

STARTUP-HELP Policy

1. COMPLIANCE OBLIGATION SUPPORTED

[Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#)

[Higher Education Support \(STARTUP-HELP\) Guidelines 2023](#)

2. PURPOSE

To outline the University's requirements for administering and receiving STARTUP-HELP assistance, and to outline the eligibility and selection criteria for students applying for STARTUP-HELP assistance towards study in an approved accelerator program course at Curtin University.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1. General

- 3.1.1. Places in accelerator program courses are not subsidised by the Australian Government, but eligible students may access STARTUP-HELP assistance to pay for their accelerator program course fees.
- 3.1.2. The number of STARTUP-HELP assisted places in an accelerator program course must not exceed the number of places allocated to the University by the Australian Government.
- 3.1.3. Accelerator program course fees must not exceed the maximum course costs prescribed annually for the University by the Australian Government.
- 3.1.4. Students receiving STARTUP-HELP assistance must repay their loan to the Australian Government once they earn enough income to make repayments (the income threshold).
- 3.1.5. STARTUP-HELP assistance cannot be used to cover costs such as accommodation, laptops, textbooks, or capital for startup businesses.
- 3.1.6. Students may receive STARTUP-HELP assistance no more than two times. If a student is enrolled in more than one accelerator program course, they may only access STARTUP-HELP assistance for one course.
- 3.1.7. Accessing STARTUP-HELP assistance does not affect a student's HELP loan limit and is not dependent on their available HELP balance.
- 3.1.8. Accelerator program courses cannot be delivered to students who receive FEE-HELP assistance for the course.

3.2. Eligibility

- 3.2.1. Eligibility for STARTUP-HELP assistance will be according to the criteria set out in the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) and as described on the Australian Government's [STARTUP-HELP information page](#).
- 3.2.2. To be eligible for STARTUP-HELP, students must:
 - a) Meet one of the following citizenship or residency requirements:
 - i. be an Australian citizen;
 - ii. be a permanent humanitarian visa holder (or eligible former permanent humanitarian visa holder) who will live in Australia for the entire accelerator program course; or
 - iii. be a New Zealand citizen who will be residing in Australia for the duration of the accelerator program course and meets the requirements set out in 128B-30 of the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#);
 - b) Be either:

- i. a student in the final year of an undergraduate course of study;
 - ii. enrolled in a postgraduate course of study; or
 - iii. a recent student who completed a bachelor degree (or higher level qualification) no more than 36 months before commencing the accelerator program course;
- c) Be assessed by the University as a genuine student and academically suited to undertake the accelerator program course;
 - d) Be enrolled in an approved accelerator program course at Curtin University on or before the census date for the course and remain enrolled at the end of the census date;
 - e) Be primarily studying at an Australian onshore campus (Bentley); and
 - f) Not have received a STARTUP-HELP loan more than once before.

3.3. Course Selection

- 3.3.1. Students will be selected for admission to an accelerator program course in accordance with the [Admission and Enrolment Policy](#) and [Admission Procedure – Admission and Enrolment Manual](#) and in accordance with any additional criteria published on the relevant accelerator program course website.
- 3.3.2. The University may apply quotas or sub-quotas for accelerator program course places in order to facilitate the participation of groups that are underrepresented in the startup ecosystem, including but not limited to:
 - i. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people;
 - ii. people with a disability; and
 - iii. women.

3.4. Receiving STARTUP-HELP Assistance

- 3.4.1. In order to receive STARTUP-HELP assistance, students must submit a completed STARTUP-HELP Electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (eCAF) on or before the relevant census date, and must provide a valid:
 - a) tax file number; and
 - b) Unique Student Identifier (USI).

3.5. Withdrawal

- 3.5.1. No STARTUP-HELP debt will be incurred where a student withdraws from an accelerator program course before the relevant census date.
- 3.5.2. A student withdrawing from an accelerator program course after the relevant census date may apply for a reversal of their STARTUP-HELP fee assistance and/or remission of any STARTUP-HELP debt incurred if the application is made within 12 months of the day of withdrawal from the course, and only if they can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the University that special circumstances apply.
- 3.5.3. Special circumstances are circumstances which apply to the student that are:
 - a) beyond the student's control;
 - b) do not make their full impact on the student until on or after the census date for the accelerator program course; and
 - c) make it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements for the course in the period during which the student undertook, or was to undertake, the course.

4. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to University staff administering STARTUP-HELP for accelerator program course places at Curtin University, and to students applying for and receiving STARTUP-HELP fee assistance.

5. DEFINITIONS

(Note: Commonly defined terms are located in the [Curtin Common Definitions](#). Any defined terms below are specific to this document)

Accelerator Program Course

A structured and integrated program of education and mentoring designed to develop a person’s skills, capabilities, and connections for startup businesses. Courses approved by the University as accelerator program courses will meet the criteria for an accelerator program course per the [Higher Education Support \(STARTUP-HELP\) Guidelines 2023](#) and will be listed on a register maintained by the Department of Education.

STARTUP-HELP

A loan offered by the Australian Government to provide fee assistance to eligible students in an approved accelerator program course at Curtin University.

6. SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

Nil

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS/LINKS

- [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Higher Education Support \(STARTUP-HELP\) Guidelines 2023](#)
- [STARTUP-HELP information page](#)
- [Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2023](#)
- [Statute No. 26 - Fees and Charges](#)
- [Fees and Charges Rules made pursuant to Statute No. 26 - Fees and Charges](#)
- [Admission and Enrolment Manual](#)

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