



CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING PROCEDURES

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Supporting documents, procedures & forms:	Admission Procedures Coursework Rules Credit for Prior Learning Policy Application Form to Apply for an Undergraduate Degree and Credit for Prior Learning Application Form to Apply for a Postgraduate Degree and Credit for Prior Learning Application Form to Apply for Credit for Prior Learning for Current Students Learning Statement Guide to Assessment of Prior Learning		
Relevant Legislation & External Documents:	Australian Qualifications Framework 2nd Edition, 2013 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018		
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1 Introduction

1. These procedures support the implementation of the Credit for Prior Learning Policy. They apply to all coursework programs and all campuses, except UOW Dubai.

2 Communication to Students

1. UOW will maintain a central website which contains up-to-date information on credit and the application process. Students (including prospective students) enquiring about or applying for credit will be referred to this website.
2. Applicants will be advised that credit transferred into a UOW course does not carry a grade or mark, and consequently an award “with distinction” cannot be made where more than 50% (or 66% for postgraduate coursework) of the course is made up of prior credit from a non-UOW accredited course. This should be made clear to students as they may, as a result, choose not to transfer credit into a program (refer Coursework Rules, clauses 7.28 and 7.29).
3. International applicants should be advised that the granting of Credit for Prior Learning may lead to a shortening of the course duration and potentially have implications for their visa. If credit is approved after a visa has been granted, the University is required to inform the Department of Immigration and Border Protection of any changes to the course duration under the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

3 Application Process

1. Applications for credit should be made either:
 - a. as part of the application for admission, and by way of completion of the prescribed Admission form; or
 - b. after enrolment, and by way of completion of the prescribed Credit for Prior Learning Application form
 - c. by an UOW student undertaking a Mobility Exchange Program offshore.
2. Prospective students should be encouraged to apply for credit for prior learning as early as possible before the commencement of study to ensure that the most appropriate course of study is undertaken.
3. An application for credit should be lodged before the start of session, but no later than the census date for each session (normally the fourth week of session).
4. There is no charge for credit assessment for a current student or an individual who has been made an offer to study at UOW.

4 Timelines

1. Applications for credit for formal learning, where there are current precedents, will normally be assessed within 10 working days. A longer period may be required where full assessment is required, particularly at peak admission and enrolment times.
2. Applications for credit for non-formal and informal learning will normally be assessed within 20 working days. A longer period may be required at peak admission and enrolment times.



5 Documentation

1. Except where credit transfer is covered by a formal agreement, all applications for credit must be accompanied by full documentation as follows:
 - a. For formal learning: Full details of previous studies including a certified copy of an academic transcript, indicating the course/subject(s) completed, year completed and grade obtained (including details of the grading system), and weighting of the course/subject as a portion of the total program; and a copy of the subject/course description for each course, including the syllabus or handbook outline.
 - b. For informal or non-formal learning: Evidence of achievement of learning outcomes presented in a Learning Statement attached to the Credit for Prior Learning Application Form (refer to the Guide to Assessment of Prior Learning).

6 Assessment Process

1. Assessment of credit is an academic responsibility. Standard assessments based on established precedents may be delegated in writing to admissions staff. Student and Accommodation Services will maintain a record of all such delegations and a credit precedents register.
2. All new assessments will be referred to the relevant Head of Students (or relevant delegated authority in accordance with the UOW Delegations of Authority Policy) who may seek advice from the Academic Program Director, Discipline Leader or specific academic who is teaching in this area for preliminary assessment and who will advise whether the student could be potentially academically disadvantaged or otherwise disadvantaged in their proposed course of study by an award of credit.
3. Assessment of credit must ensure that evidence provided is valid, authentic, current and sufficient (refer to the Guide to Assessment of Prior Learning).
4. Assessment of incomplete studies involves an evaluation of the authorised record of results for the units undertaken (via a transcript, an academic record or other term including statement of attainment) to confirm that the person has satisfied the requirements of the unit/s of competency or accredited short course specified in the statement and a judgement made on of the demonstration of learning outcomes (subject or course) relevant to their Award.
5. Assessment of credit based on informal or non-formal learning will normally be undertaken by the relevant Subject Coordinator following the assessment of an Evidence Portfolio (refer to the Guide to Assessment of Prior Learning) and additional assessment or interview if required. The Subject Coordinator will make a recommendation to the Head of Students or relevant delegated authority.

7 Approval Process

1. Applications will be approved by the Head of Students or relevant delegated authority in accordance with the UOW Delegations of Authority Policy.
2. The Head of Students (or delegated authority) approves the credit to be granted in response to applications for credit from students enrolled in the School or Faculty for which he/she is responsible. Where the application relates to credit for a subject coordinated by another School or Faculty, the approving officer will seek the advice of the approving officer of the relevant School or Faculty.



