

2012 Guidelines about Fees

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a framework for the collection of tuition fees and other fees for government-funded training and further education and to set out financial and accountability requirements with regard to student fees.

These guidelines apply from 1 January 2012 to all enrolments in Victorian government-funded training and further education.

Sections 1, 2 and 4 to 9 inclusive apply to enrolments that commence on or after 1 January 2012, and to enrolments in an Apprenticeship that commenced on or after 1 July 2009.

Sections 1 and 3 to 9 inclusive apply only to enrolments that commenced on or after 1 July 2009 and prior to 1 January 2012, excluding enrolments in an Apprenticeship that commenced on or after 1 July 2009.

Section 10 applies only to enrolments that commenced prior to 1 July 2009.

SECTION 1

1. General requirements for calculation and levying of tuition fees and other fees for enrolments other than those specified in Section 10

- 1.1. For each enrolment a provider may calculate a tuition fee on the basis of an amount for each scheduled hour of government-funded training and further education which a person enrolls to undertake (rounded to the nearest dollar) in a calendar year.
- 1.2. If a course is undertaken partly in one calendar year and partly in a second or subsequent calendar year, tuition fees shall be calculated according to the fees applicable when the training is to be undertaken.
- 1.3. For the purpose of calculating tuition fees, each course is classified in one of six categories:
 - (a) Foundation Skills;
 - (b) Skills Creation;
 - (c) Apprenticeships
 - (d) Traineeships;
 - (e) Skills Building; or
 - (f) Skills Deepening.
- 1.4. The Minister will approve the classification of courses to categories and may from time to time approve adjustments to the classification of courses.

- 1.5. The provider must provide each student with an itemised list of all fees and materials required, including student tuition fees, student services and amenities fees and other fees, prior to enrolment.

SECTION 2

2. Calculation of tuition fees for enrolments in courses that commence on or after 1 January 2012, and to enrolments in an Apprenticeship that commenced on or after 1 July 2009.

- 2.1. The Minister will each year fix the amount of the maximum hourly rate payable for enrolments in each category. For the 2012 calendar year, the tuition fee schedule at Table 1 at the end of this document applies.
- 2.2. Subject to the concessions and exemptions provided for in section 4 the tuition fee payable is determined according to the hourly rate for each category.
- 2.3. A tuition fee may be charged at a rate no higher than the maximum hourly rate specified for a category for a calendar year.

SECTION 3

3. Calculation of tuition fees for enrolments in courses that commenced on or after 1 July 2009 and before 1 January 2012, excluding enrolments in an Apprenticeship that commenced on or after 1 July 2009

- 3.1. The Minister will each year fix the amount of the maximum hourly rate, and the maximum tuition fees payable for enrolments in each category. For the 2012 calendar year, the tuition fee schedule at Table 2 at the end of this document applies.
- 3.2. Subject to the concessions and exemptions provided for in section 4, the tuition fee payable is determined according to the hourly rate and maximum tuition fee specified for each category.
- 3.3. A tuition fee may be charged at a rate no higher than the maximum hourly rate specified for a category for a calendar year. The maximum fee is the maximum that may be charged for a person's total enrolments in courses within a category in a calendar year.
- 3.4. If a person enrolls in and commences more than one course within the same category in a calendar year, tuition fees already paid in that year shall be taken into account in calculating the fees applicable to the additional enrolments.
- 3.5. If a person enrolls in and commences more than one course in different categories in a calendar year, the tuition fees for each enrolment shall be calculated independently, within the maximum limit specified for each category.
- 3.6. Notwithstanding clause 3.5, the total tuition fees payable by a person in a calendar year shall not exceed a fixed annual maximum. The annual maximum for total enrolments shall be the same as the maximum applicable to the Skills Deepening category in that calendar year.

SECTION 4

4. Tuition fee concessions and exemptions

- 4.1. Providers must allow concessions on tuition fees in accordance with these guidelines.
- 4.2. For enrolments in courses in all categories other than Skills Deepening, providers must not charge a tuition fee that is more than the concession fee from a person who holds one of the following concession cards (or an alternative card or concession eligibility criterion approved by the Minister for the purposes of these guidelines):
 - a. Commonwealth Health Care Card;
 - b. Pensioner Concession Card; or
 - c. Veteran's Gold Card.
- 4.3. The concessions provided for in clause 4.2 (a) and (b) also apply to a dependant spouse or dependant child of a card holder.
- 4.4. The Minister will each year fix the amount of concession fee for the next calendar year.
- 4.5. If a person who was previously eligible for a concession under clause 4.2 or 4.3 becomes ineligible for the concession before the completion of the hours for which they have paid tuition fees, this does not affect the tuition fees payable for the enrolment.
- 4.6. If a person who was previously not eligible for a concession under clause 4.2 or 4.3 becomes eligible for a concession and then enrolls in further training within a calendar year, the person will not be liable for any further tuition fees above the maximum concession rate for that calendar year for a course in the same category.
- 4.7. The concessions provided for in clauses 4.2 and 4.3 do not apply if a person's tuition fee is being fully paid by a Commonwealth Government Agency or as part of a Commonwealth program or initiative.
- 4.8. A provider must not collect a tuition fee from a person whose enrolment is undertaken by arrangement with another education institution which provides payment to the provider for tuition.
- 4.9. A provider must not charge a tuition or other fee for an enrolment for which funding has been provided directly or indirectly by the Commonwealth Government and where a condition of the funding prohibits the imposition of a tuition or other fee.
- 4.10. A provider must not charge a tuition fee for enrolment by a person who is:
 - (a) a prisoner within the meaning of the *Corrections Act 1986* and from the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre; or
 - (b) required to undertake the course pursuant to a non-custodial order made under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*.

