

Withdrawal from VET Student Loan Study Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure Australian Online Music Institute communicates to Students the administrative processes in place which allow Students to withdraw from a VET Unit of Study.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure apply to all eligible Students enrolled within vocational education and training programs which are offered by AOMI and are approved for VET Student Loans.

3. Background and Need

The VET Student Loan scheme provides eligible VET students with loans to cover the cost of their higher level VET qualifications. The VET Student Loan scheme is designed, to ensure it protects vulnerable students, taxpayers and the reputation of Australia’s high-quality VET system.

4. Definitions

Census Date – the closing date for Students to apply for a VET Student Loan, pay for tuition fees or formally withdraw their enrolment in order to not incur a debt for that VET Unit of Study.

Official Withdrawal - where a Student completes the *Request to Withdraw* and submits it to AOMI.

Special Circumstances - one or more circumstances that are unusual, uncommon or abnormal and which have impacted on a Student’s ability to complete a VET Unit of Study.

Student/s – eligible local student/s enrolled in vocational education and training course/s that are offered by AOMI and are approved for a VET Student Loan.

Revision	By Whom	Date
Reviewed, and Standards updated	G Bottrill	31 Jul 20
Reviewed, no changes	G Bottrill	20 Sep 20
Reviewed, minor change	A Palmer	12 Oct 20
Updated to include the process on re-enrollment	A Palmer	11 Apr 22

Student Support Officer – the staff member who is responsible for managing the provision of the training and assessment services throughout the Student’s enrolment, and/or is the main contact for administrative and support purposes.

VET Course – a vocational education and training course that is offered by AOMI and is approved for VET FEE-HELP.

VET Unit of Study - a component of a VET Course to which fees and a Census Date are applied.

VET Student Loan Liability - occurs on a VET Unit of Study basis. Under *the Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA), Students do not incur a liability for the tuition fees for a VET Unit of Study until after the published Census Date. This applies to all Students who are or would be entitled to VET Student Loan assistance.

5 Withdrawal Policy

It is important that the Student correctly withdraws from the VET Unit of Study or VET Course. If they do not submit the completed *Request to Withdraw* before close of business on the relevant Census Date, they will incur a HELP debt, unless Special Circumstances apply.

No withdrawal fee will apply.

AOMI will not enrol that Student into subsequent VET Unit/s of Study without written instructions from the Student.

5.1 Official Withdrawal Prior to the End of the Census Date

A Student who enrolls in a VET Unit of Study, but Officially Withdraws on or before its Census Date, is not liable for the tuition fee for that unit, if, on or before the Census Date, the Student submits a completed *Request to Withdraw* to AOMI, advising that he or she wishes to:

- a) withdraw from a VET Unit of Study; and/or
- b) cancel his or her enrolment in that Unit of Study; and/or
- c) cancel his or her enrolment in the VET Course, and/or
- d) cancel his or her previous request for Commonwealth assistance,

AOMI will ensure that the Student is not enrolled in that VET Unit of Study or VET Course from the time of the receipt of that written notification.

Where an eligible Student has requested a VET Student Loan for all or part of those tuition fees, the Student's VETSL balance will be re-credited by that amount without the Student being required to apply for that repayment to occur.

If the Student has chosen to pay part or all of the tuition fees upfront, AOMI will repay to the Student any VET tuition fees for that VET Unit of Study that were paid on or before that Census Date.

The Student will not be required to apply for that repayment to occur.

The Student's records within AOMI database/s will be adjusted to reflect the withdrawal.

5.2 Withdrawal after the Census Date

If once the Census Date has passed, the Student is still enrolled in the VET Unit of Study, the Student becomes liable for the debt for that VET Unit of Study. This applies to all Students, irrespective of whether they have chosen to pay all or part of the tuition fees of the VET Unit of Study upfront, or to access the VET Student Loans deferred payment loan option.

However, for withdrawals after the Census Date, a Student may apply to have their VSL balance re-credited if they have been unable to complete the requirements of a VET Unit of Study and the Student believes that this was due to Special Circumstances. See Appendix 1.

If after due consideration of the supporting evidence provided, AOMI decides that Special Circumstances do apply, the Student is not required to apply for the repayment. Where the Student has requested a VET Student Loan for all or part of those tuition fees, the Student's VET Student Loan balance will be re-credited by that amount.

If the Student has chosen to pay part or all of the tuition fees upfront, AOMI will repay to the Student any of the VET tuition fees for that VET Unit of Study that were paid on or before that Census Date.

The Student will not be required to apply for that repayment to occur. AOMI will make every effort to provide the full refund within 28 days of the receipt of the completed *Request to Withdraw*.

