

RTO- Student Fees, Charges and Refunds Policy

Introduction

The objective of the *Student Fees, Charges and Refunds Policy* is to ensure prospective and current students and clients are aware of the fees, charges, refunds, and transfer arrangements that apply as an enrolled student with Riverina Community College (RCC).

Application

The policy applies to all fees, charges, refunds, and transfers that relate to the provision of education and training by RCC and applies to all students undertaking training with government subsidies, paying concession fees and/or clients, and/or paying full fees.

Fees and Charges

Fee for Service Training

RCC advises students of fees, additional resources, and any other additional training costs prior to enrolment. This information is provided in the Student Handbook, training quotes, promotional materials such as promotional brochures, flyers, and information packs, and the RCC website.

The cost of fee for service for nationally accredited training will be adjusted by the value of any Credit Transfers (CT) or Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) that has been approved or granted.

- Credit Transfer – there is no fee associated with a CT application. Where a student is granted a Credit Transfer for one or more units of competency:
 - any fee for service fee will be adjusted proportionally
 - any student contribution under Smart and Skilled funding will be adjusted by Training Services NSW and a new student contribution determined.

Where a student has already made a payment for a course, RCC will refund any Smart and Skilled Student Contribution overpayment made by the student.

- Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) – a pre-assessment interview for an RPL application will occur at no cost.

If the RPL pre-assessment interview identifies that a student should proceed with a formal RPL application, the student will be provided with a formal quote for the cost of each unit assessment under the RPL fee. The RPL fee will:

- cover the cost of supplying and processing the RPL Kit,
- assessment of the evidence supplied,
- assessment decision and
- issuing of certification.

Where a student is successfully granted RPL for one or more units of competency:

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- any fee for service fee will be adjusted proportionally
- any student contribution under Smart and Skilled funding will be adjusted by Training Services NSW and a new student contribution determined.

For further information on RPL and CT refer to the *RCC Recognition of Prior Learning Policy* and the *RCC Credit Transfer Policy* which are available on the RCC website.

Smart and Skilled Subsidised Programs

To be eligible for subsidised training under the *Smart and Skilled Program* students must meet the relevant eligibility criteria. Students who are eligible under the *Smart and Skilled Program* will have their training subsidised by the NSW Government and students contribute towards the cost of training through the payment of a student contribution (fee).

RCC will provide a quote to students at the completion of their enrolment application. The quote will provide a breakdown on the Student Contribution (Fee) and government subsidy payment on behalf of the student. Fees, including the value of student contributions, are determined based on the information provided by the student, including:

- prior qualifications
- if the student is undertaking an Apprenticeship/Traineeship
- eligibility for concessions
- eligibility for exemptions
- Credit Transfers (CT)
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- If a continuing student from the previous calendar year
- deferral

The student contribution fee may be paid on behalf of the student by their employer or a third party unrelated to RCC. The quote includes the fee amount the employer or third party has agreed to pay, when and how the fee will be collected, and refund arrangements.

Other Subsidised Programs

For all other funded programs, RCC will advise each student of any subsidy provided, including no applicable fees, or additional fees, as well as incidental expenses and other charges that apply to the program prior to enrolment. Where an employer is supporting an employee's enrolment, RCC will also provide this information to the employer.

Additional Course Costs

RCC will advise students if any additional costs may apply to a course prior to enrolment acceptance.

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Concessions and Exemptions

Students can contact RCC Reception to find out if they are eligible for a concession or exemption as outlined below.

- **Smart and Skilled Concessions and Exemptions**

If a student is eligible for Smart and Skilled training and is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, a student with a disability or an Australian Government welfare recipient, the student and any dependents may be eligible for an exemption or concession when enrolling in a Smart and Skilled course.

Eligibility for concessions and exemptions, and evidence required to prove eligibility, are outlined in the Smart and Skilled Fee Administration Policy available via www.smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au.

