

## **Governance Institute of Australia**

### **Advanced Standing Policy**

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<b>Summary</b>	This policy provides for the granting of credit for previous studies and recognition of prior learning.
<b>Authoring Department</b>	Education
<b>Contact</b>	General Manager, Education
<b>Applies to</b>	Higher Education
<b>Distribution</b>	External
<b>Related documents</b>	Governance Institute of Australia Admissions Policy Governance Institute of Australia Advanced Standing Guideline Governance Institute of Australia Articulation Pathways Policy Governance Institute of Australia Student Fees Policy Governance Institute of Australia Student Support and Responsibilities Policy
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**Issued under the authority of Governance Institute of Australia Board of Directors**

# **Governance Institute of Australia**

## **Advanced Standing Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

This policy outlines the principles that underpin Governance Institute of Australia's (hereafter referred to as Governance Institute) approach to granting students advanced standing by the granting of credit for prior study and the recognition of prior learning in courses.

### **Aims and Objectives**

1. The policy sets out the requirements for staff and students in relation to applications for advanced standing.

### **Overview**

2. The policy applies to all applications for, and awards of, advanced standing (previously referred to as exemptions), including advanced standing covered by articulation pathway arrangements.

### **Definitions**

3. The following definitions apply for the purpose of this policy.
  - a. Advanced standing: credit, expressed in the form of a specified number of credit points, towards an award course, granted on the basis of previous, successfully completed studies or prior learning.
  - b. Formal learning: completed studies at a recognised University or higher education institution in Australia and recognised international institutions.
  - c. Credentialed learning: courses undertaken within the workplace, professional organisations or registered training organisations, where appropriate certification is available.
  - d. Informal learning: demonstrable skills and learning gained from work experience.

- e. Nested course sequence: an articulated sequence of courses such as Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma.
- f. Equivalent subject: subjects that are considered substantially the same in content and learning outcomes as subjects offered by Governance Institute.
- g. Non-award subjects: subjects offered by Governance Institute that students enrol in independently of one of Governance Institute's award courses. Successful completion of the subject/s results in the attainment of Higher Education Credit
- h. Provisional advanced standing: advanced standing provisionally granted to applicants who are yet to apply for admission to a Governance Institute course. Offers of provisional advanced standing remain valid for a period of one academic year. Offers not taken up within that period will be considered to be expired.
- i. Specified advanced standing: advanced standing granted in the form of individual named subjects against a student's record. Governance Institute may grant specified advanced standing where prior learning is regarded as having satisfied the learning outcomes of a particular subject taught in Governance Institute.
- j. Unspecified advanced standing: advanced standing granted in the form of elective subjects only. Governance Institute may grant unspecified advanced standing where the relevant previous learning is regarded as broadly consistent with the expected outcomes of Governance Institute's course the student intends to take, but where they may not be directly equivalent to the learning outcomes of any specific subject in the course.

## **Procedures**

### **Facilitating Student Pathways**

- 4. Governance Institute aims to ensure that students complete their courses in the shortest time possible, consistent with course requirements and giving formal recognition for any relevant, previously achieved learning.
- 5. The granting of advanced standing for previously achieved learning is an acknowledgement by Governance Institute that students have gained the knowledge, understanding and skills equivalent to the stated learning outcomes of related courses and subjects offered by Governance Institute.

6. Governance Institute recognises that learning takes place in a broad range of contexts - in formal study and in the workplace. The granting of advanced standing for previous learning ensures that students commence study at a level that appropriately recognises that learning and ensures that they are not required to repeat successful learning activities in any Governance Institute course.
  
7. Governance Institute may grant advanced standing on the basis that the knowledge, understanding and skills gained are equivalent to the learning outcomes for the subject on offer. This can be through formal, credentialed, or informal learning, or a combination of these:
  - a. completed studies at a recognised University or higher education institution in Australia and recognised international institutions (formal learning);
  - b. courses undertaken within the workplace, professional organisations or registered training organisations, where appropriate certification is available (credentialed learning);
  - c. demonstrable skills and learning gained from work experience that is relevant to the course being studied (informal learning).

## **Conditions**

8. To protect the integrity of its awards, Governance Institute will only grant advanced standing for, and as, whole subjects.
  
