

## Tuition Fee Refund and Course Withdrawal Policy

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### 1. Background

Gateway Business College (GBC) has a legal obligation to act fairly and with integrity in its financial arrangements with students. This obligation applies to refunding tuition fees to students who withdraw from a course of study, defer, take a leave of absence or change their enrolment.

### 2. Purpose

The *Tuition Fee Refund and Course Withdrawal Policy* outlines principles and procedures to ensure that all GBC students are protected within the financial terms and conditions of their enrolment in a course of study.

This policy establishes the rights of students to receive a refund of tuition fees should they defer, take a leave of absence, change their enrolment or withdraw from a course.

This policy establishes the rights of students to receive a refund of tuition fees under certain circumstances.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all financial contractual arrangements that students enter into with GBC, including domestic and international students. This policy applies to all staff and students.

### 4. Definitions

**Academic Board:** The Academic board is responsible for academic governance at GBC. The Academic Board reports and advises the Corporate Governance Board on academic activity. This board oversees academic activities such as teaching, learning, scholarship, research, course approval, student outcomes, academic standards and academic policy.

**Administrative date:** The date by which students must complete their enrolment in a GBC course. After this date, students may be required to pay late fees to submit payments and forms.

**Census date:** The last date that students can withdraw from a subject or course with a guaranteed full fee refund.

**Change of enrolment:** A change in a student's study plan. This includes withdrawal from a subject, enrolment in an additional subject, or mode of study.

**Current student:** A person currently enrolled in a GBC course.

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**Deferral:** Postponing the commencement of study.

**Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act):** The established legislative requirements and standards for the quality assurance of Australian education and training institutions offering courses to international students who are studying in Australia on a student visa. ESOS provides tuition fee protection for international students.

**Leave of Absence:** Time away from study without academic penalty at any point in a course, granted on compassionate or health grounds.

**Prospective student:** A person who intends to apply for admission to a GBC course.

**Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS):** A system operated by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training that enables CRICOS-registered higher education providers to confirm and report changes to the enrolment of international students.

**Tuition fees:** Fees payable for each study period. Fees are incurred by students who are enrolled in a subject or course at census date.

**Withdrawal:** Un-enrolling from a course or subject. Withdrawal prior to census date does allow for a tuition fee refund. Withdrawal after census date does not allow for a tuition fee refund. Under certain circumstances, usually compassionate grounds, a full tuition fee refund may be granted withdrawal occurs after the census date.

### 5. Principles

GBC will comply with all legal, legislative and regulatory requirements that apply to tuition fee refund and course withdrawal.

GBC will act with integrity and treat students consistently and fairly in matters related to enrolment, tuition fee refund and course withdrawal.

GBC will ensure prospective and current students have access to accurate, relevant and current information regarding enrolment terms and conditions, administration and census dates, tuition fee refund and course withdrawal on the GBC website, student handbook, student portal, Moodle LMS, marketing materials.

GBC will ensure students are reminded of upcoming dates that affect their enrolment, tuition fees, course withdrawal and tuition fee refund options through email communication, announcements on the GBC website, GBC social media platforms, student portal, Moodle LMS, in class, and on-campus.

This policy is aligned with national legislation and regulatory requirements, including the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)*.

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## 6. Procedures

### 6.1 Information to students

Prospective and current students will have access to the following information as provided on the GBC website, GBC social media platforms, student handbook, student portal, Moodle LMS, subject outlines:

- Application dates, enrolment dates and other relevant administration dates
- Census dates each semester
- Course fees
- The terms and conditions that govern course fees and enrolment
- Support services
- Contact details for student enquiries
- All forms identified below are available online
- All forms identified below will be available on campus from a Student Administration Officer
- Guidelines for how to apply for a tuition fee refund, course deferral, leave of absence, change of enrolment, course withdrawal
- Instructions for grievances, complaints and appeals
- Applications submitted after the administrative due date will incur a late fee
- Students must submit change of enrolment forms before the census date to avoid fees and charges.

### 6.2 Deferral

Students admitted to a GBC course may defer commencing for twelve (12) months. To defer, admitted the student must complete a *Course Deferral Form*.

A student who has successfully deferred commencement does not need to reapply to commence the course in the following year.

### 6.3 Leave of absence

An enrolled student may apply for a leave of absence due to extenuating circumstances that affect their ability to temporarily continue their course of study. To apply for a leave of absence, the student must complete a *Leave of Absence Form*.

A student can apply for a leave of absence of up to twelve (12) months.

### 6.4 Change of enrolment

A student may withdraw from a subject, enrol in an additional subject, or change their mode of study after they have enrolled.

Students are encouraged to seek advice from a Student Administration Officer before changing their enrolment as it may affect course progression, course completion, eligibility for a tuition fee refund or student visa status.

Prior to census date, students may change their enrolment details online via the student portal. Or they may seek assistance from a Student Administration Officer on campus. After the census date, students must complete a *Late Change of Enrolment Form*. A late change of enrolment may affect any access to a tuition fee refund.

### 6.4 Course withdrawal

To withdraw from a course, a student must complete a *Course Withdrawal Form*.

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A student who submits a *Course Withdrawal Form* will be encouraged to meet with the Course Coordinator to discuss their reasons for withdrawing from the course and future options for study.

If a student who withdraws from a GBC course wishes to return to study in the same course, they must reapply for admission.

### **6.4 International students**

International students are entitled to apply for a course deferral or leave of absence, change their enrolment or withdraw from a course of study in which they are enrolled. However, they must ensure they are aware of the effect it will have on their student visa conditions.

A Student Administration Officer will liaise with an international student who intends to amend their enrolment to ensure they are aware of its effect on their student visa conditions.

GBC has an obligation to report any international student enrolment changes to the Australian Government using the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).

### **6.5 Tuition Fee Refunds**

In the case that a course is discontinued, students will be automatically refunded 100% of course fees paid for any part of the course that is not delivered.

For tuition fee refunds due to deferral, leave of absences, change of enrolment or course withdrawal, a student must complete a Refund Request Form online or seek assistance on campus from a Student Administration Officer.

An approved tuition fee refund will be transferred to the bank account or credit card that was used to pay the course tuition fee, unless otherwise specified by the student.

### **6.4 Refund conditions for course deferral or withdrawal**

A full refund of course tuition fees will be provided by GBC if the student defers or withdraws from the course of study prior to the census date

If a student defers or withdraws from a course after the census date, they are not entitled to a course tuition fee refund unless special or extenuating circumstances apply. The Dean is responsible for making this decision and may do so in consultation with the Academic Board.

### **6.4 Refund conditions for subject deferral or withdrawal (change of enrolment)**

A full refund for the subject tuition fee will be provided by GBC if the student changes their enrolment prior to the census date.

If a student changes their enrolment after the census date, they are not entitled to a subject tuition fee refund unless special or extenuating circumstances apply. The Dean is responsible for making this decision and may do so in consultation with the Academic Board.

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## 7. Records

Records associated with this policy will be maintained according to the Records Management Policy.

## 8. Related legislation

- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011
- TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
- The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code 2018)

## 9. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Corporate Governance Board every three years, or more frequently should the Board deem it necessary.

## Version Control

Document History			
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<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Date</b>	
1.		01.03.2017	
2.	Policy Reviewed and new policy code applied, details of policy related record and Related legislation inserted	23.03.2023	