

UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

POLICY ON DOMESTIC STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS AND TUITION FEES

PURPOSE

This policy sets out the University of Canberra's requirements for setting, collecting, administering and refunding domestic student contribution amounts and tuition fees.

OBJECTIVES

The broad policy objectives are to:

- Ensure the University of Canberra is compliant with the requirements of the Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003 and related guidelines in its approach to setting, collecting and advertising student contribution amounts and tuition fees for domestic students;
- Provide a single, comprehensive statement of the University of Canberra's policies in respect of domestic student contribution amounts and tuition fees; and
- Achieve a client-oriented, flexible, consistent and equitable approach to the collection, refunding and remission of domestic student contribution amounts and tuition fees.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all domestic students undertaking a University of Canberra program of study in Australia. A domestic student is a student who is:

- An Australian citizen;
- A New Zealand citizen (including a diplomatic or consular representative of New Zealand); or
- A holder of a permanent visa.

The policy applies to domestic students who are enrolled in a Commonwealth supported place and domestic students who are enrolled in a non-Commonwealth supported place (see Section 1, below).

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Legislation

- Higher Education Support Act 2003

University Legislation

- Fees Rules 1995
- Fees Statute 1995

Policies/Procedures

- International Student Fees Policy
- Procedures for Setting Tuition Fees and Student Contribution Amounts
- Amenities and Services Fee Refund Policy
- Student Contribution Amount Up-Front Payment Refund Policy
- Tuition Fees Refund/Remission Policy
- Procedure for Remission of Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) and/or Re-Credit of Student Learning Entitlement (SLE)
- Application for Remission of HELP Loan or Student Learning Entitlement
- University of Canberra Staff Study Assistance Policy
- Policy on UC Sponsorship for Over-time Domestic Postgraduate Research Students
- Student Grievance Resolution Procedure

Publications

- University of Canberra Fee Schedule

DEFINITIONS

The terms in this policy have the same meaning as those that appear in ‘Schedule 1 – Dictionary’ of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

POLICY

1. COMMONWEALTH AND NON-COMMONWEALTH SUPPORTED PLACES

1.1 Offer of Place

In accordance with HESA 2003, the University of Canberra may offer domestic students:

- A Commonwealth supported place; or
- A non-Commonwealth supported place.

1.2 Administration

The University of Canberra is required to:

- Set, administer and – where a student pays upfront – collect student contribution amounts for students who are enrolled in a Commonwealth supported place;
- Set, administer and – where a student pays upfront – collect tuition fees for students who are enrolled in a non-Commonwealth supported place.
- Administer HECS-HELP and FEE-HELP on behalf of the Commonwealth government, including applications for remission.

1.3 Concurrent Enrolment

Students may be enrolled as a Commonwealth supported student in one or more units and as a non-Commonwealth supported student in one or more units in the same teaching period.

1.4 Higher Education Loan Programme

In accordance with the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, Commonwealth supported students may be eligible to defer payment of the student contribution amount under the

Higher Education Contribution Scheme – Higher Education Loan Programme (HECS-HELP).

In accordance with the Higher Education Support Act 2003, non-Commonwealth supported students or tuition fee students may be eligible to defer payment of the tuition fee under the Fee – Higher Education Loan Programme (FEE-HELP).

2. CENSUS DATES

The Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee will set a census date for each official teaching period of the University by 1 December of the year prior to the census date. Census dates will be published on the University website.

Unless a student applies for and receives:

- a refund of tuition fees;
- a refund of student contribution amount; or
- remission of a tuition fee or student contribution debt

a student will be held to be liable for all enrolled units, as indicated on a student's record on the University's student management system, by the census date for the relevant teaching period. A student will also be liable for the Amenities and Services Fee, in accordance with the student's enrolment, by the census date.

3. EQUIVALENT FULL-TIME STUDENT LOAD (EFTSL) VALUES

EFTSL is a measure of the study load, for a year, of a student undertaking a course of study on a full-time basis. In most cases, 24 credit points is the standard full-time annual enrolment load for a University of Canberra course. Thus, 24 credit points equals one EFTSL. A three credit point unit is worth .125 EFTSL (3/24), and so on.

Student contribution amounts and tuition fees for any unit will be based on the EFTSL value of that unit multiplied by the applicable course fee (for postgraduate coursework and research course tuition fees) or discipline band (for student contribution amounts and undergraduate tuition fees).

The Academic Board will determine an EFTSL value for each unit of the University by 1 October of the year prior to the commencement of any unit. EFTSL values and/or methods for calculating EFTSL values will be published on the University website.

4. STUDENT CONTRIBUTION AMOUNTS

The University must require every student enrolled as a Commonwealth supported student in a unit of study - if they are not an exempt student (see Section 9.1, below) - to pay a student contribution amount for that unit (NB: Research Training Scheme places are not classified as Commonwealth supported places).

