

This procedure comes into effect from 1 January 2022

Academic Procedure

Recognition of Prior Learning

1.0 Purpose and Scope

1. This procedure outlines the requirements for the assessment of prior formal, non-formal and informal learning for the purpose of:
 - a. granting credit (including specified, unspecified and reduced program duration credit), up to a specified limit, towards completion of a coursework program; and
 - b. granting exemption from completing a course specified for a coursework program, where there is no reduction to the units required to satisfy the program requirements and another UQ course is completed in place of the exempted course.
2. This procedure applies to:
 - a. all UQ coursework programs;
 - b. all coursework students; and
 - c. applicants for admission to a UQ coursework program (hereafter program).
3. For the requirements of credit for UQ coursework this procedure should be read in conjunction with the [Enrolment Procedure](#).

1.1 Implementation

1. This procedure will apply to decisions regarding credit or exemption made from 1 January 2022 for Semester 1, 2022 enrolments onwards.

2.0 Process and Key Controls

1. Prospective and current students may apply for credit or exemption in accordance with the requirements of this procedure. Assessment of prior learning and the granting of credit or exemption will be consistent with the [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#).
2. Once the granted credit or exemption for the prior learning is entered on the student's record for the applicable semester and the credit/exemption takes effect:
 - a. the credit/exemption is subject to the limits specified in section 2.4 of the [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#); and
 - b. the Associate Dean (Academic) may only rescind the credit/exemption if:
 - i. the original decision was the result of a procedural error, incomplete information, inaccurate information or fraud, or

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- ii. an enrolled student applies for granted reduced program duration credit to be rescinded and the request is justified.

3.0 Key Requirements

3.1 Application process

3.1.1 Applications at time of admission

1. International applicants may apply for credit or exemption as part of their admission application.
2. Domestic applicants applying for admission to a master's program may apply for reduced program duration credit as part of their application where it is applicable. All other applications for credit or exemption will only be considered once the applicant is enrolled in the program.

3.1.2 Applications by enrolled students

1. Enrolled students applying for credit or exemption must complete the online [Credit or Exemption Request Form](#), except for:
 - a. Applications to UQ Global Experiences to undertake for-credit [student exchange or short-term experience](#);
 - b. Applications to the Faculty to enrol in [cross-institutional studies](#); or
 - c. Transfer of credit following an [internal program change](#) (section 3.1.2.1).

Students may nominate on the application the UQ course(s) for which the credit/exemption is being sought.

2. An application may be lodged at any time; however, where the granting of credit or exemption may affect the student's current semester enrolment, complete applications must be submitted no later than 14 calendar days prior to the commencement of study in that semester. Students should lodge applications in the early stages of their program of study where possible so that they can identify the remaining units to complete as part of the program requirements, including any prerequisites required for courses they wish to study.
3. Applications may take up to 28 calendar days for processing, however in some circumstances additional time may be required (for example, during peak periods, or where an application involves a combination of learning types requiring academic assessment).

3.1.2.1 Program change

1. If a student changes from a single program to another single program, the credit counted towards the incomplete program (including UQ courses) is not automatically transferred. The option to transfer credit (whole or partly) is included with the program change request form in mySI-net, or in the case of a program change processed through QTAC, the [Credit or Exemption Request Form](#) is to be completed once the student is enrolled in the new program.
2. If a student changes from a dual program to:
 - a. another dual program with the same component single program; or
 - b. a component single program or vice versa;

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the credit counted towards the relevant component will automatically be transferred. Students who change to the single component have the option to transfer credit from the other component, within the limits of the program requirements, by completing the [Credit or Exemption Request Form](#).

3.2 Documentation and evidence

The following conditions apply to all documentation required as part of an application for credit or exemption:

1. All copies of original documentation must be [certified](#) by persons the University considers appropriate, and verifiable.
2. The University may at any time—
 - a. request additional documentation or information (including original documents and/or certified copies of originals);
 - b. audit an application and perform any 'back-to-source' checks considered necessary; and/or
 - c. use external providers to verify documentation (e.g. QTAC for verifying academic transcripts).
3. Once an application has been submitted, students must respond to any requests related to their application by the specified deadline on the application (usually within 14 calendar days). If the deadline lapses and no response has been given the application may be cancelled.
4. Any documentation or information required as part of the application that is in a language other than English must include an English translation completed by a translator certified by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) or an alternative official translator recognised by the University.

