

Advanced Standing Policy and Procedures – Higher Education

1. Scope

This policy is applicable to all students and prospective students applying for Advanced Standing towards the higher education courses at Holmes Institute and the staff who are involved in the assessment and process of the student advanced standing applications.

2. Purpose

The Policy and Procedures:

- 2.1 Ensure that the decision to award credits into or towards a course is based on clearly defined and transparent guidelines that ensure all students are treated equitably and through a process that is academically defensible;
- 2.2 Provide a streamlined framework for the Advanced Standing towards Holmes qualifications, consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF);
- 2.3 Outline the principles and processes in the assessment of pre enrolment and post enrolment Advanced Standing applications;
- 2.4 Ensure that no student who is granted credit for prior learning is disadvantaged in achieving the course learning outcomes; and
- 2.5 Ensure that the integrity of the course and the qualification are not compromised by recognition of prior learning decisions.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Advanced Standing** is recognition of prior learning in terms of experience and/or studies whereby a student is awarded appropriate exemptions for units of study.
- 3.2 **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is defined in the AQF as an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior education, skills and experience to determine entry or credit outcomes.
- 3.3 **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.
- 3.4 **Credit Transfer** is when a student's previous academic work or study is deemed to be equivalent to a unit, or course offered by Holmes.
- 3.5 **Articulation Agreements** are predetermined credit arrangements towards Holmes programs that apply within relevant Holmes programs and between Holmes and other, specified education providers.
- 3.6 **Block Credit** is credit granted towards a whole stage or component of a qualification.

Block credit is normally considered to fulfil progression requirements for a stage of a program.

- 3.7 **Specified Credit** is credit granted towards core and/or specific components of a qualification. At Holmes, specified credit is given for a specific unit.
- 3.8 **Exemption** is a general term used to describe all types of credit.
- 3.9 **Unspecified Credit** is general credit granted towards elective units or components within a qualification. Only the credit point value and level of the unit credited are identified on the student's transcript.

4. Policy Statements

Advanced Standing aims to:

- 4.1 Ensure the academic integrity and standards of Holmes' qualifications are safeguarded;
- 4.2 Ensure that Advanced Standing is only granted if previous studies demonstrate that the Unit Learning Outcomes have already been achieved;
- 4.3 Ensure that students granted Advanced Standing are not disadvantaged in achieving the Course Learning Outcomes of the relevant course of study at Holmes;
- 4.4 Negate the need for a student to retake a unit for which they can demonstrate satisfactory achievement of the required competency or learning outcome for entry into, and/or partial completion of a qualification; and
- 4.5 Facilitate the movement of students between education providers and between various programs of study.

5. Policy Principles

- 5.1 Students can attain learning experiences relevant to their study at Holmes through formal, non- formal and informal experiences, such as through previous study, training, work experience and life experience.
- 5.2 Advanced Standing is granted for units of study at Holmes only when the student can demonstrate that all of the Unit Learning Outcomes have already been achieved.
- 5.3 Students who possess relevant prior learning may apply for Advanced Standing by submitting evidence of their prior learning for assessment.
- 5.4 All Advanced Standing decisions are considered on a case by case basis with due regard to the student's prior learning.
- 5.5 Assessment of prior learning is undertaken and Advanced Standing decisions are made by appropriately qualified staff.
- 5.6 Students providing evidence of formal studies as evidence for an Advanced Standing application must have achieved a pass grade in the relevant unit for the evidence to be accepted.
- 5.7 Holmes does not guarantee the transferability of credit granted by other educational institutions. A new Advanced Standing application must be made for credit to be granted at Holmes.
- 5.8 Holmes will grant credit or admission to a student where a student's prior learning experiences are assessed as equivalent to the AQF level, content and learning outcomes