8 Credit Precedents

1. Where an application for assessment for credit for prior learning based on prior complete or incomplete formal study is approved, this becomes a credit precedent which is applied to subsequent credit applications.
2. The Admissions team within Student and Accommodation Services assesses credit applications covered by a formal agreement or where there are clear precedents (subject to written delegated authority from the relevant faculty).
3. Student Services is responsible for the administration of articulation arrangements and providing information to potential credit applicants about approved articulation agreements and credit precedents.

9 Notification Process

1. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of credit decisions in writing, including any reasons for not giving credit. For unsuccessful applications the decision rationale should make reference to the relevant assessment criteria as outlined within the Guide to Assessment of Prior Learning (Schedule 1).
2. Applicants may be notified of the credit available to them in the offer letter or by a separate notification.
3. Where an applicant has been granted provisional credit, the offer letter will state clearly that the credit is provisional upon the applicant providing additional documentation or meeting other requirements as stipulated by the University.

10 Record Keeping and Reporting

1. Student and Accommodation Services Division will:
 - a. ensure that credit awarded is recorded on the student's record and noted on the student's academic transcript.
 - b. maintain a record of all faculty delegations of credit assessment.
 - c. maintain a public register of articulation and credit transfer agreements.
 - d. maintain a credit precedence database.
 - e. ensure that the records kept under clauses 10.1 (b),(c) and (d) are reviewed at least on an annual basis.
2. When the granting of Credit for Prior Learning leads to a shortening of an International Student's course duration, Student Services will ensure the change in course duration is reported via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) in accordance with the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act.

11 Review

1. Credit arrangements for each course will be reviewed as part of the course review cycle.
2. In order to ensure the integrity of credit decisions, the subsequent academic performance of student cohorts receiving credit will be monitored.
3. Data on student performance by credit pathway, policy exceptions and appeals will be reported annually to the Faculty Education Committee.



12 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	1 April 2015	University Council	First Version – Replacing the Admission and Advanced Standing Policy
2	17 July 2019	Vice-Chancellor	Second version – Inclusion of the Mobility Exchange Program, replace ESOS with National Code of Practice, insert requirement to consider student disadvantage, clarification of assessment of incomplete, informal and non-formal studies, updates to the Assessment Guide and changes to delegations.
3	1 January 2020 (Approved 9 June 2020)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)	Minor amendments to reflect the rescission of General Course Rules and Admissions Rules, replaced by Coursework Rules.
4	18 December 2020	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)	Administrative amendments to reflect divisional and faculty realignments.



SCHEDULE 1: GUIDE TO ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR LEARNING

1. Assessment Criteria

The University's assessment of prior learning is based on an evaluation of the evidence presented, using the following criteria:

- **Valid** - the prior learning matches both the qualification type and the discipline learning outcomes for the relevant subject/course. The applicant's standard of achievement in the prior learning is consistent with the qualification level and type specified for the course.
- **Authentic** – the prior learning has been undertaken by the applicant and the standard of achievement in the prior learning is based on the applicant's own work.
- **Current** – the prior learning has been achieved within the specified time limit for credit set out in Credit for Prior Learning Policy.
- **Sufficient** - the evidence of prior learning is sufficient for the Assessor to reliably verify the learning outcomes achieved are at the appropriate standard. In recognising prior learning consideration needs to be given to whether the volume of learning is sufficient in the context of the discipline for the AQF level and qualification type, as well as whether there is a sufficient portion of qualification components at the AQF level.

2. Assessment of Formal Learning

Credit for prior formal learning is assessed by determining the extent to which the applicant's prior studies are equivalent to the content and learning outcomes of one or more subjects in the award program. The educational judgement concerning equivalence is based on the discipline context, content, standards and assessment in the program or course the applicant has undertaken.

Factors to be taken into consideration as related to assurance of learning principles:

- Credit for studies completed at a diploma level is normally restricted to level 100 subjects as this level of study generally covers introductory material.
- If the request for credit applies to 300 level subjects or beyond, the assessment should take into consideration if the course (degree) level outcomes and any assurance of learning outcomes have been achieved, as it is often at these later stages of the degree where these apply.
- Credit for postgraduate programs for studies completed at an undergraduate level may be granted under certain conditions (refer to Schedule 1: Limitations on the Amount of Credit within the Credit for Prior Learning Policy). The assessment process will take into consideration the knowledge the student has obtained through the study of a relevant major or where learning has been attained in a double badged subject and the lower level subject content and outcomes are considered either identical or directly relevant to the content and outcomes of the higher AQF level course.

For formal learning, the provision of credit is based on the precedents of established subject equivalence, with no attempt being made to assess the learning of the student who is applying for credit. The formal assessment of the student, already conducted, is accepted as proof.



3. Assessment of Overseas Qualifications

In addition to the assessment criteria listed in (1) and (2) above, assessment of overseas qualifications should take into consideration:

- academic entry level standards for the overseas institution's award;
- course duration required to complete the overseas institutions award;
- hours of delivery, and assessments undertaken and grading scales of the overseas institution's award;
- levels of credit granted by other Australian Universities; and
- any available benchmarking of education standards across countries and qualifications.

4. Assessment of Informal and Non-Formal Learning (RPL)

4.1 Introduction

An assessment of informal and non-formal learning is often referred to as the recognition of prior learning (RPL). RPL is a process which matches the things a person has learnt against the learning outcomes of a course or subject. The educational judgement concerning equivalence is based on the extent to which the applicant can demonstrate they have achieved the required learning outcomes. Examples:

Informal:

- professional experience/ on-the-job training/ work-based learning;
- community-based learning/ volunteering;
- experiential learning/life experience/hobbies.

Non-formal:

- non-accredited or uncredentialed course;
- micro-credentials such as a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC).

It is important to stress that credit is not given for experience. Experience is only valuable, in this context, as a source of learning. It is what has been learned that is important not what the individual has actually done. For the same reason, the length of professional experience should not determine the amount of RPL credit awarded.

4.2 RPL Process

The RPL process consists of the following stages:

- identifying the evidence required;
- providing advice to students about the process;
- providing students with sufficient information to enable them to prepare their evidence to meet the standard required for the RPL assessment process;
- assessing using appropriate evidence-gathering methods and tools;
- recording the outcome; and
- reporting to key internal and external stakeholders.



This process is described in more detail in the Flowchart.

In applying for RPL, students must lodge the following with the Student and Accommodation Services Division:

- Credit for Prior Learning Application Form which lists all subjects against which RPL is sought;
- Learning Statement which clearly maps the applicant's informal and non-formal learning experiences to the learning outcomes of the subject(s) against which RPL is sought;
- Portfolio of Evidence.

4.3 The Evidence Portfolio

The evidence portfolio includes all the information that an applicant presents to the University for assessment. This may include:

- a completed and signed Learning Statement;
- a detailed Curriculum Vitae;
- reports, testimonials or affidavits relating to the applicant's learning, skill or competency;
- certified supporting statements from employers;
- examples of the applicant's work drawn from the workplace, social, community or other settings;
- reflective papers, journals;
- if the applicant has been self-employed, a copy of the ABN registration and a letter from an accountant or solicitor certifying the nature of the business and the period during which the applicant has been engaged in the business.

In the case of non-formal learning:

- a certified copy of a statement of satisfactory completion of the study offered by a professional body or other provider;
- a statement of the objectives, learning outcomes and content of the course;
- details of the contact hours of the course;
- information on the course presenter/s and their qualifications.

Documents provided as evidence must be original or certified.

Portfolio preparation is an educational experience requiring the applicant to reflect and relate past learning experiences to present educational goals. It tests powers of self-evaluation and the ability to present evidence in a clear, concise manner.

In addition to the portfolio, the applicant may be required to participate in an interview or undertake some form of assessment to demonstrate they have achieved the required learning outcomes.

4.4 RPL Assessment

RPL assessment should be undertaken by academic staff with expertise in the subject area, as well as knowledge of and expertise in RPL assessment.



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RPL assessment needs to ensure that the learning outcomes of the subject/course are adequately demonstrated and are at the AQF level required for the relevant qualification.

The RPL Assessor will interpret the evidence presented and make a judgment as to whether the learning objectives have been met. The assessment will normally involve an interview with the applicant and may be supplemented by other forms of evidence such as an oral presentation, practical demonstration, examination or challenge test. When the assessment indicates substantial but incomplete mastery, it is acceptable for the assessor to set additional make up work and further assessment in order to fully satisfy requirements.

Note that a graded mark is not awarded for RPL credit because of the lack of comparability with other enrolled students of that assessment.

The RPL Assessor makes a recommendation to the Head of Students (or relevant delegated authority as per the UOW Delegations of Authority Policy) who has final approval of exemption by RPL. If the RPL claim is rejected the applicant will be notified of the outcome in writing and provided with a rationale for why their application was not approved in accordance with the Assessment of Informal and Non-Formal Learning RPL Procedures outlined above and will be advised to enrol in and complete those subject(s) for which RPL was requested. The results of RPL assessments are to be recorded by each Faculty.