



QUANTUM INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Fee Refund Policy

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Fee Refund Policy

Purpose

The Fee Refund Policy ('the Policy') outlines the guidelines surrounding the process and circumstances under which students may be eligible for a refund of tuition fees and/or other related charges.

Scope

This Policy applies to all students and staff of Quantum Institute of Higher Education ('QIHE' or 'the Institute') involved in the fee refund process.

I. Policy Principles

Regarding fee refund, QIHE upholds the following principles:

- i. **Transparency and Accountability.** Provide clear, accessible and comprehensive information on refund conditions and processes.
- ii. **Fairness and Equity.** Consistent and fair policy for all students while considering individual circumstances where appropriate.
- iii. **Student-centred.** QIHE prioritises the needs and rights of students in all refund decisions, considering their financial well-being and keeping the process student friendly.
- iv. **Timeliness.** Refund applications are to be processed within a reasonable timeframe.
- v. **Compliance.** QIHE adheres to all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

2. Eligibility for Refunds

The following provides the details where refunds are applicable:

- i. Withdrawal from the Course:
 - a. **For withdrawal before census date:** full refund of tuition fees;
 - b. **For withdrawal after census date:** partial or full refund may be considered if the student has special circumstances (e.g., illness, personal hardship, family emergency). QIHE has the right to retain a portion of fees for administrative purposes or to cover costs that have already been incurred.
- ii. Changes in Course or Program:
 - a. For students switching programs within the Institute before the census date: they will be entitled for a full refund of the fees paid for the original program and will be charged with the fees for the new program;
 - b. For students switching program within the Institute after the census date, no refund for the fees paid for the original program will be given.

iii. QIHE's Default:

- a. **Course not delivered:** full refund of tuition fees if QIHE is unable to deliver the course as advertised or if the course is cancelled before its commencement date;
- b. **Closure:** full refund if the Institute ceases to operate, including arrangements for transferring to another provider if applicable.

iv. Visa Refusal:

- a. **Before course commencement:** full refund of tuition fees;

v. Special Circumstances:

- a. Medical reasons: refund may be granted if a student is unable to continue due to medical conditions and provide appropriate documentation;
 - b. Compassionate or compelling reasons: circumstances such as the death of a close family member or severe disruption in a student's personal life could warrant. A refund, may result subject to the provision of relevant documentation.
- vi. Administration Error or Misadvise: refund may be granted if the student has been misadvised by QIHE or if an administrative error led to the overpayment of fees;
- vii. Course Deferral: refunds may be granted if a student successfully defers their course enrolment to a later date in line with the *Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure*;
- viii. Overpayment of Fees: automatic refund of any overpaid tuition or other fees;
- ix. Other Exceptional Circumstances: refunds may be considered on a case-by-case basis for circumstances that are not covered in this section but are deemed valid by QIHE.

3. Refund Process

i. For refunds, the general process involves:

a. Submission of a refund request:

- Students must notify the Institute and submit the Fee Refund Application Form via email. The Form could be found on QIHE's website;
- Where relevant, supporting documentation (such as medical certificates, visa refusal letter, etc.) must be submitted alongside the Fee Refund Application Form;
- Upon receipt of the request and the Form, QIHE will acknowledge the receipt of the refund request within 5 business days by email.

b. Assessment and verification:

- QIHE's Student Services team and the Accounts team (the Finance Manager and Accounts Officer) will review the request within 14 business days after the date of the refund request;
- The review includes verification, of payment records, documentation and any special circumstances presented are checked to ensure their relevance;
- For more complex cases, the Student Services team may require a further review and verification from the Dean;
- Should the team require more time to assess and verify the documents, the student will be informed further via email.

c. Decision and notification:

- The student will be notified of the decision in writing whether the refund is approved, partially approved or denied, including the reasons for the decision.

d. Processing of refund:

- If approved, the Accounts Officer will process the refund within 14 business days of the decision;
- Refunds will be returned to the original payment account or method, except if otherwise agreed upon with the student.

e. Appeal Process (if applicable):

- If a student is dissatisfied with the refund decision, they may lodge an appeal within 14 days of receiving the decision;
- The appeal must be made by replying to the email of the decision;

f. Finalisation and record keeping:

- Once the refund is processed, a confirmation email will be sent to the student;
- All documentation related to the refund request, decision and processing will be stored in the student's file for compliance and audit purposes.

ii. For withdrawals from a program prior to census date:

- No penalty fees or administrative charges will be applied;
- For international students withdrawing from a program before the census date, QIHE will not refund any costs incurred for health insurance and other services.

iii. For refunds due to visa refusal:

- Students must submit proof of visa refusal;
- Full refund of tuition fees will be processed within 14 business days;

- c. Application fees and other administrative charges may not be refunded, unless otherwise stated;
- iv. For refunds due to course deferral:
 - a. QIHE will calculate should there be any difference in fees between the original and deferred dates or if there are any unused portion of the fees;
 - b. Administrative fees for processing the deferral may be deducted from the refund.
- v. For refunds due to exceptional circumstances that are not covered by this Policy:
 - a. The case will have to be reported to the Dean and the Executive Management Team for further consideration;
 - b. The Institute may offer partial refunds or other forms of compensation depending on the situation.
- vi. For refunds due to closure, QIHE will automatically calculate refunds and process all affected students within 28 business days of the notification.

