

Credit for Prior Learning Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) This Policy sets out the University's requirements in relation to the granting of credit for prior learning.
- (2) This Policy aims to ensure:
 - a. accessible, inclusive and diverse pathways to higher education;
 - b. opportunity for individuals to have their different types of learning recognised regardless of where and how that learning was achieved;
 - c. equitable, valid and reliable processes for assessment of prior learning which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for a unit of study;
 - d. alignment with the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Guidelines; and
 - e. quality assurance to guarantee that prior learning is of an appropriate standard.
- (3) This Policy operates in conjunction with the [Coursework Rules](#) and the [Credit for Prior Learning Procedures](#).

Section 2 - Application & Scope

- (4) This Policy applies to:
 - a. future and current students of UOW;
 - b. all coursework programs offered by UOW, both within Australia and overseas, including the coursework component of research degrees;
 - c. Credit for prior learning arrangements made on the basis of:
 - i. formal credit agreements made between UOW and other education institutions and partners (articulation pathways);
 - ii. credit for prior learning granted by UOW in response to individual applications.
- (5) This Policy does not apply to UOW Dubai (which has its own version of this Policy).

Section 3 - Policy Principles

- (6) The following principles will inform the assessment of credit and recognition of prior learning.
- (7) Credit decisions will:
 - a. maintain the integrity of UOW award;
 - b. be academically defensible and take into account the students' ability to meet the learning outcomes of the qualification successfully;
 - c. not disadvantage the student in achieving desired subject and course learning outcomes;

- d. recognise UOW's commitment to lifelong learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided that the learning is relevant and current and has a relationship to the learning outcomes of the qualification;
- e. be applied consistently and fairly with decisions subject to appeal and review;
- f. be clearly communicated and transparent;
- g. be approved at the appropriate level and be clearly documented; and
- h. be undertaken in a timely way.

Section 4 - Admission

(8) Admission to the University is based on academic merit and approved criteria as defined in the [Coursework Rules](#). An applicant who is eligible for credit is not guaranteed an offer of a place, except where this is included as part of an agreement between the University and another education partner, or as part of an approved UOW pathway program. The granting of credit to any particular applicant will be subject to the admission of the applicant to the relevant University program.

(9) Admission in some instances may be approved on the basis of assessment for credit of prior learning; for example where "or equivalent" is indicated as a potential admission pathway. Admission on the basis of assessment of credit to undergraduate or postgraduate study must be specified in Course Rules. Examples might include: portfolio assessment provisions for admission to certain degrees, or acceptance of evidence via the [Universities Admissions Centre](#), or similar admission process. Evidence used to gain admission into an undergraduate or postgraduate award cannot be used to present a case for credit once used as a basis for admission.

Section 5 - Granting of Credit

(10) Credit towards an Award may be granted when students can demonstrate they have achieved the discipline learning outcomes for the relevant subject/course and an assessment of equivalence has been undertaken. The assessment criteria is outlined in the [Credit for Prior Learning Procedures](#), Schedule 1 Guide to Assessment of Prior Learning. An application for credit may cover more than one category of learning, including formal, non-formal or informal learning.

(11) Credit may be granted as specified credit, unspecified credit and block credit. These types of credit are defined in Section

(12) Credit may be granted to individuals or groups of students. Students receiving credit on the basis of credit transfer agreements should receive the same form and amount of credit as set out in the public register or database of credit arrangements, providing they can provide the relevant evidence. However, the total amount of credit will vary from individual to individual, based on which qualification(s) or combinations of qualification components have been successfully completed.

(13) Provisional credit may be granted to applicants when an offer of admission is made and will be subject to confirmation by the University following a full assessment of the evidence of prior learning.

(14) Credit may be granted for a subject undertaken on a non-award basis or as part of an enabling program towards a UOW course, where course structures allow.

(15) A significant proportion of the studies leading to a UOW award must be studies offered by the University. The granting of credit must comply with University limitations on credit for undergraduate and postgraduate coursework courses as set out in Schedule 1.

