

DEFERRALS, WITHDRAWALS AND EXTENSIONS

This new status ranking system is to be read alongside the standard student fees, withdrawals, compassionate and refunds policies. This document aims to add clarification and guidance due to COVID-19 impacts, however it is acknowledged that a one-size-fits-all approach will not cover all situations.

General Guidelines

Until we know how long the timeframe is around the continued lockdown restrictions/access to campus and the need to teach remotely, we will not be in a position to make decisions around which status each programme/course fits into, therefore decisions around refunds may need to wait until the timeframes are clarified. The following sets out some anticipated scenarios and associated action.

In all cases, refunds will be for fees/levies only and SAC (EFTS) funding will not be refunded. Studylink is working on a system to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged in terms of entitlements, including lifetime EFTS limits, which are still yet to be determined. *Many cases may not be clear cut and will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.*

Principles:

Below are the principles applied in reaching a decision whether to refund a student:

- It is in the best interests of the student to complete their learning despite the change in delivery mode. Unitec is doing everything possible to help students complete their course(s)
- Students, who through no fault of their own, cannot start or complete a course directly due to COVID-19 impacts should not be financially disadvantaged
- Unitec should do everything possible to retain a student but also to ensure this is done in accordance with all relevant legislation including consumer laws
- Compassionate cases involving students will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis according to [Unitec's compassionate withdrawal, refunds and deferrals policies](#)

Status	Description	Criteria	UNITEC RECOMMENDATION
1	COVID-19 Compassionate	The student wishes to withdraw for reasons related to COVID-19 that are due to their specific situation, not due to changes in the courses/programmes. These include changes in financial circumstances, needing to work in essential services, mental health and wellness, physical health and wellness (including COVID-19), learning needs that make on-line learning not possible etc.	Refund based on genuine hardship grounds (financial, digital connectivity, health + family priorities re: work etc) as already in process and agreed with ELT. Student to submit evidence to support claim. Case-by-case exceptions on compassionate grounds Deferrals decision tree developed to help any staff member having the DEF discussion. Important we don't overpromise and underdeliver. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-by-step process for domestic students • Step-by-step process for international students
	Student Levies	The student requests a refund of levies due to not being able to access all of the services covered by the levy charge (e.g. gym and student health)	Waiting on further direction from NZIST
	Decline in academic performance due to COVID-19	This could be either a fail result or a result of a lower grade than would normally be achieved.	Waiting on further direction from NZIST
1a	<u>Continue with no extension</u> Learners can continue their course or programme using online and other distance methods	The learner can complete the course/programme wholly online and finish on the scheduled date.	Withdrawal/Refund based on genuine hardship grounds

Status	Description	Criteria	UNITEC RECOMMENDATION
1b	The learner can catch up and complete in normal timeframes once campus re-opens	The learner is not able to study on line, but is able to catch up on work missed while the campus is closed and still finish in the normal timeframe	Refund not applicable
2	<u>Continue with minor extension</u> Students can continue their course or programme using online and other distance methods. However, some on-campus or in-work time is required e.g. for practical work or assessment. The scheduled end date may need to be extended	The student can progress in their course or programme online but require up to three weeks on-campus or in-work; and those three weeks can be delivered without extending the scheduled end date by more than three weeks.	Defer to next appropriate semester for student.
3	<u>Major extension</u> The course or programme end date will be extended to the end of the next scheduled course or programme offering, provided that the scheduled end date of the next course or programme occurrence is within six months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students cannot complete online. • The course or programme is dependent upon some on-campus or in-work activity. • Students have already undertaken and received results for some assessment activities. • The extension to the scheduled end date will extend into the next scheduled offering. 	Refund and defer to next available semester
4	<u>Holding pattern</u> This will be largely dependent upon the national COVID-19 alert level and on-campus or in-work availability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students cannot complete online. • The course or programme is dependent upon some on-campus or in-work activity. • In the event of campuses re-opening in three weeks' time, the courses could continue (albeit perhaps with an extension to the scheduled end date) 	<p>Application of Fees & Admissions policy as well as International refund policy – domestic students to be deferred preferably or withdrawn with full course refund.</p> <p>International Students: If students have not arrived in NZ then agents should not be paid commission.</p>
5	<u>Cancelled</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The course or programme is dependent upon on-campus or in-work activity • The students cannot complete online. • Students have not yet undertaken or received results for some assessment activities (preferably). • There is an unchangeable reason why the scheduled end date cannot be extended (by no more than six months). 	<p>Application of Fees & Admissions policy as well as International refund policy – domestic students to be deferred preferably or withdrawn with full course refund</p> <p>International Students: If students have not arrived in NZ then agents should not be paid commission.</p>