

## **Fees and Refunds Policy & Procedure**

### **Policy**

#### **1. Information about fees and charges**

BCTA protects the fees that are paid in advance by students.

- BCTA does not require a student to ever pay more than \$1500 in advance for services not yet provided, either prior to course commencement or at any stage during their course. Fees will be paid off during the course in instalments according to a set payment plan.

Fee information relevant to a course is outlined in detail on the statement of fees as well as BCTA's website.

Fee information includes:

- All costs for the course including any materials fees or levies
- Payment terms
- Fees for Skills First programs in line with the Department's Guideline about Fees.

The Student Handbook which are provided prior to enrolment, includes this Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedure

Students have the right to a 'cooling off period' if they signed up to a course as a result of tele-marketing or door-to-door sales. The cooling off period is 7 days from the date they signed their Agreement. To exercise this right, the student must notify our office in writing within 7 days of enrolment.

#### **2. Fees and charges for Skills First students**

##### **Tuition Fees**

Tuition Fees for Skills First government-funded students are set in accordance with the Guidelines about Fees issued by the Department each year. Tuition fees will be based on a set rate per nominal hour in a student's course. Tuition fees may or may not be applicable to a course.

Tuition Fees will not be charged for any units that have a Credit applied.

For some courses, a Materials Fee applies which is additional to the Tuition Fees. Students cannot receive their text books and materials until this is paid. Students can also buy material or text books from outside.

The published Tuition Fees for Skills First students are subject to change given individual circumstances at enrolment.

##### **Concessions**

- To be eligible for concession rates, the student must, on the date of enrolment:
  - Be a holder of a current Commonwealth Health Care Card or a spouse or be a dependent child of a card holder
  - Be a holder of a Pensioner Concession Card or be a spouse of, or a dependent child of a card holder
  - Be a holder of a Veterans Gold Card

- A copy of the card must be provided to our office prior to the commencement of training.
- Concession fees will be 20% of the normal Tuition Fee.
- Concession rates are only applied to Tuition Fees and do not apply to other fees such as materials fees.
- Concession fees also apply to any Skills First student enrolled under the Asylum Seeker VET Program.

Concession fees will also apply to students who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and students that enrol under the Asylum Seeker VET program, enrolling at any level course.

Job Service agencies referring Job Seekers to participate in a Skills First course with BCTA will be required to pay the difference between the normal Tuition Fee and the Concession Fee if the Job Seeker is eligible for concession.

### **Fee Waivers**

Tuition Fee waivers will be granted to the following individuals, meaning that no Tuition Fees need to be paid for these students:

- A student who is from the Lazarus Transition Centre (as a prisoner within the meaning of the Corrections Act 1986).
- A student who is required to undertake the course pursuant to a community based order made under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005.
- A student who is referred with a standard Young People Transitioning from Care Referral Form.

Tuition fee waivers as outlined above will only be granted where BCTA is provided with the appropriate evidence as required by the Department.

### **Statement of Fees**

All Skills First students will receive a Statement of Fees at enrolment which is an individualised quote for the course they are enrolling in. This will include:

- the code, title and currency of the program
  - the total cost to them for their program, taking into account any Fee Concession or Fee Waiver entitlement
  - the approximate value of the government contribution expressed in dollars, and
  - any other applicable fees, such as student services, amenities, goods or materials.

## **3. Course fee inclusions**

Course and tuition fees include:

- All of the training and assessment required for students to achieve the qualification or course in which they are enrolling within the attempts allowed. However, in the case of re-assessment, where a student fails to achieve a satisfactory outcome after three attempts at an assessment task, an additional fee may apply for additional training and re-assessment.
  - Course fees do not include required text books and learning materials. Textbooks can either be purchased from BCTA or external textbook providers
  - Issuance of one set of certification documents including the testamur (certificate) and record of results and/or a Statement of Attainment (in the case of withdrawal or partial completion). Re-issuance or additional copies of these documents will attract a fee of \$50 per document.
- Course and tuition fees do not include:

- Any optional textbooks and materials that may be recommended but not required to complete a course.
- Replacement textbooks if original copies are lost or misplaced. Costs for replacement textbooks are outlined on the Student Agreement.
- Stationery such as paper and pens.
- Re-assessment if required, as outlined above.
- Re-issuance of AQF certification documents – a cost of \$50 per document applies.
- BCTA cannot guarantee that students will successfully complete the course in which they enrol regardless of whether all fees due have been paid.

#### **4. Payments**

Payments can be accepted by electronic transfer

Students who are experiencing difficulty in paying their fees are invited to call our office to make alternative arrangements for payment during their period of difficulty.

BCTA reserves the right to suspend the provision of training and/or other services until fees are brought up to date. Students with long term outstanding accounts may be withdrawn from their course if payments have not been received and no alternative arrangements for payment have been made.