4. Non-Refundable Cases

To ensure clarity, the following are cases where fees are typically non-refundable:

- i. Fees paid during application process for admission to the Institute;
- ii. Administrative fees related to enrolment, deferral and/or any other services, unless there is a demonstrable error from QIHE;
- iii. If a student withdraws after the census date without any special circumstances;
- iv. Fees relating to course materials, textbooks, or other resources, should they be purchased through QIHE;
- v. For international students, if a student's visa is rejected due to submitting fraudulent documents or providing false information;
- vi. If a student is dismissed from QIHE due to a serious misconduct or breach in the *Student Code of Conduct* or other policies;
- vii. If a student withdraws or is withdrawn from a Course due to failing to meet the academic progress requirements as outlined in the *Academic Progression and Graduation Policy*.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

i. Student Services Team

- a. Receive, process and become the first point of contact for students submitting refund requests and appeals.
- b. Provide communication and information to students regarding the refund process.

- c. Verify and assess the credibility of the refund requests, ensuring that they are appropriate and accurate for further processing by the Accounts Team.
- d. Work together with other departments, should it be necessary, for the fee refund process.
- e. Ensure compliance and timeliness of the fee refund process.
- f. Provide reports to the Dean and the Executive Management Team regarding fee refunds.

ii. Accounts Team (Finance Manager and Accounts Officer)

- a. Handle all financial aspects of the refund process, including verifying payments, calculating refunds and processing approved refunds.
- b. Assess the financial implications of the appeals.
- c. Ensure compliance and timeliness of the fee refund process.
- d. Maintain accurate records of all refund transactions and ensure compliance with financial regulations and audit requirements.
- e. Provide reports to the Dean and the Executive Management Team regarding fee refunds.

iii. The Dean

- a. Assess the refund requests and appeals involving special circumstances.
- b. Ensure that decisions regarding fee refund are consistent and comply with the Institute's obligations to maintain transparency and integrity and are in line with ESOS requirements.

iv. The Executive Management Team

- a. Oversee the refund process, ensuring it is in compliance with applicable regulatory requirements.
- b. Receive reports on fee refund process and decisions.

v. Governing Council

- a. Oversee the implementation of this Policy and conduct regular reviews to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.
- b. Receive reports on the fee refund process and decisions from the Dean.

6. Privacy and Records Management

QIHE will take steps to protect the security and confidentiality of any personal information. Records and information regarding fee refunds will remain confidential within QIHE's database and will only be disclosed to relevant and approved parties and authorities that require access to the records should it be required by the investigation process or compliance requirements. All records will be kept in accordance with the *Records Retention Policy*.

7. Monitoring and Review

QIHE will regularly monitor, examine and review the system of fee refunds to ensure continuous compliance and consistency. Regular reviews of this Policy and the implemented system in the Institute will be conducted in accordance with the *Policy Review Schedule*.

Glossary

Appeal refers to the formal request made by a student to have a refund decision reconsidered, typically when the student believes the decision was incorrect or unfair.

Census Date refers to the official date set by QIHE by which a student's enrolment and fee liability for a semester are finalised. Withdrawal after this date may result in forfeiture of tuition fees for that period.

Compassionate Grounds refer to circumstances beyond a student's control that significantly impact their ability to continue their studies, such as serious illness, death of a close family member, or other significant personal hardship.

Course refers to QIHE's units of study or subjects.

Domestic Student refers to a student who is an Australian citizen, permanent resident, or holder of a humanitarian visa in Australia.

Fee Refund refers to the return of tuition fees or other charges paid by a student to the Institute in full or in part, under certain conditions as specified in this policy.

International Student refers to a student who is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident and who requires a student visa to study in Australia.

Program refers to the Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Information Technology degree that QIHE is preparing to establish.

Special Circumstances refer to the exceptional situations that may justify a refund or partial refund of fees, such as medical conditions, compassionate grounds, or administrative errors made by the Institute.

Version Control

Version	1.0
Last Review	6 September 2024
Policy Category	Governing Council
Related Documents	<i>Admission Policy and Procedure</i> <i>Academic Progression and Graduation Policy</i> <i>Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure</i> <i>Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure</i> <i>Discontinuation and Teachout Policy and Procedure</i> <i>Records Retention Policy</i>
Legislation References	TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, Standard 3 (ESOS Act 2000) NSW Fair Trading Regulations Australian Consumer Law (ACL)
References	Australian Institute of Technology and Commerce Lincoln Institute of Higher Education University of Sydney University of New South Wales