

## FEE-HELP STUDENT ENTRY PROCEDURE

In accordance with the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and FEE-HELP guidelines, all students wishing to apply for FEE-HELP assistance must:

- be studying in a higher education qualification;
- be enrolled in your units of study by the Census date;
- submit an Australian Government Electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (eCAF) by the Census date;
- have an [available HELP balance](#);
- Provide your [Unique Student Identifier](#) (USI) prior to the first Census date;
- not undertake more than 2 years' worth of higher education study in the last 12 months (unless your provider has approved a higher study load)
- Meet the citizenship and residency requirements;
- Be assessed as a genuine student and academically suitable for your unit(s) of study;

This academic assessment is *in addition* to any entry requirements that may be required for the specific course you are undertaking. In high demand courses where there are more applicants than there are available places, there may also be additional selection criteria.

### Eligibility for a FEE-HELP Loan

To be eligible for a FEE-HELP Loan you must provide evidence that you are:

- an Australian citizen who will study at least one unit of your course in Australia; or
- a **New Zealand** Special Category Visa (SCV) holder; or eligible Former New Zealand SCV holder; who meets the long-term residency requirements and who studies the entire course while living in Australia; or
- a **permanent humanitarian** visa holder; or an eligible former permanent humanitarian visa holder; who studies the entire course while living in Australia
- a **pacific engagement** visa holder who is resident in Australia for the duration of your unit(s)

TAFE SA will require you to provide proof of citizenship prior to your application for a FEE-HELP loan. TAFE SA requires the same evidence as is required to apply for VET Student Loans as outlined in the VET Student Loans Manual for Providers

<https://www.dewr.gov.au/vet-student-loans/resources/vet-student-loans-manual-providers>

The evidence required to demonstrate proof of Australian citizenship may differ depending on whether you were:

- born overseas
- born in Australia before 20 August 1986
- born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986

This is because different rules applied at different times.

**Born overseas**

If you were born overseas and acquired Australian citizenship by application you will need to provide **one** of the following documents as evidence of your Australian citizenship:

- an Australian Passport **OR**
- an Australian citizenship certificate **OR**
- a Citizenship by Descent extract

If you do not have one of the above citizenship documents you will need to apply for evidence of citizenship by lodging **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs).

**Born in Australia before 20 August 1986**

If you were born in Australia before 20 August 1986 you will need to provide **one** of the following documents as evidence of your Australian citizenship:

- an Australian Passport **OR**
- full birth certificate issued by an Australian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (RBDM)

An exception to this is if your parents were in Australia as diplomats or consular officers at the time of your birth. In these circumstances, you will need to provide a citizenship certificate as evidence that you are an Australian citizen.

If you do not have a citizenship certificate you will need to lodge **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with Home Affairs.

**Born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986**

If you were born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986 and one (or both) of your parents were an Australian citizen at the time of your birth you will need to provide either:

- an Australian Passport **OR**
- full birth certificate issued by an Australian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (RBDM)

If your birth certificate shows that at least one your parents was born in Australia, and that parent was born before 20 August 1986, this is sufficient evidence to prove your Australian citizenship.

If neither parent was born in Australia but they were born before 20 August 1986 and were an Australian Citizen at the time of your birth, you can provide a parent's Australian citizenship certificate, or extract of citizenship certificate, to prove at least one of your

parents was a citizen at the time of your birth.

If your parent was born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986, your parent's full birth certificate issued by an Australian RBDM, or your parent's citizenship certificate, or extract of citizenship certificate is still required.

If you cannot provide this you must apply for your own evidence of Australian citizenship by lodging **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with Home Affairs.

If you were born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986 and one of your parents was a permanent resident of Australia at the time of your birth, you will need to provide:

- an Australian Passport

If you do not have a current Australian Passport you must provide your Australian citizenship certificate.

You can apply for evidence of Australian citizenship by lodging **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with Home Affairs.

The following documents are not acceptable as proof of a parent's permanent residency for FEE-HELP Loan applications:

- parent's foreign passport with a visa label
- Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) printout
- Visa grant notification letter
- Certificate of Evidence of Resident Status (CERS)
- Certificate of Status for New Zealand Citizens in Australia (CSNZCA)
- ImmiCard
- Freedom of Information (FOI) letter from the Department of Home Affairs

These documents only provide proof of a person's visa status on the day they are issued/printed and are not sufficient proof of a parent's resident status at the time the applicant was born.

Applicants born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986 who spent the first 10 years of their life in Australia and neither parent was an Australian citizen or an Australian permanent resident at the time of your birth

Applicants in these circumstances without a current Australian Passport must provide their Australian citizenship certificate.

You can apply for evidence of Australian citizenship by lodging **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with Home Affairs.

First Nations applicants not registered at birth by the relevant State/Territory authority

Applicants in these circumstances without a current Australian Passport may submit a Statutory Declaration as provided on the department's **Information for VET Student Loans Approved Providers** page under 'Forms'.

