



Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure

Academic Board Approved Policy

Policy Compliance with Relevant Legislation

Regulatory Requirements	Relevant Standards	Section/s
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	Standard 2: Registered providers must recruit responsibly and ensure that overseas students are appropriately qualified for the course they are seeking to enrol in. Overseas students must have sufficient information to enable them to make informed decisions about studying with their chosen registered provider.	Section 9
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HES Framework)	Domain I Student Participation and Attainment	Entire Policy
Section 1.2 (Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning),	<p>Assessment of prior learning is undertaken for the purpose of granting credit for units of study within a course of study or toward the completion of a qualification, such assessment is conducted according to institutional policies, the result is recorded, and students receive timely written advice of the outcome. Credit through recognition of prior learning is granted only if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. students granted such credit are not disadvantaged in achieving the expected learning outcomes for the course of study or qualification, and b. the integrity of the course of study and the qualification are maintained. 	Entire Policy

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Policy Custodian	Dean
Policy Contact	Dean
Related Documents	Academic Progression and Early Intervention Policy and Procedure Admissions Policy and Procedure Glossary of Terms Quality Assurance Policy Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure Records Management Policy and Procedure
Related Legislation	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth) Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 Australian Qualifications Framework 2013 National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
Higher Education Standards Frameworks (Threshold Standard) 2021 (Cth)	BI.1 "Higher Education Provider" Category Standard 1.1; ss 2 Standard 1.2; ss 1 – 2 Standard 1.5; ss 7 Standard 7.2; ss 2
Policy Benchmarking	Australia Institute of Higher Education International College of Management Sydney University of Southern Queensland University of Technology Sydney

I. Preamble

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure ('the Policy') is to recognise and grant a fair and equitable amount of advanced standing for prior study. Additionally, this Policy aims to:

- i. facilitate articulation arrangements with other higher education and vocational training providers;
- ii. provide fair and consistent opportunities for transfer between courses of study at Southern Cross Institute ('the Institute or SCI');
- iii. provide a consistent approach to granting of advanced standing.

1.2 Background

The Institute recognises that learning takes place in a broad range of contexts including knowledge gained from previously completed qualifications. The Institute also recognises that granting advanced standing for prior learning ensures that students commence study at a level that appropriately recognises their previous learning experiences, and they are not required to repeat within their course of study equivalent learning successfully undertaken in another qualification.

1.3 Definitions

For definitions, please refer to the '*Glossary of Terms*'.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all courses and unit of study of the Institute.

3. Policy Statement

The Institute ensures that all applications for credit transfer and/or advanced standing are dealt with in an open, fair and consistent manner. Through in depth and evidence-based assessment of advance standing applications, SCI is committed to ensuring expected learning outcome are achieved and integrity of course is maintained if Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is granted.

4. Principles for Granting Advanced Standing

4.1 Applications for advanced standing are assessed considering the following:

- i. The general educational practices and standards of the provider(s) or any accreditation obtained by such provider that is relevant to the course under consideration;
- ii. The objectives of the course and the methods adopted to achieve those objectives;
- iii. Admission requirements for the course of study;
- iv. The duration of the course, having regard to entry requirements and course objectives;
- v. The breadth, depth and balance in the course material involved and the intellectual effort required;
- vi. The methods of assessment of student progress;
- vii. Any arrangements for practical training and experience as part of the course;
- viii. Eligibility for credit transfer and/or advanced standing does not guarantee a place in any course. Completion of a course of study is subject to individual course structure rules.

5. Advanced Standing Procedures

5.1 Limitation on the quantum of advanced standing

- i. To receive an undergraduate and graduate degree award from the Institute, at least half (50%) of the total credit point value of a course must be completed at the Institute.
- ii. Advanced standing is not granted where it is likely to result in the student undertaking less than the prescribed minimum amount of study at the Institute.
- iii. Advanced standing is not granted for a unit where there is a requirement by the Academic Board that the unit must be completed at the Institute for an award to be conferred.
- iv. Advanced standing is not granted on the basis of prior study where the prior study occurred more than ten (10) years ago. A shorter timeframe than ten (10) years may be applied where there have been recent or significant changes in the relevant field of study since the prior study occurred.
- v. For graduate courses in Information and Communications Technology, a shorter time limit of 7 years will be applied for as RPL or credit transfer, ensuring currency in the field of Information and Communications Technology.
- vi. Advanced standing may only be granted for prior professional (work) or life experience when that professional (work) or life experience directly relates to the area of study being undertaken by the student at the Institute.

5.2 Approval of Advanced Standing

- i. The authority to grant advanced standing in all courses rest with the Dean or their nominee.
- ii. The Dean or their nominee only grants advanced standing in accordance with this Policy.
- iii. The Dean or their nominee only grants Recognition of Prior Learning in accordance with the terms of this Policy.

6. Applications for Advanced Standing

6.1 In addition to the limitations on the quantum of advanced standing listed in this Policy, the students can only apply for Advanced Standing based on prior work and life experience according to the following criteria:

- i. relevance to the learning outcomes at the unit and/or course level;
- ii. evidence of skills and knowledge that are pre-requisites for later units; or
- iii. meeting the requirements of a professional body (where relevant).

The criteria for assessing advanced standing must be applied consistently and equitably to all applications.

6.2 Any advanced standing granted to a student must be academically defensible. It must be considered that the student's assessed ability to successfully complete the requirements of the remainder of the course of study are not compromised as a result of level of granted advanced standing.

6.3 Advanced Standing must not be granted where this is likely to result in the student having difficulty in making satisfactory academic progress in the remainder of their course of study. The student's point of entry to the course of study and assessed competency to commence studies at the Institute from that point must be considered.

6.4 All applications for advanced standing must be submitted on the prescribed *Advanced Standing*

Application Form available from the Institute's website.

- 6.5 All applications must be received by the published deadlines i.e., prior to the start of each semester. Those deadlines are published on the Institute's website.
- 6.6 All applications must be accompanied by adequate supporting documentation. Transcripts and other documentation submitted in support of Advanced Standing (or RPL) applications should be either originals or certified copies. Documentation must clearly show that the applicant has achieved and maintained the competencies and/or knowledge and/or skills inherent in the qualification being recognised.

7. General condition for Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning

- 7.1 When assessing the advanced standing applications for credit transfer or recognition of prior learning, the assessor considers the following:
 - i. Whether the content (learning outcomes and assessment tasks) is at least 80 percent similar to the Institute's course for which Advanced Standing is sought;
 - ii. Assessment of equivalence must consider the following factors:
 - a. the learning outcomes of the course/units for which Advanced Standing is sought;
 - b. magnitude – degree of application of theory and practice;
 - c. the volume of learning, course of study including content; and
 - d. learning outcomes and assessment approaches.
- 7.2 For Advanced Standing or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applicants who fulfil the criteria outlined above, there are no limitations on granting Advanced Standing or RPL solely based on partially completed prior qualifications.
- 7.3 SCI recognises the significance of acknowledging prior learning attained through Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications. Credits for VET courses are granted in accordance with industry standards, enabling eligible students to be acknowledged for their previous learning accomplishments. SCI is dedicated to upholding transparency and uniformity in assessing and assigning credit for VET qualifications, guaranteeing an impartial and fair process for students pursuing recognition for their past educational endeavours.
- 7.4 SCI acknowledges the provision of unspecified credit for Advanced Standing or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applications, where credit is provided without a direct alignment of content but is instead awarded based on a comprehensive evaluation of the applicant's overall knowledge, skills, and competencies. The determination to grant unspecified credit is made individually for each case, considering the distinctive circumstances and merits of the applicant.

8. Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for Master of Social Work (Qualifying)

8.1 Credits Transfer

- 8.1.1 For Master of Social Work (Qualifying) (MSWQ), All students must undertake the core elements of the MSWQ course, including at least one of the professional practice units.
- 8.1.2 No exemptions from core social work units will be granted based on qualifications that led to a student's initial acceptance into the course.
- 8.1.3 Students transferring from one AASW-accredited course to another of the same AQF level may be eligible for credit for equivalent courses. Credit will only be granted up to the maximum allowable by SCI, ensuring alignment with course learning

outcomes.

8.1.4 Students admitted through bridging courses are not eligible for credit for units completed within those courses.

8.1.5 Credit may be granted for relevant and current work experience under the following conditions:

- i. The relevance and currency of the work align with SCI policies and program objectives;
- ii. The quality and integrity of the MSWQ course are upheld;
- iii. The work experience is clearly and directly related to the course' objectives and learning outcomes;
- iv. Credit granted for prior work experience must not result in gaps or deficiencies in achieving the required graduate capabilities.

8.1.6 Candidates entering the MSWQ course with a completed three-year social welfare degree may be granted a maximum of 25% credit (equivalent to one semester of four). This will be a case-to-case basis where the Head of the Social Work department together with the Academic Director will have to assess the candidate prior to granting credit to ensure that graduates meet all the required learning outcomes.

8.2 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for Professional Practice

Students must have worked for at least the equivalent of three full-time years in a setting deemed appropriate as a professional practice placement setting required for a first placement student and be able to demonstrate the competencies against the AASW practice standards. RPL will not be considered for a Final Placement.

Students may be granted RPL for their first professional practice placement that may encompass partial (25%) or complete (100%) recognition of hours accrued during the first professional practice placement, given that they fulfill the following:

- i. The student has worked for at least the equivalent of three (3) full-time years in a field of practice that aligns with social work settings and requirements;
- ii. The student applying for RPL credit can demonstrate a level of knowledge, competencies and skills consistent with those expected of a social work student;
- iii. The final year of the work experience for which the RPL credit is requested is within five (5) years of applying for RPL.

It is strongly recommended that students considering RPL discuss this with the Placement Coordinator prior to formally applying for RPL. Assessment of RPL is conducted jointly by the Placement Coordinator and Academic Director and approved by the Head of the Social Work department.

In the event where students are granted RPL for their first professional practice placement, their second professional practice placement will be undertaken within Australia. This professional practice placement will be conducted in collaboration with a social work organisation and will be distinct from the student's prior RPL or work experiences.

8.3 The Process for Assessing Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The *Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure* ensures a fair and equitable approach to recognising prior learning. Specifically, the Policy aims to:

- i. *facilitate articulation arrangements with other higher education and vocational training providers;*
- ii. *provide fair and consistent opportunities for transfer between courses of study at SCI;*
- iii. *provide a consistent approach to granting of advanced standing.*

The process for assessing Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) will involve a formal application using SCI [Advanced Standing Application Form](#). The student will provide evidence of their prior experience, in the human services field, relevant to social work such as counselling, casework, case management etc, on the application form and/or in a separate document. The student will also be required to demonstrate by a written 2000-word assessment how they have met the learning outcomes for the first professional practice placement unit *SWP807 Professional Practice - I* as mapped against the AASW standards.

The RPL portfolio will be assessed by the Placement Coordinator, a Placement Educator, and a member of the academic social work staff. A recommendation will then be made to the Placement Coordinator and Academic Director, and approval will be sought from the Head of the Social Work Department. Approval for RPL may be granted for some (25% or 50%) or all (100%) of the hours for first professional practice placement.

The student will have a right of appeal which will be considered by the Head of Department of Social Work. The appeal may be lodged in accordance with the Institute's grievance handling procedures outlined in the *Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure*.

If a student is granted RPL for first placement, the Final Placement will be undertaken in a human service organisation offering a direct professional practice placement. The professional practice placement will be different to the student's RPL/ previous work experiences.

For any other information, refer to the relevant sections within this Policy.

9. No Guarantees

- 9.1 The granting of advanced standing for a particular course of study does not in itself constitute eligibility for entry into that course. The student must still meet the prescribed entry requirements for the desired course of study.
- 9.2 The granting of advanced standing for a particular course does not in any way constitute a guarantee that the applicant meets the requirements to graduate from the course.

10. International Students – Compliance with National Code

- 10.1 Any approval of advanced standing for international students must comply with the provisions of the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (the National Code). International students must be advised that:
 - i. Intending students are encouraged to apply for advance standing at the time of their admission. However, students may apply for advance standing after they have commenced their study too.
 - ii. if their application for advanced standing is successful, it may decrease the amount of time in which they need to complete their course of study.
 - iii. if the advanced standing has been granted before the student's arrival in Australia and it affects the length of his or her course of study, the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) reflects the shortened period of study.
 - iv. if the credit transfer and/or advanced standing is granted after the student has

commenced their course of study, the CoE is amended to reflect the changed duration of the course. A copy of the amended CoE is provided to the student.

11. Cross-Institutional Enrolment & Criteria for Entry

11.1 Students who are enrolled in a course at the Institute and who wish to study an equivalent unit at another recognised higher education provider, should consult the Dean or nominee about the process and eligibility criteria

11.2 Credit may be given based on a cross-institutional study at another Australian tertiary institution with the prior approval by the Dean. Any subsequent changes must also be approved by the Dean.

11.3 The standard maximum credit limit of 50% apply to cross-institutional study.

11.4 *Eligibility Criteria for incoming cross-institutional students*

- i. Students must:
 - a. be currently enrolled in a degree course at an accredited Australian equivalent higher education Institute;
 - b. have completed at least one full-time semester of study at the student's original institution;
 - c. have approval from the student's original institution.

