



Australian Government

# Don't let people be held back by a VET debt they shouldn't have.

Check with the  
Ombudsman and  
apply to have the  
debt cancelled.



**The VET FEE-HELP Student Redress Measures  
have been extended to 31 December 2022**

COMMONWEALTH  
**OMBUDSMAN** 

## Do you have a client (or several clients) with a **VET FEE-HELP** debt they shouldn't have?

If so, why not give us a call or send us an email.

At a minimum all you need to provide us with is sufficient means of identifying each client such as their full name and date of birth and why you think they may have a student debt to the government they shouldn't have. Of course, the more details you can provide the better.

We can then verify whether the client has a VET FEE-HELP debt and whether they meet the criteria to further progress their complaint.<sup>1</sup>

Please note you will need to obtain your client's consent to act on their behalf before contacting us.

## Background

The VET FEE-HELP loan scheme was in operation from 2009 to 2016. During this period, some operators of vocational training colleges signed up large numbers of unsuspecting or vulnerable people to courses that were unsuitable for them. In some circumstances, the students were unaware that they had been signed up to a course which would incur a debt. These courses were paid for by the VET FEE-HELP scheme and resulted in debts that have to be repaid by the student, often without the student having received any training or education benefit.

The people targeted often did not fully understand (or were not aware) that they would be left with a debt to the Commonwealth government that they would have to repay through the tax system.

The Student Redress Measures were put in place to allow people to dispute debts they believe they should not have incurred in the first place. If it is reasonably likely that a vocational training college (VET provider) acted inappropriately, the debt may be able to be cancelled.



## Applications (complaints) must be received by **31 December 2022.**

### To make a complaint, visit:

Making a Complaint - VET Student Loans ([ombudsman.gov.au](https://www.ombudsman.gov.au)).

Further information, guidance on what to do where little is known about the origin of the debt, and assistance in lodging mass applications can all be obtained by contacting the Commonwealth Ombudsman:

### Website:

[www.ombudsman.gov.au/vslo](https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/vslo)

### Email address:

[VET@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:VET@ombudsman.gov.au)

### Phone:

**1300 362 072**

### Dedicated Indigenous phone number:

**1800 060 789**



<sup>1</sup> For complaints made after 31 December 2020, complainants need to show that they did not make a complaint earlier due to exceptional circumstances. What qualifies as exceptional circumstances has been defined broadly and includes (but is not limited to) such matters as the person not being aware of the debt before 31 December 2020, not being aware they could apply for re-credit under the Student Redress Measures, or being a vulnerable person during the period from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2020.

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