

Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy

1. Purpose

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Policy sets out the principles guiding UNSW College's (College) granting of credit and recognition of prior learning that contributes towards satisfying the requirements of a College award or Foundation Studies Program.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to College award Programs, and in a limited number of cases, its Foundation Studies Programs.

3. Policy statement

- (a) The College acknowledges that RPL facilitates the movement of students between sectors and higher education providers and recognises the multiple pathways students may take to gain qualifications.
- (b) Within this context, the College is committed to supporting RPL and granting credit where Program structures and requirements permit. Credit granted within the constraints of this commitment must maintain the integrity of the College's academic Programs and protect the academic standards and reputation of its Subjects (Courses).
- (c) For Foundation Studies Programs, the College does not apply RPL unless the student has successfully completed equivalent subjects at an institution delivering College Foundation Studies subjects under a third-party arrangement with the College.
- (d) For award Programs, the College approach to recognition of prior learning and credit is therefore guided by the following principles to only grant credit where:
 - i. it can be demonstrated that the prior learning and outcomes satisfy College Course learning outcomes;
 - ii. the integrity of the Program learning outcomes are not compromised in the granting of credit;
 - iii. prior learning is assessed as being both relevant and current;
 - iv. volume of learning, discipline context, content, learning and assessment approaches are considered in determining equivalence;
 - v. formal learning for which credit is granted is for a successfully completed Subject (Course(s));
 - vi. credit granted does not exceed 1/3 of the Program unless the student has undertaken equivalent Subjects at UNSW or an institution delivering College Programs under a third-party arrangement with the College;

- vii. UNSW has endorsed the granting of credit for Programs which articulate into the University's degrees, so as not to compromise agreed articulation arrangements.

4. Types of prior learning recognised

4.1. Formal learning (College award and Foundation Studies Programs)

- (a) Formal learning applies to education undertaken after the completion of compulsory, high school or equivalent, education.
- (b) Prior formal learning may be recognised if a student has:
 - i. successfully completed or partially completed a Program at the College, UNSW or at another higher education provider within ten (10) years of applying for a College Program;
 - ii. qualified for an award that is part of an articulated Program sequence;
 - iii. completed, or partially completed, a Program at another higher education provider where a credit transfer agreement exists as part of an articulation arrangement.
- (c) Formal learning and assessment must also align with the principles for granting credit articulated in this Policy.

4.2. Informal learning (College award Programs only)

- (a) Informal learning is assessed by determining the extent to which the student has achieved the learning outcomes of one or more Subjects in the award Program. The assessment relating to equivalence is based on the extent to which the student can demonstrate they have achieved the required learning outcomes.
- (b) Informal learning and assessment must also align with the principles for granting credit articulated in this Policy.

5. RPL for admission to a Program

- (a) Prior learning may be recognised for the purpose of admission to a Program by demonstrating that the Program entry requirements have been met.
- (b) This involves assessment of the student's prior learning for equivalence to the learning outcomes of the qualification specified as a requirement for admission to that Program. The College [Admissions Policy](#) provides further detail of Program entry requirements.

6. RPL for credit or exemptions

- (a) The granting of credit advances a student's standing in a Program to which they have been admitted and expedites their progression through the Program. Credit may be granted in the form of specified or unspecified credit.



- (b) Exemptions do not expedite a student's progression through a Program. Students can be exempted from a specified Subject based on prior learning, but are not granted credit and are required to complete a Subject of the same credit value as an alternative.

7. Types of credit

7.1. Specified credit:

- (a) Credit granted relates to the specific Subject or Subjects in a Program, exempting students from those Subjects and awarding the appropriate Units of Credit in their place.
- (b) Specified Credit is granted when an exact or near exact equivalence to one or more Subjects studied can be demonstrated.
- (c) Once approved and, if within a Program subject to an articulation arrangement with UNSW, endorsed by UNSW, this recognition becomes a precedent, subject to periodic review.

7.2. Unspecified credit

Unspecified credit is granted when an exact or near exact Subject equivalence cannot be demonstrated. It most often relates to prior learning deemed to be relevant to the learning outcomes of a Program as a whole and is granted in the form of elective Subjects or other optional parts of a Program. In some cases, students may be asked to undertake a Subject assessment before being allocated credit.

8. Time limit on credit

Application for recognition of prior learning should be made at the point of applying for the Program and before an offer is made. In the case of students who have undertaken equivalent Subjects at UNSW or an institution delivering College Courses under a third-party arrangement with the College, it may be applied automatically on notification.

9. Maximum credit granted

To ensure the integrity of College Programs, credit granted will not exceed 1/3 of the Subjects undertaken within a Program of study, unless the student has undertaken equivalent Subjects at UNSW or an institution delivering College Courses under a third-party arrangement with the College.

10. Transfer of grades for credit awarded

Grades achieved in prior formal studies at institutions other than the College are not included in a student's transcript or calculation of WAM or grade point average.

11. Approval of credit

The Executive Director, Academic, or staff with the relevant disciplinary expertise determines the credit to be granted, within the provision of this Policy, in response to applications for credit from students admitted to the College.

12. Articulation arrangements

- (a) Articulation arrangements between the College and other higher education providers can be used to provide automatic admission from one qualification into another.
- (b) Where articulation arrangements are established, the agreed credit outcomes and the defined pathway between the linked qualifications will be documented and made publicly available.

13. Review and appeals

To submit an appeal against a decision relating to credit, students should follow the [Student Appeal Policy](#).

14. Roles, responsibilities and delegations

Role	Responsibility
Academic Board	<p>Provides critical oversight of academic quality, including approval of new Programs, approval of Program withdrawals and teach out plans, approval of material changes to existing Programs and approval of academic policies.</p> <p>Provides advice to the Board of Directors on academic matters, including new Programs, academic policy, practice and quality assurance.</p>
Executive Director, Academic	<p>Key leadership role responsible to the College CEO for the quality of learning and teaching linked to all College Programs.</p> <p>Responsible in this context of this policy in ensuring the granting of any credit does not compromise the integrity of College Programs.</p>

15. Definitions and Acronyms

Definitions and Acronyms	
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework

Articulation arrangement	<p>An approved agreement or structure which enables students to progress in a defined pathway from one qualification to another with credit.</p> <p>An articulation arrangement can be internal, through an articulated sequence of Programs, or external.</p>
Award	<p>A diploma or certificate conferred following completion of a Program. It provides official recognition of successful completion of that Program and carries the official seal of the College.</p>
Award Programs	<p>Has the meaning as defined in the TEQSA Act (see higher education award) and include diplomas, advanced diplomas and undergraduate degrees.</p>
Course/Subject	<p>A planned and structured sequence of learning and teaching that allows a student to gain knowledge skills and understanding in relation to an agreed set of learning outcomes.</p> <p>Is sometimes called a 'unit' in other institutions.</p>
Subject/Course learning outcomes (CLOs)	<p>The knowledge, attitudes, skills and their applications, behaviours and practices that students need to demonstrate to complete a Subject within a Program. CLOs articulate with Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs).</p>
Credit	<p>The value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content, volume of learning and learning outcomes between different types of learning and / or qualifications.</p> <p>This value may be expressed in terms of units of credit or prescribed Courses.</p>
Exemption	<p>The waiver of a requirement to complete a specified Subject. Students are not granted credit and are required to complete an alternative Subject of the same credit value.</p>
Formal learning	<p>Learning that takes place through a structured Program of study that is delivered by education or training providers, which leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification.</p>
Informal / workplace learning	<p>Learning that takes place through life and work experience. Unlike formal or non-formal learning, it is not organised or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support.</p>

Program	An approved set of requirements and Subjects into which a student is admitted which will lead to a College award.
Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)	The specific knowledge, skills and their applications, behaviours and practices, including graduate capabilities, that students need to demonstrate in completing a Program.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	The process of assessing an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal and informal learning) for equivalence to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the learning outcomes of the qualification specified as a requirement for admission to the Program; or (b) Subjects in the Program to which a student has been admitted, to determine the credit or exemption to be granted.
Specified credit	Credit granted when an exact or near exact equivalence to one or more Subjects studied either at the College or UNSW or at another higher education provider, or through informal prior learning, can be demonstrated. Once agreed, this recognition becomes a precedent for other students.
Unspecified credit	Credit granted when an exact or near exact Subject equivalence cannot be demonstrated.
Volume of learning	The notional duration of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for a Program, expressed in units of credit.

Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents	
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</u> • <u>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) (ESOS)</u>
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Admissions Policy</u> • <u>Student Appeal Policy</u>
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Procedure</u>
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Credit for Prior Learning Application</u>

Policy Governance

Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy	
Category/Business Group	Admissions
Published Externally (Yes/No)	Yes
Approver	Academic Board
Responsible Officer	Executive Director, Future Students and Business Development
Contact Officer	Head of Admissions & Student Systems
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Next Review Date	23 May 2027
Version	2.0

Revision History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
2.0	Academic Board	23 May 2024	23 May 2024	Amended to include Foundation Studies programs, including amendments made to sections 3(c), 3(d), 4.1(b), 7.2 and 8.
1	Academic Board	08 August 2023	17 August 2023	N/A

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