1. Purpose and Objectives
These procedures detail the processes, implications and outcomes for students who seek to withdraw from a course/s and have financial liability removed. These procedures enact the Higher Education Support Act 2003 [10] and PPL 3.40.01 Student Fees - Policy [14].

For information regarding Academic Withdrawal from Courses, students should refer to PPL 3.50.02a Academic Withdrawal from Courses – Policy [15].

2. Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Study Period – a semester, teaching period, trimester, MBBS rotation period or research quarter.

SSAF - Student Services and Amenities Fee.

3. Procedures Scope/Coverage

These procedures apply to all current and former students of The University of Queensland.

4. Procedures Statement

These procedures provide detailed instructions for you to determine if your circumstances warrant an application for removal of financial liability after the census date and what to include with your application.

If you are enrolled in a course and withdraw after the course census date [16], you remain financially liable for any student contribution amount, HECS-HELP loan, FEE-HELP loan or tuition fees incurred for the course. If you withdraw due to special circumstances (for example, on medical grounds) you can apply to have your financial liability removed.

Removal of financial liability after the census date may include having:

- FEE-HELP debt remitted and balance re-credited;
- HECS-HELP debt remitted;
- Up-front student contributions credited or refunded;
- Tuition fees credited or refunded.

5. Important Notes

- Your application, Personal Statement and any supporting documents must be in English. An official translation in English must be included with your application for any supporting documentation issued in another language.
- If you submit electronic documents in support of your application, the requirements of PPL 3.40.05 Electronic Documents Submitted by Students [13] apply and you must retain original or certified copies of these documents for the period specified in the application. You may be required to produce these for verification.
- If you submit hard copies of supporting documents, these must be original or certified copies.
- Separate applications must be submitted if you are applying for the removal of financial liability for more than one study period.
- This application cannot be used to seek withdrawal without academic penalty.
- Determination of special circumstances is based largely on the information and documentation provided by you with your application. The University has no obligation to seek...
additional supporting information from persons (e.g. doctors) you identify in your application.

- For assistance in preparing your application, contact the UQ Union (refer to section 8.1 for more information).
- The student services and amenities fee (SSAF) is non-refundable after the census date and The University of Queensland is not able to remove a SA-HELP debt once it is incurred (see https://my.uq.edu.au/SSAF due dates).

6. Student Eligibility Requirements

For your application to be considered, you must satisfy ALL requirements outlined in sections 6.1 and 6.2. Supporting documentation should also be supplied to support your claims. Any requirement that is not met will result in an unsuccessful application.

6.1 Basic eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for removal of financial liability due to special circumstances, the following criteria must be met:

- you were enrolled in the course(s) after the census date; and
- you did not complete the requirements of the course(s); and
- your application is submitted in writing; and
- the application is made within 12 months from the date you withdrew from the course(s) or, if you did not withdraw from the course(s), within 12 months from the end of the study period during which the course(s) was or was to be undertaken.

6.2 Special circumstances criteria

You will be required to demonstrate (with a personal statement and supporting documentation) that special circumstances are applicable based on the requirements outlined in sections 6.2.1 to 6.2.3. All three conditions must be met.

6.2.1 Special circumstances were beyond your control

The circumstances which led to your withdrawal or inability to complete the course requirements must be considered by a reasonable person not to be due to your action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which you were not responsible. The situation must be unusual, uncommon or abnormal.

6.2.2 Special circumstances did not make their full impact until on or after the census date

To meet this condition the special circumstance must have occurred:

i. before the census date, but deteriorated significantly after the census date; or
ii. before the census date, but the full effect or magnitude did not become apparent until on or after the census date; or
iii. on or after the census date.

6.2.3 Special circumstances made it impracticable for you to complete the course(s) requirements
To meet this condition you need to demonstrate that it was impracticable for you to complete the course(s) requirements for the study period, because you were unable to, for example:

i. undertake the necessary private study required, or attend sufficient lectures or tutorials or meet other compulsory attendance requirements in order to meet your compulsory course requirements; or

ii. complete all assessment tasks and/or examinations and any special course requirements.

