



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Training**
and **Workforce Development**

VET FEES AND CHARGES POLICY 2016

EFFECTIVE: 1 JANUARY 2016

VERSION: 1.0

CONTENTS

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------|
| 1. | POLICY STATEMENT..... | 3 |
| 2. | SCOPE..... | 3 |
| 3. | PRINCIPLES..... | 3 |
| 4. | BACKGROUND..... | 3 |
| 5. | DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS..... | 4 |
| 6. | PROCEDURES..... | 4 |
| 6.1 | FEES..... | 4 |
| 6.2 | CALCULATING FEES..... | 7 |
| 6.3 | FEES FOR SPECIFIC STUDENT GROUPS/COURSES..... | 7 |
| 6.4 | NON-STANDARD ENROLMENTS..... | 8 |
| 6.5 | SKILLS RECOGNITION..... | 10 |
| 6.6 | PAYMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES..... | 10 |
| 6.7 | ADVICE OF WITHDRAWAL..... | 12 |
| 6.8 | REFUNDS..... | 12 |
| 6.9 | CHARGES FOR SPECIFIC SERVICES..... | 13 |
| 6.10 | SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS..... | 14 |
| 7. | RELATED POLICIES AND OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS..... | 14 |
| 8. | RELEVANT LEGISLATION..... | 14 |
| 9. | REVIEW DATE..... | 14 |
| 10. | CONTACT INFORMATION..... | 14 |

All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Training and Workforce Development employees.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Fees and charges for students undertaking publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) in Western Australia must be collected in accordance with the provisions of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*, *Vocational Education and Training (Colleges) Regulations 1996* and/or, where appropriate, as specified in contractual arrangements with training providers.

2. SCOPE

The policy applies to all registered training organisations (RTOs) that deliver publicly funded VET, and encompasses the following fees and charges:

- units of competency;
- modules from within an accredited course;
- qualifications from the training packages the Department has agreed to fund; and
- accredited award courses.

This policy relates only to fees and charges for units commenced in 2016, irrespective of the date of enrolment or duration of the course.

Publicly subsidised students cannot be charged for units that commence in 2017 or subsequent years under this policy.

3. PRINCIPLES

The *VET Fees and Charges Policy* is based on the following principles:

- Transparency – VET fees and charges are transparent and students have access to the necessary information to make informed decisions regarding their training.
- Accessibility – equitable access to publicly funded training.
- Procedural fairness – fair and just procedures for the administration of VET fees and charges.

4. BACKGROUND

In 1992, the Western Australian Government introduced fees for publicly funded VET on the basis that as the main beneficiaries of training, students should contribute toward the costs of that training. These fees are not set to achieve full cost recovery. They contribute only a small percentage of the total cost of training in Western Australia.

This document sets out the statutory and provider based fees and charges that apply to training funded by the Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development and delivered by RTOs in 2016. It outlines the procedures governing the administration of these fees and charges.

5. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Accountable officer means the Managing Director in the case of State Training Providers, and the Chief Executive (or equivalent) in the case of other RTOs with whom the Department has a contract for the delivery of training services.

Census/Withdrawal date means the official date for a unit after which VET FEE-HELP students incur financial liability or fee-paying students are not entitled to a full refund of the course fee upon withdrawal.

Secondary school aged person means a person who has reached 15 years of age but has not reached the end of the calendar year in which their compulsory education period expires, as defined in the *School Education Act 1999*. In 2016, these persons will be born on or after 1 July 1998.

Nominal hours means the hours assigned to units as set out in the course outline defined on the Department's [VETinfoNet website](#).

Registered Training Organisation (RTO) means a state training provider or other training organisation registered with a state or national registering authority, including an enterprise training their own employees, with which the Department has a contract for the delivery of training services.

Secondary visa holder means a member of the family unit, an interdependent partner, or a dependent child of the interdependent partner.

State Training Provider (STP) means a college established under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (previously known as a TAFE college).

Unit means the component of a course (either a unit or a module) in which VET on a discrete subject is provided to students enrolled in that course.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 FEES

RTOs must charge students fees where applicable. Minimising the collection of fees or offering inducements that could be viewed as seeking a competitive advantage is prohibited.

All RTOs must have a documented process for the receipt of student fees. Details must be retained for audit purposes.

Enterprise RTOs who elect to pay the fees on behalf of their employees must have a documented process approved by the accountable officer detailing how this will be managed.

6.1.1 COURSE FEES

The course fee is the sum of fees for all units that a student enrolls in.

Trainees are required to pay course fees regardless of mode of delivery, including training that is 100% on the job.

An hourly rate based on nominal hours will apply to each unit commenced in 2016.

The composition of courses must comply with training package requirements and enrolled units must be attached to a course.

Table 1: Course Fees for 2016

| CATEGORY OF ENROLMENT | FEE RATE PER NOMINAL HOUR |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Non-concession Student | |
| Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Existing Worker Traineeships | \$5.73 |
| Apprenticeships, Traineeships* and Priority Industry Qualifications (Up to Certificate IV) | \$3.21 |
| General Industry Training (Up to Certificate IV) | \$4.84 |
| Foundation Skills and Equity Courses | \$0.21 |
| Concession Student | |
| Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Existing Worker Traineeships | \$5.73 |
| Apprenticeships, Traineeships* and Priority Industry Qualifications (Up to Certificate IV) | \$1.61 |
| General Industry Training (Up to Certificate IV) | \$2.42 |
| Foundation Skills and Equity Courses | \$0.21 |

*Excludes Existing Worker Traineeships

For Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications, the maximum course fee chargeable in 2016 is \$7,780. This maximum applies per course in 2016.

From 1 January 2016, Existing Worker Trainees at any qualification level will be charged at the \$5.73 fee rate and will not be eligible for fee concessions. Existing Worker Trainees who are enrolled in a Certificate IV level qualification or below whose training contract was received by the Department of Training and Workforce Development's Apprenticeship Office on or before 30 September 2015 will be eligible for fee maintenance. Under these fee maintenance arrangements, these Existing Worker Trainees will be charged the fee rates applicable to the Traineeship rate in 2016 only.

For secondary school aged persons not enrolled at school, the maximum course fee chargeable in 2016 is \$415. The maximum is the total fee for all courses the student is enrolled in. For these students, course fees for courses that are below Diploma level are calculated at the concessional rate of 50% until the student reaches the fee cap. The Diploma and Advanced Diploma course fee maximum does not apply to these students.

For fee charging purposes, where the Diploma of Dental Technology is undertaken as an apprenticeship, it will be charged at the apprenticeship rate or where applicable at the apprenticeship concession rate.

6.1.2 GOODS AND SERVICES THAT SHOULD NOT INCUR A SEPARATE FEE

RTOs may not charge students separate fees for goods and services that are considered an RTO's responsibility under the relevant Standards. The costs of providing these services are included in the price set by the Department for the purchase of training. For example, RTOs may not charge fees for costs associated with goods and services such as enrolment, records archiving, the purchase or depreciation of equipment or general infrastructure, IT support, and access to general learning and personal support services such as mentoring, study skills programs and career guidance.

Separate fees may not be charged for negotiating training plans or determining employers' capacity to train, which form part of the RTO's responsibilities under the Department's *Apprenticeship Policy*.

Fees must not be charged for any items that will be retained by the student as their own personal property, such as tools, protective clothing or textbooks. Such items must be purchased separately by the student.

6.1.3 RESOURCE FEES

Resource fees are charges for materials that are considered essential to a course or unit of study and which do not form part of the course fee. The resource fee covers materials purchased by the RTO to be consumed or transformed by students in the course of instruction, such as workshop materials, workbooks and essential uniforms.

Any increases to the resource fee must not exceed a Perth consumer price index (CPI) increase of 1.1%. Where appropriate, accountable officers may apply a resource fee to new or existing courses where they have not previously applied. Resource fees must not exceed cost recovery.

Resource fees must be published by providers prior to the commencement of the academic year. Accountable officers must be able to substantiate fees.

Trainees and apprentices are not exempt from resource fees. However, where RTOs provide Training Record Books to trainees and apprentices, they must do so free of charge.

In any instances where the tuition fee requirements of the Commonwealth Government's VET FEE-HELP program are not consistent with the resource fee requirements in this policy, approved VET FEE-HELP providers are to meet their obligations under the VET FEE-HELP program.