3.2.1 Formal learning

1. Students applying for credit or exemption on the basis of completed UQ coursework studies are not required to supply the documentary evidence outlined in this section provided the completed studies are verifiable on the student's record in SI-net.
2. Students applying for credit or exemption based on prior formal learning from another institution must supply—
 - a. a current copy of the student's official academic transcript issued by the institution. A digital transcript issued via a UQ-recognised platform is also acceptable. No other unofficial reports or statements of results are permitted.
 - b. an explanation of the institution's grading system. URL weblink(s) to the location of the grading system on the institution's official website is sufficient, provided it is in English. If the grading system is not available online for verification, a certified copy will be requested.
3. If the learning is not covered by a current precedent or credit transfer/articulation agreement, course descriptions (e.g. course profiles) with a detailed syllabus will be required. Course descriptions are expected to include the information listed below. If it is deemed that there is insufficient detail in the course descriptions, additional information from the list may be requested:
 - a. week-by-week list of topics covered in the course,
 - b. an overview of learning activities including the numbers of lectures, practicals, tutorials etc in the course,
 - c. list of aims and/or learning objectives (if available),
 - d. lecture titles and descriptions,
 - e. titles of practicals,

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- f. texts and references,
- g. timetable to indicate the number of contact hours of the various types of learning activities in the course, and
- h. methods of assessment including assessment items/tasks and grading criteria.

URL link(s) to the location of the course descriptions on the institution's official website is sufficient, provided it is in English; however, if the required information is not available online for verification and/or assessment, certified copies of the course descriptions will be requested.

4. In the case of for-credit student exchange and cross-institutional studies, the formal learning is assessed prior to the student undertaking the studies at the other institution, and the credit application may be provisionally approved subject to successful completion of the coursework (confirmed through the official transcript issued by the institution) and any additional evidence requested relating to the formal learning.

3.2.2 Non-formal and informal learning

1. Evidence for non-formal and informal learning will depend on the discipline and nature of the program of study, and may include:
 - a. relevant professional training;
 - b. project work;
 - c. practice related learning;
 - d. independent research;
 - e. capstone experiences;
 - f. a piece of scholarship;
 - g. a portfolio containing a range of supporting materials and evidence;
 - h. work-based assessments;
 - i. examinations;
 - j. interviews;
 - k. demonstrations; or
 - l. a combination of the above.
2. Students applying for credit or exemption on the basis of non-formal and/or informal learning must provide a written supporting statement that outlines how the evidence links to the learning objectives of the course(s) for which credit or exemption is sought, with examples of the outputs that demonstrate relevant performance (e.g. written reports). The student will be advised of any additional documentary evidence required for the application to be assessed.

3.3 Assessment process

3.3.1 Assessment of reduced program duration

1. Where a program offers reduced program duration credit, the Faculty will specify the prior learning eligible for reduced program duration credit in the Programs Catalogue. The learning requirements may specify a combination of formal, non-formal and informal learning.
2. Prior learning considered for the purpose of reduced program duration credit will be assessed as follows:
 - a. Where the requirement specifies an approved degree, assessment will be carried out in accordance with the [Coursework Admission Procedure](#); or

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- b. Where other formal, non-formal or informal learning is considered, the assessment will be conducted in accordance with section 3.3.2 and section 3.3.3 where applicable.

