Refund of Student Fees Policy and Procedure

1 Purpose

To comply with the relevant legislation under which the University is bound and to ensure the University delivers a transparent, effective and efficient Student Fee refund process.

2 Scope

This policy applies to past Students, current Students and Applicants, their Authorised Representatives and/or Official Sponsors seeking a refund of Student Fees. The Refund of Student Fees Policy applies to all Tuition Fees, Student Contribution Amounts and Course Money received by the University, or a third party acting under contract on behalf of the University, and applies equally to Monies received either directly or indirectly from the Student.

This policy also applies to refunds relating to Miscellaneous Student Fees, Fines and Charges as defined, overseas health cover and credit balances on Student Accounts.

3 Policy Statement

Under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) the University is listed as a Table A - "higher education provider" and therefore must comply with all the relevant sections of that Act. Further, the University as a "registered provider" under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (*ESOS Act*) is bound by that Act and subsequent *Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001* and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code*)* and the Education Services for Overseas Students (calculation of refund) Specification 2014*.*

Under the guidance and framework provided by these Acts, Regulations and Codes, the University will conduct all Student Fee refunds ethically, honestly and with fairness to all parties.

Unless as required under legislation, this Policy will be applied equally, in the context relevant to the circumstance, to all Students, past Students and Applicants of the University, including Students in Commonwealth Supported Places, Domestic Students and International Students.

This Policy aligns with the:

- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021:* Standard 7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students
- *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students*

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(2018): Standard 2: Recruitment of an Overseas Student

4 Principles

The University will:

- Ensure this Refund of Student Fees Policy is publicly available to all Students and Applicants.
- Ensure Students have an option to leave credit balances (excess payments after Census Date) on their Student Account to be applied against future liabilities the Student may incur with the University.
- Ensure International Students are given access to a copy of this Policy prior to accepting a place at the University under a Student Visa.
- Enter into a written agreement with the International Student, concurrently with or prior to accepting Course Money from the Student, that contains information regarding refunds of Course Money.
- Include a clause in all Education Partner contracts (including Support Offices) regarding the refunding of Course Money received for a University Enrolment, to ensure the Education Partner's refund policy is consistent with this Policy.
- Through the Education Partner review process, ensure their refund practices are clearly stated and publicly available and meet the *ESOS Act* and National Code requirements.
- Develop and make publicly available Review of Decision processes for issues regarding Student Fee refunds.

5 Procedures

5.1 Grounds for a Refund and Establishing the Amount to be Refunded

5.1.1 Tuition Fees and/or Student Contribution Amounts

A Student is entitled to a refund of Tuition Fees and/or upfront Student Contribution Amounts under the following circumstances:

1. A Student, who withdraws their Enrolment in a Course before the last date to drop Courses in that Study Period (Census Date), is eligible for a reversal of Student Fees and a full refund of Monies paid upfront for that Course, with the exception of an International Student in their first six months of on-campus study at the University, who requests a transfer to another registered provider.

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2. An International Student, in their first six months of on-campus study at the University, who requests a transfer to another registered provider must apply for a Letter of Release. Where the University grants a Letter of Release, before the last date to drop Courses in that Study Period (Census Date), the International Student is eligible for a reversal of Student Fees and a full refund of Monies paid upfront for their Course(s) in that Study Period. Where the University grants a Letter of Release, after the last date to drop Courses in that Study Period (Census Date), the International Student is not eligible for a reversal of Student Fees or a refund of Monies paid upfront for their Course(s) in that Study Period.

3. All Student Contribution Amounts must be made by the Student on or before Census Date for a Study Period. Where University records indicate a Student has made a payment after Census Date, the University cannot accept this payment, and will refund the Monies to the Student.

4. A Student who is granted “Withdrawal without Academic Penalty and with Fee Reversal” under the University's Enrolment Procedure is eligible for a reversal of Student Fees and a full refund of Monies paid upfront for that Course.

5. The offer of a place to a Student is withdrawn by the University or the University is unable to provide the Course or the Program. The Student is entitled to a full refund of Monies paid in advance for the Course or for Courses in that Program.

6. A Student fails to meet program progression rules in accordance with the Student Academic Progress Procedure or the Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure and is not permitted to re-enrol. The Student is entitled to a full refund of Tuition Fees and/or upfront Student Contribution Amounts paid in advance of provision of Notice of Exclusion.

