

Withdrawal and Refund Policy

1. Statement of policy

This policy describes the student withdrawal and refund processes to ensure that The Gordon's processes are valid, fair, and transparent.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students of The Gordon seeking wishing to apply for a leave of absence or withdraw from and receive a refund for an enrolment in accredited and non-accredited Training Products offered by The Gordon, under both government funded and fee for service fee arrangements, and includes:

1. International Students
2. Gordon short course enrolments
3. VET Delivered to Secondary Students
4. VET Student Loan Students

3. Overview

3.1 Supporting students to make an informed decision

The Institute will provide up to date and detailed information regarding course content, pathways, student completion requirements, and all relevant fees and refund policies as well as guidelines in relation to applications for a leave of absence. The principal source of this information will be The Gordon's website, but may also include course booklets, flyers and student handbooks.

Business Managers are responsible for ensuring that all course information is kept up to date, and recorded in the appropriate Gordon systems to enable its upload onto the website.

Students are responsible for reading the course information provided and ensuring that they understand the terms and conditions of their enrolment. These policies and procedures do not remove the right for students under Australia's consumer protection laws. Including the right to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws in respect to any dispute regarding the payment or refund of fees.

All students are eligible for a 100% refund of fees paid in the event that:

1. The Gordon cancels their course after enrolment and the student chooses not to accept a place in an alternative course that they have been offered.
2. The Gordon closes as a registered training organisation, including closure of a campus and transfer of the course to another city.

3.2 Application for refunds

Refund applications from students will only be considered where a student has notified the Gordon in writing (including mail or email) of their withdrawal from a course, with the reference date for any refund being the date that this written notification is received by The Gordon.

Any students who do not officially withdraw from their enrolment in writing, and have fees outstanding after the withdrawal date will be liable for their enrolment fees. Outstanding fees remain on a student's record indefinitely and will affect future enrolment.

3.3 Payment of refunds

All refunds will be paid to the same person or organisation who paid the fees.

The method of payment for refunds will be via direct deposit or credit card dependant on the original method of payment.

Payments of refunds will be processed within four weeks of the outcome of the request for withdrawal and refund being determined.

Complaints and appeals

All students have a right to access The Gordon's complaints and appeals policy if they feel that a decision to not refund fees is:

1. Unfair or unjust
2. Extraordinary circumstances were not considered
3. Not processes as described in this policy.

4. Principles

4.1 Accredited Certificate I to IV Courses

In order to cancel or withdraw enrolment from a course or unit, students must provide advice in writing to our Customer Liaison Office or their teaching department. The date this advice is received is the student's official withdrawal effective date and determines whether their tuition fees are refunded or credited.

To be eligible for a refund or credit of materials fees and other levies, students must complete, sign and return a 'Withdrawal and Refund Request' form available from our Customer Service Office, their teaching department or online via their eCentral account.

If enrolment is cancelled prior to the course start date, a full refund or credit of all fees and levies will be provided. Any materials provided must be returned un-used before the cost of these will be refunded or credited

If enrolment is withdrawn within 30 days of the unit's start date, all tuition fees charged for that unit will be refunded or credited. Any portion of any other fees or levies to be refunded or credited will be at the discretion of the Program Area.

If the enrolment is withdrawn more than 30 days after the unit's start date, there will be no refund or credit of tuition fees. Any portion of any other fees or levies to be refunded or credited will be at the discretion of the Program Area.

PLEASE NOTE: If a student's fees remain unpaid at the time they cancel/withdraw and that cancellation/withdrawal is more than 30 days after the unit's start date, the student will still be liable to pay those outstanding fees. Outstanding fees remain on a student's record indefinitely and will affect future enrolment.

Students are required to discuss a course withdrawal/cancellation with their applicable teaching department prior to completing a withdrawal or refund request form. The method of payment for refunds will be via direct deposit or credit card dependant on the original method of payment.

Any students who fail to attend and do not officially withdraw from their enrolment in writing, and have fees outstanding after the teaching department makes the decision to withdraw in line with Gordon policy, will still be liable for their enrolment fees.

