

Common terms and abbreviations

The following terms are often used by the participating institutions. Refer to individual institutions for exact definitions that are usually included in the institution's calendar and/or handbooks.

Academic record (see *Transcript*)

Academic year

The part of the year when students are enrolled at a university. The academic year usually starts in February-March when classes begin, and ends with the examination period in November-December. It may comprise two semesters or three terms for undergraduate courses and six intakes for postgraduate courses.

Additional selection criteria

These are compulsory requirements, either in addition to or instead of, admission requirements, which you must do to be considered for selection into the course. Examples of additional selection criteria include interviews, auditions, portfolios, supporting statements, questionnaires and tests.

Admission requirements

The minimum qualifications required for you to be considered for entry to a particular course. Entry to many courses is competitive. The attainment of minimum qualifications does not guarantee you will be offered a place.

Advanced diploma

An award requiring two or three years full-time, or equivalent part-time, study. The Advanced Diploma is the highest of the *undergraduate* diploma awards.

Associate degree

An award requiring two years full-time, or equivalent part-time, study which equates to the first two years of a designated three-year degree course.

Associate diploma

An award requiring two years full-time, or equivalent part-time, study.

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

The Australian Qualifications Framework covers 12 national qualifications issued by secondary schools, vocational education and training providers, and higher education institutions. AQF qualifications were first issued in January 1995. Pre-AQF qualifications will continue to be recognised.

Bachelor degree

An award requiring three or four years full-time, equivalent part-time, or sandwich study.

Career opportunities

The career or area in which you will be qualified to work after completion of the course. Contact the individual institutions for additional information.

CHESSN (see *Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number*)

Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN)

A unique number allocated to students receiving Commonwealth higher education assistance (as *Commonwealth-supported students* and/or through *HELP* loans). This number stays with students throughout their studies, and allows their eligibility for Commonwealth assistance to be facilitated and monitored.

CSP

Commonwealth-supported place

Commonwealth-supported students

Students for whom the Australian Government contributes towards their study costs. These students pay *student contributions*.

Core

A common body of courses, usually compulsory within a program of study.

Correspondence study (see *Distance education*)

Coursework

A means of study composed of units, usually requiring students to attend lectures and tutorials. *Postgraduate certificates*, *postgraduate diplomas* and *Masters degrees* can be obtained this way. All *undergraduate degrees* are attained via coursework.

Credit point

Each unit of study in a course is worth a particular number of credit points. The unit's credit point value reflects the amount of work required in the unit.

Deferment

Permission to delay starting a course, usually for one year.

DEST

Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training.

Diploma

An *undergraduate* award usually placing more emphasis on practical skills than on theoretical content. Also, a postgraduate award requiring one year full-time, or equivalent *part-time*, postgraduate study.

Distance education

A form of full-time or *part-time* study that takes place outside the university, either at a study centre or at home by correspondence. Periodical residential attendance at on-campus sessions is usually required.

Division (see *Faculty*)

Enrolment

After you have been offered and have accepted a place in a course you will be required to enrol at a certain time. Each institution has its own enrolment procedures and in many institutions special advice is available about courses and enrolment plans. Successful applicants will receive enrolment details with their offer.

Exclusion

A decision by an institution to exclude you from continuing your study at that institution. The reason for exclusion is usually because you have breached a regulation, such as failure in your program of study. In most cases you may re-apply for admission to the course/institution after a set period of time from the date of exclusion, usually one or two years.

External study (see *Distance education*)

Faculty

Universities are divided into academic divisions, where teaching and research are conducted. Each division is called a faculty. Although some universities refer to them as divisions.

FEE-HELP

Part of the *Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP)*. For eligible *fee-paying students* to pay their tuition fees, up to \$50 000.

Fee-paying students

Students who meet the entire amount of their study costs. These students pay *tuition fees*.

First effective preference

The highest preference for which you are eligible to be selected. You may be ineligible for your higher preferences because admission requirements or course prerequisites have not been met, or for some other reason such as failing to submit work or attend an interview where required.

Graduand

A person who has satisfied the academic requirements for a degree/diploma but who has not yet received it at a graduation ceremony.

Graduate

A person who has received a degree.

Graduate certificate (see Postgraduate certificate)

Graduate diploma (see Postgraduate diploma)

Graduate or prior study status

Applicants need to have undertaken some postsecondary/tertiary study to be considered for entry to the course specifying *graduate* or prior study status.

HECS-HELP

Part of the *Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP)*. For eligible Commonwealth-supported students to pay their student contributions.

HEIMS (see Higher Education Information Management System)

HELP (see Higher Education Loan Programme)

Higher Education Information Management System (HEIMS)

A web-based information management system maintained by DEST that enables students to access their personal details regarding their Commonwealth higher education assistance.

Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP)

A loan programme available to Australian citizens or the holders of Australian permanent humanitarian visas to enable them to pay their student contributions or tuition fees, or for one or two study periods overseas. Loans are re-paid later through the taxation system once income has reached a certain level. For postgraduate students there are two types of HELP loans - see FEE-HELP, HECS-HELP.

Honours

Institutions adopt one of two approaches to honours. In a three-year *undergraduate course* or *part-time* equivalent, honours is available as an additional year of full-time study or part-time equivalent to meritorious students. In a four- or five-year course, honours is awarded on the basis of superior performance in the course.

Intake

A postgraduate admission period. There are six intakes in the year.

Internal

The form of full-time or *part-time* study that takes place on the university campus. Some institutions use this term to differentiate this type of study from their distance education mode.

Masters degree

An award course typically of at least one or two years full-time, which usually requires the completion of a *Bachelor degree* or equivalent. Masters degrees are either *coursework* or *research* based.

Mode of offering

Indicates whether the study is offered by means other than internal (on-campus) eg by *distance education*.

Part-time study

A method of completing a course offered to students who, for employment or other reasons, are unable to undertake full-time study. At some institutions, evening classes are available for part-time students. At others, part-time students attend the same daytime classes as full-time students but undertake fewer units of study than full-time students. Part-time students usually spread courses over a longer time than full-time students.

Postgraduate certificate

An award course typically of one semester full-time or equivalent *part-time*. Some institutions have entry requirements of a *bachelor degree* or equivalent. Some institutions use the certificate as an entry point to postgraduate studies for people who may have appropriate work experience, but no formal postsecondary qualification.

Postgraduate courses

These are courses usually available only to people who have qualified for an appropriate first degree/diploma. They are not available to school-leavers. They include:

- graduate/postgraduate certificate
- graduate/postgraduate diploma
- postgraduate degree, masters or doctorate.

Postgraduate diploma

An award course typically of two semesters full-time or four semesters *part-time*. The diploma usually has entry requirements of a *bachelor degree* or equivalent.

Postgraduate Education Loans Scheme (PELS)

Under the Higher Education Reforms to take effect on 1 January 2005, PELS is no longer available. It has been replaced by FEE-HELP.

Post-initial Bachelor degree

In education, courses that develop further the ability of individuals who hold an initial teacher qualification in the theories, methods and techniques of developing, implementing and evaluating organised learning activities. The term is used in other fields, including nursing.

Practical/Industrial experience

Supervised practice takes place in an approved work place and helps you develop skills relevant to your study. It may be undertaken during semester or in semester breaks and can vary from regular one-day placements to block periods of several weeks. Costs may be involved, such as instruments, uniform, accommodation or travel. Check with the relevant institution.

Professional recognition

The course has been approved by a professional body or bodies, which enables *graduates* to apply for membership and/or registration to practise in the profession.

Program

The combination of units of study and/or research work which is required for you to qualify for your degree or diploma.

Record of failure

Institutions generally consider you to have a record of failure if you receive a fail for one or more subjects on your academic record. The record of failure may be because:

- you have withdrawn from a course or a single unit where that withdrawal is counted as a failure or
- you have failed to satisfy the assessment requirements for one or more units.

Relevant undergraduate degree

The requirement that the applicant must have completed studies in a discipline which is the same or similar to the area of postgraduate study applied for. For example, Master of Commerce in Accounting and Finance requires major in accounting or finance in undergraduate degree.

Research

A means of postgraduate study, where students undertake supervised research which will lead to a thesis or other piece of written material, within a set period of time. Masters degrees and Doctorates can be obtained in this way.

SLE (see Student Learning Entitlement)

Special requirements

These are compulsory requirements, in addition to admission requirements, which you must do to be considered for selection into the course. Examples of additional selection criteria include interviews, portfolios, supporting statements, questionnaires and tests.

Student contribution

Determined by each institution, the amount that *Commonwealth-supported students* must pay towards their study costs.

Student Learning Entitlement (SLE)

From January 1 2005 all eligible Australian and New Zealand citizens and holders of Australian permanent visas will receive a Student Learning Entitlement of seven years equivalent full-time study as *Commonwealth-supported students*.

Transcript

An academic transcript is an official copy of your complete academic record at a postsecondary or tertiary institution, issued by the institution.

Tuition fees

Fees charged by the institutions on *postgraduate courses*, to cover the cost of teaching.

Undergraduate course

An undergraduate course refers to a course leading to a first qualification, namely an *associate degree* or an *associate diploma*, or a *diploma*, or a first degree of *bachelor*.

Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)

The Universities Admissions Centre (NSW & ACT) Pty Ltd is the central office that receives and processes applications for admission to most undergraduate degree, *advanced diploma* and *diploma* courses at the participating institution and to a number of *postgraduate courses* at participating institutions.

University

A tertiary institution offering undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and diplomas.