

Fees, Charges and Refund Policy and Procedures

Reference:

1. 2014-16 VET Funding Contract VTG Program with Schedule (Final, November 2013)
2. Key Features of VET Funding Contracts (15 November 2013)
3. VTG 2014 Guidelines about Fees (v1 November 2013)
4. Contract Notifications
 - CN No 2014-09 & CN No 2014-06
5. VRQA Guidelines for VET Providers (Guidelines 1.3 & 3.3)
6. AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration (Conditions 1,2, 3 & 5 & Standards 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4)

Policy Statement

Prahran Community Learning Centre Inc. (*hereafter known as PCLC or the RTO*) will ensure that clients and appropriate staff of PCLC are made aware of the fees, charges and its refund policy and procedure for students before accepting a student for enrolment. The RTO must satisfy compliance with AQTF *Essential Conditions and Standards of Continuing Registration* and VRQA Guidelines for VET Providers in this respect.

This policy and procedure applies to fees, charges and refunds applicable to the provision of training and assessment **including** students undertaking training under Government Training Contracts and students paying full fees.

PCLC advises of its fees and charges, as well as its refund policy and procedures on its website and Invitation to Enrol and Agreed Program Delivery which the student signs prior to acceptance into a course of study with the RTO and money accepted from a student.

Students engaged in training that is funded by State or the Commonwealth Government (*government funded courses*), will be made aware of prior to enrolment where possible, or at least, at the time of enrolment of the funding that is provided by the Government and of any additional fees applicable e.g. Administration Fees, Course Fees, Membership Fees and Material Fees.

Fees are non-transferable to other students or other institutions.

A Tuition Fee Payment Plan may be granted to eligible students in exceptional circumstances.

PCLC reserves the right to defer or cancel a course, change course start date, or change course curriculum/programs.

PCLC follows *Option 3* of AQTF Essential Conditions for Continuing Registration (*Financial Management*), ie

- PCLC will not be required a deposit or more than \$1000; and
- PCLC will not require payment of additional fees of more than \$1500 at any one time.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is for PCLC to supply each individual with a clear details of all fees, charges and its refund policy and procedures **prior to, or at the time of** enrolment through the provision of appropriate documentation that is fair, consistent in approach, reasonable and covers scenarios/circumstances relating to withdrawal by the student, course cancellation, closure of the RTO and any other reasonable matter.

Responsibility

The Principal Executive Officer has the responsibility of setting compulsory student fees and makes sure that fees are reviewed, updated and approved annually.

The Education Manager is responsible for assessing and approving refunds in accordance with this policy.

Scope

This policy and procedures applies to fees, charges and refunds applicable to the provision of training, including students undertaking training under the VET Funding Contract VTG Program, and students paying full fees.

Definitions

1. **Tuition Fee:** The fee charged for the delivery of the training and assessment.
2. **Administration Fee:** The fee charged for processing enrolment applications.
3. **Materials Fee:** The charge to cover the cost of manuals, resources, consumables and or other materials required by the specific course.
4. **Course Fee:** Full Fee charged for a course which is inclusive of administrative fee, tuition fee and where applicable, material fee.
5. **Course Start/Commencement Date:** The first date of the course in which the student is enrolled as indicated on the RTO's Invitation to Enrol and Agreed Program Delivery and the RTOs attendance rolls.
6. **Additional Charges:** This may include follow up charges associated with late or non-payment, overdue fees, dishonor cheques fees, etc.
7. **Accredited Programs:** Programs which provide state and or/national recognition in accordance with the Australian Quality Framework.
8. **Concession:** The maximum fee which a holder of a recognised concession card may be charged. Recognised Concession Card include:
 - a) Commonwealth Health Care Card;
 - b) Pensioner Concession Card; and
 - c) Veteran's Gold Card
9. **Eligible Individual:** A student who is entitled to a funded place in a qualification/ accredited program as per the current VET Funding Contract VTG Program.

Payment Arrangements

1. Irrespective of the availability and receipt of government subsidies by PCLC, employer, referring agency or student, it is the requirement of PCLC that where tuition fees, administration fees or other charges are applicable, these must be paid at the beginning of each term and not for individual classes.
2. This fees and charges ate to be paid in Australian dollars.
3. Students commencing part way through a term will be required to pay on a pro-rata basis.
4. Late payments will not take into account missed classes.
5. The fee structure for all ACFE funded courses is consistent with the '*Ministerial Directions on Fees and Charges*', as per the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.
6. All students will be issued with a receipt and a copy of the receipt is kept on file. Payments are recorded on a weekly program incoming money sheet and also in the course payment book.
7. Course costs include tea/coffee/class notes/handouts. Students will be required to provide their own books, pens, pencils, etc.
8. Excursion costs are not included in the course costs.

9. If any student is experiencing financial difficulties, they are encouraged to notify the appropriate PLCL staff and a suitable payment arrangement may be made.

Low Class Numbers (*Running classes at a loss, ie when class numbers are less than the number stipulated*)

In general classes will be cancelled if two days before the start of the class there are less than the required number enrolled. It is important that classes which are subsidised by government funding operate on their stipulated minimum numbers. The Committee of Management has the discretion to allow some classes to proceed, even if they are operating on less than the required minimum. The basis of this decision would include:

- a. Re-negotiate tutor/rental fee component;
- b. Subsidy available for the course;
- c. Support for a new, valuable program; and
- d. Firm belief that this course must be provided.

Non-Payment of Fees

If the student/employer/school/referring agency does not pay all fees and charges by the due date they are deemed to be a PCLC debtor. Late payment of fee may incur a penalty fee, which is determined by the Principal Executive Officer. Failure to pay a debt within a timeframe set by the PEO of the original due date, may result in any or all of the following, until the full amount is paid:

1. Suspension of the student from attending or participating in the course;
2. Loss of access to PCLC resources, IT systems, etc.;
3. Loss of access to enrolment information and academic transcripts;
4. Inability to graduate; and
5. Termination of the enrolment.

Fees, Charges and Refunds

No	Scenario/Circumstances	PCLC's Policy
1.	PCLC cancels a course before it commences.	Full Refund within 10 working days.
2.	PCLC cancels the course before its expected end date.	Balance of course fees paid for that portion of the course not yet delivered will be refunded within 10 working days.
3.	PCLC defers the course start date and the new date is unacceptable to the student.	Full refund within 10 working days of notice of rescheduling.
4.	Student does not commence the course on the start date and subsequently provides a written notice of withdrawal from the course within 5 or more working days.	Full refund less Administration Fee within 10 working days.
5.	Student commences in the course and completes any portion of a term and withdraws.	No Refund
6.	Student does not return to their course after a term break and subsequently provides a written notice of	No Refund

	withdrawal from the course.	
7.	Student provides written notice of withdrawal less than 5 days before course commencement by student	No refund
8.	Extenuating Circumstances (<i>circumstances that prevent the student from attending scheduled course dates that may include but not limited to sudden illness or injury, family or personal matters, or other reasons that are out of the ordinary. Evidence must be successfully provided to support the student's circumstances which indicate that the student is unable to continue their studies and would not reasonably be able to continue</i>).	At the discretion of the PEO, with consultation with the Education Manager – based on % of course completed and shall be assessed on a case by case situation.
9.	Issuance of a replacement qualification testamur or Statement of Attainment where the original document has already been provided to the student.	\$20 for each document
10.	Issuance of a Statement of Attainment on withdrawal, cancellation or transfer, prior to completing the qualification/course, provided the student has paid in full for the tuition related to the units/modules to be shown on the Statement of Attainment.	No charge
11.	Student requests unit of competency/module resit.	No charge
12.	Student requests supplementary assessment/reassessment.	No charge
13.	Unit of Competency/module repeat	Subject to the unit of competency/module to undertake, the cost may vary depending on the duration required to complete the unit/module, assessment requirements, consumables or other costs incurred by PCLC.
14.	PCLC cancels the student's enrolment in the course, because of students repeated misbehaviour, misconduct or breach of Student's Code of Conduct	No Refund
15.	Students External Appeal Fees	Where the student elects to appeal a decision by PCLC, using the RTOs external appeals body (ACPET) and charges are incurred, the student is required to pay 50% of the cost. Where the external appeal findings are in favour of the student, PCLC will refund the student any fees paid to the external appeal body within 10 working days.
16.	Student receives academic exemption from a course since enrolled in it. (Credit Transfer).	No charge
17.	Student's RPL Assessment Fee.	Fee on application
18.	Closure of PCLC.	Balance of course fees paid for that portion of the course not yet delivered will be

		refunded within 10 working days or full refund if the course did not commence
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Refund Application

Refund application must be made in writing and submitted to the Education Manager, using the RTO's Refund Application Form, *(available on request from the Education Manager)*, stating reasons and relevant details and supported by appropriate documentation, *where appropriate*. All refunds must be approved by the Principal Executive Officer. Refunds will be made with 14 days of receipt of a written application and will include a statement explaining how the refund was calculated. A refund will be paid directly to the student or the person who made the payment.

The Refund Application Form must be maintained in their individual student files.

Note: Refund applications will not be processed where the signature on the Refund Application Form does not match the student's signature or the original payee or their authorised representative.

Complaints and Appeals

All students have the right to appeal a refund decision by PCLC. Students wishing to access PCLC Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure should contact the Client Services Officer or access it from the RTO's website.

This policy, and the availability of the complaints and appeal processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

The RTO's dispute resolution processes do not remove the student's right to pursue other legal remedies where they feel necessary.

Important Information

1. Information is correct at time of creation but may change without notice.
2. PCLC reserves the right to withhold any Certification of Qualifications achieved by the student, if student fees remain outstanding.

Relevant Documents

1. Course Fee Breakdown
2. Refund Log
3. Application for Refund

VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Document Title	Version No	Key Words	Approval Date	Author	Approved by	Amendment
Fees and Concession Policy	One	Fees and concession	07/10	Education Manager	Director	N/A
Course Fees – Policy and Procedures	Two	Course fees	06/13	Client Services Officer	Principal Executive Officer	Updated to include breakdown of fees and other charges
Fees, Charges & Refund Policy & Procedures	One	Refund	03/14	Education Compliance Manager	Principal Executive Officer	Updated to reflect currency and different scenarios for refunds