

Taikura – Quality Management System

B2-P9 International Student Withdrawal and Refund Procedures

Introduction

These procedures apply to all international enrolments (new and returning) from 1 January 2019. These procedures override all previous course refund and withdrawal policy documents issued by WelTec and Whitireia.

Purpose

To provide the framework for assessing applications for refund of fees for international students.

Responsibility

The International Team (WelTec) and the Enrolment Team (Whitireia) are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Reference to Legislation

WelTec and Whitireia are signatories to The Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 (“The Code”).

Under the Code, WelTec and Whitireia are required to ensure that the fees paid by international students for educational instruction in New Zealand are secure and protected in the event of student withdrawal or the ending of educational instruction or the closure of a signatory.

WelTec and Whitireia are governed by the Crown Entities Act, the Education Act and WelTec and Whitireia Council regulations in regard to student fees management. An individual fee account is maintained for each enrolled student.

WelTec and Whitireia have mechanisms in place whereby international student fees are protected and will be returned to the student in the unlikely case of either signatory ceasing to be a signatory, or ceasing to be a provider.

Application of this policy will abide by the Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism Act 2009.

Refunds of International Student Fees will only be made in accordance with the following policy:

1. Fee Payment and Contractual Obligations

- 1.1** The Offer of Place for International Students is a contractual agreement for the full duration of study listed in the offer.
- 1.2** The Foreign Student Fee is made up of Tuition Fee, Administration Fee, Course-related costs, and the Insurance Fee for the default health and travel insurances of WelTec and Whitireia.

- 1.3 The Insurance Fee must be paid unless the use of an alternative insurance provider has been approved and confirmed in advance.
- 1.4 Full payment of all fees listed in the Offer of Place is required prior to programme start date. Enrolment will not be complete and students will not be permitted to attend class until full payment is received.
- 1.5 Making a payment indicates an acceptance of the contract for the period of one academic year (or the length of the programme if less than one year). This contract means there is an obligation to pay the fee for the year (or the length of the shorter programme).
- 1.6 There is no automatic right to a refund of fees if a student changes his/her mind about studying at WelTec or Whitireia.
- 1.7 No refunds of fees will be paid to International Students, except as expressly provided for in this policy.
- 1.8 Whitireia and WelTec will not be liable for any exchange rate loss or bank fees charged upon repayment of a refund.

2. Refund due to programme cancellation

- 2.1 If Whitireia or WelTec cancels the programme indicated on a student's Offer of Place, whether by its own accord or as required by an education quality assurance agency, an alternative programme may be made available to the student. If there is no suitable alternative, or if this alternative is not acceptable to the student, a full refund will be given.

3. Refund due to INZ decisions re visa status

- 3.1 A student who has paid fees for a programme, and subsequently has their initial visa declined by Immigration New Zealand, will be paid a full refund of fees, minus a processing fee of \$600.
- 3.2 A student who has paid fees for a programme and subsequently has their visa declined by Immigration New Zealand on the basis of poor attendance, unsatisfactory academic performance and/or late visa application is not entitled to a refund.

4. Voluntary withdrawal

- 4.1 International students may not usually withdraw from individual courses, since student visas are granted for fulltime study only.
- 4.2 Withdrawal is only confirmed when the appropriate form is completed and submitted to the International Team, who will action the withdrawal and process any refund request.

Withdrawal due to directive

- 4.3 No refund will be given if a student withdraws or is withdrawn due to a WelTec or Whitireia directive, a directive from Immigration New Zealand or other legal directive.

Withdrawal before programme start date

- 4.4 The programme start date is indicated on the Offer of Place.

4.5 If a formal withdrawal is received 14 or more days before the programme start date, 80% of the tuition fee and course related costs will be refunded.

4.6 If a formal withdrawal is received 13 days or less before programme start date up to and including the Friday before programme start date, 50% of the tuition fee and course related costs will be refunded.

