



THE UNIVERSITY  
of ADELAIDE

# Academic Credit Arrangements Policy

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### OVERVIEW

The University acknowledges the need for clear and effective Credit arrangements to increase opportunities for students to access education, improve student mobility between sectors and institutions, and increase the pathways into and between qualifications through recognition of prior learning. This policy sets out the principles for Credit arrangements in coursework academic Programs at the University of Adelaide.

Further information regarding the Credit application process and evidence required can be found on the [Credit Transfer website](#). The University will publish information for applicants and current students that explains Credit, the Credit application process, and provides a reasonable indication of whether a student or applicant may be eligible for Credit.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the [Coursework Academic Program Policy](#) which sets out the requirements and structure of coursework Programs at the University.

### SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This policy applies to prospective and current students who apply for or receive Credit towards undergraduate and postgraduate coursework academic programs at the University. It does not apply to Higher Degree by Research Students.

Implementation of this Policy will be carried out in accordance with the University's [Code of Conduct](#) and the [Academic Board Statement on Undue Influence](#). Any attempts to improperly exert pressure or influence actions or decisions made pursuant to this Policy must be reported in accordance with the [Fraud and Corruption Control Policy](#).

### POLICY PRINCIPLES

- 1) The University will recognise and grant Credit for Prior Learning, and Formal Concurrent Learning provided it is relevant, current and equivalent to the learning required for the University's academic Programs and Courses.
- 2) The maximum amount of Credit that may be granted supports the expectation that students will complete a minimum amount of study at the University.

- 3) Determining equivalence requires academic judgement based on appropriate evidence, taking into consideration the Applicant's capacity to progress and complete the Program requirement.
- 4) Credit will only be granted:
  - a) if the integrity of the Program and the qualification is maintained; and
  - b) if the Applicant will not be disadvantaged in achieving the expected Learning Outcomes of the Program; and
  - c) in accordance with this Policy.
- 5) Credit decisions will be:
  - a) evidence-based, equitable and transparent;
  - b) academically defensible;
  - c) undertaken in a timely way;
  - d) clearly communicated;
  - e) applied consistently and fairly with decisions subject to appeal;
  - f) recorded as part of the Applicant's individual record;
  - g) recorded in the University credit management system.
- 6) This policy and related procedures are compliant with the [Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)](#) (including the [AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy](#)), the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#), the [Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) Act 2000](#) and the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#).

#### AUTHORITIES

| <b>Key</b> | <b>Authority Category</b> | <b>Authority</b>                                                                                  | <b>Delegation Holder</b>                             | <b>Limits</b>                                       |
|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Academic   | Academic Credit           | Reduce the maximum amount of Credit (Procedure 4.4)                                               | Executive Dean (or delegate)                         | Provided that the information is publicly available |
| Academic   | Academic Credit           | Approve maximum credit limits for specific types of Prior Learning (Procedure 4.4)                | Executive Dean (or delegate)                         | Provided that the information is publicly available |
| Academic   | Academic Credit           | Approve Cross-Institutional Study (Procedure 4.8)                                                 | Deputy Dean (Learning and Teaching) (or delegate)    | In accordance with Procedure 4.8                    |
| Academic   | Academic Credit           | Approve exceptional circumstances for Prior Learning more than 10 years old (Procedure 4.9 e)     | Executive Dean (or delegate)                         |                                                     |
| Academic   | Academic Credit           | Approve Credit for studies completed while deferred or on leave (Procedure 4.9j)                  | Executive Dean (or delegate)                         | Where exceptional circumstances exist               |
| Academic   | Academic Credit           | Approve exemptions to the Level of Credit awarded for AQF Level 5 qualifications (Procedure 4.10) | Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic) | To cohorts only                                     |
| Academic   | Academic Credit           | Approve alternative assessment of Prior Learning (Procedure 5.4)                                  | Executive Dean (or delegate)                         |                                                     |

