

TUITION PROTECTION SERVICE (TPS) POLICY & PROCEDURE

Introduction

This Kings Own International College (KOIC) is committed to safeguarding the significant financial investment made by international student in their education while ensuring compliance with the regulatory requirements of the Tuition Protection Service (TPS). This policy outlines KOIC's approach to the collection of fees, management of refunds, and financial oversight in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025, the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000, National Code 2018, and TPS guidelines, thereby protecting students and supporting Australia's reputation as a leading provider of quality international education.

Purpose

KOIC's Tuition Protection Service (TPS) policy ensures that:

- Prepaid tuition fees are protected in compliance with TPS requirements.
- Refunds are processed promptly and transparently, as outlined in written agreements.
- Reporting obligations via PRISMS to the Secretary (or delegate) and the TPS Director are met within prescribed timeframes.
- Students affected by provider default are offered a suitable alternative course or a refund for unused tuition fees.

Scope

This policy applies to all prospective and current international students at KOIC and KOIC staff responsible for fee collection, refunds and compliance reporting.

Policy Statement

KOIC is committed to ensuring the protection of prepaid tuition fees for all students in accordance with the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) guidelines and relevant legislation. The policy guarantees financial transparency, regulatory compliance and support for students in the following ways:

1. Fee Collection and Protection

- No more than \$1500 AUD of the student's total tuition fees is collected before course commencement unless the course is 24 weeks or less.
- Prepaid tuition fees are securely deposited into a designated account within five (5) days of receipt and maintained there until the student begins their course.
- KOIC ensures that sufficient funds are available in this account to cover potential refunds for non-commenced students.

2. Refunds

KOIC is committed to providing clear and accurate information regarding fees and refund conditions, as detailed in the *KOIC's Fee Management and Refund Policy and Procedure*. Refunds are calculated based on unused tuition fees in cases such as visa refusal, student withdrawal, or provider default. Refund is issued within twenty-eight (28) days of an approved request and paid in Australian dollars to the original payer.

If a refund request is not received within six (6) months of the event which qualifies the student for a refund, the student will forfeit their right to a refund.

3. Reporting Requirements

KOIC adheres to strict reporting obligations via PRISMS. KOIC will notify the Secretary (or delegate) and the TPS Director via PRSIMS within:

- 3 business days of provider default
- 5 business days of student default
- 7 days of resolving any default obligations.

4. Alternative Arrangements for Students

In cases of provider default, students are offered a place in an alternative KOIC course or a refund of unused tuition fees.

Definitions

Application Fee	A non-refundable fee for processing student applications.
Tuition Fees	Fees directly associated with course delivery and assessment services.
Non-Tuition Fees	Additional fees such as material costs, re-assessments and administrative services.
Provider Default	Circumstance where KOIC is unable to deliver the course as agreed.
Student Default	Circumstances where a student breaches their agreement and fails to commence, withdraws without notice, or breaches visa or course conditions.
Tuition Protection Service (TPS)	A safety mechanism to protect international student fees and ensure course continuity.

Regulatory and Legislative Requirements

- ELICOS Standards 2018
- ESOS Act 2000
- ESOS National Code 2018; Specifically, 3 & 9.4
- NVR Act 2011
- Standards for RTOs 2025: Quality Area 2 – VET Student Support, Outcome Standard 2.1(c) iii, 2.4(e) and Compliance Requirements, Division 3, Clause 18
- Tuition Protection Service (TPS) Framework

Tuition Protection Service (TPS) Procedure

1. Written Agreement with Students

KOIC will have written agreements with students that include:

- Agreed start date
- Default day
- Prepaid fee information
- Length of study period
- Tuition fees for each study period
- Approved unit of study
- Refund requirements

2. Record Keeping Purpose

The TPS legislative amendments strengthen obligations on providers to keep up to date student records related to academic progress and contact details. The purpose of this measure is to:

- Make it easier to contact students affected by a provider closure and to facilitate timely and accurate placement in an alternative course
- Improve protection for the welfare of students, particularly those under 18 years of age
- Ensure students are kept informed of course progress and to support the timely identification of and intervention by the provider where a student is not making good course progress, and
- Improve provider business practice through effective student information systems.

KOIC has established systems and processes to comply with new record keeping requirements as following:

1. KOIC will ensure that students update their contact details at least every study period (20 weeks not including study breaks) to include address, mobile phone, home phone, email, etc
2. KOIC will keep and maintain up to date academic records for every unit of competence being assessed.

