Learner Withdrawal Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines the principals, framework and processes for actioning a learner's withdrawal from an AIE course. The objectives of this policy are to outline the process:

a. By which a learner must formally advise AIE of their intention to withdraw
b. AIE will follow to action the withdrawal request in a timely manner to ensure the learner does not incur additional tuition fees or VET Student Loan (VETSL) debt, where applicable.

This policy applies to:

c. All domestic learners enrolled in an accredited qualification; it relates to learners who are accessing VET Student Loans (VETSL), state funding and/or are full fee paying
d. Learners in non-accredited courses.

This policy does not apply to:

e. Learners who have been determined to be a non-genuine learner; for non-genuine learners, see *Cancellation of Learner Enrolment Policy and Procedure*
f. International learners.

This policy and procedure applies to AIE Administration, training and executive staff who have direct oversight of the learner withdrawal process.

2. The Policy

AIE has a simple and accessible means for genuine domestic learners to withdraw from their studies and that. Learners who wish to withdraw are done so in a timely and orderly fashion so that further tuition fees or VETSL debt are not incurred. AIE also ensures that requests for remission of tuition fees based on special circumstances are fairly and compliantly actioned.

3. Implementation

The Board of Directors is responsible for the approval of this policy after it has been drafted or reviewed by the National Administration Coordinator.

The policy is to be implemented via induction and training of staff and distribution via the AIE intranet and other publications as required.

The implementation of this policy as it relates to learners is included in the *Learner Handbook*.

4. Procedures

Refer to Appendix A for a printable flow chart of the learner withdrawal process.

4.1. Receive Learner Withdrawal Request

A learner who wishes to withdraw from their course of study must do so in writing to AIE.

A learner who is enrolled in a Diploma, Advanced Diploma or Graduate Diploma qualification must complete and sign the *Learner Withdrawal Form*.

If a learner indicates (via email, in person or telephone contact) that they wish to withdraw but does not complete a *Learner Withdrawal Form* by the census date, AIE would consider this sufficient evidence to begin the withdrawal process. Non-completion of the *Learner Withdrawal Form* will not be considered a barrier to actioning the withdrawal to prevent the tuition fee and/or VETSL debt for the next Unit of Study being incurred. A learner who is enrolled in a Certificate qualification may complete the *Learner Withdrawal Form* or send an email or other form of written communication.

A learner who is enrolled in a non-accredited course may send an email or other form of written communication to cancel their place in the course.

Where a VET Student Loan funded learner withdraws from an approved course, or a part of an approved course, AIE will not enrol that learner in a subsequent course or part of a course without written permission from the learner, which must be given after the date of withdrawal.

4.2. Review Learner Withdrawal

All *Learner Withdrawal Form*s received for Diploma, Advanced Diploma or Graduate Diploma qualifications are forwarded to the relevant Head of School(HOS)/delegate for review.

Where practicable, the HOS/delegate contacts the learner to discuss their intention to withdraw, explore any issues raised and discuss alternative learning options if required (such as transfer to another course of study).

If the learner has requested a remission of fees as part of their withdrawal, the HOS/delegate discusses this request with the learner and seeks additional information and supporting evidence in relation to special circumstances.

The HOS/delegate confirms in writing to Administration that the withdrawal is to be actioned.

Withdrawal forms and/or written requests to withdraw for Certificate qualifications and non-accredited courses are received by Administration.

Where practicable, Administration contacts the learner to discuss their intention to withdraw and explore any issues raised.

Administration seeks confirmation from the HOS/delegate that the withdrawal is to be actioned. Verbal confirmation is considered sufficient.

AIE actions a learner withdrawal within 7 business days of receiving the written notification of withdrawal.

4.3. Remission of Fees for Special Circumstances

A learner may request a remission of fees for special circumstances via the *Learner Withdrawal Form*. Refer to *Domestic Learner Tuition Fee Refund Policy and Procedure* and *VETSL Special Circumstances Review Policy and Procedure* for more information.