7. Withdrawal due to Special Circumstances in accordance with the Assessment of Special Circumstances Procedure.

8. An International Student who obtains Permanent Residency status on or prior to the Study Period Census date, has provided certified documentary evidence of the residency change and is eligible, as a Commonwealth Supported Student to be charged the Student Contribution Amount or, if ineligible for Commonwealth support, is eligible to be charged the domestic tuition fee, will be entitled to a refund of the difference (if any) between Monies paid in advance of that Study Period as an International Student and those fees applying to a Domestic Student.

The University may refuse to provide or continue to provide a Program to a Student in one or more of the following circumstances:

- The Student, or their Official Sponsor, failed to pay an amount they were liable to pay the University, directly or indirectly, in order to undertake the Program;

- The Student breached a condition of their Student Visa (where applicable); and
- Misconduct by the Student in accordance with the University's policies on misconduct.

Domestic Students

- Where the withdrawal is effective on or before Census Date, the Student will be entitled to a full refund of a Student Contribution Amount and/or Tuition Fees paid on or before Census Date.

International Students

- The University will inform a Student of its intention to suspend or cancel their Enrolment and will provide Notice to the Student that they have 20 University Business Days to request a Review of Decision in accordance with Section 4.4 of the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure.
- The University will calculate any refund payable in accordance with the *ESOS Act* and any associated legislative instruments.

Where the University gives a partial refund to a Student, their Authorised Representative or an Official Sponsor, the University will provide a statement on the method of calculation of the amount, including any fees and/or charges deducted.

Where an offer to an International Student was made on the basis of fraudulent documents or incomplete or incorrect disclosure, the University reserves the right to subtract amounts from Course Money as detailed by legislation.

5.1.2 No Refund - Tuition Fees and/or Student Contribution Amounts

Where a Student withdraws from a Course after the last date to drop Courses in that Study Period (Census Date), and the withdrawal is not subject to Special Circumstances, a Student, their Authorised Representative or Official Sponsor will not be eligible for a refund of Tuition Fees or Student Contribution Amount for that Course.

5.1.3 Refund of Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

A Student (or Official Sponsor) may apply for a refund of the paid but unexpired portion of their OSHC premium where the Student:

- paid their OSHC premium but did not come to Australia;
- could not/did not extend their Student Visa;
- returned to their home country before the end of their approved stay for reasons beyond their control;
- has completed their studies at the University and are returning home; or
- has been granted Permanent Resident status in Australia.

Where Monies for OSHC are held by the University, the refund will be processed by the University. Where the University has, under an agency agreement with the University's OSHC provider, transferred these Monies to the provider, the Student will apply directly to the provider for the applicable total or partial refund.

5.1.4 Refund of Miscellaneous Student Fees, Fines and Charges

A Student may be entitled to a full or partial refund of a University administrative fee, fine or charge where the service was not provided or the fee, fine or charge has been reversed. Requests for refunds of Miscellaneous Student Fees, Fines and Charges will, in the first instance, be addressed to the department or faculty that imposed the fee, fine or charge. Successful requests for refunds will be forwarded to Finance and Business Solutions for processing. If a refund request is unsuccessful a Notice will be provided to the Student, providing details of the Decision.

5.1.5 Refunds of Credit Balances on Student Accounts

A Student may apply to Financial and Business Services for the refund of a credit balance on a Student Account where:

- A Student has ceased Enrolment at the University; and
- All Student Account balances relating to that Student have been satisfied in full.
- The overpayment was a genuine mistake (as evidenced in writing by a Student and University records).

5.1.6 Refund of UniSQ Residential College Accounts and / or Fees and Charges

A Student, their Authorised Representative or Official Sponsor seeking a refund of UniSQ Residential College fees and charges will apply in writing to the Director (Student Engagement and Leadership). Detailed rules regarding refund eligibility criteria are available in the “Residential Colleges - Conditions of Residency” at https://www.unisq.edu.au/accommodation/living-on-campus/services

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5.2 Requesting a Refund

All requests for Student refunds must be made in writing.

5.2.1 Domestic Students

Students will address their request to:

Finance and Business Solutions
University of Southern Queensland
Toowoomba Qld 4350

Or via email to debtors@usq.edu.au

Or complete a Refund Request Form A, in person, available from the Cashier, Finance and Business Solutions, J Block, Toowoomba Campus.

Finance and Business Solutions Employees may require proof of identity at the time of processing the refund. This will be a series of short questions relating to the Student's University Admission and/or Enrolment details.

5.2.2 International Students (not holding a Student Visa) who have paid their Monies directly to UniSQ

Students will address their request to:

Finance and Business Solutions
University of Southern Queensland
Toowoomba Qld 4350

Or via Email: debtors@usq.edu.au; or

Or complete a Refund Request Form A, in person, available from the Cashier, Finance and Business Solutions, J Block, Toowoomba Campus.