4.1 Post 2005 Student Contribution Amounts

For students who commence a course of study in 2005 or later, the University Council is able to set student contribution amounts within a range established by the Commonwealth government. Student contribution amounts are set for four discipline groupings, within which all disciplines of the University are represented. Student contribution amounts are set with respect to the discipline of a unit of study, not a course. Student contribution amounts are expressed in terms of the student contribution amount owing for 1 EFTSL enrolment. Accordingly, a student's contribution amount liability for any given teaching period is based on the discipline bands of the units in which the student is enrolled by the census date, multiplied by the EFTSL value of each unit.

The University will determine the student contribution amounts for each discipline band by 1 October of the year preceding the year in which the contribution amounts are to apply. Where the University changes its contribution amounts from year to year, new contribution amounts will only apply to commencing students in the following year. Thus, the student contribution rates which apply to an individual student at the commencement of their course, will hold for the length of time it takes for the student to complete the course. This principle does not apply to the student contribution amount index movements determined by the Commonwealth government each year and which apply to all students enrolled in the following year.

4.2 Pre-2005 Student Contribution Amounts

Students who commenced a course of study pre-2005 are charged student contribution amounts that are fixed until 2008, but indexed each year by the Commonwealth government. After 2008, the student contribution amounts set by the University apply to any student still enrolled in a course the student commenced, pre-2005.

4.3 Publication of Student Contribution Amounts

Student contribution amounts and methods for calculating liabilities will be published on the University website in the *University of Canberra Fee Schedule*. The *University of Canberra Fee Schedule* will list all of the applicable student contribution amounts according to the year a student commenced a course.

5. TUITION FEES

5.1 Discipline-based Tuition Fees

Tuition fee rates for undergraduate study mirror the applicable student contribution amounts (NB: for those students who defer payment of tuition fees for undergraduate study with FEE-HELP, the Commonwealth government applies a 20% charge on top of the undergraduate tuition fee rates for administering FEE-HELP).

5.2 Course-based Tuition Fees

At postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research course level, tuition fees apply to individual courses. Thus, a student's tuition fee liability for any given teaching period is derived from the course fee multiplied by the EFTSL value of each unit.

Postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research course tuition fees are reviewed annually. The Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee will determine the tuition fees for each course by 1 October of the year preceding the year in which the tuition fees are to apply.

5.3 Postgraduate Coursework Courses

For postgraduate coursework courses, new tuition rates will apply to commencing students in the following year. Thus, the tuition fee rate which applied to an individual student at the commencement of the student's course, will hold for the length of time it takes for the student to complete the course.

5.4 Postgraduate Research Courses

For postgraduate research courses, the tuition fee rate approved for any particular year will be applied at the time a student becomes a tuition fee-paying student. For example, a Research Training Scheme (RTS) student who runs out of RTS entitlement may be required to pay tuition fees. The tuition fee rate approved for the year in which the student is first required to pay tuition fees will apply thereafter.

5.5 Publication of Tuition Fees

Tuition fees will be published on the University website in the *University of Canberra Fee Schedule*. The *University of Canberra Fee Schedule* will show the total tuition fee for the selected course of study.

6. AMENITIES AND SERVICES FEES*

All students are required to pay an Amenities and Services Fee (ASF) each teaching period to cover the provision of membership to the University of Canberra Union which provides social and recreational activities and facilities on-campus, membership of the Students' Association and subsidies for the University's Health and Counselling Service. Payment includes a Goods and Services Tax (GST).

An ASF applies to each teaching period in which a student enrolls in any given year. ASF rates are subject to annual review and may vary from year to year. Any variations will apply to all students of the University.

The University Council will determine the ASF rates for teaching periods in a subsequent year by 31 December of the preceding year. ASF rates will be published on the University website in the *University of Canberra Fee Schedule*.

*The Commonwealth government is currently considering Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) legislation which may affect the University's ability to collect an Amenities and Services Fee. In the event that VSU legislation passes Section 6 of this policy will be revised.

7. INCIDENTAL FEES AND CHARGES

The University may levy additional incidental fees and administrative charges in accordance with *HESA 2003*. University-wide fees and charges, such as late payment fees, will be published on the University website in the *University of Canberra Fee Schedule*.

8. PAYMENT OF FEES

8.1 Invoices

Students will be invoiced upon enrolment in units. The invoice will indicate the payment date or dates by which payment must be made. If a student is a tuition fee-paying student and changes units after paying the applicable fee, there may be a variation to the student's fee liability. Any additional fees owed will be included in the student's subsequent invoice and must be paid by the date indicated on the invoice. Any amount owed to the student will be credited towards the student's next fee payment in the subsequent teaching period. Students do not need to apply for a fee credit; this will occur automatically.