(16) A candidate who has completed the Bachelor of Research at the University will be granted 48 credit points

towards the coursework component of the Master of Research. The Delegated Authority may grant a candidate who has completed a qualification in a relevant discipline that is assessed as equivalent to the Bachelor of Research up to 48 credit points of credit towards the Master of Research.

(17) A candidate for the Master of Philosophy, or Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated) or a professional doctorate who has completed a relevant qualification may be granted up to 24 credit points towards the coursework component of their degree.

Section 6 - Transfer of Grades with Award of Credit

(18) Except for subjects completed at or accredited by UOW, no marks or grades will be recorded for subjects where specified credit has been granted.

Section 7 - Formal Credit Arrangements with Other Institutions

(19) The University's formal credit transfer agreements are listed on the University website.

(20) All of the University's formal credit transfer agreements with other institutions are approved and reviewed as part of the course approval and review cycle and in accordance with the [Credit for Prior Learning Procedures](#).

(21) Types of Formal Credit Arrangements:

- a. Articulation arrangements enable students to progress from a completed qualification at a partner institution to UOW with credit and/or admission in a defined qualification pathway.
- b. Credit transfer arrangements provide students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications.

(22) Articulation and credit transfer agreements within the provisions of this policy are approved by the relevant Executive Dean on the advice of the relevant Associate Dean, Head of School or Head of Students where appropriate.

(23) All such agreements with non-Australian education providers must be reported to the Transnational Education Subcommittee and the Director, Student Administration Services Division and will be added to a central register of articulation agreements.

(24) All such agreements with Australian providers must be reported to the Director, Student Administration Services Division and will be added to a central register of articulation agreements.

Section 8 - Restrictions on the Granting of Credit

(25) Credit will not be granted for prior learning completed more than ten years ago, unless the applicant can demonstrate currency of learning against the subject/course learning outcomes.

(26) Students may not use the same prior credit towards more than one qualification, as this would constitute double counting of credit. This restriction does not apply to approved UOW postgraduate nested or packaged Masters courses.

(27) A candidate for a research degree cannot receive credit for the research component of their degree.

(28) Restrictions on the amount of credit may apply:

- a. where there are certain core components of the course structure (e.g. a capstone subject) required for satisfactory completion of the course;
- b. where professional accreditation requirements limit the maximum amount of credit that can be granted.

Section 9 - Applications for Credit

(29) Applications for credit for prior learning must be made in writing using the prescribed process.

(30) An application for credit for prior learning can be made with an application for admission to the University, or after enrolment provided that the application is made no later than the third week of session, or as part of an application to undertake a student mobility program.

(31) Except for applications based on previous study at UOW, a credit application must be accompanied by evidence of formal, informal or non-formal learning. See [Credit for Prior Learning Procedures](#).

Section 10 - Credit for Concurrent Studies at another Institution

(32) Students currently enrolled at UOW and who apply for Cross-Institutional Enrolment must seek provisional credit for their intended study prior to commencing study at the other institution. Credit will only be granted for successfully completed subjects.

(33) Students currently enrolled at UOW and who apply to study overseas as part of a Student Mobility Program must seek provisional credit for their intended study prior to commencing study overseas. Credit will only be granted for successfully completed subjects.

Section 11 - Approval of Credit

(34) Applications will be approved by the Head of Students or relevant delegated authority in accordance with the UOW [Delegations of Authority Policy](#).

Section 12 - Withdrawal of Credit

(35) The University reserves the right to withdraw credit for prior learning where an administrative error has been made or where the documentation provided by the applicant is misleading or invalid.

(36) The withdrawal of credit for prior learning must be approved by the Head of Students (or relevant delegated authority) and notified to the Student Administration Services Division.

Section 13 - Visa Implications for International Students

(37) When the granting of Credit for Prior Learning leads to a shortening of an International Student's course duration, the University must issue a new Confirmation of Enrolment and must report the change via PRISMS under the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#).

Section 14 - Overview of Responsibilities

Students

(38) Students who seek credit for prior learning are responsible for completing and submitting all documentation required to support their application.

(39) In applying for credit based on informal or non-formal learning, the onus is on the student to reflect upon their prior learning and to demonstrate how that learning relates to the intended learning outcomes for the subject or course (refer [Credit for Prior Learning Procedures](#)).

