International education: ensuring quality and protecting students

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As an international student, you can only study a course with an education institution listed on the

Even before you enrol with an education institution, under Australian law you have the right to:

receive current and accurate information about the courses, entry requirements, all fees and modes of study from your education institution and your education institution's agent; sign a written agreement with your education institution before or at the time you pay fees. You do not have to pay the education institution any money or fees until you accept the agreement;

seek a refund in certain situations for course money you have paid. Information about refund arrangements must be included in your written agreement;

get the education you paid for. The law includes tuition protections that will allow you to be placed in another course or receive a refund if your education institution is unable to teach your course (known as a provider default), visit the TPS website for more information; access complaints and appeals processes; and

request to transfer to another education institution and have that request assessed by your education institution.

From 14 December 2015, changes to Australian law give international students more choice about how they pay their fees. Previously you could not pay more than 50 per cent of your fees before you started a course. Now you can to pay more than 50 per cent of your tuition fees before you start. For example, you or the person who is paying your fees may decide this is a good idea if the Australian dollar exchange rates mean you will save money by paying more of your fees early.

Your education institution may ask you if you would like to pay more than 50 per cent of your fees before you start your course. This is your choice. You

If your visa is refused after the course was due to start, the education institution can keep tuition fees for the number of weeks that have passed since commencement and must refund you the rest of the fees.

If you change your mind and do not want to start the course, you may be entitled to a refund.

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