



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY

## School of Art, Communication and English (SACE) Academic Advice FAQ's

### What is a stream? How is it different to a major or minor?

A major consists of 48 credit points in a single subject (discipline) area. A minor consists of 36 credit points in a single subject (discipline) area.

A stream is a core program of study that incorporates specific units of study compulsory for students enrolled in that stream.

The program within a stream consists of core units of study completed in a single subject (discipline) area, and sometimes incorporates a major in that stream. Check the course resolutions of your degree in the [Handbook for the year you started your degree](#) for details. The available streams in the Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Advanced Studies are [International and Global Studies](#), [Languages, Media and Communications](#) and [Politics and International Relations](#). In some streams it is possible to do two majors or a major and a minor. In this case your stream may count as your first major (e.g. Media and Communications)

The Dalyell stream is a targeted stream for high achievers; [see here for further Dalyell details](#).

### If I have a question about units in my degree/major, whom should I contact?

If you have a question about a unit of study in which you are enrolled, you should contact the Unit of Study (UoS) coordinator; you will find their details in the Unit of Study outline, available from your UoS Canvas home page.

If you have a question about a unit of study in which you are **not yet** enrolled, you should contact the UoS coordinator: [type the UoS code into the bar](#) to find the current or most recent version of the UoS outline, in which you will be able to identify the UoS coordinator.

### How do I know if I am on track to complete my degree and my major(s) and/or minor(s)?

Check the **course resolutions** of your degree in the [Handbook for the year you started your degree](#) against the units you have completed so far. If you didn't start this year, click on the [Handbook archive](#) to access the rules for the year you began your degree. You should also check the Handbook rules for **each subject area** in which you want to complete a major or minor. The number of credit points you have completed is another indication of your progress. Sydney Student can be helpful in outlining the units of study at various levels (e.g. Level 1000, 2000, 3000) you need to complete, and demonstrating when you have completed the requirements at each level with a tick.

### I'm not sure my major/minor/degree is right for me. Who should I contact for advice?

You can contact a member of the [FASS academic advice team](#). You can check if there is an advisor in your discipline on the [University website](#) and contact them directly. If there is not an advisor in your discipline, please [register here and you will be allocated an advisor](#) who will contact you to set up a meeting. Academic advisors can help you with planning and advancing through your degree. They can also help you get back on track if you find yourself on the [Academic Progression Register](#).

### I am not happy with my current degree. How do I change degrees?

You may be able to apply for an [allowable transfer](#). If not, you will need to [submit an internal course application](#). If you have successfully completed **fewer than 48cp**, you will be

assessed on your entry qualification (e.g. your ATAR for domestic students or high-school qualification or equivalent for international students). If you have successfully completed 48cp or more, you will be assessed on either your entry qualification (ATAR or equivalent) or your weighted average mark (**WAM**), whichever is the better result. Please note that there **are deadlines for changing degrees**.

#### **If I change degrees, will credit from previous study be transferred automatically?**

If you successfully apply for an **allowable transfer**, a credit application will automatically be generated for you. If you make a successful **internal course application**, you will need to **apply for credit transfer** once you have enrolled in your new degree. Please note that **there are deadlines for credit applications**.

#### **What happens if I change majors? How will this affect my progression through my degree?**

It's best to **change majors** earlier rather than later in your degree. If you change your major, you will need to remap your degree. The Handbook rules governing your new major will be those from the year in which you commenced your degree. You can access UoS outlines and course planners through the **FASS Student Portal**. You may need to meet with a **FASS academic advisor** for further information.

Any units allocated to your discontinued major will be allocated as elective units in your degree. This may result in you needing to exceed the credit point limit of your degree in order to meet the requirements of any new **core** major or minor. You will need permission from the Dean to do this, and you will need to meet with an **academic advisor**.

If you decide to change majors, you should do so before the **last day to add a unit** (usually the end of Week 2 in the **semester calendar**). If you change majors after this date, the units allocated to your discontinued major may be withdrawn.

#### **Which handbook rules should I follow if I start a new major in a year other than the year I enrolled in my degree?**

If you change majors, you should still follow the rules for the major in the **handbook for the year you started your degree** (check the **online handbook archive** if you didn't start in 2023).

#### **How do I complete my major if the required units are no longer offered?**

You will need to contact the discipline UG coordinator to find out which units you should take instead.

#### **How many electives am I allowed to take in my degree? What counts as an elective?**

Check the course resolutions of your degree in the **Handbook for the year you started your degree**; the amount of elective space depends on the degree in which you are enrolled. An elective unit is any unit that is not compulsory for completion of your degree ie that falls outside your major, minor or specific stream requirements. You can choose your electives from the **Table A subject areas** (any FASS subject area if you are enrolled in a FASS degree) or the **Table S subject areas** (this table includes disciplines offered outside of FASS).

#### **I am not happy with a unit of study in which I am enrolled. Can I change once semester has started?**

Once a study session (semester or intensive session) has started, there is a deadline by which students need to enrol in units of study; **check the last day to add a unit of study** for your study session.

Once a study session has started, there is a deadline by which students can drop a unit of study. If you **withdraw from a unit of study before the census date** for that session, you will not be charged fees for that unit and there are no academic penalties. If you **discontinue a unit after census date**, there may be implications in the form of penalties and/or fees charged.



### **I started my degree before 2018. Can I complete the Interdisciplinary Impact unit and have this counted towards my major requirements?**

Students in the old curriculum (pre-2018 students) are **not** required to complete interdisciplinary impact (XXXX3999) or industry and community project Units (XXXX3998) to fulfill the requirements of their major (and subsequently their degree).

You can choose to complete an interdisciplinary impact unit XXXX3999 in line with your discipline as an elective if you have elective space in your degree and have met the pre-requisites.

You will need to [apply for Enrolment Exception Request](#) to enrol into the interdisciplinary impact unit.

If pre-2018 students would like these interdisciplinary units to count towards the pre-2018 curriculum majors, you need to seek the permission of the Undergraduate Coordinator for the discipline. You will also need to specify this in your Enrolment Exception Request application. An alternative for pre-2018 students in their final year is to enrol in the elective interdisciplinary project unit INDP3000; this unit does not have the same pre-requisites as XXXX3999/XXXX3998 and thus should not require a Enrolment Exception Request application.

### **How can I ask for permission to enrol in units that are not available to me on Sydney Student?**

This is generally not allowable. However, under exceptional circumstances, you could email the Unit of Study coordinator to ask permission: [type the UoS code into the bar](#) to find the current or most recent version of the UoS outline, in which you will be able to identify the UoS coordinator. If they agree, attach their email of approval to a Sydney Student request for Enrolment Exception Request. If you cannot contact the unit coordinator, just lodge a request for **Enrolment Exception Request**.

### **I'm enrolled in one of the new (post-2018) degrees. When should I take OLE units?**

You can take Open Learning Environment (OLE) units when you like, preferably early in your degree. [Check out the OLE page on the University website](#). Most post-2018 degrees require 12cp of OLE units and often students enrol in them in S1 in their first year to get them out of the way. Be aware that many of them are only worth 2cp, so you could have up to 6 x 2cp units at once; the assessment tasks for this study load would be numerous and hard to keep track of, especially as some are offered in intensive mode rather than throughout the whole semester. This leads to a confusing and disjointed experience. In your first semester/first year, it's great to focus on your majors and get a feel for your discipline. You can also complete some OLEs as intensive units between semesters, during the winter and summer breaks. There are 6-credit point OLEs available in some intensive sessions between semesters that involve international travel; [check the OLES units listed here for details](#). Please note that these units are designed as a beginner language and cultural experience for students not enrolled in a major in the same language. For further information [contact the unit of study coordinator by accessing the UoS outline](#).

Please note that [if you are a Dalyell Scholar](#), you only need to complete 6cp of OLE units, as you have an additional 12 credit points of Dalyell-Scholar units you are required to complete.

### **Where can I find information about summer/winter intensive units relevant to my major(s)/degree?**

There are [numerous intensive study periods throughout the academic year](#). There is currently no comprehensive list of summer and winter intensive units available on the University website; we are trying to organise this. You should [check out the unit of study table in the current handbook](#); in the right-hand column of the unit of study table, there is an indication of when the unit is offered. Another workaround solution is to [find the code for the intensive session](#) in which you wish to study, then [go to the information page about class timetables](#) on the Current Students website. Click on the "Central timetables" link on the right, type Ctrl+F

and then type in the session code into the search box; click on "Highlight All, and all available units of study will then be highlighted.

#### **Can I enrol in a unit if I do not have the necessary pre-requisites?**

If you do not have the pre-requisites but believe you qualify to enrol in a unit, you will need to apply for Enrolment Exception Request. You should always confirm the unit is appropriate with an academic advisor before applying for Enrolment Exception Request; contacting the UoS coordinator will facilitate the enrolment application process.

#### **I'm interested in doing an internship. What opportunities are open to me?**

There may be FASS internships available that are specific to your discipline; you can find more information here. It's also worth checking the [University's CareerHub website](#).

#### **I wish to go on exchange as part of my degree. What is the process?**

To apply for exchange, you should first go to the [Study Abroad and Exchange site](#) and enrol in an information session. You may subsequently need to speak to a departmental exchange coordinator about the exchange credit approval requirements of your degree. It's easiest to study elective units whilst on exchange, although some disciplines will also allow you to seek specified credit for units studied overseas if they correspond to the learning objectives, assessment tasks and course content of USyd offerings.

The [Overseas Study application page](#) may assist with the latest updates as this outlines the entire admin process for students. Please note that organising your exchange experience can take up to 12 months, so best to start investigating early. Please note that some degrees recommend exchange at a particular time in your degree; you should check with the departmental UG or exchange coordinator in your discipline.

#### **I wish to suspend my studies; how to I go about this?**

It is possible to [suspend your studies](#); it's best to seek advice from an academic advisor if you are contemplating this. Domestic students can take up to a year off and even longer if necessary; they must seek approval from an Associate Dean. Suspension is more complex for international students, but it is possible in certain circumstances; you need to consider your visa and eCoE deadlines.

[International students seeking to suspend should check their eligibility](#) and consult an academic advisor **prior to submitting an application to suspend**.

#### **How many credit points per semester is considered 'full time'?**

Recent changes to the University calendar year have seen the University year divided into two sessions (January to June; July to December), each of which include the summer and winter intensives. [Study load details are available here](#). 24cp per session is a recommended full-time load, but students can now take up to 32cp per session without requiring Enrolment Exception Request. **Anything over 24cp is generally not advisable**. Domestic students taking a minimum of 18cp per semester qualify as full time in the eyes of the government and so qualify for a student transport card and government benefits. International students must enrol in at least 24 cp per semester, with at least 18cp taken during the main session (called Semester 1 or Semester 2), unless they get formal permission from an academic advisor or an Associate Dean to take a [reduced study load](#) (in which case a study plan is required).

#### **How do I reduce my load?**

Domestic students can reduce their study load via Sydney Student. International students should seek advice from an academic advisor, and follow the [reduce study load steps](#) outlined.

#### **How do I qualify for Honours in my 4th year?**

Contact the discipline or school Honours coordinator. In some schools it is possible to enrol in a Joint Honours program across different disciplines. Please note that not all disciplines offer a mid-year intake. If you are enrolled in the combined BA/BAAdv Studies degree, you have the option of applying for Honours in your 4th year via Sydney Student,



you must upload a written letter of approval from the discipline or school Honours coordinator or other member of the discipline. In some cases, it is possible to enrol in Honours part-time. If you are currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Economics and commenced your studies in 2018 or later (or transferred to the new curriculum version of your degree in 2018), how you commence Honours will depend on how much of your degree you have completed.

- If you've completed 96 credit points or less, you will need to change to the combined Bachelor of Advanced Studies. You will then be able to undertake Honours as an additional fourth year.
- If you've completed 97-120 credit points, we recommend you change to the combined Bachelor of Advanced Studies to complete Honours. However, if you are on track to complete two majors, you do have the choice to complete your Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Economics then [apply for the stand-alone Bachelor of Advanced Studies](#) in order to undertake Honours.
- If you've completed 121 credit points or more, you will need to complete your Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Economics and [apply for the stand-alone Bachelor of Advanced Studies](#) in order to undertake Honours.

Please note that Honours applications will **not** be assessed until after the publication of results from your previous semester. This is generally early July for Semester 1 and late December for Semester

[Read more information about Honours.](#)

## Media and Communication Study Questions

### I am enrolled in the BA/BAdv (MECO). Can I fit in an exchange semester?

You must consult the [MECO undergraduate coordinator](#) (refer key academic contacts) and have your planned program approved before you go on overseas exchange. You also need to consult unit of study coordinators if you wish to claim specified credit against existing MECO units.

To start the process, you should first attend a student exchange info session to understand the basics of study abroad programs. See the [Study Abroad](#) site for more details. You then apply for exchange approval to Sydney Abroad 9-12 months in advance of wanting to go overseas.

The Discipline of MECO Department strongly recommends that students consider undertaking exchange in their second year of study. Given that Northern hemisphere institutions start their semesters mid-August, this means you would ideally do your exchange in the (USyd) first or second semester of your second year.

Doing exchange in third year is more difficult. The MECO stream and major are carefully structured to develop professional knowledge and include mandatory units that cannot be substituted for overseas units of study.

If you wish to do your exchange in third year, second semester you must discuss this with the Undergraduate Coordinator and Internship Coordinator, and carefully consider how the exchange units will fit in your study plan - otherwise you could delay the completion of your degree, which might necessitate an extra semester of study.

These senior core units must be done at the University of Sydney and cannot be swapped for specified or unspecified exchange credit:

- **MECO3603 Media Law and Ethics** (a pre-requisite for MECO4115 Internship).
- **MECO3999 Interdisciplinary Project Unit**
- **MECO4116 Research Practices**
- **MECO4117 Critical Practice in Media**
- **FASS4901, 4902 and 4903 Independent Community Project Units**

No Level 4000 units can be substituted for exchange credit.



### **I wish to take an internship in MECO. How do I go about this? Can I do this on exchange?**

Internships are generally part of your fourth-year studies, and need to be discussed with, and approved by the [MECO Internship Convenor](#) (see Our people, Key Academic Contacts). You will enrol in first or second semester, but you may be able to complete your placement during the summer or winter breaks. It's also worth checking the [University's CareerHub website](#).

### **How should I plan my Level 4000 Bachelor of Advance (BAdv) Studies units?**

You can take an Advanced Coursework stream or an Honours stream in your fourth year. If you commenced your Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Advanced Studies (Media and Communication) in 2018 or 2019, you will see that Sydney Student recommends you take 24 credit points of mandatory fourth year Level 4000 units. However, the MECO study diet lists 30 credit points of mandatory units to select from: MECO4115 Internship; MECO4116 Research Practices; MECO4117 Critical Practice in Media; 12-credit point Industry and Community Project unit.

We strongly recommend that if you have space in your program you complete the full 30 credit points of MECO Level 4000 units. This will allow you to develop an idea for a research or creative project in MECO4116 that you then realise in MECO4117 as a portfolio project – for example, a documentary, podcast series, multimedia project, feature investigation or research report.

According to current University policy, BA/BAdv (MECO) students who commence their degree in 2018 or 2019 are required to take only 24 MECO credit points at 4000 level, which must include the 12-credit point project unit. If you have no extra space in your program, you may need to drop MECO4117 Critical Practice in the Media.

If you only complete 24 credit points of MECO 4000-level units, we recommend you take:

- MECO4115 Media & Communications Internship (6 credit points) in Semester 1;
- MECO4116 Research Practices (6 credit points) in Semester 1; and either of the following:
- FASS4903 ABC Innovation Research unit (12 credit points) in Semester 2; or
- FASS4901 and FASS4902 (6 credit points each) offered in the July Intensive and Semester 2 respectively.

If you commenced your studies after 2020, you will take 30 credit points of MECO 4000-level units.

If you are choosing an Honours stream you can apply for this when you receive your final grades for your third-year studies. Please contact the [MECO Honours Coordinator](#) (refer key academic contacts) for further details.

### **I am enrolled in a Digital Cultures major in the BA/BAdv (Media and Communications). How should I choose my units of study?**

Students who have enrolled in the Digital Cultures Major between 2018 to 2020 will need to complete MECO1001 (Introduction to Media Studies) and MECO1002 (Digital Media and Communication Landscapes) as your 1000-level core units.

Students who have enrolled in the Digital Cultures Major in 2021 and 2022 will need to complete MECO1001 Introduction to Media Studies and ARIN1001 The Past and Futures of Digital Cultures as your 1000-level core units.

Because of the overlapping cores, Media and Communications students taking the Digital Cultures Major must take 12 credit points (for those who started the major between 2018-2020 or 6 credit points (for those who started the major in 2021 and 2022) of elective units to complete the credit point requirements of their degree.

Digital Cultures Major students may take FASS4903 ABC Innovation Research unit as an elective as long as you have 12 credit points of units available in your degree.





## Bachelor of Visual Arts; Bachelor of Visual Arts/Advanced Studies Study Questions

### Can I transfer from BVA/BAdv to BVA at the end of my first year? If so, how?

Yes, [this would be considered an allowable transfer](#). You can also transfer from a BVA to a BVA/Adv.

If you wish to transfer from BVA/Adv to BVA **later** than first year, you can simply complete the requirements for the BVA, then apply for early exit at the end of your third year. This avoids potential problems with credit transfer.

### If I complete the BVA, can I undertake a stand-alone Honours year afterward?

Yes. [You do this by enrolling in a stand-alone Bachelor of Advanced Studies the Bachelor of Visual Arts \(Honours\)](#). Note the entry requirements for the BVA Honours pathway: you need to have completed your Studio major, as well as at least 36cp of a Table S major, and have a WAM of at least 70 by the end of your BVA.

### If I am enrolled in the standard BVA/BAdv, it appears I cannot take any Visual Art elective units. Is this correct, or is there a way around this?

There is definitely a work around; as the vast majority of technical content in this degree is delivered through elective units, it is important to consider the following advice:

- If you select certain [Art History](#) units that are 'double counted' across both the BVA and the BVA/BAdv, it will free up **three two** elective spaces over the course of your degree.
- To do this, you need to:
  1. Identify which [Art History](#) units are double counted across the [BVA and BVA/BAdv](#); this changes from one semester to the next.
  2. Request [Enrolment Exception](#) from the Art History coordinator via Sydney Student.
  3. Due to limited availability of Art History units at any given time, this means that you may need to do a Level 2000 unit in your first year; this will need to be approved by the Art History coordinator.
  - 4.

### My BVA/BAdv degree is very full. What is the best semester to do my exchange and OLE units?

You should have room to enrol in OLE units every semester. As you are expected to enrol in a 12- credit point core Studio unit every semester for the BVA, your opportunities to complete an exchange are limited to a short-term exchange during the long breaks between the main semesters (June-July or December-January). If you are enrolled in a BVA/BAdv, you may have an opportunity to go on exchange in your fourth year. It is best to speak with [an academic advisor](#) or discipline exchange coordinator; see above section in General Questions for further details about exchange.

## Art History Study Questions

### I'm new to Art History. Where do I find information about my major or minor?

The [Discipline of Art History Department has a fantastic student guide](#)  that will answer many of your questions.

### I would like to do Honours in Art History. Where can I find information about this?

You can find information about Honours in the [Art History Student Guide](#)

## Film Studies Study Questions

I'm new to Film Studies. Where do I find information about my major or minor? You can find information about Film Studies in the [Film Student Guide](#), pp. 12-19.

## English Study Questions

### How do I complete an English major?

For an English major you need to complete 2 x 1000-level English units, 2 x 2000-level English units (including the compulsory core unit ENGL2674 The Life of Texts if you enrol in 2021 or later) and 4 x 3000-level English units (including ENGL3999 if English is your primary or only major). If English is your secondary major you need to do ENGL3998 instead of ENGL3999.

### How do I complete an English minor?

For an English minor you need to complete 2 x 1000-level English units, 2 x 2000-level English units (including the compulsory core unit ENGL2674 The Life of Texts if you enrol in 2021 or later) and 2 x 3000-level English units.

### How do I enrol in English Honours?

To enter English Honours you need to have completed two majors (one being English) and have an average grade of 70 or above for your English major. Consult the current Handbook for further information: [http://sydney.edu.au/handbooks/arts/subject\\_areas\\_eh/english.shtml](http://sydney.edu.au/handbooks/arts/subject_areas_eh/english.shtml)

## Theatre and Performance Study Questions

### How do I complete a Theatre and Performance Studies major?

A new model for the PRFM Major (and Minor) has been introduced for students who are beginning their degree in 2023 (and beyond). The table below is a summary of the changes.

	“Old” (pre-2023) PRFM Major (a 2-2-4 structure)	New PRFM Major (a 2-3-3 structure)
1000-level	PRFM1601 + PRFM1602 (both core)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PRFM1601 (core)</li> <li>1 x PRFM1000-level selective</li> </ul>
2000-level	PRFM2601 + PRFM2602 (both core)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PRFM2601 (core)</li> <li>2 x PRFM2000-level selectives</li> </ul>
3000-level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PRFM3961 (core),</li> <li>2 x PRFM3000-level “selectives”</li> <li>1 x Faculty Interdisciplinary unit (FASS3999 or FASS3998 or FASS3333)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PRFM3961 (core)</li> <li>1 x PRFM3000-level selective</li> <li>1 x Faculty Interdisciplinary unit (FASS3999 or FASS3333)</li> </ul>

You may also refer to the Handbook for further information:

[https://www.sydney.edu.au/handbooks/arts/subject\\_areas/subject\\_areas\\_oz/theatre\\_and\\_performance\\_studies/theatre\\_and\\_performance\\_studies\\_table.html](https://www.sydney.edu.au/handbooks/arts/subject_areas/subject_areas_oz/theatre_and_performance_studies/theatre_and_performance_studies_table.html)

### I started my degree in 2022, can I change to the new major structure?

It is possible but requires a bit of workaround in your enrolment selections. If you wish to change to the new major structure, you are advised to contact the Discipline Chair, [Paul.Dwyer@sydney.edu.au](mailto:Paul.Dwyer@sydney.edu.au) as soon as possible.