

Domestic Student Fee Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') is committed to ensuring the training, education and research needs of our communities are met and that the setting of student fees is fair and transparent.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This policy outlines the basis on which the University sets and collects fees and charges from students, including the process for a refund of student fees.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This policy applies to all domestic students who are enrolled at the University in award and non-award courses, including pathway and foundation courses, short courses, and vocational and higher education courses, both coursework and higher degree by research.

(4) International students are excluded from this policy and should refer to the [International Students - Refund of Fees Procedure](#).

Section 4 - Policy

(5) The University sets student tuition fees and receives student fee payments within the parameters of Commonwealth legislation. The University will ensure the setting, review, and administration of student fees is:

- a. accurate and accessible, with information on fees being publicly available so that fee liability can be known prior to enrolment;
- b. reviewed annually, taking into account insights from the market, sectors, accreditation bodies, grandparenting arrangements and strategic partners;
- c. transparent, with reasonable notice to students given with respect to any variation to fees; and
- d. ethical, timely, and respectful of both the student's and University's financial interests. This includes processes relating to the refund and recovery of student fees.

(6) Students who study at CDU are responsible for ensuring that they:

- a. pay fees by the due date;
- b. provide accurate and timely information to the university relating to contact details for fee collection;
- c. seek advice and assistance at the earliest opportunity where financial hardship or other difficulties are experienced that may impact on their ability to pay fees; and
- d. are a genuine student for the purpose of maintaining a Commonwealth Supported Place.

Review and publication of fees

(7) All student fees will be set and published in accordance with the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) for Higher Education (HE) students, and the [Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015](#) for Vocational Education and Training (VET) students.

(8) All student fees will be reviewed annually and may increase each calendar year.

(9) The Vice-Chancellor holds the delegation for approving student fees.

Invoicing and payment of fees

(10) Students will be invoiced within six (6) weeks prior to the commencement of the relevant teaching period or when they enrol, whichever is later.

(11) Invoices will be sent in one of the following forms:

- a. Students who have activated their computer account – emailed to their official university email address.
- b. Students who have not activated their computer account – posted to their postal address.

(12) Students can access the balance of their outstanding fees at any time through the MyStudentInfo portal.

Fee obligations

(13) Fees will apply to students who withdraw more than:

- a. 14 days after the unit commencement date for VET courses; or
- b. after the census date for HE courses or VET Student Loan courses.

(14) Students are required to pay their fees by the due date specified on their Enrolment and Fee Advice Invoice. A student may, if eligible:

- a. access a HELP loan (HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP, or SA-HELP) or a VET Student Loan to pay for their fees. Students will need to submit the relevant forms and Tax File Number (TFN) by the applicable census date; and
- b. transfer their fee liability to a third party, where the relevant Third-Party Sponsorship form for this arrangement is put in place.

(15) Students will incur a HELP debt or VET Student Loan with the Australian Taxation Office if they:

- a. remain enrolled in a unit after the census date; and
- b. are eligible for HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP, SA-HELP, or a VET Student Loan; and
- c. have submitted a valid HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP, SA-HELP, or a VET Student Loan form; and
- d. have provided a valid Tax File Number (TFN); and
- e. have not made a full up-front payment of their fee by the Census date.

(16) A Commonwealth Assistance Notice will be issued to students within 28 days of the census date where they:

- a. are enrolled in a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP), regardless of whether they chose to pay up front or take out a loan; or
- b. elect to take out a FEE-HELP, SA-HELP or VET Student Loan.

(17) The University will ensure that a student on a Commonwealth Supported Place will be:

- a. assessed as academically suited for their study; and
- b. meet the assessment requirements as being a genuine student in relation to the unit of study.

(18) If a student is no longer eligible for a Commonwealth Supported Place, they will be notified and offered to continue in their course as a full fee-paying student.

Extension for payment

(19) In exceptional and compelling circumstances, a student may be granted an extension or payment plan at the discretion of the University. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a. an extension of time to pay their fees (with the exception of Commonwealth supported students); or
- b. an instalment plan for debt of \$100 or more for VET students.

Non-payment of fees and associated penalties

(20) Students who have not paid their fees in full by the due date will be issued a Final Notice requesting the immediate payment of fees.

