

Emmanuel College - Refund Guidance Paper

Approval Authority: Principal

Policy Owner: Principal / Deputy Principal

Effective Date: 29 April 2026

Review Date: Annual

1. Purpose

This Policy sets out Emmanuel College's approach to refunds where an applicant or resident withdraws from a residential offer, residential agreement, or place at the College. It is intended to provide clarity and certainty to applicants, residents, and families.

Further, recognising that the College has limited opportunity to refill vacancies once the academic year has commenced, this policy intends to support prudent financial management at the College.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- accepted applicants for residency at Emmanuel College;
- returning residents who have accepted an offer or renewed a place; and
- residents who have commenced residence under a student residential agreement. This Policy does not apply to short-stay or conference residents, who are accommodated under separate contractual arrangements.

3. Policy Principles

Emmanuel College recognises that residence at the College involves a substantial financial commitment and that circumstances can change for students and their families. The College seeks to balance compassion and flexibility with financial sustainability, particularly given that many College costs are fixed and vacancies are difficult to fill once the University academic year has begun.

The College's approach is guided by the following principles:

1. applicants and residents should have certainty about the financial commitments they make when accepting an offer or entering a residential agreement;
2. the College must make prudent financial decisions and protect its long-term sustainability;
3. the College has limited capacity to replace a withdrawn resident after the academic year commences; and
4. genuine hardship or exceptional circumstances may warrant individual consideration in limited cases.

4. Acceptance Fee / Deposit

The **Acceptance Fee / Deposit** is payable when an applicant accepts a conditional offer of a place at Emmanuel College. The Acceptance Fee / Deposit secures the applicant's place and confirms the College's commitment to hold that place for the applicant. Consistent with this purpose, the Acceptance Fee / Deposit is **non-refundable after a Residential Agreement is signed**.

For the avoidance of doubt:

- Subject to clause 6, the Acceptance Fee / Deposit is **not refundable merely because** an applicant changes their mind, accepts another offer to another college or academic institution, defers study, withdraws before moving in, or does not take up residence; and
- where any other fee is refundable under this Policy, the Acceptance Fee / Deposit remains **non-refundable** unless Emmanuel College is required by law to refund it or expressly determines otherwise in writing.

5. Application Fees

Any application processing fee is non-refundable, as it is charged to cover the administrative costs associated with processing applications, interviews, and enrolment-related administration.

6. Refunds for Withdrawal Before Commencement

6.1 No offer to UQ

If a student does not receive any offer to study at UQ in any degree program, and after all offer rounds have been completed for the academic semester associated with the residential or associate term, the college will refund the acceptance fee/ deposit.

6.2 Other

Otherwise, if an accepted applicant or returning resident with a UQ offer withdraws **more than four weeks before** the commencement of the residential or associate term or the agreed move-in date (whichever is earlier), any fees paid will be refunded **except** the Acceptance Fee / Deposit, which is non-refundable.

6.3 Late Withdrawal Prior to Entry

If an accepted applicant or returning resident withdraws **less than four weeks before** the commencement of the residential or associate term or the agreed move-in date (whichever is earlier), all Residential Fees remain payable unless the College is able to re-book the place. If the place is re-booked, the College may refund the relevant Residential Fees, less:

- the non-refundable Acceptance Fee / Deposit; and

¹ In the case of an applicant under the age of 18 years.

- any applicable re-booking or administration fee set by the College. (Currently \$250)

If more than one resident withdraws, re-booking will be considered in chronological order of withdrawal.

7. Refunds After Commencement or Entry

If an applicant or resident withdraws **after** the commencement of the residential term or after the agreed move-in date (whichever is earlier), all Residential Fees remain payable unless the College is able to re-book the place. Where the place is re-booked, the College may provide a **pro rata refund** of relevant Residential Fees for the unused period, less:

- the non-refundable Acceptance Fee / Deposit; and
- any applicable re-booking or administration fee.

The College may also consider whether any fee credit or partial refund should apply to a later residential period, depending on the circumstances of the withdrawal.

8. Special Consideration

The Principal may, in limited and exceptional cases, give special consideration to a resident who withdraws from a residential agreement where evidence is provided of circumstances surrounding the withdrawal. This could include:

- a significant medical condition; or
- urgent family circumstances requiring withdrawal from tertiary study.

Any decision under this clause is at the College's discretion and will be determined on the particular facts of each case. Unless the College expressly decides otherwise in writing, special consideration will not ordinarily affect the **non-refundable status of the Acceptance Fee / Deposit**.

9. College Closure or Extraordinary External Events

If Emmanuel College closes to residents, no resident fees will be charged from the date of closure. The College may elect to provide for refunds of unused time at the College where a resident is unable to attend due to pandemics or similar events beyond the College's control, such as border restrictions or lockdown orders, provided the student did not elect to leave before those restrictions or orders were imposed.

In such cases, the College may refund or credit fees for the unused portion of residence in accordance with the circumstances and any applicable law.

10. Refund Process

Any request for a refund or special consideration must be submitted in writing to the Principal of the College, together with any supporting documentation relevant to the request. The College will assess the request against this Policy, the resident's contractual arrangements, and any supporting evidence provided.

11. Interpretation

This Policy should be read together with the relevant residential offer, residential agreement, fee schedule, and any other College policies that apply to student residency. If there is any inconsistency between this Policy and a written residential agreement, the terms of the residential agreement will prevail to the extent permitted by law.

12. Summary Position

For clarity, Emmanuel College's position is as follows:

- **Application fees are non-refundable.** These fees cover administration of applications, interviews, and enrolment systems.
- **Acceptance Fees / Deposits are non-refundable.** The acceptance payment is payable on acceptance and is non-refundable. See exception note 6.1
- **Residential Fees may be refundable only in limited circumstances,** usually depending on when the withdrawal occurs and whether the College is able to re-book the place.
- **Special consideration may be given in exceptional cases,** but this does not displace the College's clear position that the Acceptance Fee / Deposit is ordinarily non-refundable.