



# **Credit and RPL Policy and Procedure**

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## 1. PURPOSE

This policy and procedure specify the Australis Business School (“Australis”) requirements for the approval of credit for students' prior learning, including the types of credit granted, the types of learning recognised and the procedures for credit approval. This policy and procedure are in accordance with the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training of Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) and the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

## 2. SCOPE

The policy and procedure apply to all enrolled and prospective students at Australis who seek advanced standing based on previous informal and formal learning, and to staff who apply the provisions of the policy and related procedure.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

See the Australis *Glossary of Terms* for definitions.

## 4. POLICY STATEMENT

Australis recognises prior learning and grants credit for that learning where it is current, relevant and equivalent to the learning required for Australis courses and as per this policy and procedure.

In granting credit, Australis does not compromise the integrity of course learning outcomes, graduate capabilities and qualification outcomes. Students granted credit are not disadvantaged in achieving the course qualification or expected learning outcomes for the course, and the integrity of the course and qualification is strictly maintained.

### 4.1 Policy Principles

#### 4.1.1

All existing and prospective students are advised of the arrangements for recognition of prior learning (RPL). This advice clearly defines RPL, the eligibility criteria for RPL and critical dates for RPL application submissions.

#### 4.1.2

Students are advised to submit their credit transfer or RPL application early to provide sufficient time for assessing the application and making the decision before course commencement.

#### **4.1.3**

All applications for RPL must be supported by relevant documentary evidence. Assessment for RPL or credit transfer is evidenced-based and demonstrates the principles of assessment (fair, reasonable, flexible and reliable) and the rules of evidence (valid, sufficient, authentic and current).

#### **4.1.4**

Students seeking recognition of prior academic achievement are assessed on how comparable and equivalent the learning outcomes, the volume of learning, the content, and the learning and assessment approaches are to Australis's courses. An RPL or credit transfer application is only considered if the prior qualification submitted for review is less than five (5) years old.

#### **4.1.5**

Ordinarily a maximum of fifty per cent (50%) of the total number of units in one (1) course can be considered for exemption. Therefore, each student must study a minimum of fifty per cent (50%) of the course to be eligible for the relevant qualification.

#### **4.1.6**

Students receive timely notification of their RPL assessment. However, eligibility for credit does not guarantee a place in any course for which credit may be gained. The student is informed in writing of the outcome of the assessment for credit transfer or RPL. The student may choose not to receive some or all of the credit to which they are entitled.

#### **4.1.7**

No credit is available for partially completed units.

No credit is available for Capstone units not completed at Australis.

On a case-by-case basis, Australis will consider providing credits from relevant standards, such as but not limited to Diploma level placement units as per the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) standard.

## **4.2 Types of Credit**

Australis awards the following forms of credit:

### **4.2.1 Specified credit**

Specified credit is granted based on prior learning deemed equivalent when considering the learning volume, the learning outcomes, the program of study (including content) and the learning and assessment approaches.

### **4.2.2 Unspecified credit**

Ordinarily unspecified credit is only granted with elective units. It is granted based on prior formal learning deemed to be at the right Australia Qualification Framework (AQF) Level with appropriate volume of learning and assessment strategies. Content must be deemed equivalent to an elective option and still meet the overall course learning outcomes. When

approved, unspecified credit is credited against electives within the course and recorded as a credit granted. It cannot be used to meet any prerequisite requirements.

#### **4.2.3 Block credit**

Block credit is granted when a student has completed a formal qualification as part of an approved pathway or formal articulation agreement. The qualification must be equivalent to one offered at Australis. The amount of block credit granted is determined as part of the agreement and will be applied at admission. Block credit exempts a student from completing multiple units – usually specified stages or components of a course – and is recorded as credit against each of those units. It does not recognise that the student has achieved equivalent unit(s) learning outcomes and cannot be used to meet prerequisite requirements. All block credit arrangements are unit to rigorous quality assurance.

