

Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning

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1.0 Purpose

This procedure supports the Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and provides a formal framework for the assessment and awarding of credit transfer. Its purpose is to ensure a consistent approach to the management of credit transfer and recognition of prior learning in accordance with the policy.

2.0 Scope

This procedure applies to all students enrolled in an award program at Griffith University, including undergraduate students, postgraduate coursework and research students and higher degree by research students.

3.0 Procedure for granting of credit

Prior formal, non-formal and informal learning may make an applicant eligible for credit that can be counted towards their degree and reduce the number of courses they are required to study.

Key principles guiding the University's granting of credit include:

- the applicant's achievement of learning or acquisition of prior learning outcomes are demonstrated, evidenced and authenticated at the appropriate Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level;
- the applicant's learning outcomes are assessed as relevant and current;
- the program's volume of learning, discipline context, content, learning and assessment approaches are considered in determining comparability and equivalence of prior learning; and
- the learning for which credit is sought is for a successfully completed prior qualification or for a successfully completed component of learning.

3.1. The basis on which credit is granted

The University may recognise:

- prior formal learning which is assessed by determining the extent to which the applicant's prior studies and assessed standards are equivalent to the content and learning outcomes of one or more courses in the award program. The educational judgement concerning equivalence is based on the discipline context, content, standards and assessment in the program or course the applicant has undertaken;
- prior informal and non-formal learning which is assessed by determining the extent to which the applicant has achieved the learning outcomes of one or more courses in the award program. The educational judgement concerning equivalence is based on the extent to which the applicant can demonstrate they have achieved the required learning outcomes;

for the purpose of granting credit.

3.2 Types of Credit

Credit may be granted as specified credit, unspecified credit, block credit, provisional credit and advanced standing.

3.3 Credit based on a Passing Grade

Credit is only granted for courses for which the equivalent of a Griffith University passing grade of 4 and above has been achieved.

3.4 Transfer of Grades with award of credit

Normally when credit is granted for prior study completed at Institutions other than Griffith, credit is recorded in the Griffith academic transcript with a grade of "T" (Transfer) and the grades achieved in the prior study are not included in the Griffith academic transcript or in the calculation of the grade point average. Where the Program Director considers that the grade achieved in the prior study is comparable to the grade which would have been awarded if the course had been studied at Griffith, approval may be given for that grade to be included in the student's Griffith academic transcript and included in the calculation of the grade point average.

When credit is granted for prior Griffith study at the same level, the grade achieved in the prior study is included in the Griffith academic transcript and is included in the calculation of the grade point average.

3.5 Credit based on Recognition of Prior Informal and Non-Formal Learning

Recognition of relevant and current prior informal and non-formal learning may be used for credit. Responsibility for providing appropriate evidence for the recognition of prior informal and non-formal learning that demonstrates the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding lies with individual applicants. Professional and para-professional experience, subsequent professional development activities or training and other experience, through work or life, may be taken into account in the granting of prior informal and non-formal credit, provided that the learning can be documented and the applicant can demonstrate the standard they achieved from participating in these activities is comparable to the standards in the course in which they are seeking credit. This prior learning is to be evidenced by the applicant in the form of a Learning Profile which forms part of the Online Credit Application.

3.6 Credit based on Advanced Secondary School Level Studies

Normally, credit towards an undergraduate award is not granted for study at secondary school level. However, in specific cases, where it is considered that the study successfully completed at secondary school is judged to be substantially comparable in level and content with undergraduate award study, credit may be granted. This may apply, for example, where students, as part of their senior school certificates, have undertaken the International Baccalaureate; studies where a School and the University have jointly developed the curriculum; and higher-level VET certificates.

Credit will not be granted where professional accreditation requirements limit the granting of credit based on secondary school level studies.

