

Credit Transfer and Advanced Standing Policy and Procedures

Purpose

This Policy sets out the principles that govern how the Sydney International School of Technology and Commerce (SISTC) grants academic credit and provides recognition of Advanced Standing. It includes procedures on applying for credit and Advanced Standing for both domestic and international students in accordance with the requirements of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) Standards.

Definitions

Census Date; the official deadline for finalising student's enrolment and fees for each teaching period (as published on the SISTC website).

Credit transfer: A process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for completed components of a course of study based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched courses of study (based on TEQSA definition).

Block credit: is credit granted towards whole stages or components of a course.

Specified credit: is credit granted towards a particular (specific) unit or units within a course.

Unspecified credit: is credit granted towards elective unit or units within a course.

Advanced Standing: A process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual's application for credit (based on TEQSA definition).

Nested course: a course of study leading to a higher education award that includes articulation arrangements from a lower level education award to a higher level education award to enable multiple entry and exit points. A nested course may include a shorter course within a longer course within the same discipline, both at the same AQF level.

Principles

SISTC aims to be equitable and evidence driven and to provide a transparent process for determining an appropriate amount of Advanced Standing credit for each student. In doing so, SISTC adheres to the aims of the Australian Qualifications Framework *Qualifications Pathways Policy*, that is, to:

- enhance student progression into and between AQF qualifications;
- recognise the multiple pathways that students take to gain AQF qualifications and that learning can be formal, non-formal or informal; and
- support the development of pathways in qualifications design.

Policy Statement

SISTC has an equitable, evidence-driven and transparent process for determining an appropriate amount of Advanced Standing credit for each student. Details of Advanced Standing are provided to prospective students prior to enrolment as indicated in the *SISTC Admissions and Enrolment Policy*. Consistent with the process, Advanced Standing will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis on the merits of the case put forward by the student. Educational judgments concerning equivalence of learning outcomes are based on the discipline context, content, standards and assessment in the program or course the applicant has undertaken. Key considerations for decisions are that the integrity of SISTC's Courses is upheld and that students have the ability to complete courses with no disadvantage in achieving outcomes.

General credit arrangements are specified in the course rules when a course is proposed or formally revised and maintained on the course record. Assessment of Advanced Standing must be clearly documented and submitted in the course revision process.

Specified credit for Advanced Standing may be granted on successful completion of the prior learning in relevant disciplines to achieve learning outcomes that are substantially equivalent to SISTC's relevant unit(s) or nested course(s).

Unspecified credit or block credit may be granted where prior learning is regarded as consistent with the broad learning outcomes of units or the course being undertaken. The unspecified credit will be restricted to non-core components of a course.

The maximum credit granted in recognition of prior learning achieved in an incomplete course is 50 percent of the total credit points of a SISTC course.

The maximum credit granted in recognition of prior learning achieved in a completed course, which does not substantially match any SISTC nested course, is 50 percent of the total credit points of the SISTC course.

Where a completed course substantially matches a SISTC course that is an equivalent course, credit granted in recognition of prior learning achieved shall be the full credit point value of SISTC's equivalent course. AQF level 5 and 6 awards will be recognised as such without distinguishing whether they are obtained from a university, higher education, or VET provider. AQF Level 8 and 9 awards will be recognised as such without distinguishing whether they are obtained from a university, or higher education provider.

Prior learning that has been completed within the last five years for undergraduate courses and three years for postgraduate courses will generally be considered current learning for the purpose of assessing Advanced Standing. Exceptions to the time period may be approved in individual cases by the Academic Dean.

All Advanced Standing applications shall close by the Census Date of each teaching period with respect to any application for granting of credit in the same teaching period. Extension may be approved in individual cases.

A student must formally apply for Advanced Standing to be granted unless:

- formal articulation arrangements have been established; or
- the student is transferring internally between SISTC nested courses.

