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RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS:	2018 – 2020 VET Funding Contract <i>Skills First</i> – HESG 2020 Guidelines about Fees Version 1.0.

Introduction

South West TAFE is responsible for the setting the tuition fees for Government funded courses in accordance with Guidelines about Fees issued by the Higher Education and Skills Group from time to time. South West TAFE is required to allow concessions on standard hourly tuition fees in accordance with these Guidelines based on 20% of the published standard hourly fee.

Acceptable evidence of eligibility for a concession is documented in the 2018 - 2020 VET Funding Contract *Skills First* and 2020 Guidelines about Fees Version 1.0.

South West TAFE also has an obligation to publish on our website all fees associated with government funded training courses.

Scope

These Guidelines are applicable to students enrolling in a government funded course at South West TAFE.

Definitions

VET Funding Contract:	The Training Service Delivery Agreement between South West Institute of TAFE and the Department of Education and Training. Also referred to as <i>Skills First</i>
Concession fees:	A reduction in tuition fees to an amount calculated on the basis of 20% of the published <i>Skills First</i> standard hourly fee.
Tuition Fee exemption:	Where the individual or course has no course tuition fees imposed.
Financial hardship:	Being able to demonstrate that the imposing of full tuition fees will cause financial difficulties that will adversely impact on the student's ability to achieve positive educational outcomes.

Delegated authority

The CEO has delegated authority to consider and provide concession fees where cases of financial hardship can be demonstrated. The CEO has nominated Manager Client Services to oversee the fee concession process.

Claiming concession fees

- As part of the pre-enrolling information package, all potential students are provided with information on South West TAFE's fees and charges. This information is also available on the website at www.swtafe.edu.au. The website provides the potential student with all the relevant information including:
 - fees that may be charged
 - acceptable concessions categories
 - fee payment options
 - what happens when you withdraw from a course
 - how to apply for special consideration of having your fees reduced
- The Concession Card must be valid at time of enrolment (fees incurred) for the concession rate to be applied to the student's fees.
- Concession tuition fees are available to students eligible for a government funded place within a course at AQF level IV or below, and who can provide the required evidence prior to the course commencement date.
- If the student is enrolling in a Diploma or above AQF level course, concession rates cannot be applied except where the student identifies as from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.

- A student who has been issued with a current
 - ♦ Health Care Card;
 - ♦ Pensioner Concession Card **OR**
 - ♦ Veterans Gold Card;
 is eligible to claim concession fees. The Card must be issued in the student's name or they must be listed as a dependant on their parent's or partner's Concession Card to be eligible for concession fees.
- The valid Concession Card must be sighted and a copy retained of the entitlement prior to commencement of training. In some instances an exception may allow the application of a valid concession provided within 10 business days of enrolment.
- Where a student does not have a valid Concession Card, but believes they have a case for financial hardship, the student can apply for Access and Equity assistance via the Access and Equity link on the South West TAFE website www.swtafe.edu.au. Alternatively, the Skills & Jobs Pathfinders team can assist with an Access and Equity application for consideration. The Access and Equity application is managed against specific criteria.

Applying Concession Fees without evidence to Government funded eligible individuals:

In accordance with our VET Funding Contract, concession fees are to be applied to *Skills First* eligible individuals, even if they do not have evidence of concession in the following circumstances.

- **Indigenous Completions Initiative** – for enrolments in a course at any level, the concession fee must be applied to individuals who self-identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander decent once deemed eligible for *Skills First* funding.
- **Asylum Seeker VET Program** - a fee concession must be granted to a student enrolled under the Asylum Seeker VET Program in accordance with Clause 4.7, Schedule 1 of our VET Funding Contract and the Guidelines about Fees.

Access and Equity Application

The intent of the Access and Equity application is to support those students who wish to access TAFE training but who are unable to do so due to the impact of higher tuition fees and resources costs across some programs. The application is particularly focused on potential full time students who are likely to have limited options in alternative training and/or employment and where the inability to pay higher fees may see them not being able to engage in meaningful education, training and/or future employment.

- Applicants need to be able to demonstrate financial hardship
- Applicants should be able to articulate their commitment to the course and area of study
- Applicants must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident

Consideration for Access and Equity assistance can be made through the South West TAFE website www.swtafe.edu.au. Alternatively, the Skills & Jobs Pathfinders team can assist with an Access and Equity application for consideration. The Skills & Jobs Pathfinders team ascertains a student's ability to pay the fees through alternative sources or processes.

- The Skills & Jobs Pathfinders Centre team will consider these for approval
- Where financial assistance is not provided, the student will be informed by a Skills and Jobs Pathfinders team member, and further course and career consultation will take place.