

# Recognition of Prior Learning Policy - HE and VET

**Policy Code:** ACA-046**Version:** 3.0**Effective Date:** 20 October 2023

## Purpose

The College's approach to recognition of prior learning (RPL) aims to enhance access to lifelong learning, promote student success, and enhance graduate mobility between institutions, sectors, States and countries through recognising previous learning to maximise credits, minimise completion times, and avoid unnecessary duplication. Appropriately evidenced and assessed RPL outcomes ensures the quality and integrity of subject and course learning outcomes and the meeting of professional recognition for graduates.

## Scope

- All campuses
- VET and HE coursework qualifications
- Current and prospective students (domestic and international)
- All staff, decision making bodies, agents, and partners of the College

## Policy Statement

The College provides RPL practices that are informed by and consistent with the obligations of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* (Cth), the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)'s *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)* (Cth), the Australian Qualifications Framework's *AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy*, and the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* (Cth).

The College ensures an equitable and consistent approach to the management of RPL, with timely, evidence based, and academically defensible processes that are formally documented. Students are supported to evaluate their potential for RPL when seeking admission, and provided with an outcome that recognises their best starting point based on previous achievements and experience.

In assessing the potential for credit, assessors will consider the range of learning types and comparability of previous learning to the requested subject/s. Note that credit eligibility is not the same as an offering of entry, and course admission is offered as described within the policies of admission.

*This policy **does not** apply to research qualifications, or for non-formal learning such as non-award study (including micro-credentials).*

## Types of Learning

- Formal learning: includes learning achieved as part of a recognised AQF level course or qualification (or its equivalent in the case of international study).
- Non-formal learning: includes learning achieved as part of a non-AQF course or qualification.
- Informal learning: includes professional or paraprofessional experience which is not part of a course or qualification.

## Types of Credit

- Specified: may be awarded against specific subject/s, where the student demonstrates comparable previous learning or experience. Specified credit is the most commonly applied and preferred form of credit, and is applicable to core subjects, elective streams, and free choice electives (note: approval of credit for a subject does not also approve credit for any pre &/or co-requisite subjects).
- Unspecified: may be awarded only for free choice elective subjects when a student's previous experience is directly relevant to the context of the qualification and is comparable to the level and volume of a subject or subject/s. Unspecified credit is not transferrable to another qualification.
- Block: may be provided in the case of established credit arrangements or credit agreements between other institutions or industry partners and an Endeavour course or courses (for example credit for the first year, or for a stream of subjects within a qualification). Block credit may be specified or unspecified as described in the credit arrangement or credit agreement.
- Ungraded credit: credit is typically ungraded and will not contribute towards the student's GPA.
- Graded: graded credit will contribute towards the student's GPA and will be applied only for the same subject with the same code completed in a different course at the College.

## Currency of Learning

- For the purposes of credit into a Higher Education award, currency is considered to be learning that has occurred not more than 10 years prior to the application for RPL.
- For the purposes of credit into a VET award, currency is considered to be learning that has occurred not more than 3 years prior to the application for RPL.
- For both Higher Education and VET awards, currency of learning will be measured:
  - ⊗ For formal learning - from completion of a subject, group of subjects, or completion of the course, whichever is the most relevant.
  - ⊗ For informal and nonformal learning - from the most recent year of relevant experience or learning.
- Credit may be provided for learning that occurred prior to the limits of the currency period, where the previous learning has been maintained through further related learning and/or experience.
- Shorter currency limits may be applied with the approval of the Chair of the Education Board for specific subjects or courses where the content is considered to be more rapidly evolving or where professional accreditation requirements specify a shorter timeframe, and this shorter limit is published in the course brochure/s.

## Denial of Credit

Credit will not be awarded:

- When documentation is insufficient to evidence the application.
- Where currency of learning is not evidenced.
- When sufficient comparability is not evidenced for the appropriate
  - ⊗ AQF level
  - ⊗ learning outcomes
  - ⊗ units of study
  - ⊗ units of competency
  - ⊗ volume of learning
  - ⊗ discipline contexts

- ② depth and scope of content covered
- Where the assessment completed does not demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes of the subject for which credit/RPL is sought.
  - Where comparability is not established for the entire subject, unit of study or unit of competency as relevant.
  - On the basis of previously awarded credit.
  - Where formal learning has been completed while suspended or excluded from study at Endeavour.
  - Where previous learning did not achieve a passing grade or where a conceded pass or its equivalent is the recorded outcome).
  - Where the total volume of credit requested exceeds the volume of equivalent study previously completed.
  - Where the approval of credit would fail to meet professional recognition obligations for the course or student/graduate .
  - For any capstone subject/s.
  - For clinical subjects where the application is not based on formal learning.
  - In any circumstance that may disadvantage the student in achieving of the course's learning outcomes, professional recognition as a graduate, or would otherwise diminish the academic integrity of the qualification
  - Where the student's application has not met the requirements of the relevant timeframes or been accompanied by any relevant fees.

Individual exceptions to the above may be approved by the Chair of the Education Board in consultation with relevant content experts where academically justified and consistent with the principles of this policy.

## Withdrawal of Credit

Credits may be withdrawn with approval of the Director of Education or CEO at any time prior to graduation when:

- an administrative, assessment, or other error has occurred
- an application is found to be incomplete, misleading, false, or invalid (fraudulent applications will also be referred to the Student Academic Misconduct processes)
- the student submits a request for the withdrawal of previously awarded credit
- a student is withdrawn from a course of study.

Students will be advised in writing of the withdrawal of credit, the reasons for this decision, and the potential for further impacts or actions by the College on the basis of this decision.

Credit cannot be withdrawn retrospectively due to changes in policy, or a review of precedents or articulations.

Where a student rejects or rescinds credit, the return of that credit is not automatically granted, and a new application is required and will be assessed on its merits and according to the policy and processes at that time.

## Minimum Study Amounts

Credit provided into a qualification may be limited to ensure course learning outcomes or the academic integrity of the course is not compromised.

Volume of credit limits that are additional to ordinary policy requirements may be applied with the approval of the Chair of the Education Board for academic or professional accreditation requirements, and this additional limitation is published in the course brochure/s.

## Higher Education – External Credit

For external credits (inclusive of formal, informal and nonformal learning), advanced standing into an award will be calculated as a percentage of the total credit points within the course, and will maximally be:

- Undergraduate Certificate: 50%
- Higher Education Diploma: 50%
- Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree: 75%
- 3-year Bachelor Degree: 66% (i.e. minimum of 1 year of study remaining)
- 4-year Bachelor Degree: 75% (i.e. minimum of 1 year of study remaining)
- Graduate Certificate: 50%
- Graduate Diploma: 50%
- Masters by coursework: 50%

The College will not confer credit for non-formal or informal learning for more than 25% of any higher education award.

## Higher Education - Internal Credit

Credit will not be limited for internal credit applications for students who have:

- not been conferred an award,
- enrolled in nested qualifications or course suites,
- or where the application of credit limits would require a student to re-complete the same or equivalent subject/s to those that they have previously completed at Endeavour.

Administration fees will be applied for the issue of an award based on credits from a previous course of study where the student has already been conferred a qualification.

## VET Awards

For VET qualifications, external credit of up to 100% may be awarded. Administration fees will be applied for the issue of an award based on credits.

## Credit Agreements, Credit Arrangements, and Credit Precedents

Credit pathways may be established for study that is at the same or a different AQF level.

In alignment with the *AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy*, credit agreements with an external institution or industry partner into a College qualification will use the following guidelines as the basis of negotiations:

- 50% credit for an Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree linked to a 3-year Bachelor Degree
- 37.5% credit for an Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree linked to a 4-year Bachelor Degree
- 33% credit for a Diploma linked to a 3-year Bachelor Degree
- 25% credit for a Diploma linked to a 4-year Bachelor Degree

Credit agreements and credit arrangements may provide credits that are specified, unspecified or block according to the specific circumstances of each pathway. Credit agreements or arrangements must specify the courses or subjects for which credit is available, any specific eligibility requirements which are additional to ordinary College policy, and the amount and nature of credit available.

Credit agreements and credit arrangements are developed by the Office of the Director of Education in collaboration with the relevant content experts. Credit agreements must be approved by the Education Board, and those that do not meet ordinary policy requirements can be approved only by the Academic Council.

Credit precedents are established when a credit decision is made by the relevant content expert for specific subject/s or course/s, and that decision is recorded in the Articulation Abacus for utilisation in subsequent applications in the same circumstances. Credit precedents should ordinarily be recorded wherever possible.

