

SWTS - FEE POLICY

You will pay for your course in one of four ways.

- 1. Full fee payment.** You must pay the student services fee, plus a portion of your course fees (negotiated with the Finance Manager) in order to enrol. This will never exceed \$1000. (In accordance with AQTF –Essential Conditions and standards for continual registration Condition 5. The remainder of your course fees will be paid incrementally over the duration of the course, according to the student’s ability to pay, as negotiated with the Finance Manager which will never exceed single payment of \$1000 in accordance with AQTF –Essential Conditions and standards for continual registration Condition 5.
- 2. Payment plan.** These may be arranged upon application and in exceptional circumstances only. If approved, a deposit is negotiated and required prior to enrolment. This will never exceed \$1000. The remaining fees will be paid through a payment plan that achieves full payment prior to completion. Payment arrangements must be finalized with the Training Finance Manager prior to course commencement.
- 3. Government funding.** This applies to those who are assessed as being eligible for the Skills First Funding. Eligible students are required to pay a small portion of the total course fee, with the Victorian Government then paying the remainder as the course progresses. Government funded students must pay their portion of fees prior to course commencement.
- 4. Government funding concession.** Students who hold a Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, or Veteran’s Gold Card are required to pay 15% of the government funded fee.
- 5. Concessions**
Some students who are enrolled in government funded training may be eligible for further concessions. Where further concessions are available, the RTO will review upon request and implement any requirements applicable under state, territory or national legislation governing such arrangements.

FEES, CHARGES AND REFUNDS POLICY

Information Applicable to non-eligible Students

Fees and charges are costs payable to SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES by students relating to their training, assessment and certification in a course.

1. In order to enrol in a SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES qualification, an Administration fee of \$70 must be paid at the time of enrolment.

2. Prior to the commencement of the course, the student is to have paid the Administration fee either:
 - a. Paid their initial course fee in full, or (initial course fee includes only the material cost and the administration fee)
 - b. Arranged their payment plan with SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES administration.
3. The minimum initial fee includes the Administration fee of \$70. This fee is non-refundable.
4. Payment plans can only be approved by the Finance Manager. Payment plan options do not apply for Short Courses. If a student falls behind in their payment plan and significant collection effort by SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES is required, the student negates their right to access further payment plan arrangements.
5. SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES reserves the right to vary fees prior to commencement of a course. When this occurs, all affected students will be notified and given the option of withdrawing from the program. A refund of course fees paid will be provided.
6. In the event that SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES is unable to begin a course for which a student is enrolled, all fees paid, including the Administration fee will be fully refunded. Should for any reason, SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES be unable to continue to run a course that has commenced all course fees will be refunded, less the Administration fee and any materials fee paid.
7. If a student has paid for course fees and cancels their course (in writing) prior to the proposed course commencement date, a full refund of course fees will be given.
8. If a student cancels their course (in writing) within seven days of the commencement of the course, a refund of 50% of the course fees paid will be refunded. No refund is usually given after 7 days after the commencement date. Any student may, when providing written notice of withdrawal from a course, may request consideration of a refund they believe is warranted by the circumstances pertaining to their withdrawal. Such requests will be referred to the Director for decision.
9. At the discretion of the Director, students may defer or transfer course fees between courses. A second deposit, negotiated with the Finance Manager, must be paid in order to continue any payment plan for the re-commenced course.
10. RPL/RCC assessment costs are borne by students and are non-refundable. Quotes will be offered in advance. RPL fees will not exceed the actual cost of assessment.
11. SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES does not accept payments of more than \$1000 per student prior to the commencement of any course.

Financial Hardship

Students enrolled with South West Training Services may apply for special consideration with regard to their fees if they are experiencing financial hardship.

Financial hardship is defined by South West Training Services as follows:

Where a student is unable to discharge their financial obligations because of illness, unemployment or other reasonable cause.

South West training being a not for profit organisation will provide opportunity to the eligibility FFS students to study at the discounted fees if approved by the management.

