



STUDENT APPLICATION AND SELECTION POLICY

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Related Documents:	Justice and Equity Policy Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Student Grievance Policy Student Integrity Policy	
Responsible Officer:	Registrar	
Review:	Academic Quality Assurance Committee	

Any person who requires assistance in understanding any aspect of this document should contact the Responsible Officer

1. Overview

Tabor is committed to the principles of justice, equity, and the inherent dignity of individuals, and seeks to ensure that all students and persons seeking to enrol in courses of study are treated fairly, justly and with respect.

Tabor operates as a Tertiary Education Quality Standards Authority (TEQSA) registered Private Provider of Higher Education. In doing so, Tabor seeks at all times to comply with the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) and associated [Guidelines for Higher Education Providers](#), the [Higher Education Standards Framework 2015](#), and any additional requirements of its registering or auditing body/bodies, which have been established to ensure that clients/students receive sound and appropriate training/education.

2. Scope

This policy outlines the application and selection policy and procedures for students who wish to study Higher Education at Tabor.

3. Policy Principles

3.1. Tabor will, in line with its Justice and Equity Policy, at all times seek to treat fairly:

3.1.1. all students of the College

3.1.2. all persons seeking to enrol with the College.

The College will ensure that students are provided with sufficient information to enable them to make informed decisions about their studies. This information will usually be provided through the website.

3.2. All entry requirements for Higher Education courses of study at Tabor are established in accordance with the appropriate TEQSA accredited course documentation and within the common framework of the principles set out in Appendix A below. The College will make decisions on entry to its courses, based on whether an applicant meets the criteria described in the TEQSA accredited curriculum documentation.

3.2.1. These requirements are based upon Appendix A: Principles for Establishing Entrance Criteria and should be interpreted in light of these principles.

3.3. The Registrar and Dean of Faculty has the authority to accept or reject any application for enrolment solely on the basis of compliance with the requirements for enrolment or progression established in the appropriate TEQSA accredited course documentation. (In the situation where there are more qualified applicants than places available, including Commonwealth supported places, priority will be given to earlier applications.)

It is the responsibility of the applicant or the student to demonstrate that they have achieved these requirements.

3.3.1. The Dean of Faculty may delegate the authority to accept or reject an application for enrolment to a faculty member who is suitably trained in assessing the criteria detailed in the TEQSA accredited course documentation, and who is able to appropriately advise applicants and students on their enrolment options.

3.3.2. In cases where it is unclear if an applicant or a student has been able to demonstrate their compliance with the documented criteria, the Dean of Faculty will make the final decision.

3.3.3. Applicants who have been denied enrolment, may appeal the decision via the Grievance Procedure found in the Student Grievance Policy if they can demonstrate that supporting evidence was inappropriately considered or if they believe that their case has not been handled in a manner consistent with the Justice and Equity Policy.

3.4. Tabor will ensure that the opportunities and benefits provided by any Commonwealth Government assistance received under Chapter 2 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* are made equally available to all students or classes of students that are eligible to be paid the assistance.

3.4.1. Tabor will practise open, fair and transparent procedures that are based on merit for making decisions about the selection of students who are to benefit from a grant, allocation or payment made under Chapter 2 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

3.5. Data will be collected with respect to the basis for acceptance or non-acceptance into a Higher Education course of study and the social and educational background of successful applicants consistent with the reporting requirements of the College.

3.6. Proficiency in the English language is required for entry to all courses and any applicant for whom English is not their first language must satisfy the College's English language requirements. This can be met by attaining an overall score of 6.5 with minimum 5.5 in each subtest in the IELTS (Academic), or by holding a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education or a tertiary qualification delivered and assessed in English, or by achieving a passing grade in Tabor's Admissions Assessment. For Initial Teacher

Education, the IELTS requirements are an average band score of 7.5, with a score of at least 8.0 for Listening and Speaking and a score of at least 7.0 for Reading and Writing.

- 3.7. Admission requirements and procedures should ensure that admitted students have no known limitations (e.g., inadequate proficiency in English language, inadequate preparedness for academic study, through inappropriate recognition of prior learning, etc.) that would be expected to impede their progression and completion.
- 3.8. Tabor applies access and equity principles through all its policies and procedures to promote full and equal participation of all students in its courses, to foster an environment free of discrimination and harassment, and to assist students to identify and achieve their desired outcomes.
- 3.9. The College reserves the right to refuse admission of a prospective student if the applicant demonstrates behaviours that do not meet the standards set out in the Student Integrity Policy. Any decision not to admit an applicant can be appealed by following the grievance procedures.