4.4. Withdrawn learners who return to study

Learners who re-enrol into the same course from which they have previously withdrawn from will not be penalised. The learner can re-enrol as long as the qualification is the same and the course content has not changed. The learner may be required to show currency of knowledge depending on the duration of time since their last study. The learner may be required to re-enrol into units of study from the start based on assessment by AIE.

Where the qualification and/or the course content has been updated, the learner may apply for Recognition of Prior Learning or Credit Transfer according to the process outlined in the Learner Handbook.

Where a previously withdrawn learner recommences study with AIE, the learner must contact their Campus Administration Team and notify them of their intent to re-enrol in writing. Their Head of School or delegate must complete an assessment of the learner's previous course progress against the current course requirements. The learner must re-submit all enrolment forms to confirm their intention to recommence their studies.

Where a learner has already completed part of the course under their previous enrolment, they can choose to only enrol in the part/s of the course they still have remaining by completing a VETSL Options Form provided by their Campus Administration Team.

4.5. Process Learner Withdrawal – Administration

4.5.1. Update Student Management System

Administration follows the internal administrative process to correctly withdraw a learner from their course in the Student Management System (SMS). See the *Administration Handbook* for more information.

Administration confirms all learner results are updated from the Learning Management System (LMS). Any learner work that has been submitted to the LMS but not yet assessed must be assessed and a result recorded within 7 days of receiving the written notification of withdrawal.

The learner's Units of Competency are finalised with a result or outcome as per the current AVETMISS data reporting requirements.

The learner's Unit of Study (for Diploma, Advanced Diploma or Graduate Diploma qualifications) will be finalised with an outcome as per the current Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI) data reporting requirements.

4.5.2. Action Learner Withdrawal Checklist

Administration completes the internal administration *Learner Withdrawal Checklist*. This sends an automated email notice to the following departments:

a. **Accounts** – to calculate fee refunds/payments and action accounting reporting processes. Administration to advise Accounts if the learner has requested a remission of fees.
b. **IT** – to disable Office365 account
c. **National Compliance Support** – for review.

4.5.3. Review Equipment Loan Register

Administration reviews the Equipment Loan Register/form folder to ensure the learner has returned any items borrowed during their study.

4.6. Process Learner Withdrawal – Accounts Team

The Accounts Assistant or delegate actions all withdrawal emails received by the Accounts Team.

4.6.1. Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Graduate Diploma Withdrawals

When learners withdraw prior to the commencement of the course, providing there have been no tuition fees paid in advance, Administration sends an email to Accounts requesting that the invoice be voided in Reckon.

The Accounts Assistant:

a. Determines the Unit/s of Study the learner has incurred tuition fees for by considering the learner's withdrawal date in relation to the relevant census dates
b. Checks the SMS to determine how much VETSL, VTG, and/or other funding the learner is eligible to receive
c. Reviews Reckon and Payrix records to clarify payments to date, future payments to be received and determine if learner has a debt owing or a refund due; some VETSL payments may be receivable in the future
d. Creates a credit note in Reckon for learners who withdraw after the commencement of the course – the credit note is for any Units of Study the learner is not liable for
e. Checks that the balance of the invoice equals the amount owing, if any (the balance payable may be split over 2 invoices), and that the credit note has a zero balance
f. Creates a note about the withdrawal on the Reckon invoice and the credit note
g. Adds a note to invoice memo section that the learner is withdrawn
h. Adds '(withdrawn)' to the end of the learner's name in the VLOOKUP Master files for VSL, VSFF and VETRO located in the S Drive – or '(partial withdrawal)' for any Online Evening learner withdrawals that are subject withdrawals only

i. Notes whether the withdrawal is for an online learner withdrawing from a subject/s rather than from the whole course.

4.6.1.1. Payrix Process

Where relevant, the Accounts Assistant checks the learner account in Payrix, deletes all future payments and cancels the plan if necessary. The learner may elect to repay any remaining debt via Payrix.

4.6.1.2. Communication Process (Email)

The Accounts Assistant emails the relevant campus to:

j. Confirm the amount of refund payable to the learner or debt owing by the learner
k. Request bank account details for refunds (if necessary).