6.1.4 OTHER FEES

Other fees may be charged for:

- goods or services that are not essential to the course such as parking, membership to student organisations and security passes; or
- alternate forms of access to essential goods or services that are otherwise made available by the RTO at no additional cost, such as course reading material that is available free of charge through another source (eg the RTO's library).

Excursion costs should be charged to students as they arise.

Other fees must be published by providers prior to commencement of enrolment. Accountable officers must be able to substantiate fees.

6.2 CALCULATING FEES

The fee applicable is from the start date of the unit in which the publicly subsidised student is enrolled, irrespective of the date of enrolment or duration of the course.

To ensure consistency, adjustments will not be made to fees to reflect variations in timetabling or in instances where students complete a course or unit in less time than the nominal hours specified in the course outline defined on the Department's [VETinfoNet website](#).

Students enrolling in a publicly funded course are charged according to the same fee structure regardless of mode of delivery, including:

- local face to face class;
- remote live electronic conferencing;
- self-paced – scheduled and unscheduled;
- external studies;
- workplace learning;
- video/television based learning; and
- online learning.

6.3 FEES FOR SPECIFIC STUDENT GROUPS/COURSES

6.3.1 CONCESSIONS ON COURSES

The following students are entitled to the concession rate on course fees:

- a) Persons and dependants of persons holding:
 - i) A Pensioner Concession Card.
 - ii) A Repatriation Health Benefits Card issued by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.
 - iii) A Health Care Card.
- b) Persons and dependants of persons in receipt of AUSTUDY or ABSTUDY.
- c) Persons and dependants of persons in receipt of the Youth Allowance.
- d) Persons and dependants of persons who are inmates of a custodial institution.

- e) Secondary school aged persons, not enrolled at school.

If the concession is valid for the full enrolment period, then all eligible units commenced within that period attract the concession rate. If the concession is valid for part of the enrolment period, then only eligible units commenced on or after the start date and prior to the expiry of the concession attract the concession rate.

6.3.2 VET IN SCHOOLS

Secondary school students are exempt from course and resource fees if they:

- a) are enrolled at school, as defined in the *School Education Act 1999*; and
- b) are undertaking a VET course.

6.3.3 INTERSTATE STUDENTS

Students residing in other Australian States or Territories are charged at fee-for-service rates, with no specified maximum.

Apprentices and trainees may be eligible for publicly funded training if the:

- training contract is registered in Western Australia; and
- workplace is in Western Australia; and
- training occurs in Western Australia, unless the training is only available in another state or territory.

6.3.4 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND TEMPORARY RESIDENTS

International students and some temporary residents are charged at rates determined by Education and Training International Western Australia.

Persons holding a temporary visa of sub-class 309, 310, 820, 826 or secondary holders of a temporary visa of sub-class 457 are to be treated as Australian residents for fee charging purposes and are also eligible for fee waivers and concessions.

Further information can be obtained from the Education and Training International [website](#). Alternatively, enquiries can be made by telephone on 08 9218 2100 or emailed to study.eti@dtwd.wa.gov.au.

6.4 NON-STANDARD ENROLMENTS

6.4.1 MULTIPLE ENROLMENTS

Where students enrol in a course and transfer to another campus or RTO to complete the same course, the total course charges will not exceed the maximum charges prescribed in Section 6.1.1.

The student must provide proof of any previous enrolment and fees paid, and a copy should be retained by the RTO for audit purposes.

6.4.2 ENROLMENT IN CAVSS AND USIQ

The *Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS)* and the *Course in Underpinning Skills for Industry Qualifications (USIQ)* must always be co-delivered with a vocational qualification.

Enrolments in CAVSS and USIQ are exempt from course fees.

6.4.3 ENROLLING FOR EXAMINATIONS ONLY

Students enrolling for examination or assessment only, may be required to pay an assessment entry charge of \$20.00 per unit. No other fees apply.

Students who have already paid the maximum course fee as prescribed in Section 6.1.1 are not required to pay this charge.

6.4.4 RE-ENROLLING IN OR STUDYING MULTIPLE CLASSES OF THE SAME UNIT

Students wishing to enrol in a unit in which the student has already obtained a pass may do so at the RTO's discretion. These enrolments will not be publicly funded.

If a student enrolls in multiple classes in the same unit within the same enrolment period, these additional classes will not be publicly funded.