3.7 Assessment of Prior Learning

The University's assessment of prior learning is based on an evaluation of the evidence presented, using the following criteria:

- Valid - the prior learning matches both the qualification type and the discipline learning outcomes for the relevant course. The applicant's standard of achievement in the prior learning is consistent with the qualification level and type specified for the course.
- Authentic – the prior learning has been undertaken by the applicant and the standard of achievement in the prior learning is based on the applicant's own work.
- Current – the prior learning has been achieved within the specified time limit for credit set out in Section 3.13
- Sufficient - the evidence of prior learning is sufficient for the Program Director to reliably verify the learning outcomes achieved are at the appropriate standard. In recognising prior learning consideration needs to be given to whether the volume of learning is sufficient in the context of the discipline for the AQF level and qualification type, as well as whether there is a sufficient portion of qualification components at the AQF level.

3.8 Requirements for the Award of the Degree (notwithstanding credit awarded)

Notwithstanding the amount of credit which may be granted towards a bachelor degree as set out in 3.9, the student undertaking a three year degree (240CP) is required to complete a minimum of 80 credit points of level 2 and 3 courses which are part of the degree requirements of the Griffith degree which the student is undertaking. In the case of a four year bachelor degree (320CP), students are required to complete a minimum of 110 credit points at level 2, 3 or 4. For bachelor degrees of other lengths, the application of this rule relates to the minimum portion of the program for which credit may not be granted and requires that these courses must not be level 1 courses. Students must not exceed the maximum requirement for level 1 courses in their program.

When a student transfers into one of the component single degrees from a double or vertical degree and is granted maximum full credit points towards the single degree, to complete the other degree, the normal processes of admission and credit transfer apply in relation to a completed prior qualification.

Alternative coursework may be substituted in order to achieve the requirements for the degree where the prior study is considered to have such a high degree of overlap to the content of a course/s in the degree.

3.9 Credit Limits

The amounts of credit that may be granted depend on the level of the prior study and the level of the award program. Credit limits are prescribed in the sections below.

Griffith Program	Prior Study	Amount of Credit
Undergraduate Certificate	Certificate I and II Certificate III Certificate IV	Nil 10CP Up to 20CP
Bachelor	Certificate I and II Certificate III Certificate IV AQF 5-7 Undergraduate Certificate AQF 5 Diploma AQF 6 Advanced Diploma	Nil 10CP Up to 20CP Up to 40 CP Up to 100CP Up to 160CP

Griffith Program	Prior Study	Amount of Credit
	Associate Degree Sub-degrees Bachelor (3 and 3 plus years)	Up to 160CP One-half for less than 3year degrees Two-thirds (refer to 3.8)
	Bachelor with Honours (concurrent) (3 and 3 plus years)	Two-thirds (refer to 3.8)
Double undergraduate degree	Eligible prior learning Partial completion of double	Up to maximum credit to allow for minimum completion of 80CP of courses at second and third year level from each degree program. Full credit point value when transferring into single component.
AQF Level 8 Bachelor Honours Degrees end-on and embedded	Refer to Bachelor Honours Degree (AQF Level 8) Policy	Up to 20CP
Double Masters degree	Eligible prior learning	Up to maximum credit to allow for minimum completion of 60CP of courses from each Master program
Vertical degrees	Eligible prior learning	Up to maximum credit to allow for minimum completion of 80CP of courses from both the Bachelor and the Masters
Graduate Certificate	Eligible prior learning	Up to one half of program
Graduate Diploma	Eligible prior learning	Up to 20CP for programs 80-100CP in length Up to half for 120CP in length
Masters	Refer to Postgraduate Qualifications (AQF Level 8 and 9) Policy including Table 3 Guidelines for Amount of Credit in Master Degrees	Up to 20CP for programs 80 – less than 120CP Up to half for programs 120CP and more
Doctorates - Professional	Refer to Section 7.6 of the Higher Degree Research Policy	

The amount of credit awarded may not be greater than the amount of study successfully completed (expressed as Griffith equivalent credit points) on which the award of credit is based.

The upper limit for the granting of credit based on recognition of prior informal and non-formal learning will be one-third of the requirements of the award program

Credit may not be granted for any dissertation or research component.

Credit based on AQF7 undergraduate studies may be awarded for postgraduate foundation courses in a 160CP and more Masters program.

Credit may be granted towards a postgraduate program for postgraduate courses completed as part of a Griffith University undergraduate program structure up to the maximum amount of credit allowable above.

3.10 Nested Qualifications

A student enrolling in a higher level nested qualification may be awarded maximum credit entitlement which is included in the maximum amount of credit allowable in 3.9 Credit Limits for the higher level qualification.

A student opting to exit to a lower level nested qualification may be granted up to a maximum of the full credit point value of the award.

When a student who has exited with a lower level nested qualification requests readmission to the higher level nested qualification, the Program Director determines if additional studies to the standard duration and content of the higher level qualification is to be completed for the student to meet program outcomes.

3.11 Structured Upgrading Programs

Where a student has been admitted to a structured upgrading program and holds additional tertiary qualifications in excess of the study that determined the entry to the structured upgrading program, further specified or unspecified credit may be granted in accordance with credit limits specified in this policy.

3.12 Articulation Agreements

Articulation agreements typically involve an agreement to award block credit or advanced standing. The amount of credit granted under an articulation agreement is subject to the credit limits prescribed in this policy.

3.13 Time Limit on Credit

Credit will not normally be granted for studies (or other prior learning) that have been completed more than ten years prior to the time of application for credit.

A shorter time limit may be applied where there is concern about the currency of the applicant's knowledge or skills, and/or where professional accreditation requirements limit the granting of credit. The shorter time limit may apply to all applications for credit in a particular program or to a specific student application.

Exceptions to the ten year time limit may be approved for certain articulation agreements or for individual cases. In considering cases for credit for studies completed more than ten years earlier, post-qualification experience which may contribute to the currency of knowledge or skills may be taken into account.

3.14 Withdrawal of Credit

The University reserves the right to withdraw credit where an error has been made in assessing an application or where the documentation provided by the applicant is incomplete, misleading, false or invalid. The withdrawal of credit must be approved by the Program Director on the recommendation of the Manager, Academic Credit Transfer.

However, where a change is made to a provision of this credit policy, or where a precedent or articulation is reviewed and changed, credit already granted may not be withdrawn.

4.0 Process for applying for credit

An application for credit for prior learning must be made using the Online [Credit Application](#). A credit application must be accompanied by an official academic record except for applications based on previous formal study at Griffith. Except for when credit is sought for previous study at Griffith or where the University already has established course precedents or articulation arrangements advertised on the University's Credit Precedent and Articulation Database (located on the University's website), extracts from institutional handbooks or other official documentation giving sufficient details of the studies to allow an assessment of the application for credit must be supplied. All supporting documentation must be in English.

Where credit is being sought for RPL (the combination of formal, informal and non-formal learning) the [Credit Application and Learning Profile](#) supported by appropriate certified documentation must be completed. Supporting documentation may include references, samples of work, project briefs, reports, publications, employment history and employment position descriptions.

Applications for credit may be lodged at any time. However, they should normally be lodged no later than the last working day in the January, May or September preceding the commencement of any trimester in which the granting of credit may affect the student's study program. An application for credit will not be accepted for a course(s) a student is enrolled in, if the census date has already passed. International students should apply to be pre-assessed for credit transfer at time of lodgement of application for admission to the University.

4.1 Approval of Credit

The Program Director determines the credit to be granted, within the provisions of this policy, in response to applications for credit from students admitted or enrolled in the program for which the Program Director is responsible. Where the application relates to credit for courses convened by another School, the Program Director will seek the advice of the Head of the relevant School or staff member designated by the Head of School for the purpose of advising on credit;

4.2 Credit Precedents

Where an application for credit based on prior complete or incomplete formal study is approved by the Program Director, this becomes a credit precedent which is applied to subsequent credit applications. Articulation arrangements and credit precedents are reviewed periodically and must be reviewed when a program undergoes a major change.

4.3 Review and Appeals

For information pertaining to credit appeals, refer to Section 3.2 (Table 2) of the Student Review and Appeals Policy.

5.0 Definitions

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is a national system of qualifications encompassing all post-compulsory education. Higher education awards are located at AQF Levels 5-10.

Advanced standing is the granting of block credit of a trimester or more. Advanced standing indicates that the student is deemed to have satisfied all the program requirements that are embedded in the trimester (s) for which block credit has been awarded. Advanced standing reduces the courses the student must undertake to successfully complete the program.