9. Eligibility for advanced standing does not guarantee admission to Governance Institute.
  
10. Offers of provisional advanced standing remain valid for a period of one academic year. After this time the offer of advanced standing expires.
  
11. If a student does not complete the course within the maximum time to complete, any advanced standing granted to the student for the course will be cancelled.

## **Quality Assurance**

12. Governance Institute's Education Committee has responsibility for ensuring the practice of granting advanced standing across Governance Institute is consistent.

13. Governance Institute’s Education Committee may commission comparisons with other Higher Education Providers to ensure that the advanced standing granted by Governance Institute is consistent with practice in the higher education sector.

## **General Information**

14. Advanced standing may be granted either as specified advanced standing or unspecified advanced standing, or as a combination of both.
15. Decisions on applications are made by the Education Department and approved by the General Manager, Education.
16. The General Manager, Education has the option to refer complex advanced standing applications to the Education Committee for resolution.
17. Governance Institute reserves the right to withdraw advanced standing where the documentation provided by the applicant proves to be incomplete, misleading, false or invalid or when an error has been made in assessing or processing the application.
18. If an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their advanced standing application, they may appeal against the decision, in accordance with Clause 39-46.

## **Limits on Advanced Standing - Postgraduate Courses**

19. The maximum advanced standing that can be granted towards a postgraduate course is dependent on the exit point (award):

<b>Exit Point (Award)</b>	<b>Maximum Advanced Standing</b>
Graduate Certificate	20 credits (one-half of overall award) [2 subjects]
Graduate Diploma	20 credits (one-third of overall award) [2 subjects]

20. Governance Institute students, upon completion of a lower level nested award, can apply for transfer to the higher level award. If a student chooses to graduate from a lower level award, they will then need to re-apply for the higher level award. The previously completed subjects within the nested award will be transferred to the higher level award and noted on the academic transcript as Advanced Standing (see Admissions Policy).

21. Certain subjects may not be granted advanced standing, as per the Advanced Standing Guideline.

### **Articulation Pathways**

22. Governance Institute is committed to providing and expanding clear pathways to assist students, who have previously successfully completed studies elsewhere, to enter an appropriate Governance Institute course with the maximum amount of advanced standing warranted by their previous studies. The Articulation Pathways Policy defines the objectives of providing students with clearly articulated pathways between a course at another educational institution and a course at Governance Institute, by means of the award of advanced standing.

### **Time Limits for Currency of Previous Studies**

23. Advanced standing in specified subjects is not normally granted for subjects studied more than 10 years prior to the application for advanced standing/or admission to the course (if later). Where advanced standing is being sought for subjects studied more than 10 years prior to the application for advanced standing/or admission to the course (if later), Governance Institute may assess the currency of an applicant's knowledge. Governance Institute will determine the evidence required.

### **Applying for Advanced Standing - Lodgement of Applications**

24. Applications for advanced standing must be made by the published application closing date using the approved form available on Governance Institute's website.
25. Applications for advanced standing will generally accompany an application for admission into the award course for which the advanced standing applies. Applications from continuing students will also be accepted as necessary.
26. Applications for advanced standing will not be considered for subjects in courses which the student is not eligible to study.

## **Supporting Documentation for Advanced Standing Applications**

27. Where advanced standing is being sought on the grounds of successfully completed studies at a recognised University or higher education institution in Australia and recognised international institutions (formal learning), the applicant must provide:
  - a. a certified copy of the official academic transcript; and
  - b. extracts from institutional handbooks or other official documentation giving sufficient details of the studies to allow an assessment of the application to be made. All supporting documentation must be in English, including certified translations where necessary.
  
28. Where advanced standing is being sought on the grounds of credentialed or informal learning, Governance Institute requires satisfactory evidence that the relevant learning outcomes for the subjects and/or key learning areas have been achieved. The applicant may be required to supply certified copies of statements from employers, present a portfolio, attend an interview or demonstrate their competence through an appropriate form of assessment. The method of assessment will be established by the General Manager, Education in consultation with the Chair, Education Committee, where applicable. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide all certified documentation for assessment at the time of assessment, in consultation with the Education Department.
  
