

## What is Tuition Assurance

Tuition assurance protects students in the event a course, provided by an education provider, ceases to be provided after it starts but before it is completed.

## General Tuition Fees

To protect students Niche Education Group, generally, **does not** accept prepayments of tuition fees over \$1,500.

This protects students, in the event that we are unable to fully deliver your course of study, we do not hold a significant prepaid (or “unspent”) tuition fees that would be required to be refunded.

If we are unable to fully deliver your course of study, we will use our best efforts to facilitate students to complete their studies in another course or with another education provider.

As we do not accept prepayment of tuition fees over \$1,500 we are not required to be party to an tuition assurance arrangement approved by the VET Regulator.

For your options to pay your tuition fees please review our Course Payment Options at <https://www.aacds.edu.au/course-payment-options/>

## VET Student Loans

Students who prepay their tuition fee by accessing a VET Student Loan, your tuition fees are assured by the Tuition Protection Service (TPS).

The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is an initiative of the Australian Government to assist eligible domestic students accessing a VET Student Loan (VSL), whose education providers are unable to fully deliver their course of study. The TPS ensures that these students are able to either:

- complete their studies in another course or with another education provider or
- receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees a re-credit of their loan for open units of study (VSL).

For more information on how TPS process works for VET Student Loan students please visit <https://tps.gov.au/>

## International Students

International Students are required to prepay their tuition fees prior to commencing each study period. These prepaid fees are assured by the Tuition Protection Service (TPS).

The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is an initiative of the Australian Government to assist international students whose education providers are unable to fully deliver their course of study. The TPS ensures that these students are able to either:

- complete their studies in another course or with another education provider or
- receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees.

For more information on how TPS process works for International Students please visit <https://tps.gov.au/>

**What happens if Niche ceases to provide a course after it starts but before it is completed? Information for affected students.**

1. Niche will notify affected students in writing that an approved course is no longer provided within 2 business days after Niche ceases to provide the course after it starts but before it is completed.
2. As soon as practicable, Niche will also update its website to reflect that the course is no longer being delivered and to give students information about the tuition assurance arrangements.
3. Niche will work with affected students to identify a replacement course and arrange for students to be placed with replacement providers.
4. For VET Student Loan and International Students, the Commonwealth Department of Education Skill and Employment (the Department) (or a consultant engaged by the Department) will work with affected students to identify a replacement course and arrange for students to be placed with replacement providers.

**Replacement courses**

Replacement courses must meet the following requirements:

- the course must lead to the same or comparable qualification as the original course;
- the mode of delivery of the replacement course must be the same as or, with the student's consent, similar to the mode of delivery for the original course;
- the location of the replacement course must be reasonable, having regard to the costs of, and the time required for, a student's travel; and
- the student will not incur additional fees that are unreasonable and will be able to attend the replacement course without unreasonable impacts on the student's prior commitments.

Affected students will be offered a replacement course (if available) and may seek a review about whether the course offered to them meets the requirements for replacement courses.

A student who accepts the replacement course offered will not be required to pay the replacement provider for the replacement components of the replacement course. However, the fees payable for the remainder of the replacement course may be different from the fees payable for the original course.

A student who accepts the replacement course offered will also receive course credits for parts of the original course successfully completed by the student, as evidenced by:

- a copy of a statement of attainment or other Australian Qualifications Framework certification document issued by the course provider or an authorised issuing organisation in accordance with the Australian Qualifications Framework; or a copy of an authenticated VET transcript issued by the Student Identifiers registrar.

Each affected student will have a period of six (6) months in which to accept the replacement course offer. The Department may extend that period in circumstances that justify an extension.

If an affected student enrolls in a course that is not a replacement course, the student may be required to pay additional tuition fees and might not receive the course credits the student would have received if the student had enrolled in a replacement course.

### **Re-crediting of students' VETSL debt balances**

Where there is no suitable replacement course for a student, Niche will re-credit the student's VETSL debt balance for the affected parts of the original course. The amount re-credited will be equal to the amount of VET student loan used to pay tuition fees for the student for the course.

### **Prepaid fees**

Niche does not accept prepayments of tuition fees over \$1,500 and therefore does not have in place current membership of a Tuition Assurance Scheme approved by the VET Regulator.

For tuition fees paid up-front below \$1,500, students should be aware that there is no formal protection in place and students will be responsible to seek a refund for these fees directly from Niche if Niche fails to provide the agreed services.

Niche has in place the refund policy agreed to in the student's enrolment contract in the first instance and a broader, general policy outlined in the Fees, Charges, Refund and Re-Credit Policy and Procedure. If the provider is under external administration, this may require the student submitting a proof of debt with the external administrator.

### **Record keeping**

It is suggested best practice for students to retain assessments, records of competencies or statements of attainment that they receive from their education provider.