Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

Purpose

(1) The purpose of this procedure is to establish processes consistent with both the University's [Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) and the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) in order to:

   a. provide as many applicants/students as possible with timely advanced standing decisions to support their enrolment and the development of their study plans;

   b. ensure clarity for applicants/students with respect to credit decisions;

   c. contribute to the development of articulation arrangements and a suite of publicly available advanced standing precedents that the University can re-use and to which applicants/students can refer.

Scope

(2) These Procedures apply to the processing of all applications for Advanced Standing received by Southern Cross University and the development of advanced standing precedents based on articulation arrangements and individual credit decisions.

Section 2 - Definitions

   a. Refer to the [Definitions (Academic) Policy](#).

Section 3 - Articulation

(3) The Project Coordinator within the Office of the Vice Chancellor manages enquiries and provides support to University Schools/Colleges for the development of articulation arrangements, which establish predetermined and approved advanced standing decisions that can be subsequently applied for current and future applicants (students).

(4) The development of a Qualification Linkage is triggered via email request to: pathways@scu.edu.au. The development of an organisational specific Pathway is triggered by the provision of information about the proposed pathways using the relevant [Pathway Application Form](#).

(5) In the case of an organisational specific Pathway only, the information from this clause (5) enables feasibility and quality assurance analysis to be undertaken as follows:

   a. [Feasibility](#) is considered by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) in consultation with relevant Heads of School/College.

   b. [Quality Assurance](#) is conducted where feasibility is established prior, by the Office of Planning, Quality and Review for domestic arrangements and by SCU International for international arrangements.

(6) Where Feasibility and Quality Assurance are endorsed, the Project Coordinator within the Office of the Vice Chancellor will liaise with University staff and representatives from other organisations to provide appropriate academic evidence to the relevant Course Coordinator for content mapping in accordance with clause (20) of this Procedure.

Section 4 - Applications (Advanced Standing)

Applications

(7) Applicants/students may apply for Advanced Standing as detailed on the University's Pathways and Advanced Standing website, within the timeframes defined in the Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

(8) Applicants will receive acknowledgement of their application within three working days via:

a. the email address listed on the application form for applicants not yet admitted to a Southern Cross University course; or
b. the Southern Cross University student email address for students that are admitted or enrolled in units of study within a Southern Cross University course; or
c. where applicable, via third party agents.

Supporting Documentation

(9) Unless the prior learning was completed at Southern Cross University, applicants/students must provide supporting documentation according to whether the application is based on:

a. Formal or non-formal learning, where an Advanced Standing Precedent exists;
   i. Testamur/Certificate for the completed accredited qualification/course; and/or
   ii. Transcript/Statement of Results/Statement of Attainment for the completed or partially completed accredited qualification/course; or
   iii. Statement/Certificate of Attendance/Participation for the non-accredited completed or partially completed course/program. Alternatively, a detailed history of attendance and participation via a Professional Development Register (or similar document), which is signed by an authorised representative of the issuing authority; and
   iv. a copy of the applicable published Advanced Standing Precedent details; or identify the Advanced Standing Precedent Reference Code from the University's Search for Advanced Standing.
b. Formal or non-formal learning, where an Advanced Standing Precedent does not exist:
   i. Testamur/Certificate for the completed accredited qualification/course; and/or
   ii. Transcript/Statement of Results/Statement of Attainment for the completed or partially completed accredited qualification/course, including a document that explains the marking/grading system; or
   iii. Statement/Certificate of Attendance/Participation for the non-accredited completed or partially completed course/program. Alternatively, a detailed history of attendance and participation via a Professional Development Register (or similar document), which is signed by an authorised representative of the issuing authority; and
   iv. a detailed outline of the learning outcomes and attributes taught/assessed within each unit (subject) or module (topic) of the prior accredited or non-accredited qualification/course/program.
c. informal learning, whether an Advanced Standing Precedent exists or not;
   i. cover letter, including a personal competency statement outlining how the applicant/student fulfills the learning outcomes and graduate attributes of the relevant units of study in the SCU course; and why credit should be granted; and