Articulation agreement is an agreement between Griffith and another institution to document and publicise a specifically approved pathway for progression between a program at the other institution and a Griffith award program, involving specific credit arrangements.

Bachelor Honours Degree (AQF Level 8) is typically equivalent to one year of full-time study, normally taken after the completion of a three year bachelor degree, referred to as “**end-on honours**” or may also comprise four or more years in length and may be studied concurrently with the bachelor degree, with the honours typically included in the final year/s of the program, referred to as “**concurrent honours**” or “**embedded honours**” refers to the award of Honours on the basis of a differentiated study program within a Bachelor degree (AQF Level 7) program which is four or more years (full-time equivalent) in length.

Block Credit is credit granted towards whole stages or components of a program of learning leading to a qualification. For example, when a group of courses undertaken at another institution is recognised as broadly equivalent to the learning outcomes of a group of courses within a Griffith program block credit is granted.

Components of a qualification refer to units of academic work or courses, the completion of which leads to an AQF qualification.

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, recognition of prior learning or advanced standing.

Credit Point (CP) refers to the number of units assigned to a course. Credit Points are assigned to courses such that the courses which comprise one year of full-time study add to 80 credit points

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.

Discipline refers to a defined branch of study or learning.

Formal learning is the learning that takes place through a structured program of learning that leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification. Examples of formal learning include study undertaken with other Australian Higher Education Providers and study at recognised overseas institutions. It also includes credentialed programs provided by recognised professional bodies, employers and other authorities,

Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of learning but does not lead to an officially accredited qualification. Examples of non-formal learning are learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace, voluntary sector or in community-based settings.

Informal learning is learning gained through work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experience. Unlike formal or non-formal learning, informal learning is not organised or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support.

Learning Outcomes are the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

Learning Profile is a statement of an applicant's achievements of learning outcomes, knowledge, skills and competencies, supported by evidence, relevant to the particular program for which advanced standing or transfer is requested or for specific course/s for which credit is sought. The Learning Profile forms part of the Online Credit Application.

Nested Qualifications are purposely designed qualifications that enable explicit articulation pathways and encompass more than one AQF level and/or qualification type.

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

Provisional Credit is the granting of credit or the recognition of prior learning subject to prescribed conditions being met. Provisional credit is granted where there is uncertainty about the relevance or standard of particular prior learning.

Qualification type is the nomenclature used in the AQF to describe each category of AQF qualification e.g. Bachelor Degree or Bachelor Degree Honours. Each qualification type is defined by a descriptor expressed as learning outcomes.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a 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. RPL assessors (Program Director or nominee as designated by the Dean and Course Convenors) document their decision on the Online Credit Application.

Structured upgrading programs are designed and approved by the University to upgrade or extend a qualification which the student already holds. Advanced standing is granted on the basis of a previously attained qualification which is a requirement for admission to the structured upgrading program. The structured upgrading program is therefore shorter than the standard length for a program at that level.

Specified credit is granted for one or more specific courses in a program, exempting students from those courses, and awarding the appropriate credit points in their place. Specified credit may be granted where the applicant has met the learning outcomes, attained the knowledge and/or developed the skills related to a specific course.

Unspecified credit is granted in the form of credit points which take the place of elective courses (listed or free choice) or other optional components in a program. Unspecified credit may be granted where prior learning is judged to be relevant to the learning outcomes of a program as a whole.

Vertical degree is an approved program of study of at least four years (full-time equivalent) duration, in which the core requirements of a bachelor degree and a masters degree program or a bachelor honours degree and masters are undertaken simultaneously and for which two separate awards are granted.

INFORMATION

Printable version (PDF) Downloadable version (Word)

Title	Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure
Document number	2020/2003014
Purpose	This procedure sets out the process of granting credit and recognition of prior learning that contribute towards satisfying the requirements for an award of the University.
Audience	Staff, Student, Public
Category	Academic
Subcategory	Student Services
Effective date	8 December 2020
Review date	2025
Policy advisor	Manager, Academic Credit Transfer Student Life credit@griffith.edu.au
Approving authority	Programs Committee

RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Legislation	Higher Education Standards Act
Policy	Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy Student Review and Appeals Policy
Procedures	NA
Local protocols	NA
Forms	NA