

School of Physiotherapy

The University of Melbourne

Credit / Exemption / Advanced Standing Policy for Postgraduate Courses

This policy should be read in conjunction with University Council Statutes 5.4.4 and 5.4.5 and is not intended in anyway as a substitute for Council approved Statutes, and should be read in whole as the credit/exemption policy for postgraduate courses of the School of Physiotherapy. The principles contained herein relating to 'Academic Levels' (point 9) are those articulated as a result of the Academic Board's Masters by Coursework Review process (2003).

1. Background

This credit policy outlines the principles that apply to students seeking credit for subject(s) in one of the School of Physiotherapy's postgraduate courses. The School of Physiotherapy determines eligibility for credit only after selection into a course. Students are required to apply formally in writing and provide detailed information (eg. subject descriptions, course content, subject outlines, etc - see Table 1) to enable the School to assess their credit status.

2. Entry Requirements

All applicants are required to meet the formal entry requirements of courses before they will be allowed to enrol, and before any credit can be awarded.

3. Definition of Credit

Credit may be awarded for subjects within a postgraduate program on the basis of the prior completion of subjects within the parameters of this policy. Credit should not be confused with 'advanced standing' (see point 5) which is currently available to students entering, for example, the Doctor of Clinical Physiotherapy, and is governed by the selection regulations of that course.

Credit refers to the approved accreditation of subjects (specified or unspecified), with associated credit points, toward a degree/program of study (eg. the Master of Physiotherapy by Coursework), on the basis of approved recognised prior studies (at an equivalent level) that reduces the amount of credit points required for the completion of the current course to which the student has been admitted and for which the credit applies (ie. usually it reduces the length of a course by the amount of credit points accredited).

4. Definition of Exemption

An exemption refers to the waiving of a particular subject on the basis of a student having completed an equivalent subject in an award course which has been successfully completed. This means that the student does not need to do that particular subject(s) and must complete an alternative approved subject. The awarding of exemption(s) does not decrease the points value or length of a course. The subject must be of the same academic level (see point 9), and deemed equivalent by the course coordinator.

5. Definition of Advanced Standing

Advanced Standing can reduce the length of the total course and/or may entitle the student to enter the course at an advanced level. Advanced Standing is part of the selection process for entry into a course. Advanced standing may be made on the basis of approved studies or recognised work experience normally within the past 10 years. At the time of selection, the PG Selection committee will consider the previous studies / work experience undertaken by the applicant and determine the appropriateness of granting any advanced standing.

6. Time Limitation

Credit is not normally granted for studies undertaken more than 5 years prior to the year of admission to a School of Physiotherapy postgraduate course. Advanced standing may be made on the basis of approved studies or recognised work experience normally within the past 10 years.

7. Status of Creditable Subjects

These principles apply to prior study undertaken within the University of Melbourne and at other recognised equivalent tertiary institutions.

(a) Credit will not be granted for subjects which are already credited towards an award course that the student has completed (as defined under point 8).

(b) Credit will not be granted for subjects which have been completed at a different academic level to the subjects for which credit is sought (see point 9).

(c) Credit will not be granted for research reports, research project subjects or theses.

8. Definition of a 'Completed Course'

A 'completed course' is defined by that point in time when final results for all the required subjects of a course are released to a student who has been enrolled in that course, and the student is deemed to have 'completed' all course requirements of that course and/or the student has 'graduated' and been awarded the course.

9. Academic Levels

Credit cannot be transferred between levels. For example, students may not gain credit for a 300 level subject towards a 400 or 500 level subject course. A masters degree must contain at least 100 points of masters (500) level subjects. Subjects completed at another recognised tertiary institution for which credit/exemption is sought, shall be assessed at the appropriate level.

10. Maximum Amount of Credit

The University of Melbourne statute states that a student will not normally be granted more than 50% credit towards the coursework component of the course in which a student enrolls [see Statute 11.1.11 (3)]. Students will **not** be granted credit for research reports, minor theses subjects or research project subjects.

11. Credit for Community Access Subjects

Students may be entitled to receive credit for successfully completed CAP subject(s) in an award course providing that:

- The student meets the entry requirements of the award course and is admitted;
- The subject is a recognised part of the award course, and was undertaken at the appropriate academic level, normally within the past 5 years.

