

Applying for Credit OR Recognition of Prior Learning

Application Deadlines: *Stage One 09 March*
 Supervisor Assessment 30 March
 Stage Two 30 April

Applicable Policies and Definitions:

The university grants credit for previous learning where this is assessed as equivalent to Monash University study. Credit is where a student is assessed and considered previously to have completed the equivalent of a unit through formal study (see Credit transfer) they may receive credit for that unit and the course requirements may be correspondingly reduced.

Credit transfer means granting of credit towards a unit, on the basis of a unit(s) previously completed in a course with an Australian university, or equivalent. Credit transfer involves assessment of equivalence of the previous unit(s) with the unit(s) for which credit is being given.

Specified Credit is given for specific Monash University units as identified by their unit code.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process that assesses the individual's non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification.

Relevancy & Recency

Credit within both undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs can only be awarded for formal prior studies that have:

- Been completed at recognised tertiary level institutions; and
- Been completed at a relevant equivalent tertiary level (i.e. no credit will be awarded for postgraduate level studies toward an undergraduate level course or vice versa); and
- An 80% equivalence of content and assessment for the unit specified; and

- Been completed within the last 10 years or more recently if the course requirements and professional accreditation body restricts such credit being awarded due to recency regulations.

Thus, students who have completed a BSW placement may either:

- ◆ apply for credit in the BSW course or
- ◆ apply for RPL in the MSW (Q).

Credit:

Credit cannot be granted in the MSW (Q) for a placement taken within a BSW because it is not of an equivalent level. Students who have completed one placement at MSW (Q) level can apply for credit within the MSW (Q) course.

If you think you are eligible for **credit**, you must submit a formal application for credit on the university form:

<http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/service-centre/forms/credit.pdf>

This form outlines the additional material required for the application to be complete, such as a syllabus for the unit – including information about hours in the field, assessment criteria and contact hours with the university. The student will also submit their learning agreement and their mid and end of placement reviews.

AASW

The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) requires that students undertaking an accredited Social Work program complete two field education placements. The nature, time requirements and other characteristics of these placements must be at least in accordance with AASW Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards 2008.

AASW Policy

Section 4.3.5 of the AASW Accreditation Standards refers to ‘Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning in Field Education’. It states:

“The AASW recognizes that students may enter their social work degree study program with a breadth of prior learning and experience in the human services sector. The AASW policy for credit transfer and recognition of prior learning is detailed in Part 1, section 7 and 8 [...]. The policy as it relates to field education is outlined further below:

- (i) Credit for the first field education placement or part thereof, may be possible on the basis of recognition of prior work experience or the completion of field education placements completed prior to entry into the social work program.

- (ii) Performance outcomes for first placement based on the *AASW Practice Standards* and *Code of Ethics* will be used to assess students for RPL.
- (iii) In accordance with the policies in this document credit for the first field education placement or part thereof, will take account of:
 - the currency of the work experience (minimum 5FTE in last10 years), with a minimum of 3 years practice in a relevant context,
 - the use of social work practice skills such as assessment and counselling
 - familiarity and use of a range of methods such as case work and community work;
 - verification of student’s claim by a qualified social worker who can attest to its accuracy.
- (iv) Recognition of Prior Learning for field education must be thoroughly assessed.
- (v) In order to be granted RPL for field education the student must provide evidence that they have met the standards and performance outcomes for the first placement. This should include for example, job descriptions accompanied by referee reports; skills assessment and critical reflection on placement or work experience.”

Monash Recognition of Prior Learning Application Process:

Recognition of Prior Learning is given in acknowledgement that the student has performed academically or professionally in such a way that they can show the same level of knowledge, skill, and integration of theory and development of Social Work identity as a student within the course who has passed the specified unit. This means that the student has reached the standard expected at completion of the first placement, as detailed in the learning objectives below.

Learning Objectives for First Placement:

1. Develop an understanding of and articulate relevant social work theory and how it can be integrated into effective direct service delivery
2. Demonstrate an ability to interpret professional social work ethics and familiarity with the AASW Code of Ethics
3. Demonstrate beginning social work practice skills and values.
4. Explore and articulate professional social work attributes including an understanding of the nature of professional roles and responsibilities
5. Articulate and explore personal values and conflicts in social work settings
6. Articulate an awareness of a range of social work intervention strategies applicable to work with individuals, families and communities
7. Demonstrate an understanding of multi-dimensional assessment and plan appropriate intervention, including evaluation of outcomes, for a range of individual, family and community problems

8. Develop an understanding of the principles and purpose of social work supervision and its effectiveness in social work practice
9. Develop an understanding of critical and reflective social work practice.
10. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of working in an organisational context and professional behaviour that is consistent with organisational aims, policies and objectives
11. Develop an understanding of the AASW Practice Standards and how they relate to social work practice

As per the AASW policy, credit or RPL can only be given in regard to the first placement.

International students who are seeking recognition of prior learning for a field education placement apply in the same way as domestic students. However, if the prior learning was undertaken outside Australia evidence will be required for the student to demonstrate how this experience can be translated to the Australian context. It is unlikely, except in rare cases that more than 15 days credit will be granted to students whose field experience for which they are seeking credit was completed in another country because to practice successfully in the Australian context students need to demonstrate knowledge of the Australian health and welfare systems.

If the application for credit or RPL (for any amount of time) is successful:

- The student ~~must still attend the workshops for skills (for off-campus students) and/or may attend~~ the integration days (for on campus and Melbourne placed students)
- The student's second placement cannot be in their place of work, unless there are exceptional circumstances
- The student must receive direct Social Work supervision in the second placement (i.e. not external supervision)
- The second placement must have a direct service component.

CREDIT – will be given for students who have successfully completed a direct service placement in an AASW accredited Social Work Course at the equivalent level.

As per the university policy, the student must submit a formal application on the university form, <http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/service-centre/forms/credit.pdf>

RPL is Assessed in Two Stages:

Stage One – for applications for 15 days credit towards the first placement or as the first of two stages for RPL for the whole first placement.

Stage Two – for applicants who have been assessed positively at the first stage and are deemed eligible to apply for RPL for the whole of the first placement.

The possible outcomes for the assessment of RPL are:

- ◆ the application will be denied and no RPL will be given, or
- ◆ 15 days of credit will be granted, or
- ◆ RPL will be granted for the full placement.

The rationale for offering only 15 days RPL is that anything more would make the placement viability difficult for the student's learning, for the field teacher to form achievable goals and for the required administration to be reasonable. Fifteen days RPL leaves the student with a 55 day placement to in which to meet all the learning goals and be assessed.

Stage One

Submission due by 09 March

Students should submit a portfolio comprising the following four forms of evidence for RPL by the due date:

1. Personal details
2. Completed self-assessment (see below) to address the learning objectives for first placement. The form includes a 1-5 scale relating to basic competencies (as used in the mid and final assessments for students on placement) giving examples of your use of social work practice skills such as assessment and counselling and further demonstrating familiarity and use of a range of methods such as case work and community work.
3. Details of relevant work experience (must meet AASW guidelines re minimum 5 FTE years in last 10 years, with a minimum of 3 years practice in a relevant context). This includes job descriptions and examples from practice.
4. Name and contact details of an AASW eligible supervisor, who has known and supervised you for at least two years. The department will contact the supervisor and ask him/her to complete the same self-assessment questionnaire. You must receive an assessment of 3 and above which qualifies as a pass for each of the objectives for your application to proceed.

The Portfolio will be assessed by a panel of Monash social work staff.

The panel may decide:

- to grant 15 days RPL, but not consider an application for RPL for the full placement
- the student is eligible to apply for stage 2 – that is, full RPL for the first placement
- to require major or minor revisions to the Portfolio before a decision is made
- to decline approval for RPL

Stage Two

Submission by 30 April

Students who have met the requirements of stage 1 for a full RPL should submit:

- A 1,500 word critical reflection on their work experience, demonstrating integration of theory and practice ~~and~~, social work values and ethics (~~AASW Accreditation Standards Section 7.2.3 refers~~). The submission should attend to the requirements and assessment criteria of the Critical Analysis component of the first placement. The critical reflection will be assessed by members of the panel.

AND

Students will be asked to present in front of a panel. This part of the assessment will be based on a role play interview to take place on campus at Monash. For off-campus students, the role play will be scheduled to coincide with off-campus workshop attendance. The interview will take place for half an hour. Following the interview students must complete and submit a 1,500 word assessment and intervention report within the following 24 hours.

The panel may decide:

- to grant approval of full RPL for the first placement
- to require major or minor revision to the work presented
- to decline approval of RPL for the full placement, leaving the student with 15 days RPL.

Requests for review/appeals

Assessment of credit is an academic decision and as such, students may request a review of the decision under the [Academic and Administrative Complaints and Grievances Policy](#) and its related procedures.

Learning Areas to be assessed by student, please complete **the following**:

(From Monash Supervised Professional Practice Learning Agreement and Assessment Report)

No.	Learning Area and description	Rating	Practice example
1	Values, ethics and professional practice: Awareness of contextually relevant ethics in accordance with the AASW Code of Ethics.		
2	Organisational context: An understanding of the organizational, legal and political contexts of human service processes.		
3	Use of knowledge in practice: An understanding of theories and methodologies relevant to practice and ability to reflect critically upon their use and application to work with individuals, families and communities.		
4.	Processes, skills and relationships: An ability to form constructive relationships with individuals, groups and communities including user groups, colleagues, professionals and people in other significant roles/positions.		
5.	Self learning and professional development: The ability to take responsibility for one's own learning and development, and to perform at a level of competence appropriate to a beginning social work practitioner, including the skills to manage one's future career and the transition from university to professional practice.		
6.	Research: Recognition of research as an integral part of social work practice; demonstrating knowledge and understanding of all types and stages of social research.		
7.	Social Policy: An understanding of the legislative and social policies which influence the different fields of practice including knowledge of relevant legislative and policy frameworks.		

Step 2:

Relevant work experience:

Please provide a summary of your practice experience in support of this application. Include the job title, employer name and location, dates of employment and principal duties of the role. Attach relevant job descriptions if available.

Step 3:

Name and contact details of supervisor: _____ **Email:** _____

Please provide the name and contact details of an AASW eligible supervisor who has supervised your work for at least two years. The supervisor should be your current or most recent supervisor if possible.

Send your completed application for Stage One by 09 March to:

Lesley-Caron Veater

Department of Social Work, Monash University

PO Box 197

CAULFIELD EAST VIC 3145

Or email to: Lesley.veater@monash.edu

Updated: 01 December 2011

AASW Education and Accreditation Standards 2009