3. Fee Collection and Designated Account Management

Prepaid tuition fees are deposited directly into the tuition fees holding account. This account is exclusively for holding prepaid tuition fees and ensures sufficient funds are available for potential refunds. The account must always maintain a credit balance sufficient to refund all prepaid tuition fees for courses not yet commenced.

3.1 Prepaid Fees

Tuition fees are any fees that are directly related to the provision of a course and only tuition fees are protected under TPS. KOIC will comply with the limits on prepaid tuition fees as follows:

- KOIC will not receive more than \$1500 AUD of the student's total tuition fee for a course before the student begins the course unless the course has only one study period which is 24 weeks or less, in which case 100% of total tuition fees can be received.
- KOIC will not require any remaining fees earlier than two (2) weeks before the start of the student's second study period.
- A student may voluntarily pay earlier than two weeks but must not be required to do so
- An exception to these two (2) weeks rule is if the fees are in relation to the first study period, or if it is a debt.
- After the second study period there are no restrictions on when or how much tuition fees KOIC can collect.

3.2 KOIC Obligations to Designated Account

KOIC will maintain a designated account as follows:

- The account will be for initial prepaid tuition fees until a student commences studies.
- It will be a normal bank account that allows deposits and withdrawals (not necessarily a trust account)
- With an Australian ADI (Authorised Deposit-taking Institute)
- Will be a separate account from the day-to-day business operating account.
- Any tuition fees received from students before the student has begun the course will be deposited directly into the account.
- Always ensure there is enough in the account to repay all tuition fees of non-commenced students.
- Will not use this money for payment of other debts.
- Strict penalties will apply for non-compliance against both KOIC and the CEO/PEO
- The account balance is monitored to ensure it covers all un-commenced student's tuition fees.

4. Handling Provider and Student Defaults

4.1 Provider Default

Reporting requirements in case of provider default;

- Notify the student, Secretary (or delegate) and the TPS Director via PRSIMS within three (3) business days.
- Provide an alternative course or refund within fourteen (14) days of default.
- Report the outcome within a further seven (7) days.

4.2 Student Default

In the event of student default, KOIC follows the regulatory requirements for notification and resolution within the prescribed timeframes to ensure compliance with TPS obligations. Reporting requirements in case of student default:

- Notify student, Secretary (or delegate) and the TPS Director via PRSIMS within five (5) business days of the default.
- Notify Department of Home Affairs (DHA) within fourteen (14) days to report cancellation of the student's enrolment via PRSIMS) (i.e. a section 20 notice)
- Twenty-eight (28) days to finalise the student default obligations as set out in the written agreement with the student, and
- A further 7 days to report the outcome of the student default (via PRSIMS).

5. Giving Information about Accepted Students

Under this amendment, KOIC will report particulars of any breach by an accepted student of a prescribed condition of a student visa on PRSIMS even if the student has ceased to be an accepted student. Students cannot avoid being reported to Department of Home Affairs (DHA) for non-attendance or unsatisfactory academic progress by cancelling their CoE.

6. Refund Process

Refund requests must be submitted in writing using the *Refund Application Form*, and approved refunds will be processed within 28 days. Refunds will be issued to the person who made the original payment and be in Australian dollars.

The Kings Own International College (KOIC) will not issue refunds for:

- Application fees, and non-tuition fees such administrative / materials fees
- If you withdraw from your course after the course has commenced
- If you withdraw from your course not in accordance with your visa obligations and behaved not in good faith
- Change in student's work hours
- Inconvenience of travel to class
- Moving interstate or overseas
- Job changes or retrenchment
- Students who leave before completing the course &/or qualification
- If a student becomes a permanent resident of Australia during the program. No guarantees of university or other pathway places will apply to such students
- If DHA has rejected your student visa application based on their finding that you have supplied fraudulent documents along with your student visa application.

7. Refund in Other Cases

Where KOIC has not entered into a written agreement that complies with Section 47B or where a student has been refused a visa, KOIC will pay the student a refund worked out in accordance with the legislative instrument under subsection 47E(4) of the Act.