12. Internal Transfer Between Courses

Notwithstanding maximum credit restrictions (point 10), students seeking to transfer between two postgraduate courses offered at the same level in the School of Physiotherapy may be awarded 100% credit for all successfully completed subjects from course A to course B (not including research reports, minor theses subjects or research project subjects), provided that:

- The student meets the entry requirements of course B and is admitted
- That the subject is a compulsory or recognised part of course B and was undertaken at the appropriate academic level

Notwithstanding any other principle as set out in this policy, students cannot transfer subject credits from one partially completed course to another course offered at a different level.

13. Terminating (Conceded or Compensatory) Passes

The School of Physiotherapy will not award credit for subjects in which a student has received a terminating (conceded or compensatory) pass (ie. the student failed the subject but was granted a full pass in terms of credit points).

14. When is Credit Determined?

Credit is formally calculated once a student has been admitted to a School of Physiotherapy course.

15. How to Apply for Credit and Exemptions

An "Application for Credit/Exemption" form is available from the School of Physiotherapy website: <http://www.physioth.unimelb.edu.au/resources/pgrad/cswk.html>. The application for Credit may be made at any time, however it will only be considered once the applicant has been selected into the course.

Before submitting the application students should:

- Read this policy document carefully to ensure that the request falls within the guidelines of the School of Physiotherapy Credit/Exemption Policy;
- Attach all necessary information, as specified in Table 1 below;
- Attach a certified academic transcript of the subjects for which they are seeking credit, as well as a key to grades awarded on the transcript.

16. Information Required for the Evaluation of Credit

Students are required to provide the information listed in Table 1: Information Required for Assessment of Credit/Exemption Applications (below) for each subject they have completed for which they would like the credit status to be determined.

Table 1: Information Required for Assessment of Credit/Exemption Applications

- a) Total contact hours, with lectures, practicals and tutorial hours clearly specified (contact hours for each week and the number of contact weeks)
- b) Level of the subject at the institution where it is taught (eg. is it a first, second, or third year subject?)
- c) Content of the subject (a weekly syllabus, in addition to the Handbook extract, would be extremely useful)
- d) Credit points awarded for the completion of the subject at the institution where it is taught
- e) Information about the structure of the course in which the student was enrolled. In particular, information about the total number of points that a student had to complete in order to finish the course.
- f) Assessment requirements

17. Formalisation of Credit

The amount of credit to be awarded for previous studies will be decided by the School of Physiotherapy in accordance with the School's credit policy. Students will be sent a letter advising them of the credit they have been awarded. This letter is generally sent within the semester in which the student applied for credit, in the year in which the student has been admitted to a School of Physiotherapy postgraduate course. The credit that the student has been awarded will also be noted on their University of Melbourne academic record.

18. Accepting Credit

Students do not have to accept any or all of the credit that they are awarded. Students who do not wish to accept all of the credit that they have been awarded must advise the School of this decision in writing prior to the subject census date and within their first year (full-time or part-time) of enrolment.

19. Appeal Procedure

Students may appeal in writing to the School of Physiotherapy Postgraduate Coursework Committee (PGCC) concerning any rejection of an application for credit/exemption. This Committee will make a recommendation to the Head of School.

20. Studies Completed Overseas

The rules relating to the award of credit and exemptions, as outlined in this policy, will apply to studies completed overseas. All students will need to provide the information listed in Table 1: Information Required for Assessment of Credit/Exemption Applications (above). Normally, students whose qualifications are recognized and deemed equivalent and suitable for entry for postgraduate study in Australia by the Commonwealth Government's National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR), Department of Education, Science and Training, are considered to be eligible for credit or exemption. Students whose qualifications fall outside these guidelines may be considered for credit or exemption on a case by case basis.

21. Special Circumstances

Any student who believes that their circumstances are not covered by this policy may make a special written application for credit or exemption to the School of Physiotherapy Postgraduate Coursework Coordinator or Head of School.

22. Complex Credit Issues

Any complex credit issues will be referred to the School of Physiotherapy Postgraduate Coursework Committee.

23. Recording of Credit

A database / record of credit applications will be maintained for standardization purposes.