



**VICTORIA  
UNIVERSITY**

**A NEW  
SCHOOL OF  
THOUGHT**

MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

# **ACCEPT YOUR OFFER AT VU**

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT OFFER  
ACCEPTANCE INFORMATION**



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### ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The information contained in this booklet is intended to provide prospective international students with an overview of the procedures required in order to accept an offer into a Victoria University program.

Further information about Victoria University can be found at: [www.vu.edu.au/international-students](http://www.vu.edu.au/international-students)

Information in this booklet is current as of November 2009, and may be subject to change.

Fees are in Australian dollars (A\$), are indicative only, and may be subject to change. This booklet is provided as the terms and condition(s) of your contract between you and Victoria University should you accept your letter of offer.

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### ACCEPT YOUR OFFER AT VU

Approved on 2 March 2010, information is subject to changes.

## WELCOME

Congratulations on receiving an offer to study at Victoria University (VU). You are about to embark upon an exciting adventure that is set to enrich your life both on an academic and personal level. This guide will help you accept your offer and commence your studies.

Victoria University is proud of our reputation for being a distinctive university where students thrive and creativity and innovation flourish. We work hard to ensure each student has the opportunities and support they need to reach their potential and achieve their goals.

Victoria University is one of only five Australian universities offering both Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and higher education courses. This gives advantages in course and pathway design and delivery, as well as providing our students with greater flexibility.

With more than 47,000 enrolled students, including over 11,800 international students from over 90 countries studying our courses, Victoria University is a great place to study.

By 2016, our centenary year, Victoria University will be a leading university among those known for its knowledge of the changing nature of work and the workplace, and will continue to be applauded for its strong community values.

We will be a distinctive international university that blends vocational and professional, conceptual and creative pursuits. To achieve this, we have made a number of commitments, including:

ensuring at least 25 per cent of each student's assessment is based on learning in the workplace and in the community;

providing customised learning experiences for our students;

creating 12 industry and community-focused roundtables that have a strong voice in the creation of a distinctive VU; and

becoming a leader in workforce development and vocational education, placing VU at the forefront of education and training for skills shortages and new professions in Australia and abroad.

These commitments show VU's determination to providing its students with an education that equips them with the key foundations for their future lives, both in employment and in their communities.

We look forward to welcoming you to Victoria University.



Andrew Holloway

Vice-President (International)



## ACCEPTING YOUR OFFER

Accepting your offer at Victoria University (VU) is an easy process. Whether you have a full letter of offer to study at Victoria University or a conditional letter of offer, we have outlined five easy steps to assist you in preparation for university or TAFE study life in Melbourne, Australia.

### FIVE STEPS TO ACCEPTING YOUR OFFER:

#### STEP 1: UNDERSTAND YOUR LETTER OF OFFER

Read your letter of offer and all the information provided. If you have received a conditional letter of offer, you must fulfill the condition(s) stated.

You must provide evidence that you have met all condition(s) outlined in your letter of offer, prior to or at the time of acceptance. If you do not provide this evidence, you will not be eligible to proceed with your enrolment or student visa application.

The type of evidence you must submit depends on the condition(s) as listed on your letter of offer. Examples include:

- Official or certified copies of academic transcripts
- Completion letters or certificates
- IELTS (Academic module) results, no more than two years old
- TOEFL (computer-based or paper-based or IBT) results, no more than two years old



#### STEP 2: ACCEPT YOUR OFFER

##### ORGANISE YOUR PAPERWORK AND PAYMENT

Depending on your country of citizenship you may need to show that you are eligible to apply for a student visa, before returning the following documents to the University or one of VU's registered agents;

- Complete and sign the International Student Acceptance Form.
- Provide documents showing that you have met the condition(s) (if any) indicated on your letter of offer.
- Provide a copy of your personal details pages in your passport.
- Provide evidence of payment .You can pay your deposit using one of the payment methods below, details are outlined in the International Student Acceptance Form :
  - Option 1: Bank Draft or Bank Cheque
  - Option 2: Telegraphic Transfer (TT)
  - Option 3: In person at Victoria University International with a Bank Cheque
  - Option 4: Credit Card
- Provide evidence of program length Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) For more information see the Overseas Student Health Cover section.

