



VET Student Loan Policy

Policy Category:	RTO Operational Policy
Policy Number: 2.014	Date written: July 2014
Related Governance / Enabling Policies:	
Related Operational Policies:	Learner Fees and Refund Policy, Learner Recruitment, Enrolment and Induction Policy, Fairness and Opportunities Policy, Learner Complaints / Grievances and Appeals Policy, Statement of VET STUDENT LOAN Tuition Assurance
Related Standards:	<i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015. VET Administrative Information for Providers September 2015</i>
Related Legislation:	<i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i>
Policy Owner	Manager Adult Learning
Person(s) Responsible for Policy:	Enquiries and Information Officer, Administration Officer, Compliance Coordinator, Team Leader Adult Learning Offerings, Manager Adult Learning

Purpose

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre (Melbourne) Inc, trading as Gowrie Victoria, champions good early and middle childhood education and care. We commit to supporting learners in all facets of their further education and offer various ways to fund their qualifications. This policy outlines VET Student Loan requirements and information to ensure learners have an understanding of the scheme and Gowrie Victoria's obligations as VET Student Loan provider.

Scope

This policy applies to all Gowrie Victoria learners wishing to apply for VET Student Loan assistance to fully or partially fund their qualification tuition fees.

Principles

- All eligible learners wishing to undertake a Diploma Early Childhood Education and Care must be offered VET Student Loan
- All eligible learners wishing to undertake Diploma of School Age Education and Care or Advanced Diploma must be offered VET Student Loan after 1st July 2017 only
- No learner should be compelled to undertake a VET Student Loan
- Learners must be fully informed about VET Student Loan prior to making a decision to incur a VET Student Loan debt
- There is a two business day cooling off period once the person has received the electronic Commonwealth Confirmation Form (eCAF) via email
- There is a census date by which the learner may withdraw without incurring a VET Student Loan debt. The census date is a minimum of 20% of the time between start and finish of a unit of study.
- The Diploma has been capped at \$10,000 and the Advance Diploma has been capped at \$5,000.

VET FEE Help

VET FEE Help ceased on 31st December 2016 and learners that accessed VET FEE Help prior to 1st January 2017 and that have opted-in to before 31st March 2017 are still able to access VET FEE Help for any census dates prior to 1st January 2018. Further information can be found on: <https://www.education.gov.au/vet-fee-help-students>

VET Student Loan

VET Student Loan is a government loan scheme that can assist a learner to pay their tuition fees. The loan is provided to a learner by their approved training provider and funded by the Australian Government. Learners start to re-pay their loan through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) once their income reaches the 'compulsory repayment threshold'. The threshold is adjusted each year and is available on the ATO website (www.ato.gov.au)

Is there a loan fee?

A fee applies for some learners. A fee of 20% of the loan applies for VET Student Loan loans accessed by full fee paying / fee for service (FFS) learners. The fee does not count towards a learner's FEE-HELP Limit.

You will **not** acquire the loan fee if you're a learner who is subsidised by the Victoria government.

How much can I borrow?

Eligible people can borrow up to their HELP FEE limit. The HELP FEE limit is the total amount available to eligible learners under both the VET Student Loan schemes. This means that any amount you borrow under either VET Student Loan or Student Loan (Higher education) will reduce your Student Loan balance until you have reached the Student Loan limit.

The FEE-HELP limit changes every year. For 2017, the FEE-HELP limit is \$100,879 for most learners. For information, visit: www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Study-and-training-support-loans/View-your-loan-balance-online/

This is a lifetime limit and is not reset by any repayments that are made.

The amount of a VET Student Loan for a course is capped. The Diploma courses are capped at \$10,000 and the Advanced Diploma is capped at \$5,000. This amount might not be sufficient to cover all the tuition fees for the course. The learner is responsible for paying the gap fee.

Am I eligible for VET Student Loan?

A person may be *eligible for VET Student Loan if they:*

- are an Australian citizen or permanent humanitarian visa holder (resident in Australia for the duration of the unit) or be a qualifying New Zealand citizen; and
- the FEE-HELP balance is more than \$0 and is sufficient to cover the amount required; and
- meet the Tax File Number (TFN) requirements
- are a full fee-paying / fee for service learner or are subsidised by the Victorian Government – Skills First Program and are studying an approved diploma or advanced diploma level course with an approved course provider at a campus in Australia

Census Date

The Census Date is a published date set by your training provider, applicable to your enrolment. Each course has at least 3 census dates. It is an important date as it is the last day to submit / or withdraw from your course without incurring a VET Student Loan debt. The below circumstances apply:

- A person eligible for VET Student Loan and has requested VET Student Loan to cover their tuition fees, who withdraws from a unit on or before their census date **will not** incur a VET Student Loan debt in that unit(s).
- Persons who have requested VET Student Loan and are actively enrolled after the census date **will** attract a VET Student Loan debt in the unit(s) of study for which they're enrolled.
- A person who withdraws from a unit(s) after the published census date for that unit(s) of study **will** attract a VET Student Loan debt for that unit(s).

Re-crediting a VET Student Loan balance

Persons who withdraw from a unit(s) of study after their census date, fail to satisfactorily complete a unit(s) of study, may apply to have their Student Loan balance re-credited with respect to the unit, if they believe special circumstances apply

Special Circumstances

Persons who withdraw from a unit after their census date in a unit(s) of study, or who have been unable to successfully

complete a unit(s); for which they believe is due to special circumstances, may apply to have their Student Loan balance re-credited for the affected unit(s) only.

Gowrie Victoria will re-credit the person's VET Student Loan balance if it is satisfied that special circumstances apply, where:

- The turn of events were beyond the person's control; and
- The turn of events did not make their full impact on the person until on, or after the census date; and
- The turns of events were such that it was / is impracticable for the person to complete the requirements for the unit(s).

For the turn of events to be beyond a person's control, the state of affairs should be that which a reasonable person would regard as not being due to the person's action or inaction, directly or indirectly, and for which the person is not responsible.

The circumstances must be deemed unusual, uncommon or abnormal to be considered special circumstances.

What does not constitute Special circumstances

- Poor knowledge or comprehension of requirements for VET Student Loan assistance; or
- A person's inability to repay a VET Student Loan balance.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document the following refers to:

- The Act - the Higher Education Support Act 2003
- Person/s - past, current and / or potential learners of Gowrie Victoria, who requested and were accessed as eligible for VET Student Loan for their tuition fees.
- Census Date - a published date, for each eligible qualification, set by Gowrie Victoria (refer to definition on page 2).
- Tuition Fees - fees for a VET Unit of Study that is approved for VET Student Loan and applies to persons who are, or would be entitled to VET Student Loan assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A and of the Act.
- Unit of study or VET Unit of Study - unit of study approved for VET Student Loan that a person may undertake with the training provider
- The Department - Commonwealth of Australia department, responsible for administering the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

Related Documents/Procedures/Forms:	Location:
Learner Recruitment, Enrolment and Induction Policy, Enrolment Form	S:\1 Tools to do the job\4 Policies and Procedures CURRENT POLICIES\RTO Operational Policies\2.014 VET Student Loan Policy

It is the responsibility of each employee, or those mentioned within the policy scope, to ensure that they are aware of changes and updates to policies. All employees must ensure that they have the most current version of a policy. Please refer to the electronic policy for the most current version.

Employee acceptance of and agreement with Policy content and conditions:

Name:	Signature:	Date:
--------------	-------------------	--------------

Human Resource/ Manager witness:

Name:	Signature:	Date:
--------------	-------------------	--------------

Date	Version	Author	Revision Description
July 2014	1	Simon Daniel	New Policy
November 2015	2	Michele Haywood	Updated to new policy template, hyperlinked to replace old information within document, revised location, updated with new VFH information
May 2017	3	Nicole Hochuli	Updated new policy with VET Student Loan information

Policy Name: VET Student Loan Policy
Version: 3 – Published June 2017

S:\1. Tools to do the Job\4. Policies and Procedures\1. MASTER POLICIES RESTRICTED\CURRENT POLICIES Word Documents\RTO Operational Policies\2.014 VET Student Loan Policy V3.docx