



Code and Number	E.1.3a
Title of Document	Student Admission and Progression Procedure - Graduate Certificates

Table of Contents

1	PURPOSE	2
1.1	Student admission.....	2
1.2	Payment of fees	2
1.3	Refunds.....	2
1.4	Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	2
1.5	RPL of assessment items	3
1.6	Clinical placement documentation requirements	3
1.6.1	RPL of clinical placement.....	3
2	Student progression and course requirements.....	3
2.1	Student progression Graduate Certificate in Nursing (Re-entry)	4
2.2	Outside of normal progression	4
2.3	Assessment items.....	4
2.3.1	Assessment extensions	4
2.3.2	Late submission of assessment item(s).....	5
2.3.3	Assessment Grading.....	5
2.3.4	Unsuccessful assessment item(s)	5
2.3.5	Resubmission/reattempt of assessment items	5
2.3.6	Grade review and re-mark of an assessment item.....	5
2.4	Withdrawal from a course by ACN.....	5
2.5	Deferring from a course	6
2.6	Leave of absence from a unit of study	6
3	Withdrawing from a unit of study	6
3.1	Withdrawing from a unit of study without penalty due to extenuating circumstances.....	6
4	Investigating alleged incidents of academic misconduct.....	6
5	Academic appeals.....	7
6	Feedback and Complaints	7
7	Student support.....	7
7.1	Administrative and miscellaneous fees waiver due to extenuating circumstances	7
8	Course completion Graduate Certificates.....	8
8.1	Course completion Graduate Certificate in Nursing (Re-Entry).....	8
8.2	Graduation.....	8

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Student admission and progression procedure is to ensure equity of administrative practice across all Graduate Certificate (GC) courses conducted by ACN and to set out:

- ACN's requirements for determining admission to an ACN GC course.
- The steps of finalising enrolment into a GC course.
- The processes for monitoring student progression throughout the study.
- The GC course completion and graduation process.

1.1 Student admission

- Potential and existing students seeking to enrol in a course regardless of their background, circumstances or eligibility for FEE-HELP assistance, will be assessed for entry to study based upon published ACN GC entry requirement criteria (for published GC entry criteria see: <https://www.acn.edu.au/education/postgraduate-courses>).
- Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. ACN will not apply inflexible policies that preclude eligible applicants from having their applications considered.
- The application deadline is the close of business (5:00 pm AEST/AEDT) Wednesday before term commencement. Applications received after this time will be processed for the following term.
- Students will be notified in writing via email of the outcome of their application.
- Applications from overseas students offshore wishing to undertake an online course of study must be approved by the Manager Higher Education (MHE).

1.2 Payment of fees

- For fee-paying students, fees must be paid before the start of the term.
- Fees paid by FEE-HELP need to be applied for before the census date of the course.
- Current and future tuition fee prices and payment procedures are published on the ACN website and the ACN letter of offer.
- Where a student defaults, the Finance Department will be notified for appropriate follow-up. The student's progression will stop at this point until the account is settled. If an account remains unsettled after the census date, ACN reserves the right to withdraw a student with a fail grade.
- Administrative fees will apply for:
 - Requests for non-current course/ unit outlines: \$45 in electronic format
 - Reissuing of documents for conversion of qualification for international recognition: \$150
 - Request for a copy of certification documents (Testamur, Transcript and AHEGS): \$150 flat fee. This includes requests for the hard copy outside of the graduation period.

1.3 Refunds

See [E.1.14 Course Withdrawals and Refunds](#) and [E.1.14a International student course withdrawals and refunds](#).

1.4 Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process through which eligibility for the award of credit is assessed, through assessment of formal and informal learning to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit (Australian Qualifications Framework Council, 2012).
- ACN will grant RPL on:
 - an individual basis, whereby the individual's formal and informal learning is assessed against ACN's course learning outcomes; or
 - where there are credit transfer arrangements between ACN and another provider to allow for credit to be transferred when a student completes particular units.
- Details of current credit transfer arrangements between ACN and other Higher Education providers will be made publicly available on the ACN website.
- Students applying for entry into the Graduate Certificate in Nursing (Re-entry) are not eligible for RPL as students must, according to ANMAC accreditation standards, complete all course requirements including the mandated minimum hours of workplace experience.

- Applications for RPL must be submitted on the Credit and RPL application form: [FM-E.1.3-ED046-Credit-Transfer-and-RPL-information-package-and-Application-form](#)
- As a general rule, applicants may apply for up to 50% (2 units of study) credit or RPL into an ACN course. Exceptions apply if students have successfully completed the units of study at ACN that map into a Graduate Certificate course. Where an applicant wishes to apply for more than 50% credit or RPL, they must apply in writing to the MHE via customerservices@acn.edu.au.
- Applicants are required to provide supporting documentation as part of an application for all RPL requests. Supporting documentation requirements are listed on the credit and RPL application forms and the ACN website.
- For RPL based on prior Formal learning, students must provide evidence for the following:
 - The unit of study was from an appropriately accredited organisation.
 - There is a similarity in learning outcomes. (All learning outcomes for ACNs courses are available on the website).
 - The unit of study was at the appropriate/equivalent level. For example, Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level 8 and above.
 - The content of the unit of study is congruent.
 - The workload of the unit of study is equivalent.
 - The applicant demonstrates successful completion of the unit of study.
- For RPL based on prior informal learning, applicants must provide, valid, authentic, and current evidence to satisfy the Course Coordinator (CC) and the MHE that through their education, life and work experience they meet the required knowledge and skills of the course. This process will incur an administrative fee of 20% of the Unit cost.
- Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application via email.
- Credit will appear on an academic transcript as Advanced Standing (AS), to indicate that RPL has been granted for the unit of study (UOS).
- When assessing equivalent formal education for RPL, only courses offered in the last five years will be considered unless the student can demonstrate ongoing continual professional development in the area of study.

1.5 RPL of assessment items

A student repeating a unit of study may be eligible for RPL for an assessment item completed as part of their initial enrolment attempt provided that:

- The student is repeating the unit of study within the last year of the initial enrolment.
- The assessment item within the unit of study has not been changed or updated since the initial enrolment attempt.
- Students who withdraw or fail from a unit of study will be given a letter outlining their options for repeating the unit and will be advised of their eligibility for RPL of assessment items. (if applicable) and the application process.

1.6 Clinical placement documentation requirements

It is the student's responsibility to present documentation before the commencement of the course.

- Students who have a clinical placement component within their course must submit all documentation required for clinical placement upon application. See the [Clinical Placement Information](#) webpage for clinical placement documentation requirements.
- The customer service team will contact students who submit incomplete applications to request missing documentation.
- Students must have clinical placement documentation checked and must be deemed 'compliant' before enrolment into the course.

1.6.1 RPL of clinical placement

- Students can apply for RPL of clinical placement upon application if they are currently employed in a role in the area of speciality being studied.
- Students must provide documentation to verify employment such as a letter from their employer and a current job description.

2 Student progression and course requirements

- Where the course admission criteria require the student to be employed in a specified area of practice, the student must maintain employment in this area for the duration of the course.
- ACN GC courses must be completed within two (2) years of the original course commencement date.
- Students are required to enrol in one-unit (1) per term over four (4) terms. Requests to exceed a normal study load must be approved by the CC.
- Students must maintain registration with the appropriate registering authority for the duration of the course.
- Where a student is no longer employed in the area of practice, they must notify ACN in writing and the CC will determine if they are eligible to continue in the course.
- Where a student is unable to meet course requirements because of extenuating circumstances, alternative arrangements may be negotiated; this may include alternative assessment items or simulated learning.

2.1 Student progression Graduate Certificate in Nursing (Re-entry)

- Nurses referred by a registering authority for enrolment into the Graduate Certificate in Nursing (Re-entry) must complete the course within one year or as determined by the registering authority. Students must attend at least 90% of the on-campus / classroom / online and/or clinical hours for the course.
- Where a student is unable to meet course requirements because of extenuating circumstances, alternative arrangements may be negotiated; this may include alternative assessment items or simulated learning.

2.2 Outside of normal progression

- Where normal student progression does not occur, the CC will determine a student's eligibility to continue the course in the following instances:
 - Where a student requests a deferral or leave of absence from a course.
 - Where a substantiated breach of academic integrity has been identified.
 - Where a student has been identified as requiring support.
 - Where a student breaches the Student Code of Conduct.
 - Where a student is deemed by the clinical facilitator or the clinical facility to be unsatisfactory and/or unsafe during clinical placement.
 - Where a student has not submitted any assessment items or completed any coursework.

2.3 Assessment items

- It is the student's responsibility to keep an electronic copy of all uploaded assessment items.
- Where an assessment item has a due date specified in course documentation, the item is to be uploaded by the student to ACN's learning management system CNnect.
- Students must adhere to assessment item criteria set out in the unit outline for each assessment item concerning originality and the use of GenAI.
- Where the use of Gen AI is permitted for a specific assessment item, appropriate referencing must be applied.
- Failing to reference the use of Gen AI correctly, or using the technology when prohibited, constitutes academic misconduct (see: [E.1.3b-student-code-of-conduct.pdf \(acn.edu.au\)](https://www.acn.edu.au/e1.3b-student-code-of-conduct.pdf)).

2.3.1 Assessment extensions

Students are responsible for ensuring compulsory assessment items are submitted by the due date. Requests for extensions may affect your progression in the course. Therefore, any request for an extension will be at the discretion of the unit coordinator and considered on an individual basis.

- Requests must be made to the tutor by email at least two (2) working days before the assessment date.
- Evidence of extenuating circumstances (see Table of Definitions in [E.1.3 Student Management](#)) must be provided for extensions greater than two (2) days beyond the assignment due date.
- If a student fails to submit an assignment by the new due date, they will be subject to the normal penalty applied for late submission as set out below.

- Extensions granted beyond the course completion date will be recorded as a result outstanding (RO).

2.3.2 Late submission of assessment item(s)

- Late submissions, without permission, will incur a penalty.
- Five (5) marks (for that assessment item) will be deducted for each day the assessment item is late (including weekend days and public holidays).
- Assessment items submitted more than five (5) days after the due date will be awarded a fail grade unless extenuating circumstances can be proven. (For further information see Table of Definitions in [E.1.3 Student Management](#)).

2.3.3 Assessment Grading

- All assessments will be graded within a two (2) week period from the assessment due date.
- It is the student's responsibility to review all feedback provided by the marker.

2.3.4 Unsuccessful assessment item(s)

A fail/not yet competent grade will be determined when a student has:

- Not met the assessment criteria.
- Has been found to have breached academic integrity requirements.
- Submits an assessment item more than five (5) days late.

2.3.5 Resubmission/attempt of assessment items

- After an assessment item has received a fail/not yet competent grade there may be provision for a student to resubmit their work to improve the quality of the submission.
- Resubmission of assessments must be submitted within seven (7) days from the date that the assessment is marked, and the student is notified by the unit coordinator.
- Resubmission of assessments will:
 - Be considered on a case-by-case basis by the unit coordinator.
 - Be awarded a maximum grade of 50%.

2.3.6 Grade review and re-mark of an assessment item

A student may request a review of a grade or a re-mark of an assessment item by contacting their CC via email. *Please note, this is **NOT** an academic appeal.*

- An application for the review of a grade of an assessment item must be made within five (5) working days of the student receiving the grade via CNnect.
- Grounds for granting a review of a grade include:
 - The assessment requirements in the course were unreasonably or prejudicially applied to the student.
 - A student is of the view that a clerical error has occurred in the computation of the grade.
- Decisions regarding the approval of a review of the grade will be at the discretion of the CC in consultation with the MED.
- Students should be advised that:
 - The assessment will be marked by an independent marker who may be internally employed or externally contracted by ACN.
 - The revised grade will be final. This may mean that the student may receive a lesser grade than originally awarded.

2.4 Withdrawal from a course by ACN

The Course Coordinator reserves the right to withdraw a student from the course if they do not follow the normal course or student progression. In such an event ACN will:

- Inform the student of the decision in writing via email.
- Notify the relevant registering authority in the case of students undertaking a Graduate Certificate in Nursing (Re-entry).
- Notify any appropriate person if the course is being offered under contract.
- Alternative courses may be offered if available and it is a core component of a course.

- Exclude a student from studying at ACN for 12 months where there is a proven case of misconduct.

2.5 Deferring from a course

- A deferral is a postponement of a course where students can defer admission until a later date.
- This is available to students who have not undertaken any units of study in the course and can be done before census.
- Students will be deferred into the next intake without having to reapply for the course.
- If a student is unable to commence at the next intake, they will be advised to withdraw from the course and reapply at a later date.