Procedures

1. CREDIT TRANSFER

Credit transfer will be approved for successful and certified completion of a unit delivered by another educational institution/ work experience where that unit is equivalent to a SISTC unit in:

- learning outcomes;
- the volume of learning;
- assessment;
- content.

2. ADVANCED STANDING

Credit will be granted for previous learning where this has been assessed as equivalent in:

- learning outcomes;
- the volume of learning;
- assessment;
- content.

3. BLOCK CREDIT

Credit for a block of SISTC units may be granted where it can be shown that a combination of units from another institution and/or previous learning and/or work experience is equivalent *in total* to the block of SISTC units, even if exact unit-to-unit correspondence does not apply.

4. ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

SISTC may establish articulation agreements with other institutions in the future such that credit transfer is guaranteed.

5. APPLICATION PROCESS

Students should apply for credit transfer or recognition of prior learning at least twenty business days (excluding weekends and public holidays) before the beginning of a teaching period. Forms for Advanced Standing applications are included in Appendix A and B to this Policy. Forms must include a student declaration that the information supplied in the application is accurate and that the application is bound by the relevant legislation and SISTC's policies and procedures.

6. ASSESSMENT OF ADVANCED STANDING

The Academic Dean or Associate Dean, Academic Programs provides Unit Coordinators with clear, documented processes for assessing the equivalence of a student's prior learning with the outcomes of the course. Assessment of Advanced Standing requires judgement about:

- the type of Advanced Standing granted (i.e. admission, credit, exemption).
- whether the prior learning meets the admission criteria specified for the course.
- how accurately the prior learning demonstrated in the application matches the learning outcomes of the SISTC course or units.

This may involve assessment of:

- unit requirements;
- unit learning outcomes;
- content;
- assessment;
- contact hours; and
- professional placement hours.
- Work Experience Details

Assessment will be based on:

- precedence: approved, administered and recorded subject to relevant School policies and procedures.
- individual assessment of record of prior study or portfolio of evidence.

For students applying for post graduate courses this assessment may also include written submission from the applicant's employer and/or personal statement, written examination, and/or interview with the Academic Dean.

Advanced Standing assessment methods will:

- address the specific evidence required to demonstrate prior achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment requirements of the particular qualification for which credit is sought;
- provide a range of ways for individuals to demonstrate that they have met the required outcomes; and;
- be in accordance with the framework set by existing SISTC policies and procedures.

Advanced Standing applications are assessed by the Academic Dean, Associate Dean, Academic Programs, or delegate, and decisions notified in writing to the student within ten business days (excluding weekends and public holidays).

When approved, an application for Advanced Standing will be recorded in the Advanced Standing Register and on the student record for an enrolled student. If the approval results in a change of course duration then details will be recorded in PRISMS. Where a precedent, rule or an articulation or credit transfer agreement has been approved, the Academic Registrar may undertake the assessment and processing of Advanced Standing for formal learning for credit and notify the student in writing of the decisions made.

7. APPEALS PROCESS

Where a student believes that their application for credit or recognition of prior learning has been rejected in error, they make an application in the first instance under the provisions of the *SISTC Student Complaints, Appeals and Grievances Policy and Procedures*. The Appeal may also subsequently be considered under the *SISTC Review of Grades and Academic Appeals Policy*.

An applicant to SISTC or an enrolled student may appeal the decision by forwarding a written notice of appeal to the Academic Dean or nominee, normally within ten business working days of receiving the decision. The notice of appeal must state the grounds on which the applicant or student is seeking the appeal.

An appeal will normally be based on the following grounds:

- procedural irregularity; and/or;
- new evidence.

The Academic Dean (or nominee) will consider the appeal and may consult with any relevant academic staff. The appellant may also be consulted. The normal timeframe for assessing an appeal will be within ten working days of the receipt of the appeal.

Monitoring and Review

The *SISTC Compliance, Quality Assurance and Review Strategy and Plan* shows how SISTC continuously monitors the application of this Policy to achieve ongoing regulatory compliance and process improvement.

