



Client Services Unit, Academic Registrar's Division

FEES POLICY

Date approved:	23 November 2007	Date Policy will take effect:	1 January 2008	Date of Next Review:	January 2012
Approved by	University Council				
Custodian title & e-mail address	Senior Manager, Client Services Unit jo_braithwaite@uow.edu.au				
Responsible Faculty/ Division & Unit	Client Services Unit, Academic Registrar's Division				
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy	Administrative Charges Schedule International Student Application for Refund of Fees Form Application for Refund of Domestic Tuition Fees in Exceptional Circumstances Tuition Fee Instalment Plan Contract				
References & Legislation	Higher Education Support Act, 2003 (Commonwealth) Education Services for Overseas Students Act, 2000 (Commonwealth) The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 Commonwealth Supported and Assisted Students (HELP) information Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship Academic Grievance Policy (Coursework and Honours Students) Academic Grievance Policy (HDR Students) Delegations of Authority Policy University's Privacy Policy University Code of Conduct – Staff State Records Act 1998 (NSW) General Retention and Disposal Authority GDA23 Records Management Policy				
Audience	Public – accessible to anyone				
Expiry date of Policy	2012				



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1 Purpose of Policy

1. The purpose of this policy is to provide transparency for UOW students in the application and administration of fees and charges, including refunds.
2. This policy replaces the revised Tuition Fee Policy approved on 15 March 2005 and complies with the Higher Education Support Act, 2003 (HESA).

2 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Approved methods of payment	Approved methods of payment are available from the UOW website
Census date	The date the financial liability for subjects is set and tuition fee is due.
Charge	A dollar amount related to administrative or penalty payments.
Charge or payment due date	The date fees or charges need to be paid by.
Commonwealth supported student (CSS)	A domestic student whose enrolment is partially funded by the Australian government.
Commonwealth assisted student (CAS)	An eligible domestic student who accesses a HELP loan to pay their subject charges.
Credit point	The value attached to a subject that indicates the study load.
Credit	Funds paid by the student into their UOW student account, which are above any outstanding fees and charges.
Deferment	A student with an unconditional offer requesting to postpone the commencement of study to a later session.
Delegated authority	A person given delegation to make decisions under the Delegations of Authority Policy.
Domestic student	An Australian Citizen, Australian Permanent Resident or a New Zealand Citizen.
Equivalent full-time study load (EFTSL)	EFTSL values calculated for each subject based on what fraction of a standard full time load the subject represents.
Fee	Includes any tuition or other fee payable to a higher education provider by a person enrolled with, or applying for enrolment with, the provider (HESA).
Fee reversal	A reversal of outstanding or paid tuition fees after the census date. For subject fee reversals there is the condition that the subject received academic approval for Late Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty and the fee reversal received approval by the appropriate delegated authority.
Forfeit	Loss of rights to unused credit held in the student account following a refund decision or 12 months of inactive enrolment.

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Full fee paying student	A student studying in a non-Commonwealth supported place.
Full time study load	Standard full time study load for a particular course.
HELP loans	HECS-HELP is a loan available to eligible domestic students enrolled in Commonwealth supported places. A HECS-HELP loan will cover all or part of the student contribution amount. FEE-HELP is a loan given to eligible domestic fee-paying students to help pay part or all of their tuition fees.
Intake	Defined period of study per subject.
International or overseas student	A student who is not a domestic student. This includes students on temporary residence visas.
Packaged offer	Two or more consecutive offers made at one time for study at the University of Wollongong.
Refund	An overpayment of fees or charges which is reimbursed to the payee.
Remission	A process of removing an incurred HELP loan debt from the Australian Government.
Session	Defined period of study per subject.
Student	A person registered for a course.
Sponsor	A third party who pays the fees and charges on behalf of the student and has a formal sponsorship agreement with the University.
Sponsored student	a student for whom fees and charges are paid by a third party under a formal sponsorship agreement with the University.
Student contribution amounts	the amount of tuition fees a Commonwealth supported student has to pay to UOW.
Student online services (SOLS)	SOLS is the official enrolment system of the University of Wollongong. It is a web based system that enables a student to self-manage their enrolment. The system also allows the student to update their personal details, manage fees, apply for academic consideration, check assignment and final results and receive important messages from the University.
Transfer	A student enrolled in a course receives approval to change and enrol in another course.

