

## QF008 APIC Award of Credit Policy

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## 1. Purpose

APIC is committed to the ideals of lifelong learning and recognises the need to facilitate continued opportunities for the pursuit of formal education through the recognition of previous learning. This policy outlines the principles, procedures and limits for the recognition of an individual's prior learning and experience through the awarding of credit towards an APIC award course through credit transfer, recognition of prior learning (RPL) or articulation.

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all APIC current and prospective undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students seeking credit towards an AQF recognised award for prior or concurrent learning from other courses of the College or other institutions and workplaces.

## 3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Item	Definition
<b>Advanced Standing</b>	The student has been awarded credit based on work/life experience rather than formal education qualifications.
<b>AQF</b>	The Australian Qualifications Framework, a national policy which describes the minimum standards and levels of Australian qualifications and award courses.
<b>Articulation arrangements</b>	"Articulation arrangements enable students to progress from a completed qualification to another with admission and/or credit in a defined qualification pathway" (AQF, 2013).
<b>Block Credit</b>	Block credit is a form of credit granted towards whole stages or components of an officially accredited qualification or program of learning.
<b>Census date</b>	The last date a student can withdraw from a subject without being financially liable i.e. having to pay for the unit.
<b>Course</b>	A structured sequence of study undertaken at a recognised higher education provider, leading to the award of a degree, diploma, certificate or other recognised qualification.
<b>Credit</b>	Credit is the value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit reduces the amount of learning required to be undertaken to achieve a qualification and may be attained through credit transfer, recognition of prior learning or articulation.
<b>Credit Transfer</b>	"Credit transfer is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications" (AQF, 2013).
<b>Credit Transfer Arrangement</b>	A credit transfer arrangement defines the availability of credit transfer from one qualification to another.
<b>Recognition of Prior Learning</b>	The student has been awarded credit for a specific unit through credit transfer, articulation or other recognition of prior learning.
<b>Register of Outcomes</b>	A database in which details of the outcomes of assessments of applications for recognition of prior learning are recorded.

Item	Definition
<b>Specified Credit</b>	Specified credit is a form of credit granted towards the core and/or specified components of an officially accredited qualification or program of learning.
<b>Unspecified Credit</b>	Unspecified credit is a form of credit that may be granted towards elective components of an officially accredited qualification or program of learning.
<b>Unit</b>	A component of an award course with specified assessment requirements for which a final grade is awarded upon completion.
<b>Uncredentialed learning</b>	Knowledge and skills acquired through relevant in-service programs, work experience and other experiential learning.

## 4. Principles

The following principles and practice form the foundation for this policy.

When granting credit through recognition of prior learning or when entering into a credit arrangement with other providers, the College will

- comply and be consistent with applicable Australian laws, regulations and standards, including those enunciated in the VET Quality Framework, Higher Education Standards Framework and Australian Qualifications Framework
- preserve the integrity of learning outcomes and/or discipline requirements of the award qualification to which the credit applies
- consider the comparability and equivalence of the learning outcomes, volume of learning, the program of study previously undertaken, including content, and approaches to learning and assessment of previous learning
- recognise accredited awards and statements of attainment issued by any Australian commonwealth, state or territory authorised issuing organisation (or comparable international equivalents)
- recognise that learning can be formal, non-formal or informal, though not all of these may be applicable to all forms of credit

Determining the awarding of credit requires academic judgement. This applies when making decisions about block, specified or unspecified credit, articulation or recognition of prior learning. Staff determining the granting of credit must ensure the decision concerning the granting of credit into or towards an award is information and evidence based, equitable, transparent, timely and academically defensible.

## 5. Policy

The College may award credit in the form of block, specified or unspecified credit through articulation, credit transfer or recognition of prior learning in accordance with this policy.

For current College articulation or common credit transfer arrangements, specified, block or unspecified credit will be granted to an individual consistent with the arrangements described in policy according to the following principles:

- the amount of credit granted is determined by the specified articulation or common credit transfer arrangement, and
- the individual must have fully satisfied all terms of the specified articulation or credit transfer arrangement to be granted credit based on the arrangement.

## 6. Articulations and Credit Transfer Arrangements

### 6.1 Articulation

Articulation arrangements are based on student achievement through formal learning and provide a seamless pathway with automatic admission into one qualification from another.

Articulation arrangements may include:

- clustered qualifications involving lower qualifications that are embedded completely in the next qualification with multiple exits and entry points (an articulated suite of qualifications), or
- partially clustered qualifications that include some qualification components of the lower level qualification nested into the linked qualification, or
- arrangements where two separately designed qualifications are linked to each other to form a defined qualification linkage and credit pathway.

The amount of credit as agreed by the organisations in an articulation arrangement will be applied automatically to any student on successful completion of the previous qualification in the articulation agreement.

### 6.2 Credit Transfer

The College may award credit by credit transfer for units undertaken through prior formal learning based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched officially accredited qualifications or programs of learning. The amount of credit to be awarded must be in accordance with this Policy. The agreed credit outcomes may include any form of credit: block, specified or unspecified credit.

