



## **FEES AND REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

*(For International Students)*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Sydney Met (**the College**) maintains transparency and provides complete information to students on fees and refunds, ensuring they can make informed decisions and protect their rights in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations.

### **2. PURPOSE**

The Fees and Refund Policy and Procedure document aims to express Sydney Met's commitment to fair trading practices and set out the expectations and requirements underlying the administration of student tuition fees and non-tuition fees in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations.

### **3. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all students and educational agents sending students to the College and all relevant staff within Sydney Met, including the CEO and the General Manager.

### **4. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents/information:

- Schedule of Fees
- Academic Calendar
- Admission and Enrolment Policy and Procedure
- Letter of offer
- Student Handbook
- Grievance and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Privacy Policy
- Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Policy

The above documents/information can be accessed via the [Policy and Procedures](#) section on the Sydney Met website.

### **5. DEFINITIONS**

**“Census Date”** means the date on which student enrolment is finalised, after which students are liable for all associated course and tuition fees as published on the Sydney Met website.

**“Commencing Student”** means a student who has accepted an offer of a place at Sydney Met but has yet to commence their studies there.

**“Commencement Date”** means the first day of a course or trimester.

**“Special Circumstances** apply to a person if and only if the higher education provider is satisfied the circumstances apply to the person that:

- a) are beyond the person’s control; and
- b) do not make their full impact on the person until on or after the census date for the unit of study; and
- c) make it impracticable for the person to complete the requirements for the unit during the period during which the person undertook, or was to undertake, the unit.

The Administration Guidelines may specify circumstances in which a higher education provider will be satisfied with a matter referred to in paragraphs (a), (b), or (c). A decision of a higher education provider under this section must be in accordance with any such guidelines.” (Quote from section 36.21 of the *Higher Education Support Act (Cth) 2003*)

**“Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)”** means a document registered with the Department of Home Affairs to confirm an international student’s acceptance into a particular course for a specified duration and that they are a bona fide student when applying for a visa.

**“Continuing Student”** means a student who has commenced a trimester of study and is eligible to remain enrolled in the course.

**“Course”** means a set of subjects of study for which successful completion results in the awarding of a qualification.

**“Domestic Student”** means an Australian citizen, New Zealand citizen, or holder of an Australian permanent visa (holders of all categories of permanent resident visas, including Humanitarian Visas).

**“Enrolment”** means the period during which a Sydney Met student is progressing towards completing their course requirements, including any scheduled breaks between study periods.

**“International Student”** means an individual enrolled in a course at Sydney Met who is not a citizen of Australia or New Zealand or an Australian Permanent Resident and has been granted a student visa by the Department of Home Affairs to study full-time in Australia.

**“Letter of Offer”** means an official document offering applicants a place in the Sydney Met’s course.

**“Non-Tuition Fees”** means fees charged by Sydney Met that are not for tuition.

**“Provider Registration International Student Management System (PRISMS)”** means the secure database owned and maintained by the Department of Education to administer the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.

**“Student Handbook”** is an essential resource for students at Sydney Met. The student handbook and staff and student policy library are available on the Sydney Met website. The student handbook contains critical course information and contact details for student support services and identifies student policies and procedures.

**“Subject”** means a separate unit of study; a combination of subjects makes up a course.

**“Tuition Fees”** means fees received by Sydney Met that are directly related to the provision of a course that Sydney Met is providing or offering to provide to a student. These fees can be received directly or indirectly from a commencing student, continuing student, or another person who pays the money on behalf of a student.

**“Tuition Protection Services (TPS)”** means the initiative of the Australian Government to assist students whose education providers are unable to deliver their course of study fully.

**“Withdrawal”** means discontinuing enrolment by a student in a subject or course.

**“Working Days”** mean 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, and exclude Australian and state public holidays.

