



POLICY

Withdrawal and Refunds Policy (Domestic and Online Students) (S2)

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1. Purpose

1.1 Background

This policy outlines the framework for managing withdrawals and refund requests for domestic and online students enrolled at the Australian Guild of Education Pty Ltd (AGE). It ensures that all withdrawal and refund processes are fair, transparent, and compliant with relevant Australian consumer protection legislation, the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(HESF\) 2021](#), and the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 \(TEQSA Act\)](#). The policy is aligned with AGE's commitment to ethical conduct, integrity, and service excellence.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Provide a clear and transparent process for domestic and online students who wish to withdraw from courses.
- Ensure that all refund requests are handled in accordance with the relevant consumer protection laws, including the [Australian Consumer Law \(ACL\)](#) and relevant education legislation.
- Ensure compliance with the [TEQSA Act](#), the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(HESF\)](#), and other relevant federal and state legislation.
- Protect students' rights while maintaining financial integrity for AGE.

2. Scope

2.1 Applicability

This policy applies to all domestic and online students enrolled in any program or course at AGE who wish to withdraw and request a refund of tuition fees.

2.2 Exclusions

This policy does not apply to:

- International students (covered under the International and Offshore Students Withdrawal and Refunds Policy).
- Short courses or professional development programs where withdrawal and refund conditions may vary.

3. Definitions

3.1 Key Terms

- **Withdrawal:** The formal process by which a student notifies AGE of their intention to discontinue their enrolment in a course or unit.
- **Refund:** The return of tuition fees paid by the student, in accordance with this policy and subject to the conditions outlined.
- **Census Date:** The last date a student can withdraw from a unit or course without financial penalty or academic consequences, as determined by AGE's academic calendar.
- **Consumer Protection Laws:** Includes relevant sections of the [Australian Consumer Law \(ACL\)](#) which protect consumers in their dealings with businesses, including higher education providers.

3.2 Acronyms

- **AGE:** Australian Guild of Education Pty Ltd
- **TEQSA Act:** Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011
- **HESF:** Higher Education Standards Framework 2021
- **ACL:** Australian Consumer Law

4. Policy Statement

4.1 Principles

AGE is committed to ensuring that all withdrawals and refund requests are handled with integrity, transparency, and fairness, in alignment with its values and ethical standards. This policy reflects AGE's commitment to protecting the rights of its students while maintaining compliance with relevant consumer protection laws and educational standards.

4.2 Commitments

AGE commits to:

- Providing clear and accessible information about the withdrawal and refund processes, including the conditions under which refunds are granted.
- Ensuring that refunds are processed in a timely manner, consistent with the timeframes and procedures outlined in this policy.
- Maintaining compliance with the [Australian Consumer Law \(ACL\)](#), [TEQSA Act](#), [HESF](#), and other relevant federal and state legislation.
- Ensuring students are informed of the potential financial and academic consequences of withdrawing from a course after the Census Date.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Individual Roles

- **Admissions Officer:** Provides guidance to students on the withdrawal and refund process and ensures that withdrawal requests are correctly submitted.
- **Finance Officer:** Processes refund requests in accordance with this policy and ensures timely disbursement of approved refunds.
- **Student Support Officer:** Offers advice to students about the potential academic and financial consequences of withdrawal and assists with the completion of the necessary forms.
- **Quality and Risk Director:** Ensures compliance with relevant consumer protection laws and education standards, including the HESF and TEQSA regulations.

5.2 Committee Roles

- **Executive Management Committee (EMC):** Oversees the implementation and compliance of the withdrawal and refund policy, ensuring alignment with AGE's financial and operational integrity.
- **Finance Committee:** Reviews financial implications of refunds and ensures the refund policy is aligned with AGE's financial sustainability objectives.

5.3 Reporting Requirements

The **Finance Officer** will provide quarterly reports to the **Finance Committee** on the number of refund requests processed, reasons for refunds, and the financial impact on AGE.

6. High-Level Procedures

6.1 Overview

The withdrawal and refund process is designed to ensure that students understand their rights and obligations when requesting a withdrawal or refund. This process is in accordance with the [Australian Consumer Law \(ACL\)](#), AGE's academic policies, and relevant educational legislation.

6.2 Key Steps

1. **Student Submission of Withdrawal Request:** Students must complete the **Withdrawal and Refund Request Form** and submit it to the **Admissions Officer**.
2. **Processing of Request:** The **Finance Officer** will assess the refund request based on the student's **withdrawal date** and compliance with AGE's **census dates and refund conditions**.
3. **Approval and Disbursement:** Refunds will be approved by the **Finance Officer** and processed within 14 days of approval, subject to eligibility and any outstanding student obligations (e.g., unpaid fees).
4. **Notification to Student:** The student will be notified in writing of the outcome of their refund request, including details of any refund amount or reason for rejection.



6.3 Responsibilities and Authorities

- **Finance Officer:** Responsible for processing refunds and ensuring compliance with this policy.
- **Student Support Officer:** Provides advice to students and ensures they understand the implications of their withdrawal.
- **Executive Management Committee:** Oversees policy implementation and ensures it aligns with AGE's financial strategies.

7. Compliance and Monitoring

7.1 Compliance Measures

This policy complies with the [Australian Consumer Law \(ACL\)](#), the [TEQSA Act](#), and the [HESF](#). Compliance will be monitored through regular internal audits of refund requests and financial disbursements.

7.2 Monitoring Methods

The **Finance Committee** will conduct an annual review of the policy's effectiveness, focusing on the timeliness of refunds, student satisfaction, and compliance with legal obligations. Additionally, the **Quality and Risk Director** will review compliance with the HESF and TEQSA requirements.

7.3 Consequences of Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary actions for staff involved in the refund process or financial implications for the institution. Non-compliance may also expose AGE to legal risks under consumer protection laws.

8. Related Documents

Document Name	Policy Type
Student Fee Charges and Refunds Policy	Financial
Withdrawal and Refund Request Form	Administrative
Financial Management Policy	Financial
Complaints and Appeals Policy	Governance

9. Review and Revision

Review Aspect	Details
Review Schedule	Annually or as required by changes in legislation.
Revision History	Version 1.0, created in October 2024.



10. References

10.1 Legislation

Legislation	Reference and Hyperlink
TEQSA Act 2011	TEQSA Act 2011 - Section 59
HESF 2021	HESF 2021 - Standard 1.5
Australian Consumer Law (ACL)	ACL - Part 3

10.2 Guidelines

Guidelines	Reference and Hyperlink
TEQSA	TEQSA Guidance - Student Participation and Attainment
TEQSA	TEQSA Risk Assessment Framework

10.3 Standards

Standards	Reference and Hyperlink
HESF	HESF - Standard 1.5
National Code	National Code - Standard 8

11. Approval and Endorsement

Approval Aspect	Details
Endorsing Committees	Executive Management Committee (EMC)
Approval Authority	Board of Directors (BoD)
Date of Approval	June 2024

12. Document Control

Document Aspect	Details
Version Number	1.0
Effective Date	14 October 2024
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