



COURSE MODIFICATION AND TUITION FEE REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

Lincoln Education Australia (LEA) understands the importance of fair and transparent processes with regard to students' enrolment and financial matters.

The *Course Modification and Tuition Fee Refund Policy and Procedures* defines the principles and procedures to be followed when a student applies for a course withdrawal, deferral, leave of absence, or fee refund.

POLICY

Scope

This policy applies to all students at LEA, including domestic and international students.

Principles

The principles and procedures outlined in this document are designed to be aligned with national legislation and regulatory requirements, including the *Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2015*, the *Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 (ESOS Act)* and the *ESOS National Code 2018*.

LEA shall conduct all enrolment administration and fee refund activities in a fair and transparent manner, ensuring that all students are treated equally.

LEA ensure that all students are aware of their options, rights, and obligations through all enrolment and refund processes.

PROCEDURES

Student Information

LEA shall communicate to all students:

- The census date and administrative date for each semester, along with the implications of each
- The applications identified below must be submitted by the administrative date to avoid late fees
- The availability of application forms for enrolment/refund matters online or through student support/administrative staff at LEA
- The availability of this policy on the LEA website



- Student complaints and appeals processes, including the condition that LEA cannot alter a student's enrolment during the complaint or appeals process.

1. Course Withdrawal, Deferral, and Leave of Absence

Deferral

Students are permitted to defer the commencement of their studies for up to 12 months. Students must submit deferral requests through the Registrar. Students are automatically re-enrolled at the end of the deferral period and are not required to re-apply for a place of study within their course.

Leave of Absence

Students may apply for a leave of absence under extenuating circumstances that are negatively impacting their studies. A leave of absence may be granted for up to 12 months. Students are automatically re-enrolled at the end of the leave of absence and are not required to re-apply to the course.

Change of Enrolment

After enrolling, a student may modify their course by withdrawing from a subject, enrol in an additional subject, or changing the semester in which they commence a subject. This can be done through the online student portal, or through the Registrar, using the Change of Enrolment Form.

Students are advised to change their enrolment before the course administrative date in order to avoid being charged a fee for late changes to their enrolment.

Course Withdrawal

Students who wish to withdraw from a course at LEA are strongly encouraged to speak with the Course Coordinator and/or a Student Experience Officer to discuss their reason for withdrawal and future plans.

Students may apply to the Registrar to withdraw from their course, using *the Course Withdrawal Form* either on-line or by submitting a hard copy.

Students are not guaranteed a place in the course from which they have withdrawn. If they wish to be re-admitted in future, they must go through the course application and admissions process.

International Students

All procedures defined above are available to international students, however international students must remain aware of their visa conditions and the effect that course modification may have on their enrolment and consequent visa requirements. LEA shall consider the



impact of an international student's application on their visa when evaluating applications.

The LEA document "***Deferral, Cancellation and Suspension Guidelines (International Students)***" provides detailed procedures for international students as required by the National Code 2018.

Academic Transcript

Students that cancel enrolment in a subject after the seventh week of semester shall receive a fail grade for that subject as recorded on their Academic Transcript (Record of Results).

2. Fee Refunds

Tuition Fees

The written application for a refund is only considered complete, where the *Refund Request Application Form* is signed by the student and the correct refund details have been provided (including any third party recipients) in accordance with this Policy.

Students are also required submit their application to change their enrolment for subject change, course deferral, or course withdrawal prior to the census date, by completing the *Change of Enrolment Form or Course Withdrawal Form* either on-line or to the Registrar.

LEA will process all student refund requests and will provide written responses within **10 working days** from the date of receipt.

In the event of a refund being rejected by the bank due to insufficient data or incorrect data supplied by the student, any bank fees charged by LEA's bank to LEA will be deducted from the amount due to the student.

Refund amounts transferred by international telegraphic transfer will attract a bank charge.

Refunds will be paid:

- To the person or entity from whom the original payment was received
- In Australian dollars
- to the same account or credit card from which the original payment was made at the time of enrolment, and
- Within four (4) weeks from the time a refund claim was received by LEA, provided all banking information for payment of refund is received on application.

If a student has incurred fees due to an administrative error, they shall be refunded 100% of the fees deducted.

Where a course has been discontinued by LEA, students shall be refunded in line with the measures detailed in the *Course Discontinuation Policy and Procedures*.



If students are entitled to a refund due to an administrative error or course discontinuance, the student shall be refunded automatically and is not required to submit a *Request for Refund Form*.

Non-Tuition Fees

Refund payments will only be calculated and processed based on LEA's tuition fees. It is important to recognise that the following fees and charges are not tuition fees and are therefore, non-refundable:

- Application fees
- Enrolment fees
- Learning materials fees
- Change of course fees
- Late payment administrative charges
- Ancillary charges, including credit card surcharges
- Graduation fees
- Library fines
- Re-marking of assessment fees (where applicable)
- Reprints of transcripts
- Postage, printing or Student ID Card replacement charges.
- Accommodation placement
- Airport pickup
- Photocopying credits

Domestic Students

Domestic students are eligible for a full refund of the tuition fees if the *Request for Refund Form* or *Course Withdrawal Form* is received prior to the census date. There is no refund if the application is made after the census date except in compassionate and compelling circumstances.

