# eCAF functionality

**FEE-HELP and SA-HELP (optional HE loans)**

1. The CAF Creation process runs overnight to identify students who meet eligibility requirements for a FEE-HELP or SA-HELP eCAF.
2. Students who are eligible are ‘staged’ – we do not post their CAF details to the eCAF portal.
3. When the student begins the enrolment process in EOL, we check if the student’s citizenship has been verified (some students are able to do this online/real-time).
   1. If verified, we display a page for the student to indicate whether they are interested in the specified loan type. If so, they must also provide CHESSN consent.
   2. If not verified, we advise the student that they may be eligible for an optional loan but require their citizenship to be verified before an invitation can be extended. We advise them they can opt-in later via My student Record.
4. If the student opts in, we post their CAF to the government portal (via API webservice).

**HECS-HELP (required CAF)**

1. The CAF Creation process runs overnight to identify students who meet eligibility requirements for a HECS-HELP eCAF.
2. If a student is eligible and their citizenship is verified, their CAF details are posted to the government portal (via API webservice).
3. The student cannot enrol until they have submitted their CAF on the portal.
4. If the student has not submitted their eCAF and they attempt to enrol in EOL, we check if the student’s citizenship has been verified (some students are able to do this online/real-time).
   1. If verified, we display a page advising them they must submit their eCAF to enrol. The page allows the student to reactivate their CAF (if it has expired or census date has passed) or refresh RMIT’s data if they have now submitted their CAF.
   2. If not verified, we advise the student that they are required to verify their citizenship and complete their CAF before they can enrol.

**VSL (optional VE loan)**

This is the same as FEE-HELP/SA-HELP except:

* A successful enrolment is required to complete their eligibility.
* When the student opts-in, their details are not sent to the portal unless they have enrolled and all other conditions have been met.

# Happy days

* The following are automated:
  + CAF eligibility
  + Posting of HECS-HELP CAFs to Government portal
  + Students electing to be included/excluded from communications for loans
  + Uploading of students who have submitted eCAFs in the portal
  + Loan approval
  + All student comminucations
  + VSL Progression

# Problems

The initial implementation sought to use the APIs provided by the Government to automate integration as much as possible. The following pains were felt:

* Initial upload to the portal was by spreadsheet as webservices were not ready. This resulted in missing staging records which we later came to rely on (eg missing gCAFIDs that were later required for other services like VSL progression compliance)
* The Government ‘lapses’ CAFs when the census date uploaded to the portal has passed. This means the student can no longer submit their CAF. To reactivate the CAF for the student requires a DELETE webservice to delete the lapsed CAF and a REPOST of their CAF data. Each delete/post spawns two emails to the student. If the Census date is volatile (eg flexible enrolment terms), this can result in a lot of webservices being called for the same student to delete/reactivate. Students are spammed with email which generates complaints to DET and the provider.
* When the institution’s password expires the services fail. There is no warning that the password used by the integration layer is about to expire.
* The government can change their APIs with little notice. It may not be obvious that when they introduce a new ‘optional’ element it may actually break the webservices.