



## RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING AND CREDIT TRANSFER POLICY

<b>Approved By:</b>	Academic Board	Revision: 2.12
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<b>Related Documents:</b>	<a href="#">AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy</a> <a href="#">Justice and Equity Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Grievance Policy</a>	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Registrar	
<b>Review:</b>	Academic Quality Assurance Committee	

Any person who requires assistance in understanding any aspect of this document should contact the Responsible Officer

### 1. Overview

- 1.1. Students may be granted formal recognition of knowledge and skills achieved through previous training, education and experience, and consequent exemption from particular subjects in Tabor's accredited courses.
- 1.2. This policy seeks to be consistent with the **AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy** that aims to "maximise the credit that students can gain for learning already undertaken. It aims to: enhance student progression into and between AQF qualifications; recognise the multiple pathways that students take to gain AQF qualifications and that learning can be formal, non-formal or informal; and support the development of pathways in qualifications design" (*Australian Qualifications Framework, 2nd ed., January 2013, p.77*).
  - 1.2.1. The College will seek to maximise credit for a student but such credit will only be offered when the College can be assured that it will "not impinge upon the integrity of qualification outcomes and discipline requirements, or the responsibility of [the College] to make decisions on admission, prerequisites or programs of study, and the students' likely successful completion of the qualification" (*AQF QPP §2.1.4*).
- 1.3. While RPL and CT are related, and the boundaries between them are often blurred, they are distinguished as alternative pathways to an AQF qualification. This distinction is outlined below:
  - 1.3.1. RPL is an assessment process that assesses the individual's formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification.

- 1.3.2. CT assesses the initial course or subject that the individual is using to claim access to, or the award of credit in, the course being applied for.
- 1.3.3. The key distinguishing characteristic is that it is the student who is assessed in the case of RPL, and the course or subject in the case of CT. That is, in CT the judgement is about the learning program, outcomes and assessment in the initial course or subject.
- 1.4. The obligation remains on the applicant/student to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate their eligibility for RPL or CT.

## 2. Scope and Applications

This policy applies to students wishing to study Higher Education at Tabor.

## 3. Principles

- 3.1. Consistent with the *AQF QPP*, “This policy is underpinned by the principles that pathways: are clear and transparent to students; are systemic and systematic; enable flexible qualification pathways; may be horizontal across AQF qualifications at the same level as well as vertical between qualifications at different levels; can facilitate credit for entry into, as well as credit towards, AQF qualifications; and eliminate unfair or unnecessary barriers for student access to AQF qualifications” (§2).
- 3.2. Subject credit may be granted towards a Tabor course for assessable learning outcomes achieved through formal and/or informal learning, work related experience and/or life experience, to an extent that is consistent with maximising student progression while maintaining established academic standards.
- 3.3. Tabor recognises qualifications and statements of attainment awarded by Registered Training Organisations and TEQSA registered Higher Education Providers. It also recognises any statements and advice provided by the [Department of Education and Training](#) in relation to the equivalency of overseas qualifications.
- 3.4. Academic credit will be granted if the assessor is satisfied that the applicant meets the learning outcomes for course entry or subject credit as required by Tabor’s current accredited curriculum documentation.
- 3.5. An applicant who applies for academic credit on the basis of non-formal education, self-directed learning or previous experience will need to provide appropriate evidence or demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes.
- 3.6. Recognition may be given for studies taken at a lower academic level or in a different field of study. In this case the assessor will determine the amount of academic credit to be given and the extent of bridging work to be undertaken.
- 3.7. A near pass will not be considered successful completion of a subject.
- 3.8. A publically accessible register of formally established pathways for the awarding of CT is published on Tabor’s website. Where possible, applications from similar RTOs or HEPs should receive the same consideration as those identified in the formally established pathways.(Note: *AQF QPP* 2.1.2)

## 4. Procedures

### 4.1. Applications for RPL/CT

- 4.1.1. Applications for RPL and Credit Transfer should be made at the point of application for admission or within the first semester of study. This allows for the study program to be determined early, and avoids the possibility of undertaking a subject unnecessarily. Applications for RPL or CT made later than this may result in the student undertaking additional credits in order to satisfy the rubrics for graduation of a particular course.
- 4.1.2. Applications for academic credit for subjects will not normally be considered for subjects in which applicants are currently enrolled. Where such an application is received, no guarantee can be made that the assessment will be finalised prior to census date.
- 4.1.3. The assessment will be completed and the applicant notified of the outcome in writing within six weeks of receipt of the detailed submission.