#### **5. Refunds for fee-for-service students**

- A full refund of any fees paid (including the deposit) will apply where a student withdraws or cancels their course in writing within the cooling off period. The cooling off period is 7 days and applies from the date of first enrolment or sign-up.
- A full refund of any fees paid (including the deposit) will apply if BCTA is required to cancel a course before it commences due to insufficient numbers or for other unforeseen circumstances.

In the unlikely event that BCTA or any third parties responsible for delivering training and assessment on its behalf, is unable to deliver the course or any portion of the course as promised, the student will be issued with a refund for the course or portion of course that was not provided.

This includes the following situations:

- Where BCTA or any third parties delivering training and assessment on its behalf ceases to operate.
- Where BCTA ceases to deliver the course in which a student is enrolled and the agreement is terminated.
- Where BCTA needs to make a change to the terms of the student agreement (such as the way the course is delivered or conditions of enrolment) and a new agreement cannot be reached with the student to account for changes.

In any of the above situations, BCTA will automatically conduct a refund assessment of all affected students and issue the refunds due accordingly. In these cases there is no need for a student to make an individual application for a refund. Refunds will be issued within 28 business days.

Students who withdraw from a course may seek a refund or a reduction in fees owing by making an application for a refund in writing using the *Application for Refund Form*. The application must include the details and reason for the request. Students who have not completed a Withdrawal Form are not eligible for consideration of a refund or reduction in fees.

The refund assessment will be based on reviewing the services provided to the student and the costs incurred by BCTA to provide those services.

The outcome of the refund assessment will be provided in writing to the student's registered address within 28 business days, outlining the decision and reasons for the decision along with any applicable refund or adjustment note. Refund decisions can be appealed following our *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

A student not achieving the qualification or unit/s in which they enrolled due to exhausting their attempts at assessment, does not entitle the student to a refund.

RPL application fees are non-refundable.

## **6. Refunds for Skills First students (if applicable)**

A full refund will be granted for Skills First students if they cancel their enrolment at least 14 days prior to their course commencing. The cancellation must be notified in writing to our head office.

A full refund will also apply if BCTA is required to cancel a course due to insufficient numbers or other unforeseen circumstances.

Skills First students who withdraw from a course and wish to seek a refund must request this in writing using the *Application for Refund Form*. Students who have not completed a Withdrawal Form are not eligible for consideration of a refund. A refund will apply for the Tuition Fees paid for any units that have not been commenced.

Refunds will not be provided for materials fees if the student has received any or all course materials.

The outcome of the refund assessment will be provided in writing to the student's registered address, within 28 business days outlining the decision and reasons for the decision along with any applicable refund or adjustment note. Refund decisions can be appealed following our *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

## **7. Recording and payment of refunds**

Refunds will be paid to the Fee Payer, the person or organisation that made the original payment.

Refund assessments can be appealed following our *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Records of refund assessments and issuance of refunds will be stored securely on the student's file and in our accounts keeping system.

## **8. Publication**

BCTA will publish in a prominent place on its website the following:

- Standard tuition fees payable for each qualification/ course it offers under the VET Funding Contract, including concession rates and any other fees including but not limited to student services, amenities, goods, materials or administration fees. The following caveat will be displayed with all fees: *The student tuition fees as published are subject to change given individual circumstances at enrolment.*
- Costs for fee for service programs.
- This Fees and Refunds Policy.

## Procedures

### 1. Student fees

#### A. Invoices for Fee-for-service students

Upon enrolment, raise deposit/first invoice in accordance with agreed payment schedule.

Keep a copy of the invoice on the student's file.

Setup remaining invoices for the course as per the payment schedule as draft/ pending invoices.

#### B. Invoices for Skills First students

Prior to enrolment, ensure the student has been provided with their Statement of Fees – an individualised quote for all relevant fees in their course.

If Credits apply, reduce the fees by the nominal hours times the tuition fee per hour for the relevant units. This does not apply to materials and other fees.

If the student is eligible for a concession or fee waiver, apply the reduced rate as per below.

Ensure correct tuition fees and other fees are reported in AVETMISS files against the student's enrolment, including ensuring that Concession fees or waivers have been reported where applicable.

In the student management system, in Client Tuition Fee field, report the actual hourly rate (in cents) that the student was charged as their student tuition fee for their enrolment in the unit, being the tuition fee for that unit.

In the student management system, against the Fee/Exemption Concession Type Identifier, record identifier as Z – None.

#### C. Concession fees for Skills First Students

Concessions apply in the following situations:

- Any student who self-identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torrest Strait Islander descent and this is indicated on the enrolment form, apply the concession fee (for courses at any level).
- OR
- If the student is enrolled under the Asylum Seeker VET program, apply the concession fee.
- OR
- The student is enrolling in a Certificate IV level course or lower.

AND meets the one of the following requirements:

- The student holds a Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card or a Veteran's Gold Card, current on the date of enrolment, or
- The student is a dependant spouse or a dependant child of a holder of one of the above cards at the time of enrolment.

If the student is eligible for concession and is also a referred Job Seeker with a standard Job Seeker Referral Form, keep a copy of the original Job Seeker Referral Form. The Department will not contribute to revenue foregone for referred Job Seekers as a result of charging a job seeker a concession fee. Charge the different between concession fee and full fee to the referring agency, provided that written agreement has been obtained from the referring agency.

