Credit Recognition for

Students as Partners
in Education, Service, and Research

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The purpose of this document is to assist students and teachers in applying for credit recognition in extra-curricular *Students as Partners (SaP) activities.*

These SaP activities are **outside** of the credit-bearing program credits in relation to teaching, service, or research activities. These may be inside or outside of the classroom or on or off campus. This manual details the preparation and application process to apply for credits which on submission of a report and formal approval may be displayed on students' academic transcripts.

The Students as Partners credit recognition is facilitated by the HKU Horizons Office which supports out-of-classroom learning experiences. For more information please see:
[Recognition of Out-of-classroom Learning Experiences – Credit Award Scheme](#)

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I. General Guidelines

Before applying for credits, students should consult a faculty supervisor, course teacher, or Head of Department well in advance of starting the activity. Students must apply 1 month in advance and teaching staff 3 months in advance:

1. **Preparation: How many credits can students apply for?:**
    - Currently, each SaP activity is awarded in one or two credit units.
    - For a 1-credit activity, at least 20-30 hours of learning/participation is required
    - For a 2-credit activity, 50 hours or more of learning/ participation is required
    - Students will need to define which [University Educational Aims](#) their SaP activity will be mapped against in their application and report
    - No duplicate applications/credits for the same activity can be made, that is no double counting for the same activity

2. **Application: How to apply for a SaP activity for preliminary approval**
    - For HKU-organized activities, teachers apply for a particular activity, ideally 3 months in advance for education, service, or research activities and obtain a pre-approval number.
    - For non-HKU-organized activities e.g. NGOs, and partner institutions, students will need to make an application 1 month in advance for education, service, or research activities and obtain a pre-approval number.
    - For student-initiated activities, students apply for a particular activity 1 month in advance for education, service, or research activities and obtain a pre-approval number on the E-portfolio.

3. **Claiming Credit(s): How do students report on their SaP activity to claim credit(s)? What is included:**

    - a detailed report and reflection on the Horizons website in a Google document (For one credit this will be approximately 300-500 words and for two credits this will be 1,000 words.)
    - confirmation on the number of hours undertaken for the activity concerned.
    - official proof of completion

<u>Preparation:</u>

Before applying for credit recognition on students as partners activities, students need to consult their faculty supervisor on the number of credits, number of hours, University Educational Aims, and activity evidence relevant to their SaP activities.

Currently, each SaP activity is awarded in one or two credit units. For a 1-credit activity, at least 20- 30 hours of learning/participation is required. For a 2-credit activity, 50 hours or more of learning/ participation is required. Students need to consult the supervisor on the number of credits appropriate for these activities and make sure to keep the number consistent in the preliminary application as well as the reporting form to claim the credit. Different students attending the same activity may choose to claim either 1 or 2 credits depending on their level of engagement in the activity.

The number of hours dedicated to each activity is one of the major conditions for the Horizons office to determine whether a SaP activity is eligible to claim 1 or 2 credits. It is important to clarify the number of hours students plan to dedicate to each activity.

Students and staff should collaboratively decide which of the University Educational Aims (UEA) may be mapped for the SaP activity. Each student as a partner activity should be mapped to at least one UEA to be recognized by Horizon's Office. The Horizons Office provides relevant [examples of out-of-classroom learning activities](#) in relation to the 6 UEAs, please make reference and contact the Horizons office when unsure.

Lastly, students need to align with event organizers about the expected deliverables at the completion of the activity. The Horizons office mandates that students need to write a 300-500 word reflection for claiming one credit, and a 1,000 word reflection for claiming two credits. Except for the reflection essay, the Horizons office will ask students to present other evidence such as certificates, awards, cash prizes, etc. upon completion of the SaP project.

Application

Before the activity starts - Students or staff need to apply for ***preliminary approval*** for SaP activities through the Horizons office. There are two main application pathways for obtaining a pre-approval number for a SaP activity for credit recognition through the Horizons office:

1) HKU units (i.e. academic staff, faculties, departments, units, etc.) should submit an application ideally at least three months before commencement.