## **6. POLICY PRINCIPLES – STUDENT FEES**

6.1. Sydney Met is committed to ensuring that:

- information regarding fees is accurate, comprehensive, easily accessible, and written in plain English
- all students are treated fairly and equally
- students are provided with consistent information regarding fees
- all matters relating to student refunds are addressed on time.

The principles and procedures outlined in this policy are designed to align with national legislation and regulatory requirements, including the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021, the Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 (ESOS Act), and the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA).

## **7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 7.1. The Sydney Met Governing Council is responsible for setting fees on the recommendation of the Chief Executive Officer. Fees will be compliant with all relevant legislation and regulations.
- 7.2. The Chief Executive Officer may vary fees for any student or group within their delegated limitations and subject to approval from the Governing Council.
- 7.3. The General Manager is responsible for the implementation of this Policy and Procedure.

## **8. PROCEDURES – STUDENT FEES**

- 8.1. Tuition and non-tuition fees are set out in the Schedule of Fees on the [Fees & Payments](#) webpage on Sydney Met’s website.
- 8.2. The CEO decides on any changes in fees after consulting with and obtaining approval from the Sydney Met Governing Council.
- 8.3. If necessary, fee increases may be implemented at the beginning of each financial year and remain in place for 12 months.
- 8.4. Sydney Met will update the Schedule of Fees by 30 June for the following financial year, which will be published on the Sydney Met Website, [Fees & Payments](#).

## **9. PAYMENT OF FEES**

- 9.1. Commencing international students must pay the Enrolment Fee and the Initial Payment in full, as stated in their Letter of Offer, before a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) is issued unless a payment plan is made and agreed in writing between the student and Sydney Met.
- 9.2. If payment is not received from a commencing student by the due date, the student’s offer of enrolment may be suspended or cancelled in accordance with the procedures and obligations in

standard 9 of the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*.

- 9.3. Continuing international students must pay their tuition fees at least two (2) weeks before the commencement date of each trimester.
- 9.4. Tuition fees for all enrolled subjects are payable unless Sydney Met has received the Application for Deferral/Withdrawal before the commencement date. Students repeating a subject must pay in full for the repeated subject.
- 9.5. International students who do not pay their tuition fees in full by the due date may be charged a late fee as entailed in the Schedule of Fees (Please refer to section 8).
- 9.6. Failure to pay all fees by the due date may result in one or more of the following:
  - exclusion from classes;
  - suspended access to online resources, including Library resources;
  - enrolment in further subjects may not be permitted;
  - withholding of academic results;
  - withholding of eligibility to graduate;
  - Suspension of enrolment; or
  - termination of enrolment.
- 9.7. If a student fails to pay their fees within the specified period stated on the issued invoice, a reminder notice will be sent to the student.
- 9.8. If the fees still need to be paid, Sydney Met will send the student the *Intention to Report notice* and provide information on their right to access Sydney Met's complaints and appeals process within 20 working days (refer to Grievance and Appeals Policy).
- 9.9. If Sydney Met cancels an international student's enrolment due to a failure to pay fees, it will notify the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS for non-payment of fees.
- 9.10. International students applying for a payment extension beyond the commencement date due to exceptional circumstances must submit their request in writing to the Registrar with supporting evidence.
- 9.11. The Registrar will consult with the General Manager to determine whether an extension is approved and will inform the student in writing of the outcome.
- 9.12. Any bank fees or relevant payments associated with processing an international student's tuition fees are the student's responsibility and must be paid within ten (10) working days.
- 9.13. Any non-tuition fees incurred by an international student will be payable within ten working days.
- 9.14. The international student and Sydney Met will maintain a copy of the Letter of Offer and receipts of any payments of tuition and non-tuition fees.
- 9.15. Sydney Met may suspend or cancel an international student's enrolment in the case of a failure to pay due fees (refer to Admission and Enrolment Policy).
- 9.16. Where Sydney Met decides to cancel an international student's enrolment for failing to pay outstanding fees, Sydney Met will report the student to the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs as soon as the internal appeals process has been completed. The student will be informed to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs on any potential impact on his or her student visa. Sydney Met will notify the Department of Education through PRISMS of the student enrolment variation.

