



School of Social and Political Sciences (SSPS) 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 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; check here for further details.

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; check the deadline dates for each semester [here](#).

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 2022).

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

You will need to contact the disciplinary 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 [here](#) for 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. Check [here](#) for details.

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 (FASS3999) or industry and community project Units (FASS3333) to fulfill the requirements of their major (and subsequently their degree).

You can choose to complete an interdisciplinary impact unit FASS3999 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 FASS3999/FASS3333 and thus should not require an 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 for [Enrolment Exception Request](#). If you cannot contact the unit coordinator, just lodge an application 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.

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; information is available [here](#). 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 Exception Request 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 disciplinary 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 [“apply”](#) 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 disciplinary 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. 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. **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 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 steps outlined [here](#).

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

Contact the disciplinary 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/BAdv Studies degree, you have the option of applying for Honours in your 4th year via Sydney Student; in this case, as part of your application, you must upload a written letter of approval from the disciplinary 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 2, more information is available [here](#).

Discipline of Anthropology

I started my degree before 2018. Am I required to take at least one theoretical, one regional, and one thematic class? Which units are which?

The Anthropology discipline recommends that every major take a wide range of ANTH units on different topics. You are not required to take units from each group if no relevant classes are offered when you need them. Because many classes of each kind cannot be offered every year, we waive the requirement whenever it is not feasible to meet it. If FASS Faculty Services flags this for you, ask for the requirement to be waived.

I started my degree before 2018. I am interested in taking an Honours year in Anthropology. Do I have to take both ANTH3601 and ANTH3602?

No, the Anthropology discipline recommends that you take one or both of these classes in your third year if you want to do an Honours year, but they are not required for entry into Honours.

I am interested in doing Honours but I don't meet the requirements. Can I still apply for entry?

Yes, the Honours entry requirements can be adjusted depending on the circumstances. The Anthropology discipline will seek evidence from interested students that they will benefit from an Honours project and be able to successfully complete their project. Having a WAM of 70 and having a breadth of ANTH units (including several 3000-level units) are good indicators of this. We can also request permission for students to enroll in the Honours program when we see that they have a clear idea of what they would research in their Honours project. If you are interested in doing an Honours project, contact the [Honours coordinator](#) to set up a time to talk about the program.

Discipline of Government and International Relations

Politics and International Relations (General)

I would like to major in both International Relations and in Politics, however, the core units in both majors are similar. Can I still do a double major?

Yes. Students wishing to complete a double major in International Relations and Politics must complete the core units for their first major. The already completed cores in the second major can then be replaced with selective units from the major at the same level (1000 or 2000 level) make up the additional requirements for the second major (e.g. GOVT1661, and 2x 2000-level GOVT units).

Politics and International Relations (Stream-specific questions)

I would like to go on an exchange program in my second semester, but the stream-specific GOVT3601 is only offered in Semester 2. Am I able to complete GOVT3601 while on exchange, or can I complete this at another time in my degree?

You might be able to complete GOVT3601 in your second semester of fourth year if you are enrolled in a BA/Adv degree and are intending to enrol in Advanced Coursework units. If you intend enrolling in the Honours program in your fourth year, you will need to discuss your Exchange program with the Undergraduate Coordinator and seek an appropriate exchange unit to count as a replacement for GOVT3601.

Discipline of Sociology and Social Policy

Sociology

I need Enrolment Exception Request to enrol into a Sociology, Social Policy, Socio-legal Studies or Criminology unit of study. Whom should I contact?

You should apply for [Enrolment Exception Request](#) through Sydney Student. You may also [contact the Undergraduate Coordinator \(Discipline of Sociology and Social Policy\)](#) to explain why you want to enrol into that unit, and why you think you should be allowed into a particular unit (for which you don't have the necessary pre-requisites or other reason that precludes you from enrolling).

If Sociology is my first major, which interdisciplinary unit do I need to enrol into? SCLG3999 or SCLG3998?

If you have any of our majors listed as your **first** major (Sociology, Socio-legal studies, Criminology), you should enrol into the relevant 3999 Interdisciplinary Impact unit: SCLG3999, SLSS3999, CRIM3999. If one of these majors is your **second** major, you should instead enrol into the relevant 3998 Industry and Community Project unit: SCLG3998, SLSS3998, CRIM3998.

I started my degree before 2017 and the requirements include SCLG2602 or SCLG2632, but these units are no longer available. What units must I complete to satisfy my Sociology requirements?

Both SCLG2602 and SCLG2632 have now been remodelled into SCLG3701 and SCLG3702 respectively. You should complete your core SCLG2601 Sociological Theory, as well as at least one of the methodology units (SCLG3701 and/or SCLG3702), and at least one of the sociological theory units (SCLG3601 and/or SCLG3602). You can complete the remaining required credit points for your major with selective units.

Criminology

I commenced my degree in 2019 with a minor in Criminology. I would like to nominate a major in Criminology but have not completed CRIM1001 and CRIM1002. Will I be required to enrol in those 1000-level core units?

No, SLSS1001 and SLSS1003 will count towards your Criminology major if you have successfully completed those units.