#### **4.2.4 Recognition of prior learning**

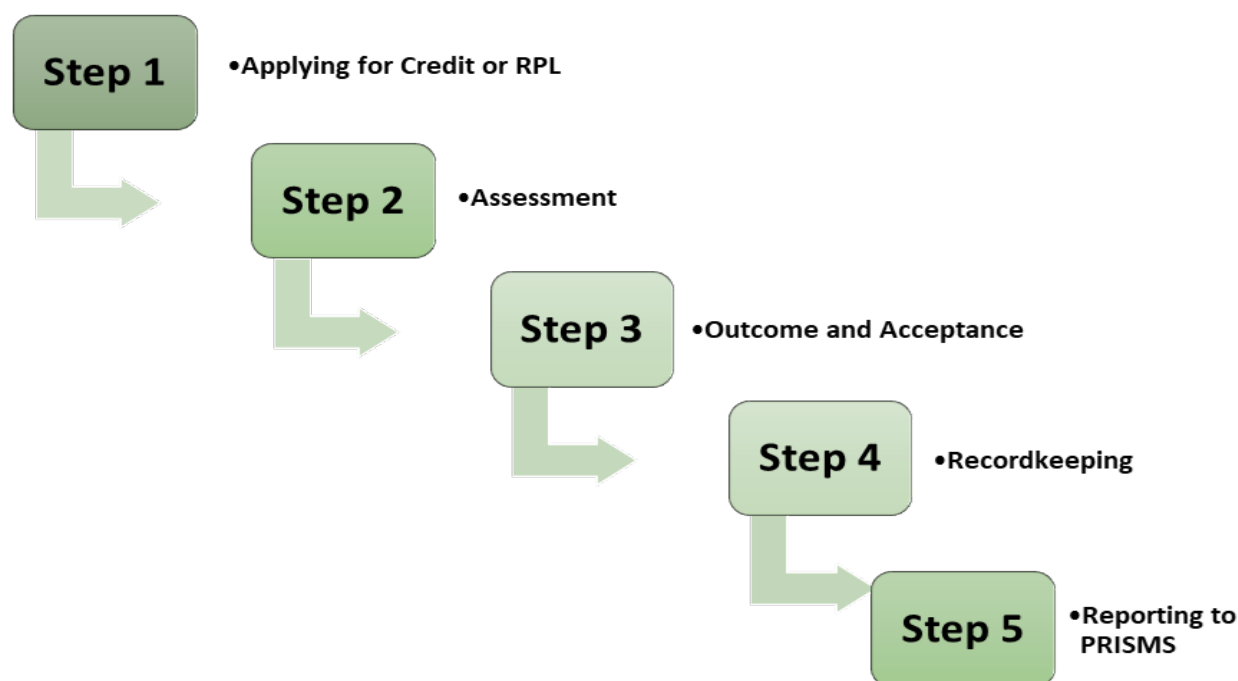
RPL is a form of credit that results from an assessment of an individual's relevant prior informal learning against unit or course learning outcomes.

The HDR Director will consider RPL applications for the Master by Research (MRes) course on a case-by-case basis. RPL applications could be considered for the following:

- Applicants without a AQF Level 7 qualification may be considered for entry if they have demonstrated background educational qualifications (such as a Certificate 4 in Business) with substantial work experience such as 5 years or more of experience as a: Research Analyst, Manager, Supervisor or Business Owner in industry. Such an application would ordinarily be accompanied by a statement outlining how their experience maps to AQF Level 7 skills in a cognate discipline in which Australis has research expertise. Each applicant must provide an outline of his or her anticipated research issue and the anticipated domain they anticipate specialising in.
- For those applicants that already have an AQF Level 7 (or higher) qualification, the following pathways could be considered by the HDR Director:
  - Applicants with an AQF Level 8 qualification, in one of the specified areas of Australis domains with expertise, may be exempted from the first year of the course providing, on application, there is evidence of a well formulated research proposal. Admission to the second year of the course will require the same kind of process for the confirmation of candidature as students completing year 1 of the MRes degree (for details refer to the *HDR Candidate Progress Procedure*).
  - Applicants with an AQF Level 8 qualification in a non-cognate area may be exempted only from the coursework units in Year 1 Semester 1 of the MRes providing they can provide evidence of research preparation or readiness equivalence (e.g. an Honours degree or Postgraduate Diploma).

