Domestic and Non-Visa Student Fee Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') is committed to ensuring that the management of student tuition fees is fair and transparent for all training, education and research courses.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This policy outlines the requirements associated with student fee payments, allocation, student refunds, financial penalties and cancellations.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This policy applies to the following cohorts of students. The terms 'student' and 'students' in this policy refers to these students:

a. All domestic students who are enrolled at the University in higher education coursework courses, vocational education and training courses, and higher degrees by research;
b. Vocational education and training international students who are on a visa other than a student visa; and
c. Transnational education students.

(4) The following students are not in the scope of this policy:

a. International students enrolled in higher education courses, inclusive of coursework courses and higher degrees by research, regardless of visa type – refer to the International Student Fee Policy;
b. Vocational education and training international students on a student visa – refer to the International Student Fee Policy; and
c. Participants in CDU Express offerings – refer to the CDU Express Offering Policy and 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 are:

a. accurate, accessible and transparent, with information on fees being publicly available so that fee liability can be known prior to enrolment;
b. reviewed annually, taking into consideration insights from the market, sectors, accreditation bodies, grandparenting arrangements and strategic partners.

(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 and meet eligibility criteria 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 2025 Standards for RTOs and VET Student Loans Act 2016 for Vocational Education and Training (VET) students.

(8) All student fees will be reviewed annually and may change 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.

Student fee responsibility

(13) Payment by a student is required in full for:

a. undergraduate and postgraduate higher education unit/s or courses by the applicable census date.
b. hyperflexible delivery units within fourteen (14) days of enrolment.
c. VET unit/s or courses within fourteen (14) days of classes commencing.
d. microcredential and short form unit/s or course in advance of class commencement, on receipt of the Enrolment and Fee Advice, unless otherwise advertised.

(14) Fees apply to students who enrol in units if they:

a. withdraw from units:
    i. more than 14 days after the unit commencement date;
    ii. after the census date for HE units or VET Student Loan courses;
b. fail to withdraw and receive an NS for VET Student Loan courses as per the Grading Policy;
c. withdraw after the first day of teaching from microcredential and short form units and courses, or do not attend, unless covered under a FEE-HELP agreement; or
d. remain enrolled.

(15) 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 must submit the relevant forms with their Unique Student Identifier (USI) and Tax File Number (TFN) by the applicable census date; or
b. transfer their fee liability to a third party, where the relevant Third-Party Sponsorship form for this arrangement is put in place and the sponsor must pay the student fee by the relevant due date or student remains liable for the outstanding debt.

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

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

(17) A Commonwealth Assistance Notice (CAN) will be issued to students within 28 days of the census date. It will list the units a student is enrolled in for that study period where they accessed the Commonwealth Assistance (either through a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) or a HELP loan). Students can cross check the amounts listed on the CAN with the amount that has been added to their HELP debt to make sure the calculation is accurate. A CAN is issued when students:

a. are enrolled in a 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.

(18) The University will ensure that a student on a CSP 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.

(19) If a student is no longer eligible for a CSP, they will be notified and offered to continue in their course as a full fee-paying student. Students can check their eligibility by visiting the Study Assist website.

Extension for payment

(20) In special 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 instalment plan for debt of $100 or more for VET students.

Non-payment of fees and associated penalties

(21) Payment of tuition fees must be made in full by the due date specified by the University. A student who fails to make payment by the due date:

a. will be subject to the Student Debtors Procedure;
b. will be issued a Final Notice requesting the immediate payment of fees; and
c. may have an encumbrance placed on their student record, which may affect their enrolment and system access, as outlined in the Enrolment Policy.

(22) 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.

(23) 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.

(24) 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

(25) 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.

(26) 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.

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 due date

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

a. Withdrawals from microcredential units after the due date will not be eligible for a refund.

(28) 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 tuition payments, excluding bank fees or currency conversion rate variations.
c. No refunds will be made for upfront Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF) or SA-HELP loans.

(29) Students must submit a request for withdrawal without financial penalty form 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.

(30) Students are not eligible for a remission or refund if they have successfully completed a unit.

(31) 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.

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

University default

(33) Where the University cancels a unit or course, 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
c. 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

(34) Students whose enrolment has been cancelled for the non-payment of fees may apply for reinstatement of their enrolment at the discretion of the Director Student and Academic Services.

Reporting

(35) All debts incurred and payments made are reported to the Australian 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 Australian Government.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(36) Non-compliance with governance documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees 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 outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct - Students.

(37) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(38) 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	Current
Effective Date	16th October 2025
Review Date	10th September 2027
Approval Authority	Vice-President Governance and University Secretary
Approval Date	16th October 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Louise King Provost
Implementation Officer	Lisa-Marie Stones Director Student and Academic Services
Enquiries Contact	Lisa-Marie Stones Director Student and Academic Services

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Census Date" - The last date for students to withdraw from enrolled units without academic or financial penalty, apply for a leave of absence, or change their citizenship status or contribution payment option.

"Domestic student" - A student who is an Australian or New Zealand citizen, permanent resident of Australia or holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa.

"University" - Charles Darwin University, a body corporate established under section 4 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003. The University is comprised of the various faculties, CDU TAFE, organisational units, and formal committees, including the governing University Council and Academic Board.

"Governance document" - means policy or procedure published in the Governance Document Library. Policies and procedures are collectively called ‘governance documents’ and are often referred to as ‘policy’ or ‘University policy’.

"Higher education coursework course" - Higher education coursework courses include award courses, which lead to a qualification recognised by the AQF, and accredited non-award courses, including enabling, foundation, preparatory, bridging, study abroad, international exchange, and other types of accredited non-award courses.