SECTION 5

5. Fees for recognition of prior learning within courses of government funded training and further education

- 5.1. A provider may charge a fee for assessment of recognition of prior learning only if the assessment is conducted at the request, or with the consent, of the student.
- 5.2. If a fee is charged for recognition of prior learning the amount must not exceed the actual cost of the assessment.
- 5.3. For courses eligible for VET FEE-HELP, a provider may charge a fee for recognition of prior learning only if a person enrolls in a unit of study designated for recognition of prior learning.

SECTION 6

6. Student Services and Amenities Fees

- 6.1. A provider may impose a non-academic fee (whether described as a subscription or other term) for the purpose of providing student services and amenities.
- 6.2. If a provider imposes a student services and amenities fee, the provider must give itemised details of the fee prior to enrolment.
- 6.3. If a provider imposes a student services and amenities fee, the fee must be collected and expended for the sole purpose of providing facilities, services or activities of direct benefit to students at the institution.

SECTION 7

7. Other fees

- 7.1. A provider may charge a fee to recover no more than the actual cost of providing goods or materials to be retained by a student as his or her private property. However, a student must be permitted to use equivalent goods or materials obtained from sources other than the provider.
- 7.2. A provider may charge a fee to recover the cost of incidental goods and services provided in support of a student's tuition.
- 7.3. If a provider imposes a fee as detailed under clauses 7.1 and 7.2, the provider must give itemised details of all fees and materials required prior to enrolment. Providers must advise students of when materials will be needed, to enable purchases to be spread over time.
- 7.4. A provider may not charge any fees in respect of enrolments in government-funded training and further education other than the tuition fees, recognition of prior learning fees, and student services and amenities fees referred to in these guidelines, and the fees indicated in clauses 7.1 and 7.2.

SECTION 8

8. Refunds

- 8.1. If a student withdraws, by written notice, from government-funded training or further education at any time up until 4 weeks after the scheduled commencement date of the course, the provider must refund the tuition fees paid in respect of the enrolment, and any other fees and charges paid by or on behalf of the student.
- 8.2. For the purposes of clause 8.1, if a student withdraws from only part of an enrolment, then the provider is required to refund only the portion of the tuition fee and materials fee applicable to that part of the training or further education.
- 8.3. If a course is cancelled by the provider at any time during the period of a person's enrolment, then the provider must refund the full tuition fees, the pro-rata portion of any student services and amenities fees, any incidental fees for goods and services that have not been used prior to the date of cancellation, and fees for materials that have not been used prior to the date of cancellation.
- 8.4. If a student has paid a fee for tuition which is no longer required because of recognition of prior learning, the provider must refund an amount equal to the difference between the tuition fee paid, and the tuition fee payable for the adjusted hours of tuition that are to be undertaken.
- 8.5. Notwithstanding clauses 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, and 8.4, enrolments in courses eligible for VET FEE-HELP are subject to VET FEE-HELP requirements.

SECTION 9

9. Accounts and records of tuition fees and other fees

- 9.1. The accounts and records kept by a provider must clearly distinguish income and expenditure for fee-for-service training and further education from government-funded training and further education.
- 9.2. A provider must establish and maintain a separate general ledger account to record receipt of income from fees for tuition and the payment of refunds of tuition fees.
- 9.3. A provider shall keep records, including evidence, to support any claim for compensation for revenue foregone as a result of granting concessions or exemptions.

SECTION 10

10. Tuition fees for enrolments in courses that commenced prior to 1 July 2009

- 10.1. Subject to clauses 10.3, 10.4 and 10.5 a provider must charge a tuition fee on the basis of \$1.47 for each hour in which a person is enrolled, rounded to the nearest dollar, up to a maximum of \$939 in a calendar year or continuous 12 month period of enrolment (referred to as the 'fee maintenance' tuition fee).
- 10.2. Subject to exemptions specified in section 4 of these guidelines, the minimum fee maintenance tuition fee that must be charged in respect of

total enrolments by a person in any calendar year or enrolment period is \$59.