On receipt of the above, VU will:

- Ensure all condition(s) of the letter of offer (if any) have been met
- Issue you directly or through your agent a electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE)
- Provide you with information on how you can inform the University of your arrival, request for airport pick up and arrange temporary accommodation

#### STEP 3: APPLY FOR YOUR VISA

Upon receipt of your electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE), you should proceed with your student visa application at an Australian Embassy, Consulate, High Commission, or Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) Office (please refer to the Student Visa Information section)

#### STEP 4: PREPARE FOR YOUR DEPARTURE

Make your travel arrangements, inform the University of your expected arrival and book your airport pick up and temporary accommodation if required (refer to the Prepare for Departure section)

#### STEP 5: ARRIVE AND BEGIN YOUR STUDY JOURNEY

Arrive in Melbourne, attend the international student orientation and begin your academic journey (refer to the Prepare for Departure section).

## CHECK LIST TO ACCEPT YOUR OFFER

To accept the offer and obtain your eCoE you must complete the tasks in the below list; leave enough time for the high commission to grant you an eCoE; and arrive on time for commencement of classes.

- Ensure you have read and understood your letter of offer
- Have documents available showing that you have met the condition(s) of your letter of offer (if any)
- Complete and sign the [International Student Acceptance Form](#)
- Photocopy your personal details page from your passport
- Arrange payment for course tuition fee deposit and program length OSHC fee:
- If paying by bank draft or cheque ensure you have included your student ID number, full name and contact phone number on the back of each bank draft or cheque
- If paying by telegraphic transfer ensure you notify VUI of the details
- Photocopy your OSHC card if you already have health insurance (if applicable)
- Provide a copy of the sponsorship statement/financial guarantee letter if you are receiving a scholarship or sponsorship from your home country (if applicable)
- Evidence that you are eligible to apply for a student visa. (If you are a citizen of a country classified assessment level 3 or 4 by DIAC, refer to Student Visa Information section)
- If you will be under the age of 18 years when the program commences, complete the Under 18 Declaration form (refer to [Student Visa Information](#) section)
- If you are applying to VU from within Australia, please provide a copy of your current Australian visa

Once the University receives your completed acceptance form and documentation including payment, an eCoE will be issued. It may take between two and seven working days for the University to issue an eCoE depending on how quickly the payment can be cleared and the processing priority.

You will need the eCoE to lodge a student visa application at the Australian Embassy, Consulate or High Commission that you nominated on the [International Student Acceptance Form](#).



## FEE INFORMATION

As a student of Victoria University, you are required to pay international student fees for your program of study. The indicative annual tuition fee for a particular program is based upon the standard full time enrolment load of 24 units. The amount to be paid therefore depends upon your program of study and your enrolment load. Should you overload or underload, your fees will be increased or decreased accordingly. After your first semester, the University invoices you (or your sponsor) each semester according to your enrolment load in that semester.

Victoria University reserves the right to annually adjust course tuition fees to take into account increases in university and program delivery costs. Changes to tuition fees will be applied at the beginning of each calendar year. Course fees will be approved by the University Council in the year prior to the fee increase commencement. Once approved, the course fees will be posted on January 1 each year. In the event of variation between the fees on the letter of offer and the approved university schedule of fees, the approved schedule will prevail. The relevant section of the schedule for international students is Part D. Course tuition fees are invoiced on a semester basis based on the enrolled load for that particular semester. If your fees are not paid when they are due, the University will cancel your enrolment. If your enrolment is cancelled you are no longer permitted to participate in teaching, learning or assessments of any university course. The University is required to inform the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) that you no longer meet your visa requirements.



## OVERSEAS STUDENT HEALTH COVER

The Australian Government requires all international students and their families to pay for health insurance in Australia through the Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) scheme. OSHC helps pay for medical care you may need when you are studying in Australia. You will need evidence that you have OSHC before you obtain your Australian student visa.

The only exceptions to this policy are:

- Norwegian students with Norwegian National Insurance scheme
- Swedish Students with cover through the National Board of Student Aid
- Students whose studies are sponsored by AusAid

VU's preferred provider is [OSHC Worldcare](#).

If you choose to insure with OSHC Worldcare through the University, you will be required pay for OSHC cover for the duration of their program at the time of admission. The total fee for OSHC is quoted in your letter of offer. By making payment for the full duration you will receive the benefits of a discounted rate for the second and subsequent years of study. The University will disclose your relevant personal details to OSHC Worldcare for registering your OSHC.

Health insurance is your responsibility and current cover must be maintained by students for the duration of your stay in Australia.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM RULES

The admission, progression, assessment and graduation rules in a program are governed by relevant academic program rules. Refer to the Academic Program Rules of your program published in the [University handbook](#) .

## DEFERMENT OR CHANGE OF COURSE

If you wish to defer commencement to a date not specified on your letter of offer, or would like to change your study program, advise Victoria University International of your preferred intake date by [submitting this form](#)

Note: Not all programs are available for the next intake. Please ensure you check the [course offering list](#).

## STUDENT VISA INFORMATION

The student visa application process can be lengthy, taking anywhere from a few weeks up to several months to be granted. It is up to you to consult closely with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) before applying for your visa. Applications are assessed by DIAC according to the assessment level of the individual. The passport you hold and the education sector of your principal academic program determine your assessment level. Current information about the student visa application process can be found at the DIAC website including a full list of country assessment levels.

### STUDENTS FROM DIAC ASSESSMENT LEVEL 1-2 COUNTRIES

Once you have received your eCoE, from VU, you will need to contact your nominated Australian Consulate, Embassy or High commission to apply for your Australian student visa. Note: Only students from assessment level 1 can apply for their visa in Australia.

### STUDENTS FROM DIAC ASSESSMENT 3-5 COUNTRIES

If you are a citizen of a country in assessment level 3-5 you are required to provide evidence that you are eligible to apply for a student visa by:

- Providing a Pre-Visa Assessment from DIAC or
- Lodging your acceptance form with an official agent of the University who is authorised by DIAC to process e-visas

Consult with a Registered Migration Agent (as authorised by Australian law) or the Australian consulate, Embassy or High commission for Australian visa requirements and application details. Further information on visa requirements and applications can be found on the [DIAC website](#).

You will also be required to provide an IELTS test result as evidence of meeting DIAC's English requirement. Upon receiving notification from DIAC that you are eligible to apply for a student visa, please follow the offer and acceptance procedure as outlined in section 1.

The Pre-Visa Assessment (PVA), can be started once you have a full letter of offer or a conditional letter of offer to study at VU. The PVA process can take between six weeks and two months, so it is important that you act swiftly. Once your PVA is granted please continue with the process of accepting your place by making payment and submitting the International Student Acceptance Form including the letter of genuineness as issued by DIAC.

## STUDENTS UNDER 18 YEAR OF AGE

If you are under 18 years of age, it is a condition of your student visa that you have acceptable arrangements for your accommodation, support and general welfare. The arrangements must be in place, until you turn 18.

Your parent or legal custodian will be able to apply for a Student Guardian visa to come with you to Australia. You can find out [more about this visa](#).

If your parent or legal custodian is not going to live with you in Australia, you must ensure your accommodation and welfare requirements satisfy one of the following arrangements:

- you will live in Australia with a relative over 21 years of age who is nominated by your parent or legal custodian and is of good character. This arrangement will be approved by DIAC; or
- you will live in Australia under a welfare arrangement that is approved by VU. This may either be with a VU approved caregiver service or with a close family friend/cousin

Regardless of your arrangements, you must complete the 'Victoria University International Under 18 Care Arrangements Form' when accepting your offer.

If your welfare is being approved by Victoria University International, you will need to submit with your student visa application a signed statement from the University which confirms the start and end dates of these welfare arrangements. This letter is called a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements (CAAW) letter and if granted, your visa end date will correspond with the welfare dates on the letter. If your welfare arrangements are approved by Victoria University you cannot travel to Australia until the date when your welfare arrangements start. This is the start date indicated on the CAAW.

If you are already in Australia when you lodge a student visa application you need to show evidence of adequate arrangements for your welfare when you lodge your application. [More information](#)

If you do not maintain adequate welfare arrangements as an under 18 student during your stay in Australia, your student visa may be cancelled.

## STUDENT VISA CONDITION(S)

When you receive your student visa, DIAC will provide you with an explanation of the condition(s) attached to your visa. Students are expected to meet their program requirements including attendance and progress requirements and are expected to complete within the normal duration of the program.

Please read your grant letter and/or visa label very carefully for details of the condition(s) of your visa. A four digit code will be issued with a brief description and placed in your passport. Breaching any condition of your visa may result in a cancellation of your student visa in which you and your family may be required to leave Australia. A student visa permits multiple entry to Australia for the duration of the visa.

For more up to date information please visit the [DIAC website](#).

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

As a condition of your student visa, you must provide Victoria University with your current Australian address and contact details as soon as you are permanently settled in Melbourne. You must also advise Victoria University of any changes to your address and contact details within seven days of any change. This is a mandatory condition of your student visa. Failure to notify Victoria University of a change of address may result in the cancellation of your student visa.

## CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

If you believe you may be able to get credit for subjects previously studied, you can apply for Recognition of Prior learning RPL. You must include certified copies of transcripts, certificates and the syllabus from your previous study program and either the TAFE application for recognition of prior learning (RPL/RCC) (TAFE) - A80 form or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (Higher Education) - A04 form. Both forms are [available online](#). If you are granted credit and this changes the duration of your course, Victoria University will issue you with a new eCoE. This will notify DIAC that your course has been shortened in duration.

## TAKING A REDUCED STUDY LOAD OR OVERLOAD

As an international student you are obliged to complete your course within the expected duration outlined on your electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE), so you must maintain a full-time load wherever possible. You can only reduce your study load in exceptional circumstances, or if it will not change your course duration. You can overload your studies only if this is approved by your Faculty and if they believe it will not harm your course progress.

## TRANSFER TO ANOTHER PROVIDER

You cannot change to another education institution during the first six months of your principal course without first notifying VU. If you wish to transfer to another education provider, you will need to apply for a Letter of Release from Victoria University and supply a letter of offer from the new institution. You can download a [release letter request form](#).

Changing your provider may affect your student visa, so students are advised to contact DIAC for advice in this situation.

## WORKING WHILE STUDYING

International students with work rights on their visa can work a maximum of 20 hours per week while the course is in session and full-time during the holiday periods. Family members of students studying in Masters by coursework, Masters by research, Doctoral degree or sponsored by AusAID or Defence and studying in Masters by coursework, Masters by research or Doctoral degree, can apply to work unlimited hours once the student starts their main course.

You would be able to commence working once you are enrolled. You should not expect to rely on working to support yourself as you may find it difficult to gain appropriate part-time work. Working 20 hours a week will not give you enough money to cover your tuition fees nor all of your living costs.

As of 26 April 2008, a separate Work Rights Visa is no longer required. All students (and dependent family members) issued with a student visa after this date will now automatically have a permission to work attached. Student visa holders now will pay only one charge of A\$450 for the combined visa application and permission to work (fee subject to change). [More information](#)

## BRINGING YOUR FAMILY

If you are intending to bring your family with you there are additional arrangements you need to make. You can find more information about bringing your family . You must declare all family members on your application, even if they do not plan to travel with you to Australia. They will then be eligible to come as dependents after you have arrived. You must also provide proof of your relationship to them, in the form of officially issued birth and marriage certificates. You may be asked to show DIAC that you have sufficient money to support your family.

## ASSESSMENT LEVEL 3 TO 5

You will need to show proof that you can meet tuition and living expenses for yourself, your spouse and your dependent children for the length of your stay in Australia. However, if your course length is less than 12 months, your family will not be able to come to Australia with you.

### School aged children

If you intend to bring children aged between 5 and 18 years of age they will have to be enrolled full-time in Australian schools. You must arrive in Australia in time for your children to start the school term. For [information on school term dates](#).

You are expected to pay full school fees for your children unless you are:

- a postgraduate research student holding a Subclass 574 Visa
- an AusAid scholarship student, enrol your children in a Victorian Government school and have been granted an AusAid dependent visa
- a full Australian Tertiary Institution Scholarship student

### [More information on school fees](#)

The costs of enrolling your children in private schools are significantly higher than for state government schools, but in either case, you should be prepared for additional expenses such as school books, uniforms, school levies and school outings. Schools able to provide education for international students are [registered with the Victorian State Government](#)

## VISA AND ECOE EXTENSIONS

If required, Victoria University can help you organise a new eCoE in order to extend your visa and your course in Australia. Victoria University can only extend a CoE in limited circumstances, such as where you need to repeat a few units of study, you have a compassionate reason for not completing in the expected duration, or if you have made unsatisfactory progress and an intervention strategy leads to a change in course duration. You should contact Victoria University International for an application to extend your eCoE in a current course of study. You must apply for an extension at least six weeks before your visa expires, and allow at least one week for Victoria University to process the application.