3.3.2 Assessment of formal learning

1. Only successfully completed learning with a minimum passing grade of 4 (or equivalent) or non-graded pass will be considered for credit or exemption.
2. When determining the unit value of credit for formal learning, it is expected that load equivalency to UQ coursework units will be taken into consideration, which may include the use of pre-existing standards such as the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) weighting equivalency, or prior precedents established within the University.
3. Where an application involves unspecified credit for elective courses in a program, verification of an existing precedent is not required and the assessor may recommend to the Associate Dean (Academic) or Deputy Associate Dean (Academic) that credit be granted, provided the completed coursework is from a UQ-recognised institution and the approval requirements under section 3.4 are met. If the learning is determined to be at a lower qualification or course code level to that which is required for the program, the assessor may recommend that the application be considered for exemption.
4. For all other applications for credit:
 - a. If a precedent is registered in the Credit Precedent Database or has been set by the Associate Dean (Academic), or the learning is covered by a credit transfer or articulation agreement, the application may be considered using the existing precedent/agreement.
 - b. If no precedent/agreement exists, or the existing precedent is older than 3 years, the formal learning will be referred to an academic assessor who will review the content of the formal learning prescribed in the course descriptions and recommend to the Associate Dean (Academic) or Deputy Associate Dean (Academic) that:
 - i. specified credit be granted if the content is equivalent or near equivalent (e.g. at least 70%) to a UQ course and provided that the learning covers the essential components required to complete the course, serves as an appropriate prerequisite course for any required follow-on course that lists this UQ course as a prerequisite, and is at a similar AQF level of study and/or course code level; or
 - ii. unspecified credit be granted if an exact or near exact equivalence cannot be demonstrated but the learning is at a similar AQF level of study and/or course code level, and unspecified credit is permitted in the program requirements.

The assessor may recommend to the Associate Dean (Academic) or Deputy Associate Dean (Academic) that the application be denied if the formal learning is at a lower AQF level qualification or course code level to the UQ course, or recommend that the learning be considered for exemption.

- c. Once formal learning is assessed, where feasible the precedent will be recorded in the [Credit Precedent Database](#).

3.3.3 Assessment of non-formal and informal learning

1. Applications for credit or exemption involving non-formal and/or informal learning will be assessed by an academic assessor, who will review the evidence submitted and recommend to the Associate Dean (Academic) or Deputy Associate Dean (Academic) that:

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- a. specified or unspecified credit be granted if the learning meets the criteria in clause 2 of this section and is at a similar AQF level of study and/or course code level;
 - b. exemption be granted if equivalence to AQF level of study and/or course code level cannot be determined but the learning meets the assessment criteria in clause 2 of this section; or
 - c. the application be denied if the learning does not satisfy the assessment criteria.
2. The following criteria must be applied when assessing non-formal or informal learning—
 - a. the learning fulfils the same criteria associated with assessment of learning outcomes in any conventional course: that is, assessment must be valid, current, sufficient, reliable and authentic; and
 - b. the evidence presented is of a standard comparable to the type of assessment that would typically be undertaken in a course of the level for which the recognition of prior learning is being sought.

3.4 Approval requirements

1. When considering an application to grant credit or exemption, the Associate Dean (Academic) or Deputy Associate Dean (Academic) will consider the advice and recommendation from the designated assessor (where applicable) and determine whether—
 - a. the type and unit value assigned to the credit/exemption is appropriate to the design and structure of the program; and
 - b. the credit/exemption complies with the requirements and limits specified in the [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#).
2. The Associate Dean (Academic) or Deputy Associate Dean (Academic) may grant an exemption from undertaking a course or courses if a student:
 - a. is required to undertake a substantially similar course at a postgraduate level that had already been completed at the undergraduate level;
 - b. completed a substantially similar course in another Faculty or as part of a dual degree;
 - c. undertook similar studies as part of a sub-bachelor level program, or as a senior secondary school student, and credit was not granted;
 - d. completed the same or a substantially similar course that exceeds the applicable period of currency; or
 - e. is granted permission by the Associate Dean (Academic) to undertake another course as a substitute.

Where an exemption is granted the Associate Dean (Academic) may specify conditions (e.g. that the course be substituted by a specific course or by a course from a specified list of courses).

3.5 Outcome of application

1. Applicants/students will be notified of the outcome of their application.
2. If an application for credit is approved:
 - a. For prospective students applying for admission directly to UQ – the credit is noted in the offer letter, and once the individual accepts the offer and is enrolled in the program the credit is entered on the student's record; or

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- b. For enrolled students – the credit is entered on the student’s record, and in the case of international students the credit is also subject to the student accepting the offered credit.
3. Granted credit or exemption takes effect from the census date of the applicable semester and will be noted on the student’s studies report and official transcript. If the credit granted is for UQ coursework, the grades from all attempts at the course(s) will be retained on the academic transcript.
4. If the credit/exemption is different from what was applied for in the original application (e.g. only some of the credit is approved or different courses were approved from that applied for), the applicant will be requested to confirm if they accept the credit/exemption by the specified date, otherwise the application will be denied.
5. An appeal of a credit/exemption decision may be lodged in accordance with the [Student Grievance Resolution Procedure](#).