Students will incur penalty charges on any outstanding fees payable to The Gordon and if they default in payment of any fee when due, will indemnify The Gordon from and against all costs and disbursement incurred by The Gordon in pursuing the debt including legal costs on an indemnity basis and The Gordon's reasonable collection agency costs

4.1.1 Extraordinary circumstances

Under extraordinary circumstances a full or partial refund may be approved by the Chief Executive Officer of The Gordon or their delegate. Students must complete the Application for Refund of Fees via eCentral, attaching any relevant supporting evidence. Each case will be considered on its merits

4.2 Accredited Diploma and above courses (including Vet Student Loans)

In order to cancel or withdraw from a course or unit, students must provide advice in writing to our Customer Liaison Office or their teaching department. The date this advice is received is the student's official withdrawal effective date and determines whether tuition fees are credited or refunded.

To be eligible for a refund or credit of materials fees and other levies, students must complete, sign and return a 'Withdrawal and Refund Request' form available from our Customer Service Office, their teaching department or online via their eCentral account.

If enrolment is cancelled prior to the course start date, a full refund or credit of all fees and levies will be provided. Any materials provided must be returned un-used before the cost of these will be refunded or credited.

For all courses at the Diploma and Advanced Diploma levels, a refund or credit of all tuition fees charged for the unit will be made if the withdrawal is prior to the unit census date. Any portion of any other fees or levies to be refunded or credited will be at the discretion of the Program Area.

Once the census date passes there are no refunds or credits applicable to tuition fees.

Please Note: If a student's fees remain unpaid at the time they cancel/withdraw and that cancellation/withdrawal is outside the refund rules outlined above, the student will still be liable to pay those outstanding fees. Outstanding fees remain open on a student's record indefinitely and will affect future enrolment if they remain unpaid.

Students are required to discuss a course withdrawal/cancellation with their applicable teaching department prior to completing a withdrawal or refund request form.

The method of payment for refunds will be via direct deposit or credit card dependant on the original method of payment.

Students who fail to attend and do not officially withdraw in writing from their enrolment and have outstanding fees after the teaching department makes the decision to withdraw in line with Gordon policy, will still be liable for their enrolment fees.

The Gordon can cancel a students' enrolment at any time by:

- informing the student of the proposed cancellation;
- advise the student that they have 28 days to initiate grievance procedures before cancellation is finalised;
- ensuring that the cancellation does not take final effect until any grievance procedures initiated by the student have been completed.

Students will incur penalty charges on any outstanding fees payable to The Gordon and if they default in payment of any invoice when due, will indemnify The Gordon from and against all costs and disbursement incurred by The Gordon in pursuing the debt including legal costs on an indemnity basis and The Gordon's reasonable collection agency costs.

4.2.1 Extraordinary circumstances

Under extraordinary circumstances a full or partial refund may be approved by the Chief Executive Officer of The Gordon or their delegate. Students complete the Application for Refund of Fees via eCentral attaching any relevant supporting evidence. Each case will be considered on its merits.

Students applying for a refund under the special circumstances provision should document their case for consideration within the timelines stipulated in the VET Student Loans Reviews Procedure.

4.2.2 Payment Plans

Students who withdraw from their course and whose fees were part of a payment plan will have the relevant fee credited to their debt and any other fee paid up front refunded in line with the refund rules outlined in this procedure.

4.3 Accredited and Non-accredited Gordon Short Courses

4.3.1 Cancellation by the student, sponsor or employee

Courses with low enrolment numbers may be cancelled. In the event a short course is cancelled by The Gordon, a transfer or full refund will apply. The Gordon will notify participants at least 24 hours in advance of any cancellations (in some exceptional circumstances this may not be possible if there is a sudden staffing illness).

4.3.2 Cancellation by The Gordon

Courses with low enrolment numbers may be cancelled. In the event a short course is cancelled by The Gordon, a transfer or full refund will apply.

4.3.3 Transfers

Transfers must be requested at least five days prior to the course commencement. A \$20 administration fee will be charged for second and subsequent transfers unless due to extraordinary circumstances.

4.3.4 Extraordinary circumstances

In the event of extraordinary circumstances, participants must apply in writing, attaching a medicate certificate in the case of illness, within 10 working days of notification. Each case will be considered individually.

4.3.5 Refunds

Short course refunds will be issued within 10 to 15 working days.

