Tuition Fee Pricing Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This policy states the principles, processes and responsibilities for setting award course tuition fees at Charles Sturt University (the University), and includes:

a. fees for Commonwealth supported places (CSP) and full fee-paying places (FFP)
b. fees for international students: fee paying overseas students (FPOS)
c. single subject study
d. micro-credential courses
e. fee transition and preservation arrangements
f. the use of scholarships and discounts
g. the application of alumni discounts.

(2) This policy supports the University's compliance with:

a. Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA).

Scope

(3) This policy applies to University staff involved in determining course tuition fees. This policy does not apply to setting non-tuition fees or the allocation of Commonwealth supported places.

Section 2 - Policy

Principles

(4) The following principles will guide the University's decisions when setting award course fees:

a. Fees will be compliant with relevant legislation.
b. The maximum contributions will be charged for Commonwealth supported places (CSPs) as set annually by the Commonwealth.
c. Fees will be reviewed and recommendations for indicative fees will occur annually by the Course Fee Advisory Group (CFAG) based on the following:
    i. A sector review comparing the University's fees with providers in like discipline groups.
    ii. Fees will be compared with the lower and upper fee ranges of the sector together with the overall median, with the sector median guiding the fees.
    iii. Recommendations from the CFAG to confirm or change indicative fees are provided to the delegated officer, for final approval.
d. Scholarships and discounts can be used as defined below in clauses 20-26.
e. Tuition fees will only include tuition costs in accordance with HESA s 19–90. Other packaging or non-tuition fee considerations must be communicated separately and be available to prospective students to inform their study

decision via the Charles Sturt University website.

f. The website must also include messaging to inform prospective students that fees will change from year to year.
g. When published and in accordance with the Communications and Marketing Policy, fees will be labelled 'indicative' to allow for changes if required. The indicative fee should be as close as possible to the fee that is charged and cannot be used to allow large fee increases to be implemented.
h. Noting subclause 4f., fees will be published one year in advance. As current fee information is not always available (for example tuition fees for CSPs are set by the government) a projected indicative fee can be used.

(5) The headings below provide further information to support the application of these principles.

Commonwealth supported places

(6) Tuition fees for CSPs are set at the maximum rate.

Domestic full fee-paying places

(7) In accordance with current obligations under HESA:

a. all domestic tuition fees must be equal to or higher than the fees that would be charged for a CSP student in the same unit of study, unless allowed under HESA sub-s 36-55(2) (employer reserved places)
b. where a course has subjects that are taken only by domestic fee-paying students, there are no constraints.

(8) Subject to clause 7, and consistent with the University's market position, fees will be set based on the following:

a. A yearly review of the higher education sector and positioning of fees to the median of the equivalent courses in the sector.
b. Where the number of relevant providers in the sector is limited, comparison with the providers available and the reputation of the course can be used.
c. Where a course has a strong reputation or is a market leader, a higher fee may be applied.
d. The setting of tuition fees must allow for the course health metrics (as provided by Office of Planning and Analytics) and may consider setting fees higher than the sector median for courses with strong health metrics.
e. Minimum tuition fee increases should include any expected costs for the University to provide the course (including but not limited to inflation/CPI increases or impact of enterprise agreement provisions).

Fee paying overseas students (FPOS)

(9) In accordance with HESA and Higher Education Provider Guidelines (HEP Guidelines), all international tuition fees must be no less than those shown for the relevant category of courses in the schedule of minimum indicative course fees (HEP Guidelines sub-s 29(1)), except where:

a. a course is provided wholly offshore and students will not at any stage enter Australia for study
b. approval has been given by the Department to charge less than the minimum indicative fee for a course
c. for overseas students who are undertaking a masters or doctoral degree by research in Australia and who have been awarded a scholarship for that study, on the basis of merit following a competitive application process, or
d. students who are studying in Australia under a formal exchange program.

(10) Subject to clause 9 and consistent with the University's market position, fees will be set based on the following:

a. A yearly review of international student fees in the higher education sector.
b. Positioning of fees in line with reputation and outcomes sought in the Charles Sturt International strategy.

c. Minimum tuition fee increases should include any expected costs for the University to provide the course (including but not limited to inflation/CPI increases or impact of enterprise agreement provisions).
d. Fee-paying overseas student fees will always be no less than domestic full fee-paying places.

Single subject fees

(11) Single subject fees are set annually per faculty, by applying the highest subject fee within that faculty to all single subject study undertaken.

Micro-credential course fees

(12) Fees for micro-credentials (micros) need to be matched to the market strategy being implemented and therefore flexibility is required in setting micro fees. For example, a taster type micro may not have a fee or a nominal fee charged.

(13) If a micro is part of a unit of study the fee must comply with the obligations set out under HESA, see clause 7 for domestic students and clause 9 for international students.

(14) When setting micro-credential fees it is recommended that applying the eight credit point single subject study fee from the faculty offering the micro subject, divided by the credit points being studied within the micro-credential, plus a 31% loading fee is used. Further:

a. micro subjects are charged as individual subjects with the faculty micro fee rate applied per subject when bundling micro subjects together
b. for bulk enrolments (from a corporate partner for example), a 10% discount can be applied to the full micro credential fee rate.