Note:

- a. Other eligibility criteria may apply to the course(s) for which students wish to apply. Approval for a cross-institutional study enrolment is at the discretion of the Dean.
- b. Some of SCI units may not be available through cross-institutional study.
- c. Some courses/units may have quota restrictions and therefore limited availability for cross-institutional study.
- d. Students may undertake cross-institutional enrolment only where the required unit is not offered at SCI in the relevant semester and cross-institutional study is necessary for the student to complete their course within the required timeframe.
- e. Students have to complete 50% of their enrolled degree to be able to receive SCI award.

12. Internal Credit Transfer

12.1 Credit transfer is granted when a student has completed units while undertaking a course within the Institute and wishes to transfer to another course.

12.2 Credit is granted for those units already undertaken which form part of the course into which the student is transferring.

12.3 The maximum credit internal transfer that can be granted in these circumstances is not limited.

12.4 *Types of Credits*

As per the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy, credit can be given to students in the form of block, specified or unspecified credit. The AQF defines the different types of credit as follows:

- i. Specified credit: Specified credit is credit granted towards particular or specific

components of a qualification or course of learning.

- ii. Unspecified credit: Unspecified credit is credit granted towards elective components of a qualification or course of learning.
- iii. Block credit: Block credit is credit granted towards whole stages or components of a course of learning leading to a qualification

13. False or Misleading Information

13.1 If an applicant for advanced standing provides any information that is false or misleading in relation to their application, the Dean may:

- i. refuse an application for advanced standing, or if already granted, revoke the approval of advanced standing;
- ii. refuse admission, or if already admitted, revoke the offer of admission.

14. Notification of Outcome and Record Keeping

The Dean, or nominee, decides to grant or deny the application for advanced standing or credit transfer and notify the student within ten (10) working days of receipt of the application provided the submitted application had all required documents. Students at the Institute are informed in writing of the decision to their student email account. Applicants who are not yet students at the Institute are notified by a letter sent to the address of the applicant, if their email contact is not available.

All records of successful advanced standing applications and related evidence is maintained in accordance with *SCI Records Management Policy and Procedure*.

15. Quality Assurance

- 15.1* For ongoing quality assurance, the Dean and/or nominee conducts comparisons with other higher education providers that the advanced standing granted by the Institute is consistent with the current practice in the industry.
- 15.2* The Dean and/or nominee reports to the Academic Board on a half-yearly basis about the granting of advanced standing to ensure that consistency of the Policy and its procedures are upheld, and all non-standard authorisations of the advanced standing are assessed by the Academic Board.
- 15.3* The Dean and/or nominee has the overall responsibility for the effective administration and implementation of this Policy and related procedures.
- 15.4* Students are responsible for applying for advanced standing or credit transfer and providing required documentary evidence to support their application.

16. Withdrawal of Credit

- 16.1* SCI reserves the right to withdraw credit where an error has been made in assessing an application or where the documentation provided by the applicant is incomplete, misleading, false or invalid. The withdrawal of credit must be approved by the Dean.
- 16.2* Where withdrawal is based on incomplete, misleading, false or invalid information or documentation, SCI may refuse admission, or if an offer of admission has already been made, revoke the offer of admission.
- 16.3* Where a change is made to a provision in this Policy, or where a precedent or articulation is reviewed and changed, credit already granted is not withdrawn.

17. Articulation Agreements

- 17.1* Articulations are assessed on a case-by-case basis and advanced standing is granted based on the assessed equivalence and relevance of the prior study.
- 17.2* Credits granted may be up to a maximum of 50% of the total award credit points.
- 17.3* All articulation agreements must be approved by Dean and reported to the Academic Board.

18. Appeals

A student may appeal against a decision made under this Policy. The appeal may be lodged in accordance with the Institute's grievance handling procedures outlined in the *Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure*.

Appendix I: VET Qualifications Academic Credit Table

Award	Basis for credit (Australian equivalent qualifications)	Maximum credit (Normal Circumstances)
Bachelor Degree	Completed Diploma in a cognate field of study	6 - 8 subjects
Bachelor Degree	Advanced Diploma in a cognate field of study	8 – 10 subjects
Bachelor Degree	Associate degree in a cognate field of study	10 subjects
Bachelor Degree	Bachelor Degree in a cognate field of study	12 subjects