

## ACADEMIC BOARD – MEETING 5/04 (24 JUNE 2004)

### MELBOURNE ABROAD

#### OUTGOING EXCHANGE POLICY

##### 1) BACKGROUND

The guidelines for both the Outgoing Exchange Program are reviewed regularly. Some issues have arisen recently and were taken to MSPC for approval, following discussion at the Undergraduate Scholarships Sub-Committee.

The MSPC asks the APC to consider the recommendations arising from this policy review. We propose a variation to the Exchange policy to facilitate access to it by postgraduate coursework students and we request endorsement of guidelines for research students who participate in the Exchange Program.

##### Current Requirements

The Outgoing Exchange Program is available to students at all levels. Current eligibility criteria for students who wish to participate in the Exchange Program state that the students must:

- a) have completed at least one year and 75 points of study at the time of application;
- b) have achieved a weighted average of at least 70% in the course for which they are seeking credit for the overseas study, and
- c) have obtained faculty approval.

The faculty must ensure that a student's intended study plan meets the faculty's credit requirements. In all cases, decisions about credit must not contravene the relevant University statutes 5.4 and 11.1.

##### 2) ISSUES

###### 2.1 Postgraduate Coursework Students

As postgraduate coursework courses are often of shorter duration than undergraduate courses, it is proposed that the requirement in 1a) above be altered for postgraduate coursework students to 'completion at least **one semester** and **50 points** at the time of application, in the course for which they are seeking credit'. Eligibility criteria for postgraduate coursework students would then be:

- a) have completed at least one semester and 50 points of study at the time of application;
- b) have achieved a weighted average of at least 70% in the course for which they are seeking credit for the overseas study, and
- c) have obtained faculty approval.

The faculty must ensure that a student's intended study plan meets the faculty's credit requirements. In all cases, decisions about credit must not contravene the relevant University statutes 5.4 and 11.1.

We believe that this would enable postgraduate coursework students to participate more easily in the Exchange Program.

It is recommended that:

***Postgraduate coursework students be eligible to be considered for an exchange after having completed one semester and 50 points in the University of Melbourne course for which they are seeking credit for the study undertaken overseas.***

## 2.2. Research Higher Degree Students

Research higher degree students are increasingly using the Exchange Program to travel abroad to undertake research. They are not eligible for Melbourne Abroad Scholarships but find an Exchange placement helpful as it gives them access to facilities and assistance at the partner institution, which may otherwise be unavailable to visiting students.

The following method of assessing eligibility was developed by the Student Exchanges Coordinator in consultation with relevant Faculty staff and is used currently. We request that MSPC endorse these guidelines.

As research higher degree students do not normally have subject results by which to judge their eligibility for Exchange, we propose that such a decision be based on a statement of support from the student's principal supervisor. The statement must address:

- a) the student's academic merit;
- b) the value of the exchange to the research project;
- c) details of any subjects to be undertaken overseas, if they are for credit and their relevance to the research;
- d) details of any temporary supervision arranged for overseas; and
- e) if the student can still complete their thesis within the original time frame.

The student must also obtain permission from his or her faculty or the School of Graduate Studies to study away from the University.

These guidelines have been endorsed by Professor Barbara Evans, Dean SGS on behalf of the RHD Committee

It is recommended that:

***The Committee endorse the current exchange application guidelines for research higher degree students.***

## 2.3 Combined Degree Students

It was agreed at MSPC meeting 1/2002 that 'a student undertaking a combined degree will be assessed to go on exchange on their weighted average (normally a minimum of 70%) in the degree for which the exchange and credit is sought providing there are no fails recorded for subjects in the other degree.'

We propose that the clause 'providing there are no fails recorded for subjects in the other degree' be deleted. The policy recognises that students may perform better in one arm of a combined degree and that the other arm should not reduce their chance of being accepted for exchange in a discipline in which they are achieving well. Deletion of the clause removes the restriction that the other arm of a degree may impose.

It is recommended that:

***The requirement for students in a combined degree be altered by deleting the clause 'providing there are no fails recorded for subjects in the other degree'.***

## 2.4. Transferring students.

All Undergraduate students must have completed at least one year and 75 points of study, at the time of application. This is to enable selection based on some tertiary results and to ensure that the student has a level of maturity and experience that allows them to adapt to study at tertiary level overseas. If students have transferred to the University of Melbourne and gained credit from their previous studies, their time at our University is limited.

We propose that students who have transferred from another tertiary institution after at least a year of study at that institution and who have been granted credit at Melbourne, only be required to complete a minimum of one semester and 50 points at the University of Melbourne, before being eligible to apply for a place on the Exchange Program. One of the aims of the Exchange Program is to send the best students to represent our University overseas. As transferring students who receive credit have less time and fewer points in the University of Melbourne degree, this change would facilitate access to the Program of potentially excellent students.

The faculties must ensure that a student's intended study plan meets the faculty's credit requirements. In all cases, decisions about credit must not contravene the relevant University statutes 5.4 and 11.1.

It is recommended that:

***Students who have transferred from another tertiary institution after at least a year of study at that institution and who have been granted credit at Melbourne, only be required to complete a minimum of one semester and 50 points at the University of Melbourne, before being eligible to apply for a place on the Exchange Program.***

## 3) SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are:

- 1) Postgraduate coursework students be eligible to be considered for an exchange after having completed one semester and 50 points in the University of Melbourne course for which they are seeking credit for the study undertaken overseas.
- 2) The current exchange application guidelines for research higher degree students be endorsed.
- 3) The requirement for students in a combined degree be altered by deleting the clause 'providing there are no fails recorded for subjects in the other degree'.
- 4) Students who have transferred from another tertiary institution after at least a year of study at that institution and who have been granted credit at Melbourne, only be required to complete a minimum of one semester and 50 points at the University of Melbourne, before being eligible to apply for a place on the Exchange Program. The total credit granted for studies undertaken prior to selection into the Melbourne degree, and for exchange study, must not exceed the total credit allowable under the statutes relating to credit in order to take out the degree.

Melbourne Scholarships Office  
May 2004.