3.5.1 Requirements for international students

In the case of international students, the following requirements apply in accordance with the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 \(Cth\)](#) and [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#):

1. Once an international student accepts an offer to undertake a program of study at UQ, any granted credit accepted by the student will be reflected in the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) issued to the student.
2. For commencing international students, the Faculty will inform the Visa Officer of final credit outcomes no later than the beginning of the second week of the student’s first semester of enrolment, to enable the transmission of the data to the Department of Home Affairs. By the end of the second week of the semester, the Faculty will send a letter to affected international students informing them of their final credit status, which must be signed by the student and retained on the student’s record.
3. Once an international student has commenced studies, the faculty will inform the Visa Officer of any credit granted, cancelled or rescinded that results in a change to the student’s expected completion of the program. The Visa Officer will report the change to the Department of Home Affairs and arrange for the issuing of a new CoE.

3.6 Cancellation and retention of credit

1. Credit granted for prior learning counted towards a UQ program that exceeds the applicable period of currency specified in section 2.4 of the [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) will be cancelled unless the Associate Dean (Academic) approves the retention of credit subject to any conditions (e.g. demonstrating retention of learning). Students will be notified prior to the cancellation of the credit and advised to contact the Faculty on the requirements for the retention of credit.

3.6.1 Rescission of reduced program duration credit

1. Granted reduced program duration credit may be rescinded at the request of the student if the Associate Dean (Academic) is satisfied that the request is justified.
2. The request must be made by the enrolled student no later than 14 calendar days prior to the commencement of the semester the credit rescission will take effect, and include a statement outlining the reasons for the rescission.

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3. If the request is approved the Faculty will update the student's record, and in the case of international students also inform the Visa Officer who will report the change to the Department of Home Affairs and arrange for the issuing of a new CoE.

4.0 Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

4.1 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

1. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is responsible for implementation and review of this procedure.

4.2 Associate Dean (Academic)

1. The Associate Dean (Academic) is responsible for RPL assessment and quality assurance processes within the faculty.
2. The Associate Dean (Academic) also provides reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and the Academic Board through the Committee for Academic Programs Policy to demonstrate and provide assurance of compliance with the requirements of the [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) as required.

4.3 Faculties

1. Faculties are responsible for—
 - a. articulating the type/s of credit granted for each of their programs/courses including—
 - i. program-specific restrictions and limitations on credit transfer, and
 - ii. program-specific assessment and evidence requirements to support an application, in addition to the requirements of this procedure; and
 - b. establishing local operating procedures to ensure timely consideration of applications; and
 - c. recording the progress of students who have been granted credit, to help ensure equity and consistency in decision-making.

4.4 Visa Officer

1. The Visa Officer is responsible for reporting changes to an international student's expected completion of the program to the Department of Home Affairs, and arranging for the issuing of a new CoE where applicable.

5.0 Monitoring, Review and Assurance

1. Faculties will—
 - a. develop and implement quality assurance processes to ensure that prior learning is of an appropriate standard to permit consideration for admission, credit or exemption; and
 - b. review precedents every 3 years. Faculties may set an earlier review period as required (e.g. for accreditation purposes).
2. Review of, and compliance with, this procedure is overseen by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and the Committee for Academic Programs Policy.

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6.0 Recording and Reporting

1. Credit precedents on the basis of formal learning are recorded in the UQ Credit Precedent Database where it is feasible to do so.
2. Records concerning a person's credit/exemption application and the University's decisions are filed in the applicant/student's record in the University's official records systems.
3. The Associate Dean (Academic) shall provide reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) via the Committee for Academic Programs Policy to demonstrate compliance with this procedure, as required.