Any student who would like to apply for an amendment to their fees or payment schedule due to financial hardship will be required to complete a Financial Hardship form. This form is to be completed prior to enrolment with South West Training Services, or in the event of unforeseen circumstances, during enrolment.

In making application, the student should include the reason(s) behind their hardship. This may include (but is not limited to):

- receipt of pension / government support
- single carer status
- dependants living with you
- unexpected medical or other health issues, especially if likely to be prolonged
- young person who is refused school entry
- young person (under 25) living independently (with no parental support)
- homelessness
- long term unemployed
- recent loss of job, and enrolment at South West Training Services for purposes of retraining
- career change required due to reduced physical capacity
- New to the country

Each case is handled individually and all decisions made are at the sole discretion of the RTO Director.

The RTO Director may also devise payment plans for students experiencing financial hardship. It is expected that students will agree to and adhere to the payment plans provided to them.

For the full procedure, please see below.

Procedure

- Student contacts South West Training Services and expresses an interest in a course offered;
- Student requests Financial Hardship Form from RTO Administration;
- Completed form to be returned to RTO Administration;
- Application to be considered within 5 working days;
- Outcome of Application sent to student in writing (may also include verbal confirmation over the phone);
- Student to decide whether to proceed with enrolment or not;
- If decision made to proceed with enrolment, normal enrolment process followed.

Should a student be in a situation where they are experiencing financial hardship mid enrolment, the same procedure will apply from point 2. The RTO Director will consider the student's remaining fees when deciding how to progress with the application.

Withdrawal and Refund Policy – Non-Eligible VET

Requests to withdraw from a course must be made in writing. If a student fails to attend a course but has not withdrawn in writing prior to the course commencement date, a refund is not available, and the student will be charged the entire applicable course fee. SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES may terminate a class position if it is felt a student has missed too much of a course and course fees still apply. Students will only be able to enrol in another SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES course if all outstanding fees have been paid in full. Subsequent course fees are payable and subject to all standard policies as above.

Requests for refunds need to be made in writing and submitted to the RTO Administration Department.

Reasons to request a full refund may include:

- Withdrawing from a training program;
- Customer enrolling in another training program, or a university program;
- Unable to continue the training program due to illness, or injury.

If the request is made prior to the commencement of training, then a full refund is applicable. If a student withdraws from the course less than 7 days into the course, for reasons other than those related to occurrences that were beyond their control, then South West Training Services will offer a maximum of 50% refund for parts of the course not yet completed or undertaken. Please note, students will need to demonstrate how the occurrences were beyond their control, and it is at the discretion of SWTS to accept this evidence or not. For students who withdraw after 7 days of commencing, no refund is usually applicable. Students may apply for special consideration in this regard.

When fees have been paid/will be paid by an employer and the candidate leaves that place of employment, no credit will be available to either the candidate or the employer. Fees paid for a particular individual's training is non-transferable.

Should SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES cancel any course, participants are entitled to a full refund or transfer of funds to a future course.

PAYMENT PLANS (NON-ELIGIBLE STUDENTS)

Initially students must pay a deposit, including \$70 Student Services fees and course material fees. The balance must be paid prior to the completion of classes. The Finance Manager will prepare a

weekly or fortnightly schedule of payments. Students will then sign a payment plan form, detailing each required payment.

FEE COLLECTIONS (NON-ELIGIBLE STUDENTS)

It is the responsibility of students to ensure they are up to date with their fees. If students fall behind in their payment plans, they will be contacted by Finance Manager. If students consistently fall behind and are constantly paying make up fees, the Finance Manager may cancel the Payment plan option and require payment of outstanding fees in full. Failure to pay following the cancellation of a payment plan will result in the student being prevented from attending class. No further learning resources, trainer access, assessment or placement opportunities will be provided until the student is up to date with payment of fees.

In extreme cases, students with outstanding payments will receive a letter formally requesting payment by a specified date. Failure to comply may then result in referral to an external debt collection firm.