6.4.5 REMOTE ASSESSMENT SUPERVISION

Where a student is remotely enrolled in a course but sits an assessment with another RTO that is situated in geographic proximity, a remote assessment fee of \$50.00 will be applied. In the case of trainees and apprentices this fee will be paid by the Department.

6.4.6 CHARGES FOR STUDENTS TRANSFERRING TO OTHER RTOS

Where a student or a block of students transfers to another RTO, the new RTO will have course and resource fees transferred in full from the RTO from which the student(s) has transferred, if the program of study has not commenced.

In all other circumstances, the new RTO may seek a pro rata transfer, based on elapsed time, of course and resource fees from the RTO from which the student(s) has transferred. Transfers of fees are to be managed on an RTO to RTO basis.

Proof of previous enrolment and fees paid must be provided by the student and retained by the RTO for audit purposes. Details of transfers must be retained by both RTOs for audit purposes.

6.5 SKILLS RECOGNITION

6.5.1 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) involves the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system in respect of a specific unit. RPL is an assessment process that assesses the individual's non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved these required learning outcomes or competency outcomes.

While fees for students enrolling in RPL are not subject to this policy and will be determined by the training provider, training providers are required to publish their fees for RPL services.

6.5.2 RECOGNITION OF CURRENT COMPETENCIES

Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) applies if a student has previously successfully completed the requirements for a unit and is now required (that is, by a licensing authority) to be reassessed to ensure that competency is being maintained.

RCC fees are not subject to this policy and will be determined by the training provider.

6.5.3 CREDIT TRANSFER

Students are not charged for credit transfer. The transfer of credit provides the student with an exemption from relevant units within a course. Credit transfer does not involve an assessment of the student's knowledge or skills – it is an assessment of the credentials of the formal accredited learning presented against the destination course to determine the extent to which it is equivalent to the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards in a course.

Students may be granted credit for the completion of formal accredited learning with a school, university or RTO.

6.6 PAYMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES

Enrolment is not complete until statutory and RTO based fees and charges are paid, deferred payment arrangements have been made or fees and charges have been waived.

Irrespective of payment option, details of all student enrolments must be retained for audit purposes.

6.6.1 PAYMENT OPTIONS

On enrolment, students will take up one of the following payment options:

- a) pay the full amount of fees and charges;
- b) present a signed authority from an employer to invoice that employer for the student's fees and charges;
- c) pay the fee by instalment;
- d) declare their intent to defer payment under the Commonwealth Government's VET FEE-HELP program, subject to eligibility and acceptance by the provider;
- e) pay part of the full amount of fees and charges and defer payment of the other part under the Commonwealth Government's VET FEE-HELP program;
or
- f) make application on the grounds of severe financial hardship for fees and charges to be waived.

Students who fail to take up one of the above options must not be enrolled.

Apprentices and trainees are to be treated the same as other students and are legally liable to pay fees.

6.6.2 PAYMENT BY INSTALMENT

Students must be given a minimum of eight weeks from the commencement of the unit to finalise payment when paying by instalment.

Accountable officers should use their discretion in the application of this instruction by formulating the payment by instalments to more appropriately match the particular training program. Details of the student's enrolment and details of why deferred payment was granted must be retained for audit purposes.

Where approval has been given for a student to pay by instalment, the RTO is responsible for the collection of outstanding fees and charges. Fair and adequate recovery procedures must be in place to manage the collection and recovery of monies.

Students who have fallen behind in their payments must not be enrolled in additional units unless appropriate arrangements, agreed to by both the student and the RTO, have been put in place to pay the amount outstanding.

6.6.3 WAIVING OF CHARGES

Accountable officers may waive all fees and charges for students that they assess as being in severe financial hardship. Whether a student is in severe financial hardship is to be determined on a case by case basis by the RTO. This should include an evidenced-based assessment of the client's capacity to pay the

fees for the enrolment period and is generally based on the individual's financial incomings and outgoings.

RTOs are required to have in place formal processes for the waiving of fees and charges. Details of a student's enrolment, records where a fee waiver has been granted and documented reasons for the decision must be retained for audit purposes.

Meeting the concession eligibility requirements entitles the individual to a fee concession, but is not sufficient grounds for the granting of a fee waiver.

6.7 ADVICE OF WITHDRAWAL

Students must be advised that written advice of withdrawal is necessary to ensure that:

- they are eligible for refunds; or
- they do not incur a liability under the Commonwealth Government's VET FEE-HELP program.