- of a Holmes unit or pre-requisites for the proposed course of study, respectively.
- 5.9 Credit will not be granted for any unit which has been previously attempted at Holmes.
 - 5.10 Students and prospective students have the right not to accept an offer of an exemption, but they may not subsequently re-apply for exemption for that unit after the offer of exemption has been rejected.
 - 5.11 Applications for Advanced Standing must be submitted prior to commencement of any unit for which exemption is being sought.
 - 5.12 Credit will generally not be awarded for studies completed more than 10 years prior to the date of application.
 - 5.13 Holmes Institute will not grant partial credit for a unit.
 - 5.14 Holmes does not charge a fee for application or approval of advanced standing.
 - 5.15 Credit is not normally awarded for studies undertaken at overseas institutions. However, prospective students may apply for an assessment should they want an Advanced Standing assessment undertaken (refer to the Procedures section, for more information about how to apply).
 - 5.16 Qualifications from overseas institutions are assessed according to the Department of Education and Training's guidelines (via Country Education Profiles (CEP) online tool) and contemporary knowledge of conditions in particular countries and institutions.
 - 5.17 Holmes will not grant Advanced Standing where the grant of credit will disadvantage the student in future study or where credit will jeopardise the academic integrity or credibility of a Holmes qualification. To this end the maximum number of units that Holmes will award as advanced standing is one half (50%) of the total number of units required to satisfy completion of the course, unless specifically authorised by the Academic Board or delegate.
 - 5.18 In limited circumstances, the Academic Board or delegate can waive the credit limits listed above. These circumstances include, but are not limited to, where:
 - a) There is a formal articulation arrangement between Holmes and another provider;
 - b) Credit transfer between Holmes courses in similar disciplines;
 - c) In the case of transitional arrangements due to a merger or acquisition;
 - d) Where another provider closes or stops delivering a program of study and Holmes agrees to teach those students to completion;
 - e) Where Holmes is teaching out students from a provider under the terms of an Agreement.

6. Holmes Institute Articulation Arrangements

- 6.1 The following outlines current Advanced Standing and articulation arrangements at Holmes. The articulation arrangements outline the maximum credit applicable for each Holmes degree.
- 6.2 Students in possession of a qualification awarded by Holmes or a similar qualification awarded under the AQF are eligible for credit as outlined below.

- a) Credits awarded for a Diploma (AQF level 5) to Bachelor Degree (AQF Level 7):
Up to 8 credits (units) can be awarded towards a Holmes Institute Bachelor degree, where previous learning demonstrates equivalency to Holmes units and courses.
- b) Credits awarded for an Advanced Diploma (AQF level 6) to Bachelor Degree (AQF level 7):
Up to 12 credits (units) can be awarded towards a Holmes Institute Bachelor degree, where previous learning demonstrates equivalency to Holmes courses.
- c) Credits awarded towards a Graduate Degree:
Students who have completed units in a similar qualification awarded under the AQF related to the course the student wishes to enrol in at Holmes, may be eligible to apply for credit.

7. Procedures

- 7.1 Holmes will maintain a Precedents List which will contain a record of previous decisions made in relation to the equivalence of individual units at other education providers to units at Holmes. It will be supported by detailed records showing the mapping of learning outcomes which support the decision.
- 7.2 Holmes will refer to the equivalence list of units at various education providers which is made publicly available by CPA Australia and/or the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand and/or any other relevant professional body for units which lead to professional recognition by those bodies.
- 7.3 Advanced standing decisions for units which are neither on the Precedents List nor listed by CPA Australia will be made by the Dean, Academic. Records of learning outcome mapping will be retained by the Dean, Academic to justify the decision that has been made. These decisions will then be added to the Precedents List and the mapping recorded.
- 7.4 The Dean Academic oversees the centralised Credit Assessment Team (CAT) who administer the credit assessment process.
- 7.5 Advanced standing will only be granted if previous studies or informal learning clearly demonstrate that the learning outcomes of the unit and the course have already been achieved.
- 7.6 Application for advanced standing must be made by prospective students upon course application and by current students through the submission of the program specific Application for Advanced Standing.
- 7.7 A student seeking advanced standing must provide copies of qualifications, a statement of attainment and/or results. In the event that the relevant unit is not on the Precedents List or the CPA equivalence list, Holmes may require evidence including, but not limited to:
 - a) A copy of Unit Guide or Unit Outline from the education provider;
 - b) A Statement of Results confirming the grade received for the unit; and
 - c) A Testamur if the course has been completed.
- 7.8 Holmes reserves the right to request further information from applicants to support their application.
- 7.9 Where an application is based on professional experience, applicants will be required to demonstrate attainment of learning outcomes or the relevant units of competency by:

- a) Identifying the units they wish to be assessed for; and
- b) Demonstrating how they address the learning outcomes of the unit or course by:
- c) Providing a portfolio of work; and/or
- d) Providing work references; and/or
- e) Providing a Curriculum Vitae; and/or
- f) Completing an assessment task set by the Dean, Academic; and/or
- g) Providing any other evidence requested by the Dean, Academic.