Sight and retain a copy of the concession card prior to commencement of training. Students should be given no more than one week after enrolment to provide their copy of the Concession card, otherwise full fees will apply.

If the concession card is presented via Digital Wallet through a Centrelink Express Plus mobile application, of which a copy is not possible, make a written declaration and attach it to the student's file stating that the digital concession card has been sighted. The declaration must cover the requirements outlined in Clause 3.9 of the Department's Guidelines about Fees.

Apply the Concession rate to the Tuition Fees which is 20% of full Tuition Fee. Concession does not apply to materials and other fees.

Ensure waivers are granted where there is suitable evidence – refer to policy and Guidelines about Fees for evidence required.

Evidence of concession and fee waivers must be kept in the student's file.

In the student management system, in Client Tuition Fee field, report the actual hourly rate (in cents) that the student was charged as their student tuition fee for their enrolment in the unit, being 20% of the tuition fee.

In the student management system, against the Fee/Exemption Concession Type Identifier, record the following, as applicable.

#### D. Fee waivers for Skills First Students

Do not charge tuition fees, and apply a fee waiver, for any Skills First individuals:

- Who are from the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre (as a prisoner within the meaning of the Corrections Act 1986).
- Who are required to undertake the course pursuant to a community based order made under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005.
- Referred with a standard Young People Transitioning From Care Referral Form.
- Who have a letter from the Department providing them with a fee exemption.

Appropriate evidence to support the fee waiver must be kept on file as follows, respectively:

- Retain a copy of written confirmation from the management of the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre that the individual meets the requirements of Clause 2.4 of the Department's Guidelines about Fees.
- Retain a copy of written confirmation from the relevant Youth Justice Unit of the Victorian Department of Human Services that the individual meets the requirements of clause 2.6 of the Department's Guidelines about Fees.
- Retain the original Young People Transitioning From Care Referral Form, and return a copy to the relevant referring agency.

In the student management system, in Client Tuition Fee field, report the actual hourly rate (in cents) that the student was charged as their student tuition fee for their enrolment in the unit, being \$0.00.

In the student management system, against the Fee/Exemption Concession Type Identifier, record the following:

Type	Identifier	Eligible for concession/ waiver contribution from the Department
Judy Lazarus Transition Centre	X	Yes – waiver
Community Based Order under Children, Youth and Families Act	X	Yes - waiver
Young People Transitioning from Care	E	Yes – waiver
Letter from Department	Y	Yes

## **E. Receiving payments**

Payments may be made by direct bank transfer

Provide the student with a receipt.

Put a copy of the receipt in the student's file for Skills First students.

## **F. Managing overdue fees**

Send out statements monthly to students to show outstanding fees.

Call students where payments are more than 14 days overdue.

Refer to the Admin Team about suspending training until fees are brought up to date. If training is suspended send a letter to the student advising of suspension until payment is made. Advise Trainer/Assessor.

Where fees continue to be unpaid, refer to Admin Team to consider withdrawal.

## **2. Refunds**

### **A. Processing refunds – fee-for-service students**

If a course is cancelled by BCTA, students who have enrolled and paid their deposit/enrolment fee should be automatically issued a refund. Notify them in writing and issue refund. Record on file.

Students who withdraw from their course and seek a refund are to make a request for a refund in writing.

To make an assessment of a refund due, consider the services the student has received. Consider the following:

- Deposit/enrolment fee is non-refundable – this covers administration time for enrolment and induction process.
- Text books provided
- Training received – number of classes attended, visits received, Individual support provided by the trainer/assessor
- Assessments marked

Consider the costs incurred by BCTA as per above, plus the fees paid by the student to calculate an suitable refund. Refund assessments are to be approved by CEO/Finance Manager.

Notify the student in writing of the outcome of the refund assessment and make payment of refund where applicable.

Keep a copy of the refund assessment on the student's file.

### **G. Processing refunds – Skills First students**

If a course is cancelled by BCTA, students who have enrolled and paid their fees are to be automatically issued a refund. Notify them in writing and issue refund. Record on file.

If a student withdraws from their course at least 14 days prior to commencing, automatically issue a full refund.

Students who withdraw from their course can make a request for a refund in writing. A withdrawal form must be provided in order to issue a refund. For government-funded students, only courses where the tuition fee per nominal hour is more than 50 cents are eligible for a refund.

If a student is eligible for a refund as per above, issue a refund for any units the student hasn't participated in.

Refund assessments are to be approved by the CEO

Notify the student in writing of the outcome of the refund assessment

Record refund in the accounting system and make payment of the refund.

Keep a copy of the refund assessment on the student's file.

### **3. Publishing fees and refund information**

#### **A. Publishing information on website**

- Up-to-date fees information must be published on the organisation's website, in accordance with the Contract.
- Refer to the Marketing and Advertising P&P for details on the information required to be published on the website.