3 Application & Scope

1. The Fees Policy applies to all UOW students unless otherwise stated.

2. The Fees Policy excludes:

- UOW Accommodation Services fees and charges except for clause 5.13 of the policy
- UOW Faculties fees and charges except for clause 5.13 of the policy
- UOW Library charges except for clause 5.13 of the policy
- UOW Dubai except for Commonwealth Supported/Assisted Students (CSS/CAS)

- Wollongong College Australia for Foundation Studies.
3. The policy contains a General Conditions Section (Section 5) applying to both international and domestic students, and a separate Refunds Section (Section 6) to ensure compliance due to differing legislation.
 4. Students from a non-English speaking background should seek clarification on any aspects of the policy prior to accepting an offer of admission. Assistance is available by contacting the University.

4 Compliance

1. This Policy complies with the Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003 and The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 under the [Education Services to Overseas Students Act, 2000](#).

5 General Conditions

1. The General Conditions refer to international and domestic students and provide general information about fees and charges including their application, payment and cancellation due to non-payment.

Access to Fees and Charges

2. Up-to-date fees and charges information is made available to students online in the Student Online System (SOLS) and is available at all times. SOLS is used by the University to communicate important information to students and for this reason should be accessed by students at least once per week. Failure to do this may result in students failing to receive important information regarding fees and charges.

Allocation of Payments

3. A payment made to cover fees or charges is allocated against outstanding fees based on:
 - a. the fee/charges due date, and
 - b. the earliest fee/charge due date receiving the first allocation from that payment.

Tuition Fees

4. Tuition fees are set as an annual fee for a course and are subject to annual review.
5. Tuition fees are charged:
 - a. per credit point for full fee paying students and international students (unless otherwise stated), or
 - b. per equivalent full-time study load (EFTSL) for Commonwealth supported students, and
 - c. for each session or intake. Payment arrangements must be finalised by the relevant session or intake census date.
6. Changes to tuition fees will occur through:
 - a. deferrals of enrolment to the next year;
 - b. transfer from one course to another, including change in mode of delivery and campus/study location; or
 - c. becoming a permanent resident.
7. International students must pay a full session of fees in accordance with their final unconditional offer letter upon commencement of a new course.

Other Fees and Charges

8. Other fees and charges may apply as outlined in the student charges [schedule](#) available on the UOW website.

Tuition Fee Instalment Plan Contract

9. The University of Wollongong recognises that students may experience difficulty paying full tuition fees by the census date. To provide some measure of support to these students the University offers the Tuition Fee Instalment Plan Contract.
10. Students eligible to apply for a Tuition Fee Instalment Plan Contract are required to be:
 - a. enrolled on a full time study load; and
 - b. full fee paying students not eligible for Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) assistance.
11. The Tuition Fee Instalment Plan Contract:
 - a. applies to tuition fees only;
 - b. incurs a non-refundable administration fee; and
 - c. is payable in instalments as per the signed contract.
12. Students applying for a Tuition Fee Instalment Plan Contract are bound by its terms and conditions and by this Fees Policy as outlined by clauses 5.13 to 5.17.

Penalties for Non-Payment

13. Any student who has an overdue debt to the University of Wollongong and does not make full payment shall cease to be entitled to any privileges of the University and the University may, at its discretion, apply a range of penalties, including:
 - a. Cancellation of enrolment (removes all access rights to any enrolled and/or active course). When fee arrangements are not finalised in full by the census date cancellation penalties shall be, but are not limited to:
 - i. the loss of insurance cover under the University's Liability Insurance for attending classes and/or examinations,
 - ii. withdrawing the permission to register for a further session, and/or
 - iii. withdrawing access to University services and facilities (email, library, etc);
 - b. Inability to access or receive official credentials or documentation;
 - c. Accessing or requesting access to examination results; and/or
 - d. Attending graduation and receiving degree documentation.
14. When fees are not paid in full by the due date, late payment fees may apply.
15. Cancellation and late payment fee appeals must be submitted in writing to the Academic Registrar's Division within 20 working days after the enrolment is cancelled. Appeal processes are outlined in cancellation letters issued to students.
16. To be reinstated cancelled students shall pay
 - a. all outstanding amounts; and
 - b. reinstatement charge and late payment fee as outlined in the student charges [schedule](#) available on the UOW website.
17. When fees remain unpaid for an extended period of time, the University may, at its discretion, employ a debt collection agency for the purpose of recovering longstanding overdue fees.