Finance and Business Solutions staff may require proof of identity at the time of processing the refund. This will be a series of short questions relating to the Student's University Admission and/or Enrolment details.

5.2.3 International Students studying on-campus (holding a Student Visa)

All International Students (holding a Student Visa) will complete a “Request for Refund Form B”.

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- Commencing Students in their first six months of study will address their request to the Director (International Marketing, Admissions and Business Development).

  Email: ioadmissions@usq.edu.au; or

  Complete Refund Request Form B, in person, available from the Reception Counter, Y Block, Toowoomba Campus

- Students who have completed their first six months of study will address their request to the Associate Director (Student Administration).

  Email: usq.support@usq.edu.au;

5.2.4 Students supported by Official Sponsors

Where a Student has been Admitted to the University under a formal Official Sponsorship agreement with the University, and University records indicate the Monies were paid by the Official Sponsor, refunds of these Monies will be payable to the Official Sponsor.

Official Sponsors will address their request to:

Finance and Business Solutions
University of Southern Queensland
Toowoomba Qld 4350

Email: debtors@usq.edu.au

5.2.5 International Students studying via an Education Partner

Students who have paid their fees to an Educational Partner are directed, in the first instance, to apply for their refund directly from the Educational Partner.

An Educational Partner will provide to a Student, a copy of their refund requirements, prior to accepting the Student Monies (Refer Section 5.6 below).

1. A Student may authorise the University, in writing, to refund the Monies to a third party where:
    a. The third party was the original payee of the Monies, as confirmed by University records; or

    b. The Student is transferring to another recognised educational institution in Australia; or

    c. The Student applies to the Director (Finance) setting out the reasons for the third party payment.

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Where the University refunds the Monies to a third party, as instructed by the Student, the University will consider this as full and final settlement of the refund to the Student.

The University reserves the right to offset a credit balance on a Student Account against a debit balance in another account held in the same Student name, prior to processing a refund request.

5.3 Refund Processing Times

All refunds will be paid within 10 University Business Days of Finance and Business Solutions receiving a fully completed and signed written request for a refund, with the exception of refunds defined under the *ESOS Act* as detailed below.

Refunds assessed as “Provider Defaults” will be paid within 10 University Business Days of the notification of the default by the University, subject to a Student providing information in accordance with this Policy to enable the processing of the refund.

Refunds assessed as “Student Defaults” will be paid within 20 University Business Days of receiving a Student's written request, subject to a Student providing information in accordance with this Policy to enable the processing of the refund.

5.4 Refund Payment Methods

The University will apply the following methods of refund:

1. Where the original Monies were received by the University via a current credit card the refund will be credited back against the originating credit card.

2. Where the original Monies were received by the University via cash, cheque, money order, debit card, Bpay, AustPost Billpay, UConnect payments, Australian bank transfer, international bank transfer or international bank draft, the refund will be via a University Australian cheque, EFT, international bank draft or international bank transfer, as appropriate.

3. Cash or debit cards accepted for cash sales at the UniSQ Library may be refunded via cash or an EFT reversal.

Exceptions to these methods must be approved in writing by the Director (Finance), Finance and Business Solutions.

It is not permissible to transfer Monies directly from a Student's Account to that of another Student.

5.5 Refund Currency and Bank Charges

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1. All credit card refunds will be processed in AUD.

2. All other refunds will normally be in AUD unless a Student specifically requests the refund in a currency other than AUD.

   Where a Student or their Authorised Representative indicates a preferred currency other than AUD, the University will convert the AUD equivalent on the day of transfer, at the rate offered by the University's supplier of foreign currency. The Student accepts this rate of conversion by their signature on the refund application form.

   Where the University is unable to transfer AUD or the Student or their Authorised Representative's preferred currency to the country due to international banking limitations or where the cost of the transfer would result in excessive international bank charges for either party, the University will select the most appropriate foreign currency. The Student or their Authorised Representative accepts this currency by their signature on their refund application.

3. The University will carry all bank charges or deductions imposed by the actions of the bankers engaged by the University to make the refund payment or transfer including the University's nominated supplier of foreign currency.

4. The Student or their Authorised Representative will carry all bank charges or deductions imposed by or arising from the actions of the bankers nominated by the Student to receive the payment or transfer.

5. Where a Student or their Authorised Representative has nominated a third party as the refund beneficiary the Student, their Authorised Representative and/or the third party will carry all bank charges or deductions imposed by or arising from the actions of the bankers nominated by the Student, their Authorised Representative and/or third party to receive the payment or transfer.