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ii. current Resume or Curriculum Vitae with relevant life, work and voluntary activities and dates; and

iii. Job/Position Description(s) and/or copies of Performance Review(s) listing duties, responsibilities and key performance indicators (KPIs); or

iv. detailed Statement(s) of Professional/Voluntary Services from current and/or previous employer(s), supervisor(s) or trainer(s). More than a reference, this document must be on letterhead, contain the contact details of the organisation, display the date of issue, identify and be signed by the authorised person, detail the length and breadth of service (full or part time capacity) and list complete duties and responsibilities; and

v. where applicable, the following may be required:

- a diary or journal depicting daily events/performance, for example a record of clinical/service hours;
- Work samples such as a professional or creative portfolio, completed projects, research, articles, blogs and wikis, designs, presentations, correspondence and reports; or
- Performance observations such as videos, photographs or recorded conversations.

(10) Non-English documents must be submitted in the original language, accompanied by an authorised English translation.

(11) The receiving Administration Officer will assess whether sufficient supporting documents are provided (guided by clauses(9)a, (9)b, or (9)c) and:

a. where doubt exists as to the authenticity of a supporting document , the officer will contact the issuing organisation to verify issue. If the issuing organisation does not respond within three working days, the officer may ask to sight the applicant's/student's original documents and/or request the submission of certified copies of originals; and

b. if the supporting documents are insufficient, or Non-English documents submitted in the original language, are not accompanied by an authorised English translation , the officer will contact the applicant/student in writing, within three working days to request further evidence.

(12) Supporting documents uploaded as part of the University's online application system are automatically maintained in the Student Management System. Supporting documents submitted in any other way, must be sighted, scanned and uploaded onto the applicant's/student's record via the Student Management System.

(13) Where a complete or incomplete qualification/course/program from an overseas educational organisation is presented for advanced standing assessment and no precedent exists, the Administration Officer will determine the qualification's AQF comparable level using the Country Education Profiles or other appropriate guide. Where an AQF equivalency is clearly established by Country Education Profiles or other appropriate guide, it will be used by the Course Coordinator to guide the amount of credit applicable under the University's standard approach to cognate (classified as being of the same, closely allied or related discipline/field/branch of learning) credit decisions (Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy - Schedule 1).

Processing Variations

(14) Following receipt of an application and supporting documentation (including via a Student Management System alert notification), the relevant Administration Officer will progress Advanced Standing applications according to the following process variations:

a. for all cases, the officer will check Credit Search and Calculator for a matching Advanced Standing Precedent, and if:

i. an applicable precedent exists which defines both the amount and units against which the advanced

standing will be awarded in the SCU study plan, apply Part A - of this Procedure;

ii. an applicable precedent exists which defines only the amount of advanced standing to be awarded, but not units against which it will be awarded in the SCU study plan, apply Part B - of this Procedure; or

iii. no applicable precedent exists the officer will apply Part C - of this Procedure.

Part A - Precedent with Amount and Units to be Awarded

(15) Where an applicable precedent exists which defines both the amount and units against which the advanced standing will be awarded in the University study plan, the credit may be applied immediately by the Administration Officer (skip to Section 6 -).

Part B - Precedent with Amount to be Awarded Only

(16) Where an applicable precedent exists which defines only the amount of advanced standing to be awarded, but not units against which it will be awarded in the University study plan, the credit decision must be referred to the relevant Course Coordinator for assessment and recommendation of the type of credit to be awarded (either specified unit codes and names; or the number of unspecified elective units or block elective credit points and the part of the course structure these occupy).

(17) The Administration Officer will provide relevant supporting documentation, such as Transcripts/Statement of Results and unit outlines to enable the Course Coordinator to map and recommend the type of credit to be awarded on the basis of any applicable Specific Award Rules, the supporting documentation provided, and Section 5 - of this Procedure.

Part C - No Precedent Exists

(18) Where no applicable precedent exists, the credit decision must be referred to the relevant Course Coordinator for assessment of the amount of credit awarded (if any) and units against which the advanced standing will be awarded in the University study plan (as applicable).

(19) The Administration Officer will provide the application and supporting documentation to the Course Coordinator to recommend the amount and units for which credit may be applicable.

(20) The Course Coordinator will recommend the amount and units for which credit should be awarded on the basis of the supporting documentation provided and any applicable Specific Award Rules, the Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, and Section 5 - of this Procedure.

Section 5 - Content Mapping

(21) Where a Course Coordinator is required to develop recommendations for awarding credit (either amount and type or only the type), they will undertake content mapping for:

a. accredited courses/qualifications/awards (formal learning) by identifying:

    i. comparability of similar learning outcomes and graduate attributes;

b. non-accredited courses/programs (non-formal learning) by identifying:

    i. where the course/program fits within the AQF levels summaries and learning outcomes criteria;

    ii. qualification type learning outcomes descriptors and learning qualification type specifications (detailed in the AQF Second Edition January 2013);

    iii. the relative volume of learning and depth of knowledge/skills within each unit/subject as indicated within

the relevant AQF qualification or unit type specifications. The volume of learning should not be compared to the volume of the University course or units; and

    iv. comparability of similar learning outcomes and graduate attributes;

  c. professional/voluntary experience and hours of service (informal learning):

    i. using the [Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO)](or equivalent system), to inform regarding equivalent course/qualification/award levels under the AQF and related learning outcomes and graduate attributes.

(22) Where an applicant presents with cognate prior learning to the course in which they seek to obtain advanced standing, the amount of credit to be awarded will normally align with the amounts specified at [Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy - Schedule 1](). However, credit recommendations may vary from the amounts listed at Schedule 1 due to:

  a. external/professional recognition requirements;

  b. constraint of a mandatory study plan, or

  c. greater alignment of equivalent learning outcomes resulting from collaborative course development.

> Variations must be suitably justified by a statement recorded in the University Precedent Database and must be consistent with any other similar articulation or stand-alone credit decisions/precedents approved into the same SCU course.

(23) Where doubt exists as to whether a qualification is cognate Course Coordinators will refer to the [Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)]() broad and narrow fields of Education at the course level, and the narrow and detailed fields of Education at the unit level. The [International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)]() Fields of Study may also assist regarding overseas qualifications and units.

(24) Course Coordinators will liaise with relevant Unit Assessors and (if necessary) with academic specialists from the articulating organisation, to recommend credit decisions for approval based on:

  a. their specialist discipline related subject matter and considered professional judgment;

  b. SCU International advice about the comparability of overseas programs/courses/qualifications/awards to the AQF levels benchmark;

  c. any external/professional course accreditation issues that may impact on the type or amount of credit applicable.

(25) The language underpinning learning or assessment must not be a factor considered to inform credit recommendations, as all students are required to meet the University's minimum English language requirements for the purpose of admission.

(26) The Course Coordinator is responsible for electronically maintaining content mapping evidence supporting their credit recommendation.

(27) Where any doubt exists for a particular credit decision, rather than to decline an application for Advanced Standing outright, the Course Coordinator will seek a second opinion from a suitably qualified colleague, and:

  a. if the second person confirms that no amount of credit for prior learning should be granted, then the assessment may stand;

  b. if a difference of opinion emerges, the Course Coordinator will contact the applicant/student in writing, copying the relevant Administration Officer, offering alternative means of establishing their standing, such as a challenge test or special project.

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Part D - Communicating the Outcome of Content Mapping and Credit Recommendations/Decisions

(28) When the content mapping and resulting credit recommendation are complete, the Course Coordinator will forward the recommendation (to approve or not to approve) to the relevant officer authorised by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) to approve credit decisions, unless the Course Coordinator is also the approving authority. The information at clauses:

    a. (29)a to (29)d will be provided for articulation related decisions; and

    b. (31)a to (31)d will be provided for stand-alone decisions.

(29) The officer authorised by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) to approve credit decisions will, in the case of articulation, email such decisions to pathways@scu.edu.au within three weeks of receipt of the request and will including the following information:

    a. University course code and nomenclature, plus any applicable major or specialisation (if applicable);

    b. The articulating program/course/qualification/award code (if applicable) and nomenclature, plus any applicable major or specialisation, or occupation/position title;

    c. The total amount of credit approved, expressed as:

        i. specified unit codes and names (wherever possible, credit will be awarded in specified units); or

        ii. the number of unspecified elective units or block elective credit points (and the part of the course structure these occupy); or

        iii. a combination of unspecified elective units and specified unit codes and names and/or block elective credit points; or

        iv. a combination of unspecified units, yet to be determined by the Course Coordinator and specified unit codes and names, unspecified elective units or block elective credit points; and

    d. any conditional statements that apply to the articulation credit decision via an Advanced Standing Precedent.