Sponsored Students

18. The University of Wollongong considers a sponsor as a third party, who pays tuition fees and charges on the student's behalf and has a formal agreement for sponsorship with the University.
19. Students who have a private agreement with a third party are not considered a sponsored student by the University.

20. For sponsored students, as defined in paragraph 5.18, the University shall invoice the sponsor directly for the student's fees and charges. Should a student withdraw from a subject, the excess fees will be allocated to the next session unless the student is completing their degree, in which case a refund will be issued.
21. All refunds are made directly to the sponsor unless alternative reimbursement arrangements are confirmed by the sponsor.
22. Under certain circumstances a limited number of Higher Degree Research (HDR) Tuition Fee Scholarships are awarded for HDR students where an area of research strength can be demonstrated. A HDR Tuition Fee Scholarship may also be considered for HDR students who are in their final session of study and faced with exceptional circumstances. Applications must be accompanied by the relevant documentary evidence. HDR Tuition Fee Scholarships are approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

6 Refunds including Remission and Fee Reversal

Refunds for Domestic Students

1. Students who were enrolled in subjects as at the census date and withdraw from these units after the census date may apply for a remission of fees if there are special circumstances as outlined in Section 7.
2. The University of Wollongong shall remit the amount of tuition fees the student incurred for the subject if:
 - a. the student was enrolled in the subject as at the census date; and
 - b. the subject would, if completed, form part of a course of study undertaken at the University; and
 - c. the student has not completed the requirements for the subject during the period during which the student undertook, or was to undertake the subject; and
 - d. the University is satisfied that special circumstances (as defined in Section 7) apply to the student; and
 - e. the student applies in writing to the University for a refund of tuition fees; and
 - f. either:
 - i. the application is made before the end of the application period, or
 - ii. the University waives the requirement that the application be made before the end of that period, on the grounds that it would not be, or was not, possible for the application to be made before the end of that period.
3. The application period in which a student may apply for a refund of tuition fees shall be 12 months after the day the withdrawal takes effect or within 12 months of the end of the period of study in which the unit was, or was to be, undertaken. The withdrawal must be officially recorded with the University.
4. Applications will be assessed by the Academic Registrar's Division upon receiving the [Refund Application Form](#).
5. The student shall be notified by the Academic Registrar's Division of the decision in writing within 4 to 6 weeks, provided all relevant documentation has been submitted with the application.
6. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, they may apply for a review of that decision within 28 calendar days of receiving the original decision. Information about a review of appeal is provided with the decision papers sent to the student.
7. The decision letter will include advice on refund and remission processes.

Refunds for International Students

8. Applications for a refund must be submitted on the appropriate application form and be accompanied by the required documentary evidence. Any refund approved will only be paid to the applicant or

sponsor, as defined in paragraph 5.18, and will only be made in the student's country by Australian dollar draft or electronic funds transfer in Australian dollar currency.