4.4 Non Accredited Online Short Courses

4.4.1 Refunds

Students can enrol up to three days after the course commences.

Cancellation by the student must be given in writing. A refund will be issued up to one week after the course commencement and if the course is not completed.

A request for a refund by the student must be given in writing.

To request a refund email The Gordon at ShortCourses@gordontafe.edu.au with the following information:

- First and Last name
- Course title
- Date session started
- Reason for the refund
- Any other things you may want to tell us

In the event of extenuating circumstances participants must apply in writing, attaching any relevant documentation. Each case will be considered individually.

Refunds will be issued within 3-7 working days.

4.4.2 Transfer to a new session for the same course

Students can enrol up to three days after the course commences.

Students can transfer to a new session of the same course within one week of the course commencing and the course is not completed.

A request to transfer by the student must be given in writing.

To request a refund transfer email The Gordon at ShortCourses@gordontafe.edu.au with the following information:

- First and Last name
- Course title
- Date session started
- Reason for the refund
- Any other things you may want to tell us

Students will be notified of the outcome within 3 working days

4.4.3 Transfer to a different course

Students can transfer to a new session of the same course within one week of the course commencing and the course is not completed.

A request to transfer by the student must be given in writing.

To request a refund transfer email The Gordon at ShortCourses@gordontafe.edu.au with the following information:

- First and Last name
- Course title
- Date session started
- Reason for the refund
- Any other things you may want to tell us

Students will be notified of the outcome within 3 working days. Students will be refunded for the original enrolment and will need to enrol in the new course.

4.5 VET Delivered to Secondary Students – all courses

For all VET Delivered to Secondary Students courses, a full refund or credit of fees, less any materials used for passed units, will be made if notice of withdrawal from the unit or course is received within the first 28 days after course commencement.

4.5.1 Transfers

During any calendar year, students who transfer from their VET Delivered to Secondary Students program to an apprenticeship/traineeship in the same program area and The Gordon is the RTO for that enrolment, adjustments to fees and charges for the VET Delivered to Secondary Students program will be determined on an individual basis having regard to the date of transfer, processed results and any other related matters.

For such consideration to apply; the college/school must follow The Gordon's formal withdrawal procedures including the use of The Gordon's withdrawal form. Evidence of completed enrolment into the apprenticeship/traineeship program must also be supplied.

4.6 International students – all courses

Claims for refunds must be made in writing using the *Application for a refund of international students fees STS FO 03.03 form*

Forms are available from the international office or on the international student portal.

Any portion of resource / material fees paid to be refunded will be at the discretion of the Program Area. Any portion of service fees paid to be refunded will be at the discretion of the International Office.

Under extraordinary circumstances a full or partial refund may be approved by the Chief Executive Officer of The Gordon. Students must complete Application for Refund of Fees via eCentral attaching any relevant supporting evidence. Each case will be considered on its merits.

Students will be advised of the outcome for the refund request within 3 working days. Approved refunds will be processed within 21 working days

4.6.1 Gordon initiated refunds

The Gordon shall refund all course fees paid by the student in the event that:

- The course is cancelled.
- The commencement of the course is postponed for more than four weeks.
- The student is refused the offer of a place due to capacity limits e.g. the course is full.
- The student is prevented from entering a course by reasons beyond the student's control, including but not limited to Acts of God, Acts of Government Authorities, civil strife and riots.

4.6.2 Visa Refusal Refunds

The Gordon shall refund all unexpended fees paid by the student (including OSHC fees if the student had paid The Gordon to arrange health cover) less the \$200 administration fee in the event that the student has applied for a student visa offshore and is refused a Visa to study in Australia.

If the student is refused a visa onshore and a considerable portion of the course has been undertaken at the time of visa refusal.

- Where the student has been in class for up to the end of week 3 of class, the student will receive a full refund minus a \$200 administrative fee
- Where the student has been in class for 4 – 8 weeks, the student will receive a 50% refund of tuition fees.
- Where the student has been in class for more than 8 weeks, the student will not be eligible for a refund.

4.6.2 Refund on notice of withdrawal

If a student requests withdrawal prior to the course commencement (for reasons other than those listed above):

- More than 28 days before course commencement – 80% of tuition fees refunded.
- Less than 28 days before course commencement – 50% of tuition fees refunded.
- After course has commenced - no refund

This includes students providing a release letter.