8.2 Commonwealth Assistance Notice

Students with a HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP liability will be provided with a statement of that liability – the Commonwealth Assistance Notice (CAN) – within one month after the census date in any teaching period.

8.3 Commonwealth Supported Students

Commonwealth supported students who are commencing a course and who are eligible for HECS-HELP must lodge a Commonwealth assistance form by the end of Week One of the relevant teaching period. Commonwealth supported students who wish to make a full or partial payment of a student contribution amount must do so by the census date for the relevant teaching period.

8.4 Non-Commonwealth Supported Students

If they have not previously submitted a Form relating to their current course, non-Commonwealth supported students who intend to defer payment of tuition fees via FEE-HELP must submit a Commonwealth assistance form by the end of Week One of the relevant teaching period.

Up-front tuition fee payments will be due by the end of Week One of each teaching period.

8.5 Difficulties with Payment

In exceptional circumstances, special payment arrangements may be made for students not eligible for HELP support who are experiencing difficulties with payment. These arrangements will take account of students' financial and other circumstances. Written requests for special payment arrangements together with relevant documentation will be considered by the Director, Student Services. Extensions to payments would not normally be granted that are greater than six months. Extension of payment will be advised in writing and will not be granted automatically. Late payment fees will apply, as per the *University of Canberra Fee Schedule*.

8.6 Non-Payment of Fees

Failure to pay fees by the census date of any given teaching period will result in cancellation of a student's enrolment. A student who is subsequently reinstated will be charged a reinstatement fee, as per the *University of Canberra Fee Schedule*.

A tuition fee-paying student whose enrolment is cancelled will retain the fee liability and will not be permitted to re-enrol in a subsequent teaching period until such time as the debt is either paid in full or agreement has been reached between the student and the Director, Student Services about the arrangements for repayment. Late payment fees will apply, as per the *University of Canberra Fee Schedule*.

9. FEE VARIATIONS

9.1 Exempt Students

The University may exempt some students from paying tuition fees and student contribution amounts. In general, the University will only exempt the following categories of student:

- Students who are also permanent staff of the University (see *Staff Study Assistance Policy*);
- Students who are holders of a scholarship, one of the benefits of which is exemption; or
- Research students who are over-time and who have been awarded UC Sponsorship (see *Policy on UC Sponsorship for Over-time Domestic Postgraduate Research Students*).

9.2 Academic Work Extensions

In exceptional circumstances some students may be awarded extensions for the submission or completion of academic work in specified units beyond the final day of a teaching period. Where the extension date extends into the following teaching period students will not be required to re-enrol in the outstanding units and will not be required to pay ASF, tuition fees or student contribution amounts.

9.3 Repeated Units

Students who are required to repeat a unit will be charged again the tuition fee or student contribution amount applying to the unit.

9.4 Research Degree Students Submitting a Thesis

Research students who have completed all academic requirements by the first day of a teaching period may submit their completed thesis without re-enrolling if the thesis is submitted within 28 days after the first day of the teaching period.

Research students who have not completed all academic requirements by the first day of the teaching period will be required to enrol and, if applicable, pay the appropriate fee by the due date.

10. FEE REFUNDS

Students who withdraw from units before the census date will be eligible to receive a full refund of tuition fees or student contribution amount for those units.

10.1 Amenities and Services Fee

The University's provisions with regard to the refund of ASF are set out in the *Amenities and Services Fee Refund Policy*.

10.2 Student Contribution Amount Up-Front Payments

The University's provisions with regard to the refund of student contribution amount up-front payments are set out in the *Student Contribution Amount Up-Front Payment Refund Policy* (also see the *Policy on Remission of HELP Loan or Student Learning Entitlement* as well as the *Application for Remission of HELP Loan or Student Learning Entitlement*).

10.3 HELP Loans

The University's provisions with regard to the remission of HELP are set out in the *Policy on Remission of HELP Loan or Student Learning Entitlement* (also see the *Application for Remission of HELP Loan or Student Learning Entitlement*).

10.4 Tuition Fees

The University's provisions with regard to the refund of Tuition Fees are set out in the *Tuition Fees Refund/Remission Policy*.

10.5 Payment of Refunds

Refunds will normally be paid within four weeks from the date of receipt of a written request for a refund from the student, or the date of clearance of the original payment, whichever is later. Refunds are normally made in the form of a bank draft or EFT direct to the student. Refunds will be paid only following full payment of any outstanding debts owed to the University, such as residential fees, library fines, late fees or student loans.

11. APPEALS

A student who is dissatisfied with a decision made under this policy may appeal against the decision using the University's *Student Grievance Resolution Procedures*.