Relevant Legislation and Standards

Australian Qualifications Framework

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Domain 1

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

Standard 2: Recruitment of an Overseas Student

Key Related Documents

SISTC Compliance, Quality Assurance and Review Strategy and Plan

SISTC Admissions and Enrolment Policy and Procedures

SISTC Student Complaints, Appeals and Grievances Policy and Procedures

SISTC Student Recruitment Information Policy

SISTC Review of Grades and Academic Appeals Policy

Notes

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| Responsible Officer | Chair, Academic Board |
| Approval Authority /Authorities | Academic Board |
| Date Approved | 27 July 2017 |
| Date of Commencement | |
| Date for Review | 2023 |
| Documents Superseded by this Policy | None |
| Amendment History | <p>20 September 2018, 31 January 2019; 6 March 2019 (Board of Directors Endorsement) <i>Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy</i></p> <p>V1.0 updated with the SISTC logo July 2020</p> <p>V1.1 title changed to <i>Credit Transfer and Advanced Standing Policy</i> approved by Academic Board 3 June 2020.</p> <p>V1.2 updated with the approved changes to the senior management structure 28 April 2021 and the changes to the HESF 21 1 July 2021</p> <p>V2.0 approved by the Academic Board 15 November 2021 and released to the website after receiving accreditation of the MIT 5 April 2022 and provision of CRICOS Course Codes 28 April 2022</p> |

Appendix A – Advanced Standing Application Form

INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

The *SISTC Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure* (link) recognises previous study or learning that can be counted towards a SISTC qualification. This process can reduce the number of units required to complete an undergraduate or postgraduate course. Different types of study are assessed for equivalency including credential studies and informal (non-credentialed) learning. As a SISTC student, you can apply to have specific units (subjects) credited toward your course (i.e. core subjects or specified electives). You can also apply to have unspecified credit applied to your course (i.e. electives that will appear as “unspecified credit” on your academic transcript). Please refer to the School’s Course Pack when looking for equivalent or unspecified units. Students are required to present evidence to prove that they have demonstrated sufficient knowledge, skills, and or experience to meet both the School’s requirements and the appropriate level of study as stipulated by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

1. Completion of Application

Students must complete the application form (over page) and submit to SISTC, ensuring that they have:

1. Completed the application form and signed the declaration.
 2. Supplied ALL evidence required (see list below).
- Please note: SISTC will not process any application for Advanced Standing until both of the above have been completed and submitted.

2. Evidence Required

Students must provide:

- Copies of subject/unit outlines (information must include: learning outcomes, weekly structure, topic list, assessment details, contact hours/student workload).
- Verified copies of certificates and transcripts (copies to be certified by a Justice of the Peace or originals sighted by a SISTC staff member or approved agent). Documents in a foreign language will need to be officially translated to English.

Students applying on the basis of relevant work experience will need to provide a written reference from their employer detailing the relevant work experiences including currency and how they relate to the post graduate course applied for. Students may also be requested to provide a personal written statement, attend a written assessment or attend an interview with the Academic Dean.

3. Advanced Standing Assessment Process

Applications for undergraduate courses are reviewed by the Associate Dean or nominee. Applications for post-graduate courses are reviewed by the Academic Dean or nominee. The student will be advised in writing of the decision ten working days after the completed application has been submitted and received by SISTC Student Administration.

4. Application Deadline

The latest date to submit this application is at close of business two weeks prior to the first census date after commencement of the course.

5. Application Restrictions

Students can only apply for Advanced Standing within their first year of study at SISTC for units and/or work experience that have already been completed in the past five years for undergraduate courses and three (3) years for post-graduate courses. Students should endeavour to apply for Advanced Standing for courses currently in progress as soon as official academic transcripts are available.

