



The University of Sydney

Admission: Advanced Standing, Credit and Exemption Policy

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1. Introduction

The following resolutions of the Academic Board must be read in conjunction with the *University of Sydney (Amendment Act) Rule 1999 Part 9: Admission to Courses, Division 8* and the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000*.

2. Recognition of Institutions and Programs

Recognition of institutions and programs under these policies and procedures is the responsibility of the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Committees of the Academic Board.

3. Definitions

University

As defined by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, a University means a body:

1. that is established as a university, or recognised as a university, by or under a law of the Commonwealth, a State, the Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory, and
2. meets nationally agreed criteria for a university.

Course

means a structured academic program leading to the award of a degree, diploma or certificate of the University.

Unit of Study

(a unit) means a stand-alone component of a course.

Advanced Standing

is the formal acknowledgment by the University - generally through the granting of credit - of previous academic attainment by students prior to their enrolment in their current course. Advanced standing can be granted in the form of credit points which count towards the requirements for the course.

Credit

Advanced standing may be granted as specific credit or non-specific credit.

Specific credit is the recognition of previously completed studies as directly equivalent to a unit of study at the University of Sydney (e.g. specific credit is given for Physics 1 [PHYS1001] at the University of Sydney for Physics 1 taken at the University of Adelaide.).

Non-specific credit takes the form of a block credit for a specified number of credit points at a particular level e.g.

- the University of Sydney does not teach Russian but credit may be given towards the degree of Bachelor of Arts for full first year study in Russian taken at the University of New South Wales, as 12 Junior credit points; or
- a student may be granted 48 junior credit points for the first year of an Arts degree completed at another Australian tertiary institution.

These credit points may be in a particular subject area. Non-specific credit is not linked to a specific unit of study at this University.

Exemption

A student taking a particular unit of study is normally required to attend all prescribed lectures, seminars, tutorials and practical work. On the basis of previous study a student can, however, be exempted from completing parts of the prescribed work for a particular unit of study within a course.

Waiver

Exemption may also be granted for the whole of a prescribed unit of study: this is known as a 'Waiver'. A waiver may be in order to exempt a student from a prerequisite or the requirement to do a compulsory course on the basis of previous learning or experience. In such cases, no credit will be granted and the student will be required to complete an alternative unit of study as prescribed by the Faculty, in order to gain sufficient credit points to meet the requirements for the degree.

Embedded Program Award courses in the graduate certificate, graduate diploma and master's degree by coursework sequence which allow unit of study credit points to count in more than one of the awards, e.g. the Graduate Certificate in Information Technology, Graduate Diploma in Information Technology and Master of Information Technology.

4. Preamble

Faculties have the authority to grant credit on the basis of previous study. This policy provides a broad framework under which faculties may exercise their academic judgement in the granting of credit. The policy is based on the following broad principles:

- 4.1 granting maximum credit for appropriate previous study;
- 4.2 support for articulation with other tertiary providers and with other courses at the University of Sydney;
- 4.3 a consistent and transparent approach to the granting of credit.
- 4.4 consistency with the Group of Eight Credit Transfer Agreement (March 2007).

5. Policy

- 5.1 Entry to the University's courses is competitive and eligibility for credit or advanced standing does not guarantee an applicant a place in a course.

- 5.2 The level of credit to be granted towards a particular course shall be determined at Faculty level in accordance with this policy and the degree and faculty resolutions. Any credit granted must be consistent with the current resolutions governing progression within the course for which credit is sought. If a student is admitted to candidature for an undergraduate degree at the University of Sydney with credit for completed units of study, the maximum credit allowed will be determined by the requirement that the student complete a minimum of the equivalent of two full-time semesters of their course at the University of Sydney.
- 5.3 Regardless of the level of credit granted, any pre-requisite and co-requisite requirements must be met, unless approval to waive these requirements has been given (see 'Waiver').
- 5.4 Amount of credit to be granted.
Generally, the same unit of study cannot be counted towards the requirements for two different courses, except for approved combined degrees and the instances set out below:
- 5.4.1 *Undergraduate coursework:* If a student is admitted to candidature for an undergraduate degree at the University of Sydney with credit for completed units of study not counted towards an award, the maximum credit allowed will be determined by the requirement that a minimum of the equivalent of 48 credit points of their course be completed at the University of Sydney.
- Graduates*, however may be given a limited amount of credit for units of study already counted in a completed qualification. Except where provided otherwise in the specific resolutions for the course concerned, the maximum credit granted in such cases will be determined by the requirement that a graduate who is admitted to candidature for a degree of bachelor with credit for completed units of study shall attend units of study for the equivalent of at least two full-time years in that course, unless additional credit from an uncompleted course or courses has also been granted.
- 5.4.2 *Postgraduate coursework:* Credit towards a postgraduate coursework degree (GradCert, GradDip, Masters) will not be given for undergraduate units of study or for completed postgraduate awards except in the case of embedded programs at the University of Sydney or other programs deemed by the relevant faculty to be the equivalent of such embedded programs.
- 5.4.3 Specific or non-specific credit for postgraduate study undertaken at another tertiary institution for which an award was not made may be granted by the faculty, subject to a maximum equivalent to fifty per cent of the credit point requirements for the award.
- 5.5 Credit will not normally be granted for units of study completed more than ten years prior to application. Faculties may prescribe a shorter timeframe.
- 5.6 Credit may be granted for units of study completed at an Australian University as follows:
- 5.6.1 Subject to limitations outlined in University policy, units of study which are part of award courses at Australian tertiary institutions shall generally be recognised for the consideration of applications for credit towards appropriate or equivalent awards of the University of Sydney.

- 5.6.2 Subject to limitations of University policy and the academic judgement of faculties, credit shall generally be granted for a specific unit of study where there is substantial overlap of skills, knowledge and experience at a level deemed to be equivalent to a University of Sydney unit of study.
- 5.6.3 Non-specific credit appropriate to the award may be granted in accordance with faculty policies and guidelines.
- 5.7 Units of study completed through:
- 5.7.1 recognised overseas tertiary institutions
- 5.7.2 registered private providers of accredited higher education courses
- 5.7.3 the Vocational Education and Training sector
- may be recognised for specific or non-specific credit towards appropriate courses of the University of Sydney.
- 5.8 Credit shall be granted for completed units in other programs after evaluation by the Faculty of the program which forms the basis for the credit application. The program of study will be measured against factors including:
- 5.8.1 the general educational practices and standards of the institution(s) or system;
- 5.8.2 the objectives of the particular course and the methods adopted to achieve these objectives;
- 5.8.3 admission requirements for the course;
- 5.8.4 the duration of the course;
- 5.8.5 the breadth, depth and balance of the course material;
- 5.8.6 the methods of assessment;
- 5.8.7 the teaching staff conducting the course, including numbers, professional qualifications and experience and educational expertise;
- 5.8.8 the accommodation and facilities including equipment, library, laboratories, workshops and other instructional or research resources for the particular course.
- 5.9 Recognition of Other Prior Learning
Credit may be granted for other prior learning where that experience can be documented. The onus shall be on the applicant to provide appropriate evidence or demonstrate the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding gained. The criteria in s5.8 may be used as a guide. Skills and knowledge gained through work or life experience may, at the discretion of the faculty, be recognised by the granting of a waiver or credit, where it can be shown that such skills and knowledge are equivalent to those that would be gained in relevant University of Sydney studies. Such credit shall be granted only when the applicant can demonstrate equivalent skills and knowledge to that gained if the relevant University of Sydney studies were undertaken.

5.10 Honours level study

Where course resolutions permit, students who have been awarded the degree of bachelor at pass level may be permitted to enrol for that degree at honours level.

6. Procedures

6.1 Each Faculty shall publish annually details of its advanced standing and credit transfer policy, consistent with this policy, including the criteria to be applied and relevant deadlines.

6.2 Credit will be approved by the Faculty administering the course for which the student is enrolled and will not automatically be transferred from one course to another. With respect to combined programs, applications must be made to the faculty delivering the equivalent unit of study for which credit is sought.

6.3 Applicants seeking credit must apply to the Faculty using the University form, and must provide satisfactory documentary evidence in support of their application.

6.4 Individual decisions about granting of credit to applicants will be made by the relevant Dean or nominee within procedures and frameworks established and maintained by the Faculty in accordance with this policy.

6.5 Advice on possible credit to be gained will be given by the relevant Faculty officer to a potential student on the understanding that a final decision will be communicated if the student is admitted to the course.

6.6 A fully documented decision to grant or not grant credit shall be attached to the student's file. Documentation, including any supporting documents, must be stored and filed in accordance with current University practice.

6.7 A student wishing to contest a faculty's decision on the granting of credit should follow the procedures in "Resolutions of the Academic Board: Principles for student appeals against academic decisions".

6.8 By the end of each calendar year, each faculty will submit to the Academic Board a summary of applications for granting of credit, indicating the courses for which credit was sought and the amount granted.