Australian Unmanned Systems Academy

Student Co-Contribution Fees, Refund & Eligibility Policy

1. Purpose

To ensure that Australian Unmanned Systems Academy (AUSA) manages student fees, refunds, and eligibility under the Career Start funding program in a fair, transparent, and compliant manner. This policy supports ethical financial practices, compliance with the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), and Queensland Government funding requirements.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students, employers, and industry partners enrolled in subsidised training programs delivered by AUSA. AUSA is committed to:

• Providing clear and fair student fee arrangements.
• Preventing financial disadvantage to students.
• Ensuring refund practices meet regulatory and funding contract obligations.
• Confirming student eligibility for subsidised training programs, including Career Start.
• Communicating student rights, responsibilities, and entitlements clearly.

3. Procedure

Co-Contribution Fee Collection

Australian Unmanned Systems Academy will not charge or collect the full co-contribution fee upfront.

• AUSA will not invoice more than 30% of the total co-contribution fee at enrolment.
• The remaining balance will be invoiced six (6) weeks after enrolment.
• Payment of the second invoice is required to maintain continued enrolment in the program.
• Failure to make payment may result in suspension or cancellation of enrolment in accordance with AUSA procedures.

Refund Management

Refunds are managed in line with the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and applicable funding requirements.

• A full refund of co-contribution fees will be provided where enrolment is cancelled before training has commenced.
• A proportionate refund will apply where a student withdraws after commencement, based on units or modules not yet delivered.
• Employers or industry partners will receive refunds for any additional charges paid beyond the co-contribution fee and government subsidy.

Refund requests must be submitted in writing and will be processed within a reasonable timeframe.

Career Start Eligibility

To be eligible under the Career Start funding program, students must meet the following criteria:

• Aged 15 years or older.
• Not a current school student.
• Be a permanent Queensland resident.
• Be an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident (including humanitarian entrant), temporary resident with an eligible visa and work rights on a pathway to permanent residency, or a New Zealand citizen.
• Not currently enrolled in another qualification.
• Not have completed a Certificate III or higher-level qualification within the last 10 years (general training pathway).
• Not be enrolled in another qualification, even if it is on hold or deferred, whether funded by DTET or not (foundation skills qualifications are exempt).

Eligibility will be confirmed during the pre-enrolment assessment process.

Career Start Training Opportunities

Through Career Start, students are eligible for funding for up to two training opportunities, which can be used in one of the following ways:

• **Option 1:** Complete one Certificate III qualification through the general training pathway and one apprenticeship or traineeship.
Note: If the apprenticeship or traineeship is completed first, the student cannot later access a general training pathway qualification under Career Start.

• **Option 2:** Complete two apprenticeships or traineeships at Certificate II or III level, including school-based options.

Students may also access one funded introductory skill set in addition to the two training places.

Career Start does not allow students to undertake two general training pathway qualifications.

Student Responsibilities and RTO Obligations

It is the responsibility of Australian Unmanned Systems Academy (AUSA) to inform students of their eligibility for a program, including when they will exhaust their entitlement to access a subsidised training place. This information is provided through:

• The pre-enrolment interview, where program requirements and eligibility are explained.
• An AISS search to confirm the student's prior training history.
• A student review of the eligibility criteria, ensuring they understand their eligibility before enrolment.

Students are expected to provide accurate information during these processes to support AUSA in determining their eligibility.

Government Reporting Requirements

Students may be requested to complete Queensland Government surveys relating to training goals, learning experiences, and employment outcomes as part of funding, monitoring, and quality assurance obligations.