2.6 Leave of absence from a unit of study

- Leave of absence is only available after the student has undertaken at least one unit of study.
- Leave of absence for a unit of study is available for students before the census date of the term
- Leave of absence may only be granted for a maximum period of 12 months from the requested date, and the course must be completed within the required timeframe.
- A maximum of three (3) consecutive leave of absences are allowed. For more than three (3) leave of absence requests, a student will be advised to withdraw from the current course and enroll in a new course.
- A student must have at least one (1) active enrolment in a unit of study every 12 months.
- Extended timelines can be negotiated for students who can show evidence of extenuating circumstances upon review of supporting documents (for further information see Table of Definitions in E.1.3 Student Management).
- All requests for extended timelines will be referred to the CC for determination.
- If a request is granted the student will be notified of the outcome (in writing) and the new study timeline will be outlined.

3 Withdrawing from a unit of study

The Census date is the last day a student may withdraw from a unit of study without occurring a FEE-HELP debt and/or a financial penalty.

Students withdrawing after the census date will incur a FEE-HELP debt; and/or will not be eligible for a refund, unless extenuating circumstances apply.

The Monday of week six (6) is the last day student may withdraw from a unit of study without incurring an academic penalty.

Students who withdraw from a unit of study after Monday of week six (6) will obtain a *Fail* outcome for the unit of study unless extenuating circumstances apply.

3.1 Withdrawing from a unit of study without penalty due to extenuating circumstances

- A student who withdraws after census, and who can show evidence of extenuating circumstances upon review of supporting documents, may be eligible for refund / re-credit of FEE-HELP balance, see [E.1.14 Course Withdrawals and Refunds](#), Appendix Two: Refund Approval Process Due to Special or Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances and [E.1.15 Re-Crediting a Student Fee Help](#). For extenuating circumstances see Table of Definitions in [E.1.3 Student Management](#).
- Where extenuating circumstances have been assessed and determined by the Director Education Operations (DEO):
 - the unit of study tuition fee will be refunded and/or the student's FEE-HELP balance will be re-credited; and
 - the unit of study outcome will be updated to *Withdrawn*.

4 Investigating alleged incidents of academic misconduct

- Alleged incidents of academic misconduct, will be referred to and investigated by the CC under the supervision of the Academic Integrity Officer (see: [Student Code of Conduct E.1.3b](#) appendix two).
- Alleged incidents of level three plagiarism or other serious incidents of academic misconduct will be referred to and investigated by ACN's Academic Integrity Officer, (see: [Student Code of Conduct E.1.3b](#) appendix two).

5 Academic appeals

ACN is committed to fair academic decision-making. A student who is dissatisfied with an academic decision and believes they meet eligible grounds for contesting a decision may apply for an academic appeal. (See [E.1.13a Academic Appeal policy and procedure](#)).

Students can appeal academic decisions that affect their academic progression within the award course and includes a decision:

- about a final grade;
- about special consideration or special arrangements;
- relating to credit transfer (CT) or recognition of prior learning (RPL);
- not to re-admit or re-enroll a student following exclusion;
- to remove a student from clinical placement;
- to exclude /withdraw a student from studying with ACN;
- about a perceived academic integrity breach.

Academic appeals must be submitted on the appropriate academic appeal form. See:

[Request for an Appeal of an Academic Decision – Higher Education](#)

- Level 1 academic appeals will be referred to the CC for review and determination.
- Level 2 appeals will be referred to the MHE for review and determination.
- Level 3 appeals will be referred to the Academic Appeals Committee for review and determination.

6 Feedback and Complaints

ACN places high value on the student study experience and welcomes any feedback students have. Feedback can be provided online in via CNnection, an online platform in [CNnect](#) where students can tell us what we can do to make their learning experience a better one.

ACN is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable grievance handling system which is easily accessible to all complainants. The Non-academic grievance policy outlines grievance procedures designed to ensure that ACN responds effectively to individual cases of dissatisfaction. For further information visit: [E.1.13 Non-academic Grievance Policy](#).

7 Student support

ACN offers a variety of student support services to help students succeed and to ensure the transition to postgraduate study is straightforward and enjoyable. For further information visit the [Health, Wellbeing and Student Support](#) webpage.

The Support for Students Policy sets out how the education division identifies students who are at risk of failing their chosen units of study including the process for identifying disengaged students and how students will be supported to successfully complete their studies. For further details see: [E.1.5 Support for Students](#).

7.1 Administrative and miscellaneous fees waiver due to extenuating circumstances

- ACN will support students experiencing extenuating circumstances if they require assistance with the wavier of administrative and miscellaneous fees. Students must provide:
 - Three forms of identification is necessary upon request to verify a student's identity such as the student's full name (or proof of change of name if applicable), student ID or email or address (used at the time of study with ACN).