6. Where an Official Sponsor is the refund beneficiary, the Official Sponsor will carry all bank charges or deductions imposed by or arising from the actions of the bankers nominated by the Official Sponsor to receive the payment or transfer.

5.6 Refunds to Students Studying via an Educational Partnership Arrangement

Reference to this Refund of Student Fees Policy and any applicable Educational Partnership refund processes, will be reflected in the Student's Letter of Offer and Acceptance of Offer at the time of Admission to the University, when studying via an Educational Partner.

Students studying via an Educational Partnership arrangement, where the Student is required to pay their Student Fees directly to the Educational Partner, will seek Student Fee refunds directly from that Educational Partner.

The Educational Partner will:

- Develop refund procedures consistent with this Policy; and
- Deal with all Student refunds promptly ethically, honestly and with fairness to all parties.

In exceptional circumstances the Director (Finance) may approve, in writing, the refund of the 'net credit of Monies received' by the University from the Educational Partner on behalf of the Student.

Students studying via an Educational Partner arrangement, where the Student is required to pay their Monies directly to the University, and does so, will be refunded those Monies by the University in accordance with the procedures in this Policy.

5.7 Review of Decision

A Student, their Authorised Representative or an Official Sponsor may request a Review of Decision in relation to a Student Fee refund where the Student or an Official Sponsor considers that the University has not assessed or processed the refund request in accordance with this Policy, or not all relevant information was taken into account when the refund was assessed.

Where the Student, their Authorised Representative or Official Sponsor is not satisfied with the attempt at informal resolution, or is uncomfortable with attempting an informal resolution the Student, Authorised Representative or Official Sponsor may lodge a formal request for a Review of Decision in accordance with Section 4.4 of the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure.

The University's resolution processes, including the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure and the Student Appeals Procedure do not circumscribe a Student's right to pursue other remedies.

Where a Student agrees to the terms of this Policy, such agreement, and the availability of Student Grievance resolution processes, does not remove the right of the Student (or Official Sponsor) to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

6 References

- Higher Education Administrative Information for Providers (2015)
- *Education Services for Overseas Students Act (2000)* (ESOS Act)
- Education Services for Overseas Students (calculation of refund) Specification 2014
- *Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations (2001)* (ESOS Regulations)
- *Higher Education Support Act (2003*) (HESA)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students

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2018 (National Code)

7 Schedules

This policy must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

8 Policy Information

Accountable Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and Education)
Responsible Officer	Academic Registrar
Policy Type	Executive Policy
Policy Suite	
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	2/1/2026
Effective Date	2/1/2026
Review Date	
Relevant Legislation	*Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)* Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001 (ESOS Regulations) Education Services for Overseas Students (calculation of refund) Specification 2014 *Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)* Higher Education Providers: Administrative Information for Providers (AIP) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018)
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	Admissions, Enrolment and Graduations Policy Student Grievance Resolution Policy
Related Procedures	Assessment of Special Circumstances Procedure

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	Enrolment Procedure Higher Degree by Research Student Admissions and Enrolments Procedure Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure Student Academic Progress Procedure Student Appeals Procedure Student Authority to Act Procedure Student Grievance Resolution Procedure Transfer Between Providers Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Refund Request Form A Refund Request Form B
Definitions	**Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary**
	Admission The process of submission and assessment of applications for entry to study at the University. Appeal A formal, written request made by a Student or Employee to a higher authority to have a Decision overturned. Applicant A person who applies for any program or Course of study offered by the University whether the application is made through the Queensland Tertiary Admission Centre (QTAC) or directly to the University. Authorised Representative A representative who has been authorised to represent or act on behalf of a Student and acknowledged as such by the University in writing and in compliance with relevant University policy. Census Date

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	The date on which the Student's enrolment related requirements must be finalised in line with the University's important dates. A Higher Education Provider must, for each unit of study it provides or proposes to provide during a year, determine for that year, a particular date to be the Census Date for the unit. Students are responsible for meeting the University's Census Date deadline and must check that all enrolment and payment details are correct on or before the Census Date. Complaint A Complaint is an “expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the University, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required”. Course A discrete element of a program, normally undertaken over a single Study Period, in which the Student enrols, and on completion of which the Student is awarded a grade. Decision A determination made by an Employee, contractor or other authorised delegate in the course of their duties on behalf of the University. Domestic Student A Student who is an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, an Australian Permanent Resident or the holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa. Enrolment The process of admitting Students to one or more Courses for the current Academic Year. Exclusion Prohibition from enrolling in a Course or program for a specified period due to unsatisfactory academic progress. International Student A Student who is not an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, an Australian Permanent Resident or the holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa.