|          |                 |                                                                                         |                                                         |                                                                                                 |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Academic | Academic Credit | Assess and grant applications for Credit where no Credit Precedent exists (Procedure 5) | Executive Dean (or delegate)                            | Within limits of Procedure 4 and in accordance with Procedure 5                                 |
| Academic | Academic Credit | Assess and grant applications for Credit where a Credit Precedent exists (Procedure 5)  | Associate Director, Admissions Operations (or delegate) | Only where valid Credit Precedent, Articulation Agreement or Credit Transfer Arrangement exists |
| Academic | Academic Credit | Create a Credit Precedent (Procedure 6)                                                 | Executive Dean (or delegate)                            |                                                                                                 |
| Academic | Academic Credit | Review & update Credit Precedents (Procedure 6.9)                                       | Executive Dean (or delegate)                            |                                                                                                 |
| Academic | Academic Credit | Withdraw Credit (Procedure 7.5)                                                         | Executive Dean (or delegate)                            |                                                                                                 |

## PROCEDURES

### 1. Recognised Prior Learning

- 1.1 The University may grant Credit for Prior Learning, including (but not limited to):
- a) prior studies undertaken as part of a complete or incomplete university-level Award Program, including Australian Qualification Framework study in a Diploma, Advanced Diploma, or Associate Degree;
  - b) tertiary-level work completed at secondary level;
  - c) vocational education;
  - d) studies undertaken in non-award Programs at the University or other higher education institutions;
  - e) substantial and sustained relevant, documented professional work experience.

### 2. Articulation Agreements and Credit Transfer Arrangements

- 2.1 The University may establish Articulation Agreements and Credit Transfer Arrangements with other institutions that specify approved Credit arrangements. The granting of Credit in Articulation Agreements and Credit Transfer Arrangements must comply with this policy.
- 2.2 The [International Engagement Policy](#) sets out the principles and procedures for establishing, maintaining, and reviewing Articulation Agreements and Credit Transfer Arrangements with education institutions outside Australia.
- 2.3 The University will regularly monitor the academic performance of student cohorts admitted based on Articulation Agreements or Credit Transfer Arrangements.

### 3. Applying for Credit

- 3.1 Applicants must formally apply for recognition of Prior Learning undertaken outside of the University.
- 3.2 Applications must be accompanied by evidence of Prior Learning required to support the application. The Applicant should demonstrate how the Prior Learning relates to the Learning Outcomes for the designated Course. Applicants applying for Credit pursuant to an Articulation Agreement or Credit Transfer Arrangement may have reduced evidentiary requirements.
- 3.3 Applicants will be required to provide certified copies of all academic and professional documents and qualifications submitted as evidence of Prior Learning. Any documents presented in a language other than English must be accompanied by a certified translation, and a signed statement verifying the accuracy of the translation.

a) Evidence of Formal Learning must include:

- i. Course descriptions;
- ii. Course content;
- iii. the quantum of study;
- iv. the level of study;
- v. the Learning Outcomes;
- vi. the year the study was commenced and completed;
- vii. placement information, as appropriate;
- viii. certified copy of an official transcript; and
- ix. any other additional information that the University may request.

b) Evidence of Non-Formal Learning and Informal Learning will depend on the discipline and nature of the learning. In all cases, the Applicant must demonstrate how the Non-Formal Learning and Informal Learning is matched to the relevant Learning Outcomes and, where appropriate, assessment requirements. Evidence may include:

- i. relevant formal professional learning;
- ii. employment history;
- iii. work documents such as reports, spreadsheets, or products/samples;
- iv. project work;
- v. practice-related learning;
- vi. practice-related research;
- vii. Capstone Experiences;
- viii. a portfolio containing a range of supporting materials and evidence;
- ix. work-based assessments; or
- x. other additional information that the University may request.

3.4 Applicants may apply for Credit at any time from submission of their application to be admitted to a Program at the University until ten business days before the last day that they are able to enrol online in the Course(s) for which Credit is being sought.

