

Student Withdrawal Processes and Procedures – VET Student Loans

Part 7, Division 1, Subdivision E of VET Student Loan Rules

1. Purpose

Lawson College Australia meets its legal and ethical requirements in relation to student withdrawal processes and procedures.

An approved course provider must have processes and procedures relating to a student’s withdrawal from a course, and must include:

- Procedures for a student to withdraw from an approved course, or a part of an approved course
- A procedure for a student to enrol in a part of an approved course with the provider in circumstances where the student had earlier withdrawn from the part of the course undertaken with the provider.

The procedure for a student to withdraw from an approved course, or a part of an approved course, before a census day for the course, or the part of the course, must not involve financial, administrative or other barriers to the withdrawal.

An approved VET Student Loans provider must comply with the requirements of the VET Student Loans Ombudsman and fully cooperate with the VET Student Loans Ombudsman to ensure compliance with the Act.

2. Scope

This *Student Withdrawal Processes and Procedures – VET Student Loans* sets out the procedures Lawson College Australia uses in its management of Student withdrawal.

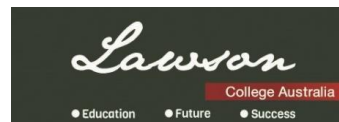
Related Lawson College Australia *Policy and Procedure*:

- Tuition
- Refund
- Student FEE-HELP Re-Credit Procedure_VSL
- Student Grievance Procedures_VSL
- Student Review Procedure_VSL
- Record Management and access to records
- Provide secure certification and participate in student identifier scheme

This *Student Withdrawal Processes and Procedures – VET Student Loans* applies to all Lawson College Australia staff and students eligible for a VET Student Loan.

3. Definitions

Approved Course: A course of study which the Department of Education has approved for VET Student Loans.



Census Date: In regard to VET Student Loans this means the last day a student may withdraw from a VET unit of study in which they are enrolled without incurring tuition fees.

Covered Fee: The amount of the course Tuition Fees to be covered by a VET Student Loan.

Deferral: A deferral is when you request to delay the start of a course you have been offered.

Eligible Student: This is a student who meets all the eligibility requirements under the Act.

Gap Fee: The difference between the Covered Fee and the total Tuition Fee for a course.

Genuine Student: In regard to VET Student Loan conditions a student may meet requirements of being a genuine student.

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth): An Act to make provision to protect the privacy of individuals, and for related purposes ([Privacy Act 1988 \(legislation.gov.au\)](http://legislation.gov.au)).

Student: A person who is enrolled in a higher education course or an *approved course* for VET Student Loans (may also be referred to as 'VET course') ([Student | HEIMSHHELP \(dese.gov.au\)](http://dese.gov.au)).

The Act: The VET Student Loans Act 2016 (Act) and the VET Student Loans Rules 2016 (Rules) set out the legislative requirements that underpin the VET Student Loans (VSL) program ([VET Student Loans Compliance - Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government \(dese.gov.au\)](http://dese.gov.au)).

Tuition Fee: The total fees for the course.

Unit of Study: A unit of study may comprise a group of units of competency or one unit of study may equal one unit of competency.

VET Student Loan: A VET Student Loan (VSL) helps eligible students to cover tuition fees for vocational education and training (VET) courses. VSLs are only available for approved courses at the diploma level and above ([VET Student Loans | StudyAssist](http://StudyAssist)).

VET Student Loans Ombudsman: The VET Student Loans Ombudsman in the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman investigates complaints from students regarding their VET FEE-HELP or VET Student Loans provider in Australia. Their services are free, independent and impartial ([VET Student Loans Code of Practice \(ombudsman.gov.au\)](http://ombudsman.gov.au))

Withdrawal: In relation to a course means ceasing all study under that course. This may impact government payments.

4. Student Initiated Withdrawal Process and Procedure – Prior to Census Date

4.1 Students may withdraw from an Approved Course or Unit of Study at any time.

Lawson College Australia	RTO: 40679	CRICOS Provider: 03406J	Version
VET Student Loan Rules 2016: Student Withdrawal Processes & Procedures: Part 7, Division 1, Subdivision E	Document Name	Student Withdrawal Processes & Procedures – VET Student Loans	03082021



- 4.2 Students requesting deferral must comply with Deferral conditions as specified in Lawson College Australia Policy - *Deferral, suspension or cancellation of enrolment*
- 4.3 After their enrolment and no later than 14 days before the first Census Day, students will be advised through the VET Student Loan Fee Notice about how to withdraw.
- 4.4 Students who wish to withdraw/defer from an Approved Course or Unit of Study without incurring financial debt must apply to withdraw/defer on or before the unit Census Date.
- 4.5 Student must complete and submit the *Student Withdrawal Form_VSL Eligible* on or before the unit Census Date.
- 4.6 The student must request a Progression Form. This is how the student must inform the Australian Government that they want to stop accessing their VET Student Loan while not studying.
- 4.7 The student is encouraged to seek optional counselling about their Student Withdrawal with Student Support Staff within a timeframe that allows the student to withdraw on or before the census date if the student still so chooses. Student Support Staff will not pressure a student to remain enrolled or to enrol in a different course.
- 4.8 Lawson College Australia will confirm to the student (within reasonable timeframe) after receipt of the completed *Student Withdrawal Form_VSL Eligible*, and checking and review:
- Date and time of the student’s withdrawal
 - The Unit of Study, part of a course or who course from which the student withdrew
 - The relevant Census Day
 - Whether the student has incurred a debt for the unit, part of the course or whole course (noting that no debt may be incurred if the student withdraws prior to the census day)
 - Advice to the student regarding the special circumstance’s requirements if applicable to the student’s circumstances
 - Information about the refund of upfront payments.
- 4.9 A student who withdraws from VET Units of Study or Approved Course on or before the published Census Date will not incur A VET Student Loan debt.
- 4.10 No withdrawal fees apply for a student who withdraws from VET Units of Study or Approved Course on or before the published Census Date.
- 4.11 Students who have paid their VET tuition fees up front are eligible for a refund if they withdraw on or prior to the published Census Date.
- 4.12 If students withdraw from their course or units of study after the Census Date they will not be eligible for a refund.