Faculty

(40) Faculties are responsible for:

- a. assessing credit for prior learning applications and determining the level of specified and unspecified credit awarded in accordance with this Policy;
- b. ensuring that determination and award of credit for prior learning outside of a formal agreement is overseen by qualified UOW academic staff;
- c. approving and reviewing articulation and credit transfer agreements;
- d. notifying Transnational Education Partners of any new articulation and credit transfer agreements or changes to any existing approvals where relevant and ensuring that the partner institution operate in accordance with this Policy; and
- e. monitoring the progress of students granted credit from partner institutions and making recommendations for change to the assessment process in accordance with the [Credit for Prior Learning Procedures](#).

Student Administration Services

(41) The Student Administration Services Division is responsible for:

- a. maintaining the information about credit for prior learning on the University's public website including an up-to-date list of approved credit arrangements;
- b. assessing credit for prior learning applications covered by a formal agreement or where there are clear precedents (subject to written delegated authority from the relevant faculty);
- c. communicating with students (including prospective students) about their credit for prior learning;
- d. recording credit granted to individual students;
- e. maintaining a central register of articulation and credit transfer agreements; and
- f. maintaining a credit precedence database.

Section 15 - Right of Appeal

(42) Where a current student is not satisfied with the outcome of a credit assessment, they are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns with the academic staff member who made the assessment.

(43) A current student who is not satisfied with the outcome of a credit assessment may lodge a request for a formal review of academic decision in accordance with the [Review and Appeal of Academic Decisions Policy](#) and [Procedures for the Review of Marks or Grades and other Academic Decisions \(Coursework\)](#).

(44) Current students wishing to submit a review request may do so via the online [Review and Appeal of Academic Decisions](#).

(45) Future students seeking admission to UOW, may request a review of a credit for prior learning decision, in relation to a current admission application or letter of offer. They may do so by return email to the designated admissions officer in the Student Administration Services Division.

Section 16 - General Savings Clause

(46) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any particular case, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic and Student Life) or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Sustainable Futures) may vary the credit limit.

Section 17 - Schedule 1: Limitations on the Amount of Credit

Credit Limits

(47) The following table sets out the minimum amount of study a student of the University must undertake in a course at UOW (or in that course at a partner institution offering a UOW award, or a combination of both) to be eligible for the granting of the award.

(48) The total amount of credit awarded must not exceed the minimum required study at UOW limits outlined below for the course in which the student is enrolling or is enrolled.

(49) For double degrees, the below credit limits apply to each degree separately.

(50) Credit for UOW microcredentials is identified at the time of approval of the microcredential in accordance with the [Short Course and Microcredential Management Procedure](#) and is subject to the below credit limits.

(51) Credit for non-UOW microcredentials is assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the assessment criteria (clause 60) and is subject to the below credit limits.

(52) The following are not subject to the below credit limits:

- a. UOW nested programs;
- b. Incomplete UOW courses to allow transfer to another UOW course at the same [AQF level](#), within the constraints of the course structures.

Table 1

Level of UOW course in which applicant seeking to enrol	Minimum required study to complete a UOW course
Undergraduate Certificates	12 credit points
Bachelor degree, including a Bachelor degree 'with Honours'	48 credit points
One year stand-alone Honours course	48 credit points
Combined course leading to two Bachelor Degrees (Double Degree)	48 credit points for each degree and 96 credit points in total
Graduate Certificate	12 credit points
Graduate Diploma	24 credit points
Master (by coursework) Degree - 48 credit points	24 credit points

Level of UOW course in which applicant seeking to enrol	Minimum required study to complete a UOW course
Master (by coursework) Degree -72 credit points	36 credit points
Master (by coursework) Degree - 96 credit points	48 credit points

(53) Taking into account the required minimum amount of UOW study, credit may be granted for up to the remaining credit points in an undergraduate or postgraduate coursework course on the basis of an incomplete course at the same or higher level.

(54) The maximum amount of credit based on a completed course at the same or higher level is 50% of the credit point value of the UOW course.