### 4.2. Assessors for RPL/CT

- 4.2.1. Deans of Faculties are responsible to ensure the quality of assessment of RPL/CT applications. The actual task of assessment may be delegated to a designated staff member (the Faculty RPL Officer or the Head of Program / Course Coordinator) or to the lecturer(s) responsible for delivering the subject(s) for which recognition is sought.

### 4.3. The Academic Director shall ensure that Assessors are trained in the policy and the procedures for assessing RPL and CT and that all documentation is recorded in a complete and timely manner.

- 4.3.1. All documents supporting an RPL/CT application must be original or certified copies.
- 4.3.2. Where evidence relates to prior study, an official academic transcript must be supplied.
- 4.3.3. All RPL/CT applications need to be signed off by both the assessor and the Dean of Faculty. It will then be stored in the student's file.
- 4.3.4. Within one month of receiving the application the Assessor should return the application and all supporting materials to the Academic Registrar.

### 4.4. In assessing an application, the Assessor should ensure decisions:

- 4.4.1. Are evidence-based, equitable and transparent
- 4.4.2. Are applied consistently and fairly with decisions subject to appeal and review as per the College's Student Grievance Policy
- 4.4.3. Recognise learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided that the learning is relevant and current and contributes to the learning outcomes of the qualification
- 4.4.4. Are academically defensible and take into account the students' ability to meet the learning outcomes of the qualification successfully
- 4.4.5. Are decided in a timely way so that students' access to qualifications is not unnecessarily inhibited
- 4.4.6. Allow for credit outcomes to be used to meet prerequisites or other specified requirements for entry into a program of study leading to a qualification or for the partial fulfilment of the requirements of a qualification
- 4.4.7. Are formally documented for the student including any reasons for not giving credit.

### 4.5. Recording and Notifying Students

The Registrar will ensure that the Student Services Office:

- 4.5.1. Scan relevant evidence supporting the applicant's submission for uploading to the student's file.
- 4.5.2. Files a copy of the RPL outcome notification in the student's file.
- 4.5.3. Records the RPL/CT against the student's record on the student database.
- 4.5.4. Notify the student of the outcome of their application.

#### **4.6. Maximum amounts of Credit**

- 4.6.1. For courses having a volume of learning of two years of equivalent full-time study or greater, students must complete at least the equivalent of one year of full-time study at Tabor in the enrolled course. For courses having a volume of learning of less than two years of equivalent full-time study, students must complete at least one-half of the total credit points at Tabor in the enrolled course.
- 4.6.2. An exception can be made to the maximum amount of credit offered in cases where an articulation agreement is in place or where a Tuition Assurance Scheme event is triggered.
- 4.6.3. An exception can be made to the maximum amount of credit offered in cases where a student has completed subjects as part of incomplete Tabor award within the previous accreditation period. In this case, students can receive up to a maximum of 75% credit towards a currently accredited award providing the course structure and learning outcomes are not compromised, as determined by the Dean of Faculty.

#### **5. Cross Institutional Study**

5.1 An application for cross institutional study will only be approved if:

- the student cannot complete his/her course pathway without cross institutional study; or
- the unit fits within the course pathway and is not available at Tabor.

#### **6. Definitions**

See [Global Definitions](#)

#### **7. Communication / Training**

7.1. This policy will be placed on the Tabor website, and students and persons seeking to enrol will be referred to it.

## Appendix A – Guidance for Assessors

**Exemption:** An exemption is given for a core subject in a course of study, and means that the student does not have to study the subject, but does not receive any credit for it, so it must be replaced by a different subject. An example might be where a student has studied a similar subject elsewhere but has already used their maximum amount of RPL or Credit Transfer. The student would be better served being exempted from the core subject and allowed to study an extra elective. The student's transcript will show the name of the Tabor subject, with Exemption, and no credit points.

**Credit Transfer:** Credit transfer is defined in the AQF as follows:

*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.*

Decisions on credit must ensure that integrity of qualification outcomes is maintained and that there is consistency, fairness and transparency in the decision making process.

CT is given to a student where they have studied a subject at an accredited institution. As long as the subject can fit in the pathway, and maximum credit amounts are not exceeded, CT cannot be refused. If the subject does not fit the pathway and there are no electives in the course (or have already been used), CT does not have to be given. No assessment against learning outcomes is required for CT. If the subject is similar to a Tabor core subject, you would also add in an exemption for that core subject so the student doesn't repeat similar work. No exemption is necessary if the subject is similar to an elective. The student's transcript will show "Credit for Prior Studies" with Credit Granted and the appropriate credit points. If the subject is almost the same as a Tabor subject, so close that you believe the learning outcomes will have been met, you could opt to do a full RPL process.

**Block Credit:** The same as unspecified credit, this applies where a student has completed some studies in a prior award and wishes to gain some credit for these. Essentially the same as Credit Transfer if the prior study was at Higher Ed level. An example would be if a student had done 8 subjects at Flinders at Undergrad level, we might offer them 48 credit points of Block Credit into one of our Bachelor courses, as well as some exemptions from core subjects if the course co-ordinator deemed fit. It can also be offered for VET study, though not subject for subject. It is common to offer 24 credit points of Block Credit on the basis of a Certificate 4 and 48 credit points on the basis of a Diploma. The student's transcript will show "Credit for Prior Studies" with Credit Granted and the appropriate credit points.

**Advanced Standing:** This is basically an overarching term for Credit Transfer, RPL, Block Credit. When a student is offered credit of any kind as they enter into our degree, it is said they have received Advanced Standing into the award.

RPL: Recognition of Prior Learning is granted for a subject where a student has met the learning outcomes of that subject from prior life experience, formal or informal learning. The student is assessed against the learning outcomes of the subject and as such is a more rigorous process than Credit Transfer. The student's transcript will show the name of the Tabor subject, with Credit Granted and the appropriate credit points.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is defined in the AQF as follows:

*Recognition of prior learning is an assessment 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.*

Assessment should be undertaken by academic or teaching staff with expertise in the subject, content or skills area, as well as knowledge of and expertise in RPL assessment and should recognise learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided the learning is relevant to the learning outcomes in the qualification. Evidence provided must be valid, authentic, current and sufficient and the process fair, flexible reliable and valid.

Where an assessor feels that the Learning Outcomes are mainly met, but not fully, 2 options exist;

- 1 – the student could be asked to submit a piece of work that demonstrates the missing learning
- 2 – an exemption could be granted for the unit with 6 (or appropriate) credit points being granted as block credit.

To be discussed with and approved by the Dean of Faculty with a clear justification provided to the Dean.

If an assessor feels that the LO's have not been met to a reasonable degree such that the above is not appropriate and yet for whatever reason they feel it not in the best interest of the student's learning to study the unit, the assessor can grant an exemption for the unit and no block credit, so the student can replace the unit with an elective that better suits the student's required outcome/vocational goals etc.

*Students should not be exempted from units which are integral to their ability to achieve the course Learning Outcomes.*

RPL assessment methods;

- should include reasonable adjustment for the literacy levels, cultural background and experiences of students, and it should not be a proxy for the assessment of skills such as literacy except where these are intrinsic to the learning outcomes of the qualification component
- should address the specific evidence required to demonstrate prior achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment requirements of the particular qualification components for which credit is sought
- should provide a range of ways for individuals to demonstrate that they have met the required outcomes and can be granted credit. These might include:
  - mapping of learning outcomes from prior formal or non-formal learning to the relevant qualification components
  - questioning (oral or written)
  - observation of performance in work based and/or simulated environments

- challenge examinations/assessments
- consideration of third party reports and/or other documentation such as articles, reports, project material, papers, testimonials or other products prepared by the RPL applicant that relate to the learning outcomes of the relevant qualification component
- consideration of a portfolio and review of contents, and
- participation in structured assessment activities that individuals normally would be required to undertake if they were enrolled in the qualification components.