Withdrawal after programme start date

4.7 No fees or costs will be refunded to students who withdraw after the programme start date.

5. Request to defer studies

5.1 Students who wish to defer their programme start to the next intake must notify the International Team (WelTec) or the Enrolment Team (Whitireia) in writing, a minimum of two weeks (14 days) before programme start date. Deferment requests received after this date will not be approved.

5.2 Deferment requests due to late issue of a student visa will be considered on a case by case basis.

5.3 Students who receive a deferment are not subsequently entitled to apply for a refund.

6. Late withdrawal due to exceptional circumstances

6.1 If events outside a student's control, such as illness, accident or an unexpected change in circumstance necessitate withdrawal from a programme of study, WelTec and Whitireia will in normal circumstances, hold the student's fees for a period of up to one year to be transferred to the next instance of the same offering. An Offer of Place will be made for the new start date. No additional transfer or refund will be made after that date.

6.2 International students who wish to apply for a fee reconsideration because of exceptional circumstances must complete the appropriate form and attach documentation of appropriate evidence that will verify the reason for withdrawal under exceptional circumstances.

7. Partial refunds

7.1 Whitireia and WelTec may, at their sole discretion, approve a partial refund on a pro-rata basis after consideration of the circumstances relevant to the case. A partial refund will be calculated after a processing fee of \$600 plus minimum 30 per cent of the tuition fees are retained. The amount of any refund granted because of exceptional circumstances will be at the discretion of the Director Business Development and will normally not include the portion of the programme already attended.

8. Impact of Permanent Residency status on International Student Fees

8.1 An international student who gains Permanent Residency or the rights to domestic student status while studying on a student visa, and provides evidence of such, is entitled to be treated as a domestic student. S/he will not receive a refund of fees for the trimester during which the

Permanent Residency is granted. However, the student will be entitled to pay domestic fees for subsequent trimesters, and will be refunded international fees for those trimesters.

8.2 For non-trimesterised programmes, international fees are payable for the full year in advance. If Permanent Residency is granted during the year, no part of the international fee for that year is refundable.

9. Processing of withdrawal and refund applications

9.1 Withdrawal and refund applications for international students are processed by the International Team (WelTec) and the Enrolment Team (Whitireia). All applications for refunds must be submitted in writing. Students seeking a refund should complete the appropriate forms and attach any relevant written evidence.

9.2 Students will receive written confirmation that an Application to Withdraw has been received. Processing of the applicable refund can take up to 20 working days to process.

9.3 Applications for fee reconsideration under Exceptional Circumstances will be considered by the Director Business Development. The applicant will be advised of the outcome of the application within 21 days.

9.4 Refund decisions will take into consideration any liability for outstanding accounts or unpaid fees. Whitireia and WelTec reserve the right to withhold payment of all or part of a refund to recover any outstanding debts a student has incurred with the organisation/s.

9.5 All approved refunds will be paid in New Zealand dollars or the equivalent of the New Zealand dollar amount converted into foreign currency to either:

- a) the offshore account from which the fees were paid, on receiving evidence that the student has returned to their home country; or
- b) the account for the recruitment agent who referred the student. This only upon evidence the student has returned to their home country and where the student has authorised this transfer in writing; or
- c) the account of another New Zealand education institution from which Whitireia or WelTec has directly received written evidence of an unconditional Offer of Place.

