

Name:	Recrediting a VSL or FEE-HELP Balance
Approved by:	Group Accreditation & Compliance Manager
Date Approved:	05.09.2019
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Implementation Owner	Student Services (T&D)
Maintenance Owner	Group Accreditation & Compliance
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Section 1 – Recrediting a VSL or FEE-HELP Balance

1) Incurring a VETSL Debt or FEE-HELP Debt

A Student who is, or would be, eligible for a government loan and has requested VSL or FEE-HELP Assistance, who withdraws from a Unit on or before the census date will not incur a VETSL debt or FEE-HELP debt for the tuition fees for that Unit. Students who have requested Assistance who remain enrolled after the published census date will incur a VETSL debt or FEE-HELP debt. A Student who withdraws from a Unit after the published census date for that Unit will incur a VETSL debt or FEE-HELP debt for that Unit.

2) Recrediting a VSL or FEE-HELP balance

Students who withdraw from a Unit after the published census date, or fail to complete a Unit, may apply to have their VSL or FEE-HELP balance re-credited with respect to the Unit if they believe special circumstances apply in accordance with the following procedures.

3) Special Circumstances

If a Student withdraws from a Unit after the census date for that Unit, or has been unable to successfully complete a Unit, and believes this was due to special circumstances, the student may apply to have their VSL or FEE-HELP balance re-credited for the affected unit/s.

AIT will re-credit the Student's VSL or FEE-HELP Balance if it is satisfied that

Special Circumstances apply where:

- i) these circumstances were beyond the Student's control, and
- ii) these circumstances did not make their full impact on the student until on, or after the census date; and
- iii) these circumstances were such that it was impracticable for the Student to complete the requirements for the Unit.
- iv) For circumstances to be beyond a Student's control, the situation should be that 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. The situation must be unusual, uncommon or abnormal to be considered special circumstances.
- v) Special circumstances do not include:
- vi) lack of knowledge or understanding of requirements for VSL or FEE-HELP assistance; or
- vii) a Student's incapacity to repay a VETSL debt or FEE-HELP debt (repayments are income contingent and the Student can apply to the Australian Taxation Office for a deferral of a compulsory repayment in certain circumstances).

4) Re-credit of a student's VSL or FEE-HELP balance – the process

Each application for re-credit of a student's VSL or FEE-HELP balance will be considered on its merits together with all supporting documentation substantiating the special circumstances claim. The Registrar is responsible for the assessment of a student's request for a re-credit of their VSL or FEE-HELP balance due to special circumstances and for the initial decision regarding the request.

A Student must apply in writing to the Registrar within 12 months of the withdrawal date, or if

the Student has not withdrawn, within 12 months of the specified completion date of the Unit. AIT, has the discretion to waive this requirement if it is satisfied that it was not possible for the application to be made within the 12-month period. Relevant supporting documentation will be required to substantiate the claim.

The application for re-crediting a VSL or FEE-HELP balance must include details of the:

- i) Unit(s) for which a Student is seeking to have a VSL or FEE-HELP balance re-credited; and
- ii) special circumstances as referred to above, including supporting documentation.

AIT will consider each application within 10 working days of receipt of the application. It will consider each request to re-credit a VSL or FEE-HELP balance in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 1A to the Act. Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision within 20 working days.

5) Review of Decision

Where AIT decides NOT to re-credit a student's VSL or FEE-HELP balance, that decision may be subject to review. If a Student is not satisfied with the decision made the Student may apply for a review of the decision.

The application for review must:

- i) be made within 28 days of receipt of the original decision;
- ii) include the date of the original decision;
- iii) state fully the reasons for applying for the review; and
- iv) include any additional relevant evidence.

Applications should be made in writing to the General Manager as the designated Review Officer of any decisions relating to a request for re-crediting of a VSL or FEE-HELP balance.

Note: The Review Officer is senior to the designated HELP officer responsible for the original decision and was not involved in making the original decision to be reviewed. The

Review Officer will:

- i) acknowledge receipt of the application for review of a decision in writing within 10 working days; and
- ii) inform the Student that if the Review Officer has not advised them of a decision within 45 days of receipt of the application for review, it is taken that the Review Officer has confirmed the original decision.

The Review Officer will then:

- i) review the information from the original decision and then assess any new evidence provided by the Student;
- ii) provide written notice to the Student of the decision, setting out the reasons for the decision;
- iii) inform the Student of their right to apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal if they disagree with the Review Decision, and timelines involved (see below).

