

ADVANCED STANDING POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of the University of New England to grant advanced standing (credit) on the basis of prior learning whether from formal studies, or professional work or life experience.

The University's policy on recognition of prior learning for the purpose of advanced standing is based on the following broad principles:

- granting maximum credit for prior learning consistent with students' chance of success in a course;
- granting block credit or specified credit to minimise the workload required to complete a course;
- furthering articulation with TAFE and other tertiary providers;
- open and accessible guidelines for advanced standing; and
- a consistent approach to the granting of credit.

Recognition of Prior Learning is, for the purposes of this policy, the assessment for credit of a range of prior learning from:

- a recognised higher education institution;
- TAFE or other VET provider;
- professional body, enterprise, private educational institution, or other similar body;
- work experience or other forms of practical experience, including voluntary work;
- life experience.

Students are also permitted to transfer between courses within the University after they are admitted and before the courses are completed. Transfer between courses is covered by the relevant course rules.

POLICY

1. Entry to the University's courses is competitive and eligibility for credit does not guarantee an applicant a place in a course. Decisions on which applicants should be admitted to a particular course shall be determined by appropriate University officers in accordance with University policy.
2. The assessment of the amount of credit to be granted in particular courses shall be determined by the relevant Faculty within the framework of this policy and must be submitted for approval by Academic Board via the University Teaching and Learning Committee unless clause 11 of this policy applies. Where specific credit assessments are to be included in a credit agreement, the Academic Board, via the University Teaching and Learning Committee, must approve the assessment prior to the signing of the credit agreement.

3. Regardless of the credit granted, the requirements of each course must be fulfilled.
4. Candidates for an award from the University of New England will normally be required to complete a minimum proportion of the course through the University of New England. Other than where specific articulation arrangements have been approved by the Academic Board, the total credit granted for prior learning external to the University shall not exceed 67 per cent of the total credit points required for the award toward which credit is sought. With respect to combined degrees, the 67 per cent limit on total credit granted for prior learning external to the University shall apply to each component constituting the combined award. With respect to any degree requiring majors, no more than 67 per cent of any major may be credited with advanced standing. The 67 per cent may comprise a mixture of advanced standing for formal study and credit for work and life experiences.
5. Credit assessments approved by Academic Board for a specific course cannot automatically be transferred from one course to another.
6. Decisions about granting of credit to individual applicants will be approved by appropriate University officers in consultation with appropriate academic committees and staff within procedures and frameworks established and maintained by the faculty board. This determination will be made after consultation with the Credit and Admissions Register. If a precedent for advanced standing does not exist, an initial credit assessment will be undertaken to form a new precedent, which will then be recorded on the Credit and Admissions Register for future reference and decisions.
7. The Credit and Admissions Register will be the authoritative source for all advanced standing decisions, once precedent assessments have been recorded.
8. A Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean must seek approval from the Academic Board, via the University Teaching and Learning Committee, for any proposal to modify credit transfer arrangements which fall outside the requirements of University policy or to vary a previously established precedent.
9. Credit will not normally be granted for units or qualifications completed more than 10 years prior to application unless there is evidence of continued relevance of these units/qualifications for the award towards which credit is sought.
10. Unspecified credit appropriate to the course may be granted where no comparable University of New England unit or course exists, but where the learning is still relevant and at an appropriate level in terms of the specific course.
11. In cases where a fast response is required to capitalise on specific opportunities or meet specific negotiating needs, the Chair of the University Teaching and Learning Committee and the Chair of Academic Board shall be empowered to consult and approve credit assessments via a 'Chair's Action', which will then be reported back to their respective bodies.
12. Credit for units from recognised higher education institutions, either domestic or international.
 - 12.1. Units which are part of accredited award courses provided by recognised higher education institutions shall be recognised for credit towards appropriate awards of The University of New England.
 - 12.2. Credit may also be granted for non-award courses offered by recognised higher education institutions.
 - 12.3. Credit shall be granted for a unit where there is substantial overlap with content and/or learning outcomes as The University of New England unit.
13. Credit for units from TAFE and other VET providers.
 - 13.1. Units which are part of State or Commonwealth accredited award courses provided by TAFE and VET providers including those providers registered through the Australian Recognition Framework or of similar recognised international standing, shall be recognised for credit towards appropriate awards of The University of New England.

- 13.2. Block credit towards awards of The University of New England shall be granted for the successful completion of accredited award courses where these courses contain subject matter at an appropriate level that is considered suitable for a course at The University of New England or the University has been directly involved in the design and development of the TAFE course, and this course articulates with a specific University course. Such block credit may be towards a specified block of units within a UNE award. In such cases, the specified block of credit in the UNE award will not require equivalence with the block for which credit is being granted. Rather, it will require reasonable correspondence in the context of the educational goals of the UNE award.
14. Credit for study in courses provided by a professional body, enterprise, private educational institution, or other similar body, either domestic or international.
- 14.1. Credit may be granted for programs of study delivered by professional associations, private educational institutions, employers or other similar bodies.
- 14.2. Credit will be granted following evaluation of the extent to which the program of study conforms to or is consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework guidelines.
15. The initial credit assessment for a formal course from any provider covered under Rules 12., 13. and 14. will normally consider the following types of information:
- (a) the general educational practices and standards of the institution(s) or system and any accreditation obtained by such institution(s) or system that may be relevant to the course under consideration;
 - (b) the objectives of the particular course and the methods adopted to achieve these objectives;
 - (c) admission requirements to the course;
 - (d) the duration of the course, having regard to entry requirements and course objectives;
 - (e) the breadth, depth and balance in the course material involved and the intellectual effort required;
 - (f) the procedures for approval of research projects where appropriate;
 - (g) the methods of assessment of student progress, including the use of external examiners for higher degrees;
 - (h) the relative emphasis on the teaching of skills in relation to the study of the discipline;
 - (i) any arrangements for practical training and experience as part of the course;
 - (j) the teaching staff conducting the course, including numbers, professional qualifications and experience, educational expertise and ability to service the particular mode(s) of offering the course;
 - (k) infrastructure, including equipment, library, laboratories, workshops and other instructional or research resources, as necessary for the particular course.
16. Credit for learning from work or life experiences
- 16.1. Credit may be granted for work or life experience where that learning can be documented to the satisfaction of the relevant faculty. The onus shall be on the applicant to provide appropriate evidence or demonstrate the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding. The maximum credit that can be granted is 16.67 per cent of the total credit points for the degree being sought (eg 24 credit points for a 144 credit point Bachelor's degree).
- 16.2. Credit to be granted shall be determined by the assessment of uncertified training and experiential learning using a variety of mechanisms developed by the faculties, and at the discretion of the faculties, to measure prior learning. Such credit shall be granted only when the applicant can demonstrate equivalent skills, knowledge and understanding to that gained if the relevant University of New England studies were undertaken.

16.3. When establishing assessment mechanisms and assessing learning from work or life experience, the following will be taken into account:

- (a) Authenticity—the applicant has actually demonstrated the learning outcome that is being claimed;
- (b) Currency—the learning outcome is still valid and performable;
- (c) Quality—the learning has reached the acceptable level;
- (d) Relevance—the learning is applicable to the area claimed;
- (e) Transferability—the learning outcome can be applied outside the specific context in which it was learned;
- (f) Comparability—the assessment mechanisms adopted should ensure that the prior learning is comparable in content and standard with the unit(s) in which credit is sought. The standards applied in assessing prior learning should not be greater than those required to pass the unit(s).