6.8 REFUNDS

RTOs are required to make all policy relating to refunds publicly available and inform students of the policy prior to enrolling.

6.8.1 FULL REFUNDS

Students who withdraw are entitled to a full refund of the applicable course fee, resource fee and other fees where:

- a unit is cancelled or re-scheduled to a time unsuitable to the student; or
- a student is not given a place due to maximum number of places being reached.

Accountable officers can approve a full refund of fees at any time during delivery if a class is cancelled because of declining student numbers, no available lecturer, or due to other circumstances caused by the RTO.

6.8.2 PART REFUNDS

RTOs must set a census/withdrawal date for each unit at no less than 20% of the duration for that unit.

Students who withdraw for reasons other than those outlined in section 6.8.1 and who lodge a withdrawal form before the census/withdrawal date for a unit will be eligible for a full refund of the course fee for the unit; and

- a full refund of the resource fee if the course is a Diploma, Advanced Diploma, or Certificate IV course included in the VET FEE-HELP Certificate IV trial in Western Australia; or
- 50% of the resource fee if the course is below Diploma level and not included in the Certificate IV VET FEE-HELP trial in Western Australia.

6.8.3 PRO RATA REFUNDS

Accountable officers can approve a pro rata refund of fees and charges at any time during the course of delivery if students withdraw for reasons of personal circumstances beyond their control.

For example:

- serious illness resulting in extended absence from classes;
- injury or disability that prevents the student from completing their program of study; or
- other exceptional reasons at the discretion of the accountable officer.

In all cases, relevant documentary evidence (for example, medical certificate) is required. Details of all refunds should be retained for audit purposes, and the enrolment form annotated to show that a refund has been given.

6.8.4 REFUNDS FOLLOWING RE-MARKING

Students requesting a re-mark of their assessment should do so within four weeks of the date of publication of the results. Should a 'Not Yet Competent' candidate achieve an outcome of 'Competent' on a re-marking of the assessment, the \$25.00 re-marking charge is to be refunded.

6.9 CHARGES FOR SPECIFIC SERVICES

RTOs are not required to charge fees for the following services. However, if fees are charged, maximum fees apply as specified below.

- a) Assessment only and assessment held in normal assessment period – each unit \$20.00.
- b) Re-marking of an assessment if the result was a fail – no charge.
- c) Re-marking of an assessment if the result was a pass – each unit \$25.00.
- d) Replacement of award/qualification/academic record \$50.00.
- e) Re-issue of academic statement
 - i) Results on computer network \$20.00.
 - ii) Results from archive \$30.00.
- f) Remote assessment supervision \$50.00.

6.10 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Scholarship Programs that related to training funded by the Department of Training and Workforce Development must be documented, including application and assessment procedures. Scholarships awarded by the RTO or by an organisation which is a subsidiary or related business entity of the RTO to students undertaking a publicly funded training program will need to be reported to the Department. The scholarship recipient details, the courses/s enrolled in, and amount of the scholarship will need to be included in the report.

7. RELATED POLICIES AND OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- *National Standards for Registered Training Organisations*
- *VET FEE-HELP Administrative Information for Providers*
- *VET Administrative Information for Providers – Addendum incorporating the VET FEE-HELP reforms 2015/2016*
- *Apprenticeship Policy*
- *Colleges Direction 1997*

8. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Vocational Education and Training Act 1996
Vocational Education and Training (Colleges) Regulations 1996
Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009
School Education Act 1999

9. REVIEW DATE

This policy is to be reviewed by 31 December 2016.

10. CONTACT INFORMATION

General queries:

Policy, Planning and Research Branch
 Department of Training and Workforce Development
 Optima Centre, Building B
 16 Parkland Road
 OSBORNE PARK WA 6017
 T: 08 6551 5567
 W: dtwd.wa.gov.au
 E: VETFees@dtwd.wa.gov.au

International students and temporary residents:

Education and Training International
 T: 08 9218 2100
 W: eti.wa.edu.au
 E: study.eti@dtwd.wa.gov.au

Recognition of overseas qualifications:

Overseas Qualifications Unit

T: 08 9224 6530

W: www.migration.wa.gov.au/services/overseas-qualification-unit

E: oku@dtwd.wa.gov.au