

REFUND OF TUITION FEES POLICY

Related documents – Higher Education Support Act 2003 division 104 sections 25, 27, 30, 35, 40 and 42

The Refund Policy of Heart of Life Spirituality Centre (HoL) provides for the refund of student tuition fees or the re-crediting of a Fee-Help balance when special circumstances apply.

1. Scope

This policy applies to all persons enrolled or previously enrolled as students of HoL who have paid tuition fees, who have had tuition fees paid on their behalf, or who have accessed Fee-Help to pay for a course of study at HoL.

2. Liability for Fees

- 2.1. HoL must publish census dates for each unit of study on the HoL website.
- 2.2. Students are responsible for ensuring their enrolment details are correct on or prior to the census date for each unit of study they undertake.
- 2.3. Payment of tuition fees must be made prior to the commencement of a unit of study, either by payment of fees upfront, or by certification from an institution that it assumes responsibility for the fees, or by application for Fee-Help assistance.
- 2.4. Failure to pay tuition fees, or to provide certification from an institution that it assumes responsibility for the fees, or to apply for Fee-Help assistance by the census date may result in a student's enrolment being discontinued.
- 2.5. If a student who has paid fees upfront withdraws from a unit of study *on or before* the census date for that unit of study, the fee for that unit of study is refunded to the student by HoL.
- 2.6. If a student who has paid fees upfront withdraws from a unit of study *after* the census date for that unit of study, the fee for that unit of study is not refundable.
- 2.7. If a student whose fees are to be paid by an institution withdraws from a unit of study *on or before* the census date for that unit of study, the institution does not incur a debt for that unit of study. If fees have already been paid, they are to be refunded to the institution by HoL.
- 2.8. If a student whose fees are being paid by an institution withdraws from a unit of study *after* the census date for that unit of study the institution remains

liable for those fees.

- 2.9. If a student who has applied for Fee-Help assistance withdraws from a unit of study *on or before* the census date for that unit of study, the student does not incur a Fee-Help debt for that unit of study.
- 2.10. If a student who has applied for Fee-Help assistance withdraws from a unit of study *after* the census date for that unit of study, the student incurs a Fee-Help debt for that unit of study.

3. Refund of Fees in Special Circumstances

- 3.1. Notwithstanding anything in section 2 of this policy, a student may apply after the census date for a unit of study for a refund of upfront fees (see 4.1) or re-credit of a Fee-Help balance (see 4.2) if:
 - a) the student has been unable to complete the requirements of the unit of study; and
 - b) the student believes that this was due to special circumstances; and
 - c) the application is lodged in writing within 12 months of the date of withdrawal from the unit of study, or (if the student has not withdrawn) within 12 months of the end of the period of study in which the unit of study was or was to be undertaken.
- 3.2. Fees may be refunded or a Fee-Help balance re-credited only where HoL is satisfied that special circumstances existed which:
 - a) were beyond the student's control; and
 - b) did not make a full impact on the student until on or after the census date; and
 - c) made it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements for the unit during the period in which the person undertook or was to undertake the unit.
- 3.3. Special circumstances are circumstances that would make it impracticable for a person to complete the requirements of a unit of study. These may include:
 - a) medical circumstances
 - b) family circumstances
 - c) personal circumstances
 - d) employment-related circumstances
 - e) course of study-related circumstances.
- 3.4. Special circumstances are circumstances beyond a person's control that a reasonable person would consider is not due to the person's action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which the person was not responsible. The situation must be unusual, uncommon or abnormal.
- 3.5. For the purposes of satisfying the requirement that a person's circumstances did not make their full impact until on or after a census date, special circumstances may be held to exist where they occur:
 - a) before the census date but worsen after that day; or
 - b) before the census date but the full effect or magnitude does not become apparent until on or after that day; or
 - c) on or after the census date.

4. Application & Assessment

- 4.1. A person seeking refund of upfront fees must apply in writing to the Director of HoL
- 4.2. A person seeking re-credit of a Fee-Help balance must apply in writing to the Business Manager in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, University of Divinity.
- 4.3. The applicant is responsible for providing independent supporting documentation to support the claim that special circumstances applied.
- 4.4. The Director, Business Manager or the Chief Financial Officer may request further information from the applicant or the applicant's College (Yarra Theological Union) in relation to the application.
- 4.5. The decision to approve or reject an application for refund of fees in special circumstances may be made by either the Director, Business Manager or the Chief Financial Officer, if he or she is satisfied that the applicant meets the criteria in section 3.1 of the Policy.
- 4.6. The outcome of an application for refund of fees or re-credit of a Fee-Help balance must be notified to the applicant, and the applicant's College if applicable, within 20 working days of receipt of the written application.

5. Appeal

- 5.1. A person may appeal a decision made under this policy within 30 days from receiving written notice of the decision. Application for review must be made in writing in accordance with the Appeals Policy.
- 5.2. A person dissatisfied with the outcome of an appeal made in accordance with the Appeals Policy may apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for a further review of the decision not to refund fees or to re-credit a Fee-Help balance.

(Office Server/Policies/Fees/HoL Refund Policy)