Procedure Summary Table

Step & Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Reference / Use
1. Collect prepaid tuition fees (<\$1500) and issue receipt	Finance / Admissions	At pre-enrolment	Tax Invoice, Written Agreement
2. Deposit prepaid tuition into designated protected fee account.	Finance Officer	Within 5 business days of receipt	Bank Transfer Record, Account Reconciliation Sheet
3. Record fee data in SMS and flag next PRISMS reporting date	Student Services Officer	Same day	SMS fee ledger
4. Student default occurs (no show. Visa refusal, withdrawal) – log case and acknowledge	Compliance Officer	Within 5 business days of request	Default log; Acknowledgement email
5. Calculate refund or confirm no refund under policy	Compliance Officer / Student Services Officer	Within 10 business days of request	Refund Calculation Sheet
6. Notify student of refund decision and appeal rights	Student Services Officer	Within 2 business days after Step 5	Decision Letter
7. Pay approved refund	Finance Officer	Within 28 calendar days of Step 3 notification	Bank proof, SMS update
8. PRIMS Reporting Student default (5 business days) Provider default (3 business days) Outcome of default (7 days after finalisation)	Compliance Officer	Per ESOS/TPS timelines	PRISMS ID confirmation
9. File all documentation in SMS; archive in TPS evidence folder	Student Services Officer / Compliance Officer	Immediately on completion	Student file checklist
10. Escalate all unresolved complaints via Complaints and Appeals Policy	Any staff member	Upon student request	Complaints Register

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
CEO	Ensure overall compliance with TPS obligations.
Finance Manager	Maintains accurate financial records and oversees fee-related processes.
Compliance Officer	Monitors and ensures compliance with all regulatory standards and reporting requirements.
Student Services Officer (SSO)	Provides support to students during default situations and assists with refund processes.
Students	Understand their rights and obligations in accordance with this policy.

Policy Implementation

KOIC embeds this policy through the following operational controls:

- Designated Tuition-Fee Account – Finance transfers every prepaid amount to the segregated “Student Fees Holding Account” within five (5) business days of receipt and reconciles the balance weekly to ensure it always covers 100 % of un-commenced students’ tuition.
- Automated SMS Workflows – PRISMS-API tasks (default notices, outcome reports) and refund-due alerts are scheduled in the Student Management System, guaranteeing regulatory timelines are met.
- Version-controlled templates – Written Agreement, Refund Application Form, Provider-Default Action Plan and PRISMS Report Checklist are stored in SharePoint with mandatory version stamps.
- Staff capability – Induction for all Admissions, Finance and Compliance staff includes a TPS micro-module; refreshers are delivered each January and July.
- Cross-policy linkage – Key clauses in this policy mirror the Fees Management & Refund Policy, Deferment / Cancellation Policy and Financial Viability Policy to prevent conflicts or gaps.
- CEO oversight – Monthly dashboard (fee-account balance, refund turnaround, PRISMS notices) is tabled at the Executive Meeting and signed-off by the CEO.

Monitoring and Review

Ongoing monitoring includes:

- Monthly - Finance reconciles the Designated Fee Account; Compliance samples 10 % of refund files for 28-day payment rule and PRISMS lodgement dates.
- Quarterly - Dashboard KPIs (average refund turnaround, fee-account coverage ratio, overdue PRISMS notices) are reported to the Governance Committee and logged in the Continuous Improvement Register.
- Annually - Internal audit against TPS Framework and ESOS Act ss46–47 using the TPS Audit Checklist; findings form part of the annual Self-Assurance Report required by Standard 4.

KOIC will review and update this policy every two years, or sooner, to ensure compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements. Review outcomes are reported to senior management for approval and implementation.

Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Approved by	Approval date	Author	Review date
V1.0	Aug 2012	Original draft	Operation Manager	Aug 2012	Director of Study VET	Aug 2013
V1.1	Dec 2012	Overall editing and update	Operation Manager	Dec 2012	Director of Study VET	Dec 2013
V1.2	Jan 2024	Reviewing policy	Operation Manager	May 2024	Director of Study VET	May 2025
V2.1	Jan 2025	Revised policy	CEO	12 Feb 2025	Compliance Officer	Jan 2026
V3.0	Jun 2025	Updated in line with the new standards for RTOS 2025	CEO	20 Jun 2025	Compliance Officer	Jun 2027
V3.1	Apr 2026	Re-brand of policy to KOIC	CEO	1 Apr 2026	Compliance Officer	Apr 2028

Policy and Document Information

Author:	Compliance Officer
Policy owner:	Compliance Officer
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