9.6 Refunds will not be paid directly to a student or transferred to a student's bank account in New Zealand.

Summary Table of International Student Withdrawal and Refund Conditions

Reason for Withdrawal/Refund	Information to be provided by student	Deadline for submission	Refund amount*
Refund due to programme cancellation	-	-	Full refund of all fees paid
Refund due to INZ decisions re visa status – initial visa declined by INZ	-	-	Full refund of fees, minus a processing fee of \$600
Refund due to INZ decisions re visa status – subsequent visa declined by INZ because of poor attendance, unsatisfactory academic performance and/or late visa application	-		No refund
Voluntary withdrawal 14 or more days before the programme start date	Completed Application to Withdraw form, submitted to International Team (WelTec); Enrolment Team (Whitireia)	14 or more days before the programme start date	80% of the tuition fee and course related costs; 100% of default insurance premium
Voluntary withdrawal 13 days or less before programme start date, up to and including the Friday before programme start date	Completed Application to Withdraw form, submitted to International Team (WelTec); Enrolment Team (Whitireia)	13 days or less before programme start date, up to and including the Friday before programme start date	50% of the tuition fee and course related costs; 100% of default insurance premium
Voluntary withdrawal after programme start date	Completed Application to Withdraw form, submitted to International Team (WelTec); Enrolment Team (Whitireia)	Submitted after the Friday before programme start date	No refund
Exceptional circumstances	Completed Application to Withdraw form and Exceptional Circumstances form, submitted to International Team (WelTec); Enrolment Team (Whitireia)	Within the relevant period of enrolment	At the discretion of the Director Business Development.

* *Whitireia and WelTec will not be liable for any exchange rate loss or bank fees charged upon repayment of a refund.*

International Student Withdrawal and Refund Procedure

The policy, approved 14 December 2018, will be communicated to new and returning international students:

- On the international pages of WelTec's and Whitireia's websites
- On all Offers of Place issued on or after 1 January 2019
- At International Student Orientation

Relevant forms will be updated to reflect this policy.

As a transition arrangement, students who received an unconditional Offer of Place for 2019 dated prior to 1 January 2019 may have their refunds considered under the terms and conditions of the International Student Withdrawal and Refund Policy that appears in their Offer of Place, or under the conditions of this Policy, whichever is beneficial to the student.

Process

1. All withdrawals must be submitted on the Application to Withdraw form. This form is obtainable from W&W International staff or by email at International.Support@WandW.ac.nz, International.Support.Auckland@WandW.ac.nz
2. Completed forms should be submitted by email to International.Support@WandW.ac.nz, International.Support.Auckland@WandW.ac.nz or in person to the International Compliance Officer (WelTec) or the Enrolment Team (Whitireia) with all relevant supporting documentation attached
3. Refunds will be managed by the International Compliance Officer (WelTec) and by the delegated member of the Whitireia Enrolment Team in accordance with this policy; refunds will be processed promptly and full documentation of the refund process will be maintained on the student file
4. Refund applications related to a claim of exceptional circumstances will be submitted to the GM International, who will submit, with a recommendation, to the Director, Business Development for consideration
5. All refunds will be paid in New Zealand Dollars. Refunds will be made to the following accounts as appropriate:
 - the offshore account from which the fees were paid, on receiving evidence that the student has returned to their home country; or
 - (when specifically requested), the recruitment agent who referred the student. This only upon evidence the student has returned to their home country and where the student has authorised this transfer; or
 - another New Zealand education institution from which Whitireia or WelTec has directly received written evidence of an unconditional Offer of Place.

Approved by: Directors Business Development, and Finance and Operations
14/12/2018

Date of approval:

Responsibility:

Date for review/revision: 2020

Relevant Forms

WelTec:

Application to Withdraw - <https://www.weltec.ac.nz/assets/WelTec-forms/Enrolment-forms/SF006-Withdraw-enrolment-2018-2019.pdf>

Transfer/Change Enrolment - <https://www.weltec.ac.nz/assets/WelTec-forms/Enrolment-forms/SF005-Transfer-enrolment-2018.pdf>

Fee Reconsideration under Exceptional Circumstances - <https://www.weltec.ac.nz/assets/WelTec-forms/Enrolment-forms/SF009-Withdrawal-Exceptional-Circumstances-2017.pdf>

Whitireia:

Withdrawal forms can be obtained from Information & Enrolment or from programme administrators - <https://www.whitireia.ac.nz/enrolment-information/other/withdrawal-process>