

Advanced Standing Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) This policy replaces Chapter 2.40 of the Academic Policy (December 2010).

Section 2 - Definitions

(2) For the purpose of this Policy refer to the Academic Board's Definitions Policy.

Section 3 - Introduction

(3) This Policy addresses the University's commitment to the importance of advanced standing, credit transfer and recognition of prior learning (RPL) as mechanisms for recognising the prior learning and professional experience and/or the prior formal education of students enrolling in SCU award courses. It is also a mechanism for ensuring flexible access into SCU courses and between SCU and other recognised providers.

Objectives

(4) The purpose of this Policy and the University's Advanced Standing Scenarios table is to establish principles and processes that will enable advanced standing to be made readily available to eligible students without undermining the quality of SCU's degrees and other awards.

(5) The Policy clarifies the different types of advanced standing, the principles for decision making about advanced standing, and clarifies the business processes and application of advanced standing under the Rules Relating to Awards and Specific Award Rules.

(6) The intent of the Policy is to enable the equivalence of learning outcomes to be established and to assist those equivalence decisions to be made regardless of the similarity or difference of the educational processes and provider involved.

Section 4 - Content and Implementation

Part A - Granting of Credit Towards a Qualification

- a. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) which is a process that assesses the individual's non-formal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification. (AQF 2004)
- b. Credit transfer from prior formal studies. This is a process which assesses the initial course or subject that the individual is using to claim access to, or the award of credit in, the destination course to determine the extent to which it is equivalent to the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards in a qualification. This may include credit transfer based on formal learning that is outside the AQF framework.

(7) A student may apply, and be considered, for advanced standing at any time from the date of their application, but will not receive the credit until enrolment occurs. However, all applications for advanced standing must be made prior to the commencement of a student's last study period.

Part B - Types and Processing of Advanced Standing at SCU

(8) Advanced Standing can be categorised into various types depending on the circumstances.

(9) For more information refer to the Advanced Standing Types Flowchart and the Advanced Standing Scenarios at SCU table (the latter outlines various scenarios that have been identified at SCU and categorises these according to type and treatment).

Part C - Hierarchy of Advanced Standing Arrangements

(10) Advanced Standing is dealt with in the following order:

- a. Advanced standing articulated in Specific Award Rules
- b. Rules Relating to Awards - Advanced Standing Rules (Rule 2.4)
- c. Contractual arrangements agreed between SCU and other providers as approved by the Chair, Academic Board who must notify Academic Board of all such approvals. Where the Chair has not approved the arrangement, advanced standing may not be awarded under that contractual arrangement.

Part D - Record Keeping

(11) Schools/Colleges shall ensure that records of all decisions taken regarding the granting of Advanced Standing are maintained. These records shall include the following in either hard copy or recorded on Student One:

- a. student's study plan
- b. application by the student for advanced standing and all associated documents
- c. names of staff approving advanced standing.

(12) Student Services and CIS, in consultation with Schools/Colleges, will oversee the development of a standardised database and a precedence approach to processing advanced standing based on the functionality of Student One.

(13) Schools/Colleges shall also ensure that they contribute to and maintain their part of the precedence database on Student One.

Part E - Principles for Decision Making About Advanced Standing

(14) The following principles are intended to provide a framework for decision making by the Academic Board and School Boards /College Boards about the granting of Advanced Standing.

Demonstrated Equivalence to Existing Unit

(15) Decisions about advanced standing should routinely be informed by considered professional judgement about the evidence presented to demonstrate equivalence to an existing unit of study. Where doubt exists, it is preferable to offer alternative means of establishing the student's standing, such as challenge tests and special projects, rather than to decline the application outright.

Recency of Qualification

(16) Qualifications or study units completed more than ten (10) years ago should not normally be recognised for the

granting of Credit Transfer unless the applicant can establish that these studies have provided the basis for continuing and recent employment in a relevant occupation. Exceptions to this principle will remain at the discretion of the discipline area.

(17) When a School/College is forwarding credit transfer documentation to Programs Committee they must include a statement that addresses the issue of currency of previous qualifications.

Precedents

(18) Faculties and Schools/Colleges shall contribute to the precedent database on Student One to ensure consistency and to improve recording and reporting.

Transparency

(19) All decisions about Credit Transfer should be open to scrutiny. Records that show the reasons for decisions taken must be properly maintained.

Limitations with Regard to Exiting with a Lesser Award

(20) If a student chooses to exit a course with a lesser award they cannot have been granted more than the equivalent of 50% of the units in that exit award.

Part F - Procedure and Rules Relating to Awards and Specific Award Rules for Undergraduate Courses

(21) In the case of a direct application Student Services will forward advanced standing paperwork to Schools/Colleges within 24 hours of receipt.

(22) In the case of clause (21) and where an application goes directly to a School/College staff shall make decisions and process new student advanced standing requests within ten working days of receipt.

(23) In processing advanced standing it is important to record the relative differences between the types of advanced standing as outlined in clause (9).

(24) Reference should also be made to the Rules Relating to Awards and where relevant the Specific Award Rules.

(25) Students must be notified in writing of the decision regarding their advanced standing application.

Part G - Accountability

(26) The Academic Board is ultimately accountable for all decisions taken about advanced standing. Any committee or person with delegated responsibility for making these decisions should make an annual report to the Academic Board, through their School Board /College Board, on the decisions that have been taken; identifying any issues, procedural and academic; and reporting on the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy.

(27) The School Board /College Board should from time to time audit the academic progress being made by students granted advanced standing to ensure that their progress is not significantly different than that of other students.

Status and Details

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