

INFORMATION – APPLICATION FOR WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT FINANCIAL PENALTY (Domestic Students Only)

Remission of HELP Debt and/or Refund of Upfront Tuition Fees

Application and timeframes for acceptance

Commonwealth Government legislation (The Higher Education Support Act 2003) and University policy stipulate that, under special circumstances, students may apply for a remission of Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) debt (FEE-HELP or HECS-HELP) and/or, refund of student contribution amounts and tuition fees, if paid up-front.

Students have up to 12 months after the date of withdrawal, or, if not withdrawn, 12 months after the end of the study period for the subject to make their request and provide appropriate evidence to support their case.

Please note: A lack of knowledge or understanding of requirements for applying for a remission or refund is not a valid reason for applying outside of these timeframes. The Remission and Refund Officer has the discretion to waive the 12 month time requirements if they are satisfied that the applicant has supplied sufficient evidence to determine that the application could not be made within the time limits.

What are “special circumstances”?

James Cook University must be satisfied that special circumstances applied to the student were:

- beyond the student’s control; **and**
- did not make the full impact until on or after census date; **and**
- made it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements of the subject/s in the period during which the person undertook, or was to undertake the subject.

In all cases, the circumstances must have a significant impact on the student and their ability to complete the unit of study.

Circumstances which make it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements of the unit include:

- Medical Circumstances
- Family/Personal Circumstances
- Employment Related Circumstances
- Course Related Circumstances

Who should use this form?

Domestic students should use this form to apply for a HELP debt to be removed (remitted) for a unit of study only if the student has:

- withdrawn after the census date due to special circumstances; **and**
- has not completed the requirements of the subject.

Who should not use this form?

International students should use the form available [here](#).

How do I apply?

If your circumstances fit the criteria outlined above, please complete the [application form](#) and submit with the following documentation to support your application:

1. A student statement.
2. Independent supporting documentation (see below for further information).

By email to studentfinance@jcu.edu.au (preferred method) or lodge the application in person at the Student Centre on your campus:

TOWNSVILLE Student Centre – Education Central (Bld, 134)
CAIRNS Student Centre – Chancellery Building (Bld. A1)

Supporting documentation

It is very important to provide independent supporting documentation with your application. It is not sufficient to just provide a student statement. Supporting documentation may include:

1. **Medical Circumstances:** a statement from a doctor stating:
 - the date your medical condition began or worsened;
 - how your condition affected your ability to study; and
 - when it became apparent that you could not continue with your studies.
2. **Family/Personal Circumstances:** A statement from a doctor or counsellor stating:
 - the date your personal circumstances began or changed;
 - how your circumstances affected your ability to study; and
 - when it became apparent that you could not continue with your studies.
3. **Employment-Related Circumstances:** A statement from your employer stating:
 - your previous work hours and location;
 - your current work hours and location;
 - the reason for changed hours and location

Note: The change in employment must be beyond your control.
4. **Course Related Circumstances:** A statement from your Faculty stating:
 - that you have been disadvantaged by changed arrangements to your unit/course and that it was impossible for you to undertake alternative units or courses.

What happens once the application is lodged?

1. Once the application is lodged you will be sent an acknowledgement email – within 7 days of receipt to the email address supplied on the application form. This email will be confirmation of receipt and will outline timeframes for the assessment of your application.
2. You may receive an additional request by email to supply further supporting documentation to assist with the assessment of your application. The application will be considered by the Remission and Refund Officer based on the Higher Education Support Act in conjunction with the independent supporting documentation provided. You will be notified of the outcome within eight weeks of receipt of the application or if requested within eight weeks of when all additional documentation is received.
3. The decision will be communicated to you via the email address supplied on the application form. If an email address has not been supplied, a Notice of Decision letter will be posted to the address provided.
4. If approved, the HECS/FEE-HELP debt you have incurred for that unit will be remitted, and any amounts you paid up-front will be refunded.
5. If declined the reason for the decision will be provided in the Notice of Decision letter. Details on how to appeal the decision is available on this letter.

Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSA Fee)

In accordance with the SSA Fee Policy, any up-front payments or SA-HELP debt for the SSA Fee for subjects approved under the Application for Withdrawal without Financial Penalty will not be refunded after the applicable census date.

Academic penalty

As part of the Withdrawal without Financial Penalty application process if you tick the box in Section 6 on the application form the University will review your grade during this process. The Division will correspond with you directly on the outcome of the Application for Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty.