

Credit (also known as Advanced Standing)

Policy Title	Credit (also known as Advanced Standing)
Review Date	August 2012

Purpose

This policy provides principles for the application, evaluation and award of credit for coursework degrees at the University of Melbourne.

Scope

This policy applies to all coursework degrees in the Melbourne Model.

Legislative Context

[Statute 5.4 – Course and Subjects](#)

[Statute 11.1 – Entry Quotas and Admission](#)

Please note that some changes to the credit statute will be proposed to deal with credit in the case of accelerated entry and nested degrees.

Definitions

(NB. These are working definitions that may be changed to ensure consistency with terminology employed in the Student System).

accelerated entry: Exemption from and/or credit for a tertiary subject at the University of Melbourne on the basis of (a) additional work while completing a secondary educational program and possibly also (b) satisfactory performance (70%) in an exemption examination in the subject offered by the administering department for the subject.

credit (also known as advanced standing): points granted towards the requirements of a degree for studies completed outside of that degree and/or the University of Melbourne.

cross-institutional study: Studies undertaken by a student enrolled in a course at a particular institution (the first institution) at another institution (the second institution) for credit towards the course at the first institution.

degree: Unless a different definition is specified in the policy, a tertiary award course (including Bachelors, Honours or Masters degrees, or any diploma or certificate, whether offered to undergraduate or graduate students).

enrolling student: A student who has been offered or accepted a place in a degree at the University of Melbourne.

exemption: waiver of a particular requisite with or without credit.

exemption examination: an examination of the material covered in a subject that is offered in association with an accelerated entry pathway to students who have completed higher level work judged to be at a tertiary level while completing a secondary education program. Satisfactory completion of the exemption examination/s is an aggregate result of at least 70%.

higher level work: work which covers tertiary-level subject matter associated with but additional to a secondary school educational program, such as the Maths Olympiad or advanced language studies.

nested degrees: One degree is nested in a second if the two degrees have the same entry requirements and the course requirements of the first are a subset of the course requirements of the second.

prerequisite: specified knowledge, usually defined by a subject or subjects, required for enrolment into a particular subject(s).

prospective student: A student who is considering applying, or who has applied for a place in a degree at the University of Melbourne but has not yet been made an offer.

University of Melbourne Extension Program (or equivalent): A program in which secondary school students can complete university subjects as part of a secondary education program.

POLICY

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Prospective students are entitled to receive advice about the number of credit points and type of credit they may be granted if they were to enrol in a degree at the University of Melbourne.
- 1.2 Where a student enrolled in a degree has completed prior study judged to be academically equivalent to a subject offered in the degree, credit for the subject should be offered, subject to the limitations on credit specified in Statute 11.1 and the length requirements for graduate degrees, including the requirement that masters degrees can be awarded only after completion of at least five years of full-time study or equivalent. Enrolling students, having disclosed their previous tertiary studies or higher level work as part of the application process, and, where relevant, completed an exemption examination in association with an accelerated entry pathway, will be formally advised about credit and invited to provide any further details required to properly evaluate their previous studies.
- 1.3 Current students enrolling in an exchange or study abroad program, or course of complementary study at another institution will receive credit for studies that have been pre-approved.
- 1.4 The type of credit to be awarded is determined primarily according to the characteristics of subjects, the requirements of the relevant degree and, to a lesser extent, the preferences of enrolling students.
- 1.5 Credit will only be awarded for approved completed subjects or for approved subjects in which a student has completed "higher level work" and where applicable an exemption examination at the specified satisfactory level of 70% offered by a department as part of an accelerated entry pathway.
- 1.6 The accelerated entry policy sets out the circumstances in which credit will be offered as part of an accelerated entry pathway.
- 1.7 If a subject or subjects completed at another institution are judged not to be equivalent to a complete subject offered at the University of Melbourne, credit will not be awarded for part of that subject.
- 1.8 Notwithstanding the extent of relevant studies completed prior to enrolment in a degree, a student must complete a minimum amount of study at specified year levels as an enrolled student at the University of Melbourne in order to be awarded a degree at this institution. As a result, there is a maximum amount of credit that will be granted for each course or subject level.
- 1.9 Where a first degree is formally nested in a second, the points accumulated in one of the two degrees can be counted towards the requirements of the other degree in the following cases:
 - a. a student transfers from the first degree into the second without completing the first;
 - b. a student enrolls in the second degree within a period that allows them to complete all of the requirements for the second degree as those requirements are specified at the point of enrolment in that degree and within the maximum course duration specified for that degree (see the [Course Duration](#) policy);
 - c. a student enrolls initially in the second degree but exits with the first.

