

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

1. Background

Gateway Business College (GBC) is dedicated to ensuring students are able to access higher education through a variety of alternative pathways and this policy provides the framework from which to identify students' prior learning experiences and standardise the various types of prior learning when awarding academic credit.

Students may be entitled to credit for prior learning, whether formal or informal. Formal learning can include previous study in higher education, vocational education, or adult and community education. Informal learning can include on the job learning or various kinds of work and life experience. Credit can reduce the amount of study needed to complete a degree.

2. Purpose

This policy establishes the framework from which to recognise both formal and informal learning applicants to GBC may have previously completed as part of a course's entry requirements. It aims to ensure the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) procedures are transparent, fair and consistent and the prior learning assessments preserve the integrity of the course and qualification for which prior learning credit is awarded. The policy should be read in conjunction with the *Admissions Policy*.

3. Scope

This policy applies to students enrolled at GBC and prospective students applying for course admission to GBC.

4. Definitions

Academic Board: the Academic board is responsible for academic governance at GBC. The Academic Board reports and advises the Corporate Governance Board on academic activity. This board oversees academic activities such as teaching, learning, scholarship, research, course approval, student outcomes, academic standards and academic policy.

Course Monitoring Committee: the committee with delegated authority from the Academic Board to monitor academic data and trends, and report advice to Academic Board. This includes assessing academic appeals, and cases of RPL and award credit for prior learning.

Credit points: points allocated for successful completion of a subject. A student must complete a predetermined number of credit points to be awarded their degree.

Formal learning: learning acquired through a structured program of learning and assessment that results in part or in full to the attainment of a formally recognized qualification.

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Informal learning: learning acquired outside a formally structured program.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL): A process used to assess an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit that may be granted towards completion of a qualification.

Glossary of common admission-related terms and their meaning: (insert link)

The common admission-related terms and definitions have been committed to by Australian higher education providers, tertiary admission centres and other related bodies, to ensure consistency in the presentation of admission requirements across courses and institutions.

Advanced standing: A form of credit for any previous learning (Australian Qualifications Framework definition) – see also the definitions for “credit transfer” and “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 (Australian Qualifications Framework definition).

5. Principles

5.1 Application

GBC will advise prospective students of the arrangements for recognition of prior learning in a student's offer of enrolment. This advice will clearly define what RPL is, the eligibility criteria for RPL, and key dates for RPL application submissions.

All applications for RPL must be supported by relevant documentary evidence. Students will receive timely notification of their RPL assessment from the Course Monitoring Committee.

Eligibility for credit does not guarantee a place in any course for which credit may be gained.

5.2 Assessment of RPL applications

Assessment of RPL will be evidence-based, and its processes will be equitable, transparent, and accountable to maintain the integrity of the course in which credit for prior learning is awarded.

RPL must map an applicant's knowledge, skills and professional work experience to the key learning outcomes of the subject for which they are claiming RPL. RPL may be used to meet the entry requirements for a course as an alternative to completing the proscribed formal entry requirements, and/or gain credit towards a course or qualification. Students who receive credit for prior learning must not be disadvantaged in achieving the key learning outcomes of the course in which credit for prior learning is sought.

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5.3 Types of Credit awarded in recognition of prior learning

Block Credit

Block credit is granted as a specific number of subjects and may be granted on the basis of prior learning judged to be comparable to part of a given course. Block credit, sometimes referred to as "articulation credit" is often granted where formal agreements exist (e.g. students who completed VET diplomas may gain credit for the first year or part of the first year of a degree program)

Unspecified Credit

Unspecified Credit may be granted when an applicant's previous learning is evaluated as being at a suitable standard and level for an elective component of the course.

Specified Credit

Specified Credit may be granted when an applicant's previous learning is evaluated as fulfilling the defined learning outcomes for a specific subject in a course of study. Specified Credit may be applied to core or elective subjects.

5.4 Relevance

Prior learning will be approved for the awarding of block credit, unspecified and specified credit where there is evidence that:

- The applicant has attained a standard and quality of learning equivalent to that required in the relevant GBC course.
- The applicant can document the successful completion of previous study.
- The prior learning is evaluated as relevant and appropriate in content, breadth, depth, and discipline.

