Credit and Prior Learning Policy and Procedure

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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out policies and procedures for meeting to ensure fair and transparent means of recognising students’ prior learning, both through formal study and through other forms of learning.

Scope

This policy applies to all higher education courses of study offered.

Responsibility

The Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for evaluating applications for credit transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning. The integration of articulation pathways into course design is overseen by the Course Advisory and Development Committee and implemented by the Director of Studies. The Director of Studies is also responsible for negotiating articulation agreements with other institutions where applicable.

Definitions

Credit: AQF (2012) defines credit as “…value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications” and states that “Credit reduces the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification and may be through credit transfer, articulation, recognition of prior learning or advanced standing”.

Credit transfer: Credit transfer is defined in accordance with the definition used by Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Council (AQF, 2012). As such, the term applies to the awarding of credit toward one qualification recognised under the AQF on the basis of a student having completed a course, or components of a course recognised under the AQF or other formal learning that is demonstrably equivalent to a course or component of a course recognised under the AQF. Credit transfer and related procedures apply only to formal study.

Destination course: A course that is being or will be undertaken by a student in which they wish to receive credit for prior learning or on the basis of previous study.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): As set out in AQF (2012), RPL is defined as a “process
that involves assessment of an individual’s relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit”.

**Principles**

Credit transfer arrangements will:

- Eliminate, wherever possible, unnecessary and unfair barriers that may prevent students from receiving a higher education qualification;
- Be communicated clearly and transparently to students and staff;
- Be applied consistently and equitably and;
- Include rigorous processes to ensure that the academic integrity and quality of courses of study is maintained;

Internal articulation pathways will:

- Be planned and identified during the course design process;
- Be clearly and transparently communicated to students and potential future students and;
- Be set out in curriculum documentation

Equivalence, for the purpose of establishing articulation pathways, credit transfer and RPL will be evaluated on the basis of:

- Learning outcomes;
- Volume of learning;
- Program of study, including content, and;
- Learning and assessment approaches.

Equivalence of learning shall be “recognised regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided that the learning is relevant and current and has a relationship to the learning outcomes of the qualification” (AQF, 2013).

The decision to grant or deny credit transfer or prior learning does not relate to admission decisions. A student may be eligible for admission into a course though their credit transfer or recognition of prior learning application is denied. Conversely, a student may be offered credit for
units through recognition of prior learning or credit transfer but not be admitted to a course of study for which they have applied.

**Equivalency Standards for AQF Courses**

When evaluating an application for transfer of credit from an AQF course, the Teaching and Learning Committee must ensure that:

- The previous units of study for which the student applies for credit are at an AQF level at least equivalent to the destination course;
- The institution with which the student has undertaken the previous units is recognised under Australian law as an issuer of AQF awards and is either self-accrediting or has been given accreditation by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to deliver the units as part of an accredited course of study;
- The units of study were completed within the past five years;
- The scope and duration of the units is equal to the requirements for the same number of credit points as units within the destination course;
- The units of study cover content that is equivalent to units of study within the structure of the destination course into which the credit is to be transferred or, in units that include electives, that generic credit can be applied that would meet the criteria for electives to be included in the course;
- The evidence of the student having completed the units is sound and;
- The student is only receiving credit once for each previously completed unit of study.

**Equivalency Standards for non AQF Courses**

When evaluating an application for transfer of credit from a non AQF course, the Teaching and Learning Committee must ensure that:

- The previous units of study for which the student applies for credit can be proven beyond reasonable doubt to be equivalent to an AQF level at least equivalent to the destination course;
- The units of study were completed within the past five years;
- The scope and duration of the units is equal to the requirements for the same number of credit points as units within the destination course;
- The units of study cover content that is equivalent to units of study within the structure of the destination course into which the credit is to be transferred or, in units that include electives, that generic credit can be applied that would meet the criteria for electives to be included in the course;
- The evidence of the student having completed the units is sound and;
- The student is only receiving credit once for each previously completed unit of study.
Recognition of Prior Learning Standards

When evaluating an application for Recognition of Prior Learning, the Teaching and Learning Committee must ensure that the application provides sound evidence that:

- The student has attained knowledge, understanding and competency in that it is at least equivalent to that required to pass the assessment requirements of the units of study for which the student is applying for credit;
- The knowledge and competency the student has attained is current and reflects changes and developments in the body of knowledge addressed by the content of the units for which the student is applying for credit;
- The student has progressed in terms of attaining the graduate attributes of the course of study in which they are enrolled in line with other students who have progressed to a similar point in the course and;
- The student has academic competency, including writing and research skills, which would be sufficient to pass the assessment requirements of the units for which the student is applying for credit.