#### 6.2.1 Establishment of College Articulation and Common Credit Transfer Arrangement

APIC may systematically establish formalised, time-bound, articulation arrangements and/or common credit transfer arrangements between accredited qualifications of the College and other authorised issuing organisations. These may be across AQF qualifications at the same level, as well as between qualifications at different levels. They are established based on the assessment of equivalence between qualifications and/or the way in which the discipline areas of two qualifications are suited to articulation.

This considers:

- whether the articulation or credit transfer arrangement will result in a logical sequential qualification pathway for entry into and/or credit transfer towards the same or a higher level AQF qualification; and
- the comparability and equivalence of the learning outcomes, volume of learning, program of study (including content), and learning and assessment approaches.

#### 6.2.2 Guidelines for establishing articulation and credit transfer arrangement

- Articulation will be based on linking one qualification to another higher-level qualification to establish content relationships and equivalence between them, making a judgment about any credit outcomes between the linked qualifications, and setting out the agreed credit outcomes and the defined pathway between the linked qualifications in a documented agreement which is publicly available.
- The credit transfer process will be based on mapping, comparing and evaluating the extent to which the learning outcome, discipline content and assessment requirements of the individual components of one qualification are equivalent to the learning outcomes, discipline content and assessment requirements of the individual components of another qualification.

- The granting of credit through an articulation or credit transfer arrangement does not preclude any further institutional or individual student negotiations for additional credit.
- When establishing articulation or credit transfer arrangements for individuals towards higher level AQF qualifications in the same or a related discipline, subject to the limitations set out in Schedule 1.

### 6.3 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- The College may award credit through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for a higher education level unit on the basis of either:
  - prior formal learning, or
  - a combination of prior formal learning with prior non-formal and/or informal learning.
- The College will:
  - identify the evidence required
  - provide advice to students about the process
  - provide students with sufficient information to enable them to prepare their evidence to meet the requirements of the RPL assessment process
  - assess the application using appropriate evidence-gathering methods and tools
  - record the outcome and RPL assessment
  - ensure that, as with all assessment, decisions about the award of credit are undertaken by academic or teaching staff with expertise in the subject, content or skills area, as well as knowledge of and expertise in RPL assessment
  - recognise learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided the learning is relevant to the learning outcomes in the qualification
  - ensure that the evidence provided is valid, authentic, current and sufficient and that the process is fair, flexible reliable and valid.
  - Professional accreditation guidelines for some of College academic programs require that some units are taught within the course at the College. In these programs, RPL will not be approved.

### 6.4 Applications for recognition of prior learning

- Applications for RPL must be completed using the APIC Recognition of Prior Learning Form and lodged through the online via the APIC website.
- Applications for recognition of prior learning, including all required supporting documentation, must be lodged through an online application 10 working days before the census date of the student's first study period at APIC.
- Applications lodged after this date will not be considered unless the student can demonstrate there were circumstances beyond their control that prevented them submitting an application by the required date.
- Conditional credit may be awarded based on uncertified documents in support of an application. Certified documents must be provided in accordance with APICs procedures and timeframes to confirm the awarding of credit. Unavailability of official documents will not be considered a valid reason for a late application. Where certified documents are not provided in accordance with APICs procedures and timeframes credit will not be officially awarded.
- A student must not enrol in a unit for which they have applied or intend to apply for RPL credit. An application for RPL for a unit in which a student is enrolled at census date for the study period in question will not be considered.

- Applications for RPL on the grounds of successfully completed studies at a recognised higher education or vocational institution must be supported by the following:
  - original or officially certified copies of academic transcripts and/or testamurs;
  - institutional course guides, subject guides, or similar materials that describe the course and subject contents, including learning outcomes; and
- AQF qualifications and providers may be verified using one of the Australian government's registers, such as Training.gov.au (TGA) and the TEQSA National Register;
- Overseas qualifications may be assessed for equivalence in Australia at the time of application using the Country Education Profiles (CEP) online tool.
- If official documents are not available, officially certified copies must be presented. Certified copies are official copies that have been authenticated by an awarding body (university or college), or a Justice of Peace or by an authorised agent.
- Applications for RPL on the grounds of uncredentialled learning or relevant work experience require evidence that the relevant Course and Unit Learning Outcomes have been achieved. This may be demonstrated by:
  - certified copies of statements from employers; and/or
  - a portfolio prepared by the student; and/or
  - an appropriate form of written or oral assessment and/or
  - other written or oral presentations acceptable to the Dean.
- For non-formal learning, applicants will be required to supply certified copies of statements from employers, present a portfolio, or demonstrate their competence through an appropriate form of assessment.
- Applicants holding an overseas qualification(s) which is not in English must provide the original transcripts and testamur(s) and submit approved translations of those documents. APIC will only accept translations by National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) or other officially recognised translators or by the APIC authorised agent network.

