GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Procedure

NOTE: Effective from Trimester 1, 2026

International Student Refunds

1.0 Purpose
2.0 Scope
3.0 Procedure
3.1 Refunds - General conditions | 3.2 International students - Commencing | 3.3 International students - Continuing | 3.4 Refund of tuition fees - Griffith English Language Institute (GELI) student | 3.5 Withdrawal in compassionate circumstances | 3.6 Reviews of international student – refund processes
4.0 Definitions
5.0 Information
6.0 Related policy documents and supporting documents

1.0 Purpose

This Procedure outlines the basis on which the University calculates and provides refunds of international student fees.

2.0 Scope

This Procedure applies to international students enrolled in non-award, undergraduate, postgraduate coursework, and higher degree research programs. It applies to all international student tuition, Overseas Student Health Cover (OSCH) and some non-tuition fees paid to the University.

It does not apply to:

- Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF)
- student accommodation fees
- parking fees and fines
- library fines.

3.0 Procedure

- Student fees and charges are calculated in accordance with the *Fees and Charges Procedure*, the *Fees and Charges Schedules*, and the *Approval of Tuition Fees and Fee Reduction Scholarships Procedure*.
- Students are required to pay tuition fees for the trimester or teaching period in which they are enrolled by the census date as prescribed in the *Enrolment Dates Protocol*. A late payment fee may be charged if the amount due is not paid in full by the due date.
- The University may levy a range of non-tuition fees and charges on students, including Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) and other administrative charges. The *Fees and Charges Procedure* details these non-tuition fees and charges.
- International students may be entitled to refunds in specific circumstances. These are detailed in this procedure.

3.1 Refunds: General conditions

3.1.1 Remittance of refund

Active students must use the Refund of Fees online form and attach any required supporting documents. If the online form is unavailable due to the student no longer being active the manual Refund Form may be used. The processing timeline for refunds will only begin once all requested information has been provided.

Unless approved under compassionate circumstances, refunds will be:

- refunded to the student via the original payment method where possible to the student's home country, less any costs associated with the refund process or
- paid to an Australian bank account if the student is approved to transfer to another Australian education institution, subject to the receipt of documentary evidence from the education institution regarding the student, including but not limited to, the Letter of Offer and Confirmation of Enrolment.

Refunds to an Australian address are only considered if evidence is provided that the fees were paid from the student's own Australian bank account and the student has a legal right to reside in Australia. Exceptional circumstances may be assessed individually.

Refunds are generally paid to the student or original payer, unless documentation supports payment to a third party. Student refunds are not paid to Agents.

Refunds cannot be paid until the University is in receipt of the monies into its account as cleared funds.

Any debts owed to the University must be paid in full, or the outstanding amounts will be deducted from the refund that is due.

All refunds for which students are eligible will only be made in Australian dollars.

3.1.2 Refund conditions for Offshore Programs

The University reserves the right to apply specific and different fee refund conditions to students enrolled in offshore and online programs. Any such specific and different fee refund conditions will be outlined in the offer letter.

3.1.3 Withdrawal from a course

If the student withdraws from a course but does not withdraw from the program, and the withdrawal is affected prior to the census date, the tuition fee paid for that course will normally be credited towards the remaining or future tuition fees.

Alternatively, on application from the student, approval may be given for the tuition fee to be refunded except where the amount is part of the initial deposit paid as specified in the Offer Letter. In this instance, the credit will be held in the student account and applied to future tuition or until the student withdraws from the program, then Sections 3.2 or 3.3 applies as necessary.

If the withdrawal from a course is due to an approved withdrawal due to special circumstances application process, the tuition fee for that course will normally be credited towards the remaining or future tuition fees. Alternatively, on application from the student, approval may be given for the tuition fee to be partially or fully refunded except where the amount is part of the initial deposit paid as specified in the Offer Letter. In this instance, the credit will be held in the student account and applied to future tuition or until the student withdraws from the program, then Section 3.2 or 3.3 applies as necessary.

3.1.4 Withdrawal from course on granting of academic credit

If a student receives credit for a course in which they are enrolled, the full tuition fee paid by the student for that course will be treated according to Section 3.2 and 3.3, even if notification of credit approval is received after the census date.

3.1.5 Permanent Residency

If a student provides evidence of becoming a permanent resident of Australia prior to their commencement of study in the program and they subsequently apply for a place as an Australian resident student either as a Commonwealth Supported Student or a fee-paying student through the normal processes the offer of an international student place will be withdrawn and tuition fees paid will be applied to the domestic fees and any remaining balance can be refunded.

If, after commencing study in the program, a student obtains permanent resident status in Australia and provides evidence of permanent resident status prior to the census date, the student will be provided with either a Commonwealth Supported Place or a domestic fee-paying place through the normal admission processes. The student will be eligible for a refund of the difference between the fee as an international student and the fee for a domestic student for the period of study in which the residency status changed.