International Students

(i) Tuition fee refunds, prior to course commencement

If an international student wishes to withdraw from their course prior to its commencement, the following refund rules apply. If the:

- COE has not been issued, LEA will refund 100% of the tuition fees paid
- *Course Withdrawal Form* is received by LEA at least four weeks prior to course commencement date, LEA will refund 70% of the first semester tuition fee
- *Course Withdrawal Form* is received by LEA less than four weeks prior to the course commencement will not refund any of the first semester tuition fee



Note: the first semester tuition fee is outlined on the Offer of Admission.

Where the student's enrolment is withdrawn or cancelled by LEA prior to course commencement because the student provided incorrect or incomplete information at the time of enrolment, LEA will refund 90% of the first semester's tuition fee.

If a student chooses to defer the start of their course, all prepaid tuition fees will be held in credit towards future tuition fees, and no refund is available

(ii) Tuition fee refunds, post course commencement

In the event a student who has commenced their course at LEA subsequently withdraws from the course, any unused fees will be considered refundable. Unused fees are those that have been paid to LEA but not applied to a subject by the end of the semester's subject enrolment period. The fees for enrolled subjects that are withdrawn from after the semester's enrolment period closes, will be considered used and therefore are not refundable.

If a student applies for, and is granted, a leave of absence (suspension of enrolment), any prepaid tuition fees will be held in credit towards future tuition fees, and no refund is available.

(iii) Visa refusal

In the event of the Department of Home Affairs refusing a student visa, all tuition fees are refunded in full. This excludes any enrolment or other administrative fees paid at enrolment.

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

Any prepaid Overseas Student Health Cover may be fully or partially refunded in the event of a student visa being rejected or cancelled.

Overseas students who have organised their OSHC premium through LEA will be entitled to a full refund of their OSHC premium if they withdraw from their course prior to their arrival in Australia. If a student arrives in Australia and wishes to return home early and receive a refund of unused OSHC, they must apply for the refund directly with the OSHC provider and follow their refund processes.

Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances

LEA understands that on occasion a student may be required to withdraw from a course due to unforeseen compassionate and compelling circumstances. Therefore, provision is made under this policy for a student to provide appropriate documentary evidence with their refund application for consideration by LEA for a full or partial refund.



To be considered, the situation must:

- be outside of the student’s control; and
- make it impractical for the student to continue with their studies; and
- be supported by documentary evidence.

Compassionate and compelling circumstances do not include:

- failing to progress adequately or successfully complete a pathway course to meet an entry requirement for the course
- inability to pay tuition fees (overseas students) as it is a visa condition to have sufficient funds for study and living purposes.

Requests for refunds on compassionate and compelling circumstances grounds should be accompanied by independent supporting documentation.

Protection of Student Fees

In the unlikely event that LEA is unable to deliver a course in full, students will be offered a refund of all unspent tuition fees. This refund will be paid within 10 working days of the day on which the course ceased being provided. Alternatively, students may be offered enrolment in an alternative course at no extra cost.

Students have the right to choose whether they would prefer a refund of unspent tuition fees or to accept a place in another course. If they choose placement in another course, students will need to sign documentation to indicate their acceptance of the placement.

In the unlikely event that LEA is unable to provide a refund or place a student in an alternative course, the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) will assist students in finding an alternative course or to get a refund if a suitable alternative is not found. Further information concerning TPS can be found at <https://www.education.gov.au/tps>.

Record Keeping

It is the LEA Registrar’s responsibility to ensure that each student’s records include all details of any course modification or tuition refunds they have received in their time at LEA.

Compliance

All students at LEA are required to comply with this policy and its procedures, and with related policies and respective procedures. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

File Number	LEA-GEN-COR-70021-D
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Contact Officer	TBA
Legislative Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 (ESOS Act)</i>• <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i>• <i>National Code 2018</i>



Supporting Documents	
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Course Discontinuation Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Data and Records Integrity Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Information for Students Policy and Procedures</i>
Superseded Documents	
Effective Date	1 January 2022
Next Review	3 years from the effective date

Definitions

Administrative Date: Latest date for students to complete enrolment at LEA, after which late enrolment fees may be charged.

Census Date: Latest date that a domestic student may withdraw from a course without financial and or academic penalty.

Confirmation of Enrolment (COE): Issued by education providers to verify the applicant's enrolment in a specified course

Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances: Those circumstances beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided);
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the international student's studies;
- a traumatic experience, which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)
- where LEA is unable to offer a pre-requisite subject, or the student has failed a prerequisite subject and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enrol.

Deferral: Postponing the commencement of study.

Department of Education: Department of the Government of Australia that is responsible for national policies and programs ensuring the quality and accessibility of early childcare and childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training, international education and research.

Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 (ESOS Act): Australian federal legislation establishing legislative requirements and standards for the quality assurance of education and training institutions offering courses to international students who are in Australia on a student visa.



Leave of Absence: Time granted by LEA for a student to take time off study without academic penalty.

Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS): A system operated by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training that enables CRICOS-registered higher education providers to confirm and report changes to the enrolment of international students.

Withdrawal: Un-enrolling from a course or subject

Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version History			
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Academic Board	17/12/2020	New policy