(55) The maximum amount of credit on the basis of a completed, [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) recognised Diploma, (or equivalent qualifications) towards a related UOW Bachelor degree course is 48 credit points. The maximum amount of credit for an Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree (or equivalent qualification) is 72 credit points.

(56) Credit for a completed Associate Degree is capped at up to a maximum of 50% credit points towards a related Bachelor degree course. Credit for incomplete studies at these levels will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

(57) The maximum amount of credit based on recognition of prior informal and/or non-formal learning will be one-third of the requirements of the award program.

(58) No credit is given towards an Honours Project component within a one year stand-alone honours course.

(59) Undergraduate subjects will not count towards credit in postgraduate programs, except where they form part of the volume of learning in the postgraduate program, or where it applies to completed 400 level subjects, or subjects completed as part of a nested qualification, or unless a formal agreement applies.

(60) Credit limits must be considered in conjunction with the assessment criteria outlined in the Guide to Assessment of Prior Learning (Schedule 1). Refer to the [Credit for Prior Learning Procedures](#) for more information on the assessment process.

(61) Additional limits on the amount of credit may be set by the requirements for a specific course, subject to approval by the relevant Faculty Education Committee and Academic Senate.

Section 18 - Definitions

Learning related terms

Word/Term	Definition
Equivalence	Assessment of credit for prior learning will take into account equivalence and comparability of the learning outcomes; volume of learning; and program of study, including content.
Formal learning	Learning attained through a formal program of study that leads to a full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification with an accredited education provider e.g. certificate, diploma or degree. For the purpose of credit, microcredentials are recognised as prior formal learning.
Informal learning	Learning acquired in an informal context, such as through work, community service, social, 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."
Non-formal learning	Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of learning but does not lead to an officially accredited qualification.

Word/Term	Definition
Prior Learning	Learning that has taken place prior to admission to a program of the University or prior to undertaking a relevant component of a program.
Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	The process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit. The term is most commonly applied to the recognition of informal and non-formal learning.

Credit-related terms

Word/Term	Definition
Articulation agreement	A signed agreement with an education provider that defines and publicises a specific, approved pathway for progression between qualifications, and between institutions.
Articulation arrangements	Articulation arrangements enable students to progress from a completed qualification to another with admission and/or credit in a defined pathway. (Australian Qualifications Framework definition, 2nd Edition, 2013)
Block Credit	Credit granted for complete sections of the program, equivalent to at least one session.
Credit	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 achieve a qualification and may be through credit transfer, articulation or recognition of prior learning. (Australian Qualifications Framework definition, 2nd Edition, 2013)
Credit points	The value attached to a subject that indicates study load.
Credit transfer	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.
Nested qualification	A qualification that includes articulation arrangements from a lower level qualification into a higher level qualification to enable multiple entry and/or exit points. A Graduate Certificate that articulates into a Graduate Diploma that, in turn, articulates into a Masters program is a common example of a nested qualification.
Provisional Credit	Refers to the granting of credit subject to prescribed conditions being met.
Specified credit	Credit granted towards one or more specific subjects. Specified credit is granted when learning can be demonstrated to be a near or exact equivalent to a UOW subject or UOW subjects.
Unspecified credit	Credit granted as equivalent to the volume of learning of an elective subject or subjects, but not subject learning outcomes. When specific, equivalent experience cannot be demonstrated, unspecified credit appears on a transcript as "Unspecified Credit". It can be awarded for 1 subject, or as Block Credit (see above), depending on the disciplinary and professional requirements, and the structure, of the award. Unspecified credit can be awarded for elective subjects. This does not exempt an applicant from a compulsory subject or subjects. Unspecified course credit receives an appropriate unit value in credit towards the completion of an Award.
UOW Microcredential	Means a microcredential awarded by UOW. A Microcredential is defined as a certification of formal learning that is additional to or a component part of an Award Course. Microcredentials are non-Award learning opportunities; and have been approved as being eligible for a specified number of credit points towards specified award courses for a specified amount of time.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	13th December 2023
Review Date	15th May 2026
Approval Authority	University Council
Approval Date	13th December 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Sue Bennett Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic and Student Life)
Responsible Officer	Dominic Riordan Director, Academic Quality and Standards
Enquiries Contact	Academic Quality and Standards Division