



Academic credit, advanced standing, and exemption policy

The Combined Board of Postgraduate Studies for the Faculties of Dentistry, Medicine and Pharmacy approved the below policy on the 18 May 2005. The policy commenced on the 19 May 2005 and was amended on the 19 October 2005, and again on 5 March 2008.

1. **Definitions**

In this policy:

Award Course

An **award course** is defined as a formally approved program of study which can lead to an academic award granted by the University.

Embedded Award Courses

Embedded award courses are defined as a sequence of award courses, usually consisting of two or three of the following awards, a Graduate Certificate, a Graduate Diploma and a Masters degree. All of the requirements for the lesser award course equal a component of the requirements for the higher award course. A student may undertake the requirements for the Graduate Certificate and then if the student chooses to complete further specified study may be eligible for the award of the Graduate Diploma. Further specified study again may then also allow the student to be eligible for the award of the Masters degree.

Unit of Study

A **unit of study** is defined as the smallest stand-alone component of a student's award course that is recordable on a student's transcript.

Short course

A **short course** is defined as:

1. a course run by schools or disciplines of the University; and
2. content of the course is identical to a formally offered unit of study; and
3. is taught and assessed in the same way as an official unit of study; and
4. candidates do not formally enrol or pay tuition fees to the Student Centre of the University of Sydney; and
5. candidates will normally receive a certificate of attainment upon completion, from the school/discipline but do not receive an academic transcript from the University of Sydney.

Advanced standing

The granting of **advanced standing** is based on previous attainment in another course at a recognized tertiary institution. It is granted in the form of credit points for coursework students, or full time equivalent (FTE) semesters for research students deducted from standard degree durations, which count towards the requirements for the course.

For coursework students, advanced standing may be granted as specific credit or non-specific credit.



Specific credit: The recognition of previously completed studies directly equivalent to a unit of study at the University of Sydney.

Non-specific credit: Takes the form of a block credit for a specified number of credit points in a particular subject area. It is not linked to a particular unit of study at the University of Sydney.

The academic record will therefore contain Specific or Non-specific credit for the particular course but no result.

Exemption

On the basis of previous study a candidate can be exempted from completing an entire *required* unit of study (a 'waiver'). In such cases advanced standing is not granted and the candidate will be required to complete an alternative unit of study as prescribed by the Faculty.

Academic credit

Academic credit is given for either a whole Unit of Study or for a component of a Unit of Study, such as for a specific lecture, tutorial, exam or assignment, waiving the requirement to participate in the component(s) or the whole of the Unit of Study as specified by the credit given and as determined appropriate by the Head of School/Discipline. The candidate would be required to enrol in the Unit of Study and pay the full fees liable for that enrolment. Results, as determined by the Discipline/School, will be reported as part of the standard result reporting process for that semester.

2. Advanced Standing

Process

The candidate applies in writing for Advanced Standing for (i) specific credit for a coursework unit of study (coursework students) or, (ii) non specific credit for a number of credit points (coursework students) or, (iii) credit for a number of FTE semesters (research students), to the Postgraduate Student Administration Unit. Advanced Standing will be granted subject to approval of the Faculty Dean or his/her representative on the recommendation of the Head of School/Discipline whose responsibility it is to assess the equivalency of the request in accordance with the course requirements. The student must provide certified documentation of the previous study, such as certified academic transcripts.

The recommendation for credit is then sent to the Student Centre for recording of the advanced standing on the academic record.

Limits

Advanced standing given for units of study which have previously be credited to the award of a course is limited to a maximum of one third of the credit points required for the new award course. Advanced standing given for units of study from embedded award courses, non-award courses which have not been previously credited to the award of another degree or from courses from which the student has abandoned candidature (evidence must be provided) are limited by the course requirements only, providing that these units of study were completed within the maximum time allowed by the



University's Coursework Rule, notwithstanding the date of award of the qualification for embedded award courses.

Advanced standing will normally only be given for study completed at a University.

Where a coursework candidate is able to provide evidence such as a copy of a work report or a detailed letter from the relevant employer (please note a curriculum vitae is not considered evidence) of having covered the entire course content of a Unit of Study through prior work experience to a satisfactory standard, advanced standing may be given only if the Unit of Study is a core unit of the award course. If such experience is proven for elective units of Study the student would be expected to undertake an alternative elective Unit of Study.