PROCEDURES

Applications

- 1 Applications for advanced standing must be made on the appropriate form, be accompanied by sufficient documentary evidence supporting the application, and include any University-approved fees where necessary. Applications must be lodged with the relevant University officer within the Student Centre or at another site approved by the University.
- 2 UNE advises the applicant in writing of the result of their application. The applicant is to show they accept the course credit by signing the written letter of notification or otherwise accepting the advanced standing granted. A copy of the signed letter, or other notification, is placed on the student file.
- 3 If the applicant is an international student the outcome of the application is to be forwarded immediately to the International Admissions and Operations Manager, International Marketing and Pathways.
 - 3.1 If the advanced standing is granted prior to the grant of the student visa and leads to a shortening of the student's course, the Confirmation of Enrolment will indicate the actual net course duration (as reduced by course credit) issued for that student for that course.
 - 3.2 If the advanced standing is granted after the grant of the student visa, the change of course duration is reported via PRISMS under section 19 of the ESOS Act.
 - 3.3 At any time after a student has been granted a student visa, any change in course duration due to the granting of credit must be reported via PRISMS under Section 19 of the ESOS Act. Under Section 19, this must be done within 14 days after the event as specified by the Act.
- 4 Decisions are recorded in the student administrative information system and include the outcome of the application indicating either the grant or rejection of the application, and where appropriate the reasons for refusal and the unique precedent code. .

Precedents for Advanced Standing

- 1 All precedents for advanced standing arrangements for the University of New England will be recorded in a Credit and Admissions Register, maintained by a designated administrative unit. This Register will be continually monitored and updated as new precedents are created. Details of credit available may be published elsewhere. All such publications must be double checked for accuracy against the Register.
- 2 The Register will show, for every record, total credit points, net course duration, and a unique precedent code.

- 3 The procedure used for the initial assessment of advanced standing for a particular precedent will ensure that staff carrying out the assessment have a detailed knowledge of the unit(s)/course(s) for which credit is sought. A template to guide the assessment process is provided by the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).
- 4 Once the initial credit assessment for a precedent has been completed, the precedent will be communicated to the designated administrative unit where it will be placed on the central Credit and Admissions Register.
- 5 All full-time international students at UNE (any location) are required to maintain an Equivalent Full Time Study Load when advanced standing is granted.

Appeals

1. An applicant who is dissatisfied with the decision with respect to advanced standing may lodge a written appeal to the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean (or nominee/s) of the faculty responsible for teaching the course.
2. Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the decision of the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of the faculty the applicant shall have the right of appeal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) or such other senior officer of the University as the Vice-Chancellor may from time to time appoint for that purpose.

DEFINITIONS:

Accreditation—Process of giving official recognition or approval to a course, a program, or a provider of courses/programs.

Articulation—The specific design of education and training programs in ways which facilitate and maximise opportunities for credit transfer, and/or for students to proceed from one level of education/training to the next (not necessarily with credit).

Block Credit—Is given as exemption from a period of study, expressed in points, as recognition of successfully completed periods of equivalent study. Such credit is particularly applicable to courses which are highly structured and have few or no electives, as in many professional faculties where courses are fairly uniform across Australia.

Credit(s)—Recognition granted towards meeting the requirements of an award course, either on the basis of prior study, or of prior experience. Credit may be granted with respect to specific units that constitute a course of study or as ‘block’ or ‘blanket’ advanced standing on the basis of the general nature of the qualification(s) and/or experience(s) for which recognition is being sought, their standing in a professional sense, the amount of time required to complete the qualification and the nature and rigour of the assessment of examination process undertaken.

Credit Agreement—A legal document in which credit levels are specified, but which also includes mechanisms to protect the University from the promises of other institutions and satisfies the desire of the parties to enter into an agreement.

Credit Assessment—An academic assessment of prior learning in which there is no formal agreement.

Credit Transfer—The granting of advanced standing by institutions (either in the same or a different sector) to students on the basis of previous study undertaken in another institution (and potentially on the basis of recognition of prior learning).

Recognition of Prior Learning—Recognition of individuals’ knowledge and skills whether from formal studies, professional, work or life experience. Assessment may include testing, or various other techniques including examination of a profile or portfolio of learning and/or experience.

Specified Credit—Credit granted for a particular course component when the student has completed a part of a course in which the curriculum is substantially the same, which constitutes at least the same proportion of full-time study, and the standard attained is substantially the standard required for a pass in the specified course component offered in the receiving institution.

Unspecified Credit—Credit granted when the work completed elsewhere has been in a component of a course for which there is no equivalent component in the receiving institution’s award program, but is nevertheless considered relevant to that award. Usually granted as credit towards meeting the broadening general education or elective requirements of a course.