4.6.3 Refund on notice of withdrawal, deferral, suspension

Where the student has been granted a deferral or suspension to their enrolment after the commencement of a study period, a pro rata transfer of the remainder of the study period will be

granted. The fee transferred will be held towards tuition for the study period the student is returning to and the student will be required to pay any balance prior to resuming their studies.

If the student does not return to their studies a refund is not applicable.

4.6.4 Gordon course to course transfers

For students who have paid for a course at The Gordon and wish to transfer to a different course at The Gordon, the fees paid can be transferable to the new course but will not be refundable unless they are covered by this refund policy.

4.6.5 Permanent residency status

International students who gain permanent residence after course commencement will not be eligible for domestic fees and cannot be reassessed for a domestic place after course commencement.

No refund will be given where permanent residence is granted after course commencement. Students who gain permanent residence after course commencement may either continue in the course on international student fee rates or withdraw from the course and reapply for a domestic place. There is no guarantee that an offer will be made for a domestic place.

- For written notice provided before course commencement - all tuition fees except \$200 admin fee.
- For written notice provided after course has commenced - no refund.
- Any portion of resource / material fees paid to be refunded will be at the discretion of the Program Area.

4.6.6 No refund conditions

No refund will be granted to students who breach the conditions of their visa.

No refund will be granted to a student whose enrolment is cancelled due to a breach of The Gordon's Student Conduct Policy or for breaches of student attendance and academic progress requirements for International students.

4.6.7 Refund of service fees

Accommodation arrangement fees: full refund if two weeks' notice is provided before the flight arrival. There will be no refund if less than two weeks' notice is given.

Airport pickup service fees: full refund if 48 hours' notice is provided before the flight arrival.

4.6.8 Payment Plans

Students who withdraw from their course, and whose fees were part of a payment plan, will have the relevant fee credited to their debt in line with the refund rules outlined in this procedure. Any other fees paid up front refunded in line with the refund rules outlined in this procedure. **All** outstanding fees will need to be paid.

4.6.9 Payment of Refunds

All refunds will be paid to the same person or organisation who paid the fees.
The method of payment for refunds will be via direct deposit or credit card dependant on the original method of payment.

Payments of refunds will be processed within 21 working days of the outcome of the request for withdrawal and refund being determined.

4.6.10 Complaints and appeals

All students have a right to access *the Complaints & Appeals Policy QA PO 10* if they feel that a decision to not refund fees is unfair or unjust or extraordinary circumstances were not considered.

5. Responsibilities

POSITION	GOVERNANCE / RESPONSIBILITY
Board of Studies	Accountable for ensuring that this policy meets the requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations and is consistent with The Gordon's obligations in regard to its legislative requirements as a VET Provider.
Business Managers	That all teaching and program area staff are aware of their obligations to advise students regarding withdrawal and refund application processes which are consistent with the requirements of this policy. For implementing the withdrawal process and ensuring that all students are aware of the process for applying for a refund.
Students and Employers	For making arrangements for student absences to be reported and if applicable arrange for an alternate attendance block, if applicable as failure to do so may result in The Gordon withdrawing the student.

6. Key Aligned Internal Documents

Refer to the *Operational Management System (OMS)* for copies of all policies, procedures and supporting documents. In addition refer to *eCentral for Application for Refund of Fees*.

Fees and Charges Booklet STS RD 04.02

Withdrawal and Refund procedure STS PR 03

Application for Short Course Refund of Fees Form STS FO 03.01

Application for Refund of International Student Fees STS FO 03.03

Complaints and Appeals Policy QA PO 10

International student transfer, suspension, or cancellation INT PO 02

7. Key Aligned External Documents

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015

Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Regulations 2019

VET Funding Contract (TAFE) Victorian Training Guarantee

VET Administrative Information for Providers (VET Student Loans)



8. Review and approval

	POSITION	AREA
Business Process Owner	Head	Student Administration
Endorsed by (if applicable):	Nil	
Ratified by (if applicable):	Nil	
Review schedule:	This policy will be reviewed every 3 years (or earlier as required)	
Last reviewed / updated:	2 February 2023	