9. Funds against which a refund application is being made must be credited against the student's account.
10. Refunds of U.S. Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) funds will be processed in accordance with U.S. Department of Education program regulations as agreed to by the student and the University.
11. A total refund of fees paid in advance will be made when:
 - a. an offer of a place is withdrawn by the University of Wollongong, unless the offer was made on the basis of incorrect or incomplete information being supplied by the applicant. In such cases the University reserves the right to retain 10% of the tuition fee;
 - b. the University of Wollongong is unable to provide the course for which the student has applied;
 - c. the student has made a formal application but is subsequently refused a student visa from an Australian Diplomatic Post;
 - d. the student fails to meet the University's course progression rules and as a result is not permitted to re-enrol due to suspension and/or exclusion.
12. A partial refund will be made for applications received before the commencement date of a session for a new offer. This will be a full session's fees less an administrative fee of 10%. This provision also applies to package offers.
13. A partial refund of tuition fees will be made when a student is unable to continue study due to special circumstances as outlined in Section 7. The application must be received by the University before the census date. This will be 50% of a full session's fees. After the census date fees are non refundable.
14. In cases where an offer was made on the basis of fraudulent documents, the University of Wollongong reserves the right to retain the full fee.
15. The student shall be notified by the Academic Registrar's Division in writing of the decision of the refund application within four weeks, provided all relevant documentation in support of the refund application has been submitted with the original application.
16. If the student believes that the University has not considered all of the relevant information or has not honoured the Fees Policy in making the decision, an application for a review of that decision must be made within 20 working days of receiving the original decision. Information about a review of appeal is provided with the decision advice sent to the student.

Forfeiting

17. Students shall have their unused credit held in their account for 12 months from the course commencement date as stated on the offer letter or from when they were last enrolled. The University of Wollongong will hold credit amounts in the student account under the following circumstances:
 - a. students deferring their offer; and/or
 - b. students who withdraw from subject(s) prior to the census date.
18. Funds in credit are allocated to future fees and charges unless a request for a refund is approved.
19. Any unused credit held in the student account after the period as per paragraph 6.17 will be forfeited.

Permanent Resident Status (International Students Only)

20. If applicable, a refund of fees will be payable if the student has:
 - a. obtained permanent resident status before the census date for a session; and
 - b. submitted a written request for change of status by the census date and received acknowledgement by the Academic Registrar's Division; and

- c. completed a request for Commonwealth Support on SOLS, if eligible.
21. Permanent resident status is recognised from the date specified on the student's passport.
 22. A change from International status to permanent residency status does not guarantee a Commonwealth Supported Place.

7 Special Circumstances

1. Applications submitted under the Special Consideration criteria will be assessed by the Academic Registrar's Division and a decision made by the Delegated Authority as specified in the [UOW Delegations of Authority Policy](#).
2. Special circumstances apply to the student if and only if the University is satisfied that circumstances:
 - a. Are beyond the student's control, which a reasonable person would consider is not due to the student's action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which the student is not responsible. This situation must be unusual, uncommon or abnormal; and
 - b. Do not make their full impact on the student. Full impact on the student's circumstances is considered to occur:
 - i. before the census date, but worsen after that day, or
 - ii. before the census date, but the full effect or magnitude does not become apparent until on or after that day, or
 - iii. on or after the census date, and
 - c. Make it impracticable for the person to complete the requirements for the subject during the period during which the student undertook, or was to undertake, the subject.
3. Circumstances that make it impracticable for the person to complete the requirements for their unit of study may include medical grounds, compassionate grounds, extenuating grounds or course related circumstances.

Medical Grounds

4. Medical grounds, which may include, but are not limited to, illness or injury, hospitalisation, treatment programs, exacerbation of existing medical conditions or disability resulting in a person's medical condition changing to such an extent that he or she is unable to continue studying.

Compassionate Grounds

5. Compassionate grounds, where a student is affected by suffering or misfortune may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. loss or bereavement – such as death of a family member, immediate relative or close friend, family relationship breakdown; or
 - b. hardship or trauma – such as sudden loss of income or employment, significant disruption to domestic arrangements, victim of crime.

Extenuating Circumstances

6. Applications made on extenuating circumstances of reasonable significance that interfere with the student's ability to meet a subject's requirements may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. carer's responsibilities – where a student has substantial unplanned responsibilities to either members of their immediate family or members of their household who need their care and support;
 - b. legal commitments – where a student is called for jury duty or is required to attend a court or tribunal;
 - c. military service;
 - d. accidents or natural disasters; or

- e. employment related circumstances (domestic students only) – where a person's employment status or arrangements have changed so that the person is unable to continue his or her studies, and this change is beyond the person's control.