- Supporting documentation to support the claim. Examples of supporting documentation may include:
 - a medical certificate or specialist report
 - a statutory declaration or personal statement
 - an official letter from relevant source/authority.
- Requests will be made in writing to the Director Education Operations (for administrative-related requests) and to the Director Academic Studies (for Educational-related request).

8 Course completion Graduate Certificates

To complete any course the student must:

- Meet all course requirements.
- Return all library books (if applicable), multimedia resources and other ACN resources, or pay for the replacement of same.
- Have paid in full all course fees.
- Have provided ACN with your verified Unique Student Identifier (USI)

After course completion and before awarding certificates, the Education Team will submit a document to the Academic Council, including a signed attestation verifying that the listed individuals have been reviewed and meet all eligibility requirements and it is recommended that the Academic Council approve the issuance of the certificates.

- Graduating students will receive:
 - Transcript and statement of course completion within 4 – 6 weeks.
 - A letter confirming completion of their qualification.
 - An invitation to attend a graduation ceremony. (Please note, graduation ceremonies may not proceed due to extenuating circumstances; students will be informed if this applies to them).

8.1 Course completion Graduate Certificate in Nursing (Re-Entry)

- Nurses referred by a registering authority for enrolment into the Graduate Certificate in Nursing (Re-entry) must complete the course within one year or as determined by the registering authority. Students must attend at least 90% of the on-campus/classroom/online and/or clinical hours for the course.
- Upon course completion students will receive via post (within 4-6 weeks):
 - Transcript
 - Statement of course completion
 - A letter confirming completion of their qualification
 - Testamur

8.2 Graduation

- The Graduation and Awards Ceremony will be held annually in Sydney (unless under extenuating circumstances).
- From July 2022 onwards, all students who have completed their Graduation Certificates will receive their course completion documents electronically via MyEquals.
- Students will be presented with the Testamur during the Graduation and Awards Ceremony.
- If there is no graduation ceremony or students are not able to attend, students will be able to opt-in if they would like their Testamur posted to their home address free of charge. If students request a hard copy of their documents outside of the allocated timeframe, a fee will apply and the document will be posted after the Graduation and Awards ceremony period.
- Students with Advance Standing or RPL for graduate certificate courses may complete their studies earlier, but will not be provided an early release of testamur. Testamurs will be issued at the Graduation Ceremony after the official course completion date. Prior to graduation, students may request a transcript and a statement of completion by emailing customerservices@acn.edu.au.
- Replacements of documents can only be issued upon receipt of a written request and a statutory declaration stating that the student has lost or does not have the document.

- A fee applies for the issue of the replacement documents. The replacement is not issued until the fee has been paid. Applications and inquiries should be made to customerservices@acn.edu.au.
- A re-issue of an original testamur can only occur under strictly limited circumstances including:
 - Where the spelling or the sequence of the graduate's name is incorrect due to an administrative error; or
 - Where the testamur has been issued with the incorrect award or level of the award due to an administrative error.
- Three forms of identification is necessary upon request to verify a student's identity such as the student's full name (or proof of change of name if applicable), student ID or email or address (used at the time of study with ACN).

REFERENCES

Australian Government, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). (2019) *Guidance Note: Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning*.

<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/guidance-note-credit-and-rpl-v1-1-web.pdf?v=1581307880>.

Australian Qualifications Framework Council, AQF (2012). *Recognition of Prior Learning: An Explanation*.

<https://www.aqf.edu.au/help-qualifications/recognition-prior-learning>

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

[E.1.3 Student Management](#)

[E.1.1.5 Clinical Training Room](#)

[E.1.5 Support for Students](#)

[E.1.7 Student Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment](#)

[E.1.6 Student Clinical Placements](#)

[E.1.12 Student Privacy and Personal Information](#)

[E.1.13 Student Grievance handling - Academic and Non-Academic](#)

[E.1.14 Course Withdrawals and Refunds](#)

[E.1.14a International Student Course Withdrawals and Refunds](#)

[E.1.15 Re-Crediting a Student Fee Help](#)

[E.1.17 International Student Transfer and Release](#)

[E.1.18 Deferring Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment - International Students](#)

[E.1.19 Critical incident - Students](#)

RELATED FORMS

[FM-E.1.3-ED046-Credit-Transfer-and-RPL-information-package-and-Application-form](#)

[ED079 Consent to Disclose Personal Information](#)

[ED080 International Student Refund Request](#)

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