The Teaching and Learning Committee members must also be satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that:

- The evidence provided has not been falsified;
- The evidence provided relates to the student named in the application and;
- The evidence is provided in a clear and coherent form that demonstrates its relevance to addressing the standards.

Procedures

Internal articulation

Where an articulation pathway is identified during the development of a course of study, the following procedure will apply:

1. The articulation and amount of advanced standing is included in student communication and marketing materials including the Student Handbook and thereby provided to applicants prior to enrolment;
2. In the week in which unit results are issued at the end of each study period, the Student Administration and Registration Services Manager downloads a report from the Student Management System (SMS) listing all students who have successfully completed (pass mark or above) all units of study from which an internal articulation pathway has been identified and provides it to the Marketing and Business Development Manager;
3. The Marketing and Business Development Manager issues each student named in the
report an invitation to articulate to the further course of study, specifying what credit will be transferred and what further units of study they will need to complete in order to achieve the qualification to which the articulation pathway leads;

4. Students who indicate that they wish to follow the articulation pathway complete an articulation form and submit it either online or in person to the Student Administration and Registration Services Manager. Students may indicate that they wish to follow the articulation pathway up to five years from their course completion date;

5. The Student Administration and Registration Services Manager enrolls the students in the new course of study in accordance with the applicable registration procedures.

In the week following the commencement of the teaching period, the Director of Studies and the Quality Standards and Compliance Manager review any credit that has been applied through this procedure.

Internal credit transfer

Upon introduction of new courses or units of study, all units of study are compared with those units offered in other courses and unit equivalences are identified. A map and record of these equivalences is maintained by the Director of Studies. Each new version is reviewed and approved by the Course Advisory and Development Committee and then made available online to all staff and students. Where a student enrolls in a course that includes units that are equivalent to units that the student has completed in the past five years, the Student Administration and Registration Services Manager offers to apply credit for any applicable units.

The offer also includes a summary of how this will affect the student’s contact hours and a notice to overseas students indicating that this could potentially affect their ability to meet the requirements of their student visa.

Upon receipt of the offer, the student may indicate that they wish to receive credit transfer, in which case the Student Administration and Registration Services Manager applies the credit to the student’s record. In the week following the commencement of the teaching period, the Director of Studies and the Quality Standards and Compliance Manager review any credit that has been applied through this procedure.

External articulation

Where a formal articulation agreement exists with another institution that issues an AQF qualification, the following procedure applies:

1. The requirements and conditions of articulation are negotiated with the other institution
by the Director of Studies and are set out in a written agreement. The names of the
courses between which articulation applies and the units for which credit will be applied
are specified in marketing and student communication materials and provided to
applicants prior to enrolment;

2. An applicant who has completed a course named in an articulation agreement applies to
undertake a course of study at IHM and is accepted in accordance with either the
Student Selection and Admission Policy and Procedure for Fully Online Courses or the
Student Selection and Admission Policy and Procedure for Courses Delivered to
Overseas Students as applicable. Some articulation agreements may exempt the
student from some or all of the admission criteria, meaning that a place is automatically
offered in the soonest available intake;

3. Prior to commencement of the first study period in which the student is enrolled at IHM,
the student submits an application for credit transfer, accompanied by an official
transcript of results from the course for which they are seeking credit;

External credit transfer – AQF course

Where pathways for credit transfer from other institutions that issue AQF qualifications are
identified, the type of course or unit from which credit transfer may apply is set out in student
communication materials prior to enrolment. Should a student who has completed an AQF
qualification at another institution successfully apply for and be admitted to an IHM course of
higher education study, they may apply for credit transfer, either when they apply for admission
into a course of study, or at least four weeks prior to the first teaching period of their course, in
accordance with the following procedure:

1. The student submits an Application for Advanced Standing - Credit Transfer and RPL
form, either electronically or in hard copy, to the Student Administration and Registration
Services Manager, accompanied by supporting evidence including:
   a. An official transcript of results (academic transcript) issued by the other
      institution;
   b. Unit descriptions published by the other institution including descriptions of
      learning outcomes;
2. The Student Administration and Registration Services Manager ensures that the form
   and supporting documents are complete and forwards them to the student’s Course
   Coordinator;
3. The Course Coordinator evaluates the application based on the Equivalency
   Standards for AQF Courses set out in this document and may call for further evidence
   if required. They may draw on other relevant expertise and seek to verify evidence, for
   example, by contacting previous employers or mentors specified in the application;
4. Having reviewed the application, the Course Coordinator makes recommendations to
   the Teaching and Learning Committee and the members make the final decision;
5. The minute secretary of the Teaching and Learning Committee informs the student and their Course Coordinator of the committee’s decision using the Advanced Standing Outcome Notification Template. The notification includes instructions for accessing the appropriate appeals procedure or resubmitting the application with additional evidence. The notification is sent within ten (10) business days from the date the Application for Advanced Standing - Credit Transfer and RPL was received.

In the week following the commencement of the teaching period, the Director of Studies and the Quality Standards and Compliance Manager review any credit that has been applied through this procedure.

**External credit transfer – non AQF course**

Where pathways for credit transfer from other institutions that issue non AQF qualifications are identified, the type of course or unit from which credit transfer may apply is set out in student communication materials prior to enrolment. Should a student who has completed a non AQF qualification at another institution successfully apply for and be admitted to an IHM course of higher education study, they may apply for credit transfer in accordance with the following procedure, either when they apply for admission into a course of study, or at least four weeks prior to the first teaching period of their course:

1. The student submits an Application for Advanced Standing - Credit Transfer and RPL form, either electronically or in hard copy, to the Student Administration and Registration Services Manager, accompanied by supporting evidence including:
   a. An official transcript of results (academic transcript) issued by the other institution;
   b. Unit descriptions published by the other institution including descriptions of learning outcomes;
   c. If documents are in a language other than English, English translations of all documents certified by a National Association of Accredited Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accredited translator.

2. The Student Administration and Registration Services Manager ensures that the form and supporting documents are complete and forwards them to the student’s Course Coordinator;

3. The Course Coordinator evaluates the application based on the Equivalency Standards for non AQF Courses set out in this document and may call for further evidence if required. They may draw on other relevant expertise and seek to verify evidence, for example, by contacting previous employers or mentors specified in the application;
4. Having reviewed the application, the Course Coordinator makes recommendations to the Teaching and Learning Committee and the members make the final decision;
5. The minute secretary of the Teaching and Learning Committee informs the student and their Course Coordinator of the committee’s decision using the Advanced Standing Outcome Notification Template, which includes instructions for accessing the appropriate appeals procedure or resubmitting the application with additional evidence. The notification is sent within ten (10) business days from the date the Application for Advanced Standing - Credit Transfer and RPL was received.

In the week following the commencement of the teaching period, the Director of Studies and the Quality Standards and Compliance Manager review any credit that has been applied through this procedure.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Where a student wishes to apply for credit toward their course of study, either when they apply for admission into a course of study, or at least four weeks prior to the first teaching period of their course, on the basis of their professional experience or a form of learning other than by undertaking a formal course of study, the following procedure applies:

1. The student submits an Application for Advanced Standing - Credit Transfer and RPL form accompanied by any evidence they believe will support their claim;
2. The Student Registration and Administration Services Manager checks that all sections of the form are complete and that all evidence listed in the attachments section is present and forwards the application, once complete, to the Course Coordinator;
3. The Course Coordinator evaluates the application based on the Recognition of Prior Learning Standards set out in this document and may call for further evidence if required. They may draw on other relevant expertise and seek to verify evidence, for example, by contacting previous employers or mentors specified in the application;
4. Having reviewed the application, the Course Coordinator makes recommendations to the Teaching and Learning Committee and the members make the final decision;
5. The minute secretary of the Teaching and Learning Committee informs the student and their Course Coordinator of the committee’s decision using the Advanced Standing Outcome Notification Template, which includes instructions for accessing the appropriate appeals procedure or resubmitting the application with additional evidence. The notification is sent within ten (10) business days from the date the Application for Advanced Standing - Credit Transfer and RPL was received.
### Supplementary Information

**Related policies/procedures:** Not applicable

**Benchmarking:**

**Supporting Research and Analysis:** Not applicable

**Related documents:**
- Articulation Pathway Agreement Template
- Credit Transfer Form
- Recognition of Prior Learning Form

**Related legislation:** Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000

**Guidelines:** Not applicable

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