Note: the Statutory Declaration has been pre-populated, and must only be used by applicants to whom these circumstances apply. The Statutory Declaration must be witnessed by a person included in the List of Occupations or the List of Persons provided in the template on the department's website mentioned above.

**Statutory declarations are not acceptable forms of proof of Australian citizenship for any applicants other than First Nations people whose birth was not registered by the relevant State/Territory authority.**

**If you or a parent were born in Papua New Guinea prior to 16 September 1975**

If you or your parent were born in Papua New Guinea prior to 16 September 1975 your citizenship status may need to be checked and verified with Home Affairs. You may need to obtain evidence of Australian Citizenship by lodging **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** if:

- evidence of citizenship was issued before 1 January 2009 and you were born in PNG prior to 16 Sep 1975; **OR**
- Citizenship was acquired by descent before 1 January 2009 where your parent(s) was born in PNG before 16 September 1975.

A citizenship certificate can be accepted as evidence that you are an Australian citizen if the evidence of citizenship was issued on or after 1 January 2009 regardless of your date of birth or date citizenship was acquired.

***You will need to take the Department of Home Affairs' citizenship application processing time in to account before applying for a FEE-HELP Loan. Processing times are published on the Department of Home Affairs website.***

See <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/citizenship/citizenship-processing-times>

### Permanent Humanitarian Visa Holders

If you are an eligible permanent humanitarian visa holder or eligible former permanent humanitarian visa holder your visa will need to be provided.

Refer to Volume 1, Part 1, Division 1.2 - Interpretation, Regulation 1.03 of the *Migration Regulations 1994*, which defines a permanent humanitarian visa.

An eligible former permanent humanitarian visa holder means a person who is:

- not a permanent humanitarian visa holder; **and**
- was previously a permanent humanitarian visa holder; **and**
- is the holder of a visa of the subclasses 155 and 157 (Resident Return).

You will also need to meet the residency requirements.

For more information, please see [Non-Australian citizens - StudyAssist, Australian Government](#)

### Qualifying New Zealand citizens

New Zealand Special Category Visa (SCV) holders will need to provide evidence that you:

- have usually been resident in Australia for at least 10 years before the test day\*; and
- first entered Australia as a minor under 18 years of age with no spouse or de facto partner; and
- have lived in Australia for at least 8 of the last 10 years immediately before the test day; and
- have lived in Australia for at least 18 months in the last two years immediately before the test day.

\*‘test day’ means the first day you successfully applied for a FEE-HELP loan for a unit that formed part of the same course of study as an eligible NZ SCV holder. Otherwise, the ‘test day’ is the day you submit your FEE-HELP eCAF.

For further information please refer to the [2024 FEE-HELP booklet](#) available on the [Study Assist website](#)

### New Zealand Special Category Visa (SCV) holders transitioning through a permanent resident visa to Australian citizenship

From 29 June 2023, New Zealand citizens who formerly held a Special Category Visa and have transitioned to a permanent resident visa on the pathway to citizenship will have continued access to the Higher Education Loan Program.

### **Pacific Engagement Visa Holders**

If you are an eligible Pacific Engagement visa holder your visa will need to be provided.

A Pacific engagement visa holder is a person who holds a Subclass 192 (Pacific Engagement) visa under the Migration Regulations 1994.

You will also need to be resident in Australia for the duration of your unit(s).

For more information, please see [Non-Australian citizens - StudyAssist, Australian Government](#)

### **Students without a Tax File Number**

All students accessing FEE-HELP must have a Tax File Number (TFN). If a student has applied for, but has not yet been issued with a TFN, they must supply a certificate from the Commissioner of Taxation showing that they have applied for a TFN – this certificate is provided by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) when the application for a TFN is lodged. This certificate is to be uploaded into the eCAF system by the student before completing their eCAF.

### **Providing eligibility documentation**

If you are studying externally (online, distance) you will need to have copies of your evidence verified by a Justice of the Peace or alternately by a person of a prescribed position as listed at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-support/applying-online-or-on-paper/on-paper/certified-copy> before sending it to TAFE SA. Please note this person must be an Australian Citizen and cannot be related to you.

The certifier must also write or stamp on the copy:

- their signature
- their full name
- their occupation
- organisation/employer
- their phone number
- the date
- their address (optional)

## Ways to assess your academic suitability

In addition to TAFE SA believing on reasonable grounds that a student is academically suited to undertake the qualification for which a FEE-HELP loan is sought, in order to apply for a FEE-HELP loan to assist with payment of your course fees, you must meet one of the following requirements:

- provide a copy of your senior secondary certificate of education or ATAR score, that has been awarded by an Australian authority or agency of a State or Territory of your completion of year 12 when you apply to enrol. TAFE SA is required to store a copy of this for five years after you enrol; **OR**
- provide a copy of a qualification at Certificate IV level or above in the Australian Qualifications Framework, that has been delivered in English; **OR**
- Provide Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) results; **OR**
- Provide evidence of Professional/paraprofessional qualifications or employment experience; **OR**
- Audition/Portfolio/Interview; **OR**
- Other – at discretion of TAFE SA