### 6.5 Credit for Recommencing Students

- Where a student recommences study with APIC (not including an approved leave of absence) any units from their previous enrolment which were completed with APIC may be applied to their new enrolment.
- There will be no limit to the number of APIC completed unit credits that may be applied to the new enrolment.
- Where a student has received RPL credit from studies with other higher education institutions in their previous enrolment, these may be applied to the new enrolment in accordance with s6.3 of this policy.
- In the event of a conflict between credit for APIC completed units and RPL credit from another higher education provider, or an inability within the new enrolment to accommodate all credits available, the student will select which credits are to be applied and which will be forgone.
- Once a decision is made by the student in s6.5.4 above, and applied by the Registrar's office, no subsequent variation will be permitted.

## 7. Credit Limitations

- Credit limitations governing appropriate and relevant credit apply to all College courses. These are reported in Schedule 1.
- In exceptional circumstance, the CEO, on the recommendation of the Dean, may grant credit for up to 67% of a course in recognition of a student's prior learning. This may be based on formal or informal learning.

- Credit will not be granted for courses or units completed more than seven years before the date of the credit application and will not be granted for work experience completed more than five years before the date of submission of the application for credit.

## 8. Recording of Awarded Credit

- Specified, unspecified or block credit awarded to a student towards studies with APIC will be recorded on the student's academic transcript and assigned the applicable grade as follows:
  - Credit awarded through credit transfer, RPL or articulation will be assigned the grade of 'Advanced Standing'
  - Block credit may be recorded as "Credit granted for ... units" under the course for which credit was awarded.
- Credit awarded by APIC will not be given a mark and will not be included in the calculation of the Grade Point Average.
- Credit awarded to an international student who is still to commence study with APIC will also be recorded in the Australian Government's international student management system (PRISMS) and on the Confirmation of Enrolment which is issued to the international student before the student visa is granted.
- Credit awarded to an international student that has commenced studies with APIC will also be recorded in PRISMS as required under Section 19 of the ESOS Act 2000. Where the award of credit shortens the required duration of study for the course, APIC is required to adjust the international student's course completion date in PRISMS. This may affect the international student's visa entitlements.

## 9. Appeals

- Appeals against decisions involving applications for credit should use the APIC Grievances and Appeals Policy.
- Appeals must:
  - (a) address the information provided with the decision explaining the basis of their argument for additional credit which must include specific reference to evidence that they believe has not been considered;
  - (b) be lodged within 10 (ten) working days of receipt of the initial decision.
- The Dean (or delegate) will respond to credit appeals within 10 (ten) working days of receipt of the appeal. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of their credit appeal they may request further action as detailed in the APIC Student Grievance and Appeals Policy. The College shall maintain a student's enrolment while their Credit appeal is being investigated through both internal and external process as set out in this policy. All Credit appeal outcomes are recorded in the APIC Student Management System and in the Student Grievances Register.

## 10. Related Documents

- Admission Policy,
- Award of Grades Policy,
- Academic Integrity Policy

## 11. Relevant Legislation

- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards (TEQSA) Act 2011 (Cth)
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth)
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001
- The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (The National Code)
- Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)
- Recognition of Prior Learning: An Explanation (AQF, 2012)

## 12. Version Control

<b>Document ID</b>	APIC Award of Credit Policy
<b>Category</b>	Academic
<b>Document Owner</b>	Dean
<b>Approved by</b>	Academic Board

Version	Summary of Changes	Approval date	Review Date
1.4	New title "Credit Arrangements and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy"	20 June, 2017	
1.5	Section 8. Administrative amendments to improve clarity around escalation of appeals.	21 July, 2017	
1.6	Section 7.1 Administrative amendment to provide clarity around RPL for nested qualifications.	1 August, 2017	
2.0	Reviewed and updated to clarify stakeholder expectations and timelines. Name changed from Credit Arrangements and Recognition of Prior Learning to Award of Credit Policy Logo and format updated	Academic Board 16 August 2018	
2.1	Defining credit for recommending students and reformatting	Academic Board 18 December 2020	
2.2	Definition of requirements for RPL through uncredentialed learning	Academic Board 11 June 2021	11 June 2023
2.3	Minor changes to the job titles and extension of review date	CEO 11 July 2023	11 July 2024



## Schedule 1: Credit limitations

Courses and Units for which Credit may be approved and the maximum credit that may be granted.

Enrolled Course	Units / Courses from which credit may be approved
<b>Master Degrees (AQF 9)</b>	• up to <b>50%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Masters Degree (AQF 9)
	• up to <b>50%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Graduate Diploma (AQF 8)
	• up to <b>33%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Graduate Certificate (AQF 8)
<b>Graduate Diploma (AQF 8)</b>	• up to <b>50%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Graduate Diploma (AQF 8)
	• up to <b>50%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Graduate Certificate (AQF 8)
<b>Graduate Certificate (AQF 8)</b>	• up to <b>50%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Graduate Certificate (AQF 8)
<b>Bachelor Degrees (AQF 7)</b>	• up to <b>50%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Bachelor Degree (AQF 7)
	• up to <b>50%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Associate Degree (AQF 6)
	• up to <b>50%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Advanced Diploma (AQF 6)
	• up to <b>33%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Diploma (AQF 5)
<b>Diploma (AQF 5)</b>	• up to <b>50%</b> of the enrolled course for a completed Diploma (AQF 5)

Note: Credit of up to 67% of a course may be granted under s7.2 of this Policy.