## **10 POLICY – STUDENT REFUND**

If an international student wishes to withdraw from the course, the following refund rules apply:

- 10.1. Sydney Met only permits students to change courses after completing forty-eight credit points (**required units**) . If a student decides to change courses before completing the required number of units, any fees paid for the first instalment of the course to obtain a CoE will not be refunded.
- 10.2. Where a student is studying in a pathway program combining a Vocational or English course leading to a course at Sydney Met and has paid a certain amount to secure a course at Sydney Met as a

Principal Course in their CoE, and if the student decides not to join the course at Sydney Met, any fees paid for the principal course (up to eight units, i.e. 48 credit points) will not be refunded.

- 10.3. Refunds are not usually granted after the start of the course. Under special circumstances, however, the college can give a refund on a pro-rata basis, accounting for the time elapsed between the start date and the request for a refund.
- 10.4. Students requesting a tuition fee refund must apply in writing using the Student Refund Form available on the Sydney Met's website. Requests for refunds made verbally to Sydney Met staff will not be accepted.
- 10.5. All refund applications must be emailed to [accounts@sydneymet.edu.au](mailto:accounts@sydneymet.edu.au) or in hard copy at the College's reception.
- 10.6. A written application for a refund is only considered complete when the student signs the Application of Remittal of Fees Form or International Refund Request Form and provides the correct refund details in accordance with this Policy.
- 10.7. For students under 18, a parent or legal guardian must acknowledge and sign the Application of Remittal of Fees Form or International Refund Request Form.
- 10.8. Sydney Met will process all student refund applications and provide a written response within ten working days from the date of receipt.
- 10.9. Sydney Met's policy is that every refund is transferred back into the account or credit card from which it was paid. Approved refunds are paid in Australian dollars only. The refund payment will be made within ten working days from when Sydney Met processes the refund application (provided all banking information for refund payment is received on the application).
- 10.10. Students will be responsible for any bank fees or exchange rate costs associated with the refund.
- 10.11. If the bank rejects a refund due to insufficient or incorrect data supplied by the student, any bank fees charged to Sydney Met will be deducted from the amount due to the student.
- 10.12. Refunds are not transferrable to other students.
- 10.13. Non-tuition fees are not refundable and may include:
  - Enrolment Fee for international students
  - Late payment fee
  - Recognition of Prior Learning fee
  - Ancillary charges, including credit card surcharges
  - Graduation fees
  - Overdue library fines
  - Assessment re-mark fees (where applicable)
  - Replacement transcript fee
  - Replacement student ID card fee
  - International postage fee
  - Photocopying/printing credits
- 10.14. Students will be granted a refund of 100% of tuition fees paid if:
  - Sydney Met is unable to provide the course for which a student has accepted in their Letter of Offer
  - the student is unable to meet the conditions of the Letter of Offer
  - the student has not achieved the required results to proceed on a packaged offer pathway.
- 10.15 No fees will be refunded if a student has provided incorrect, incomplete, or misleading information.
- 10.16 If a student advises Sydney Met in writing before the commencement date of their intention to defer their studies until the next trimester, and this is approved, Sydney Met will transfer the associated tuition fees to that intake.

#### 10.17 Calculating Refund

Reason for Refund	Refund Payable
College cancels the offer of enrolment	100% of fees