4. Procedures

- 4.1. The Registrar is responsible for managing a fair, efficient and effective application process as well as the data collection process associated with the application and enrolment process. There are two avenues for application to study at Tabor:
 - 4.1.1. Tabor online application for Domestic Students
 - 4.1.2. South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC)
- 4.2. The Deans of Faculty are responsible for managing a fair, efficient and effective process for assessing applications, determining Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer (CT) and for advising applicants and students about their study options. Where an overseas qualification is unable to be authenticated or is determined to be of an inappropriate standard, the College will be unable to accept it as proof of qualification or as the basis for a RPL claim.
- 4.3. Overseas qualifications are assessed on a case-by-case basis according to the following procedure.
 - 4.3.1. If the qualification is from a “highly rated” provider, then no further assessment is required. A provider is identified as “highly rated” if they are in the top 500 universities as listed on either (i) the Centre for World University Rankings or (ii) the Times Higher Education World University Rankings.
 - 4.3.2. If the qualification is not from a “highly rated” provider, then the applicant/student is referred to Recognition of Qualifications service provided by State Governments (South Australia: <https://www.migration.sa.gov.au/support-and-resources/support-services/recognition-of-qualifications>; Western Australia: <https://migration.wa.gov.au/services/overseas-qualification-unit>). Once the applicant’s/student’s qualifications have been officially assessed, Tabor can use these results to determine the suitability of the qualification for admission or RPL/credit.
 - 4.3.3. If a qualification is in a foreign language and requires translation, applicants/students are referred to a certified degree translation service (<https://www.ethnolink.com.au/documents/degree-certificate-translation/>).
- 4.4. Tabor will provide clear information to each student, prior to enrolment in regards to:
 - 4.4.1. student selection, enrolment and orientation procedures;
 - 4.4.2. course information, including educational and vocational outcomes;
 - 4.4.3. fees and charges, including refund policy;
 - 4.4.4. student support services;
 - 4.4.5. appeals and complaints procedures;
 - 4.4.6. recognition of prior learning (RPL) arrangements and credit transfer; and
 - 4.4.7. the student tuition contract.

- 4.5. All students shall have ready access to information about changes, conditions, refunds and costs involved in studying with Tabor, including any course-specific costs and tuition assurance arrangements.
- 4.5.1. Students who have enrolled in a course of study at Tabor but who then subsequently withdraw may be eligible for a refund of any fees they have paid. The rules and procedures for seeking a refund, and the decision about the eligibility of a student receiving a refund, are managed by the Registrar consistent with the appropriate government requirements and Tabor's Justice and Equity Policy. The procedures for seeking a refund can be found in the Student Fees Policy.

5. Definitions

See [Global Definitions](#)

6. Communication / Training

- 6.1. This policy will be placed on the Tabor website, and students and persons seeking to enrol will be referred to it.

Appendix A: Principles for Establishing Entrance Criteria

Tabor does not use a competitive enrolment process to choose between applicants. All eligible applicants are accepted. Deciding upon eligibility is, therefore, related solely to an estimation of the capacity of an applicant to successfully undertake the specific course of study for which they have applied.

Tabor is a learning community with its roots and its values located within the Christian tradition. It maintains an ethos of open intellectual enquiry alongside a respect for the Christian Tradition. It expects staff and students to respect a holistic approach in all areas of learning. As part of this commitment to open enquiry, Tabor **does not impose any ideological (e.g., religious, political, philosophical)** test as part of the application process.

Tabor offers some awards that are part of a pathway to professional practice (e.g., teaching, counselling, ministry, youth work). Entry to these awards may involve the applicant in demonstrating the **potential for employment** in these sectors as part of a successful application.

Tabor is aware of the debate within the Higher Education sector about the usefulness of using **ATAR rankings** as a predictor of academic success given the various factors, not least socio-economic factors that can influence a student's performance in High School. Based upon our general experience, we have settled upon an ATAR of 60 for our level 7 awards (note the BEd and BASS Couns distinctions); this ranking was benchmarked against the published guide for Flinders University's BA course. Our Bachelor of Education (Primary) and Bachelor of Education (Secondary) awards have an ATAR of 70. Our Bachelor of Applied Social Science has an ATAR of 65.

