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; Charles Sturt), and includes:

a. fees for Commonwealth supported places and full fee-paying places
b. fees for international students: fee paying overseas students
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.

Document context

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Scope</th><td>This policy applies to University staff involved in determining course tuition fees, but does not apply to setting non-tuition fees or the allocation of Commonwealth supported places.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Compliance drivers</th><td>Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)</td></tr>
<tr><th rowspan="3">Policy suite</th><th>Policy</th><td>Tuition Fee Pricing Policy (this document)</td></tr>
<tr><th>Procedure</th><td>Under development</td></tr>
<tr><th>Guidelines</th><td>NA</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Related documents</th><td>As indicated in text or as listed on the Associated Information tab</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Review requirements</th><td>As per Policy Framework Policy</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Document class</th><td>Management</td></tr>
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Section 2 - Policy

Principles

(2) 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. Full fee-paying (FFP) course fees are set at the course level as an annual fee based on an equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL) of 64 points. Subjects in a FFP course are charged as a fraction of the annual course fee for the academic year in which they are undertaken, based on the subject's EFTSL value.
d. The fee setting process is overseen by the Chief Operating Officer and administered by the Division of Finance.

e. Fees will be reviewed annually by the Division of Finance in consultation with the Office of Planning and Analytics and faculties, and other stakeholders including Business Development, Office of Global Engagement, Division of Student Experience and Division of Customer Experience.
f. Fee recommendations will be made to the delegated officer (under Delegation Schedule C - Finance) annually, or more regularly if required.
g. Fees will be informed by the cost of teaching delivery, sector reviews, benchmarks, and other analytics including those defined below in clauses 6 and 8.
h. Scholarships and discounts can be used as defined below in clauses 20-28.
i. Tuition fees will relate to tuition and be determined in accordance with HESA s 19–90. Other non-tuition fees must be communicated separately and be available to prospective students to inform their study decision via the Charles Sturt University website.
j. The Charles Sturt University website must also include messaging to inform prospective students that fees will change from year to year.
k. Noting sub-clause j., fees will be published to provide reasonable notice to students and in advance of the earliest enrolment date for the teaching period (per HESA s 39DK). As future fee information is not always available (for example tuition fees for CSPs are set by the government) a projected indicative fee can be used to aid prospective students.
l. Information provided to current and prospective students about course fees must comply with standard 7.1 Representation, in the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

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

Commonwealth supported places

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

Domestic full fee-paying places

(5) 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.

(6) Subject to clause 5, and consistent with the University's market position, fees will be informed by:

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).
f. Price sensitivity may also be considered when setting fees, especially in courses or professions where graduate future employment returns are lowest, or if the University is trying to increase enrolments in a particular course.

Fee paying overseas students (FPOS)

(7) 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 of Education 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.

(8) Subject to clause 7 and consistent with the University's market position, fees will be informed by:

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

(9) Single subject fees are determined annually, and are typically based on the highest credit-weighted proportionate fee applicable to the course in which the subject is normally offered. Faculties may propose a lower fee, subject to approval by the delegated officer.

Micro-credential course fees

(10) 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.

(11) If a micro is part of a unit of study the fee must comply with the obligations set out under HESA, see clause 5 for domestic students and clause 7 for international students.

(12) When setting micro-credential fees it is recommended that applying the 8 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 applicable overheads for indirect costs. 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

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

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

(15) 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 5).

Fee preservation and transition arrangements based on fee increases

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

(17) 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.

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

(19) 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

(20) 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. to attract a particular cohort of students to encourage participation from under-represented groups or in non-traditional courses of study
d. other market-driven factors (e.g. changes or activity by equivalent course providers).

(21) Scholarships or discounts cannot result in a tuition fee below the amount charged to a student for a Commonwealth supported place (the student contribution) for a unit of study.

(22) Where a scholarship or discount being proposed would result in a tuition lower than the cost to the University of delivering the unit of study (including overheads), this will be made clear to the delegated officer as part of the recommendation made by the Division of Finance.

(23) The tuition fee for the unit of study before the scholarship or discount is applied is to be used in government reporting, not the value once the scholarship or discount is applied.

(24) Proposals to change fees via scholarships and discounts must be:

a. overseen by the Chief Operating Officer and administered by the Division of Finance with input from the Office of Planning and Analytics, faculties and relevant divisions
b. approved by the delegated officer.

Alumni discount

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

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

Staff discount

(27) A discount of 20% is available to Charles Sturt employees who:

a. hold a full-time or part-time continuing appointment with a minimum FTE of 0.5
b. have completed at least two years continuous service at the University
c. are studying a course relating to their current role, as agreed by their supervisor.

(28) The 20% discount can be applied to all domestic fee-paying undergraduate courses and micro credentials offered by the University, including non-award offerings, but cannot be used with other discounts (such as scholarships).

(29) The 20% discount is only applicable to courses in discipline areas relating to the staff member's current role.

(30) While there is no staff discount applied to postgraduate subjects or courses, the Professional Development Procedure – Professional/General Employee Schemes and the Professional Development Procedure – Academic Employee Scheme provides information about fee rebates and other support available for eligible staff.

Governance

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

(32) The Division of Finance ensures that consultation is undertaken with relevant stakeholders listed in the responsibilities section below. This provides stakeholders with an opportunity to:

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

Responsibilities

(33) The following roles and responsibilities apply.

Representative	Responsibilities
Chief Operating Officer	Oversees the fee setting process.
Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	As per Delegation Schedule C - Finance, is the delegated officer for approving tuition fees. (The delegations will overule this policy where there is any inconsistency.)
Division of Finance	Administers the fee setting process, including the application of any scholarships or discounts. Submits fee recommendation to the delegated officer for approval. 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. Provides information to Student Administration via Director, Student Administration, outlining the relevant factors supporting the fee increase.
Office of Planning and Analytics	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. Ensures fees are compliant with legislation.
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. Provides a rationale if recommendations diverge from principles. Reviews international fee on an annual basis, together with the Office of Global Engagement.

Representative	Responsibilities
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. Ensures fees are compliant with legislation.
Division of Customer Experience	Provides feedback and advice on developments in the market and the impact of fee changes to prospective students. Publishes course fees.

Section 3 - Glossary

(34) 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.

Status and Details

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Unit Head	Meg McKenchnie Chief Financial Officer
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