



## Census Date

Do you know your census date? Why is it so important?



The census date is the most important date for you to know about. It is the last day you can access a HECS loan (including VET FEE-HELP) or withdraw from a unit of study without incurring a debt.

*Education institutions set their own census dates. You must contact your institution directly for assistance with determining the census date(s) that apply to you. Even one day is too late, so don't be caught out! Saying you were unaware of your census date, or that no-one told you, are not acceptable excuses.*

### What is a census date?

- The census date is the last day for you (as an eligible student) to either:
  - submit a *Request for Commonwealth assistance* form to access a HECS loan (including VET FEE-HELP) to pay for your study, or
  - withdraw your enrolment without incurring the fees for that unit.

### I don't want a HECS debt (including VET FEE-HELP). When must I withdraw?

- ✓ You must withdraw your enrolment by the **census date** so you will not incur a HECS debt (including VET FEE-HELP) and/or maintain entitlement to a full refund of upfront payments.

### How do you withdraw from a unit?

- ✓ You must contact your institution directly! The Australian Government does not process withdrawal forms and cannot withdraw you from a unit or your course.

### Withdrawal by the census date

- ✓ You must complete the formal withdrawal process for every relevant unit, including units you may be enrolled in for future study periods.

- ✓ If you are enrolled at more than one institution (for example cross institutional study or you are undertaking two courses at the same time) you need to withdraw from each one separately.
- ✓ You must keep a copy of all your withdrawal documentation. **This will be particularly important to resolve a dispute if it occurs.**

### Withdrawal after the census date

- ✓ Withdrawing after the census date means you are liable for the fees. This means you will lose any upfront payments made and/or you will incur a HECS debt (including VET FEE-HELP).
- There are limited 'special circumstances' provisions available for you to request the removal of a HECS debt (including VET FEE-HELP) due to unexpected circumstances such as illness that prevented you from completing your unit(s) of study. You must contact your institution directly for more information.

### Other important things to note

- ✗ A telephone call or email to your institution will not be sufficient to withdraw—there will be formal documentation to complete.
- ✓ You must take the initiative to formally withdraw. Your institution will not withdraw you if you choose not to attend classes or hand in assessment items.
- ✓ Allow enough time for your withdrawal documentation to be processed by the census date.

## Need more information?

- ✓ Don't forget to visit the ***Be a savvy student and Transitioning to tertiary*** study pages.
- ✓ Read the suite of ***Be a savvy student*** factsheets.
- ✓ Visit **[www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)** for information about how to apply for a tax file number (TFN) and protecting your personal information.



This factsheet relates to the education institutions listed on **[www.studyassist.gov.au](http://www.studyassist.gov.au)**.