The **Mature Age pathway** recognises that an ATAR score is no longer a reliable indicator of academic success once someone has left school and achieved life experience. The personal learning and discipline that is achieved through participation in the workforce, or through completion of a VET award, is a valid way to demonstrate the potential for academic success; particularly for those from a socially disadvantaged cohort for who success, or lack of it, in secondary schooling no longer reflects their capacity to succeed. Applicants holding a completed VET Certificate 4 or higher will gain entry¹ into Tabor's AQF level 5 and 7 awards (note the BEd and BASS Couns distinctions). Applicants having previously been accepted into an AQF level 7 award at any TEQSA approved provider gain entry¹ into Tabor's AQF level 5 and 7 awards.

Applicants for AQF level 5 or 7 awards not meeting the above stated entry criteria can demonstrate the potential for academic success by achieving a satisfactory result in either the Special Tertiary Admissions Test, or Tabor's Admissions Assessment.

Applicants for AQF level 5 or 7 awards are expected to be 18 years of age or greater, or reach the age of 18 during the year of commencement.

Entrance to AQF level 8, 9, and 10 awards is normally granted to applicants who have completed the appropriate prior AQF level of study. Certain professional awards may, in addition, require demonstrated experience in the area of practice. For certain level 8 professional awards applicants who can demonstrate through their work experience that they have achieved the graduate attributes expected of a AQF level 7 award the requirement for a

¹ This relates to academic entry criteria. There may be other entry requirements that also need to be satisfied, such as an audition or the passing of a teaching capabilities statement, as well as the requirement to meet code of conduct and integrity standards.

completed AQF level 7 award may be waived. For further details, see "Appendix B - Guidelines for Professional Experience Entry into AQF Level 8 Awards".

Appendix B - Guidelines for Professional Experience Entry into AQF Level 8 Awards

Currently, the admission criteria for Tabor's AQF level 8 awards (e.g., Graduate Diploma in Ministry) require students to hold an AQF level 7 award. It is possible, however, that individuals who have undertaken a prolonged period of professional experience will have the necessary skills and knowledge that are needed to achieve the learning outcomes for these awards, especially if they are vocationally oriented. This is a reality that many Australian universities acknowledge, whereby they allow entry into vocationally oriented AQF level 8 awards on the basis of professional experience. This document outlines the key principles and processes that should guide the consideration of applicants who possess significant professional experience. It is based on University of Melbourne's "Recognition of Professional Experience: Entry to Graduate Programs through Recognition of Professional Experience" which was approved by their Academic Board in 2009 and can be accessed at: http://about.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/773932/RecognitionOfProfessionalExperience.pdf

Guiding Principles

The principles on which a proposal for entry into a postgraduate program through recognition of professional experience (RPE) must rest are:

- a. Tabor is required to select only students likely to succeed in its courses;
- b. There must be clear evidence that the professional experience is relevant;
- c. There must be clear evidence that the experience is at a level that would demonstrate understanding and skills comparable to that gained in an undergraduate degree.

Key Areas of Capacity

Experience in itself does not guarantee that a potential student will have developed the necessary knowledge and skills they will need to achieve the learning outcomes of an AQF level 8 award. It is thus not satisfactory simply to designate a period of "relevant professional or work experience" as equivalent to the entry requirement, although length is likely to be one major factor taken into consideration for entry.

In order to ensure the college that they are "likely to succeed" in their studies, potential applicants should be able to demonstrate capacity in the following areas:

- a. **Discipline Knowledge and Skills**
The Graduate Diploma in Ministry, for example, requires an undergraduate degree in the field of ministry/theology, and assumes that any person undertaking the program will have acquired an appropriate body of knowledge, skills and theoretical frameworks as a basis for their further learning.
- b. **Capacity for Learning**
Completion of an undergraduate degree suggests that a student has the capacity to learn within a structured academic environment. It shows the ability to take in new information and perspectives and demonstrate understanding of them in assessment tasks.
- c. **Capacity for Critical Reflection**
Critical thinking, including the ability to reflect on and test the "justification or validity of taken-for-granted premises" (Mezirow), is repeatedly highlighted in the AQF level 7 qualification type descriptor, and is a necessary pre-requisite for post-graduate study.
- d. **Literacy and Computing Skills**

Any graduate is assumed to be a literate person who will be able to meet the demands of academic reading and writing, including a capacity to produce texts that summarise and evaluate information and argue a position.

Key Considerations for Demonstrating Capacity

Potential students will need to present a case that demonstrates their capacity in the above areas. In order to establish this, Tabor expects that an applicant's professional experience would normally involve the following elements:

- a. Relevance - potential students should have professional experience that is closely connected with their area of study.
- b. Sustained length – applicants should have a minimum of 3 years' experience in the relevant field.
- c. Equivalency - the applicant's professional experience should mean that they possess the kind of knowledge and skills we would expect a graduate to have or be producing work at a level expected of a graduate.
- d. Recency – the professional experience should have been completed within a time frame which ensures that the applicant's knowledge and skills are still current. This will normally mean that any gap between the applicant's professional experience and application for study should not be greater than 5 years.
- e. The production of high-quality written work - the applicant will be competent in producing significant analytical reports, articles or other documents (either in the context of their professional experience or non-degree study), using their literacy and computing skills as required. In order to demonstrate this capacity, applicants will be asked to compile a professional portfolio or produce a substantial piece of writing as part of the application process.

The Selection Process

It is the student's responsibility to present a case which demonstrates their capacity. Normally this would involve the submission of an application package which included the following elements:

- a. a C.V. detailing the professional experience on which they are mounting their case;
- b. a covering letter, making the case on how their background has prepared them to undertake the course for which they are applying, particularly in terms of their existing discipline knowledge and skills, their success in previous study (if completed) and their communication skills;
- c. samples of relevant documents they have produced, and/or a folio of work, and/or a 2000-word critical analysis essay on a topic set by the Head of Program (graded at CR or above),²;
- d. evidence of any study they have undertaken;
- e. completion of the TAA with a minimum score of 77

Each application must be considered on its merits by a selection panel, which will normally include the relevant postgraduate head of program / course coordinator and dean of faculty. The applicant might be called in for interview if the selection panel deems this necessary to assess the application.

² A sample question might be "Critically analyse three perspectives on [topic] and explain the significance of each of these for [field] practice today. Which do you think is the most helpful perspective and why?"

APPENDIX C – Course Transfer Rules

Tabor provides reasonable opportunity for students to reorient their study program and facilitates internal course transfers for that purpose, whilst maintaining the academic integrity of the courses and the admissions process.

Depending on their circumstances, if a student wishes to change from one course at Tabor to another course at Tabor, they **may** be eligible to apply for an **internal course transfer**. There are three types of internal course transfer;

- 1) articulate 'down' to a lower nested award, for example from a Masters of Divinity to a Graduate Diploma in Divinity, for the purpose of **graduating**
- 2) articulate 'up' to a higher course in which their current course is a nested award, for example from a Diploma in Theology into a Bachelor of Theology, for the purpose of **continuing their studies**
- 3) transfer from their current Tabor course to a different Tabor course, for example from a Bachelor of Education to a Bachelor of Music, for the purpose of **commencing studies** in the new course

Will a student's completed subjects and GPA be transferred to their new course?

- 1) Students who articulate 'down' to a lower nested award will have all successfully completed subjects that fit the pathway, fully transferred to the lower course, inclusive of grades. Subjects that have received RPL in the higher course will be transferred to the nested award, subject to the maximum amounts of RPL allowed in the nested award.
- 2) Students who articulate 'up' to a higher course will have all subjects, whether passed, failed or RPL/exempt, fully transferred to the higher course, inclusive of grades and GPA.
- 3) Students transferring from one course to another for the purpose of commencing studies in the new course may be entitled to have subjects automatically credited to their new course. Internal course transfer recognition of prior learning will automatically be recognised where the subject code is identical in each course, and there is sufficient space within the new course for the transfer to occur. In such cases, the subject grade will be recorded for the course transferred to. Where subject codes are not identical, students will need to submit an application for Recognition of Prior Learning. In such cases grades and GPA will not be transferred.
- 4) Students who complete a nested award, and then study the higher award, will receive RPL for the subjects completed in the nested award.