- **Adult Community Education (ACE) Exemptions**

Students may be eligible for an exemption under ACE where they meet the Smart and Skilled criteria and experience social and educational disadvantage or have geographical barriers to accessing training. ACE supports short courses involving nationally recognised units of competency or units/modules supporting language, literacy, and employability skills.

Repeat Attempts to Complete Units of Competency

Nationally accredited training assesses a student's competency in meeting the requirements of the national standard for each unit of competency (UOC) in a qualification. If a student is deemed as Not Yet Competent (NYC), the student will be given the opportunity to re-submit or re-sit their assessment with a total of three attempts with no additional cost, unless stated otherwise under licensing requirements (where the student will be advised of the maximum opportunities available).

If a student is deemed NYC after the three attempts, the RCC Training Coordinator will discuss the available options with the student. These options may include:

- re-enrolling in the unit of competency at a fee for service administration and an assessment fee per unit. If further training is required, there will be additional charges and students will be provided with a quote in advance.
- reviewing the student's course and study options with the Training Coordinator
- transferring to another course
- withdrawing from the course.

Refer to further information in this policy regarding refunds, withdrawals and transfer of course fees.

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Refunds

RCC is committed to ensuring all enrolled students are able to successfully complete their course. RCC will only commence a course when there is a sufficient number of enrolled students making the course viable and ensuring the availability of a trainer/assessor. Should RCC cancel a course prior to commencement, RCC will return all prepaid fees for that course to the students..

RCC also recognises a student's circumstances may change while completing their course and may be unable to continue with their course. Students are required to discuss their circumstances with their trainer/assessor or the Training Coordinator who will assist them in determining the best way forward.

A non-refundable Course Administration Fee of \$250 applies as outlined below. Refunds are issued in accordance with the *RCC Financial Management Policy*.

- **Full Refunds**

RCC will issue a full refund (less the non-refundable \$250 Course Administration Fee) to the relevant person (student or third party):

- when a course cancellation is actioned by RCC prior to course commencement or
- where the student withdraws in writing prior to course commencement.

A refund of fees/contributions paid directly by a student will apply to both accredited and non-accredited courses if:

- a training course has been cancelled by RCC prior to commencement.
- a student cancels in writing five (5) or more working days prior to commencement (less the non-refundable \$250 Course Administration Fee)
- a student cancels in the five (5) working days prior to commencement due to extenuating circumstances (such as accident or illness). A written request for a refund outlining the extenuating circumstances will be considered at the discretion of RCC. Supporting documents, such as medical certificates will be required.
- a student has overpaid fees. The value of overpaid fees will be refunded.
- RCC has granted CT or RPL after enrolment and the fee recalculation is lower than the fee the student has already paid.

- **Partial Refunds**

A partial refund (less the non-refundable \$250 Course Administration Fee) will apply if:

- a student cancels less than five (5) working days prior to course commencement due to change of mind or change of circumstances (such as work hours, childcare, location, etc), or
- RCC has commenced delivery of any modules or units to a student.

The value of any partial refund will be reduced by the Course Administration Fee of \$250 plus the cost of any modules or units where RCC has commenced delivery to the student.

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Circumstances beyond RCC's control may result in a course being cancelled after it has commenced. This may be the result of a trainer becoming ill or resigning unexpectedly and RCC is unable to source a replacement trainer, or when continuing student numbers fall below the viability of maintaining the course. RCC will provide a refund for the cost of any units RCC has not delivered and issue each student with a Statement of Attainment for all units successfully completed.

A pro-rated refund is calculated by dividing the student fee with the total number of units of competency. The refunded amount is determined by the number of units of competency not commenced. In addition, RCC will retain the Course Administration Fee of \$250.00 which will be deducted from the overall fee refund amount.

In the event where CT or RPL has been applied and modification has been made to the student fee, a pro-rated refund is provided on the amended amount.

Student Withdrawal

Withdrawing from a qualification or course is not an ideal situation for any student, however RCC understands that such withdrawals may be necessary under certain circumstances. If a student is in a position where they need to withdraw from their qualification or course, the student is required to advise RCC in writing as soon as possible. For those students enrolled in a government traineeship, it is their responsibility or that of the student's employer, to promptly notify the Australian Apprenticeship Centre of the withdrawal.