NOTE: Failure to meet any progressive requirements of the course(s) prior to the special circumstances developing will not necessarily mean that your special circumstances made it impracticable for you to complete the course(s) requirements. For example, if you needed to pass all assessment items in order to pass the course, and you had already failed one of those assessment items before your special circumstance (e.g. ill health) occurred, you could not have passed the course even if you had not fallen ill, therefore your application is likely to be refused.

6.2.4. Examples of special circumstances

Medical reasons

Medical reasons must be supported by certified copies of a medical certificate(s) and/or a medical statement(s) that substantiates that:

• the condition existed prior to the census date, continued past that date, and resulted in significant deterioration after the census date to the extent that you were unable to complete the course(s);

or

• the medical condition only became known after the census date and was severe enough that you were unable to complete the course(s).

Family or personal reasons

Family or personal reasons must be supported by certified copies of documents from your health care provider(s) or counsellor(s) that substantiates your claim.

Example 1: A member of your family suffers from a severe medical condition and, after the census date, you were required to provide full-time care (which is substantiated in your supporting documentation). As a result, you were unable to complete the course(s).

Example 2: A member of your immediate family or partner died after the census date and you were affected to the extent that you were unable to complete your course(s) (must be substantiated by documentary evidence).

Financial reasons

Financial reasons must be supported by certified copies of documents that may include but are not exclusive to: bank statements, list of expenses, bankruptcy notice.

Example: There is a significant and unexpected change to your financial circumstances or to those of a third party who supports you that occurred after the census date. This unexpected change must have been sufficiently large that it would be unreasonable to expect you would be able to complete the course(s) (must be substantiated by documentary evidence).

Employment Related Reasons
Employment related reasons must be supported by relevant supporting documentation as a statement from your employer to substantiate that, after the census date, your employment status or arrangements changed unexpectedly due to circumstances beyond your control, and as a result you were unable to complete the course(s).

Example 1: You were employed full-time whilst studying. After the census date, your employer unexpectedly increased your hours of employment in circumstances that were beyond your control. As a result, you were unable to complete the course(s).

Example 2: You were employed full-time whilst studying. After the census date, your employer directs that you be transferred to a different state/country. As a result, you were unable to complete the course(s).

Special circumstances do not include:

- a lack of knowledge or understanding of census dates or cancellation procedures;
- a lack of knowledge or understanding of the HECs-HELP scheme (Commonwealth Supported students only);
- a lack of knowledge or understanding of the FEE-HELP loan scheme (FEE-HELP students only);
- forgetting you are enrolled in a course(s);
- forgetting to drop a course(s);
- an inability to repay a HECs-HELP or FEE-HELP debt;
- choosing to increase hours of work or to undertake additional employment.

7. Application Process

7.1 Submitting an application

To submit an application for the removal of financial liability due to special circumstances, you must:

1. Read these procedures to determine if you satisfy the eligibility requirements outlined in section 6.
2. Apply for removal of financial liability via my.UQ.
3. Include a Personal Statement explaining the details of your case and the special circumstances which prevented the completion of your course(s).
4. Include supporting documentation relating to your case. An official translation in English is required if this documentation has been issued in another language.

Each application will be determined on its merits.

7.2 Notice of decision

You will be notified of the outcome of your application within 45 calendar days of the date the application was received by the University. The Notice of Decision will be sent to your student email account and will contain the following information:

- the decision;
- reasons for the decision;
- evidence or other materials used to make the decision;
- how to apply for a review (if your application is refused).

7.2.1 Approved applications
Where an application is approved, the process applied for the repayment, re-crediting or remission of financial liability will depend upon your fee type and the method of original payment used, as detailed below.

**NOTE:** Payments made by credit card will usually be refunded to that same credit card.

**HECS-HELP loan students**

Students who obtained a HECS-HELP loan for their student contribution amount for their course(s) will have their debt removed (this includes any amounts incurred due to indexation). Students who are approved removal of their student contribution amount for a study period on or before 31 December 2011 will also have their Student Learning Entitlement (SLE) re-credited to an amount equal to the EFTSL value of the course(s).