SKILL FIRST FUNDING

SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES has entered into an agreement with the Victorian Government which provides funding for eligible students. As part of the enrolment process, each applicant will be assessed for funding eligibility. Those students deemed eligible will be required to pay a small portion of their total course fee, leaving the government to fund the remainder as the course progresses. Unless exceptional circumstances apply, the student's portion must be paid prior to course commencement. Regardless of government funding, all students must pay the non-refundable Administration fees to be able to commence studies at SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES. The Administration fees is non-refundable and is payable annually, as the Student Services Maintenance Fee, for students continuing their studies beyond 12 months.

SHORT COURSES

Short Courses must be paid in full prior to attendance as payment plan options do not apply for short courses.

Refunds will not be provided for short courses not attended unless exceptional circumstances apply. In this case, refunds may be arranged at the discretion of the Finance Manager.

OTHER FEES

Please refer to our Fees Schedule for a full list of Incidental Fees.

A student who is assessed as Not Yet Competent in a unit on three consecutive occasions in spite of being provided with additional training and support, will be required to pay \$100 per unit should the student wish to continue to attempt the required assessments.

The third assessment will be conducted by two different and independent assessors to ensure objectivity.

Certificate Reprint fee

No fee is charged for the student's initial certificate. Students requiring a second copy of their certificates will be charged \$20 for each additional copy or reprint.

Deadline Extension Fee

If a student wants to extend a deadline and/or has not completed the course requirements by the deadline date, a deadline extension fee of \$50 for 2 months extension will be charged. Deadline to complete Cert III courses is 12 months and for Diploma is 18 months.

Study Mode or Class Change Fee (all students)

A Study mode change request Form must be completed in order to change your study mode. If students are enrolled in correspondence and you want to change your mode to classroom based a fee of \$80 will be charged. If students are enrolled in class room based training and want to change to correspondence, a charge of \$80 will be applied.

Placement T-Shirt

It is recommended that the student wear a SWTS T-shirt for their placements. This can be purchased for a cost of \$27 at the time of their practical placement commences.

Qualification Completion Date

If students have not submitted all relevant assessments by the last due date on their schedule, then they will need to re-enrol into the next available course to complete their studies. A full payment fee for enrolment will apply, not a promotional fee.

INFORMATION APPLICABLE TO ALL STUDENTS

Please be advised that Terms and Conditions are also outlined on the Enrolment form, and signed by each student on enrolment. This form will be explained to each student by SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES administration.

Prior to enrolment, each student is provided with an itemised list of all applicable fees and charges, including payment terms. Government funded students are also provided with a breakdown of their tuition fee per scheduled hour.

Fees will not be requested more than six (6) weeks prior to a course commencement date.

The Secretary of the Department of Education, or the Secretary's delegate, will be the respondent for cases that are brought before the AAT. Upon the Department's receipt of a notification from the AAT,

the Department will notify SOUTH WEST TRAINING SERVICES that an appeal has been lodged. Upon receipt of this notification from the Department, the Review Officer will provide the Department with copies of all the documents that are relevant to the appeal within ten (10) business days.

Publication

This policy and the procedure are published on the South West Training Services website to ensure Students have up to date and accurate information publicly available to them.

Further information – applicable to all students

South West Training Services Cancellations or Postponements

Please refer to the Statement of VET Tuition Assurance, available on the South West Training Services website, for further information.

This document outlines the rights of a students should South West Training Services not be in a position to deliver the courses it had initially advertised. Please note that South West Training Services is a member of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) Australian Student Tuition Assurance Scheme. This scheme assists the provider meet its obligations in circumstances such as this and ensures that the rights of students are protected.

What is a Census Date?

This refers to the deadline for various requirements, including submitting a Request for Commonwealth assistance form, making any up-front payments of student contributions or tuition fees and formally withdrawing from any units. A Census Date calculator is available on the South West Training Services website.