Lawson College Australia	RTO: 40679	CRICOS Provider: 03406J	Version
VET Student Loan Rules 2016: Student Withdrawal Processes & Procedures: Part 7, Division 1, Subdivision E	Document Name	Student Withdrawal Processes & Procedures – VET Student Loans	03082021

5. Refund of Tuition Fees where a student withdraws by the published Census Day

5.1 Where a student withdraws their enrolment in an Approved Course on or before the published Census Day, does not incur Tuition Fees for the course or part of the course, to which the Census Day applies.

5.2 This applies to all of the Tuition Fees for the course or part of the course to which the Census Day relates. It includes:

- VET Student Loans Covered Fees
- Any Gap Fees
- Upfront payment of Tuition Fees
- Gap Fees or Tuition Fees paid through a loan from the provider

6. Re-enrolling the student

6.1 If a student withdraws from an Approved Course, or a part of an Approved Course, Lawson College Australia must not, after the withdrawal, re-enrol the student without the written permission of the student.

7. Student Initiated Withdrawal after the published Census Day

7.1 Students who withdraw from an Approved Course, or a part of an Approved Course after the relevant published Census Day, may apply for re-credit as relate to Special Circumstances. Refer to the *Student FEE-HELP Re-Credit Procedures*. To be noted circumstances are ‘Special Circumstances’ under the Act, if a student can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the provider that the circumstances were:

- Beyond the student’s control
- Did not make their full impact on the student until on, or after, the census day for the course, or the part of the course, and
- Made it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements for the course, or part of the course, during the student’s enrolment

8. Student Review Procedure

8.1 If an application to have the HELP balance re-credited is unsuccessful, the student has the right to request a review of the decision. This does not apply to students who have self-paid their Unit of Study/Part of a Course as they have not taken a loan and the VET Student Loans Act 2016 does not apply.

8.2 If a reviewable VET decision has been made or reconsidered the person must be provided with a notice of Rights of Review along with the reasons for the decision/reconsideration.

8.3 Students may request, in writing, reconsideration of decisions by someone who was not involved in making the decision. Refer to *Student Review Procedure_VSL*.

9. Completed Units of Study prior to Withdrawal



9.1 A Statement of Attainment, as per AQF requirements, is issued for any units of competency completed in full, which will only be issued once all outstanding fees are paid and all paperwork, including forms and assessments are received and actioned.

10. Provider Initiated Cancellation on Enrolment after the Census day

10.1 A student enrolment may be cancelled by Lawson College Australia for reasons, for example, but not limited to:

- Student misconduct
- The student is not a genuine student (as per Section 4, VET Student Rules 2016)
 - Refer to *VSL Student Progression Fact Sheet* <https://www.dese.gov.au/vet-student-loans/resources/student-progression-fact-sheet>
 - Refer to *VSL Student Obligations Fact Sheet* <https://www.dese.gov.au/vet-student-loans/resources/student-obligations>
- Contact with the student has been lost (communications have not been responded to).

10.2 Lawson College Australia will inform the student concerned of a proposed cancellation.

10.3 Lawson College Australia will provide the student at least 28 days to initiate Grievance Procedures before the cancellation takes final effect.

10.4 Final effect for the cancellation can only be initiated when Grievance Procedures initiated by the student have been completed.

10.5 Lawson College Australia will set out the circumstances in which fees for the course, or the part of the course, concerned will, or will not be, refunded.

11. Retaining Information

11.1 Lawson College Australia will retain documents and information related to the operation of the Act and the Rules for seven years or as otherwise specified in the Rules.

12. Acknowledgements

VET Student Loans Act (2016) <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021C00150>

VET Student Rules (2016) <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2020C00982>

VET Student Loans - Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government (dese.gov.au)

Australian Government, *VET Student Loans, Manual for Providers*, V4.2 August 2020

VET Student Loans | StudyAssist

Cancel your VET debt in special circumstances | Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Census-days.pdf (ombudsman.gov.au)

Lawson College Australia	RTO: 40679	CRICOS Provider: 03406J	Version
VET Student Loan Rules 2016: Student Withdrawal Processes & Procedures: Part 7, Division 1, Subdivision E	Document Name	Student Withdrawal Processes & Procedures – VET Student Loans	03082021



[VET Student Loans Compliance - Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government \(dese.gov.au\)](#)

[Information for VET Student Loans Students - Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government \(dese.gov.au\)](#)

[VET Student Loans Information Booklet - Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government \(dese.gov.au\)](#)

[eCAF fact sheet - Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government \(dese.gov.au\)](#)

[Users' guide to Standards for RTOs 2015 | Australian Skills Quality Authority \(ASQA\)](#)

[Legislation | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

Lawson College Australia	RTO: 40679	CRICOS Provider: 03406J	Version
VET Student Loan Rules 2016: Student Withdrawal Processes & Procedures: Part 7, Division 1, Subdivision E	Document Name	Student Withdrawal Processes & Procedures – VET Student Loans	03082021



13. Document History and Version Control Table

Version Date	Approval Date	Approved By	Type of Change	Extent
03082021	3 August 2021	Quality and Compliance Committee (QACC)	Initial	NA

Lawson College Australia	RTO: 40679	CRICOS Provider: 03406J		Version
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