If a student is on a payment plan, fees will continue to be deducted in line with the agreed payment to cover any outstanding course fees. Until the student makes final payments no credentials will be issued to the student.

Any decision regarding the repayment of outstanding course fees will be at the discretion of RCC in line with this policy.

Deferral

Deferral of course enrolment by a student will be considered on an individual basis by RCC, such as serious illness or injury or bereavement of close family members. Supporting documents such as medical certificates, may be required. Students will need to contact the RCC Training Coordinator to discuss their request to defer their course.

If a student's request to defer is approved, any fees already paid will be retained and applied to the remaining units from the student's agreed date of return to the course. RCC's non-refundable Course Administration Fee of \$250 will apply. A student's return to the course will be dependent on the availability of classes.

Transfers

A student may apply for a transfer of course fees to another course offered by RCC if they give five (5) or more working days' notice of cancelling their arrangement. RCC's non-refundable Course Administration fee of \$250

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will apply. Only one transfer per term is permitted unless the transfer relates to a course that RCC cancels for any reason.

Payment Arrangements

Payment arrangements align to courses and may vary depending upon factors such as length of course, student cohort or government contract guidelines.

It is an RCC requirement that where course fees, administrative or other charges apply, students must pay these items prior to the commencement of a course unless a payment plan has been arranged.

- **Protection of Fees Paid in Advance**

To provide protection to student fees, RCC will not at any time accept student contribution fees paid in advance of more than \$1,500 from individual students. This policy is in line with requirements of the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 - Clause 7.3*.

- **Fee Payment Options**

RCC offers a range of payment options including payment plans which can be paid using Visa, Mastercard or EFT payments. Students are to speak to the RCC Administration Team find out more about RCC's payment options.

- **Payment Plans**

Payment plans are only available for fees or student contributions of \$500 and over. The first instalment will include a \$250 non-refundable Course Administration Fee which is payable at the time of acceptance of enrolment.

All payment plans are subject to the completion of a *Student Payment Plan* and acceptance of its *Terms and Conditions* by the student. It is recommended that students retain a copy of the *Terms and Conditions* at the time of signing. The payment plan can only be approved by the RCC General Manager in line with the RCC delegations.

- **Recovery of Outstanding Fees**

Students must pay all fees and charges by the due date specified on their training fee quote or *Student Payment Plan*. Failure to pay fees and charges may result in any or all the following until the student pays the full amount:

- suspension from attending or participating in the course
- exclusion from assessment activities
- withholding of certification documentation
- withdrawal from course
- exclusion from any future enrolments at RCC.

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RCC may refer fees and charges remaining unpaid after 60 days from the due date to a debt collection agency.

Enrolment is confirmed on payment of course fees by students or on the approval of a payment plan by the General Manager. Receipts are issued by email to students when payment is received.

Management of Payment Plans

- RCC manages payment plans from students via a Payment Plan Tracking sheet and will issue an invoice 14 days prior to the due date for payment plans as per the payment plan schedule. Failure to make payments as per the payment plan will result in the student being prevented from progressing in their course.

Students, employers or associated third parties are required to pay the course fees in full by the conclusion of the course. AQF certification documentation is issued to a student within thirty (30) calendar days if the student has successfully met all the assessment requirements of the course and all course fees owed by the student have been paid in full to RCC.

Complaints, Appeals and Feedback

RCC is firmly committed to delivering high quality services to students, clients and customers and considers their feedback, both positive and negative, as an opportunity for continuous improvement.

If a student is not satisfied with the conditions under which a fee, refund or transfer request is determined, they may appeal the decision through RCC's *Compliant Policy and Procedures*. The policy is available from RCC Reception and the RCC website www.riverinacc.edu.au.

Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

Policies

- RCC Complaints Policy and Procedures
- RCC Student Handbook
- RCC Consumer Protection Policy

Forms

- RCC Student Payment Plan Form
- RCC Complaints Form