If a student obtains permanent resident status after the census date, the student will not be eligible for a full or partial refund of tuition fees paid for the period of study in which the residency status changed. On continuing their enrolment in the next period of study, the student will be provided with either in a Commonwealth Supported Place or a domestic fee-paying place through the normal admission processes.

The above processes also apply to an international student who becomes a New Zealand citizen during the course of their study.

3.2 International Students - Commencing

For the purpose of this section, a commencing student is an international student commencing with the University (including students who have accepted a packaged offer) or an international student enrolled in their first trimester or teaching period in a program at the University. The application fee is non-refundable.

Provider Default

Reason for refund	Refund payable	Time to pay refund
The University is unable to provide the program or program does not start on the agreed start date for which an offer has been made.	The University will endeavour to offer an alternative program or location, or the student can choose to receive a full refund of pre-paid tuition fees. In the unlikely event that the University is unable to meet these obligations; the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) will assist the student in finding an alternative program or to get a refund if a suitable alternative is not found.	14 days from the date the program ceases to be provided.

Student Default

Reason for refund	Refund payable	Time to pay refund
The student provides documentary evidence that their application for a visa has been refused.	Refund of any pre-paid tuition fees less an administration charge of $500 or 5% (whichever is the lesser amount).	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student is unable to satisfy prescribed conditions stipulated in the University's letter of offer and the University determines the student made a genuine attempt to meet the conditions.	Full refund of any pre-paid tuition fees less an administration charge of $500.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student is unable to satisfy prescribed conditions stipulated in the University's letter of offer and the University determines the student has not made a genuine attempt to meet the conditions.	Refund of any pre-paid tuition fees less a $3000 penalty unless the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student withdraws their Acceptance(s) of Offer or cancels their program enrolment in writing at any time prior to the first day of teaching and up until the census date. Evidence of student visa application withdrawal or voluntary cancellation may be required.	Refund of any pre-paid tuition fees less a $3000 penalty unless the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student is granted Australian permanent residency and subsequently withdraws their Acceptance(s) of Offer or cancels their program enrolment in writing at any time prior to the first day of teaching and up until the census date and does not apply for a place and enrol as a domestic student.	Refund of any pre-paid tuition fees less a $3000 penalty. Refer to Section 3.1.5.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student cancels their enrolment in a program or takes leave of absence from a program or withdraws from a course for any reason after the census date.	No refund unless the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	

Reason for refund	Refund payable	Time to pay refund
The student is found to have provided fraudulent documents or incorrect or misleading information with their application for admission or any other administrative processes.	No refund.	
The University cancels a student in a program due to non-payment of fees or non-enrolment after the census date.	No refund unless the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	
Student has not enrolled full-time in their first trimester which leaves a credit amount from the initial deposit paid.	No Refund. Credit will be applied to future enrolment. If the student does not enrol in a future trimester, there is no refund of any balance of the deposit amount paid unless Section 3.5 applies.	
The student requests a deferral of their Offer and does not accept the new Offer. The refund request will be assessed using the date of the deferral request as the withdrawal date of the original accepted Offer.	Refund of any pre-paid tuition fees, less a $3,000 penalty if prior to census and no refund if deferral request is after census of original offer trimester unless the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student breaches their student visa conditions.	No refund less the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	

3.3 International Students - Continuing

For the purpose of this section, a continuing student is an international student enrolled in their subsequent period of study at the University.

Provider Default

Reason for refund	Refund payable	Time to pay refund
The University ceases to provide the program for which an offer has been made after it has started, but before it is completed by the student.	The University will endeavour to offer an alternative program or location, or the student can choose to receive a refund of any pre-paid tuition.	14 days from the date the program ceases to be provided.

Student Default

Reason for refund	Refund payable	Time to pay refund
The student provides documentary evidence that their subsequent application for a visa has been refused.	Refund of any pre-paid tuition fees less an administration charge of $500 or 5% (whichever is the lesser amount).	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student
The student cancels their enrolment in the program or requests leave of absence from the program, and written notification is received from the student **prior** to the commencement of trimester.	Full refund of any pre-paid tuition fees. (Excludes any remaining initial deposit amount paid).	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student cancels their enrolment in the program or requests leave of absence from the program, and written notification is received **on or after** the first day of teaching and prior to the census date.	Refund of any pre-paid tuition fees less a $3000 penalty (Excludes any remaining initial deposit amount paid), unless the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student is granted Australian permanent residency and subsequently cancels their enrolment in writing at any time on or after the first day of teaching and up until the census date and does not apply for a place and enrol as a domestic student.	Refund of any pre-paid tuition fees less a $3000 penalty. Refer to Section 3.1.5.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student is excluded from the University for failing to satisfy academic progress requirements.	All fees paid in respect of the teaching period from which the exclusion takes effect are refundable.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student cancels their enrolment in a program or takes leave of absence from a program or withdraws from a course for any reason after the census date.	No refund unless the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	

Reason for refund	Refund payable	Time to pay refund
The University cancels a student in a program due to non-payment of fees or non-enrolment after the census date.	No refund unless the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	
The student breaches their student visa conditions.	No refund unless the provisions of Section 3.5 apply.	
The student is found to have provided fraudulent documents or incorrect or misleading information with their application for admission or any other administrative processes.	No refund	
The HDR candidate (enrolled in the PhD or MPhil) withdraws from the program, submits a thesis, requests a period of leave of absence, or candidature lapses.	Refund on a pro-rata basis.	