**Partial Up-front HECS-HELP students**

Students who partially paid their student contribution amount for their course(s) up-front will have this amount credited to their UQ student account. Where a student requires a refund of monies paid rather than a credit towards a future study period’s liability, the student can apply for a refund via my.UQ.

The remaining HECS-HELP debt will be removed (this includes any amounts incurred due to indexation). Students who are approved removal of their student contribution amount for a study period with a census date on or before 31 December 2011 will also have their Student Learning Entitlement (SLE) re-credited to an amount equal to the EFTSL value of the course(s).

**Full Up-front HECS-HELP students**

Students who paid their student contribution amount up-front will have this amount credited to their UQ student account. Where a student requires a refund of monies paid rather than a credit towards a future study period’s liability, the student can apply for a refund via my.UQ.

Students who are approved removal of their student contribution amount for a study period with a census date on or before 31 December 2011 will also have their Student Learning Entitlement (SLE) re-credited to an amount equal to the EFTSL value of the course(s).

**FEE-HELP loan students**

Students who incurred a FEE-HELP debt for their course(s) will have their debt removed (this includes any amounts incurred due to indexation) and their FEE-HELP balance re-credited.

**Tuition Fee paying students**

Students who paid their tuition fees up-front will have this amount credited to their UQ student account. Where a student requires a refund of monies paid rather than a credit towards a future study period’s liability, the student can apply for a refund via my.UQ.

**Sponsored students**

Students who are sponsored by a third party will have the money refunded/re-credited to the third party who paid the fees.

**7.2.2 Refused applications**
If you think the decision made by the Academic Registrar in relation to your application is wrong, you have the right to apply to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for a review of that decision. Refer to section 8.1 for more information.

8. Appeals Process

8.1 Submitting a review request

The time limit for applying for a review of a removal of financial liability decision is 28 calendar days after the day you first received the Notice of Decision from the Academic Registrar.

If you are seeking a review of the decision you must apply in writing to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and state:

- you are submitting a Review Request for a Removal of Financial Liability Decision; and
- your full name, student number, and current mailing address; and
- the date of the Academic Registrar’s decision; and
- your grounds for requesting a reconsideration of the decision; and
- attach of supporting documents which you did not provide previously, which clearly demonstrates:
  - the full impact of your circumstances occurred either:
    - before the census date, but deteriorated significantly after the census date; or
    - before the census date, but the full effect or magnitude did not become apparent until on or after the census date; or
    - on or after the census date.
  - how your circumstances made it impracticable for you to complete the course requirements for the study period, as you were unable to:
    - undertake the necessary private study required, or attend sufficient lectures or tutorials or meet other compulsory attendance requirements in order to meet your compulsory course requirements; or
    - complete all assessment tasks or examinations and any special course requirements.
  - your circumstances were unusual, uncommon or abnormal, and were not due to your action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which you were not responsible.

The review request letter should be sent to:

Manager, Student Fees
C/- Student Centre, St Lucia Campus
The University of Queensland QLD 4072

Should you require assistance with preparing your review request, please contact the SHOC Education and Postgraduate Advocate, UQ Union Complex. Students should note that there is no cost associated with lodging a review request.

SHOC Contact Information:

St Lucia campus:
Telephone: +61 7 3346 3400
Internet: http://www.uqunion.uq.edu.au [19]
Email: shoc@uqu.com.au [20]
In person: Building 21, Level 1, Student Union Complex, St Lucia Campus, The University of Queensland
8.2 Acknowledgement of review

The University will acknowledge receipt of your review request to your student email account.

8.3 Notice of Review Decision

During the review process, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will:

- review the original decision;
- assess any new evidence provided by you;
- make a decision (either confirming, varying or setting aside the original decision and substituting a new decision).