## 5. PROCEDURE

This procedure describes the process involved when students apply for academic credit based on prior learning and the assessment and granting of a credit at Australis. The procedure sets out the five (5) critical steps involved in assessing a student's application for academic credit and RPL as specified in the flowchart below:



### 5.1 Step 1: Applying for Credit or RPL

Students may apply for academic credit using the Credit and RPL Application Form, available on the Australis website. Students must submit documentation to support claims of prior learning, and the form must be submitted to the Student Administration staff.

Credit or RPL applications must be submitted three (3) weeks before the course commencement date. Australis may accept late applications, but these may not be able to be processed in time for credit or RPL to be granted before the census date. Credit or RPL is only granted where sufficient evidence is provided to prove that the applicant has acquired the knowledge and skills required to meet the outcomes of the course of study.

#### 5.1.1 Formal prior learning evidence

Appropriate evidence to support prior formal learning includes, but is not limited to, certified copies of:

- official academic records
- official academic transcripts
- official testamurs or award qualifications

- institutional handbooks or course guides which include details of the unit's content, learning outcomes and assessment details
- demonstrated equivalence of overseas qualifications to Australian qualifications

Students must ensure that academic transcripts and all other supporting documentation have been translated into English by a qualified translator and certified as true copies.

### **5.1.2 Informal prior learning evidence**

Students seeking RPL for informal prior learning must fill out the Credit and RPL Application Form and provide a statutory declaration as evidence of their work or certified evidence demonstrating that they have acquired the prior learning under the application. The obligation is on the student to supply appropriate evidence.

Appropriate evidence for prior informal learning includes, but is not limited to:

- Verified resumes and referees
- Published journal, reflective papers or portfolios that relate past learning to the learning outcomes of the unit under application
- Examples of the student's work taken from social, community, workplace or other settings
- Letters or testimonials regarding relevant knowledge or skills
- Successful completion of Australis assessments or demonstration of capabilities relevant to the Australis course
- any combination of the above

In addition to the above appropriate evidence examples, for application of RPL to the MRes course, the following appropriate evidence for prior informal learning includes, but is not limited to:

- Published journal articles in cognate areas to the course, reflective papers or portfolios that relate past learning to the learning outcomes of the unit (or course components) under application
- Examples of the student's work taken from social, community, workplace or other settings
- Letters or testimonials regarding relevant knowledge or skills
- Successful completion of Australis assessments or demonstration of capabilities relevant to the Australis MRes course
- Written outline of career trajectory to date and a reasoned case as to why the Australis MRes degree would be instrumental in attaining his or her goals

Ordinarily students for HDR courses should expect to attend an Evidence Verification and Motivation interview as part of the application process.

## 5.2 Step 2: Assessment

The application is assessed to determine eligibility for academic credit and the amount of credit to be approved based on the application type. If the application does not include all the appropriate information, the form is sent back to the student, specifying the missing information. If required, the Admissions Officer checks the Department of Education's Country Profile website for international qualification equivalence.

Completed applications are sent to the Course Co-ordinator (and HDR Director for applications relating to HDR courses) for consideration. The Course Co-ordinator (or HDR Director for applications relating to HDR courses) may assign the verification of evidence and assessment to a Lecturer or a Unit Co-ordinator with appropriate content knowledge to make an informed assessment.

The following factors are considered for assessing an application for the granting of credit:

- the duration of the course
- the requirements, objectives and learning outcomes of a particular unit or course
- the level of entry for the unit or course for which credit is sought
- types and methods of assessment
- real-life experience and practical training as part of the course
- the currency of the course or unit (usually study undertaken more than five (5) years ago is not granted credit)
- the equivalence of overseas qualifications

The duration for assessing credit applications may differ depending on the application's complexity and difficulty. Ordinarily, applications are finalised within three (3) weeks, assuming all necessary evidence has been provided with the application unless exceptional circumstances apply.

## 5.3 Step 3: Outcome and Acceptance

The Course Co-ordinator notifies students of the decision on credit or RPL application in writing within seven (7) working days of receiving an assessment recommendation.

The Course Co-ordinator records the decision on the application form and notifies the Student Administration of the outcomes of the credit application so that exemptions are recorded on the student's file.

The student is asked to respond in writing to notify Australis of whether they accept the decision or wish to appeal.