#### 4. Credit Limits and Restrictions

4.1 The maximum amount of Credit that may be awarded for a:

- a) Program with a duration of more than two years is guided by the requirement for students to complete no less than the volume equivalent to the final year of study, or in the case of a double degree, the final year of study for each component Program;
- b) Program with a duration of two years or less is 50%, except for Professional Certificate, Graduate Certificate or Honours programs, for which the maximum credit is 25%.

4.2 In all circumstances the maximum amount of Credit that may be awarded for Prior Learning is two thirds of the unit value of the Program.

4.3 Credit granted must not exceed the provisions listed in the following table:

| University of Adelaide Award for which credit is being sought                         | Length of Program |       | Max. % credit | Max. units of credit |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|---------------|----------------------|
|                                                                                       | Years*            | Units |               |                      |
| Diploma                                                                               | 1 year            | 24    | 50%           | 12                   |
| Diploma                                                                               | 2 years           | 48    | 50%           | 24                   |
| Associate degree                                                                      | 2 years           | 48    | 50%           | 24                   |
| Bachelor degree (at least one year of the degree must be studied)                     | 3 years           | 72    | 67%           | 48                   |
| Four year double Bachelor degree (at least one year must be studied from each degree) | 4 years           | 96    | 50%           | 48                   |
| Five year double degree (at least one year must be studied from each degree)          | 5 years           | 120   | 60%           | 72                   |

|                                                                            |           |    |     |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----|-----|----|
| Four year Honours degree (at least one year must be studied of the degree) | 4 years   | 96 | 66% | 63 |
| Honours                                                                    | 1 year    | 24 | 25% | 6  |
| Professional Certificate                                                   | 3 months  | 6  | 25% | 0^ |
| Graduate Certificate                                                       | 6 months  | 12 | 25% | 3  |
| Graduate Diploma                                                           | 1 year    | 24 | 50% | 12 |
| Master degree                                                              | 1.5 years | 36 | 50% | 18 |
| Master degree                                                              | 2 years   | 48 | 50% | 24 |

\* Standard Duration (as defined in the University [Glossary of Terms](#))

^ 25% of 6 units is less than one 3-unit course and unable to be awarded as credit, except as provided in 4.5

#### 4.4 The Executive Dean (or delegate) may:

- a) reduce the maximum amount of Credit that the University will grant into a Program provided that the revised amount is publicly available;
- b) approve maximum Credit limits for specific types of Prior Learning that may be granted towards a Program provided that the limits are publicly available.

#### 4.5 Applications for Credit for micro-credentialed qualifications will be considered in the same way as other Credit applications. Applicants may not apply for Credit for part of a Course on the basis of successful completion of micro-credentialed qualification unless it is a Nested Micro-credential.

#### 4.6 Where appropriate, Credit will be granted for Formal Concurrent Learning provided that it has been previously approved.

#### 4.7 Approval for Cross-Institutional Study will only be given if:

- a) the content in the selected Course is not provided by the University at any time during the relevant academic year; or
- b) there are sound educational or personal reasons as determined by the relevant Deputy Dean (Learning and Teaching) (or delegate).

#### 4.8 Credit will not be granted:

- a) for Formal Concurrent Learning if the Applicant will exceed the maximum Credit limits specified in Procedure 4.1, 4.2 or 4.3;
- b) for a Capstone, research, or dissertation requirement in a Major or Program;
- c) towards the thesis component of an Honours Award or the dissertation component of a postgraduate coursework Award, unless the Credit relates to Prior Learning in a joint award approved pursuant to the [Jointly Conferred Coursework Awards Policy](#);
- d) for more than half the Units required at the highest Level for the Program in which the Applicant is enrolled;
- e) for Prior Learning completed ten years or more before the application for Credit was submitted unless:
  - i. there are exceptional circumstances approved by the relevant Executive Dean (or delegate); or
  - ii. the Applicant can demonstrate currency of learning against the Course/Program Learning Outcomes.
- f) for Certificate IV qualifications unless in accordance with an existing legal agreement with a pathway provider;
- g) where the Applicant received a fail or conceded pass (or equivalent) for the Prior Learning;
- h) for incomplete Courses;
- i) where it would conflict with professional accreditation requirements;
- j) for studies completed at another institution while a student was deferred or on a leave of absence from the University of Adelaide unless there were exceptional circumstances approved by the Executive Dean (or delegate).