Credit for research candidatures

- (1) Credit for research candidatures must be requested at the time of application for admission to the degree. Requests for credit made after enrolment will not normally be considered.
- (2) A candidate who, at the date of admission to candidature to a higher research degree, has completed not less than 6 months as a candidate for a master degree or doctorate in any faculty or board of studies of the University of Sydney, may be permitted by the faculty concerned to be credited for the whole or any part of the period of candidature completed for the previous degree as a period of candidature completed for a new higher research degree in the Faculties of Dentistry, Medicine and Pharmacy University of Sydney, provided that the period of candidature for the previous degree for which credit is sought shall have been a course of full-time or part-time advanced study and research under a supervisor appointed by the faculty or board of studies concerned and directly related to the candidate's proposed course of advanced study and research for the new degree and has not previously been credited to the award of a research degree.
- (3) A candidate who, at the date of admission has completed not less than six months as a candidate for a higher degree in another university or institution may be permitted by the Board of Postgraduate Studies in Dentistry, Medicine and Pharmacy, on the recommendation of the faculty concerned, to be credited for the whole or any part of the period of candidature completed as a period completed for a research higher degree of the Faculties of Dentistry, Medicine and Pharmacy University of Sydney, provided that:
 - (a) the period of candidature for the higher degree of the other university or institution concerned for which credit is sought shall have been a course of full-time or part-time advanced study and research under a supervisor appointed by the other university or institution concerned and directly related to the candidate's proposed course of advanced study and research in the University of Sydney;
 - (b) the candidate shall have abandoned candidature for the higher degree of the other university or institution concerned for which credit is sought;
 - (c) the amount of credit which may be so granted shall not exceed one year;



- (4) The Faculty of Medicine may grant credit not exceeding one year to a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in that Faculty who has submitted documented evidence of having previously completed supervised study towards the degree of Doctor of Medicine of The University of Sydney.

3. Exemption

Process

The candidate applies in writing for exemption for a coursework unit of study to the School/Discipline. After consideration by the Head of School/Discipline, the School/Discipline will formally notify the student of the decision. The School/Discipline will provide the candidate with alternative Units of Study to undertake for the award course.

Limits

Exemptions will be given up to a maximum of one third of the credit points for an award course.

4. Academic Credit

Partial Academic Credit

In some circumstances, candidates may be eligible for Academic Credit for part of a Unit of Study, such as an assignment, exam, essay etc. In such cases the candidate must provide sufficient evidence to the Course Coordinator that the candidate has previously fulfilled the aims of this assignment / exam / essay, etc, to a satisfactory standard.

Short Course candidates

Candidates who have completed a short course run by schools or disciplines within the University but were not formally enrolled in a University of Sydney award course at the time of undertaking the short course may later enrol in an award course. Academic credit for the equivalent unit of study in that award course may be sought provided such candidates have satisfied the assessment requirements.

Advanced standing will not be granted for short courses completed more than two years before enrolment in the award course (see The University of Sydney Admission: Advanced Standing, Credit and Exemption Policy which can be accessed at Policy on-line search <http://www.usyd.edu.au/policy/>). This requirement may be waived by the Faculty on the recommendation of the course coordinator if he or she judges that the candidate has used the skills developed in the course regularly since acquiring them. The course coordinator may require the candidate to satisfactorily complete a further assessment before recommending a waiver.

Process

1. The candidate enrolls in the unit of study that they have already completed as a Discipline/School short course at the beginning of a Semester in which the unit is timetabled.



2. The candidate requests a statement of fees for the unit of study from either the Postgraduate Student Administration Unit or the School Student Office.
3. The Discipline/School pays the University's Fees Office the unit of study fee in accordance with the statement. If the unit of study fee on the statement is greater than the amount originally paid by the candidate for the short course, the candidate may be required to pay the Discipline/School the difference.
4. At the end of the Semester in which the relevant unit of study is taught the Discipline/School reports the result to the Student Centre as part of the standard results process. The candidate's result is then included on his/her academic record.

Limits

Academic credit will be given up to a maximum of one third of the credit points for an award course when based on short courses from the relevant School/Discipline.

Note: This process must be done prospectively. That is, the student enrolls at the beginning of the Semester and the results are provided to the Student Centre at the end of Semester. Results cannot be entered before the end of Semester; nor can they be entered without the candidate having been enrolled in the unit or in a semester in which the unit is not offered for study.

Related information

Related University legislation, resolutions, policies and procedures include:

1. University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000 (as amended)
2. Admission: Advanced Standing, Credit and Exemption Policy
3. Act: University of Sydney (Amendment Act) Rule 1999 (as amended)