In these cases, the transfer of points from one degree to the other is unlimited¹. In light of the discretion accorded faculties under the Course Duration Policy to approve extensions of the maximum course duration of up to two years, faculties also have the discretion to approve unlimited credit transfer between nested degrees for a period that exceeds the specified maximum course duration for the degree by up to two years.

- 1.10 Evaluation of an application for credit involves consideration of the time elapsed since the completion of the subjects for which credit is being sought. Credit may be refused on the basis that the content of a subject has become out of date, even if it would once have been considered equivalent to a subject offered at this University. Normally credit will not be approved for subjects taken more than ten years prior to admission to the relevant course.
- 1.11 Evaluation of applications for credit are normally based on the assumption that students have retained sufficient knowledge of their previous studies to progress to more advanced studies. Where doubts exist (e.g. for studies completed some time prior to admission) students seeking credit may be required to demonstrate their competence.
- 1.12 Subject to limitations on the amount and type of credit available to an enrolling student, the University may establish agreements with partner institutions (such as Polytechnic institutions) specifying credit that will be awarded to students articulating from certain courses offered at these institutions. An example of such an agreement exists between Australian Group of Eight Universities, which have agreed to acknowledge the equivalent standing of subjects taught at each of these institutions, in order to expedite evaluation of credit for transferring students.

PROCEDURE

1 Types of Credit

- 1.1 Different types of credit can be awarded as follows:
 - a. Specified credit may be awarded for a subject judged to be substantially similar or equivalent to a subject normally taken within the relevant degree. The points awarded shall be equal to the points value of the University of Melbourne subject.
 - b. Subject area credit may be awarded for a subject or subjects judged to be of equivalent standing to subjects offered at the University of Melbourne within a particular subject area, where no specified equivalent subject is available, and where subjects in that area are normally taken within the relevant degree. The number of Credit points shall be determined based on the points value of comparable subjects.
 - c. General or unspecified credit may be awarded for a subject or subjects judged to be of equivalent standing to subjects offered at the University of Melbourne, where no specified equivalent subject, or subject area, is available, and where subjects from any subject area can normally be undertaken within the relevant degree.
- 1.2 Wherever possible specified or subject area credit should be awarded, subject to the provisions of the policies on Accelerated Entry and Special Arrangements for Polytechnic Students. The type of credit finally awarded to each enrolling student will

¹A change will be proposed to Statute 11.1 to reflect this possibility.

be determined with reference to their application, the requirements of the degree in which they are enrolling and to the following details pertaining to the subject(s) in question:

- a. Content; and
- b. Assessment requirements; and
- c. Contact hours; and
- d. Credit points offered at the teaching institution as a percentage of full-time enrolment.