#### 4.9 Credit that has been granted towards an Award cannot be regranted to a further Award at the University of Adelaide.

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- 4.10 Unless provided for in a Credit Transfer Arrangement or Articulation Agreement, Applicants who have completed an:
- a) AQF Level 5 qualification will normally only be granted Credit at University Level I;
  - b) AQF Level 6 Qualification will normally only be granted Credit up to University Level II.
- 4.11 Applicants who have completed undergraduate Courses may be granted a maximum of 9 units or 25% of the Award (whichever is greater) of Credit towards a postgraduate coursework Program if the completed Courses were at AQF Level 7.

## **5. Assessing and Granting of Applications for Credit**

- 5.1 The University will assess applications for Prior Learning based on the evidence received of such learning.
- 5.2 Credit assessment will be based on equivalence of Learning Outcomes between the Prior Learning and a University of Adelaide Course. Assessment of applications for Credit must consider:
- a) the academic purpose of a Course for which Credit is sought;
  - b) comparability of Learning Outcomes;
  - c) currency and compatibility of the Prior Learning; and
  - d) any professional accreditation requirements.
- 5.3 Where relevant to the particular circumstances of the Program, the assessment approaches may be considered.
- 5.4 Where an Applicant is unable to provide documentary evidence of Prior Learning or applies for Credit based on Informal Learning, the Executive Dean (or delegate) may, at their discretion, allow the Applicant to complete an alternate form of assessment to enable their achievement of the Learning Outcomes to be assessed.
- 5.5 Students moving from an earlier stage of a Nested Award to a later stage at the University will receive full Credit for learning undertaken in the earlier stage, whether or not they have taken out the earlier award.
- 5.6 Credit will only be granted where the University is satisfied:
- a) that it is within the limits permitted by Procedure 4;
  - b) that the Prior Learning completed by the Applicant was of the appropriate level and completed at the appropriate standard;
  - c) that the Credit contributes to specified Learning Outcomes;
  - d) where relevant, that the knowledge gained by the Applicant is current; and
  - e) that all requirements of the Program are fulfilled and that other relevant matters, such as professional accreditation have been considered.

## **6 Approving and Recording Credit**

- 6.1 Where a complete application is submitted within the timeline specified in Procedure 3.4, the Applicant will be formally notified in writing of the outcome within ten business days. This notification will include either the nature and amount of Credit granted or the reasons for not granting Credit.
- 6.2 Where the granting of Credit leads to the shortening of an International Student's Program duration, the University will:
- a) inform the Applicant that the granting of Credit may lead to a shortening of the Program duration which may have implications for their visa;
  - b) issue a new Confirmation of Enrolment.
- 6.3 The availability or granting of Credit does not guarantee admission to a University of Adelaide Program, except where this is included as part of an agreement between the University and another education partner, or as part of a University Pathway Program.

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- 6.4 Where Credit is granted, it will be recorded on the student's transcript.
  - 6.5 When granted Specified Credit, the Applicant will receive the appropriate unit value in Credit towards the completion of their Program and be exempt from the nominated Course.
  - 6.6 When granted Unspecified Credit, the Applicant will receive Credit as specified by the University.
  - 6.7 Credit will not be given a mark or grade and will not be included in the calculation of a Grade Point Average unless it forms part of a formal agreement between the University and another provider, and the other provider's courses and results are available.
  - 6.8 The University will record details of granted Credit into the University credit management system which will create a Credit Precedent valid for five years from the date of entry into the system.
  - 6.9 Credit Precedents may be reviewed at any time. Executive Deans will ensure that Credit Precedents are reviewed at least once every five years. Early review can be triggered by changes to:
    - a) University Program(s);
    - b) Courses or Programs from which the Credit Precedent is derived;
    - c) AQF or other regulatory requirements;
    - d) professional accreditation requirements; or
    - e) the legitimacy or utility of the precedent.