If the Student is dissatisfied with AOMI's decision in relation to that claim of Special Circumstances, an appeal may be lodged in accordance with the *AOMI Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*, published on AOMI's website.

The Student's records within AOMI database/s will be adjusted to reflect the withdrawal.

6 Withdrawal Procedure

a) The Student speaks with Student Support and informally requests to withdraw from a VET Unit of Study or VET Course of study.

b) The Student Support Officer discusses the request with the Student, and advises that Students who wish to withdraw from a VET Unit of Study or VET Course must do so in writing, using the *Request to Withdraw*.

If relevant, information on what constitutes Special Circumstances is provided to the Student (refer Appendix 1). The Student must submit the application within 12 months of the Official Withdrawal. If the Student has not Officially Withdrawn their enrolment, the 'withdrawal day' is taken to be the last day of the period in which the Student was to undertake the unit.

If the Student chooses to proceed, the Student Support Officer commences the formal process.

c) The Student is required to complete the form in its entirety, including adding the digital signature before electronically submitting the form to the provided email address. Incomplete forms will not be processed, but will be expeditiously followed-up with the Student to ensure finalisation of the Student's intention to withdraw.

The date of receipt by AOMI of the completed *Request to Withdraw* will be the date of notification.

d) The Student Support Officer will provide written notification to the Student, confirming the receipt of the completed *Request to Withdraw*. This is by way of returning a digitally signed copy of the submitted Form, stating the date at which the withdrawal has taken effect and advising the Student accordingly.

6.1 Special Circumstances

Where the Student has claimed Special Circumstances within the *Request to Withdraw*, supporting documentation must be provided for the consideration of AOMI in accordance with the criteria identified in Appendix 1.

Within 28 days, the Student will be advised in writing of AOMI decision in relation to that claim.

If the Student is dissatisfied with AOMI decision in relation to that claim of Special Circumstances, an appeal may be lodged in accordance with the *AOMI Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*, published on AOMI website.

7 Re-enrollment after Withdrawal

Students wishing to re-enrol in a part of an approved course where they had previously withdrawn need to contact the Enrolment Officer. Students are entitled to re-enrol providing the course is still current. Students may need to wait until the next available intake date. Further fees and charges may apply.

This Policy will be reviewed every two years.



William Palmer
CEO
11th April 2022

APPENDIX 1: SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

(Excerpt taken from *VET Student Loan Information Booklet October 2020 v4.5*)

How can a student apply to have their HELP debt removed under ‘special circumstances’?

If you withdraw from a unit after the **census day** because you become seriously ill or for other special circumstances, you can apply to your provider to have your **HELP balance** re-credited and your **VETSL debt** removed. You cannot have your debt removed if you have already successfully completed your unit of study.

Changing your mind is not a good enough reason to apply for **special circumstances** and you will still be required to repay your **VETSL debt**. Similarly, failing a unit is not in itself sufficient to apply for **special circumstances**. However, as noted at section 5.1 above, if you fail a unit **because** of special circumstances, you may consider applying to have your HELP balance re-credited.

For your provider to be satisfied that **special circumstances** apply to you, you must be able to prove that the circumstances:

- were beyond your control,
- did not make their full impact on you until on or after the census day, and
- made it impracticable (i.e. impossible) for you to complete your unit(s) of study requirements.

Application process

A student must apply directly to their institution/provider within the requisite timeframe (refer to Application time limit below) and indicate the unit(s) relevant to their application. A student’s application must detail what the special circumstances were, and how/why the student believes those circumstances made it impracticable for them to complete those units. A student must contact their institution/provider for more information regarding submitting an application under these circumstances.

Application time limit

The application must be submitted to the student's institution/provider within 12 months of their withdrawal day. The 'withdrawal day' is taken to be the day the student's institution/provider has specified in its notice to students as the day the student's withdrawal takes effect, or if the student has not officially withdrawn their enrolment, the student's 'withdrawal day' is taken to be the last day of the period in which the student was to undertake the unit. Under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, institutions/providers also have the discretion to extend this time limit if the institution/provider is satisfied that it was not possible for the student to submit an application within the 12 months.

Internal and external appeals

If a student is unhappy with their institution/provider's decision, the student must apply to their institution/provider within 28 days (or the period allowed by the institution/provider) requesting a review of that decision.

Following the internal review, if the student is still unhappy with their institution/provider's decision, the student has 28 days from the date of that reviewed decision (by their institution/provider), to apply to the AAT requesting an independent review of their institution/provider's decision. More information regarding this process is available from the [Administrative Appeals Tribunal website \(http://www.aat.gov.au\)](http://www.aat.gov.au).