2. Amount of Credit

- 2.1 In order to be awarded a degree from the University of Melbourne, an enrolled student must satisfactorily complete at least 100 points or not less than half of the points required for that course, whichever is the lesser.
- 2.2 The total amount of Credit available to each enrolling student will vary depending on the length and structure of the degree in which they are enrolling, what subjects they intend taking within the degree, and their past tertiary experience as follows:
 - a. The maximum Credit for graduates towards a three year Bachelors degree is 100 points. Enrolling students may receive a further 100 Credit points up to a maximum of 200 points if, in addition to completing a previous degree, they have also undertaken study that has not been credited towards a completed degree or diploma.
 - b. The maximum Credit for students with incomplete tertiary studies towards a New Generation Bachelors degree is 200 points, which will normally comprise 150 points towards the core component and 50 points towards the breadth component.
 - c. Students enrolling in graduate programs will be expected to complete at least 50% of the points required for the award, or 100 points, whichever is the lesser, except where the programs are nested and the provisions below apply.
 - d. Students transferring from one degree to another in a nested pair may receive unlimited credit from one degree towards the other provided that the course duration limit for the latter degree is not exceeded. The conditions under which unlimited credit may be granted are set out in the following section on credit in the case of nested degrees.
- 2.3 Normally students will not be awarded credit towards a Bachelors degree for subjects offered at third year level as part of the major component of the degree unless the subject(s) are undertaken as part of an approved exchange or study abroad program, or approved cross-institutional study. Students undertaking such programs who wish to count subjects towards the specific requirements of a major must:
 - a. Receive approval for specified credit for the relevant subjects or;
 - b. Where only subject area or general credit has been approved, receive approval for a variation to the requirements of their chosen major to include these subjects.

3. Credit in the case of nested degrees

- 3.1 Where two degrees are formally nested in a sequence and have the same entry requirements, the points accumulated in one degree can be counted towards the requirements of the other degree where they are appropriate to the course requirements of the latter and where the course duration limit of the latter is not exceeded. In this case, there is no limitation on the amount of credit that may be awarded.

- 3.2 Specifically, where a first degree is formally nested in a second, the points accumulated in one of the two degrees can be counted towards the requirements of the other degree in the following cases:
- a. a student transfers from the first degree into the second without completing the first;
 - b. a student enrolls in the second degree within a period that allows them to complete all of the requirements for the second degree at the point of enrolment in that degree within the maximum course duration specified for that degree (see the [Course Duration](#) policy);
 - c. a student enrolls initially in the second degree but exits with the first.
- In these cases, the transfer of points from one degree to the other is unlimited. Faculties also have the discretion to approve unlimited credit transfer between nested degrees for a period that exceeds the specified maximum course duration for the degree by up to two years.
- 3.3 In the case of a nested sequence of more than two degrees (eg postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma and a masters degree), the transfer of credit between the first and third degree in the sequence is dealt with by applying the provisions of this policy for the first and second degrees in the sequence and to the second and third degrees in the sequence. For example, a student who has completed all or part of a postgraduate certificate may receive unlimited credit subject to the provisions of this policy towards a postgraduate diploma in which it is nested, and may also receive unlimited credit subject to the policy for part or full completion of the postgraduate diploma towards a masters degree in which it is nested.

4. Credit for different types of learning

- 4.1 Credit will normally only be awarded for completed tertiary studies judged to be of equivalent standing to that offered in the degree in which a student is enrolling. Recognised exceptions to this policy are set out in the policy on Accelerated Entry. Credit may be awarded for studies undertaken at the University of Melbourne through non-award programs, including the University of Melbourne Extension Program.
- 4.2 Credit will normally only be awarded towards graduate degrees for undergraduate study for foundational subjects in a graduate program of more than 200 points that are not part of the final 200 points of the program. Discretion may be permitted where students have undertaken 400 level subject(s) as part of their Bachelors degree and are subsequently admitted to a relevant postgraduate diploma.
- 4.3 Credit is not normally awarded for:
- a. TAFE study from below the level of associate diploma.
 - b. Work experience or project work, except where recognised in the selection criteria for graduate programs.
 - c. Failed or incomplete subjects (including those where a student has subsequently received a conceded or compensatory pass).
- 4.4 Exceptions to this are possible in some associate degree programs.

5. Credit information for prospective students

- 5.1 Subject to the availability of relevant data prospective students should be able to determine, prior to application for a place in a coursework degree, the amount of credit they would likely receive towards that degree based on previous tertiary study completed. Once offered a place they would be eligible to apply for a detailed assessment of their eligibility for credit, including type and amount.