## 7 Post Granting of Credit Matters

- 7.1 Applicants may request that Credit be rescinded.
- 7.2 Any Credit which has been rescinded will not be recorded on the student's transcript and will not be reinstated.
- 7.3 If a student transfers from one Program at the University to another, any Credit approved for the original Program will not necessarily be transferred to the new Program.
- 7.4 Where the granting of Credit causes timetable clashes or logistical problems with study combinations, the University is under no obligation to make individual arrangements for that Applicant.
- 7.5 The University reserves the right to withdraw Credit at any time where it has been granted in error or where it was granted as a result of incorrect, inaccurate, fraudulent or misleading documentation.
- 7.6 An Applicant who is dissatisfied with a decision regarding an application for Credit may lodge an appeal in accordance with the [Student Complaint Resolution Policy](#).

## DEFINITIONS

**Advanced Standing** has the same meaning as 'Credit' for the purposes of this Policy.

**Articulation Agreement** is a formal agreement between the University and a third party that enables students to progress with Credit to a University Program.

**Applicant** is a current or prospective student who is seeking Credit towards a coursework academic Program at the University.

**Credit** is the value assigned for the recognition of achievement of Prior Learning. Credit reduces the volume of new learning required to achieve a University qualification.

**Credit Precedent** is information about prior approved Credit that can be used to inform future Credit assessments and decisions and is an indication to prospective and current students of potential credit application outcomes.



**Credit Transfer Arrangements** is a formal agreement between the University and a third party that provides students with agreed and consistent Credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in learning outcomes.

**Cross Institutional Study** is study at another institution that is concurrent with the Applicant's enrolment at the University.

**Exchange** is study at an overseas University with which the University of Adelaide has a bilateral student exchange agreement, and that is concurrent with the Applicant's enrolment in a Program offered by the University.

**Formal Concurrent Learning** is learning undertaken as part of Exchange, Study Abroad or Cross Institutional Study.

**Formal Learning** is successfully completed units of learning that took place during a structured academic Program which would have or has led to a formally recognised qualification.

**Informal Learning** is, but is not limited to, learning gained during work experience, volunteering, internships and professional learning.

**Nested Micro-credential** is a credit-bearing micro-credential which is designed to meet one or more of the Learning Outcomes of a three-unit Course (or larger).

**Non-Formal Learning** is successfully completed units of learning that took place through a structured Program that did not lead to a formally recognised qualification.

**Prior Learning** is learning that has taken place prior to undertaking a relevant component of a Program that is either Formal Learning, Informal Learning or Non-Formal Learning.

**Recognition of Prior Learning/ RPL** has the same meaning as 'Credit' for the purposes of this Policy.

**Specified Credit** is awarded where Prior Learning can be demonstrated to be equivalent to a University Course.

**Study Abroad** is study at an overseas tertiary education provider with which the University of Adelaide does not have an exchange agreement, and that is concurrent with the Applicant's enrolment in a Program offered by the University.

**Unspecified Credit** is awarded where Prior Learning cannot be demonstrated to be equivalent to a University of Adelaide Course but meets the Program Learning Outcomes.

Other definitions are as contained in the University [Glossary of Terms](#).

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>RMO File No.</b>                         | F. 2022/2608                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Policy Custodian</b>                     | Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Responsible policy officer</b>           | Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Learning)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Endorsed by</b>                          | Academic Board on 3 May 2023                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Approved by</b>                          | Vice-Chancellor and President on 5 May 2023                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Related Documents and Policies</b>       | <a href="#">Coursework Academic Programs Policy</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Related Legislation</b>                  | <a href="#">Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) AQF</a><br><a href="#">Qualifications Pathways Policy</a><br><a href="#">Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</a><br><a href="#">Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000</a><br><a href="#">National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018</a> |
| <b>Effective from</b>                       | 5 May 2023                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Review Date</b>                          | 4 May 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Contact for queries about the policy</b> | Educational Policy & Compliance: <a href="mailto:epc@adelaide.edu.au">epc@adelaide.edu.au</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |