

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.

2. Scope

This Policy only applies to College award 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 awards.
- (c) 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 course(s);
 - vi. credit granted does not exceed 1/3 of the program;
 - vii. UNSW has endorsed the granting of credit for programs which articulate into University degrees, so as not to compromise agreed articulation arrangements.

4. Types of prior learning recognised

4.1. Formal learning

- (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;
 - 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

- (a) Informal learning is assessed by determining the extent to which the student has achieved the learning outcomes of one or more courses 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 course based on prior learning, but are not granted credit and are required to complete a course of the same credit value as an alternative.



7. Types of credit

7.1. Specified credit:

- (a) Credit granted relates to the specific course or courses in a program, exempting students from those courses 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 courses 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 course 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 courses or other optional parts of a program.

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.

9. Maximum credit granted

To ensure the integrity of College programs, credit granted will not exceed 1/3 of the courses undertaken within a program of study.

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 Chief Academic Officer 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 Review and 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>
Chief Academic Officer	<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>
UNSW Faculty Dean or nominee	<p>Endorses granting of any credit towards College programs which articulate into UNSW programs, to ensure any agreed articulations between the College and UNSW are not compromised.</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	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.
Award programs	Has the meaning as defined in the TEQSA Act (see higher education award) and include diplomas, advanced diplomas and undergraduate degrees.
Course	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. Is sometimes called a 'unit' or 'subject' in other institutions.
Course learning outcomes (CLOs)	The knowledge, attitudes, skills and their applications, behaviours and practices that students need to demonstrate to complete a course within a program. CLOs articulate with Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs).
Credit	The value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content, volume of learning and learning outcomes between different types of learning and / or qualifications. This value may be expressed in terms of units of credit or prescribed courses.
Exemption	The waiver of a requirement to complete a specified course. Students are not granted credit and are required to complete an alternative course of the same credit value.
Formal learning	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.
Informal / workplace learning	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.
Program	An approved set of requirements and courses 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	<p>The process of assessing an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal and informal learning) for equivalence to:</p> <p>(a) the learning outcomes of the qualification specified as a requirement for admission to the program; or</p> <p>(b) courses in the program to which a student has been admitted, to determine the credit or exemption to be granted.</p>
Specified credit	<p>Credit granted when an exact or near exact equivalence to one or more courses studied either at the College or UNSW or at another higher education provider, or through informal prior learning, can be demonstrated.</p> <p>Once agreed, this recognition becomes a precedent for other students.</p>
Unspecified credit	<p>Credit granted when an exact or near exact course equivalence cannot be demonstrated.</p>
Volume of learning	<p>The notional duration of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for a program, expressed in units of credit.</p>

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 Grievances and Complaints 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>

16. 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	17/08/2026
Version	1.0

Revision History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1	Academic Board	08 August 2023	17 August 2023	N/A

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