

**Tertiary Education
Commission**
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua



Student services fees

Guidance for tertiary education providers

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This guide provides information on student services fees, including how tertiary education organisations (TEOs) can comply with regulations, examples of good practice, and an example of what to include in your report.

1. What is a student services fee?

TEOs can charge learners a student services fee to fund services that support learners and enhance their academic experience.

2. How are student services fees regulated?

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

The funding conditions ensure that TEOs are transparent when setting fees and accountable to learners for their use. They provide a clear framework for TEOs and learners to work together to set fees and ensure access to services that learners need.

[Funding conditions by year](#)

2.1 Areas of compliance

TEOs must comply with all aspects of the conditions if they charge these fees to domestic learners and receive TEC funding through any of the following:

- › Delivery at Levels 1 and 2 on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF) (DQ1-2) Fund
- › Delivery at Levels 3 to 7 (non-degree) on the NZQCF and all industry training (DQ3-7) Fund
- › Delivery at Levels 7 (degree) to 10 on the NZQCF (DQ7-10) Fund.

2.2 Non-compliance with funding conditions

The compliance requirements for institutions charging student services fees are set out in TEC's funding conditions.

We may request information from TEOs to determine compliance and may undertake audits or investigations. If we determine there has been a breach of funding conditions, we can exercise a number of powers, including suspending, revoking or withdrawing funding.

Contact us

For further information and advice on student services fee requirements, please contact ssf@tec.govt.nz. More information about student services fees can be found on our website.

[Student services fees](#)

3. Funding conditions for student services fees cover six areas

- › Which learners can be charged a compulsory student services fee
- › How to involve learners in decision-making
- › What services the fees can fund
- › How to account for student services fees
- › How providers must report on the use of student services fees
- › How fee information must be published and made accessible to learners.

3.1 Which learners can be charged a compulsory student services fee

Most learners can be charged a compulsory student services fee. However, you must give apprentices and trainees, or their employers the option to pay for and access student services. You can only charge them if they agree to pay, either for all services or for specific services they want to use.

These different requirements reflect that apprentices and trainees typically spend less time on campus and may have limited access to the services funded by the fee.

3.2 How to involve learners in decision-making

If you charge a student service fee, you must involve learners in decisions about:

- › the amount charged
- › the services funded, and
- › how those services are delivered.

This must be done through either:

- › joint decision making with learner representatives, or
- › consultation that is publicised, allows time for feedback, and shows how feedback influenced decisions.

Good practice (consultation):

- › Ask learners how they want to be involved – eg, through consultation or joint decision-making.
- › Set up committees with learner representation and decision-making or advisory roles.
- › Share information about how fees are used and how services are performing.
- › Seek regular feedback on service quality and learner needs.
- › Publish proposed changes on your website and allow learners to respond.
- › Summarise learner feedback and explain how it was considered.
- › Hold forums, where learners or their representatives can provide input.
- › Partner with learner groups to deliver specific services.

Good practice (fee setting):

- › Set different fees for different campuses, reflecting services available.
- › Charge lower fees to learners who can't access all services.
- › Offer pro-rata refunds for learners who withdraw and publish your refund policy clearly.

3.3 What services the fees can fund

Student services fees can be used to support the delivery of services in the following categories:

- › Advocacy and legal advice
- › Careers information, advice and guidance
- › Childcare services
- › Clubs and societies
- › Counselling services
- › Employment information
- › Financial support and advice
- › Health services
- › Media
- › Sports, recreation and cultural activities.

If learners are charged for any of these services, you must comply with the conditions, regardless of what the fee is called. If you offer these services without charging learners, you do not need to comply with the student services fees conditions.

If you are unsure whether a service fits within one of the specified categories, please email us at ssf@tec.govt.nz.

3.4 How to account for student services fees

You must either:

- › hold student services fee income in a separate bank account, or
- › ensure that all related income and expenditure is clearly separated in your accounting system.

Keeping student services fee income separate ensures it is spent on permitted student services and makes it easier to meet reporting requirements.

3.5 Reporting requirements

All TEOs must prepare an annual student services fee annual report and share it with learners. Alongside that, there are additional reporting requirements depending on your organisation type.

Tertiary education institutions (TEIs):

- › Include student services fees information in their annual reports.

Registered private training establishments (PTEs):

- › Prepare a written report each year showing all student services fees
- › Send the report to TEC within 14 days of providing it to learners.

Send reports to:

Monitoring and Crown Ownership

The Tertiary Education Commission
PO Box 27048
Wellington 6141

Or by email to: ssf@tec.govt.nz (using the subject line: *Requirements for Student Services Fees submissions*)

Each report must include:

- › a description of each type of student service that the fee supports (note: types of services are distinct from the categories, eg, *social sports* is a type within the *sports, recreation and cultural activities* category)
- › a statement of income and expenditure for each type of student service (refer to the table in section 4)
- › the student services fee charged per EFTS (equivalent full-time student) or academic year
- › a statement describing how you are complying with the accounting requirements.

3.6 How to publish student services fee information

Your website must have a dedicated, accessible section for student fees. Each year, you must publish the following information as soon as you reasonably can:

- › A description of the types of services that the student services fees support (not just the broad categories)
- › A statement of fee income and expenditure for each type of student service
- › The fee charged per EFTS or academic year (or how it is calculated) for each campus and each type of learner, if fees differ (eg, reduced fee for distance learners or campuses with fewer services)
- › A description of the current year's decision-making process, including:
 - the decisions that were consulted on
 - how consultation took place
 - a summary of learner feedback
 - what decisions were made
 - how learner feedback was considered.
- › A description of how learners can be involved in decisions for the following year, including proposed consultation methods and topics.

This content should be updated whenever changes to student services fees occur.

4. What to include in a student services fee report

What is the student services fee?

Briefly describe what a student services fee is and why your organisation charges it.

How much is the student services fee?

State the fee charged per EFTS. If applicable, include:

- › Pro-rata rates for part-time, distance and work-based learners
- › Fee differences across campuses
- › Any separate fee charged for international learners.

What student services do you offer?

List the actual services funded by the fee, grouped under the relevant service headings. Be specific – use sub-categories or service types (eg, *social sports* under *sports, recreation and cultural activities*), rather than repeating generic category headings.

Report income and expenditure

Provide a breakdown of income and expenditure for each type of student service. Refer to the example table below. The breakdown must be by service type, not just by category.

How are you complying with the accounting requirements?

Explain how student services fee income is managed:

- › Is it held in a separate account?
- › Is it ring-fenced within your organisation's existing accounts? This includes depreciation for spaces occupied and charged under the fee.

How do you involve learners in decision-making?

This is not a requirement but, including information about how decisions are made and how learners can be involved increases transparency and encourages participation.

Good practice would:

- › provide a contact for related queries
- › specify how learners participated 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 learners can provide feedback on the services offered and how they can be involved in future decisions.

Service category	Service type (examples)	Student service fee income	Other revenue	Total revenue	Student services fee expenditure	Surplus/Deficit
Advocacy and legal advice	Class representative network, tenancy advice					
Careers information, advice and guidance	CV assistance, interview practice, career guides					
Childcare services	Childcare space, equipment					
Clubs and societies	Activity grants for clubs					
Counselling services	Chaplaincy, pastoral care					
Employment information	Career expos, online job portal					
Financial support and advice	Budgeting services, savings workshops					
Health services	Subsidised GP clinic, crisis support					
Media	Student radio, magazine					
Sports, recreation, and cultural activities	Gymnasium, high-performance sports centre, recreation centre					
Total						