PL 652 – International Student Refund Policy

1. Purpose
Provides TAFE Queensland with a policy position for the management of international student refunds.

2. Overview
Policy Intent:
TAFE Queensland is committed to providing a consistent and transparent refund process for international students withdrawing from qualifications or unit/s of competency within specified timeframes, and for qualification or unit/s of competency cancellations by TAFE Queensland.

Student refunds will comprise the refund of a proportion of Tuition Fees associated with a qualification or unit/s of competency, with an Administration Fee applied to each student refund application.

Policy Principles:
TAFE Queensland is committed to the following principles for the management of international student refunds:

Principle 1: TAFE Queensland will ensure that all students are fully informed about fees prior to enrolment, including the policy position on student refunds.

Principle 2: TAFE Queensland may provide student refunds when the student has withdrawn from a qualification or unit/s of competency within specified timeframes.

Principle 3: TAFE Queensland will provide student refunds when TAFE Queensland cancels a qualification or unit of competency.

Principle 4: TAFE Queensland will not provide student refunds outside of the specified timeframes. However, TAFE Queensland will consider refund applications outside of the specified timeframes in cases of special circumstances.

This policy outlines the broad responsibilities of TAFE Queensland in adhering to these policy principles. An International Student Refund Procedure exists to support this policy, providing a step-by-step process for the application and issuing of student refunds.

Accountability:
The Chief Financial Officer is accountable for ensuring the management and maintenance of this policy, including ensuring its continued appropriateness to the business, compliance with legislation and external requirements, and periodic review.

TAFE Queensland General Managers are responsible for administering international student refunds for TAFE Queensland under the terms of this policy.
3. Audience

3.1 This policy applies to TAFE Queensland’s:

- Board
- Chief Executive Officer
- Corporate Office Staff
- Regional Staff
- International Students
- Co-Providers
- Third parties responsible for the payment of student fees

3.2 This policy does not apply to organisations that have engaged TAFE Queensland’s services through a contract.

4. Policy

GENERAL RULES FOR STUDENTS REFUNDS

General Conditions for Student Refunds:

4.1 TAFE Queensland will consider student refund applications where the student withdraws from a qualification or unit/s of competency within specified timeframes, and in cases where TAFE Queensland cancels a qualification or unit/s of competency.

4.2 The following rules apply for the submission of student refund applications:

   (a) In cases of student withdrawal, students must submit a student refund application using the required form (or alternative method enabled by the TAFE Queensland region), and provide any documentary evidence requested by TAFE Queensland within specified timeframes; and

   (b) In cases of TAFE Queensland cancellation of a qualification or unit/s of competency or provider default), students are not required to submit a student refund application. Student bank details will be required to process the refund.

4.3 Student refund rules are applicable to students and third parties responsible for the payment of student fees.

4.4 Student refunds will be paid within 28 days of approval in normal circumstances (except in cases of provider default, in which student refunds will be provided within 14 days of the cancellation of the qualification or unit/s of competency), in accordance with the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth).

Financial Conditions for Student Refunds:

4.5 Student refunds will consist of a refund of a proportion of Tuition Fees, based on the specified timeframe of the student withdrawal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Specified Timeframe</th>
<th>Refund Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1      | Cases of Visa Rejection at any time               | Full Tuition Fee refund 
|        |                                                   | (with a specific visa rejection Administration Fee of $500 or 5% of Tuition Fee applied to the student refund, whichever is lower) |
| 2      | Withdrawal from program more than 14 days before program commencement | 50% Tuition Fee refund 
<p>|        |                                                   | (with an Administration Fee applied to the student refund) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>Withdrawal from ELICOS program more than 14 days before program commencement</th>
<th>50% Tuition Fee refund (with an Administration Fee applied to the student refund)</th>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Withdrawal from ELICOS program less than 14 days before program commencement</td>
<td>Full refund less 12 weeks Tuition Fee refund if program is less than 12 weeks then no refund is provided (with an Administration Fee applied to the student refund)</td>
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4.6 An Administration Fee (outlined in the Student Fee Schedule) will be applied for each student refund application, unless TAFE Queensland has cancelled the qualification or unit/s of competency. In cases where the Administration Fee is higher than the Tuition Fees charged to the student, the Administration Fee will be adjusted to match the Tuition Fees charged, and the student will not receive a refund.

4.7 The following exceptions apply for student refunds:

(a) Students who have their enrolment cancelled by TAFE Queensland as a result of academic or behavioural misconduct under the TAFE Queensland Student Rules are not eligible for a refund of Tuition Fees for any training that has commenced;

(b) For students approved to withdraw from a qualification or unit/s of competency prior to the commencement date to enrol in another qualification or unit/s of competency within TAFE Queensland, the student refund amount will be credited to the fees owing for the later enrolment. No Administration Fee will be applied;

(c) For students receiving an approved deferral from TAFE Queensland, the deferred fees will be held by TAFE Queensland for the agreed period of the deferral. After the agreed deferral period students will not be eligible for a refund;

(d) For students who have an outstanding debt with TAFE Queensland, approved refunds will be applied to the debt prior to any remaining balance being paid to the student; and

(e) In the event of a student’s death whilst they are undertaking a qualification or unit/s of competency, TAFE Queensland will provide a refund to the estate of the deceased. An Administration Fee will not be applied.

4.8 Student refunds will be processed in Australian dollars, unless agreed by TAFE Queensland.

**Assessment and Communication of Student Refund Applications:**

4.9 Approval of student refunds will be made in accordance with the TAFE Queensland Financial Management Delegations.

4.10 Students will be advised of the outcome of their student refund application. Should the student refund application be rejected, TAFE Queensland will provide the student with a written explanation, with reference to the relevant provisions of this policy.

**Student Refund Application Appeals:**

4.11 Students will be provided with the option to appeal a rejected student refund application.

**Special Circumstances:**

4.12 In cases where students withdraw from training outside of the specified timeframes, TAFE Queensland will not provide a student refund. However, the delegated officer has discretion to consider a student refund outside of the specified timeframes in cases of special circumstances.

4.13 In cases of special circumstances, the delegated officer will determine the refund amount, with consideration of the:

(a) Circumstances of the withdrawal; and

(b) Financial imposition on TAFE Queensland, including the need to apply a pro-rated refund (refer to definition).
4.14 An Administration Fee will apply.

5. Definitions

Administration Fee:
The prescribed fee in the Student Fee Schedule, to contribute to the reimbursement of costs in TAFE Queensland processing student refund applications.

ELICOS:
English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students.

Financial Management Delegations:
Official TAFE Queensland delegations as outlined in the TAFE Queensland Financial Management Delegations.

Pro-Rated Refund:
The refund of Tuition Fees for a student withdrawal in special circumstances outside of the specified timeframes.

The delegated officer will determine the refund amount, with consideration of the circumstances of the withdrawal and the financial imposition on TAFE Queensland, incorporating that:
- Fees for completed units of competency will not be refunded; and
- A proportion of fees for non-commenced or non-completed units of competency may be refunded at the discretion of the delegated officer.

Provider Default:
Under the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth) occurs when:
- The provider fails to start to provide the course to the student at the location on the agreed starting day;
- The course ceases to be provided to the student at the location at any time after it starts but before it is completed; and
- The student has not withdrawn before the default day.

Qualification or Unit/s of Competency:
An accredited unit of competency or complete program of learning that leads to formal certification of a qualification.

This definition incorporates an equivalent training program, unaccredited unit of competency, or unaccredited program of learning.

Service Fee:
The fee charged to a student for the provision of additional activities, goods, and services provided to students, as prescribed in the Student Fee Schedule.

Special Circumstances:
A term applicable when the delegated officer makes a decision to apply a student refund in circumstances not outlined in this policy.

Third Parties Responsible for the Payment of Student Fees:
Any person or organisation (who is not the enrolled student) responsible for the payment of student fees, including:
- Parent/guardians;
- Organisations providing funding/scholarships; and
- Employers.
Tuition Fee:
Sum of fees charged for a student’s participation in a qualification or unit of competency. A Tuition Fee does not include Service Fees.

6. Legislative and Policy Basis
Authority:
Financial Accountability Act 2009 (Qld)
Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO) 2015 (Cth)
Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)
Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)
National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 (Cth)
Pre-Qualified Supplier Policy 2014–15

Related Policies/Procedures and Other Supporting Documents:
International Student Refund Procedure
Student Fee Policy
Student Fee Schedule
TAFE Queensland Student Rules

7. Document History and Contact Details
Version:
Number: PL 652
Version: 1.0
Implementation Date: 24 July 2015
Review Date: 01/07/16

Revision History:
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<th>Revision Date</th>
<th>Summary of Amendments:</th>
<th>Prepared By:</th>
<th>Version:</th>
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<td>14/07/15</td>
<td>Development of official version 1.0</td>
<td>Tom Curtin</td>
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Contact Details:
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<th>Owner:</th>
<th>Chief Financial Officer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Officer:</td>
<td>Karen White Phone: (07) 3514 3623 Email: <a href="mailto:Karen.white@tafeqld.edu.au">Karen.white@tafeqld.edu.au</a></td>
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