



**Tertiary Education
Commission**
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua



Student Services Fees

**Guidance for tertiary education
providers**

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Introduction

This guide provides information on student services fees, including:

- › how to comply with regulations
- › examples of good practice
- › an example of what to include in a student services fee report.

What is a student services fee?

Tertiary education organisations (TEOs) can charge their students¹ a student services fee to fund delivery of services that support students and enhance their academic experience.

How student services fees are regulated

Student services fees are regulated through funding determinations and are subject to the funding conditions administered by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). These conditions outline the rules that TEOs must follow when receiving TEC funding.

The funding conditions for student services fees ensure that providers are transparent when setting the fees and accountable to students for their use. The conditions provide a clear framework for providers and students to work together to set student services fees and ensure access to services that students need.

[Funding conditions by year](#)

Areas of compliance

TEOs must comply with all aspects of the conditions if they charge student services fees to domestic students to help fund student services, and if they are funded through:

- › Delivery at Levels 1 and 2 on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (DQ1-2) Fund
- › Delivery at Levels 3–7 (non-degree) on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework and all industry training (DQ3-7) Fund, or
- › Delivery at Levels 7 (degree) and above on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (DQ7+).

The funding conditions for student services fees cover six areas:

- › [Which students can be charged a compulsory fee for student services](#)
- › [How to involve students in decision-making](#)
- › [What services the fees can fund](#)
- › [How to account for student services fees](#)
- › [How to report on student services fees](#)

¹ In this guide, the definition of 'student' includes work-based learners.

- › [How to publish student services fee information](#)

Which students can be charged a compulsory fee

While most students can be charged a compulsory fee for student services, apprentices and trainees cannot be. Instead, you must give these students the ability to opt in to paying for and accessing student services. An apprentice or trainee can only be charged a student services fee if they agree to it.

You can also give apprentices and trainees the option of paying for specific student services that they would like to access.

The different requirements for apprentices and trainees reflect that they are likely to spend less time on campus, and so may have limited access to the funded services.

How to involve students in decision-making

The funding conditions require providers to either consult or make decisions jointly with their students (or student representatives) to determine:

- › the maximum fees that students will pay (including different types of students, eg, work-based, international, part-time or distance)
- › the services that will be delivered within the specified [categories of student services](#)
- › how these services will be procured and how expenditure on them will be authorised.

We recommend you review the decision-making processes you have in place to ensure students are sufficiently involved and that you are complying with the funding conditions.

Students or their representatives must be involved in making decisions about many aspects of the student services fee. To ensure student involvement, TEOs must:

- › keep an open mind and not predetermine a course of action before involving students in decision-making
- › supply and publicise enough information to students for them to respond to proposals in an informed way
- › ensure there is enough time for students to consider proposals and provide feedback
- › consider the feedback provided by students and whether any changes are required.

If, instead of undertaking a joint decision-making process, a TEO chooses to make decisions about student services fees in consultation with enrolled students or their representatives, the TEO must ensure that:

- › it doesn't predetermine the outcome of the consultation
- › its proposals are clearly communicated and publicised
- › there is enough time for students to consider proposals and provide feedback
- › it gives due consideration to student feedback, and

- › it listens to what students have to say and gives due consideration to alternative proposals.

Engaging students: examples of good processes

- › Ask your students (and their representatives) how they would like to be involved in decisions about student services fees – eg, by being consulted or by being part of the decision-making process.
- › Establish committees with student representation and advisory or decision-making powers over how student services fees are set, what services should be delivered, and how those services should be purchased.
- › Share information with students about how the fees are being used and how the services are performing.
- › Seek regular feedback from students to inform any proposed changes, including surveys on the quality of services offered and what other types of services students may value.
- › Publish information on your website that clearly sets out any proposed changes to student services fees that you must consult on or decide jointly with students. Give students enough time to engage and provide feedback.
- › Give students a summary of feedback and an explanation of how that feedback was taken into consideration.
- › Hold student forums, where students or their representatives are invited to give feedback on student services fees.
- › Form partnerships with student groups to deliver certain student services.
- › Engage with all groups of students who could be charged a student services fee, including international students and work-based learners.



Fee setting: examples of good processes

- › Set different fees for different sites to reflect the services students can access, particularly if you have multiple campuses that offer different services.
- › Set different fees for different students. For example, charge distance students or work-based learners who cannot access all the services a lower fee.
- › Grant refunds if a student withdraws from their studies (a pro-rata refund for the period of their enrolment, or aligned with your withdrawal and refund policy)² and publish your refund policy so students are informed.



² PTEs charging a student services fee have responsibilities around withdrawals and refunds under the Education and Training Act 2020 (section 357). For more information on the refund requirements, please visit NZQA's website: [Student withdrawals and refund: NZQA](#)

What services the fees can fund

Currently, delivery of the following service categories can be supported by student services fees:

Advocacy and legal advice

Advocating on behalf of individual students and groups of students and providing independent support to resolve problems. This includes advocacy and legal advice relating to accommodation.

Careers information, advice and guidance

Supporting students' transition into post-study employment.

Counselling services

Providing non-academic counselling and pastoral care (eg, chaplains).

Employment information

Providing information about employment opportunities for students while they are studying.

Financial support and advice

Providing hardship assistance and advice to students with financial issues.

Health services

Providing health care and related welfare services.

Media

Supporting the production and dissemination of information by students to students, including newspapers, radio, television and internet-based media.

Childcare services

Providing affordable childcare services while parents are studying.

Clubs and societies

Supporting student clubs and societies, including by providing administrative support and facilities for clubs and societies.

Sports, recreation and cultural activities

Providing sports, recreation, and cultural activities for students.

If you offer these services without charging students for them, you do not need to comply with the conditions on student services fees. If you charge students for any of these services, you must comply with the conditions, regardless of what the fee is called. If you're not sure whether a type of student service falls within one of the specified categories, please email us at ssf@tec.govt.nz.

How to account for student services fees

TEOs must either hold student services fee income in a separate bank account or ensure that all associated income and expenditure is separately accounted for in their accounting system. This includes separately accounting for depreciation of spaces assigned to student services fees.

This ensures that student services fee income is only spent as intended on permitted student services. It will also help you to easily meet the reporting requirements set out below.



How to report on student services fees

Tertiary education institutions (TEIs) must report on student services fees in their annual reports.

Private training establishments (PTEs) must provide a written report each year to their students and to us at ssf@tec.govt.nz.

All reports must:

- › identify the fee charged per equivalent full-time student (EFTS) or academic year– this includes the amount charged for each type of student (eg, work-based learners, international students, distance students, part-time students, or students at different campuses)
- › describe each type of student service that the fee supports – note that the ‘types’ of student services are distinct from the ‘categories’ of student services (eg, ‘social sports’ are a type of service that falls within the ‘sports, recreation and cultural activities’ category)

- › include a statement of the student services fee income and expenditure for each type of student service (see [table](#) in appendix)
- › a written description of how you are complying with the accounting requirements.

We've provided an [example of what to include in a student services fee report](#) that you can use as a template.

How to publish student services fee information

As well as writing reports, you must have certain student services fee information available on your website. This ensures that students are informed of their rights and how they can participate in related decision-making. It increases the transparency of student services fee processes, as well as student involvement.

Information that must be displayed prominently on your website

If you are charging student services fees, you must have a section on your website that is specific to student fees. It must be accessible and its information must be displayed prominently.

You must, as soon as reasonably practicable each year, publish this information on your website:

- › a description of the student services that the fees support (ie, each type of service that the fees support and not just the categories of student services offered)
- › the fee charged per EFTS or academic year (or however it is calculated) for each campus and each type of student, if different fees are charged (eg, if there is a reduced fee charged for distance students, or for a campus that has different services available)
- › a statement of the fee income and expenditure for each type of student service
- › a description of the current year's student services fee decision-making process, including the decisions that were consulted on, how consultation with students took place, a summary of student feedback, what the decisions were, and the extent to which student feedback was incorporated into those decisions
- › a description of how students can be involved in student services fees decisions for the following year, ie, how you propose to consult with students and what issues might be considered.

This content should be updated as and when any changes related to student services fees occur. Most providers make changes to these fees annually and so run a mid-year process to involve students in related decisions.

Good practice reporting is clear and transparent and might also include:

- › links to the different services that the fees help fund, so students can easily access these
- › information on fee exemptions, pro-rata rates available, refunds or rebates
- › student services fee policy documents
- › documents, student survey information or feedback received on student services fees
- › forums for students to give feedback on services and your practices related to student services fees
- › contact details for fee queries
- › key dates and information for upcoming student meetings and consultation opportunities.

Non-compliance with funding conditions

The compliance requirements for institutions charging student services fees are set out in TEC's funding conditions. TEC can request information from TEOs to help determine whether they are complying with conditions, and can also undertake audits or investigations to assure itself of TEO compliance.

If TEC determines a breach of funding conditions has occurred, it can exercise a number of powers, including suspending, revoking or withdrawing funding.

Contact us

For information and advice on student services fee requirements, please contact ssf@tec.govt.nz.

Appendix: What to include in a student services fee report

- › **What is a student services fee?** Describe what a student services fee is and why your organisation charges this.
- › **How much are the student services fees?** Identify the fee charged per equivalent full-time student (EFTS) and, if offered, pro-rata rates for part-time, distance and work-based students. If you have multiple campuses, you need to specify the fee charges for each different campus. If you charge a different fee for international students, this should also be specified.
- › **What student services do you offer?** Provide a description of the actual services the fee funds under the category of services headings (ie, sub-categories, not just repeating the generic descriptors from the funding determination).
- › **Report income and expenditure.** Provide a breakdown of the fee income and expenditure for each type of student service. The table below is an example of how you could report this. It must be broken down by service type, not just the specified student services fee category.
- › **How are you complying with the accounting requirements?** Comment on your student services fee accounting practices: related income must either be held in a separate account or ring-fenced within your organisation's existing accounts. This includes depreciation for spaces occupied and charged under the fee.
- › **How do you involve students in decision-making?** This is not a requirement in a TEI's annual report or a PTE's report for students. However, including information about how student services fee decisions are made and how students can be involved increases transparency and encourages participation. Good practice would:
 - provide a contact for related queries
 - specify how students were involved in decisions related to the current student services fee – including setting the fee amount, determining the services offered, procuring those services and authorising expenditure
 - indicate how students can provide feedback on the services offered and how they can be involved in future decisions.



Student services fee income and expenditure must be reported by each type of student service, for example:

Service category <i>List the categories of service you offers</i>	Service type <i>List the specific types of service funded within each category</i>	Revenue			Expenditure	Surplus / (Deficit)
		Student services fee income	Other revenue	Total revenue	Student services fee expenditure	
Advocacy and legal advice	Eg, Class representative network					
	Eg, Tenancy advice service					
Careers information, advice and guidance	Eg, CV assistance					
	Eg, Interview practice, career guides					
Counselling services	Eg, Chaplaincy					
	Eg, Wellbeing workshops					
Employment information	Eg, Career expos					
	Eg, Online job portal					
Financial support and advice	Eg, Budgeting services					
	Eg, Savings workshops					
Health services	Eg, Subsidised GP clinic					
	Eg, Crisis support service					
Media	Eg, Student radio					
	Eg, Student magazine					
Childcare services	Eg, Space					
	Eg, Equipment					
Clubs and societies	Eg, Activity grants for clubs					
	Eg, Exercise gear for hire					
Sports, recreation and cultural activities	Eg, Gymnasium					
	Eg, High-performance sports centre					
	Eg, Activity grants for cultural groups					
	Eg, Recreation centre					
TOTAL	-					



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