2) Students should submit an application one month before the activity begins to the Horizons office if:

   If the activity is purely student-led without faculty
   If the activity has partners outside of HKU

For activities organized and pre-approved by HKU units, participants may simply submit their final submission, quoting the pre-approval number, upon completion of the activity.)
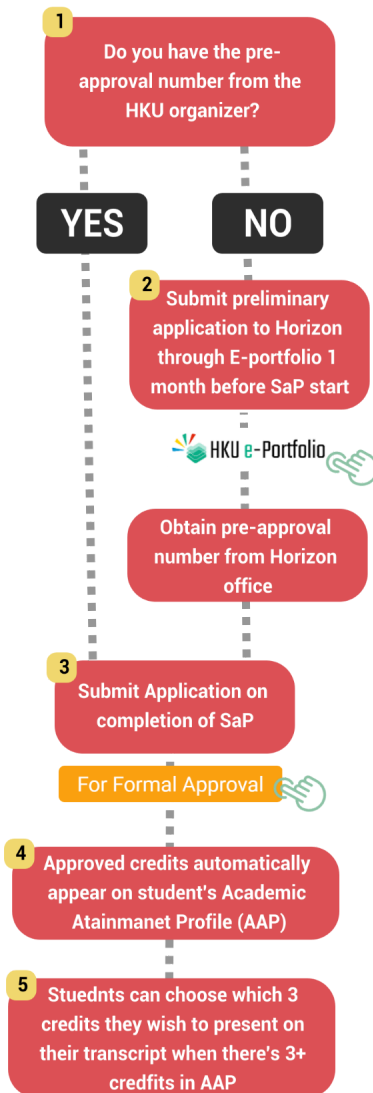
Whether the preliminary application is submitted by staff or students, when it is approved, students or staff will receive the pre-approval number from the Horizons office. Students and staff are advised to note down the pre-approval number, it will be required for claiming credit upon completion of the activity.

Claiming Credit after activity completion:

Upon completion of the SaP activity, students should submit an application for formal approval of the credits, and they should normally do so by the end of the academic year in which the event took place. Other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. an activity taking place in the final few days of an academic year), applications submitted after this deadline will not be processed.

II. HKU Students - step-by-step instructions

After discussion with faculty about the SaP activity, students need to take the following steps to apply for credit recognition:

1
Do you have the pre-approval number from the HKU organizer?

YES   **NO**

2
Submit preliminary application to Horizon through E-portfolio 1 month before SaP start

HKU e-Portfolio

Obtain pre-approval number from Horizon office

3
Submit Application on completion of SaP

For Formal Approval

4
Approved credits automatically appear on student's Academic Atainmanet Profile (AAP)

5
Stuednts can choose which 3 credits they wish to present on their transcript when there's 3+ credfits in AAP

Step 1: Do you have the pre-approval number from your HKU organizer or from your application from the Horizons office?

If yes
Move directly to step 3

If no
Step 2: Students apply for preliminary approval through HKU E-Portfolio (sample), to obtain the pre-approval number at least one month before an activity takes place.

Step 3: After completion of the project, students report on their activity through the online platform (sample) with the pre-approval number and submit the final activity report.
(A group of students participating in the same activity should use the same pre-approval number)

Step 4: The approved credit will be automatically reflected on the student's Academic Attainment Profile (AAP).
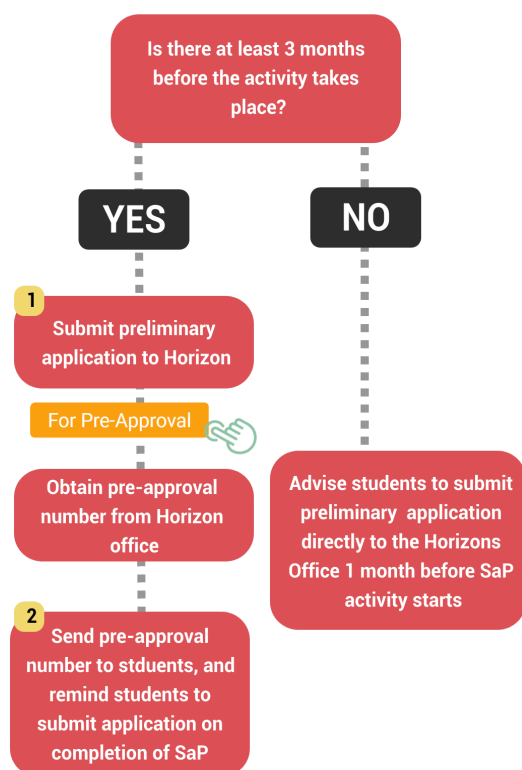
Step 5: When a student has 3 credits, he/she will be able to present the credits on the transcript. When a student has accrued four or five credits, he/she will be given an opportunity to indicate which three credits he/she would like to show on the transcript and AAP. This may be done at any time during their studies.

See the sample AAP profile bundling of 3 or more credits [here].

III. HKU Units or Teachers - step-by-step instructions

HKU units or teachers wishing to offer SaP activities for students to earn credits are requested to apply for pre-approval and obtain a <u>pre-approval number</u> ideally three months in advance:

Is there at least 3 months before the activity takes place?

YES   **NO**

1 Submit preliminary application to Horizon

For Pre-Approval 👉

Obtain pre-approval number from Horizon office

Advise students to submit preliminary application directly to the Horizons Office 1 month before SaP activity starts

2 Send pre-approval number to stduents, and remind students to submit application on completion of SaP

Step 1: HKU organizer(s) apply for pre-approval through Horizon's Office's online Google form (sample), and obtain(s) the pre-approval number from Horizons office at least three months before the activity takes place.

Step 2: Inform the student(s) of the pre-approval number, and remind them to project and send the report to the Horizons office through the online platform.

What happens after students hand in the application?

The Horizons office will review the applications. The approved credits will be reflected on the student's Academic Attainment Profile (AAP). Faculty/ HKU staff members are not involved in the credit-claiming process.

As students accumulate 3 credits or more, he/she will be able to group credits in bundles of 3 on the transcript. Students can choose which three credits he/she would like to show on the transcript. This may be done at any time during their studies.

See the sample AAP profile bundling of 3 or more credits [here].

IV. FAQ

Q: What categorizes as Students as Partners (SaP) activities?
A: Currently, Students as Partners is student engagement ***outside*** of the program teaching or credit-bearing learning activities which may be in class or out of class, on or off campus.

Examples of SaP
Any activity in the faculty, university, or beyond that does not form part of a programme or course credit-bearing activity eg.
- Teaching/mentoring secondary school students outside of course learning requirements
- Near Peer Teaching by students for students outside of course learning requirements
- Office-bearers (Secretary, treasurer, etc.) of university or faculty committees: halls, societies, sports, clubs, mentors, etc. that have served at least one academic year
- Voluntary work/ outreach outside of the university: NGOs, organizations, schools, etc.
- Presenting research in the discipline outside of course requirements

DOES NOT qualify as SaP

Any activity that forms part of programme or course credit-bearing activities eg.
- Research project as part of the course credit learning requirements
- Coaching peers as part of the course credit learning requirements
- Curriculum design and content co-creation as part of the course credit learning requirements
- Participating in research projects as experimental subjects

Preliminary Approval

Q: How do I determine if I should apply for 1 or 2 credits for my SaP activity?
A: For each out-of-classroom experience/activity, either one credit or two credits may be earned. Where an experience/activity involves not less than 20 hours of learning, one credit will be awarded. Where a more advanced experience/activity involves 50 hours or more of learning two credits will be awarded.

Q: Is there a limit to how many credits can be displayed on the transcript?
A: The approved credits with associated experiences/activities, in blocks of three and **subject to a maximum of six**, will be reflected on the transcript and the Academic Attainment Profile (AAP). Where a student has accrued four or five credits, he/she will be given an opportunity to indicate which three credits he/she would like to show on the transcript and AAP.

Q: When student A successfully applied for pre-approval of the SaP activity, can students B and C working with him/her use the same pre-approval number in the final application?
A: Yes

Q: If students are applying to create an activity for SaP, will the faculty need to support the application approval process or is this only done by the Horizons office?
A: Faculties are not involved when students apply for pre-approval through the system.

Q: What is the latest time for submitting pre-approval from students and faculty?
A: Students should make an application through the online system for preliminary approval **at least one month** before an activity takes place.

Q: Does the SaP need to be completed before the end of the academic year or can it be across different academic years?

A: Can be across different academic years.

Q: Could there be an application for 3 credits for students as partners activities?
A: Currently, students can only claim 1-2 credits for one activity and cannot combine on the same activity. Students can only make one application per activity, that is, no double-counting for credits for the same activity.

Q: Is it true that both 1 credit and 2 credits need to be recognized by the mapped to at least one of six University Educational Aims?
A: Yes.

Q: How long does it usually take until the application gets approved?
A: Normally, 4-6 weeks.

Academic Attainment Profile (AAP)

An Academic Attainment Profile (AAP) is a document that records the achievement of a student. Approved SaP credits will automatically appear on the AAP. [instruction and user guide – online academic attainment profile application](#)

Q: For 3 credits to appear on the transcript, could the credit be either 1+2 or 1+1+1?
A: Yes

Q: Can students choose which 3 credits to bundle together?
A: Credits on AAP can be selected for bundling into 3 units for transcript at any time as determined by the student. (When a student has accrued four or five credits, he/she will be given an opportunity to indicate which three credits he/she would like to show on the transcript and AAP)

Q: Does the bundling of credits for the transcript have to be done each academic year or can this be delayed so that students can bundle credits of a similar theme into groups of 3 across different years?
A: There is no definite schedule or time limit for the bundling. Students may inform the Horizons Office of their decision at any time.

Q: Would students be able to name the title that shows on the AAP?
A: The titles of the activities earning credits may be edited for clarity and conciseness. Credits on the transcript could be badged SAP – Education/Service/Research within the title if permitted by the word limit on the platform.