Emails are only sent by Accounts to Campus Administration if refunds are payable to the learner, debts are payable by the learner or when there are any other queries. Emails will not be sent for any withdrawals where no further action is required.

Refunds are paid into the learner's Payrix bank account unless otherwise advised.

When a refund is payable, the Accounts Assistant provides a copy of the withdrawal form with bank account details to the Senior Accounts Assistant for payment. Payment of the refund is made on the following Thursday, or the Thursday after bank account details are received, whichever is sooner.

4.6.2. Certificate Withdrawals

The Accounts Assistant:

a. Applies credit notes against invoices in Reckon for learners who withdraw from Certificate qualifications
b. Processes any refund that may be payable. If the payment was received via PayPal, the refund processed in PayPal. Otherwise, the payment will be made into the learner's bank account. If bank account details are not provided within 6 months, a cheque will be posted to the learner
c. Contacts the campus if any debt is owing.

4.6.3. Non-Accredited Course Cancellations

The Accounts Assistant

a. actions credit notes in Reckon for learners who cancel from non-accredited courses and to whom a refund is due.
b. If the payment was received via PayPal, the refund processed in PayPal. Otherwise, the payment will be made into the learner's bank account. If bank account details are not provided within 6 months, a cheque will be posted to the Learner.

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4.7. Deactivate Learner Account

Deactivating the learner account disables access to all systems and services, including the LMS and Office 365. Learner accounts are not removed in case the learner has submitted assessment work that needs to be retained for compliance purposes. See the Learner Access Chart below.

4.7.1. Full Withdrawal

Administration deactivates the learner account in the SMS of a learner who is withdrawing from the whole course to prevent further access.

4.7.2. Partial Withdrawal

The learner account will not be deactivated for learners who are withdrawing from specific subjects (online) or units of study (campus-based) but not the whole course. Instead, the relevant HOS disables the LMS access to the relevant subjects or units of study.

4.8. Issue Statement of Attainment

Administration issues a Statement of Attainment for any Units of Competency successfully completed by the learner, providing there is no outstanding tuition fee debt.

If a learner is withdrawing from a Diploma, Advanced Diploma or Graduate Diploma, they must have remained enrolled in a Unit of Study past the relevant census date and paid the tuition fee to be awarded any competencies from that Unit. See *Issue AQF Certification Policy and Procedure*. Administration follow the relevant SMS administrative process to issue and print credentials.

4.9. Confirmation of Learner Withdrawal

At the completion of the withdrawal procedure by all departments, Administration will email the learner to advise that their withdrawal has been processed. The email will confirm:

a. The learner has been withdrawn from their qualification (or specific subject/s, in the case of part time online learners)
b. If there are outstanding tuition fees owing and how these may be paid
c. If a tuition fee refund is owing and how this will be issued
d. That a Statement of Attainment has been posted to the learner's home address (if applicable)
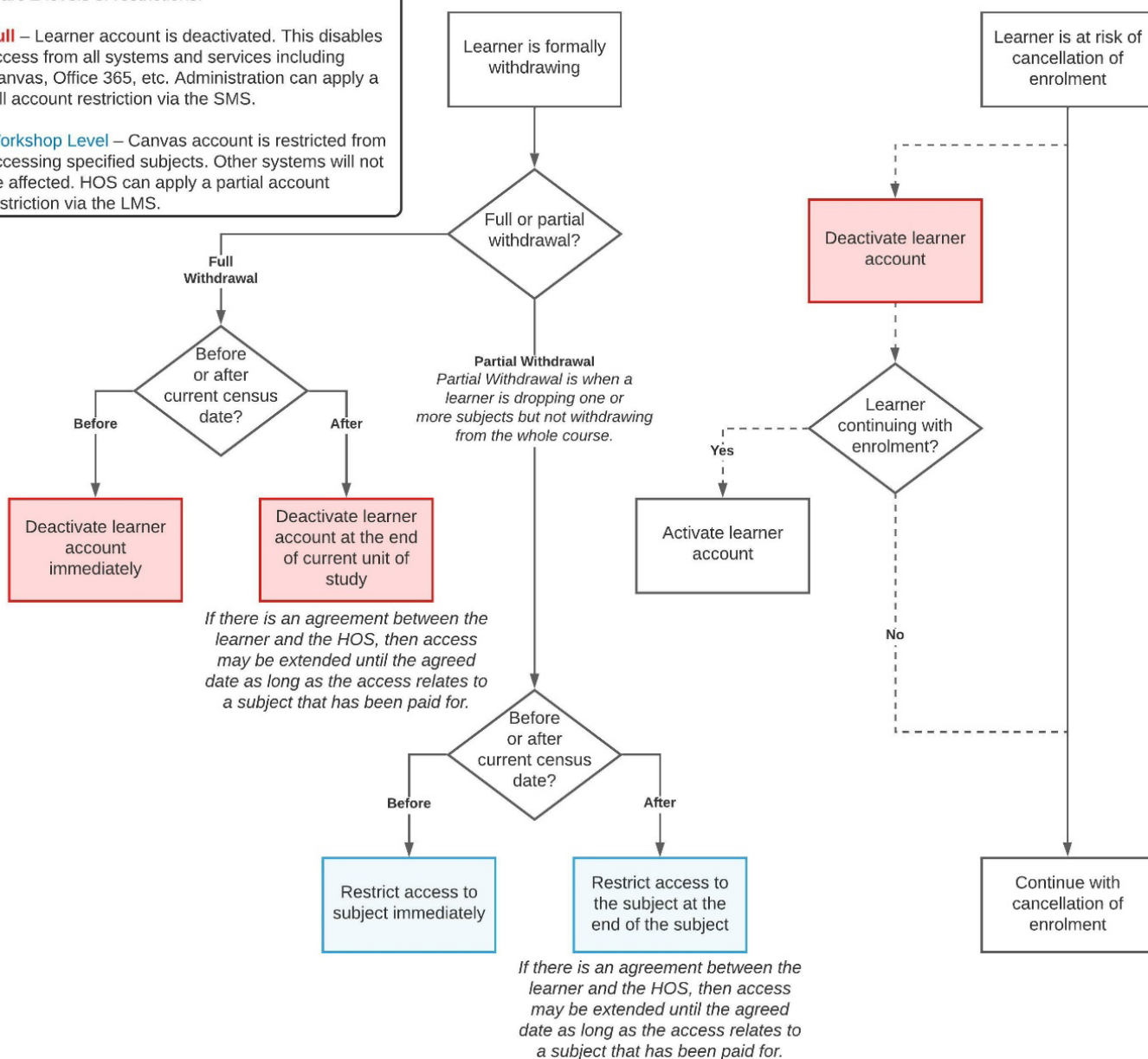e. Any additional information as required.

For Victorian learners accessing Skills First funding, AIE advises learner via email of any expected outstanding tuition fees due to the recalculation of that funding. AIE will confirm the outstanding tuition fees amount, if any, via email one month later.

Learner Access Chart

This flow chart details which level of learner access restriction to AIE systems will be applied to the learner account upon withdrawal or cancellation from a course.

There are 2 levels of restrictions:

1. **Full** – Learner account is deactivated. This disables access from all systems and services including Canvas, Office 365, etc. Administration can apply a full account restriction via the SMS.

2. **Workshop Level** – Canvas account is restricted from accessing specified subjects. Other systems will not be affected. HOS can apply a partial account restriction via the LMS.

Learner is formally withdrawing

Full or partial withdrawal?

Full Withdrawal

Before or after current census date?

Before — Deactivate learner account immediately

After — Deactivate learner account at the end of current unit of study

If there is an agreement between the learner and the HOS, then access may be extended until the agreed date as long as the access relates to a subject that has been paid for.

Partial Withdrawal
Partial Withdrawal is when a learner is dropping one or more subjects but not withdrawing from the whole course.

Before or after current census date?

Before — Restrict access to subject immediately

After — Restrict access to the subject at the end of the subject

If there is an agreement between the learner and the HOS, then access may be extended until the agreed date as long as the access relates to a subject that has been paid for.