The Notice of Review Decision will be sent to your student email account as well as the mailing address stated in your review letter within 45 calendar days from the date on which your review request was received by the University. This letter will contain the following information:

- the decision;
- reasons for the decision;
- evidence or materials used to make the decision;
- other avenues of appeal (if your review request is not approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)).

8.3.1 Approved review requests

Refer to section 7.2.1 for more information.

8.3.2 Refused review requests

HECS-HELP & FEE-HELP students

HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP students who are dissatisfied with the review decision have the right to appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). The application must be lodged within 28 calendar days after the day you first received the reviewer’s decision.

If you apply to the AAT for review of a decision, you may have to pay a filing fee of $816 (as at 1 July 2012); this may be partially refunded for successful applications. Please note that this fee is subject to change and you should confirm the fee with the AAT before you lodge an appeal. Your appeal cannot proceed until you pay the filing fee. In some circumstances a reduced filing fee of $100 may be payable, in which case no refund would be made if the application is successful.

The Secretary of the Department of Education and Training, or his/her delegate, will be the respondent for cases heard by the AAT.
Contact Information:
Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) Queensland
Deputy Registrar, Administrative Appeals Tribunal
Level 4, Harry Gibbs Building
Commonwealth Law Courts
119 North Quay
BRISBANE QLD 4000
Internet: http://www.aat.gov.au
Ph: 07 3361 3000

Tuition Fee students

International or domestic full-fee paying students have the right to take further action under
Australia’s consumer protection laws:

Contact Information:
Australian Competition & Consumer Commission
Telephone: 1300 302 502

Students may also choose to contact the UQ Union’s Legal Service at St Lucia for legal advice.

Contact Information:
Telephone: +61 7 3346 3400
Email: shoc@uqu.com.au
Internet: http://www.uqu.uq.edu.au
In person: Building 21, Level 1, Student Union Complex, St Lucia Campus, The University of
Queensland

Queensland Ombudsman

Where all avenues for escalation or appeal have been exhausted without reaching what you
consider to be a satisfactory outcome, you may take the matter to the Office of the Queensland
Ombudsman. Note however that the Ombudsman normally focuses on issues of procedural
compliance or fairness in the decision making process rather than matters concerning academic

9. Further Information

For further information in relation to the removal of financial liability, see the links below:

HECS-HELP and FEE-HELP students:

- Higher Education Support Act 2003 available at:
- Higher Education Administrative Information for Providers: student support available at:
- Study Assist website available at: http://studyassist.gov.au
- The University of Queensland’s Student Grievance Resolution Policy available at:
  https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.60.02-student-grievance-resolution
- Information on removal of financial liability available at: https://my.uq.edu.au/information-and-
services/manage-my-program/classes-timetables-and-coursework/withdrawing-course-or-

SUPERSEDED PROCEDURE ONLY FOR REFERENCE
Removal of Financial Liability Due to Special Circumstances - Procedures

Program

- The University of Queensland’s Student Charter available at: http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.60.01-student-charter

Tuition Fee students:

- The University of Queensland’s Student Grievance Resolution Policy available at: http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.60.02-student-grievance-resolution
- Information on removal of financial liability available at: https://my.uq.edu.au/information-and-services/manage-my-program/classes-timetables-and-coursework/withdrawing-course-or-program
- The University of Queensland’s Student Charter available at: https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.60.01-student-charter

Workflow State:
Approved

Evaluation Method Details:
Student Fees unit Director, Student Administration; Academic Registrar Record File F14/4242

Approval Text:
Review date reset approved by Academic Registrar on 17/1/2022.

Editors:
Mr Diego Rodriguez Perez
Mr Ian Vallely

Subscribers
Ms Caron Crossan
Ms Bronwyn Webb
Valeska Wood
Clare Moseley
Daciana Horvath UQU
Josey Jou UQU
Student Advocacy and Support
Ms Bronwyn Henderson

Custodians
Academic Registrar Mr Mark Erickson
academic.registrar@uq.edu.au

5925 reads

Subscribe to: This Procedures document


Links:
[14] https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.40.01-student-fees