Course Related Circumstances

- 7. Course related circumstances. For example, where the provider has changed the unit it had offered and the person is disadvantaged by either not being able to complete the unit, or not being given credit towards other units or courses.

8 Supporting Documentation

- 1. Students applying shall submit supporting documentation which verifies their eligibility as stipulated in Section 8. Supporting documentation must be submitted with the application form in English, or be a certified and signed translation, to the Academic Registrar's Division.
- 2. All applications must be supported by appropriate documentation as fixed by clauses 8.4 to 8.6. Supporting documentation must comply with the criteria set out in these clauses; failure to comply will result in the application being denied. Applications without supporting documentation will not be approved.
- 3. Supporting documentation should be an original document. In circumstances where this is not possible, an original Justice of the Peace certified copy will suffice. All supporting documentation should indicate the exact dates of the event or circumstance and how this will impact on the assessment.
- 4. Supporting documentation applications on medical grounds includes an original medical certificate (or original certified copy) which must indicate:
 - a. the name of the student;
 - b. the date the certificate was written and signed; and
 - c. the date on which the doctor considers the student is likely to return to studies;and should:
 - a. indicate the degree of incapacity of the student; and
 - b. be addressed to the parties requiring the certificate as evidence of illness (ie UOW).
- 5. Supporting documentation on compassionate grounds may include:
 - a. notification or letter from a registered psychologist (for example, a University Counsellor);
 - b. death certificate or death notice;
 - c. police report or event number; and/or
 - d. letter from an employer on company letterhead.
- 6. Supporting documentation on extenuating circumstances may include:
 - a. notification or letter from a registered psychologist for example, a University Counsellor;
 - b. jury notice or letter from relevant authority on relevant letterhead;
 - c. police report or event number;
 - d. letter from the armed forces on relevant letterhead; and/or
 - e. letter from an employer on company letterhead.
- 7. Where it is not possible to obtain supporting documentation, students must seek advice from the University before or at the time of lodging the application.
- 8. The submission of fraudulent documentation will be regarded as serious misconduct and will be managed in accordance with the Student Conduct Rules and associate procedures. The matter may also be referred to the State or Federal Police, ICAC and/or the Department of Immigration.

9 Communications with Government Bodies

Notification to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (for International Students)

1. The University of Wollongong shall advise the Department of Immigration and Citizenship when an international student:
 - a. has withdrawn from a course;
 - b. is cancelled from the course and not reinstated; or
 - c. has no current enrolment with the University of Wollongong.

Australian Taxation Office (for Domestic Students)

2. Commonwealth supported and assisted students may periodically receive a HELP Statement from the Australian Taxation Office. The HELP Statement should show any activity such as a new semester debt added to student accounts. The Australian Taxation Office should be contacted for further information.
3. It is the student's responsibility to contact the University of Wollongong if any part of the HELP statement is deemed incorrect.
4. The University will contact the Australian Taxation Office if corrections for HELP debts are approved.

10 Disclaimers

1. This policy and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws (including ESOS Act 2000).

11 Privacy and Confidentiality

1. All staff designated to access information contained in fees related applications are obliged to preserve confidentiality in accordance with the University's Privacy Policy, the University Code of Conduct - Staff and other relevant privacy legislation.
2. Records relating to fees applications will be retained and disposed of in accordance with the State Records Act 1998, General Retention and Disposal Authority GDA23, and the Records Management Policy

12 Roles & Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of the Academic Registrar's Division to administer student fees, including ensuring that remissions/refunds are assessed according to this Policy.
2. It is the responsibility of the student to
 - a. ensure that fees are fully paid by the census date for all sessions of enrolment; and
 - b. where relevant, provide appropriate documentation to enable a reasonable and fair assessment of the special circumstances as per claims made in the remission/refund/appeal submission.

13 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	23 November 2007	University Council	First Version – replaces Tuition Fees Policy
2	6 May 2009	Vice-Principal (Administration)	Migrated to UOW Policy Template as per Policy Refresh