- 10.3. The Minister may each year fix an amount by which the fee maintenance tuition fees will be adjusted for the next calendar year.
- 10.4. A provider must not charge a fee maintenance tuition fee that is more than the minimum charge \$59 from a person who is eligible for a concession according to section 4 of these guidelines.
- 10.5. A provider must not charge a fee maintenance tuition fee from a person to whom a fee exemption is applicable according to section 4 of these guidelines.
- 10.6. Fee maintenance tuition fees are only applicable to enrolments in continuous training, in which a person undertakes the next available scheduled training in the same course leading to the same qualification.
- 10.7. A provider may authorise a period of absence from otherwise continuous training and allow a person to resume later at the fee maintenance tuition fee rates.
- 10.8. If a person transfers from one provider to another during otherwise continuous training, the second provider may at its discretion charge tuition fees either at the fee maintenance rates, or according to sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 of these guidelines.
- 10.9. A provider may charge up to the maximum hourly rate applicable under section 2 or 3 of these guidelines to a course classified in the Foundation Skills category for that part of the course that is undertaken after 1 July 2009 by a person who is otherwise paying the fee maintenance tuition fee, up to the maximum specified in clause 10.1.
- 10.10. A person who enrolled or re-enrolled to continue a course from 1 January 2010 may elect to pay tuition fees according to sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 of these guidelines, instead of the fee maintenance tuition fee, until completion of the course or other termination of the enrolment.
- 10.11. If a person paying fee maintenance tuition fees for a course commenced an additional course or courses after 1 July 2009 the additional enrolment or enrolments will be subject to tuition fees according to sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 of these guidelines.
- 10.12. If a second enrolment as described in clause 10.11 occurred prior to 1 January 2012, the tuition fees already paid in the calendar year will be taken into account in calculating the fees applicable to the additional enrolment.
- 10.13. If a second enrolment as described in clause 10.11 occurred prior to 1 January 2012 and is subject to a higher maximum, fees may be charged up to the higher maximum.
- 10.14. If a second enrolment as described in clause 10.11 occurred prior to 1 January 2012 and is followed by a re-enrolment in a course for which fee maintenance tuition fees apply in the same calendar year, the total fees paid in that year will be taken into account in calculating the fees applicable to the additional enrolment.

- 10.15. Fee maintenance tuition fees shall cease to apply if a person elects to pay tuition fees according to sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 of these guidelines, or completes or withdraws from, or is absent without authority from, a course to which fee maintenance tuition fees have been applied.
- 10.16. Notwithstanding clause 10.16, from 1 January 2013 tuition fees for all enrolments and re-enrolments shall be calculated according to sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 of these guidelines.

SECTION 11

11. Fee-for-service

- 11.1. Providers must charge for fee-for-service enrolments on a full cost recovery basis.

Table 1:**2012 Tuition Fee Schedule for enrolments in courses that commence on or after 1 January 2012, and to enrolments in an Apprenticeship that commenced on or after 1 July 2009.**

* Not applicable for Skills Deepening courses except as specified in any relevant directions

| Tuition Fee Structure | Award | Student tuition fee per scheduled hour | Concession Fee | Minimum Fee | Maximum Fee (see Student tuition fee per scheduled hour) |
|------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|--------------------|---|
| Foundation | Foundation Level and Pre-accredited Courses | Up to \$1.08 | Up to \$50 | \$0 | N/A |
| Skills Creation | Certificate I and II | Up to \$1.62 | Up to \$105 | \$0 | N/A |
| Skills Building | Certificate III and IV | Up to \$2.17 | Up to \$187.50 | \$0 | N/A |
| Skills Deepening | Diploma and Advanced Diploma | Up to \$4.33 | * | \$0 | N/A |
| Apprenticeships | Various | Up to \$2.17 | Up to \$187.50 | \$0 | N/A |
| Traineeships | Various | Up to \$2.17 | Up to \$187.50 | \$0 | N/A |

Table 2:

2012 Tuition Fee Schedule for enrolments in courses that commenced on or after 1 July 2009 and before 1 January 2012, excluding enrolments in an Apprenticeship that commenced on or after 1 July 2009.

| Tuition Fee Structure | Award | Student tuition fee per scheduled hour | Concession Fee | Minimum Fee | Maximum Fee |
|------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Foundation | Foundation Level and Pre-accredited Courses | Up to \$1.08 | Up to \$50 | \$0 | \$500 |
| Skills Creation | Certificate I and II | Up to \$1.62 | Up to \$105 | \$0 | \$875 |
| Skills Building | Certificate III and IV | Up to \$2.17 | Up to \$187.50 | \$0 | \$1,250 |
| Skills Deepening | Diploma and Advanced Diploma | Up to \$4.33 | * | \$0 | \$2,500 |
| Apprenticeships | Various | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Traineeships | Various | Up to \$2.17 | Up to \$187.50 | \$0 | \$1,250 |

* Not applicable for Skills Deepening courses except as specified in any relevant directions