6) Reconsideration through external appeal

At the time of the original decision, and at the time of the subsequent Review Decision, the Student will be notified of their review rights and responsibilities. The relevant officer will inform the Student in writing of their right to an external appeal should he/she remain dissatisfied with the outcome, and refer the Student to the Complaints Policy and Procedure for details on the process.

7) Re- Credit of a student's VSL or FEE-HELP balance – The Process

Each application for re-credit of a student's VSL or FEE-HELP balance will be considered on its merits together with all supporting documentation substantiating the special circumstances claim. The Registrar is responsible for the assessment of a student's request for a re-credit of their VSL or FEE-HELP balance due to special circumstances and for the initial decision regarding the request.

A Student must apply in writing to the Registrar within 12 months of the withdrawal date, or if the Student has not withdrawn, within 12 months of the specified completion date of the Unit. AIT, has the discretion to waive this requirement if it is satisfied that it was not possible for the application to be made within the 12-month period. Relevant supporting documentation will be required to substantiate the claim.

The application for re-crediting a VSL or FEE-HELP balance must include details of the:

- i) Unit(s) for which a Student is seeking to have a VSL or FEE-HELP balance re-credited; and
- ii) special circumstances as referred to above, including supporting documentation.

AIT will consider each application within 10 working days of receipt of the application. It will consider each request to re-credit a VSL or FEE-HELP balance in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 1A to the Act. Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision within 20 working days.

8) Review of Decision

Where AIT makes a decision NOT to re-credit a student's VSL or FEE-HELP balance, that decision may be subject to review. If a Student is not satisfied with the decision made the Student may apply for a review of the decision.

The application for review must:

- i) be made within 28 days of receipt of the original decision;
- ii) include the date of the original decision;
- iii) state fully the reasons for applying for the review; and
- iv) include any additional relevant evidence.

Applications should be made in writing to the General Manager as the designated Review Officer of any decisions relating to a request for re-crediting of a VSL or FEE-HELP balance.

Note: The Review Officer is senior to the designated HELP officer responsible for the

original decision and was not involved in making the original decision to be reviewed.

The Review Officer will:

- i) acknowledge receipt of the application for review of a decision in writing within 10 working days; and
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The Review Officer will then:

- i) review the information from the original decision and then assess any new evidence provided by the Student;
- ii) provide written notice to the Student of the decision, setting out the reasons for the decision;
- iii) inform the Student of their right to apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal if they disagree with the Review Decision, and timelines involved (see below).

9) Reconsideration through external appeal

At the time of the original decision, and at the time of the subsequent Review Decision, the Student will be notified of their review rights and responsibilities. The relevant officer will inform the Student in writing of their right to an external appeal should he/she remain dissatisfied with the outcome, and refer the Student to the Complaints Policy and Procedure for details on the process.

10) Publication

This procedure is published on the web sites of AIT to ensure students have up-to-date and accurate information publicly available to them.

Section 2 – Reference and Supporting Information
1) Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
The Act:	Refers to the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and the VET Student Loans Act 2016
Student	Refers to students, who are Australian citizens or permanent humanitarian visa holders or New Zealand Special category Visa holders who will be resident in Australia for the duration of their Units of Study, and who access an approved government loan for payment of their tuition fees in respect of the approved Unit of Study in which they are enrolled.
Census Date	A published date, set by the Provider, no earlier than 20% of the way through an approved Unit of Study. The providers close of business is the deadline for various requirements such as making an upfront payment of part or all of the tuition fees, applying for a VET Student Loan (VSL), FEE-HELP Loan, or formally withdrawing enrolment in order to not incur a debt.
Tuition Fees	Fees paid for a VET Unit of Study that is approved for VSL, FH and applies to students who are, or would be entitled to assistance in accordance with the eligibility criteria for the relevant loan scheme.
The Department	The Commonwealth Department of Education.

2) Supporting documentation

Document name	Document type	Location
Student Code of Conduct	Policy	Internal
Student Handbook	Policy Guide	Internal
Under 18 Years Student Management and Supervision Procedure	Procedure	Internal
U18 International Students Guideline	Procedural Guide	Internal
National Code 2018	Govt Standards	External
TEQSA Threshold Standards 2015	Regulatory Standards	External
ASQA Standards for RTO's 2015	Regulatory Standards	External
Broadcasting Services Act 1999	Legislation	External

Section 3 – Change History

3) Change History

Version	Approval date	Department	Approved by	Change
V1.0	10 November 2018	Group Accreditation & Compliance	Group Manager	Development of Group Policy replacing existing entity level policies
		Technology & Design Division	General Manager	
V1.1	05 September 2019	Group Accreditation & Compliance	Group Manager	Update to new template
		Technology & Design Division	General Manager	