5.5 Currency

Previous learning that has occurred within ten years of a recognition of prior learning application will be accepted as current. Any appeals for recognition of prior learning more than ten years old may be submitted for review and approval by the relevant Course Coordinator.

5.6 Quality Assurance

GBC must protect the integrity of its courses and awards by ensuring:

- The evaluation of prior learning for credit transfer is evidence-based and ensures that the appropriate learning outcomes have been demonstrated.
- Credit awarded for a course of study was granted at a recognised provider, which was not achieved under a recognition of prior learning application from an additional external provider.
- Credit transfer previously awarded by another institution cannot be further transferred.
- Credit awarded on the base of previous learning is only awarded for completed subjects where the final grade is the equivalent of a Pass grade or higher.
- Any staff involved in the decision of an RPL application is free from conflict of interest, as per the *Conflict of Interest Policy*.

5.7 Limits on Credit

- The maximum value of credit that can normally be granted towards an undergraduate award on the basis of prior learning is one-third of the required total credit point value of the course towards which the credit is granted.

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- academic credit granted on the basis of prior learning may only be granted towards subjects in years one or two of a bachelor degree.
- A student who is permitted to transfer from one course at GBC to another may transfer credit for all subjects completed in the previous course subject to the rules and any policies applying to the course into which the student is transferring provided the student enrolls in and completes at least one subject in the new course.

6. Procedures

6.1 Qualification for Recognition of Prior Learning

Applicants may apply for RPL in cases where they can demonstrate significant experience and/or knowledge of the subject(s) for which they are applying for RPL. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Equivalent prior study
- Professional experience within their proposed field of study which demonstrates achievement of the relevant learning outcomes

6.2 Documentation Required for Recognition of Prior Learning Applications

The application must clearly state whether the requested RPL will be used to gain entry into a course, gain credit towards a course, or both. It must include a detailed description of the learning upon which the application is based and clearly identify the knowledge, skills and experience acquired in prior learning.

Applications for RPL must include supporting documentation, which may include:

- A detailed CV
- Professional references
- Academic Transcripts
- Certificates, reports, testimonials or affidavits relating to the applicant's learning, skills, competency or knowledge
- Certified copies of certificates and diplomas

6.3 Assessment of Recognition of Prior Learning

The Course Monitoring Committee will administer RPL credits and has delegated responsibility from the Academic Board to make RPL decisions.

The Course Monitoring Committee will undertake assessment of the applications based only on the information provided by the applicant in their RPL application.

The Committee may seek further information from the applicant at their discretion, and/or may invite the applicant for an interview about any of the information provided in their application.

The applicant may be required, at the committee's discretion, to undertake further examination or practical assessment to determine their competency within the discipline for which they have applied for RPL.

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6.4 Approval of Recognition of Prior Learning

Credit granted to a student for prior learning will be recorded as 'credit granted through recognition of prior learning' on their academic record. For undergraduate courses, credit granted for prior learning must not exceed one third of the overall credit to be gained in the course upon successful completion.

The result of an RPL application will be communicated to the student in writing, and a record of the application and outcome will be kept.

6.5 Recording Decisions

Credit precedent list

A credit precedent records a decision to grant Recognition of Prior learning with the aim of applying that decision to subsequent comparable cases. All decisions on credit transfer to be used as precedents, including those of non-approval, must be recorded in a credit precedent list.

The purpose of a credit precedent list is

- to aid consistency and efficiency of decision-making; and
- to assist prospective students to assess the amount of credit, if any, that they are likely to receive on admission to an award course.

6.6 Appeals

Students who wish to appeal a decision made by the Course Monitoring Committee may do so in accordance with the *Students Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

6.7 Compliance and Breaches

GBC may commence applicable disciplinary procedures if an individual to whom this policy applies breaches it or any of its allied procedures.

7. Records

Records associated with this policy will be maintained according to the Records Management Policy.

8. Related legislation

- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011
- TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
- The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code 2018)

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9. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years, or more frequently should the Board deem it necessary.

Version Control

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