6. Rules for Exemptions

50% rule

Students may obtain specified/unspecified credit for up to 50% of units in a specified SISTC course. In a **course**, unspecified credit may only be granted for two SISTC units and cannot comprise a core or major unit. In a Diploma course, unspecified credit may be granted for one SISTC unit and cannot comprise a core or major unit.

80% content coverage

Evidence of a minimum of 80% coverage of unit content is required for specified credit to be granted.

Exemption for an exemption

Previous study granted as Advanced Standing/Exemption at another institute may not be used for Advanced Standing into a SISTC course. This will be at the discretion of the Academic Dean, Associate Dean or appointed delegate.

Experience and study must be current

Any study cited in an Advanced Standing application must have been completed no more than five years for undergraduate applications and three years for postgraduate prior to the date of application.

Study must be at the equivalent AQF level

Approved study must be at a comparable AQF level.

Examples of approved study

Qualifications from accredited Australian Higher Education institutions or equivalent overseas institutions as assessed by Training Services New South Wales <https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/> in disciplines of

finance, commerce, business, economics, accounting, IT, or a combination of these may be considered.

Professional Recognition

While SISTC makes every effort to ensure that Advanced Standing for units meets the criteria of professional and accrediting bodies, it is up to the discretion of the professional bodies whether to accept the exemptions granted by the SISTC. SISTC encourages all students applying for Advanced Standing to seek advice from the relevant professional bodies prior to applying for Advanced Standing. SISTC is not responsible for the decisions pertaining to Advanced Standing made by professional bodies.

Application for Advanced Standing

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION

| | | | |
|---------------|--|----------------------|--|
| Title | | Student ID | |
| First Name | | Last Name | |
| Date of Birth | | Current SISTC Course | |

2. ADVANCED STANDING

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| I hereby give notice to that I would like to request Advanced Standing for the following unit(s) of study for study/and or work experience undertaken previously. I have included subject/unit descriptors/written reference/personal statement from my employer to support my claim. | |
| Internal Advanced Standing (existing SISTC student) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| External Advanced Standing (new SISTC student) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Written reference from Employer | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Personal Statement | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |

3. SPECIFIED CREDIT

| Institution | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---|
| Number | Unit Code | Unit Name | SISTC Equivalent Unit Code | SISTC Equivalent Name | Date Completed | SISTC Approved |
| 1 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 7 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 8 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 9 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 11 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 12 | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

4. UNSPECIFIED CREDIT

| Institution | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| Number | Unit Code | Unit Name | Date Completed | SISTC Approved |
| 1 | | | | Yes No |
| 2 | | | | |

5. DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

| Select the required documentation to support this application | Checklist |
|---|------------------------------|
| Academic Transcript | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Unit/Subject Outlines | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Course structure if not Australian Institution | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Written statement from employer | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Personal statement | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
|--------------------|------------------------------|

6. STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

| Please read and acknowledge the following statements before signing the application form | | Checklist |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| 1. I have read the instructions provided on this document and supplied all information required | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| 2. I acknowledge that the decision of the Academic Dean, Associate Dean or nominee is final | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| 3. I have accurately and truthfully represented my study/work experience in this application | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| 4. I have kept a copy of this application in its entirety including supporting documentation | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| 5. I have not sent any original documentation but I have submitted certified copies of originals | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| 6. I will not hold SISTC responsible for any lost or damaged documentation provided by me | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| 7. I understand the material sent by me will not be returned, and I agree to abide by relevant SISTC Policies | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Student Signature | | Date |
| Academic Dean/ Associate Dean/Delegate Signature | | Date |

OFFICE USE ONLY

| | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Advanced Standing Approved | | Staffing | |
| This student has been approved Advanced Standing | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | Staff name | |
| This student has not been approved Advanced Standing | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | Staff Signature | |
| This student needs to be called for further assessment and/or interview by the Academic Dean | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | | |
| Student record updated | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | Staff Role | |
| Student notified | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | Date | |