- a. A student's enrolment may be cancelled if payment is not received within five (5) business days of the issue of the Final Notice, or alternative arrangements for payment are not put in place.

(21) Students with alternate payment arrangements may have the following penalties imposed until all debts are fully discharged, or arrangements for the discharge of the debt have been agreed by the University. Penalties may include, but are not limited to, students being restricted from:

- a. accessing unit results;
- b. enrolling in further units;
- c. obtaining a Transcript of Results or Academic Transcript; and
- d. graduating from the University.

(22) The University may use an external debt collection agency to recover any outstanding payments of a student or Third-Party Sponsor.

Refunds of credit balance

(23) Credit balances within a student's individual account will not be refunded automatically.

- a. Students must make an application for a refund of fees by completing the Request for Student Refund form via the student portal.
- b. If the student has not applied for a refund within a two (2) year period, the monies may be forfeited.

(24) Approved refunds will be processed within four (4) weeks of receiving the request and are generally returned by the same method in which the fees were originally paid (with the exception of cash payments, cheques, and debit cards).

- a. For payments made by credit card, refunds will be made to the credit card used for payment if the card is still valid, otherwise it will go to a nominated bank account. A refund processed by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) may take up to seven (7) working days before the credit appears due to bank processing practices.
- b. Where a third party (such as a sponsoring body or scholarship agency) has paid the student's fees, refunds will be paid directly to the third party.

Refunds for withdrawals after census date

(25) Students who withdraw from units after the census date will not be refunded any upfront payments or remitted any HELP debt or VET Student Loan.

(26) Students with special circumstances may apply in writing for:

- a. the remission of HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP, or a VET Student Loan debt; or
- b. refund of upfront payments.

(27) A request for withdrawal without financial penalty must be submitted within 12 months of the date of withdrawal from the unit, or if the unit is not withdrawn, within 12 months of the end of the teaching period in which the student was enrolled in the unit.

- a. In exceptional circumstances an application may be made outside of the 12 months application period. In these cases, additional supporting documentation must provide detailed evidence of the exceptional circumstances that apply, and clearly state why it was not possible for the student to apply before the end of the application period.

(28) Students are not eligible for a remission or refund if they have successfully completed a unit. A fail grade is not considered to be successful completion of the requirements of the unit.

(29) Students will receive written notification from the Student Finance Officer within three (3) weeks of receipt of their application of:

- a. the decision and the reasons for the decision; and
- b. the student's right for a review of the decision if the student is not satisfied with the outcome.

(30) If approved, the University will report any HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP, or a VET Student Loan debt to be remitted and/or upfront payments to be refunded.

University default

(31) Where a domestic student enrolment is cancelled due to University default, the student will be notified in writing and will be given the option to:

- a. transfer their enrolment to a similar course leading to a comparable award within the University; or
- b. be offered a place in a similar course of study leading to a comparable award with another nominated institution, with:
 - i. full credit for the units successfully completed at Charles Darwin University which are recognised by the new Provider; and
 - ii. possible payment of the new provider's fees for unit that have not been recognised by the new provider, as determined by the University; or
 - iii. request a refund or re-credit of HELP loan or VET Student Loan to the balance of the prepaid tuition fees for those units not yet completed.

Reinstatement of enrolment

(32) Students whose enrolment has been cancelled for the non-payment of fees may apply for reinstatement of their enrolment after clearing any debts with the University, or at the discretion of the Director Student and Academic Services.

Reporting

(33) All debts incurred and payments made are reported to the Commonwealth government (where relevant) immediately after the census date. Any changes to data reported by way of withdrawals and approved request for refunds require the University to report the amendments to the Commonwealth government.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(34) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the [Code of Conduct - Staff](#) or the [Code of Conduct - Students](#), as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures.

(35) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the [Fraud and Corruption Control Policy](#) and [Whistleblower Reporting \(Improper Conduct\) Procedure](#).

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	31st May 2022
Review Date	31st May 2025
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	30th May 2022
Expiry Date	5th July 2023
Responsible Executive	Fiona Coulson Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic
Implementation Officer	Lisa-Marie Stones Director Student and Academic Services
Enquiries Contact	Lisa-Marie Stones Director Student and Academic Services