7.10 Equivalence of content and learning outcomes is measured by:

- a) In the case of previous formal learning, a comparison of the AQF level, volume, depth and breadth of content and assessment requirements between the previous successfully completed component of study and the Holmes Institute unit;
- b) In the case of previous informal and non-formal learning, an evidence-based assessment between the previous learning experiences and the relevant Holmes Institute unit or Holmes entry requirement.

7.11 Holmes will endeavour to consider relevant matters such as professional accreditation requirements in assessing an Advanced Standing application. Applicants are however responsible for ensuring that their Advanced Standing application does not jeopardise future professional accreditation outcomes.

7.12 Holmes will endeavour to advise students where a credit may negatively impact professional accreditation.

7.13 Credit outcomes are expressed as block credit, specified credit or unspecified credit, as appropriate.

7.14 When making Advanced Standing decisions, Holmes Institute will seek to allocate specified credit where possible.

7.15 For partially completed previous study, credit may be awarded on a pro-rata basis, that is, according to the percentage of the award completed. Credit is only awarded for a total unit, no partial credit will be awarded.

7.16 Where credit is granted, the applicant's record will be updated with granted credit noted against relevant units. Credit transfer reduces the number of units required to complete an award.

7.17 Where the grant of the credit exemption reduces the student's course duration, Holmes will inform the student of the reduced course duration and issue a CoE for the reduced duration of the course.

7.18 Where Credit is granted after visa issue, Holmes will report the change of program duration to the Australian Government via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) system.

7.19 The grant of credit does not allow an overseas student to study less than a full-time load of study except when no unit is available for a student to study in a given trimester.

7.20 The student will be informed in writing of the reduced course duration and the adjustment to the Confirmation of Enrolment.

7.21 Advanced Standing applicants or their representatives will be provided, generally within ten (10) working days of a completed application being received, a written record of the outcome of the application for the student to accept and return to Holmes. It is the

responsibility of the student to check the outcome of their application and inform Holmes of any errors or anomalies as soon as possible and to retain a record of the outcome.

- 7.22 A student who has been provided with Advanced Standing is obliged to provide written acceptance of the Advanced Standing. The student’s acceptance is required either by returning a signed offer letter where credit is assessed and granted prior to enrolment or by returning a signed Advanced Standing Form.
- 7.23 Where Advanced Standing is denied the applicant will be notified of the outcome in writing including a reason for refusal.
- 7.24 If the student proceeds to enrol at Holmes, Advanced Standing documentation will be kept in the student’s file for at least two years after the student ceases to be an accepted student. Advanced Standing documentation for students who do not enrol at Holmes will be kept for a reasonable time and then destroyed.
- 7.25 Documentation to be retained by Holmes will include:
- a) Advanced Standing application;
 - b) Documentation provided with the application;
 - c) Assessment of the application;
 - d) Written notification to the student; and,
 - e) The acceptance by the student
- 7.26 Where an Advanced Standing applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may seek a review of the decision utilising the Holmes Institute Complaints and Appeals process.

8. Withdrawal of Credit

- 8.1 Holmes Institute 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 or invalid. Holmes takes no responsibility for any additional fees which may be incurred by a student in this situation.
- 8.2 A withdrawal of credit must be approved by the Dean, Academic. However, where a change is made to a provision of this policy, or where a precedent or articulation is reviewed and changed, credit already granted will not be withdrawn.

Version Control and Accountable Officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this policy.

Responsible Officer	Dean, Academic
Implementation Officers	Dean, Academic in liaison with Credit Assessment Team, Admissions Manager and Academic staff
Review Date	June 2023
Approved by	Academic Board
Associated Documents	Admission Requirements Policy and Procedures Application for Advanced Standing forms

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure			
Version	Brief Description of the Changes	Date Approved	Effective Date
1.1	Policy and Procedures unbundled from Policy Manual for publication on web	10 September 2018	10 September 2018
1.2	Policy amended to better reflect Holmes administrative practices	3 April 2019	3 April 2019
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy amended to change name from Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures to Advanced Standing Policy • Refined the advanced standing assessment and processing procedure • Removed fee for assessment 	10 July 2020	10 July 2020