If the application is successful, the notification (provided to the student in writing) outlines the course duration to indicate whether the study duration has been reduced. The Course Co-ordinator also notifies the Admissions Officer of the credit outcome so that exemptions can be recorded on the student's file.

## **5.4 Step 4: Record-keeping**

The student management system is updated with the outcome of the academic credit or RPL application. The Admission Officer or Student Administration updates the student management system with the credit approved, reducing the total number of credit points needed for the student to complete the course of study.

In accordance with the National Code requirements, if Australis grants RPL or course credit to an international student, a written record of the decision will be provided to the student. The student must acknowledge and accept the decision in writing. Australis will retain this written record of acceptance for a period of two years after the student ceases to be an accepted student at Australis.

## **5.5 Step 5: Reporting to PRISMS**

Where an international student has accepted an offer of credit or RPL and paid the required deposit fees, they are issued with a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) specifying a reduced duration due to the credit approval. Current students who have applied for and are granted advanced standing may require a new CoE. Where credit is granted after the issue of a visa, Australis reports the change of course duration via PRISMS.

# **6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **6.1 Academic Board**

The Academic Board reviews and approves this policy and procedure.

## **6.2 Marketing and Student Recruitment**

The Marketing and Student Recruitment team is responsible for advising applicants about this policy and procedure.

## **6.3 Course Co-ordinator / HDR Director**

The Course Co-ordinator has due regard for Australis's academic standards, promptness in processing applications, equity principles and consistency of application of the policy and procedure. The Course Co-ordinator (or HDR Director for applications relating to HDR courses) determines the amount of credit granted for prior study or work experience.

## **6.4 Student Administration**

The Admission Officer or Student Administration updates the student management system with the outcome of the academic credit or RPL application.

## 7. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Students have the right to make a complaint or appeal a decision on academic credit under the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure* if they believe the decision is inconsistent with the rules outlined in this policy and procedure.

## 8. Related Documents, External References and Version Control

### 8.1 Related/Referenced Documents

- Admission and Student Selection Policy and Procedure
- Equity and Diversity Policy
- Marketing and Student Recruitment Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Student Enrolment and Enrolment Variation Policy and Procedure
- Student Orientation and Transition Policy and Procedure

### 8.2 Related Legislation and External References

- Higher Education Standards Framework 2021
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2021
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)
- National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code)

### 8.3 Version Control

Version	Date	Reviewed/approved by	Key notes/changes
0.1	25/08/22	Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)	Reviewed by the LTC. First draft of the policy was tabled and discussed.
0.2	01/09/22	LTC	Reviewed by the LTC. Minor grammatical and formatting changes. Individual definitions taken out and a reference to the <i>Glossary of Terms</i> inserted.
0.3	27/09/22	Academic Board (AB)	Reviewed by the AB. Block credit elaborated.
0.4	25/10/22	AB	Reviewed and approved by the AB. Minor editorial and formatting changes.
0.5	16/08/23	AB/Dean/CEO	Discussed by the AB and updated by Dean/CEO to reflect the Expert Reviewer, Phil Hancock's, suggestion to add to the assessment under section 5.2...

			"requirements, objectives and learning outcomes of a particular unit or course".
0.6	22/07/24	AB	Reviewed and approved by AB after campus address updated and reference to the ESOS Act and National Code added
0.7	26/07/24	BoD	Reviewed and approved at the BoD 26/07/24 meeting
0.8	13/09/24	AB	Reviewed and approved at the AB 13/09/24 meeting
0.9	16/09/24	BoD	Reviewed and approved at the BoD 16/09/24 meeting
1.0	30/09/24	AB	Reviewed and approved at the 30/09/24 AB meeting
1.1	01/10/24	BoD	Reviewed and approved at the 01/10/24 BoD meeting
1.2	25/11/24	Higher Degree Research (HDR) Director	HDR considerations added
1.3	29/11/24	HDRC meeting	Updated section 4.2.4 Recognition of prior learning and 5.1.2 Informal prior learning evidence.
1.4	05/12/24	AB	Reviewed and approved at the 05/12/24 AB meeting
1.4	06/12/24	BoD	Reviewed and approved at the 06/12/24 BoD meeting

## 8.4 Document Review

To be reviewed at least every five (5) years from the date of final approval.