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Notice

A Notice from the University is a document, whether physical or electronic. A Notice may be: given by hand to the addressee or delivered to the address provided by the addressee to the University; or sent by registered or pre-paid mail to the address provided by the addressee to the University; or sent by electronic communication to the University-issued email account provided by the University to a Student during the period of Enrolment until the completion of their program; or sent by electronic communication to the email address provided to the University by an addressee not enrolled at the University. A Notice is taken to be received if: given by hand to the addressee or delivered to the address provided to the University by the addressee; or sent by registered or pre-paid mail - three University Business Days after the date of posting; or sent by electronic communication - at the time that would be the time of receipt under the Electronic Transactions Act 1999 or its succeeding legislation. A Notice that would be deemed to have been received out of business hours or on a non-University Business Day will instead be deemed received on the next University Business Day.

Official Sponsor

A third party or entity, located either within Australia or overseas, who has formally contracted with the University to accept debts on behalf of a Student, and therefore make payments and receive refunds on behalf of a Student.

Review of Decision

A merits review of a Decision made by the University in relation to a Student matter where the relevant policy or procedure relating to the matter allows for a review of Decision. The Review of Decision will be undertaken in accordance with the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure.

Special Circumstances

Matters which are, in most cases, beyond the control of the Student and which will impact their capacity to progress with their planned program of study or meet a submission deadline. In some legislation, Special Circumstances are referred to as “compassionate and compelling circumstances”.

Student

A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the

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University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

Student Contribution Amount

The student contribution that a Commonwealth supported Student pays for a specific course of study.

Study Period

The period during which a Course or study unit is offered. Examples of Study Period include, but are not limited to, semesters, trimesters, blocks, intensives and sessions.

University

The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.

University Business Days

The days of Monday to Friday inclusive between 9am and 5pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST), with the exclusion of gazetted Public Holidays for the relevant campus location, plus the closure of the University between 25 December and 1 January in the following year inclusive as specified in the Enterprise Agreement, as well as any closure of the University either at one or several campuses in accordance with a direction of the Crisis Management Team.

Definitions that relate to this policy only

AUD

Australian Dollar.

Course Money

As defined in Section 7 of the *ESOS Act 2000* and includes money received by the University for tuition fees, overseas health cover and any other amount the student had to pay the University to undertake the program, and was paid either directly by the student or a third party paying the money on the student's behalf.

Educational Partner

As defined in Universities Australia Code of Practice and Guidelines for Australian Universities - Provision of Education to International

Students (April 2005) and means a person or entity (such as another university or private provider) with whom the University has an agreement for the delivery of education services. The partner may be located in Australia or in another country and the study may be taken onshore, offshore or by distance education.

Miscellaneous Student Fees, Fines and Charges

Approved University fees, fines and charges not directly related to a student's enrolment, but relating to the provision of services by the University to a student. Examples included, UniSQ Residential College Fees, UniSQ Library Fees and Fines, Academic Transcripts, Extension to Pay fees and Student Loan repayments.

Monies

Monies include current mediums of exchange and/or generally accepted forms of payment for current debts. Examples include, but are not limited to, cash (Australian notes and coins), cheques, money orders, international drafts, EFTPOS transactions, credit (or debit) card transactions, domestic and international bank transfers.

OSHC / Overseas Student Health Cover

A basic health insurance policy, from a registered health insurance organisation, held by an International Student, who is studying or intending to study on-campus in Australia.

Student Account

Is a Student debtor record maintained by the University, in accordance with standard accounting practices, and includes upfront Student Contributions (HECS), Tuition, Miscellaneous (Library and General Charges), OSHC and Student Loans and UniSQ Residential College Accounts.

Student Fee (s)

Includes, Course Monies, Tuition Fees, Student Contribution Amounts, overseas health cover and Miscellaneous Student Fees, Fines and Charges as defined above.

Student Visa

An authorisation permitting people who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents to come to Australia for the primary purpose of studying in Australia as defined by the *Migration Act (1958).*

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	Tuition Fees As defined by the University's Guidelines on definitions:- Fees charged to non-Commonwealth supported students for enrolment in a course and include fees charged for undergraduate, postgraduate, enabling and non-award studies. **UConnect** UniSQ Portal available to staff and students of the University.
Keywords	Refund, Student Fee Refunds, Tuition Fee Refunds, Student Contribution Refunds, Education Partner Refunds, Official Sponsor Refunds, OSHC Refunds, Residential Colleges Refunds
Record No	13/431PL

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