International student's visa application rejected by the Department of Home Affairs	100% of fees Enrollment fee is NOT refundable.
Visa application delayed by circumstances beyond the student's control, preventing enrolment	100% of fees Enrollment fee is NOT refundable.
Student does not or cannot meet the Minimum Entry Requirements or other Conditions set out in the Letter of Offer	100% of fees Enrollment fee is NOT refundable.
The student provides the college with misleading, false, or fraudulent documentation and information to secure the Letter of Offer, GS, or enrolment.	The refund application will be evaluated considering the nature of the issues related to the relevant policies and Acts/ legislation. For example, whether the misleading (or false) information led to a visa rejection or may have led to an institute refusing the student enrolment.  Depending on the nature of the issues, refunds could range from a No Refund to a 100% tuition fee refund.  Enrollment fee is NOT refundable.
Provider default	Refund according to the Act and its calculations and generally 100% of unused** fees
International student withdrawal on or after the course start date	No refund of the initial fees paid
Breach of international student visa conditions, visacancellation or failure to comply with enrolment conditions	No refund
Exceptional circumstances where the student cannot travel to Australia, not due to visa rejection, but due to compelling or compassionate reasons outside the student's control as requested by the student with evidence and assessed and approved by the College.	100% refund Enrollment fee is NOT refundable
Late arrival to a course while international student has already been granted a visa	No refund
Student expelled from the college for breaching college policies	No refund
International students transfer and cancel the CoE before completing eight units (48 credit points) of the course.	No refund of tuition fees paid to the college as part of the required initial payment of fees
Student not joining their Principal Course at Sydney Met from the pathway program.	No refund of tuition fees paid for the Principal Course

\*\* The ESOS Act defines "tuition fees" as being directly related to the provision of a course that the provider is providing or offering to provide to the student. Tuition fees include lectures, tutorials, training, learning materials, excursions, fieldwork or practical experience that form part of the provider's course. Sydney Met will calculate the refund based on all unused tuition fees on a weekly basis. For example, a student pays tuition fees for a course with a duration of 11 weeks before their student visa is approved, the student attends the course for three weeks and then receives notification that their student visa application has not been successful, a refund will be given to the student for the remaining eight weeks, excluding the Enrolment Fee.

## 11. REFUND PROCEDURE

The Refund Procedure for international students is as follows:

**Step 1:** The student must apply for a refund by completing the Request for Student Refund Form, which is available on the Sydney Met website.

**Step 2:** The completed form must be submitted via email at [accounts@sydneymet.edu.au](mailto:accounts@sydneymet.edu.au) or in hard copy at the College's reception.

**Step 3:** The refund application will be reviewed and analysed, and a decision will be made. All refunds are subject to college approval.

**Step 4:** Approved refunds will be processed within 28 business days from the receipt of the Request

for Student Refund Form.

**Step 5:** Refunds may be processed directly into a nominated bank account through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Refunds cannot be made in cash.

## **12. TUITION PROTECTION**

- 12.1 Tuition protection is in place to support students if Sydney Met cannot commence or continue to provide the course they are enrolled in.
- 12.2 If Sydney Met closes or no longer provides the course that a student is enrolled in, Sydney Met will either:
- arrange for the student to be offered a place in a suitable replacement subject or course
  - provide a refund of any unspent tuition fees
- 12.3 Students can choose whether to refund or accept a place on another course. If they choose placement in another course, students must sign documentation to indicate their acceptance.
- 12.4 The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) can assist students in continuing their studies through another course or a different provider or by providing a refund or loan re-credit for the education they paid for but did not receive.

Further information can be found at <https://www.dese.gov.au/tps>.

## **13. APPEALS**

Sydney Met is committed to resolving any student complaint or grievance promptly, equitably, and professionally while respecting the privacy of all parties involved.

Appeals concerning any decision taken with this policy should be made under Sydney Met's Grievance and Appeals Policy, which can be accessed from Sydney Met's website.

## **14. SCHEDULE OF FEES**

Sydney Met is committed to sharing the most up-to-date *Schedule of Fees*. The most current Tuition Fees, non-tuition fees, refund details, and policies and procedures will be set out in the Student Handbook and the Letter of Offer. The information is available and can be accessed from Sydney Met's website, and a hard copy can be obtained from the College reception. Students and relevant parties are encouraged to enquire with and obtain the most up-to-date information from the College website.

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