3.4 Refund of Tuition Fees – Griffith English Language Institute (GELI) student

The following reasons for a refund are in addition to those outlined above. A Program of Study is considered to be the period of English study (ELICOS) covered by an electronic Confirmation of Enrolment. For non-student visa holders, a Program of Study refers to the dates indicated on the letter of offer. A Program of Study may be for one or more study periods. The Griffith English Language Institute Enrolment Fee is non-refundable.

Provider Default

Reason for refund	Refund payable	Time to pay refund
GELI is unable to provide the program or program does not start on the agreed start date for which an offer has been made.	The University will endeavour to offer an alternative program or location or the student can choose to receive a full refund.	14 days from the date the program ceases to be provided.

Student Default

Reason for refund	Refund payable	Time to pay refund
The student provides documentary evidence that their application for a visa has been refused.	Refund of any pre-paid tuition fees less an administration charge of $500 or 5% (whichever is the lesser amount).	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student cancels their enrolment in a Program of Study at least 28 days before the commencement date.	75% of the tuition fees paid will be refunded, less any fees and charges incurred.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student cancels their enrolment in a Program of Study less than 28 days before the commencement date.	50% of the tuition fees paid will be refunded, less any fees and charges incurred.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.
The student cancels their enrolment after a Program of Study has commenced.	No refund.	
The student cancels their enrolment and provides documentary evidence clearly demonstrating that compelling or compassionate circumstances apply as outlined in Section 3.5.	A full or partial refund may apply at the discretion of the Director, GELI.	28 days after receiving a complete refund application from the student.

3.5 Withdrawal in compassionate circumstances

Withdrawal in compassionate circumstances may be accepted as grounds for a full or partial refund of tuition fees for international students. Compassionate circumstances may include but are not limited to:

- serious illness or disability which prevents the student from being able to study; or
- death of a close family member (parent, grandparent, sibling, spouse or child); or
- political or civil event or natural disaster which prevents payment of fees.

These reasons may be accepted as grounds for a full or partial refund of fees provided that adequate documentary evidence is provided to support the application for a refund.

The student may also be eligible for withdrawal without academic penalty.

3.6 Reviews of international student - refund processes

If a student is dissatisfied with a refund decision, the student should contact the decision maker to request further explanation or provide any additional information and supporting documentation which could support a reassessment of the decision. If they are still dissatisfied after this first step is finalised, they may apply for review of the decision in accordance with the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* and *Student Review and Appeals Procedure*.

Note: The right to make complaints and seek a review of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of any student to take any permitted external legal action under the Australian Consumer Law or other applicable law.

4.0 Definitions

Census Date: The census date for a course is the effective enrolment date and charges liability date for a course.

Genuine attempt is a submission or participation that demonstrates a reasonable and honest effort to meet the required conditions.

Program: A program is an approved course of study leading to an award of the University. A student is admitted to a program, and on successful completion of all program requirements is awarded the degree to which the program relates.

Student: A person who has an active enrolment status in a course at Griffith.

Trimesters and Teaching Periods: The standard academic year is comprised of two standard trimesters, Trimester 1 and Trimester 2 as designated in the University's Academic Calendar. Other teaching periods may be designated in the academic calendar and may be used for the offering of certain courses.

5.0 Information

Title	International Student Refunds Procedure
Document number	2026/0000368
Purpose	This Procedure outlines the basis on which the University calculates and provides refunds of international student fees.
Audience	Public
Category	Academic
Subcategory	Student Services
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	This document aligns with Sustainable Development Goal/s: 4: Quality Education 10: Reduced Inequalities
Approval date	24 January 2026
Effective date	Trimester 1, 2026

Review date	January 2030
Policy advisor	Manager, International Finance and Compliance
Approving authority	Vice Chancellor

6.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation	Education Services for Overseas Student (ESOS) Act 2000 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
Policy	Fees and Charges Procedure Student Review and Appeals Policy
Procedure	Enrolment Procedure Fees and Charges Schedule Student Debt Management Procedure Student Review and Appeals Procedure
Local Protocol	Enrolment Dates Protocol
Forms	Refund of Fees