

# Credit Policy

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### 1. Purpose

- a. An applicant or student may be granted credit towards their coursework award course in recognition of prior learning – whether gained through formal, credentialled studies or through professional assessment and experience – that is deemed to be equivalent to parts of the course for which the credit is granted.
- b. This policy provides a framework and principles for recognition of prior learning (RPL) and granting credit towards coursework award courses at Flinders University.
- c. This policy is consistent with the definitions and requirements contained within the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) and the [Australian Qualification Framework \(AQF\) Second Edition January 2013](#) for recognition of RPL and granting credit in the higher education sector.

### 2. Scope

- a. This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate coursework award courses.
- b. It applies to individual applications for credit based on formal, non-formal and informal prior learning, as well as to formal credit transfer and articulation arrangements, including credit transfer arrangements established through third-party academic partnership arrangements under the [Third-Party Academic Partnerships Policy](#).
- c. Credit transfer arrangements established prior to the Effective Date of this policy that do not currently meet its requirements will be reviewed as soon as practicable to ensure compliance, and must comply no later than their next scheduled review.

### 3. Definitions

This policy applies the following definitions from the Australian Qualifications Framework (see [AQF Glossary of Terminology](#)):

| Credit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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 achieve a qualification and may be through credit transfer, articulation or recognition of prior learning leading to advanced standing. |

|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Credit transfer</b>                     | <p>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.</p> <p>Examples include semester exchange programs and short-term overseas study opportunities (Learning Abroad programs) offered through Global Experience at Flinders. These programs involve formal study at recognised overseas institutions, supported by Flinders through official agreement with those institutions.</p>                                                |
| <b>Articulation arrangement</b>            | <p>arrangements that enable students to progress from a completed qualification to another with admission and/or credit in a defined qualification pathway (e.g. diploma or advanced diploma to Bachelors degree).</p> <p>Articulation arrangements differ from twinning arrangement under the <a href="#">Third-Party Academic Partnerships Policy</a> in that articulation involves completion of the initial qualification before entry into the next.</p>                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Recognition of prior learning (RPL)</b> | <p>an assessment 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.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Formal learning</b>                     | <p>learning that takes place through a structured program of learning at an accredited education provider that leads to the full or partial achievement of an Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) qualification, or other officially accredited qualification.</p> <p>Examples include study undertaken at Flinders, with another Australian higher education provider, Vocational Education Training (VET) provider, or study at recognised overseas institutions. It also includes credentialed programs provided by recognised professional bodies, employers and other authorities.</p> |
| <b>Non-formal learning</b>                 | <p>learning that takes place through a structured program of learning but which does not lead to an officially accredited qualification.</p> <p>Examples include learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace, volunteer sector or in community-based settings, or non-award studies or non-credentialed professional assessments.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Informal learning</b>                   | <p>learning gained through work, cultural, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences. Unlike formal or non-formal learning, informal learning is not organised or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support.</p> <p>Examples include Indigenous cultural learning and community work, on Country recognition, and Indigenous languages.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

In addition to the above AQF definitions, the following definitions are specific to this policy and are applied for its purposes:

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Advanced standing</b>  | outcome of credit process, e.g. formal recognition granted to a student that allows them to commence a qualification at a point beyond the standard entry level or to reduce the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification. |
| <b>Specified credit</b>   | credit granted for any type of learning for one or more <b>core topics</b> of a course.                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Unspecified credit</b> | credit granted for any type of learning for one or more <b>elective or option topics</b> of a course.                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Block credit</b>       | credit granted on the basis of formal learning only towards whole stages or components of a course, e.g. a major sequence, via a <b>credit transfer</b> or <b>articulation arrangement</b> .                                             |

#### 4. Policy statement

- a. The University values students' prior learning, whether achieved through formal, non-formal or informal pathways, and may recognise that learning in order to:
  - i. facilitate student mobility between qualifications, other higher education institutions and education sectors (e.g. vocational education and training (VET))
  - ii. acknowledge diverse learning experiences and enable students to take advantage of professional assessment, workplace experience and other forms of experiential learning i.e. non-formal and informal learning
  - iii. facilitate efficient learning pathways by minimising duplication of learning and reducing the volume of study required
  - iv. support lifelong learning by enabling flexible entry points for learners at different stages of life and career, and by fostering inclusive, adaptable learning pathways.
- b. Credit may be granted in recognition of:
  - i. formal learning
  - ii. non-formal learning, or
  - iii. informal learning.
- c. Students may receive credit within the limits specified in the [Credit Procedures](#), in the form of:
  - i. specified credit
  - ii. unspecified credit, or
  - iii. block credit.
- d. Credit will not be granted for:
  - i. work experience used as credit for a work-placement topic
  - ii. capstone topics, including a capstone of a major

- iii. the research component of any course e.g. research project, thesis, dissertation.
- e. Credit decisions will be:
  - i. based on academic merit and consider a student's ability to meet the learning outcomes or competencies inherent in the course
  - ii. made with consideration to academic standards and the integrity of the qualification, ensuring compliance with any conditions for the professional accreditation of the award
  - iii. evidence-based and informed by academic judgement, consistent with the level of study and learning outcomes for the course
  - iv. equitable and transparent
  - v. applied consistently and fairly
  - vi. determined in a timely manner
  - vii. made with consideration of scholarship terms and conditions for eligible applicants
  - viii. formally documented, including reasons for not granting credit where applicable
  - ix. subject to regular reviews and quality assurance processes.

## **5. Credit transfer and articulation arrangements**

- a. The University may establish:
  - i. formal credit transfer arrangements which may or may not involve a third-party academic partnership agreement, and/or
  - ii. articulation arrangements with other education institutions<sup>1</sup> which may be formalised through contractual agreement.
- b. Credit awarded through these arrangements will be granted as specified or block credit. The amount of credit is determined as part of the arrangement and must not exceed two-thirds of the total unit value of the course.
- c. Credit transfer and articulation arrangements must be approved and reviewed in accordance with the requirements of the [Credit Procedures](#).

## **6. Application for credit**

Individual applications for credit are to be made and assessed in accordance with the [Credit Procedures](#).

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<sup>1</sup> For clarity, articulation arrangements with other education providers are distinct from twinning awards under the [Third-Party Academic Partnerships Policy](#). In an articulation arrangement students complete the initial qualification before progressing to the subsequent course, whereas in a twinning award students commence study with an overseas third-party academic partner and then transfer to Flinders University to complete the remainder of their award.

## 7. Review and appeal

- a. An applicant or student may request a review of a credit decision, on the grounds that the amount or type of credit granted contravenes this policy and/or any specific provision made in a Course Rule, in accordance with the [Student Review and Appeal Policy](#) and [procedures](#).
- b. An applicant or student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the review may appeal to the Student Appeals Committee, if specified grounds are met, in accordance with the [Student Review and Appeal Policy](#) and [procedures](#).

## 8. Supporting procedures

Supporting procedures are part of this policy and provide additional detail to give practical effect to the policy principles.

[Credit Procedures](#)

|                            |                                                    |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
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| <b>Responsible Officer</b> | Senior Director, Student Experience and Management |
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\* Unless otherwise indicated, this policy or procedures still apply beyond the review date.

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