7.0 Appendix

7.1 Definitions, terms, acronyms

AQF – [Australian Qualifications Framework](#).

Articulation – articulation pathways that facilitate the progression of students from a partner institution (either domestic or international) to UQ. Articulation involves the recognition of study completed at a partner institution to allow admission and/or credit and/or exemption to a specified UQ program under specified conditions (for example, study undertaken in a completed undergraduate diploma at another institution is used as credit towards a bachelor level program at UQ).

Associate Dean (Academic) – the relevant Associate Dean (Academic) of the Faculty administering the program.

Block credit – where credit involves a specific number of units for components of a given program.

Course – a distinct unit of study within a program, for which a grade is given. Each course is identified by its alphanumeric code, a title and a fixed unit value. Courses are normally completed in one or two semesters.

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.

Credit transfer – 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.

Cross-institutional study – where a student is approved to complete coursework relevant to their current program of study at another university because the course is not offered at UQ. Refer to the [Enrolment Procedure](#) for more information.

Domestic applicant/student – an applicant/student who is:

- a) an Australian citizen or dual citizen of Australia; or
- b) a New Zealand citizen; or
- c) the holder of a permanent visa for Australia or a humanitarian visa.

Dual Program – a sequence of study under one set of program requirements that leads to two awards conferred simultaneously on separate testamurs. A dual program uses cross-crediting of courses so that the program duration is shorter than the sum of those for the constituent awards.

ECTS – European Credit Transfer System.

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Exemption – waiver of a requirement to complete a course specified for a program, where there is no reduction to the units required to satisfy the program requirements and another UQ course is completed in place of the exempted course.

Formal learning – learning that takes place through structured courses and/or programs completed at this or another higher education institution but may include studies undertaken at other accredited private learning organisations.

General electives – courses in any “general electives” building block in a program structure (see Program Design Policy).

Informal learning – learning that takes place through life and work experience, and is less structured in nature (in terms of objectives, time or learning support).

International applicant/student – an applicant/student who is not a domestic student; also called an overseas applicant/student.

mySI-net – the UQ portal which allows students to administer certain aspects of their enrolment available at <https://www.sinet.uq.edu.au/>.

Non-formal learning – learning that takes place through completion of a structured program of learning but does not lead to a formally recognised qualification.

Prior learning – any learning that has taken place prior to admission to a program of the University or prior to undertaking a relevant component of a program.

Program – a sequence of study leading to the award of a qualification such as an undergraduate degree or diploma, and/or a postgraduate coursework qualification.

QTAC – [Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre](#).

Recognition of Prior Learning – an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine eligibility for admission, credit and/or exemptions.

Reduced program duration credit – credit granted into select master's programs, as a reduction in the number of units required to complete a program. This reduction is in 8-unit blocks, and the program requirements will specify the remaining units applicable for the reduced duration.

Specified credit – credit granted for a specific UQ course when an exact or near exact equivalence to that course can be demonstrated.

Student – for the purpose of this procedure, a student means a person enrolled as a student at the University or undertaking courses, non-award studies or programs at the University.

Units – the value of an individual course which contributes to the total unit requirement of a program. 16 units equals 1 EFTSL – the equivalent full-time study load for a year.

Unspecified credit – credit granted when an exact or near exact equivalence cannot be demonstrated. Unspecified credit is typically granted for elective courses.

7.2 Related policies and procedures

[Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#)

[Coursework Admission and Enrolment Policy](#)

[Coursework Admission Procedure](#)

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[Enrolment Procedure](#)

[Collaborative Academic Program Arrangements Policy](#)

[International Agreements Policy](#)

7.3 Relevant legislation and information

[Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#)

[Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 \(Cth\)](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015](#)

[Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 \(Cth\)](#)

[National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)

[Department of Home Affairs](#)

8.0 Meta Data for Document Management

Web Links	PDF Printable Version Recognition of Prior Learning Policy Schedule of RPL and Credit Limit Variations
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Last Approval Date	12/11/2020
Next Review Date	03/09/2023
Audience / Users	All Staff All Students All applicants to the University
Notes	November 2020 – Implementation postponed to 1 January 2022. July 2021 – administrative update to clause 3.2(4) on the requirement for an English translation.