

Advance Standing and Awarding of Course Credit Policy

1. Purpose

This policy specifies the principles and guidelines that underpin Western Sydney University International College's (WSUIC) process when granting students advanced standing in its courses.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students applying for recognition of prior learning (RPL) to gain course credit in WSUIC courses.

3. Definitions

'Advanced Standing'

Advanced Standing is recognition of prior learning in terms of experience and/or studies. When you apply for **Advanced Standing**, we will assess your prior learning and may award you **Advanced Standing** in the course in which you are currently studying in recognition of what you have achieved.

'Articulation'

Articulation is a process that enables students to progress from a completed course to another with admission and/or credit in a defined course pathway.

'Census'

The date by which tuition fees and student contributions must be paid.

'Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)'

A letter issued by a higher education provider to confirm a student's enrolment in an approved course or packaged course.

'Course' – 'Program'

A course or a program refers to a structured set of subjects or units that students complete to earn a qualification, such as a degree, diploma, or certificate. The term 'course' is used when referring to Diploma while the term 'program' is used when referring to Foundation studies.

'Course Credit'

Course Credit is the value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Course Credit may be granted by Advance Standing, credit transfer or articulation.

'Credit Transfer'

Credit transfer is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent course credit outcomes for units of a course based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched courses.

'GPA'

Grade Point Average is a calculation of a student's average grade or result.

'PRISMS'

Refers to the Provider Registration and International Student Management System, an Australian Government database established to record information about overseas students studying in Australia. Through PRISMS, certain Australian Government agencies can monitor student compliance with visa conditions and provider compliance with the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act).

'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning is a process that involves the assessment of a student's relevant prior learning against an approved set of criteria. If a student is successful with their application for RPL they are awarded course credit in their course.

'Specified Credit'

Refers to advanced standing given in the form of specified units against a student's record. WSUIC may give specified advanced standing where prior learning satisfies the learning outcomes of a particular unit taught in WSUIC.

'Unit'

A unit is an individual subject of study within a program. Units typically focus on specific areas of learning and contribute to the overall credit points needed to complete a 'course' or a 'program'.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 WSUIC will ensure that all students are provided with the opportunity to apply for Advanced Standing through an RPL process.
- 4.2 WSUIC will assess all applications in a fair, consistent and transparent manner and ensure that every endeavour is made to grant the maximum amount of validated course credit warranted by an applicant's previous studies or work experience, without proving detrimental to the student's learning experience or the integrity of the required learning outcomes.
- 4.3 WSUIC will ensure that students granted advanced standing towards a unit of study are academically equipped to undertake the relevant course, capable of meeting the required learning outcomes for that course and will provide an appropriate schedule of study to the student to be completed at WSUIC.

5. Applying for Advance Standing

There are three ways a student may apply for and receive Advance Standing:

- 5.1.1 An application may be submitted as part of the admission process to WSUIC
 - 5.1.2 An application may be submitted after a student has started their course in WSUIC but no later than the close of business on Friday of the second week of the term if the student is applying for Advance Standing for a unit/s they have enrolled in that particular term
 - 5.1.3 An application may be submitted any time during the term for units in subsequent terms.
- 5.2 Application forms will be available from WSUIC Student Services and/or the WSUIC website for download. Completed application forms and supporting documents will be submitted to mypathway@westernsydney.edu.au.
- 5.3 Applicants are responsible for providing appropriate evidence to support their Advance Standing application. This includes the following:
- 5.3.1 A certified copy of their academic transcript.
 - 5.3.2 Copies of the relevant course/unit outlines, including assessment tasks, results and specified learning outcomes.
 - 5.3.3 Extracts from institutional handbooks or other official documentation giving sufficient detail of the claimed unit(s) of study to allow for an effective assessment of the application.
 - 5.3.4 All supporting documentation must be in English, including certified translations where appropriate.
- 5.4 The application will be reviewed by the Course/Program Convenor and the final decision will be signed off by the Academic Director. Within ten working days of receiving the application the Course/Program Convenor will inform WSUIC Admissions or WSUIC Student Services, whichever is applicable, of the Advance Standing application outcome.
- 5.4.1 For an application submitted as part of the admission process:
 - 5.4.1.1 The student will be advised of the outcome via email from WSUIC Admissions.
 - 5.4.1.2 If Advance Standing has been granted before the offer has been accepted by the student, then WSUIC Admissions will adjust the student's course duration in their offer letter and the CoE is issued for the adjusted course duration.
 - 5.4.2 For an application submitted and granted after the student has started the course:
 - 5.4.2.1 WSUIC Student Services will advise the student via email of the outcome no later than five business days before Census, including any changes in the course duration.
 - 5.4.2.2 Where the student's course duration has to be adjusted, WSUIC Student Services will update the student's CoE within PRISMS
- 5.5 Students are required to acknowledge and accept the credit offered within five (5) days of

receipt of advice from WSUIC. On receipt of the students' confirmation of their acceptance of the credit/Advanced Standing granted, WSUIC Admissions or WSUIC Student Services will apply the credit to the student's records.

- 5.6 The acceptance of a credit offer will be retained for a minimum of two (2) years after the student has ceased to be enrolled at WSUIC.
- 5.7 WSUIC reserves the right to withdraw an Advanced Standing assessment where the documentation provided by the applicant proves to be incomplete, misleading, false or invalid or when WSUIC has made an administrative error in assessing or processing the application and has mistakenly awarded RPL where it was not deserved.

6. Grade Issued for Advanced Standing

- 6.1 Advanced standing will be allocated the Specified (K) grade for administrative purposes. This grade will not count towards GPA.
- 6.2 Academic marks and grades are not allocated for units for which advanced standing is given.

7. Appeals

- 7.1 An applicant for advanced standing who wishes to appeal against the decision about their advanced standing assessment may do so in accordance with the POL 20 **Student Complaint Handling Policy**.
- 7.2 An appeal can only be made on one of the following grounds, which must be specified and addressed in the WSUIC Appeal Form:
 - 7.2.1 There is evidence that the decision with regard to the application for Advance Standing was made as the result of a procedural error or was in breach of procedural fairness or
 - 7.2.2 There is evidence that the decision regarding the granting of Advance Standing does not give appropriate recognition for a student's previous study.
- 7.3 All documentation relating to the appeal, including evidence presented and copies of communications with the student will be recorded on the WSUIC Student Management System and maintained as per the **POL 38 Records Management, Retention and Disposal Policy**.
- 7.4 Students should maintain their own record of the application and associated correspondence.

8. Limits on Advanced Standing

The maximum advanced standing granted will not exceed 50 per cent of the total credit points for the course for which the advanced standing is to be counted.

9. Course Transfer Arrangements

A current WSUIC student may apply to transfer from one course to another and may, upon application, be granted advanced standing for all successfully completed equivalent units in the first course. Clause 7 does not apply in this case.

10. Time Limits for Currency of Previous Studies

- 10.1 Advanced Standing in specified units is not normally granted for studies completed ten years or more prior to application.

11. Quality and Compliance

- 11.1 This policy is reviewed periodically (at a minimum every two years) to ensure regulatory compliance, operational currency, the identification of continuous improvement opportunities and risk identification and mitigation. This review is reflected in WSUIC's Risk Management Framework.
- 11.2 This policy will be available on the WSUIC website for students and the WSUIC SharePoint site for staff access.
- 11.3 Emails will be issued to all staff to inform and update them on any changes to the policy and/or procedures and guidelines.
- 11.4 New staff will receive policy information during the induction process where it relates to their position

12. Related Forms and Documents

- WSUIC Letter of Offer
- Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)
- WSUIC Application for Advanced Standing
- WSUIC Appeal Form

13. Related Policies, Procedures Guidelines and Legislation

- POL 01 Admissions Policy
- PRO 02 WSUIC Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure
- POL 02 Advance Standing and Awarding of Course Credit Policy
- POL 07 Enrolment Policy
- POL 20 Student Complaint Handling Policy
- AQF Qualifications Pathway Policy
- Education Services for Overseas (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code Standard 2
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

- TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework
- (Threshold Standards) Standard 1.2 Credit and recognition of prior learning
- Western Sydney University Advanced Standing Policy

Approval and Amendment History

Approval Authority:	Western Sydney University International College Academic Board
Policy Owner:	Academic Director/Academic Leadership Team
Approval Date:	2 November 2016
Date for Next Review:	12 November 2026

Amendments		
Revision Date	Version	Summary of changes
2/11/2016	1.0	New Policy Developed

7/04/2018	2.0	<p>Policy Statement updated significantly. Articulation component to be added to the Academic Progress Policy, therefore, all references to articulation in the previous draft removed. Subsequent re-numbering of clauses.</p> <p>Replacement of recognition of prior learning with RPL throughout document</p> <p>Addition of Clause 1.2 to nominate legislative and regulatory compliance</p> <p>Clause 2. Re-write of Scope statement</p> <p>Clause 3 Removal of Articulation Arrangements definition and subsequent re-numbering of sub-clauses; Update of Confirmation of Enrolment, Credit, Credit Arrangements and Recognition of Prior Learning definitions, Addition of 3.13 WSUIC</p> <p>Clause 4. Total re-write of Policy Statement: Previous paragraphs/content merged and/or moved to different clauses.; Removal of old clause 4.6 as this clause is not relevant; update of old clause 4.7 to include the mechanism for the review</p> <p>Clause 5 – removal of references to Category 1 and Category 2 students and re-numbering of sub-clauses.</p> <p>Clause 5.1 to 5.1.8 – complete re-write to remove the procedural content. General Statements included as replacements. Procedure and change to clause numbering as a result; Replace Academic Coordinator with Course Convenor; Old Clause 5.1.8 – Admissions Manager changed to Student Services Manager and addition of “assessment”; 5.1.10.2 – addition of reference to appeal</p> <p>Clause 9 (old) – removal of clause as its content is irrelevant.</p> <p>Clause 9 – addition of 9.1 9.2 and 9.3</p> <p>Clause 12 – new clause for Policy Source and Benchmarking</p> <p>National Code 2018 updates: - addition of subclauses 5.3.1 and 5.3.2; Removal of Appendix A. Remove Appendix B but add as link to Clause 11</p>
02/09/19	2.1	<p>Removed reference to Unspecified Grade</p> <p>Reformatted whole document</p> <p>Integrated 5.7 (review of decision by Academic Director) and 5.8 into section 6 ‘Appeals’</p> <p>Added new clause 5.4 that assigns responsibility with regards to who will be reviewing the application (Course Convenor) and who will be making the final decision (Academic Director)</p> <p>Added 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 which assign responsibility regarding who will process applications received as part of the admissions process and those received after commencement of the course</p>
9/11/2020	3.0	<p>Name changes of the Policy</p> <p>Clear alignment with Advance Standing definition in relation to WSU</p> <p>Replacing RPL with Advance Standing throughout the policy</p>
9/11/2022	3.1	<p>Minor grammatical changes.</p> <p>Addition of policy numbers to related policies and update of policy names.</p>

12/11/2024	3.2	<p>Minor grammatical changes.</p> <p>Addition to Clause 9 "Clause 7 does not apply in this case"</p> <p>Deletion of Clause 10.2 "to or in excess of the requirements of the unit or units learning outcomes can be demonstrated. Such instances will generally require additional assessment of the application such as completion of relevant assessment tasks and/or interviews with the Academic Director."</p> <p>Addition of definitions.</p> <p>'Course' – 'Program'</p> <p>A course or a program refers to a structured set of subjects or units that students complete to earn a qualification, such as a degree, diploma, or certificate. The term 'course' is used when referring to Diploma while the term 'program' is used when referring to Foundation studies.</p> <p>'Unit'</p> <p>A unit is an individual subject of study within a program. Units typically focus on specific areas of learning and contribute to the overall credit points needed to complete a 'course' or a 'program'.</p>
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