Credit agreements, credit arrangements and credit precedents are recorded in the Articulation Abacus. Credit agreements, credit arrangements and credit precedents are reviewed for efficacy of outcomes and continuing accuracy every 3 years.

## Processes and Timeframes

Applications for credit can be submitted by a student or prospective student at any time using the *Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form* available on the website, however they must be submitted in a timely manner to ensure receipt of any relevant credit. It is recommended that applications from new students are submitted at least one month prior to the beginning of their first teaching period.

Credit applications will not be approved where an application is not able to be assessed and credit awarded:

- prior to the census date of a subject or unit of study the student is enrolled into
- prior to completion of the subject or unit
- where there is a previous failure of the subject or unit of study or their equivalent

Initial assessment of an application will occur within 10 working days. Where further information is requested, applications will be assessed within 10 working days of the provision of that further information. Where the requested further information is not provided an outcome based on the available evidence will be provided. Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome (including reasons for denial of credit where relevant).

Credit/s will be applied automatically, and an application is not required:

- for transfers between course versions or from non-award study into a course with the same subject/s, or with a co-badged subject code
- for progression within a nested qualifications series

Completed outcomes of each credit application will be recorded, including the applied for subject/s or unit/s, the name of the assessor, the outcome of the application, and the reasons for denial where applicable.

Decisions are recorded on a student's records within the Student Management System and reported on as described in the associated procedures.

Credit offers are valid for a maximum period of twelve months, and do not remain valid in the event of course changes which substantially change the basis of the credit offer. Where a credit offer has expired or substantial course changes have occurred, reapplication is required.

## Review and Appeals

Current students can appeal any decision made under this policy as outlined in the *Complaints and Appeals - Domestic - HE, Grievance Policy - VET*, or *Complaints and Appeals Policy - International* as applicable.

Prospective students may submit feedback relating to recognition of prior learning via the public website section for providing feedback.

## Definitions

**Academic Council** – The peak academic governance body of the College, delegated by the Board of Directors to provide academic oversight and leadership to the College.

**Articulation Abacus** – The College's system for recording and publishing approved pathways and credit precedents between both internal and external qualifications.

**AQF** – Australian Qualifications Framework - The national system of regulated qualifications in Australian education and training, encompassing all post compulsory education.

**ASQA** – Australian Skills Quality Authority - The national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training sector.

**College** – The Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd (ACNM) trades as Endeavour College of Natural Health and Endeavour Wellness Clinic. For the purpose of this policy, any reference to 'College' or 'the College' should be considered a reference to each or any of these respective trading names / entities.

**Comparable** – For the purposes of assessing credit, equivalence needs to be 100% for vocational units of study or competency, and 80% for higher education subjects.

**Content expert** – Credit applications will be assessed by the Office of the Director of Education in the first instance where relevant and appropriate content expertise is available within the team or where denial of credit is indicated by policy without reference to the content of a subject/unit. Where relevant content expertise is not available within the team, relevant content experts from the academic department will inform the outcome/s.

**Course or coursework qualification** – a course resulting in an AQF qualification which is not a degree by research.

**Credit** – recognised prior learning applied to a student's academic record which reduces the further learning needed to complete a qualification.

**Credit agreement** – a formal agreement between another institution or industry partner and the College, or between departments within the College for articulation into an Endeavour qualification with a defined application of credit.

**Credit arrangement** – a pathway between another institution or industry partner and the College into an Endeavour qualification with a defined application of credit, but without a formal agreement.

**Credit decision** – a decision to approve credit based on application and the assessment of a relevant content expert.

**Credit precedent** – a credit decision which is established as a rule for subsequent applications for the same course or subject and recorded within the Articulation Abacus.

**Director of Education** – Executive head of the Academic function responsible for leading and delivering the Teaching and Learning Strategy through development of curriculum and innovative education solutions.

**Education Board** – Education Board is the academic forum for oversight, discussion and consideration of all academic matters, approval of minor academic changes, and for subsequently advising the Academic Council on all matters of academic relevance and on the development and recommendation of academic policies and procedures pertaining to the delivery of coursework higher education courses and services.

**GPA** – Grade Point Average - The cumulative average of all grades received by the student on the academic transcript and is calculated as per the *Assessment Policy - Higher Education*. This cumulative average can range from 0.00 to 7.00.

**HE** – Higher Education – the term 'higher education' refers to a qualification accredited by TEQSA. At the College, this typically includes education at AQF level 5 or above (usually level 7, Bachelor degree level or above, however some Diplomas and Associate Degrees are offered at higher education level also).



**Head of Department** – The relevant Head of Department is the senior academic leader (or their designee) responsible for oversight of curriculum for a discipline and / or course to which the subject/s or unit/s of study belong.

**Nested qualification** – Course of study leading to higher education awards that include articulation arrangements from a lower level higher education award into a higher level higher education award also offered at the College. Nested courses also enable multiple entry and exit points.

**Non-award study** – Enrolment in one or more subjects for personal interest or professional development purposes without full enrolment in an award qualification.

**Prior learning** – Any learning which has occurred prior to admission into a course or prior to enrolment into a subject at the College.

**RPL** - Recognition of Prior Learning – The assessment of a person's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal, and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit.

**RTO** – Registered Training Organisation - Organisations approved by the VET sector regulator, ASQA, to operate in the VET sector and deliver training package courses. The RTO will have an approved scope of registration which they must ensure is followed.

**Subject** – A single component of a course, which have an integer credit point value of 2, 4, 6 or 8 credit points for which a grade is assigned on a student's academic record / transcript. A combination of certain subjects totalling the required number of credit points make up a course.

**TEQSA** – Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency - The national regulator for Australia's higher education sector and the regulator for the College's international offerings. TEQSA regulates courses and higher education institutions to ensure the Higher Education Standards are met.

**Transition arrangement** – A credit arrangement providing details for managing student transition to a new version of a course or a new course when it is proposed to replace an existing course (HE) or the phasing out of a suspended or discontinued training package qualification (VET).

**Unit of Competency** – The specification of industry knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance expected in the workplace. A unit of competency is the smallest unit in the VET sector that can be assessed and recognised.

**Unit of Study** – The combination of two or more units of competency combined in to one learning program.

**VET** – Vocational Education and Training - The tertiary sector of education in Australia responsible for delivery of courses on the AQF from Certificate I to Advanced Diploma (AQF levels 1 – 6). Regulated by ASQA and requires educational institutions to be Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to operate in this sector.

**Working day** - A weekday (Monday to Friday) on which the College is open for business. This does not include national public holidays or College shutdown periods (e.g.: Christmas holidays) as noted on the Student Calendar.

## Related Procedures

*Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure - HE and VET*



## Further Information

### Related Policies

*Admissions Policy - Undergraduate - Higher Education*

*Admissions Policy - VET*

*Assessment Policy - HE*

*Complaints and Appeals Policy - Domestic - HE*

*Complaints and Appeals Policy - International*

*Fees Policy - HE*

*Fees Policy - International*

*Fees Policy - VET*

*Grievance Policy - VET*

### Related Documents

*Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form*

### Guidelines

Nil

### Benchmarking

- Charles Sturt University
- Deakin University
- Evolve College
- Griffith University
- LaTrobe University
- Q Academy
- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
- Southern Cross University
- TAFE Queensland
- TAFE New South Wales
- Torrens University
- University of Queensland
- Victoria University
- Western Sydney University.

### Supporting Research and Analysis

Publications and relevant policies or regulations from various organisations including:

- Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)



- Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE)
- National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)
- Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA).

Documents:

- Group of 8 Credit Transfer Policy

### Related Legislation

AQF *Qualification Pathways Policy* <https://www.aqf.edu.au/publication/aqf-qualifications-pathways-policy>

*Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* (Cth).

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2022C00105>

*National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* (Cth).

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182>

*Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (Cth).

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2019C00503>

# Review and Approval

## Policy Author

National Educational Pathways Manager

## Policy Owner

Director of Education

## Contact

Director of Education

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## Recommending Body

Education Board

Meeting date: 21 September 2023

## Approval Body

Academic Council

Meeting date: 20 October 2023

## Policy Status

Revised – fully updated to meet current practice and role titles

## Responsibilities for Implementation

- Academic Administrator
- Admissions Advisers
- Director of Education
- Director of Sales, Admissions & Retention
- Education Board
- Senior Academic Staff
- Student Advisers

## Key Stakeholders

- Academic Council
- Chief Executive Officer
- Director of Student Operations
- National Quality, Governance and Compliance Manager
- Prospective students
- Student Services team
- Students