When you renew your student visa, DIAC will require that you submit your eCoE, undergo a health check and submit a financial statement and your academic

transcripts. Note: fees are subject to change.

## DEFERRING, SUSPENDING OR CANCELLING YOUR ENROLMENT

You may only defer the start date of your course, or take a leave of absence if you have approval from Victoria University. A request to defer or suspend your enrolment will only be granted in limited compassionate or compelling circumstances. These include for e.g. if you are ill or injured, you are suffering a bereavement, or you are involved in a traumatic experience. VU will normally expect to see evidence to support your reasons. [More information](#)

Victoria University may decide to suspend or cancel your enrolment in the following circumstances:

You do not pay your tuition fees

Your school or faculty suspend or exclude you for unsatisfactory progress

You are suspended or excluded for disciplinary reasons resulting from misbehaviour

If VU decides to suspend or cancel your enrolment you will be given an opportunity to appeal our decision.

VU is obliged to notify government departments if your enrolment is suspended or cancelled, which may have an effect on your student visa. Students in this situation are advised to contact DIAC for advice.

## EDUCATION SERVICES FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS LEGISLATION

The Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 regulates the activities of schools and universities who educate student visa holders in Australia. The Act established the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (National Code) 2007.

The ESOS legislation was introduced by the Australian Government to ensure that you receive high quality education in Australia. It ensures that courses are approved, services and facilities meet minimum standards, and that students are enrolled in accordance with their visa condition(s). More information can be found at [Australian Education International \(AEI\)](#).

## USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Victoria University is committed to the responsible collection and handling of your personal information in accordance with all relevant legislation, including the Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) and the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic). The personal information collected by Victoria University will be used for the purposes of assessing and processing your application. Your personal information may be disclosed to Commonwealth and State Agencies such as the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), the Department of Immigration and Citizenship pursuant to reporting obligations under applicable legislation. Your personal information will also be disclosed to your overseas student health care provider and, if you are under 18 years of age, to the carer appointed for you under the National Code made under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000. Your information will not be disclosed to other third parties without your consent. You have a right to access personal information that Victoria University holds about you. Refer to the [University's Privacy Policy](#) for details.

## WRITTEN AGREEMENT

When you sign the International Student Acceptance form, you accept the offer of a place at Victoria University and enter into a written agreement or a contract, with the University. The three parts of the written agreement are the letter of offer or conditional letter of offer, the Accept Your Place at VU booklet and the International Student Acceptance form.

In compliance with the National Code of Practice 2007, Victoria University cannot accept your tuition fees until you (or your parent or legal guardian if you are under 18 years of age) has signed the International Student Acceptance form and the form has been received by Victoria University either before payment or at the same time. [More information](#)

## COURSE CHANGES

In the event that VU is unable to deliver the course or have changed the course you have accepted, we will let you know in writing and inform you of your rights and options. In the event that a course has changed and replaced by another with similar content you will be given a new letter of offer for that course.

## PREPARE FOR DEPARTURE

For many students this will be your first opportunity to live in another country. You may feel excited as well as a little nervous of what to expect. You can make the transition a little easier from your home country to Melbourne by better preparing yourself. Victoria University has a specialist staff in the International Student Support team that understands international student needs and have established great support material to assist you in the transition. Visit [Life at VU](#) for information on the below topics:

### BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

Plan your arrival and get ready for your studies at VU. Prepare for a smooth transition by using our checklist, including airport reception, temporary and permanent accommodation, pre-departure guide and other publications.

### SETTLING IN

Adjust to life in Melbourne. Find accommodation, open a bank account, organise yourself to attend orientation and enrolment and refer to our comprehensive 'Arrive and Thrive' guide.

### LIFE IN MELBOURNE

Achieve a study-life balance by learning more about what life has to offer in one of the world's most liveable cities.