29. Governance Institute reserves the right to check the veracity of any documents lodged with the originating source.

## **Timelines for Applications and Notifications of Advanced Standing**

30. Applications for advanced standing must be submitted by the published application closing date, two weeks prior to census. Students are encouraged to submit their application prior to commencing their first teaching session of study in the Governance Institute award course.
  
31. Governance Institute will not grant advanced standing where an application has been made after the approved application closing date for a subject being studied in that teaching session.
  
32. The assessment of applications based on informal learning may take longer than applications based on formal or credentialed learning. Applicants may be required to provide further

evidence or undertake an appropriate assessment, in which case Governance Institute will contact the applicant.

33. Applicants will be notified of the results of their application in writing. This will normally occur within two weeks of the closing date for applications for formal or credentialed learning, but no later than census.
34. Advanced standing will be allocated the following grades for administrative purposes: Specified (AS) and Unspecified (AU). Academic marks and grades are not allocated for subjects for which advanced standing is given, other than as specified in clauses 35 and 36.
35. Provisional advanced standing, granted to applicants who are yet to apply for admission to a Governance Institute course, will remain valid for a period of one academic year. Provisional advanced standing will expire if admission to the award course for which the advanced standing applies is not confirmed within this period. In this case a new application for advanced standing is required.
36. A student wishing to have successfully completed non-award subjects transferred to a course in which they are enrolled will be granted equivalent advanced standing. If the non-award subjects have been completed at Governance Institute, the grades achieved will be transferred when the student's enrolment in an award course is confirmed.
37. Postgraduate students progressing through a nested award will have marks and grades transferred to the new course.

### **Relinquishing Advanced Standing**

38. If a student can demonstrate valid academic reasons for relinquishing the advanced standing that has been granted, they may apply to the General Manager, Education providing details of academic reasons for the request.

### **Appeals - Review of Decision by General Manager, Education**

39. An applicant for advanced standing who wishes to challenge the decision of the General Manager, Education about their advanced standing must first discuss the matter with a member of the Education Department.



40. If, following this discussion, the student remains dissatisfied with the decision and considers they have evidence that meets the grounds specified in Clause 45 to lodge an appeal, the student may appeal, in writing, to the Chair of Governance Institute's Education Committee. (See also the Student Support and Responsibilities Policy – Clause 8)

### **Appeals against Determinations Made in Relation to Advanced Standing**

41. Governance Institute provides the right of appeal against decisions on the approval of advanced standing. An appeal must be lodged in writing within 15 working days of the date of notification of the advanced standing determination. Any appeal must set out the grounds for the appeal. Governance Institute's Education Committee will consider and determine the appeal.
42. No member of Governance Institute's Education Committee may have had any previous involvement with the decision under appeal. If necessary a substitute member will be appointed for the purpose of the particular appeal under consideration.
43. The appellant will not normally have the right to be present when the Education Committee convenes. A fee \$50 for the lodgement of an appeal will apply. This fee will be refunded in the case of a successful appeal. An appellant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal within 20 working days of the date of lodgement of the appeal. (Refer to Student Fees Policy – Clause 24)
44. The student must ensure that any appeal, together with supporting evidence, is received by the Chair of the Education Committee within 15 working days of the date of the letter advising of the decision of the General Manager, Education. Late appeals will not be considered, unless the Education Committee is satisfied there are extenuating circumstances.

### **Grounds for Appeal**

45. An appeal can only be made on one of the following grounds, which must be specified and addressed in the appeal letter:
- a. that there is evidence that the decision with regard to the application for advanced standing was made as the result of a procedural error or was in breach of procedural fairness; or

- b. that there is evidence that the decision regarding award of advanced standing to them does not give appropriate recognition for their previous study.
46. Any further appeal by a student, which can only be made on the grounds of a breach of process or a breach of procedural fairness, must be made to and considered by Governance Institute's Board of Directors.

### **Related Documents**

- Governance Institute of Australia Admissions Policy
- Governance Institute of Australia Advanced Standing Guideline
- Governance Institute of Australia Articulation Pathways Policy
- Governance Institute of Australia Student Fees Policy
- Governance Institute of Australia Student Support and Responsibilities Policy

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