Learner is at risk of cancellation of enrolment

Deactivate learner account

Learner continuing with enrolment?

Yes — Activate learner account

No

Continue with cancellation of enrolment

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5. Definitions

The following definitions apply to this policy.

Term	Definition
Accredited Course	A vocational education and training (VET) accredited course that has been assessed by ASQA as compliant with the *Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021* and the Australian Qualifications Framework. It includes Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Graduate Diploma qualifications and results in the attainment of a formal qualification or award.
Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS)	The national data standard ensuring consistent and accurate reporting of Vocational Education and Training information about learners. RTOs must comply with AVETMISS reporting requirements.
Census Date	The date by which an enrolment may be cancelled (via learner withdrawal or RTO-sanctioned cancellation) without incurring tuition fees (or a VETSL debt) for the course and/or Units of Study.
Learning Management System (LMS)	An online system that presents training material to learners and hosts assessment activities.
Non-Accredited Course	A course of study that that does not lead to the attainment of a formal qualification or award and has not been assessed by AQSA as compliant with the *Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021*.
Remission of Fees	The cancellation of a tuition fee debt or VET Student Loan debt for a Unit of Study where a learner has withdrawn after the census date and applied for and been approved for special circumstances.
Student Management System (SMS)	Software system that manages the administrative and data reporting functionality of RTOs.
Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI)	An Australian Government student information collection service designed to streamline data recording and storage in the higher education and VET sectors.
Tuition Fees	The amount specified by AIE as the course fee for a particular course. Tuition fees do not include monies paid for third party services, consumables, application fees, etc.
VET Student Loans (VETSL)	The Australian government program that assists eligible students pay tuition fees for approved higher-level (diploma and above) vocational education and training (VET) courses, when studying at VET Student Loans approved course providers.
Victorian Training Guarantee (VTG)	The Victorian State Government program providing eligible individuals with access to government subsidised training in Victoria, delivered by contracted registered training organisations (RTO).
Withdraw	To leave/cancel a position in a qualification. Learners may withdraw either completely from their qualification or partially (in the case of online learners transitioning to part-time study).

6. Related Documents

The following internal documents are related to this policy:

a. Administration Handbook
b. Application and Enrolment Policy and Procedure
c. Cancellation of Learner Enrolment Policy and Procedure
d. Domestic Learner Tuition Fee Refund Policy and Procedure
e. Equipment Loan Register
f. Issue AQF Certification Policy and Procedure
g. Learner Handbook
h. Learner Withdrawal Checklist
i. Learner Withdrawal Form
j. Tuition Fee Payment and Debt Collection Policy and Procedure
k. Withdrawal Register.

The following legislation and standards are related to this policy:

l. Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
m. Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021
n. VET Student Loans Act 2016
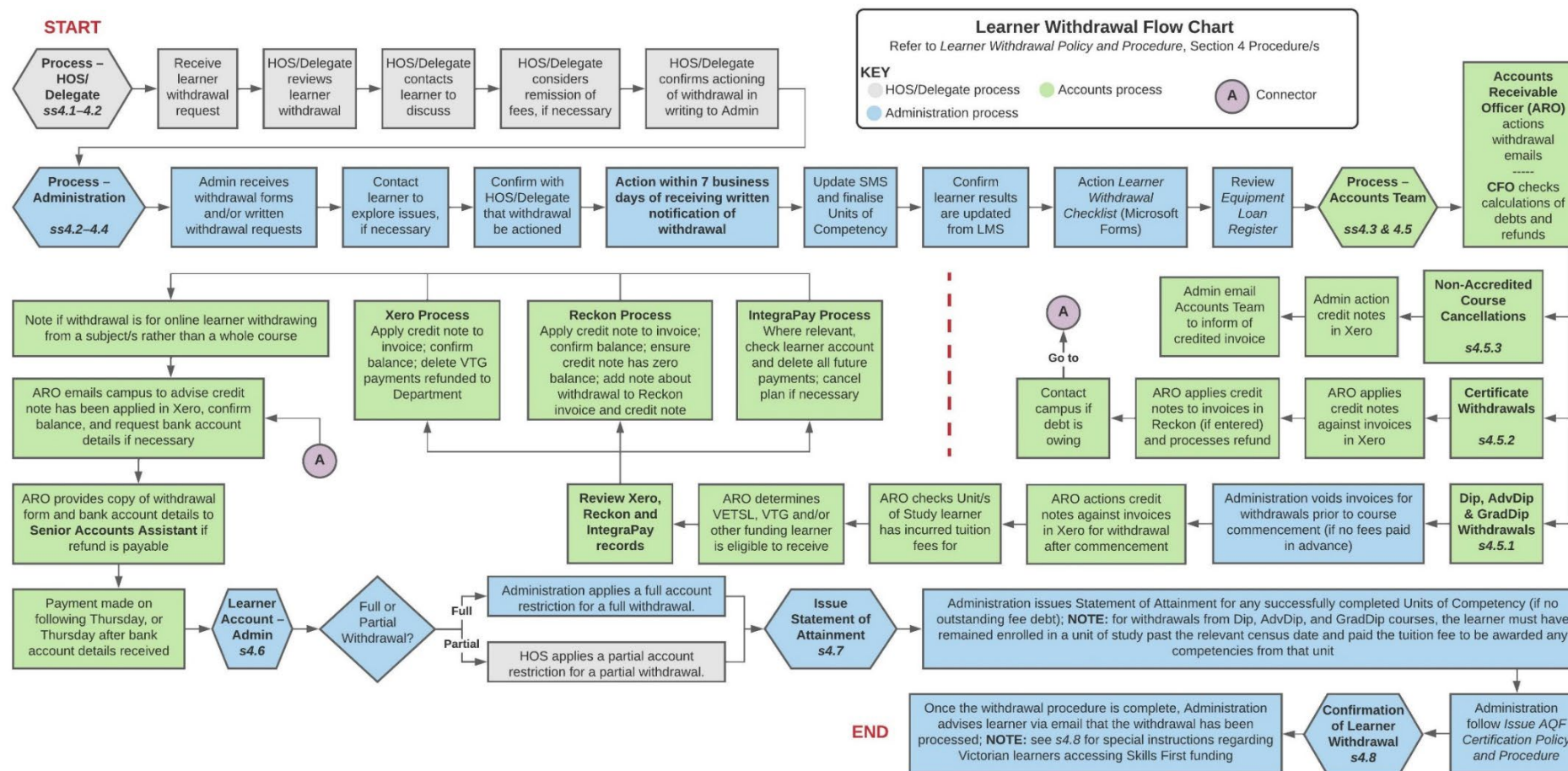o. VET Student Loan Rules 2016.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the National Administration Coordinator.

8. Revision History

This policy has undergone the following revisions:

Version No.	Version Description	Contributor(s)	Approval Authority	Date Revised/ Approved
1.0	Approved by BOD and published on MyAIE.	**Linda Burrows** (National Compliance Officer) **Rebecca Donaldson** (National Compliance Administration Support) **Alexandra Mannell** (Deputy Head of School, Sydney) **Michael Pasqualone** (Chief Technology Officer) **Nick Markesinis** (Intranet Content Coordinator) **Adam Walsh** (National Administration Coordinator)	BOD	28 January 2022
2.0	Updated policy to meet VSL legislative requirements; added section relating to deactivating the learner account; removed references to IT in the withdrawal process; updated references of IntergaPay to Payrix, and Xero to Reckon; Learner Access Chart and Learner Withdrawal Flow Chart.	**Linda Burrows** (National Compliance Officer) **Charlotte Pichelmann** (National Compliance Administration Support) **Adam Walsh** (National Administration Coordinator)	COO	13 April 2022
2.1	Update Accounts processes and position title; updated formatting.	**Karin Thompson** (Financial Consultant) **Nick Markesinis** (Intranet Content Coordinator)	-	10 February 2023

Appendix A: Learner Withdrawal Flow Chart