### DURING YOUR STUDIES

Immerse yourself in student life - stay informed, become familiar with facilities and services available to you and get involved in activities.

### FINISHING YOUR STUDIES

Use the 'Your Next Steps' booklet to learn what you need to do about applying to graduate, returning home, applying for another course or staying in Australia.

### VIDEO LIBRARY

Use these helpful resources to prepare yourself before leaving your home country or, if you are already in Australia, before you start your course.

### COMMENCING YOUR STUDIES



## COMMENCING YOUR STUDIES

Immerse yourself in student life at Victoria University (VU) and you will create opportunities to make new friends, expose yourself to new experiences and participate in satisfying activities. Remember, the [International Student Support](#) staff are always available to help with anything relating to your studies.

## FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT AND LEARNING RESOURCES

At VU our teachers are focused on optimising your learning experience. Our teaching staff will use a number of innovative delivery methods to promote your understanding of your chosen course. While you are studying with us you will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of lectures, tutorials, laboratory and studio sessions, group work, cross discipline projects, case studies, practical sessions, discussion groups and individual research projects, depending on the course you choose.

VU students are encouraged to participate in culturally diverse study groups and to take responsibility for their own learning. Much of your success will depend on your commitment to developing a mature and self-directed learning style.

## TAFE

At TAFE, learning takes place in classes, workshops and/or seminars, meaning there is lots of interaction between students and teachers. In addition, your course may require you to gain work experience in practical settings.

Many courses include online references and resources to ensure that you have access to a wide range of up-to-date information in your unit of study areas.



## HIGHER EDUCATION

### LECTURES

Lectures are designed to help you better understand the topic you are studying. Your lecturer summarises the main points of the topic and introduces other related areas. You are expected to attend all lectures, and you are encouraged to take notes during the lectures. Lecture notes prepared by the lecturer may also be available in your campus library on Counter Reserve. Some lectures are recorded.

Ask your lecturer if you can audio tape the lecture sessions. This enables you to summarise and prepare your own notes if you have missed out any important points.

### TUTORIALS AND CLASSES

These usually run in conjunction with the lectures. They are much smaller groups and enable you to address any questions that you may have during the actual lectures. Group work is very common in tutorials and classes, where everybody in the team is expected to contribute equally as marks are equally distributed to the group members.

### RESEARCH DEGREES

If you undertake a research degree you will be required to plan, develop and conduct an approved research project under the supervision of an academic staff member. You must submit a thesis for assessment. Often your thesis must be accompanied by a product or artefact that embodies the research. You may also be required to attend seminars or classes relevant to your research topic.

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Please provide full details of any disability that you have (if you have not already done so or if your details have changed). In particular, please provide details of any special requirements and/or assistance you may require in order to study. All information provided will be kept confidential.

# REFUND POLICY

## PURPOSE

This policy sets out the conditions under which the refund of tuition fees may be granted for onshore international students, and defines how refunds will be administered by Victoria University (VU) International. The policy also ensures that VU is able to comply with its legal obligations with regards to onshore international students.

## BACKGROUND

The University's policy on the refund of tuition fees for onshore international students has been written to conform to the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) legislative framework, which incorporates the ESOS Act 2000, ESOS Regulations 2001 and National Code 2007. This Policy observes the principles of the Australian National Policy on Fee Refunds established by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

## 3.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

3.1 This policy applies only to onshore international students. It applies equally to commencing onshore international students and continuing onshore international students.

3.2 Before a refund can be processed, the funds covering the tuition fee must be available to the University, i.e. cheques and drafts cleared and telegraphic transfers received.

3.3 Refunds will be processed within four (4) weeks of receiving a written claim, following provision of all relevant documentation from the student. A full refund will be paid within two (2) weeks if the University defaults.

3.4 Generally, students who withdraw after four weeks of commencement of a program will not be eligible for a refund, unless otherwise stated in this policy.

## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Census Date: The VU Census Date is the date by which student enrolment details must be finalised for each semester.

The census date for Semester 1, is 31<sup>st</sup> March. The census date for Semester 2, is 31<sup>st</sup> August.

4.2 Documentary Evidence: A document presented as evidence to support a refund application. This may include, but is not limited to, a medical certificate supporting illness or injury, or official documentation from the Australian Government Authorities regarding

a visa refusal. The University will expect to see original documents for authentication purposes.

4.3 Onshore International Student: Refers to an overseas student who is studying onshore in Australia, or has accepted an offer to study onshore in Australia on a student visa, temporary resident visa, or other temporary stay visa.

4.4 Pathway: Is a formally approved link between and across different courses and/or qualifications offered by VU and other educational providers, including qualifications attained overseas and recognised by the National Office of Overseas Recognition (NOOSR).

4.5 Political, civil or natural event : A disturbance or turmoil threatening the security and safety of a community requiring an emergency response or military intervention, such as a natural disaster, terrorist attacks or political coups that have occurred in the students home country that prevent access to funds.

4.6 Prescribed semester fee: Is the full load fee for a semester

4.7 Refund: Total or partial reimbursement of tuition fees paid for a semester

4.8 Student: For the purpose of this policy, a "student" refers to an onshore international student

4.9 Tuition fees: Fees paid by the student on a semester by semester basis throughout the life of their course of study

4.10 University default: The University is unable to provide a course, or an offer is withdrawn by the University

## 5.0 KEY WORDS

Refund, tuition fees, prescribed semester fee

## 6.0 POLICY

6.1 This policy applies only to onshore international students. It applies equally to commencing onshore international students and continuing onshore international students.

6.2 Before a refund can be processed, the funds covering the tuition fee must be available to the University, i.e. cheques and drafts cleared and telegraphic transfers received.

6.3 Refunds will be processed within four (4) weeks of receiving a written claim, following provision of all relevant documentation from the student. A full refund will be paid within three (3) weeks if the University defaults.

6.4 Generally, students who withdraw after four weeks of commencement of a program will not be eligible for a refund, unless otherwise stated in this policy.

## 7.0 FULL REFUNDS

7.1 A full refund of tuition fees paid for a semester at VU will be made: (a) In the event that an offer is withdrawn by the University; (b) In the event that the University is unable to provide the course. In this situation, new commencing onshore international students will also be eligible for a refund of the application processing fee; (c) Where a student was unable to meet a condition required by the University in its letter of offer, and is able to prove that they did not actively fail to meet that condition; (d) Where a student has been excluded by the University for failure to meet degree or diploma progression rules and where tuition fees were paid in advance of notification of exclusion; (e) Where there is a refusal by the Australian Government authorities to grant a student visa or the visa is not granted in time for the student to commence the course; (f) When illness or disability prevents the student from taking up the course; (g) When the death of a close family member (parent, sibling, spouse or child) occurs; (h) When a political civil or natural event prevents the acquittal of a fee; or (i) Other special or extenuating circumstances preventing a student from proceeding may allow for full or partial refund at the discretion of the Associate Director (VUI), VU International, or their nominee, provided the request is made prior to the commencement of the course.

7.2 Documentary evidence must be provided in support of an application for a refund under any of the above provisions, with the exception of 6.1.1 (a) and (b).

7.3 Where a condition of 6.1.1 applies and a student has paid tuition fees to study a single unit (or units) of study with VU, that will not credit towards an award from VU, a full refund of tuition fees will be issued for that unit.

## 8.0 PARTIAL REFUNDS

8.1 A student who has paid tuition fees for a semester, and gives written notice that they are a) unable to undertake the course, or b) wish to withdraw from the course, will be eligible for a partial refund as follows:

a) Where a student gives notice in writing i) at least four (4) weeks (or more) before commencement of teaching in that semester, or ii) 4 weeks before the specified date for commencement of a research program; they will be entitled to a refund of tuition fees paid for the semester, minus a service charge of 10 per cent of the prescribed semester fee.

b) Where a student gives notice in writing i) less than four (4) weeks prior to the commencement of teaching in that semester, or ii) within four (4) weeks of commencement of teaching in that semester; they will be entitled to a refund of tuition fees paid for the semester, minus a service charge of 50% of the prescribed semester fee.

8.2 Where a student has paid tuition fees to study a single unit (or units) of study, that will not credit towards an award from VU, a partial refund will be issued according to 6.2.1(a) and (b) above, for the prescribed unit fee(s).

## 9.0 NO REFUNDS

9.1 A student who withdraws after four (4) weeks from the commencement of teaching in a semester shall not be eligible for a refund of tuition fees paid for that semester.

9.2 A research student who withdraws more than four (4) weeks after the commencement of the course shall not be eligible for a refund of tuition fees paid for that semester.

9.3 A student who gives notice in writing of an inability to undertake a course, or withdraws from the course at any time, will not be eligible for a refund of the application processing fee

9.4 A student who accepts an offer for a VU course as part of an agreed pathway between VU and another education provider, will not be entitled to a refund of the deposit paid for the VU course, unless (a) The University defaults, or (b) The student is refused a visa (documentary evidence is required where this is the case).

## 10.0 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

If a student is granted a leave of absence, 50 per cent of the prescribed semester fee will be refundable. If requested by the student, the balance will be retained and offset against the commencing student fee in the appropriate semester. The retained fee will be forfeited if the student does not give notice in writing to VU International, at least four (4) weeks prior to the commencement of the semester, of his or her inability to recommence the course.

## 11.0 ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

11.1 Where a student gives notice in writing at least four (4) weeks prior to commencement of teaching, of an inability to undertake the course, tuition fees paid are refundable, less a service charge of 10 per cent of the prescribed tuition fee, as per the student's letter of offer

11.2 Where a student gives less than four (4) weeks notice, prior to the commencement of teaching, of an inability to undertake the course; or withdraws within four (4) weeks of commencement of the course, 50 per cent of the prescribed tuition fee will be refunded. The maximum amount retained by VU will not exceed 10 weeks of the published tuition fee.

## 12.0 FEES REFUND RELATED TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WHO OBTAIN A PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS

12.1 A student who is granted Permanent Resident status will be eligible for a refund of tuition fees paid for a semester, less a \$500 service charge, only if (a) The permanent residency status is granted on or before the census date for a semester, and (b) the student presents evidence of their permanent resident status to VU International (for e.g. a valid passport containing a visa label). Permanent resident status is recognised from the date stamped on the student's passport (visa label), not the date on which the application for status is made.

12.2 A student who is granted permanent residency after the census date for a semester will not be eligible to a refund of tuition fees paid for that semester. The student will be classified as an international student for the remainder of that semester.

12.3 A student who receives permanent residency prior to census date for a semester will lose their full-fee student place and must re-apply for course entry in competition with other course applicants for government-funded places.

12.4 A continuing student who seeks to become a local fee paying domestic student following change of immigration status to permanent residency, may have their pre-paid tuition fees carried over in the appropriate semester.

## 13.0 OVERPAYMENTS

Where a student makes an overpayment of tuition fees, the overpaid amount will be refunded without financial penalty. The amount will be returned to the student as a cheque to the student's local address. A memo is required from the English Language Institute to support English Language overpayments.

## 14.0 REVIEW PROCESS RELATED TO FEES REFUND

14.1 A student who is dissatisfied with a decision relating to a refund application is entitled to appeal to VU International, by submitting a written request. The student must submit the request within 20 working days of written notification of the decision.

14.2 The University's complaints and appeals processes do not preclude a student from taking other legal action to recover any fees paid, including a debt action in a court of law. Furthermore, it does not remove the right to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

## 15.0 PAYMENT OF REFUNDS

15.1 Refunds will be processed within four (4) weeks of receiving a completed Refund of International Student Fees form and all other required supporting documentation.

15.2 Approved refunds will be paid in accordance with the following circumstances:

(a) Refunds will be made payable to the student (unless otherwise requested in writing). The refund draft will be made payable in Australian dollars and sent to the student's permanent home country address. The refund will only be made available to the student in Australia if the student provides evidence that they are able to remain in the country without studying.

(b) Where a tuition fee has been paid by a sponsoring body or scholarship agency, any refund payable will be made to the sponsoring body or scholarship agency.

(c) Where an international student is transferring to another institution, the refund will be paid direct to the new institution, unless the international student can provide evidence of having paid the tuition fee to that institution (e.g. via a CoE from that institution).

(d) Where an international student requests that the refund is made payable to a relative or other person in Australia, this will only be granted if documentary evidence proves that the relative or other person paid the tuition fees.

More information regarding the process for [claiming a refund](#).







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Approved on 2 March 2010, information is subject to changes.