

# Academic Policies

## Admission to undergraduate degree courses

Avondale College welcomes applications from all prospective students and no test of religion, politics, race or gender is applied to determine admission as a student, graduation or the enjoyment of any benefit, advantage or privilege of the institution. Admission to Avondale College is dependent on demonstrated evidence of good character, intellectual competence, and a willingness to conform to College regulations.

## Admission requirements for undergraduate degrees

### Admission for Australian and New Zealand students

Entry is normally by achieving a satisfactory completion of Year 12 (Australia) or Year 13 (New Zealand) and a Universities Admission Index (UAI) score (currently UAI of 65), or its equivalent in other States (eg TER, ENTER, OP), or the International Baccalaureate.

The Academic Registrar in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty (or Faculties) is able to assess the equivalence of particular indices or profiles used in other States. A number of alternative pathways are available, see below.

### Alternative entry pathways

Several pathways are available to admission but the onus is on the student to demonstrate his/her capacity to succeed in tertiary education. Academic requirements and pathways are comparable to those required by other higher education institutions for similar courses and consistent with the AQF.

- **TAFE Qualifications**

Certain qualifications from a TAFE or Registered Training Organisation (RTO) may be used to demonstrate capacity to succeed at tertiary level. For example:

*Certificate IV in Foundation Studies*—for entry to various undergraduate degrees

- **Foundation Studies**

Appropriate performance in a recognised Foundation Studies program such as Avondale College's Diploma of General Studies may be used as a pathway to degree studies and to demonstrate ability to succeed in tertiary education. Appropriate performance may be demonstrated by successfully completing the Higher Education (HEAccess) Test normally undertaken at the conclusion of the first semester by Australian

students enrolled in Avondale College's Foundation Studies program, the Diploma of General Studies. Upon successful completion of the first four subjects in the Foundation Studies program and the HEAccess Test, Australian and New Zealand students may apply to enrol in an undergraduate course.

International students also may choose Foundation Studies as a pathway to a degree course. Applicants from other countries whose first language is not English may be advised to take studies in an ELICOS program as a preparation for Foundation Studies. Depending on their prior level of achievement, international students enrol for either one semester, two or three semesters or two years.

- **Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT)**

An appropriate score in the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) may be provided by applicants who have not attempted the Higher School Certificate (HSC) or its equivalent, and who are more than nineteen years of age by 1 March in the commencing year of studies. Applicants are advised to sit the STAT at least six weeks before the commencement of the semester.

- **Special Consideration**

Special consideration may be extended to people who have suffered economic or social disadvantage. Disadvantage may be the result of many factors including: low socio-economic background, non-English speaking background, family disruption, high mobility in childhood, little encouragement to continue study, primary care of children, remote area background, excessive travel time to school, personal illness, injury, disability, or refugee status. In such cases, the onus remains with the applicant to demonstrate a level of knowledge that indicates a capacity to succeed at tertiary level. This may be done by undertaking the STAT test, the Foundation Studies Course, relevant TAFE qualifications, or by recent passes in four subjects completed at a recognised tertiary institution.

### Admission for international students

International students should have completed a minimum of twelve years of schooling (elementary and high) with grades satisfactory for entry into a degree program in Australia. The Academic Registrar assesses the qualifications of all international students.

Applicants from a country where English is not the first language also need to demonstrate proficiency in English to enter an undergraduate degree at Avondale College. This may be done in one of the following ways:

- 1 provide documentary evidence at the time the application is lodged that all secondary schooling was conducted in the English language *and* evidence of a satisfactory pass in English in a British 0-level examination or local equivalent; *or*
- 2 provide documentary evidence at the time the application is lodged of a satisfactory pass in the standardised IELTS test with a score of 6.0 or better, with no individual band score less than 6.0, for courses in all faculties except the Faculty of Nursing and Health which requires an IELTS score of 6.5 or better with a written score of at least 6.5 and with no individual band score of 6.0 or less; *or*
- 3 provide documentary evidence at the time the application is lodged of a satisfactory pass in the standardised TOEFL test at a score of 550 with no score less than 4.0 in the Test of Written English in all faculties except the Faculty of Nursing and Health; *or*
- 4 successful completion of at least two years of tertiary study conducted in the English language in Australia or another country in which English is the official language within the last two years.

These English entry requirements are a minimum level and applicants are advised to take further English study after enrolment if specific language challenges are encountered.

If applicants do not meet these English language requirements but satisfy all other academic requirements, they will be advised to undertake instruction in an English Language program. (Avondale College is able to advise prospective students of the location of English Language schools in Australia.) For admission to all faculties except the Faculty of Nursing and Health, this may be taken as a package offer in which the English course is followed by undergraduate study.

Overseas applicants are also required to satisfy Australian Government visa requirements. Applicants from countries deemed Level 3 or 4 by the Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs will be required to obtain an IELTS score of 6.0 or better (this applies to all applicants except those applying for courses in the Faculty of Nursing and Health where an IELTS score of 6.5 or better is required) to be eligible to obtain a visa, even if the other options listed above are demonstrated. The Australian Embassy, High Commission or Consulate in the home country will provide information regarding the visa requirement. (See [www.immi.gov.au/study](http://www.immi.gov.au/study)).

COUNTRY	ENTRY CERTIFICATE REQUIRED
All countries	Successful completion of the International Baccalaureate
Botswana <sup>1</sup>	Successful completion of General Certificate of Education "A" levels; <i>or</i> Successful completion of one year of study at a recognised university
Brazil	Successful completion of one year of study at a recognised university; <i>or</i> Satisfactory completion of a recognised college or TAFE diploma
Canada	Minimum of 6 UPP subjects; <i>or</i> Canadian Matriculation; <i>or</i> Provincial High School Diploma; <i>or</i> Ontario Secondary School Diploma with 60% average in Years 11 and 12
Peoples Republic of China	Satisfactory completion of one year of study at a recognised university; <i>or</i> Applicants with completed degrees should provide certified proof of completion including National Emblem, certificate number and accreditation of their degree; <i>or</i> Satisfactory completion of a recognised college or TAFE diploma
Denmark	Completed Danish Studentereksamen or equivalent
Fiji	Satisfactory completion of Form 7; <i>or</i> satisfactory completion of a recognised Foundation Year
France	Baccalaureate
Germany	Abitur, Reifezeugnis
Hong Kong	A minimum of two academic HK or GCE "A" level subjects at one sitting
India	Successful completion of Senior Secondary Certificate (10+2) with an aggregate of at least 60% in best four subjects (excluding any local languages)
Indonesia	Successful completion of one year of study at a recognised university with grades above 6.5 Completion of SMU 3 with a GPA of 8.0 (Nursing, Science and Mathematics requires 8.6)
Japan	Successful completion of one year of study at a recognised university or junior college; <i>or</i> Satisfactory completion of a recognised college or TAFE diploma
Kenya	Kenyan Certificate of Secondary Education with excellent grades in eight major subjects; <i>or</i> GCE "A" level with good grades in two major subjects
Korea (South)	Successful completion of one year of study at a recognised university; <i>or</i> Korean Senior High School Diploma with a GPA of 2.5 plus Foundaton Studies Year
Malaysia	Successful completion of one year of study at a recognised university; <i>or</i> Satisfactory completion of a recognised college or TAFE diploma; <i>or</i> Successful completion of STPM; <i>or</i> Successful completion of UEC; <i>or</i> Successful completion of GCE "A" levels; <i>or</i> Successful completion of 32 credit hours in the America Degree Program
Netherlands	Diploma Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs
New Zealand	Satisfactory completion of NZ Universities Bursaries Examination
Norway	Successful completion of Vitnemal: den Videragenade Skole plus 4 in English
Pacific Islands	Satisfactory completion of the University of the South Pacific Foundation Year
Papua New Guinea	Satisfactory completion of either the NSW, ACT or QLD Year 12 Certificate
Philippines	Satisfactory completion of two years of study at a recognised university
Singapore	Minimum of two academic GCE "A" level subjects at one sitting; <i>or</i> GCE "O" level with five subjects at C plus satisfactory completion of a Foundation Studies Year
South Africa	Satisfactory completion of the SA Senior Certificate of Matriculation Certificate of the Joint Matriculation Board
Sweden	Swedish Secondary School Certificate, Avgangsbetyg
Taiwan	Satisfactory completion of one year of study at a recognised university; <i>or</i> Satisfactory completion of Senior High School <i>or</i> Vocational High School with a B average (70%) grade
Tanzania	Minimum of two academic GCE "A" level subjects at one sitting; <i>or</i> GCE "O" level with five subjects at C plus satisfactory completion of a Foundation Studies Year
Thailand	Completion of the Matayom 6 Thai Certificate of Secondary Education
Uganda	Minimum of two academic GCE "A" level subjects at one sitting; <i>or</i> GCE "O" level with five subjects at C plus satisfactory completion of a Foundation Studies Year
United Kingdom	GCE "A" levels
United States	Successful completion of one year of study at a recognised university; <i>or</i> Satisfactory completion of a recognised college or TAFE diploma; <i>or</i> Graduation from High School plus appropriate SAT, APT or ACT (minimum GPA of 3.0 or higher)
Zambia	Minimum of two academic GCE "A" level subjects at one sitting; <i>or</i> GCE "O" level with five subjects at C plus satisfactory completion of a Foundation Studies Year
Zimbabwe	Minimum of two academic GCE "A" level subjects at one sitting; <i>or</i> GCE "O" level with C+ in five main subjects plus Foundation Studies Year

## NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Applicants from Botswana, China and India may only use an IELTS test result when applying for a student visa. A TOEFL test result is not acceptable (see DIMA at [www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm)).

## Additional requirements

- **Specific prerequisites**

Some courses have specific prerequisites and these are listed with the information about that particular course later in this handbook.

- **For applicants for Commonwealth-supported places in teaching and nursing**

Offers of places are made in order of merit (based on UAI score in NSW or its equivalent score in other states or other entry qualifications as assessed by the Academic Registrar).

- **For applicants without recent study experience**

Students entering an undergraduate program who have not recently been engaged in formal study are required to attend the Academic Bridging Program offered during the week prior to the start of first semester. Exemption from this requirement is possible only upon the provision of evidence of recent successful academic performance.

- **For all students**

A basic level of computer proficiency is required of all students who undertake an undergraduate degree at Avondale College. Applicants for the Bachelor of Arts and Teacher Education courses fulfil this requirement in the required subjects HU156 Communicating in the Arts or ED158 Communication for Educators. Applicants for courses in the other faculties may demonstrate their proficiency in one of three ways:

1. provide certificates detailing keyboard input speed and accuracy and word processing competence from a recognised institution;
2. take a speed test during registration (a speed of at least 20 wpm with a minimum 90% accuracy is required) *and* pass a word processing challenge test;
3. take the subject: Word Processing Competency (WP010).

The challenge test is offered free of charge during the first two weeks of the semester. Before attempting this test students will need to be able to create and save files to subfolders, enter and edit text, change margins and line spacing, indent text, spellcheck, use cut and paste, insert bullets, use headers and footers, insert automatic page numbering, and create tables. A student who neglects to take the challenge test at the designated time will need to arrange to satisfy these requirements at his/her own expense. Use of Avondale College word processing facilities, and graduation, is dependent on demonstrating word processing competence.

- **For courses involving contact with vulnerable people**

Applicants for courses offered by the Faculties of Education, Nursing and Health, Theology and any other

courses that include contact with children, young people, the ill, or other classes of vulnerable people are required to sign a self-disclosure form (Prohibited Persons Declaration) and consent to a criminal records check. These checks may be required by organisations providing professional experience placements, fieldwork, clinical placements, work experience or professional internship placements. Applicants should note that in order to run the criminal records check, an employer body or other agency may require Avondale College to provide it with personal information including name, date and place of birth, citizenship status and current address.

- **For courses including fieldwork**

Some courses require professional experience placements, fieldwork, clinical components, work experience or professional internship placements. If organisations/agencies providing such placements decline for any reason to permit a student to undertake this aspect of his/her studies, then he/she may not be able to complete the requirements of the course. Avondale College will do all that is reasonable to arrange an alternative location for the student to undertake such compulsory components. However, Avondale College cannot guarantee that such an option will be available. Students should therefore note that, in such circumstances, they may not be able to graduate with the anticipated award.

Other courses such as nursing also require adherence to relevant NSW Health Department vaccination and screening guidelines that are in place during the time of their course. This may require completion of some vaccinations or undertaking of particular screening for exposure to, or protection from, certain diseases. Non-participation in this vaccination and screening program may prevent the completion of compulsory clinical placements and hence the student may not be able to graduate with the anticipated award.

## Advanced standing and credit transfer

### Advanced standing for completed formal studies

Students may apply for advanced standing in undergraduate or postgraduate courses where they have completed formal studies at another higher education institution. Students apply by submitting the appropriate form to the Course Coordinator and attaching documentary evidence of satisfactory completion of that course or courses. A decision is made by the relevant Faculty Research and Teaching Committee about the level at which the student will enter the course (eg, one year of advanced standing means the student will enter the course at the level of Year 2). The maximum amount of credit that may be granted normally is no greater than 50% of the course. (Where vocational education and training is in an area related to the subject matter of the undergraduate degree course,

credit may be granted for up to one year of the Avondale College undergraduate course for studies completed at the Diploma or Advanced Diploma level<sup>1</sup>.)

### **Block or unspecified credit**

Students may apply for unspecified or block credit in undergraduate or postgraduate courses where they have completed a block of subjects that comprise part of a course at a recognised higher education institution. Students apply by submitting the appropriate form to the Course Coordinator and attaching documentary evidence of satisfactory completion of those subjects. A decision is made by the relevant Faculty Research and Teaching Committee about the equivalence of the block of subjects from which the student will be exempted (eg, a major/minor sequence). The maximum amount of credit which may be granted normally is no greater than 50% of the course. Where vocational education and training study is in an area related to the subject matter of the degree course, credit may be granted for up to one year of the Avondale College degree course for studies completed at the Diploma or Advanced Diploma level.

### **Credit transfer**

Students may apply for credit transfer in undergraduate or postgraduate courses where they have completed a subject or subjects at a recognised higher education institution. Students apply by submitting the appropriate form to the Course Coordinator and attaching documentary evidence of satisfactory completion of a similar subject(s).

A decision is made about the equivalence of the subject(s) from which the students will be exempted (eg, Chemistry IA). Decisions about credit transfer applications will be made by the relevant Faculty Research and Teaching Committee on the following basis:

- subjects for which credit is granted should have reasonable correspondence to subjects offered by Avondale College;
- credit is normally not granted for work completed more than 10 years previously;
- students wishing to take out two Avondale College awards may be granted cross credits not exceeding 50% of the shorter course;
- where a student qualifies for two awards at Avondale College, the Christian Studies subjects for the longer course are deemed to meet the requirements of the shorter course;
- requests for credit transfer in excess of these guidelines may be considered by the Faculty Research and Teaching Committee on a case-by-case basis but will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

### **Waiver/exemption**

Students may apply for an exemption from a required element of a course on the basis of subjects or equivalent content completed elsewhere, but the student may be required to undertake alternative subject(s) to an equivalent credit point value in lieu of the exempted subject(s).

### **Credit by challenge assessment**

Incoming students may submit to the Faculty Research and Teaching Committee an application to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes of a particular subject through prior learning. The Faculty Research and Teaching Committee may permit the applicant to demonstrate their prior learning through submitting a summative assessment item normally in the form of an examination. In such cases, the Faculty Dean shall be satisfied that the summative assessment item is set and assessed at the same level as that expected of other students in the subject. The student must achieve at least a passing grade.

Upon successful completion of the challenge assessment, the student must submit a request for credit transfer for the relevant subject, providing documentary evidence of the successful completion of the challenge assessment.

### **Partial credit**

Students may seek partial credit from assessment within a subject by applying to the lecturer in charge of the particular subject. If satisfactory documentary evidence is presented by the student, the lecturer may exempt the student from the particular part of the assessment or attendance requirements that is related to the previously completed material (eg, for providing a Certificate of Completion for the standard “Basic Week Workshop” offered by the William Glasser Institute a student may be exempted from one assignment in a behaviour management course).

### **Recognition of Prior Learning and Recognition of Current Competency**

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) are terms normally reserved for Vocational Education courses. See the Advanced Standing Policy and Procedures on the Avondale College website.

### **Christian studies subjects**

Students admitted with advanced standing who will require more than two semesters to complete a course leading to the awarding of an undergraduate degree at Avondale College must complete any two of the following subjects

- Christian Studies I
- Christian Studies II
- Christian Studies III and variants, *or*

choose an equivalent number of subjects from the range of subjects offered in the Faculty of Theology.

Students who have previously taken the required number of these subjects or approved alternatives at Avondale College or other institution will be exempted from the above requirements. Students admitted with advanced

<sup>1</sup> Your application may also need approval by any related professional body; and you must have been assessed as competent in the modules you undertook.

standing in the Bachelor of Nursing course should seek advice on Christian Studies requirements from the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing and Health.

### **Credit transfer through cross institutional enrolment**

Avondale College students should seek the permission of their Course Coordinator prior to enrolling in studies with another institution that they will later seek to credit toward their Avondale College course.

Upon successful completion of the course at the other institution, it is the student's responsibility to submit an application for credit transfer to the Course Coordinator and attach a copy of the official results obtained at the other institution.

### **Academic integrity**

Avondale College's Code of Conduct states that it is an educational aim of Avondale College to develop skilled graduates who act according to ethical principles and with integrity in their personal and professional lives. In preparing students to meet this aim, Avondale College expects students to act with integrity in the performance of their academic work while students at College. Avondale College assists students in this respect by informing them how to act with integrity and discouraging all forms of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty may take several forms and these forms include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating in examinations, falsification of data, and incorrectly ascribing authorship in group projects.

**Plagiarism** is the use of someone else's ideas or words as if they were your own. It is one form of academic dishonesty, and students are expected to avoid plagiarism by doing their own work when independent work is required; acknowledging all sources of information and ideas; and acknowledging all group members when group assignments are required. Students should attach a cover sheet to all assignments that includes the following declaration:

*"I certify that this assignment is my own work and is free from plagiarism. I understand that the assignment may be checked for plagiarism by electronic or other means. The assignment has not previously been submitted for assessment in any other subject or institution. I have read and understood Avondale College's academic integrity policy."*

Signed ..... Date .....

Further, students should refrain from copying another student's work; producing an assignment in conjunction with another person when independent work is required; lending an assignment to another student(s); copying or quoting from another source without acknowledging that source and appropriately identifying all quoted material; and paraphrasing another person's work closely, with minor changes, but with the essential meaning, form and/or

progression of ideas maintained, without acknowledging the source of the paraphrase. (Extensive paraphrasing, even when acknowledged, is not advisable.)

Since Avondale College's philosophy is educative, first instances of plagiarism, if minor, will bring a warning and penalties ranging from deduction of marks to resubmission of an assignment. Students in their second or later semesters will be penalised more heavily than beginning students. Illustrative penalties are:

- *First offence:* penalties range from substantial deduction of marks to zero marks for an assignment.
- *Second offence (counting all subjects taken at Avondale College):* fail grade for the subject.
- *Third offence (counting all subjects taken at Avondale College):* the student may be discontinued from further study at Avondale College.

NOTE: All instances of plagiarism will be recorded and the documentation placed in the student's academic file.

### **Plagiarism procedure**

If a lecturer suspects plagiarism the lecturer will normally:

- 1 discuss the matter with the student and if plagiarism is established;
- 2 confer with the Dean of Faculty and, if necessary, other colleagues, to determine the appropriate penalty. As part of this process the Dean shall check the student's Academic Office file for any previous plagiarism offences.
- 3 the Dean of the Faculty shall report all instances of serious plagiarism to the Chair of the Academic Board who will ensure that a record is placed in the student's file of the date, the subject involved, the nature and extent of the plagiarism, and the action taken.

### **Appeals on academic matters**

Academic matters include, but are not limited to, matters relating to admissions, review of a grade, transfer credit or advanced standing, quality assurance, and eligibility for graduation. Policies for each of these academic matters appear in both the student section and academic section of the Avondale College Policy Manual, the definitive version of which is located on the Avondale College website.

Appeals normally occur in two stages. In Stage One the student is encouraged to contact the lecturer to confirm that the grade issued is the correct grade, and that a clerical error has not occurred. Following this confirmation, if the student continues to hold the belief that an injustice exists due to some inadequacy in the validity or the reliability of the assessment, a formal appeal may be initiated.

- 1 The student (or nominee) initiates the appeal/grievance process by discussing orally the nature of the appeal/grievance with the person with whom the grievance is held.
- 2 If the oral response does not satisfy the student he/she may either speak with or submit a written description of the grievance to the Dean of the Faculty who will

endeavour to resolve the issue amicably and with respect to the rights and responsibilities of both parties. If the student feels unwilling or unable to approach either the person with whom the grievance is held or the Dean of the Faculty, the student may seek the support of another person in authority such as the Director of Student Services, a representative of the Avondale College Student and Faculty Association Council, the Equity Officer, the Disabilities Officer, the Student Counsellor, or the Chaplain.

- 3 If the Dean of the Faculty is unable to resolve the matter informally, he/she will establish a meeting within 10 working days between the student, the person with whom the grievance is held, and any other relevant authorities or persons.
- 4 If the matter remains unresolved then a written grievance with full supporting documentation shall be submitted to the Vice-President (Learning and Teaching). The Vice-President (Learning and Teaching) (or nominee) will within 10 working days interview all parties individually, and set up a meeting between all parties where arguments and/or witnesses in support of either party can be presented. The Vice-President (Learning and Teaching), in consultation with a sub-committee (comprising no more than four persons) of the Teaching and Learning Committee will make a final determination on the matter within 10 working days of receiving the written submission, and communicate the outcome to all parties. In communicating this outcome the Vice-President (Learning and Teaching) will give reasons and full explanation in writing for the decision and actions taken as part of the procedures, if requested, by the complainant and/or respondent.
- 5 This Grievance and Appeal process does not preclude the student seeking redress in other forums outside the Avondale College process. For example, the student may wish to take the matter further by selecting the appropriate body from among such bodies as the Office of Fair Trading (02 4925 7000), the DEST National Training Hotline (1800 000 674), the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1300 656 419) or the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW (02 4926 4300). (A full list of external bodies is located in the Government section of the local telephone book.)

Students should note that:

- The Office of the Vice-President (Learning and Teaching) will keep appropriate records of grievance for at least fifteen years, and allow parties to the complaint appropriate access to these records.
- The Office of the Vice-President (Learning and Teaching) will ensure that all records are treated as confidential.
- In the case of an appeal against a grade the result may be that the final grade is either retained, raised or lowered.
- In a dispute relating to instructions which have been given to students on assessment procedures within a

subject, the written guidelines which lecturers have provided to students will be taken as definitive.

- Avondale College will alter this policy immediately and without notice where any conflict arises with relevant legislation and in such cases the requirements of the legislation will take precedence.
- A nominee of the student may be included in the grievance handling processes if the student so chooses.

## Assessment

Assessment tasks are set in each subject to promote learning and to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned. Academic staff also are able to demonstrate that students who apply to graduate have fulfilled the requirements of their course, met the requirements of accrediting bodies, Avondale College's Quality Management System and the requirements for professional registration where necessary.

Assessment tasks allow academic staff to monitor students' progress and/or diagnose and remediate learning difficulties and/or deficiencies. Assessment tasks may be modified to allow students with disabilities to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes through alternate means. Assessment tasks also provide feedback to academic staff on the effectiveness of their instructional methods, and adequacy of the content selected.

Assessment tasks may take a variety of forms such as examinations, portfolios, case studies, critical incident scenarios, group presentations, problem-based learning tasks and may increase in the level of difficulty as the course progresses. In designing assessment tasks academic staff encourage students to demonstrate:

- mastery of the body of knowledge identified in the subject outline;
- understanding of the key concepts of the subject;
- ability to deduce, infer, analyse, synthesize and evaluate;
- ability to apply theories and methodological content of the discipline;
- ability to evaluate content and/or concepts as a basis for professional decision making;
- a capacity for independent thought;
- ability to develop new ideas based on sound scholarship;
- ability to select, use and document the source of their ideas; and
- capacity to argue and communicate coherently and persuasively either symbolically or in written form.

The types and amount of assessment normally undertaken by students at Avondale College are included in the assessment policy located on Avondale College website. In summary, key principles include that assessment in each subject normally:

- requires students to apply the knowledge that they have learned to problems that graduates of the course

- may encounter in the workplace;
- measures whether or not the intended learning outcomes stated in the subject outlines and the content covered in the course have been achieved;
- is completed, with other subject requirements, within the allocated time of 150 hours for each 6-credit point subject.

Further details on the types and amount of assessment appear in the current version of the Types and Amount of Assessment Policy located on Avondale College website.

### The assessment process

Subject outlines provided to students at the commencement of each semester include a description of the assessment tasks, their relative weighting, assessment topics, and a list of criteria by which the item(s) will be evaluated.

An overview of all assessment items required to be submitted by students enrolled in the course each semester is compiled by the course coordinator to ensure that the workload of the course is manageable and spread equitably throughout the semester. A copy of this overview is made available for students.

In marking the assessment tasks, Avondale College academic staff use both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessment methods depending on the constraints of each subject. When using both methods of assessment academic staff apply the stated criteria consistently so that students with the same level of achievement receive identical grades. Comments written on the assignments provide feedback to students that is:

- timely (that is, marked assignments are returned to students in less than two weeks after submission);
- informative so that comments provided to students relate to the criteria established at the commencement of the semester.

### Grades awarded

At the conclusion of a semester, academic staff may award any of the following grades. Students are expected to achieve grades of Pass or better for subjects to be counted towards an award although up to two subjects at Pass Terminating (PT) level may be counted.

- High Distinction (HD)** normally indicating achievement in the range of 85–100%
- Distinction (D)** normally indicating achievement in the range of 75–84%
- Credit (C)** normally indicating achievement in the range of 65–74%
- Pass (P)** normally indicating achievement in the range of 50–64%
- Pass Terminating (PT)** normally indicating achievement in the range of 45–49%. PTs indicate that the subject may not be used as a prerequisite for a subject at a more advanced level. No more than three PTs in a three-year bachelor degree are permitted for certification purposes. Chartered Practising Accountants (CPA)

requirements state that “no more than one terminating pass is acceptable for subjects in the core curriculum in accounting and business related areas, unless a more advanced subject in the areas is passed.”

- Fail, supplementary available (FS)** is reserved for students who have passed other items of assessment and may pass the subject if they achieve a higher examination score by completing extra assignment work, practical work, and/or an examination.
- Pass with supplementary assessment (PS)** indicates that the student achieved a passing grade after completing an additional assessment. Supplementary assessments normally are awarded where a student failed a subject because an essential assessment component for the subject has not met the minimum requirement but the aggregate score for the assessment is greater than or equal to 50%, or where a student has a mark that falls in the range of 45%–49%. Supplementary assessments may include assignment work, practical work and/or an examination. Supplementary assessments are to be submitted by the end of the first week of the semester following that in which the subject was studied unless otherwise determined by the Faculty Examination Board. If the supplementary assessment is not completed by the specified date which must be no later than the census date of the following semester, the FS grade will convert to an FF. If the supplementary assessment(s) is not attempted the FS grade reverts to a F. The lecturer in charge of the subject is responsible for notifying the student of the work to be completed, and also for notifying the Academic Registrar when the work has been received, marked and a final grade for the subject is available.
- Fail after supplementary assessment attempted (FF)** indicates that the student achieved a failing grade after completing additional assessment.
- Fail (F)** normally in the range 0–49% however, a failing grade may be awarded in any subject where minimum requirements in essential components have not been met.
- Withdrawal without penalty (W)** indicates that the student was permitted to withdraw from the subject without academic or financial penalties.
- Fail due to late withdrawal (FW)** from the subject and financial and academic penalties imposed.
- Incomplete (IC)** indicates that the subject is incomplete due to outstanding assessment. When the student has not completed the required work, has requested an extension and the lecturer believes that the student experienced circumstances beyond his/her control, the lecturer in charge of the subject may award an IC. The lecturer in charge of the subject must stipulate the revised due date; must notify the student of the work to be completed, and the due date for its completion. The lecturer in charge must notify the Academic Office when the work has been submitted, marked and of the final grade for the subject before the census date for the next semester.
- Deferred examination (DE)** indicates that the student

is required to successfully complete a deferred examination in the subject before the subject is counted towards the course of study. Students who, by reason of extenuating circumstances such as sickness or accident, are unfit to sit a scheduled examination or to make adequate preparation may apply to the Academic Registrar for a deferred examination. Such application must be made on the prescribed form countersigned by a medical practitioner (where illness is the ground for the application), or by a Residence Hall Director, Director of Student Services or the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing and Health (for the Sydney campus) in other cases. The application form must be submitted to the Academic Registrar as soon as it can be completed. (The expectation is that this will normally be completed within 24 hours). Where sudden illness, accident or other serious misadventure occurs during the examination which prevents the student from continuing with the examination, it is the duty of the student to bring such problem immediately to the attention of the chief examination supervisor who shall report to the Academic Registrar. If an application for a deferred examination arises from such a situation, it should be lodged as soon as is reasonably possible with the Academic Office, and is to be supported by relevant documentation. Students who misread the examination timetable will not be granted permission to sit a deferred examination.

- **Satisfactory (S)** indicates satisfactory achievement in a subject in which the full-range of grades was not available.
- **Unsatisfactory (U)** indicates unsatisfactory achievement in a subject for which the full range of grades was not available.
- **Audit (AU)** indicates attendance at classes but the student was not enrolled in the subject and did not complete assessment tasks.

### Norm-referenced assessment

In a norm-referenced assessment the distribution of scores gained from marking student scripts is a relative rather than absolute measure of quality. Students are measured in relation to the achievement of their peers. Small class sizes make this type of assessment problematic. However, if this type of assessment is used at Avondale College in some large classes utilizing more than one lecturer and/or tutor it may be appropriate to rescale scores in order to approach a level of parity between the markers and student groups. Where class size indicates that rescaling is appropriate lecturers may standardize marks using a standard score such as the Z-score.

### Criterion-referenced assessment

A criterion-referenced assessment compares the students' performance with a set of standards that are provided to students at the commencement of the semester. Feedback given to students by lecturers using criterion-referenced assessment provides information to students regarding the

level of their achievement in relation to their own established goals and helps to focus learning on the intended learning outcomes. Final grades are an expression of how closely students' work has approximated the intended learning outcomes. Where deficiencies exist students are made aware of the areas of those deficiencies and how to address them, thus making progression to advanced levels possible.

## Tests and examinations

### Scheduling tests and examinations

Wherever possible, tests and examinations are scheduled to avoid unmanageable workload peaks for students, and to allow adequate time for study at the end of each semester. Course coordinators ensure that major assignments do not fall due in the last two weeks of classes except in subjects where there is no final test or examination. No tests or assignments are to be scheduled during the Professional Experience for teacher education students. No off-campus trips or extra-curricular activities are to be scheduled during the last week of classes in a semester.

### Examination procedures

Avondale College takes seriously its responsibility to conduct examinations in a manner to ensure that academic integrity is maintained. Failure to comply with examination procedures will result in a failing grade. The responsibilities and roles of students and Avondale College are outlined below.

### Examination roles and responsibilities

Students have a responsibility to:

- be present at the scheduled time. Students should not make any travel bookings during the published examination period or arrange events that are incompatible with attendance during examinations;
- bring writing tools as directed by the lecturer;
- bring their ID card and place it on the desk in front of them during the examination;
- write their ID number and/or name clearly on the examination paper and/or examination booklet;
- follow directions provided by the lecturer for the subject, the invigilators and/or other persons in authority;
- refrain from communicating with other persons in the examination room other than the examination supervisor;
- refrain from bringing unauthorised materials into the examination room except where a student whose first language is not English has received in advance written approval from a lecturer to use a printed dictionary in an examination (in which case the examination supervisor will check the dictionary). The lecturer must submit written approval to the Academic Registrar prior to the examination;
- turn off mobile phones and other electronic devices (approved calculators excepted) and leave them in bags in the place designated by the examination supervisor;
- remain in their seats during examinations; request

permission from the supervisor before leaving their seats, and remain in their seats until all examination papers have been collected.

Avondale College has a responsibility to ensure that examinations are conducted in an environment free from cheating, plagiarism or any other attempts to circumvent assessment requirements. In fulfilling this requirement Avondale College will:

- provide invigilators and/or supervisors for examinations;
- take action where candidates have unauthorised materials in their possession. Cheating in any form during an examination will normally result in a failing grade being recorded for the subject in question and may result in exclusion from the course of study. Invigilators have a responsibility to refer suspected instances of cheating in examinations to the Academic Registrar and these reports will be referred to the Faculty Examination Board;
- allow first year students from a non-English speaking background, ten minutes of additional time per hour of examination on the recommendation of the Faculty Dean responsible for the subject in question, and may also take into the examination an unannotated bilingual dictionary (non-electronic). Students wishing to be considered for these provisions must apply to the Academic Registrar via the Faculty Dean at least three weeks prior to the examination period. The examination supervisor will check the dictionary in the examination room;
- allow students with a disability (permanent or temporary) likely to impede speed of performance in examinations, to apply for modifications to the examination conditions. When students register their disability with the Disabilities Officer, they are to provide documentation of their disability duly signed by a registered practitioner, and provide a list of the accommodations required. Avondale College will make any necessary modifications to the examination conditions.

#### **Lecturers have a responsibility to:**

- set examination papers that reflect the content covered in the subject;
- set examination papers that allow students to demonstrate their learning in relation to the stated learning outcomes as indicated on the subject profile;
- provide examination scripts in a timely manner to the Academic Office;
- retain copies of the examination scripts and a copy of the examination papers for at least one year.

#### **The Board of Examiners has a responsibility to:**

- ensure that results are valid and reliable and that assessment tasks have been conducted in accordance with the written regulations provided to students;
- take action to protect the reputation of Avondale College and other students in cases where there have been suspected or actual attempts to circumvent

assessment requirements;

- identify anomalies in the assessment process;
- identify students who are not maintaining adequate progress in the course and recommend the appropriate action to the Course Coordinator, the Faculty Dean or the Vice-President (Teaching and Learning).

### **Attendance**

Avondale College aims to encourage a positive learning environment for all its students. The educational program at both the Lake Macquarie and Sydney campuses includes lectures, tutorials, laboratory and clinical activities to enhance individual learning. There is not only the commitment of teachers to students but also of students to teachers and of students to their fellow students to contribute together to the achieving of effective learning and experience in a group environment. Such an environment involves respect for each other and interacting with each other in the creating of a learning community. Lecturers design courses so that students are able to achieve the stated learning outcomes as required by their professional bodies. At graduation the course coordinator must certify that students have met the requirements for graduation. Where students do not participate in the learning activities that have been designed for their course, they may not be able to meet the intended learning outcomes and are at risk of failure. There is also the duty of stewardship. Parents, friends and church sponsors as well as the individual student, contribute to the provision of educational opportunity and privilege. The duty of stewardship implies a responsibility on the part of Avondale College and of the student to these various sponsors to maximise opportunities, resources and time.

These commitments and duties lead to an expectation of punctual and regular attendance at all (ie 100%) classes, lecture appointments, tutorials, laboratories and clinical or other work experience placements. Students should be aware that attendance records are maintained by lecturers. Students are responsible for their attendance. Occasions when a student arrives more than 10 minutes late may accumulate to count as absences.

The Faculty Research and Teaching Committee may implement measures to deal with unsatisfactory attendance. Such measures may include:

- the notification of students when their attendance pattern is putting their study program at risk;
- the requirement of a student to withdraw from a subject;
- the requirement of additional make-up work;
- the notification of guardians or fee-payers concerning a student's unsatisfactory attendance patterns;
- the denial of academic credit;
- the imposition of a financial charge for rescheduling of assessments or other academic appointments.

Students who for any reason, including sickness, do not maintain 85% attendance at class/lecture/laboratory/clinical appointments will be recorded as having a fail-withdrawal

(FW) from the subject and will be notified accordingly in writing or by email by the course coordinator. The Registrar will be notified of the FW grade and supplied with a copy of correspondence with the student. Where students receive a letter from the Faculty Dean or Course Coordinator in relation to their attendance, they need to respond to that letter in writing within one week. Students are expected to continue attending classes during the show cause period and any appeals process. Appeals against Faculty Research and Teaching Committee decisions in matters of attendance will be considered by the Appeals Committee, and should be submitted in writing to the Academic Registrar.

It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they receive subject outlines and other materials that may be distributed in class. The institution is not responsible when students do not receive material due to an absence from a class appointment. Students who register after the commencement of classes may find they have unresolvable timetable difficulties. Avondale College is not responsible to resolve such timetable clashes if a student has returned later than the first day of classes in a given semester.

### **Excellence awards**

Excellence awards are offered to encourage the pursuit of excellence by Avondale students. Awards are presented in November of each year unless indicated otherwise. Further details regarding criteria and selection procedures are available from the Office of the Vice-President (Administration and Research).

### **General awards**

#### **Graduation with Distinction**

##### *Testamur endorsement*

Avondale is committed to excellence in Christian higher education and to fostering academic excellence in its students. In addition to awards with honours, the testamurs of the highest achievers completing undergraduate degrees, the Bachelor of Teaching, the Graduate Diploma of Theology, and both the graduate Diploma in Theology and Graduate Diploma in Ministry may be endorsed "distinction" in recognition of outstanding achievement. To qualify, candidates must have completed at least 50% of the total credit points required for their award while enrolled as a student at Avondale and have achieved a grade point average that places them within the top band of graduates.

#### **Avondale College Alumni Community Service Award**

*\$1,000*

Awarded to a final-year student who has given outstanding voluntary service to the community in the current year. The student may or may not be intending to graduate.

#### **Avondale College Foundation Excellence Award (1)**

*\$2,000*

Awarded to one male student who has shown initiative, leadership potential, and desired Christian qualities and achieved an average percentage score in all subjects of the course in the upper 50% of the graduating class.

#### **Avondale College Foundation Excellence Award (2)**

*\$2,000*

Awarded to one female student who has shown initiative, leadership potential, and desired Christian qualities and achieved an average percentage score in all subjects of the course in the upper 50% of the graduating class.

#### **Avondale College Foundation Excellence Award (3)**

*\$2,000*

Awarded to one student graduating from their course in the Faculty of Nursing and Health who has shown initiative, leadership potential, and desired Christian qualities and achieved an average percentage score in all subjects of the course in the upper 50% of the graduating class.

#### **Kincare Community Service Award**

*\$1,000*

Awarded to a second-year student who has given outstanding voluntary service to the community in the current year.

#### **Overseas Volunteer Service Award**

*\$500*

Awarded by the Adventist Volunteer Service Department of the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, to encourage, acknowledge, and celebrate the contribution of Avondale student volunteers. Funded and sponsored by Marian and Cyril Youlden, and Anna Rieger.

### **Arts**

#### **Adventist Media Centre Excellence Award for Electronic Media**

*\$1,000*

Awarded to the student with a Communication major in the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Business who has the highest grade average in the Communication major (normally above the distinction level) with above average performance in the other subject areas of the course, excellence in understanding the possibilities of the electronic media and in the utilisation of skills to produce works of high quality in the electronic media to influence a wide audience, and evidence of good citizenship.

#### **Alan and Yvonne Thrift Perpetual Shield for Musical Excellence**

*Shield and \$100*

Awarded by the Avondale College Music Department to a student in the third or higher year of a Bachelor of Arts,

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Business or Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Teaching degree with a major in Music. The shield is awarded on the basis of ensemble performance and involvement and leadership in the musical activities of Avondale College. The awardee shall have maintained good academic grades in Music subjects taken at Avondale College. The nominating committee reserves the right not to award the Shield in any given year.

**Sanitarium Health Food Company Business and Information Technology Excellence Award**

*\$1,000*

Awarded to a final-year Bachelor of Business student who demonstrates quality of performance in all the advanced level (200 and 300 level) subjects of the course; diligence and a positive attitude to studies and where applicable, quality of service in work experience; relationships to peers, lecturers and College personnel; and exemplary citizenship, presentation and professionalism.

**Signs Publishing Company Journalism Excellence Award**

*\$1,000*

Awarded to a student with a major in Communication in the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Business, or Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Teaching on the basis of GPA in the subjects CC101.2 Introductory Journalism and CC201.2 Advanced Journalism at the Distinction level or above. Evidence of a publishing record, an active contribution to College and other publications, and good citizenship also will be required.

**Willobee Floor Service Arts Excellence Award**

*\$350*

Awarded to a student graduating from the Bachelor of Arts course who has demonstrated excellence in his/her major field, above average performance in other subject areas, and good citizenship. Excellence is demonstrated by grades achieved, with a weighting in favour of 200 and 300 level subjects and normally including a number of distinction grades.

## Education

**Australian Union Conference Secondary Teaching Excellence Award**

*\$750*

Presented to a Secondary Education graduand who demonstrated effort and skill in the preparation of teaching resources; the capacity to create a learning environment that is both stimulating and intellectually rewarding; the capacity to present and model Avondale College's values for faith and Christian education in an attractive and persuasive manner; a professional approach to teaching and the capacity to maintain all relationships in a mature and responsible manner.

**New Zealand Pacific Union Conference Primary Teaching Excellence Award**

*\$500*

Presented to a student graduating from Primary Education who has demonstrated effort and skill in the preparation of teaching resources; the capacity to create a learning environment that is both stimulating and intellectually rewarding; the capacity to present and model Avondale College's values for faith and Christian education in an attractive and persuasive manner; a professional approach to teaching and the capacity to maintain all relationships in a mature and responsible manner.

## Lifestyle Education and Visual Communication

**Australian Council for Health, Physical Education & Recreation Tertiary Student Health and Physical Education Award**

*Certificate plus 12 months' membership of ACHPER.*

Available to a third or fourth year graduating student who has studied in the areas of health education, physical education, sport, recreation, dance, movement science or community fitness. One student only may be nominated and selected from each department of a tertiary institution each calendar year. The award is not based on academic excellence alone but on evidence of professional interest and aptitude shown by the student which is worthy of encouragement, and the awardee is likely to benefit from the encouragement and recognition.

**Art Acquisition for the Avondale College Art Collection**

*\$500*

Avondale College annually purchases one work of art by a graduating student which is added to the Avondale College Art Collection. Graduating students' art works are judged by an external panel. The presentation is made by the Visual Arts staff at the graduating students' art exhibition normally held in November.

**Hunter Technology Education Association Excellence Award in Home Economics/Design and Technology Education**

*\$100.*

Presented to a graduating Bachelor of Education (Home Economics/Design and Technology) student who demonstrates: academic strength, professional interest and aptitude; a high degree of skill and professionalism towards teaching; leadership and personal qualities suitable to furthering Home Economics education; exemplary citizenship, presentation and integrity.

## Nursing

### **Award for Consistent Effort and Accomplishment**

*Certificate and \$50 gift*

Awarded by the Faculty of Nursing and Health to the student who demonstrates *either* clinical competence; commitment to the values and expectations incorporated in the Avondale College student guidelines; and progressive professional and personal achievement throughout the Bachelor of Nursing course *or*: continued studies within the constraints of some identifiable cognitive/educational, physical or social disadvantage.

### **Robert Gill/Ian Thew Memorial Excellence Award**

*Certificate and \$50 gift*

Awarded to the graduating student with the highest academic and clinical performance profile aggregate in the subjects Childbearing Family Health, Child and Adolescent Health Care, Clinical Practice III and IV.

### **Sydney Adventist Hospital Academic Excellence Award**

*Certificate, \$100 gift, and Gold Medallion*

Awarded to the student graduating with the highest GPA over the three years of the Bachelor of Nursing course.

### **Sydney Adventist Hospital Clinical Excellence Award**

*Certificate, \$100, and Gold Medallion*

Awarded to the student graduating with the highest clinical performance profile aggregate gained over the three years of the Bachelor of Nursing course.

### **Sydney Adventist Hospital Medical Nursing Excellence Award**

*Certificate and \$50 gift*

Awarded to the student graduating from the Bachelor of Nursing with the highest academic and clinical performance for medical nursing in Medical/Surgical Nursing A, B and C, and Clinical Practice II, III, IV and V.

### **Sydney Adventist Hospital Surgical Nursing Excellence Award**

*Certificate and gift to the value of \$50*

Awarded to the student graduating from the Bachelor of Nursing with the highest academic and clinical performance for surgical nursing in Medical/Surgical Nursing A, B and C, and Clinical Practice II, III, IV and V.

## Science

### **Bob Kalaf Science Academic Excellence Award**

*\$500*

Awarded to the science graduate in either the Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Teaching or Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Business programs who demonstrates excellence by achieving at least "Credit" level, and should demonstrate basic Christian citizenship,

as judged by the Faculty of Science and Mathematics.

## Theology

### **Arthur Ferch Prize for Hebrew Studies**

*\$1000*

This prize is donated by Carole Ferch-Johnson and sons and is awarded to the second year theology student who scores the highest cumulative grade average in Hebrew A and Old Testament Studies where Hebrew is applied.

### **Bill Marr Institute of Evangelism Award**

*\$1,000*

Presented to a Theology student who demonstrates the goals of the Institute and is donated by the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### **Graham Miller Memorial Award**

*\$1000*

Awarded to the most promising final-year student who shows aptitude for youth work (academic abilities not to be part of the consideration).

### **Graeme Scott Memorial Gift Vouchers**

*\$100 ABC Gift Vouchers*

Given to all prospective theology graduates applying for employment in ministry.

## Glossary of academic terms

### Academic advisement

Each student is responsible for structuring his/her academic program in accordance with published requirements. Course coordinators are available to advise and assist students in arranging their academic program where necessary.

### Academic regalia

Candidates for graduation are required to wear the specified academic regalia during graduation ceremonies, as determined by College administration.

### Academic year

The academic year at Avondale College comprises two semesters of 14 weeks duration. In addition, a Winter Term (June–July) and a Summer Term (January–February) include residential schools for some postgraduate courses, vocational education courses, and professional experience components for some undergraduate courses.

### Academic transcripts

Academic transcripts are the permanent academic record of each student and includes a list of all subjects in which the student has enrolled together with the grade awarded. Two free copies of the transcript are normally provided to each graduate following graduation. Further copies are available on request, and will be provided following payment of the standard charge. Official transcripts bear the impressed seal of Avondale College.

### Appeals

Students may appeal against any administrative decision if appropriate grounds for an appeal exist. Non-frivolous appeals will be considered under the relevant guidelines such as the Grievance and Appeals policy, Anti-bullying and Harassment policy, or Undergraduate Student Handbook.

### Auditing subjects

Auditing a subject involves attending class periods without doing assignments or taking tests or examinations. No academic credit is given for an audited subject. Students may audit classes provided that no more than one subject is audited each semester; the prerequisites have been fulfilled; the lecturer has approved the audit arrangements; the subject is not a practical subject; and the audit fee has been paid. Students auditing subjects may change to credit status if the Course Coordinator approves, provided all assessment requirements have been or will be met. A student changing to credit status will be charged the full fee for the subject. Students who have demonstrated academic excellence by achieving a 75% average in their studies in the previous semester are permitted to audit one subject free.

### Christian Studies subjects

A series of subjects in the study of Christianity. Students are required to enrol in the Christian Studies subjects prescribed for their course (maximum of three). The Christian Studies subjects are designed to encourage students to think Christianly about themselves, the wider world, their chosen profession and field of study. The overarching goals of the Christian Studies subjects are to provide opportunities for students to develop a personal commitment to Jesus Christ, an understanding of the Christian faith, a recognition of the advantages of practising a lifestyle based on sound Biblical principles, high ethical standards and respect for others, an appreciation of diversity, and a commitment to faith, integrity, and social justice in students' local congregations and the local, national and global communities.

### Core subjects

Certain required or mandatory subjects that form part of a degree. All students are required to undertake core subjects where designated as part of the degree.

### Course

The total program of study leading to an academic award.

### Credit points

In most courses the academic weighting of each subject is indicated by the number of credit points awarded to it. In undergraduate courses it is generally expected that students study four 6-credit point subjects totalling 24 credit points per semester. This full-time academic load will require a time commitment of 40–48 hours of academic work per week.

### Degree regulations

All degrees are governed by degree regulations which are published on the Avondale College website. Follow the links to Policies.

### Disciplinary action

Students should note that the Code of Conduct identifies the behaviours expected of students. The Code of Discipline provides guidelines for responding to breaches of the Code of Conduct. If any student is suspended from College, he/she will be required to make a written request to Avondale College Administration before reinstatement as a student.

### EFTSL (Effective Full Time Student Load)

One EFTSL is the standard study load for one year of a course of study. The standard load in most undergraduate courses at Avondale College is four 6-credit point subjects per semester, or eight subjects per year. All 6-credit point subjects comprise 0.125 of a full-time load.

### Elective

A subject which a student may choose within the elective parameters specified in the relevant course regulations.

### **Excellence awards**

Excellence is encouraged through a variety of Excellence awards and scholarships awarded annually for demonstrated excellence in areas such as academic performance, Christian lifestyle, citizenship, professional performance and leadership.

### **Full-time student**

Students enrolled in a normal full-time student load at Avondale College normally undertake four subjects (units of study) each semester. Eight subjects is considered to be a normal full-time load. A full-time student is registered for at least seventy-five per cent of a full academic load or at least three subjects totalling 18 credit points in each semester of the academic year.

### **Graduation**

Graduation means that candidates have fulfilled the requirements prescribed for their course, have achieved a passing grade for each subject listed for that course in the handbook for the year that they entered the course or a later Handbook, and fully paid all outstanding fees.

### **Graduating class**

Candidates for graduation join the graduating class in the year of their expected graduation. Unsatisfactory citizenship may result in suspension from the class.

### **Graduation in absentia**

Graduates unable to attend the official graduation ceremony may graduate in absentia. Notification must be provided to the Academic Registrar in writing prior to the graduation ceremony of the intention.

### **Higher Education Provider (HEP)**

Avondale College has been gazetted as a private Higher Education Provider under the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

### **Independent topic**

Up to 12 credit points of academic credit at 200-level or above may be undertaken as an independent topic under the supervision of a lecturer. Independent topic subjects require students to produce written reports of their study. Independent topic subjects are available provided that: students have not undertaken a research seminar in their course; the Independent Topic is not replacing a required subject; students have attained an average grade of at least credit level (minimum of 65%); and the approval of the course coordinator is obtained.

### **Last day to enter a subject**

Students are expected to be present for the instruction and orientation available in the initial class sessions of each semester. Where a student wishes to change a subject, a student may enter a subject up until the ninth academic day of the semester, provided the lecturers believe the student's

capacity to succeed in the subject will not be compromised by such a late entry. Entering a class after the first day of the semester requires the signature of the Course Coordinator on the approved form.

### **Last day to withdraw from a subject**

Students withdrawing from a subject prior to the census date must obtain the signature of the Course Coordinator on the appropriate form. Where this is approved prior to the census date, the student's academic record will indicate 'Withdrawn' (W). Withdrawals after census date will result in a failing (WF) grade.

### **Leave of absence**

Any student enrolled in a course of study at Avondale College may apply for Leave of Absence from his/her course for up to two years by completing the prescribed form. If such leave is approved, the student is entitled to recommence his/her course at any point in the future. Unless prior arrangements are made outlining how the original requirements of the student's course are to be completed, the student may be required to resume studies under the handbook regulations existing at the time of re-enrolment.

### **Major**

A sequence of studies usually comprising at least eight to ten 6-credit point subjects in one discipline area.

### **Minor**

A sequence of studies usually comprising at least four 6-credit point subjects in the one discipline area.

### **National priority areas**

The Australian Federal Government has designated Nursing and Teaching as the current national priority areas.

### **Pre-examination study days**

A pre-examination period at the end of each semester that provides time for study and reflection.

### **Progression rules**

Students are normally expected to make at least 75% progress in the course per annum. Students whose progress falls below this level may be counselled and/or placed on a restructured course. Full-time domestic students who fail more than half their subjects in any semester may be placed on academic probation. As required under visa regulations, DIMA will be notified where International students fail to maintain 75% progress. Students who hold a Commonwealth-supported place may be asked to show cause why they should not be excluded from their course of study.

### **Provisional enrolment**

Students who do not meet the entry requirements for a particular course of study and have been admitted to a course under one of the alternate entry pathways, may be designated as 'provisionally enrolled' until such time as they demonstrate their capacity to succeed in tertiary education.

**Required subjects**

Subjects (other than core subjects, major subjects or minor subjects) which all students registered for a course must take.

**Semester**

Avondale College operates on a semester system. Undergraduate students normally undertake two semesters per year. Each semester comprises 14 teaching weeks followed by Pre-examination Study Days period and an Examination Period. Semester 1 normally commences in early March and Semester 2 normally commences in early August. Postgraduate courses may be offered in Semester 1, Semester 2 or Semester 3. Semester 3 commences in early March and concludes in early December.

**Subject**

A self-contained unit of study normally equivalent to 0.125 EFTSL.

**Subject area**

A field of study generally synonymous with a single academic discipline (eg Geography, Accounting).

**Subject availability**

Some subjects listed in the Handbook are offered only in alternate years. Subject availability is listed in the final section of the Handbook and indicated in the Subject Synopses. In addition, Avondale College reserves the right not to offer a subject should there be insufficient numbers of students enrolling in that subject, or non-availability of staff.

**Subject codes**

Subject codes at Avondale College indicate the discipline area and the year level of the subject. The first two letters indicate the discipline area (eg, ED indicates subjects in Education); the first digit indicates the year level, for example:

- 0 indicates pre-degree
- 1 indicates 100-Level in an undergraduate degree
- 2 indicates 200-Level in an undergraduate degree
- 3 indicates 300-Level in an undergraduate degree
- 4 indicates Honours Level in an undergraduate degree, or a graduate entry course
- 5 indicates a coursework masters degree
- 6 indicates a research masters degree.

The final two digits indicate the number of the subject in the course sequence.

**Subjects failed twice**

Australian government visa regulations do not permit international students on student visas to repeat a failed subject more than once. Australian students who hold a Commonwealth supported place who fail a subject twice will be asked to show cause why they should not be transferred to a non-Commonwealth supported place. Students in non-Commonwealth supported places will be counselled and a

remediation program may be put in place.

**Subject workload**

Students normally enrol in four six-credit-point subjects each semester and each subject requires approximately 150 hours to complete. The weekly time commitment for one subject is approximately 10–12 hours, and the weekly time commitment for all subjects is approximately 40–48 hours.

**Testamur**

A certificate issued at the completion of a course of study that indicates that the student has fulfilled all the requirements prescribed for that course of study.

**Variation from academic policy or course regulations**

All variations from academic policy or course regulations require prior approval by the Faculty Research and Teaching Committee and also may require the approval of the Teaching and Learning Committee and/or Academic Board. A request for any such variation must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the relevant committee.

**Voluntary service and academic credit**

In keeping with its strong focus on Christian service, Avondale College is keen to foster a spirit of volunteer service in its students. It is possible in most degree courses for students to receive academic credit for significant volunteer engagement and reflection. The reflection is assessed through guided independent reading and writing. Such credit can only be given once in a particular degree course, to a value of six credit points. See the subject synopsis, VE200.1/2 Volunteer Experience and Reflection.

**Withdrawal from a course**

Students discontinuing their course part way through a semester must complete the official withdrawal form. Fee refunds for withdrawals prior to census dates are calculated from the date of completion of this form. A student who fails to comply with these formalities forfeits College fee refunds and is awarded a failure for each enrolled subject.

## **International students—special regulations**

### **Student visas**

International students planning to study in Australia need a passport and an Australian student visa. Visa conditions vary from country to country—see the DIMA (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs) website: [www.immi.gov.au/study](http://www.immi.gov.au/study). Applicants from many countries must provide evidence of English language competence. The IELTS test is the preferred English language assessment test for student visa applications. Avondale College's Admissions Office is happy to assist with information and guidance on visa matters.

### **Academic load**

A student visa requires full-time enrolment (24 credit points) in a registered course of study. Student visa holders in undergraduate courses are normally expected to progress through their course at a rate of at least 75% (18 credit points) per semester. Avondale College expects students to enrol in the Christian Studies subjects prescribed for their course (maximum of three). This requirement may be waived where a student has already completed similar subjects at another Seventh-day Adventist higher education institution.

### **Attendance at classes**

Avondale College is required to inform DIMA if an overseas student's attendance at classes is unsatisfactory (less than 80%). Visa cancellation may result. Student visa holders must inform the Academic Office of any change in their ability to attend classes.

### **Overseas health insurance cover**

All student visa holders are required to have Australian Overseas Student Health Cover. Evidence of current cover must be produced before the beginning of each semester as a condition for continuing enrolment at Avondale College.

### **Change of course or course duration**

Avondale College is required to inform DIMA of any change of course or course duration by an international student. Student visa conditions require the written approval of Avondale College to change from one course to another. If a student visa holder finishes a course prior to the scheduled completion date, he/she must either enrol with another institution within 28 days, or obtain a different visa, or leave Australia.

### **Academic performance**

Avondale College is required to notify DIMA if student visa holder fails a subject twice.

### **Change of address**

Student visa holders must inform the Academic Office of any change in their address or telephone number. If an

international student fails to satisfy course requirements relating to attendance or satisfactory academic performance, the Academic Office is required to notify the student of this, and that the student must report to the DIMA office named in the notice within 28 days. If the student's address is not up to date and the student does not receive this notice, automatic visa cancellation could occur without the student's knowledge. Such cancellation may not be revoked if it has occurred because the student failed to keep Avondale College informed of his/her address and other contact details. A student visa holder must also notify DIMA at least two working days before any change of address.

### **Renewal of student visas**

Student visas should be renewed at least six weeks before the current visa expires. Failure to renew before the current visa expires will result in deportation.

### **Deferral of study program**

Student visa holders may only defer their studies on the following grounds:

- illness documented by a medical certificate,
- other exceptional compassionate circumstances beyond the control of the student (eg bereavement).

## Tuition Assurance Statement

Avondale College (the First Provider) is required to provide a tuition assurance arrangement for Australian citizens or holders of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa who are enrolled in higher education courses it offers. This requirement is to protect a student in the event that Avondale College ceases to provide a course of study in which a student is enrolled. The meaning of ‘ceasing to provide a course of study’ is located at ([http://www.backingaustraliasfuture.gov.au/guidelines/hep\\_guide.htm](http://www.backingaustraliasfuture.gov.au/guidelines/hep_guide.htm)).

In the event that Avondale College ceases to provide a course of study in which a student is enrolled the student is entitled to a choice of:

- a) an offer of a place in a similar course of study with a Second Provider without any requirement to pay the Second Provider any student contribution or tuition fee for any replacement units (this is known as the “Course Assurance Option”);  
*or*
- b) a refund of his or her up-front payments for any unit of study that the student commences but does not complete because Avondale College ceases to provide the course of study of which the unit forms part (this is known as the “Student Contribution/Tuition Fee Repayment Option”).

If Avondale College ceases to provide a course of study, the relevant Second Provider(s) listed on the Avondale College website and the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SPD) Limited will send a student enrolled in the course of study a Written Tuition Assurance Offer (the Offer) advising the student of the options available under the tuition assurance requirements. The Offer will include directions that the student must follow in order to notify the relevant Second Provider(s) listed below and the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SPD) Limited of the choice they have made for each affected unit. The relevant Second Provider(s), listed on the Avondale website, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SPD) Limited, will provide this offer within 20 business days after it knows, or should know by reasonable enquiries, that Avondale College has ceased to provide a course of study.

## The Course Assurance Option

Avondale College has met the course assurance option requirement through a Deed/s of Course Assurance with the Second Provider/s. A full list appears on the Avondale College website. If Avondale College is unable to provide a course of study the Second Provider/s will make all the arrangements necessary to ensure that a student enrolled in that course of study is able to enrol in a similar course of study with that Second Provider.

If a student accepts a place in a course offered by a Second Provider, he/she will receive full credit for units of study completed towards the same or comparable qualification with the Second Provider without any requirement to pay the Second Provider any student contribution or tuition fee for any replacement units.

The Second Provider may have different contribution amounts or tuition fees to the amounts or fees the student would have paid for units of study which were part of the course of study the Avondale College ceased to provide.

A student is not obliged to enrol in an offered course of study with a Second Provider under the Course Assurance Option. However, if he/she enrolls with any other provider there is no obligation on that provider to offer full credit transfer for the units of study completed with Avondale College or to offer a replacement/s unit free of charge.

## Student Contribution/Tuition Fee Repayment Option

Avondale College has met the Student Contribution/Tuition Fee Repayment Option requirement through a Repayment Deed of Guarantee with the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SPD) Limited. If a student chooses the Student Contribution/Tuition Fee Repayment Option, the South Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists, undertakes to pay the student the total of any up-front payments already paid by the student for any units of study the student has commenced but not completed. Students selecting this option will also get their SLE or FEE-HELP balances re-credited for uncompleted units.

A full version of the Tuition Assurance Statement is located on the Avondale College website at [http://www.avondale.edu.au/policies\\_new/index.php](http://www.avondale.edu.au/policies_new/index.php)