6. Application

- 6.1 It is recommended that enrolling students apply for credit at the commencement of their enrolment in the degree because the amount and type of credit awarded will determine their course plan. Enrolling students can apply for credit at any time while they are enrolled in the degree for which they are seeking credit, however they will not be permitted to rescind points for subjects already undertaken at the University of Melbourne within that degree.
- 6.2 The following enrolling students need not provide any further information about previous studies undertaken at the University of Melbourne, other than that contained in their application for selection into the relevant course, as credit will automatically be evaluated:
- a. Students who have previously been enrolled at the University of Melbourne.
 - b. Students who have transferred into their degree from a relevant course offered at one of the partner institutions with which the University has a prior agreement about credit arrangements. These students will have submitted the required details as part of their application for a place in the degree.
- Such students will receive formal notification of the amount and type of credit awarded and will have the opportunity to decline credit (see section 9: 'Declining credit' below).
- 6.3 Enrolling students, having disclosed details of their previous studies undertaken at other institutions as part of their application for admission to the course, will be provided with information about finalising the amount and type of credit to be awarded at the same time as their offer is made.
- 6.4 Enrolling students seeking credit for previous studies should submit the necessary documentation to the student centre responsible for the administration of their degree.
- 6.5 A designated officer will coordinate the evaluation of each application and communicate with the student about this process.
- 6.6 The student will receive formal notification of the outcome of their Credit application with advice about their course plan accounting for the Credit they have received, as well as information about how to decline the Credit they have been offered. They will be invited to speak to a Student adviser from the relevant student centre if they have any questions or concerns about the information provided.
- 6.7 Credit will be recorded on the student system and in the relevant student file.

7. Determination of Credit

- 7.1 Applications for specified credit are evaluated and determined by academic staff.
- 7.2 Applications for subject area or general credit may be evaluated within established parameters by appropriate professional staff in student centres or by academic staff, if the relevant officer has concerns about whether or not credit should be awarded.

8. Credit Record

- 8.1 Student centres will record credit decisions for a subject from a particular institution in a particular year and semester in a credit register. This database is intended to store all relevant details of subjects for which credit has or has not been awarded. The purpose of the credit register is to expedite the consideration of subsequent credit applications.

9. Declining Credit

- 9.1 Students do not have to accept any or all of the credit they are offered; however, should they decide to decline credit, they must submit a 'Declining of credit' form (details provided with application outcome) to the relevant student centre. This must be done within the first two weeks of the commencing semester, or within two weeks following the offer of credit. Once credit has been declined students will not normally be entitled to re-apply for these points to be counted towards their degree.

10. Rescinding Credit

- 10.1 A student who has accepted credit at the commencement of their degree may, at any time, apply to rescind part or all of this credit by submitting a 'Request to Rescind Credit' form to the relevant student centre. Applications to rescind credit will only be approved for sound academic reasons (e.g. the student wishes to change direction in their degree or undertake an approved exchange or study abroad program). Once credit has been rescinded, students will not automatically be re-granted that credit.

11. Other Credit issues

11.1 Credit for Diplomates and Associate Degrees

- 11.1.1 Enrolling students who have completed a two year University level diploma or associate degree can receive up to a maximum of 200 points of credit (normally comprising a maximum of 150 points towards the core component and a maximum of 50 points towards the breadth component) towards a Bachelors degree. The amount of credit awarded will depend on the degree structure and the subjects the student intends taking in the degree.

11.2 Students resuming a degree following a previous discontinuation or termination.

- 11.2.1 Subject to any changes to the course requirements, these students will not need to apply for Credit for points accumulated at the University of Melbourne. Such students will receive an offer of credit and can negotiate the details with the designated officer in the relevant Student Centre. Resuming students need to be aware that they may not be permitted to retain credit for subjects completed if the content of those subjects has become out of date.
- 11.2.2 If students have completed additional subjects following their discontinuation/termination (e.g. CAP subjects undertaken to demonstrate academic rehabilitation) they will need to apply to have these subjects credited towards their degree. Credit for these subjects will not automatically be approved.

11.3 Students undertaking exchange or study abroad

- 11.3.1 Bachelors degree students undertaking exchange study with the University of Melbourne's Melbourne Abroad program, or study abroad with the approval of the relevant student centre are permitted to receive subject area or general credit for level 3 subjects. Such students may also receive specified credit for level 3 subjects towards the core component of the degree.

11.4 Cross-institutional study (also known as Complementary Course Study)

- 11.4.1 Subject to overall limits on the amount of credit that can be awarded towards a particular degree, students enrolled in a Bachelors degree may be

permitted to undertake up to 50 points at another institution. This is known as cross-institutional study. Students will not normally be permitted to enrol on a cross-institutional basis in any subject where it would be possible for them to undertake an equivalent subject at the University of Melbourne. Discretion to vary either the maximum number of points or the subjects undertaken may be possible on personal or compassionate grounds.

11.5 Additional degree enrolment

11.5.1 A student who:

- a. transfers from one Bachelors degree ('the first degree') to another ('the second degree'); and
 - b. receives credit towards the second degree for studies completed whilst enrolled in the first degree; and
 - c. completes the second degree; and
 - d. resumes the first degree;
- will only be allowed a maximum of 100 points of cross-credit towards the two degrees.

11.6 Study whilst deferred, on leave or enrolled in a degree

- 11.6.1 Students will not normally be given credit for study undertaken whilst deferred or on leave from their University of Melbourne degree. Credit for study completed whilst enrolled in a degree at the University of Melbourne will normally only be given for approved exchange, study abroad or complementary course enrolments.

12. Process of Application

12.1 Discretion to vary the application of this policy shall be permitted as follows:

- a. Academic staff:
 - i. will have discretion in relation to the award of all types of credit as this policy applies, as these determinations involve academic judgement.
- b. Credit Officers:
 - i. coordinate the entire process of awarding credit and have a responsibility to ensure a consistent approach to the evaluation of applications. They may do this by negotiation with all other staff involved in the process.
 - ii. will be required to refer applications for subject area or general credit to appropriate academic staff where there is no established agreement or precedent dictating whether or not such credit should be awarded.
 - iii. Will have discretion to refer questions that fall outside the parameters of this policy to the Manager of the relevant student centre or the Academic head of the relevant degree for final determination.
 - iv. May, by negotiation with enrolling students and academic staff, vary the total amount of credit to be awarded to each student within established maximum limits.
- c. Managers of Student Centres:
 - i. will have the same discretion as Credit officers; and
 - ii. will have discretion to endorse or override decisions taken by Credit officers.
- d. Following consultation with staff involved in the initial evaluation of the application, the Academic head of the relevant degree:
 - i. will have discretion to make and endorse decisions about questions on which this policy is silent or unclear. Such decisions should be reported to appropriate University committees and precedents recorded in a manner accessible to students and staff; and
 - ii. will have discretion to override decisions taken by other staff.

13. Appeals

- 13.1 Students will be advised of their right of appeal, and appeals will be dealt with according to the Student Grievance Policy.
- 13.2 Students may appeal any decision except academic judgement.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1 Policy Owner

- 1.1 The Academic Board is the policy owner.

VERSION CONTROL & CHANGE HISTORY

Version No	Approval Date	Approved By	Amendment
1	2007	Academic Board	—
2	31/07/2007	Academic Board	
3	27/08/2009	Academic Board	Name change, from 'Advanced Standing (also known as Credit) to 'Credit (also known as Advanced Standing)'; rewriting of policy statement to the effect that where credit can be awarded, it should be awarded; removal of restriction on credit associated with Statute 11.1.9 – Limitation on Granting of Credit in the case of nested degrees; recognition of accelerated entry for the purposes of credit in cases specified in the Policy on Accelerated Entry; and recording of credit decisions.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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RELATED MATERIALS

[Special Credit & Admission Arrangements for Polytechnic Students](#)

POLICY LIBRARY REQUIREMENTS

Category	Academic
Key Words	credit, advanced standing, admission