Fee preservation arrangements based on Commonwealth requirements

(15) Fee changes introduced by the Commonwealth may require mandatory preservation or transitioning of fees.

(16) The preserved tuition fee must be higher than the maximum student contribution for CSP students.

(17) Generally, no constraints apply for domestic fee-paying students, except as required to ensure the fees remain equal to or higher than those for CSPs (see clause 7).

Fee preservation and transition arrangements based on fee increases

(18) In the case of an exceptional fee increase, fee transition arrangements can be implemented.

(19) The intent of fee transition arrangements is to move the fee rate of current students within the course to the new higher contemporary fee rate over an acceptable period. In doing so, the fee increase is spread over the time period rather than being implemented as one large increase.

(20) Fee preservation arrangements can also be explored, however, transition arrangements are preferred.

(21) Preservation periods cannot exceed the maximum completion times as stated in the Course and Subject Procedure - Coursework Design.

> Note: Timeframes per degree type are set out in the Course and Subject Procedure - Coursework Design.

Scholarships and discounts

(22) Scholarships may be applied to achieve a strategic goal for a course. These may include:

a. to launch a new course and attract students
b. to increase enrolments in existing courses
c. other market-driven factors (e.g. changes or activity by equivalent course providers).

(23) Discounts to fees should not be offered for award courses but can be applied to non-award courses. For example, to support partnerships by offering an introductory fee or bulk discount.

(24) Scholarships or discounts cannot lower the tuition fee below the cost to provide the course.

(25) The full fee cost must be used for government reporting, not the value once the scholarship or discount is applied.

(26) Proposals to change fees via scholarships and discounts must have:

a. input and support from the Division of Finance and Office of Planning and Analytics
b. endorsement by the Course Fee Advisory Group, and
c. approval by the delegated officer.

Alumni discount

(27) A discount of 10% is available to Charles Sturt University alumni who have graduated from an award course of the University at AQF level 7 or above.

(28) The 10% discount can be applied to any domestic fee-paying course offered by the University, including non-award offerings, but cannot be used with other discounts (such as a scholarship).

Governance

(29) Delegated officers for approving student related fees, including tuition and non-tuition fees, are set out in Delegation Schedule C - Finance.

(30) The Course Fee Advisory Group (CFAG) is an ad hoc group convened as necessary to:

a. review fees and proposed changes, including fee changes to achieve strategic goals
b. oversee the fee setting process and make recommendations to the delegated officer.

(31) The CFAG is chaired by the Director, Planning and Analytics, with representation from relevant areas of the University set out under the 'Responsibilities' heading of this policy.

Responsibilities

(32) The CFAG is made up of the following representatives, responsible for:

Representative	Responsibilities
Executive Deans/Faculties	Reviews domestic tuition fees on an annual basis including a sector review comparing their fees with providers in like discipline groups and an assessment of course health. Makes recommendations to CFAG. Provides a rationale if recommendations diverge from principles for discussion and then setting of the fee by CFAG.

Representative	Responsibilities
Division of Finance	Determines minimum increase to be applied each year based on CPI increase and other relevant factors such as the Enterprise Agreement increase. Ensures systems are updated to reflect and publish fees accurately. Ensures fees are compliant with legislation. Provide information and CFAC resolutions to Student Administration via Director, Student Administration, outlining the relevant factors supporting the fee increase.
Office of Planning and Analytics	Oversees the fee setting process. Prepares benchmarking reports, including three-year projections and provides course health metrics. Compares University fees with the entire sector and an overall median to inform fee setting. Projects financial impact of proposed fee increases.
Business Development	Provides input into developments in the market and requirements to set fees for micro and short courses. Together with the relevant faculty representatives, reviews fees that are set for micro and short courses.
Office of Global Engagement	Provides input into developments in the market and requirements to set international fees. Together with the relevant faculty representatives, reviews international fees.
Division of Student Experience	Provides feedback, advice and, when required, actions communication with current students regarding fees and fee changes.
Division of Customer Experience	Provides feedback and advice on developments in the market and the impact of fee changes to prospective students.

Section 3 - Procedures

(33) Nil.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(34) Nil.

Section 5 - Glossary

(35) For the purpose of this policy:

a. Discount – is a reduction in the tuition fee charged by the University.
b. Employer reserved place - means a place, in a course of study, made available under a restricted access arrangement for the course.
c. Fee preservation – allows for a fee rate to be locked in and not changed based on the year-on-year review of fees.
d. Non-tuition fees – any fees and charges required for items that are not directly related to tuition fees. Examples include: student services and amenities fees (SSAF), library fines, accommodation fees, campus facilities and services, Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), and other fees and charges related to additional administrative costs incurred by the University, such as late payment and late enrolment fees.
e. Scholarship – is funding provided to the student for use against their costs, including tuition. A scholarship does not reduce the fee charged but allows the student to offset the cost by using the scholarship.
f. Transition arrangements – the process to move a cohort of students from one fee rate to another over a set period.

g. Tuition fees - fees charged for each unit of study (subject) that a student is enrolled in.

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