(30) The Administration Officer will enter articulation credit decisions into the Precedent Database within three working days of receipt of the credit decision.

(31) The officer authorised by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) to approve credit decisions will, in the case of a stand-alone application for advanced standing or determination precedent, provide such credit decisions to Student Administration Services within three working days of receipt of the application/request for determination, and will include the following information:

    a. University course code and nomenclature, plus any applicable major or specialisation (if applicable);

    b. the other program/course/qualification/award code (if applicable) and nomenclature, plus any applicable major or specialisation, or occupation/position title;

    c. the total amount of credit approved (if not already identified), and/or the type of applicable credit, expressed as:

        i. specified unit codes and names (wherever possible, credit will be awarded in specified units); and/or

        ii. the number of unspecified elective units or block elective credit points (and the part of the course structure these occupy); and

    d. any conditional statements that may apply if the credit decision were to be subsequently applied as an Advanced Standing Precedent or considered for inclusion as an articulation arrangement.

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Section 6 - Notifying the Applicant of the Decision

(32) For domestic student applications, upon retrieval of an applicable precedent which defines both the amount and units against which the advanced standing will be awarded in the University study plan, or on receipt of a credit decision from an authorised person, the Administration Officer will notify domestic and international applicants/students regarding the outcome of their application by issuing an Advanced Standing Notification to:

    a. the email address listed on the application form for applicants not yet admitted to a University course; or

    b. the University student email address for students that are admitted or enrolled in units of study within a University course.

(33) For international student applications, the Administration Officer will notify the student depending on the nature and timing of the application. Advanced Standing Notifications issued to international students who applied for advanced standing and have been granted credit after the commencement date of the SCU course will contain a Declaration of Acceptance of Credit Awarded, with clear instructions, notifying the student that they must sign and return the declaration to an International Student Adviser by the due date.

(34) On receipt of the Advanced Standing Notification Declaration of Acceptance of Credit Awarded, an International Student Adviser must adjust the student's total duration of study in Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) by revising and amending the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). If the declaration is not received by the due date by the SCU International Office, and International Student Adviser will contact the student to remind them of their obligations under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.

Section 7 - Decision Review

(35) Where an Administration Officer does not receive a credit decision from the officer authorised by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality), or advice requesting further/more detailed academic evidence, within a reasonable timeframe, they may escalate the decision to the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) for determination.

(36) The Project Coordinator within the Office of the Vice Chancellor or the SCU International may refer any credit decisions which potentially do not accord with the provisions of the Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy or this Procedure to the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) for review.

(37) A sample of credit decisions will be periodically reviewed by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) to ensure consistency and accuracy. The Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) may amend any decision upon review where in his or her judgment it does not accord with the principles of the Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy or this Procedure. Where doing so, the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) will notify the:

    a. relevant Course Coordinator; and

    b. Student Administration Services.

(38) Articulation arrangements are monitored and periodically reviewed by the Project Coordinator within the Office of the Vice Chancellor in consultation with other University and external stakeholders.

Section 8 - Advanced Standing Precedent Creation Procedures

(39) Approved Articulation arrangements will be entered into the Precedent Database by the Project Coordinator

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within the Office of the Vice Chancellor as an articulation Advanced Standing Precedent.

(40) Stand-alone credit decisions approved by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) or a person he or she has authorised, will be considered for inclusion in the Precedent Database by the Project Coordinator within the Office of the Vice Chancellor as a discretionary Advanced Standing Precedent only where:

a. the credit decision is specific, identifying both the amount and type of credit to be subsequently applied; and
b. the likelihood of the specific credit decision subsequently reapplied to another applicant/student for the same University course being moderate or high.

(41) Stand-alone credit decisions approved by Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality) or a person he or she has authorised that are not specific and/or contain conditions will be reported to the central administration point for consideration as a relevant articulation arrangement within the Precedent Database.

(42) Where the National VET Register (training.gov.au) identifies that a new qualification/accredited course supersedes and is equivalent to the prior version, an articulation arrangement and/or Advanced Standing Precedent may be created using the credit decision that applied for the prior version of the qualification.

Section 9 - Guidelines

(43) Refer to the [Pathways and Advanced Standing website](#) for further information and guidance.

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