



Australian Government

StudyAssist

Information for students about government assistance for financing tertiary study.

Deadlines and withdrawals

Deadlines

Census date

The census date is the last day you can submit your *Request for Commonwealth assistance* form (to access a Commonwealth supported place or a HELP loan) or withdraw your enrolment without incurring the fees or a HELP debt. If you do not submit your form by the census date, you will not be eligible to access a HELP loan for that study period.

The census date must be at least 20% of the way through the study period for that unit. Each provider is responsible for setting their own census dates, so this date will vary across different courses and different providers.

For Commonwealth supported students only – if you do not submit your form by the census date, your provider will cancel your enrolment as a [Commonwealth supported student](#) and you will have to wait until the next study period to re-apply.

Administrative date

Some providers also set an administrative date by which they want you to submit your form, pay your fees or withdraw your enrolment. The administrative date will be earlier than the census date. If you miss the administrative date, you may have to pay a late enrolment fee or a late withdrawal fee, but you can still submit your *Request for Commonwealth assistance* form or withdraw from a unit by the census date without incurring the full cost or debt for the unit.

Note: No withdrawal fee can be charged relating to students accessing VET Student Loans or VET FEE-HELP.

You should check with the student administration area of your provider to see if they have an administrative date as well as a census date.

For Commonwealth supported students only – if your provider has set an administrative date rather than the census date for acceptance of the offer of a Commonwealth supported place and submission of your form, you must have it in by this date, otherwise you will not be enrolled as a [Commonwealth supported student](#) and you will have to wait until the next study period to re-apply.

How do I find out the census and/or administrative dates?

The census and administrative dates will be published, usually on your provider's website, for the various units you are enrolling in. If you can't find the right dates, you should check with the student administration area of your provider.

Withdrawals

Withdrawing from study?

It is important to correctly withdraw from your course or unit of study. If you don't withdraw properly or if you miss the withdrawal deadline, you **will** incur a HELP debt and may also incur academic and financial penalties from your provider.

How do I withdraw?

To withdraw from a unit or course without incurring a HELP debt or losing an up-front payment, you need to complete your provider's formal withdrawal procedures by the census date. You need to complete the formal withdrawal process for every unit you want to withdraw from, including any units for future study periods. If the course you want to withdraw from involved enrolling in more than one provider, you will need to withdraw from each provider separately. While each provider will have their own policies about withdrawing, the main points are:

- you must withdraw in writing on your provider's official form;
- you must submit this form in time for it to be delivered and processed by the census date;
- you may need to withdraw online – check with the student administration area of your provider; and
- you should keep a copy of your withdrawal documentation as confirmation that you completed the correct procedure.

For more information about the correct withdrawal procedure you should contact your provider directly.

How do I withdraw from Open Universities Australia (OUA)?

If you are an OUA student and you want to withdraw from a unit, you can either send a signed, written notification to OUA or withdraw online via the OUA website. OUA must receive your application for withdrawal by the census date in order to avoid incurring a HELP debt or losing an up-front payment.

What happens if I withdraw by the census date?

If you correctly withdraw from a unit by the census date, you will not incur a HELP debt. If you are using FEE-HELP, VET Student Loans or VET FEE-HELP, your FEE-HELP limit will not be reduced if you withdraw by the census date. If you have paid your tuition fees up-front, you may be entitled to a refund.

What happens if I withdraw after the census date?

If you withdraw from a unit after the census date, you **will** incur a HELP debt and will lose any up-front payment you made. If you are using FEE-HELP, VET Student Loans or VET FEE-HELP, your FEE-HELP limit will be reduced and you will have a HELP debt you are required to repay.

Note: If you have concerns regarding your VET enrolment or if you believe you have been misled about the effect of your census date, please follow the steps to lodge a complaint at www.education.gov.au

If you withdrew from a unit after the census date because of [special circumstances](#), you may be able to get your HELP debt remitted (and your FEE-HELP balance re-credited if applicable).

Study Assist is an initiative of the Australian Government