



Document: Advanced Standing and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure		
Approved by: Academic Board	Version: 1.4	Date 21.6.2016

1. Overview

WIN 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.

Granting advanced standing for prior learning ensures that students commence study at a level that appropriately recognises their prior learning experiences, and are not required to repeat equivalent learning successfully undertaken in another context. Credit for previous studies or skills (including articulation, recognition of prior learning and credit arrangements) must be consistent with the Qualification Standards and must preserve the integrity of the higher education award to which it applies.

Wentworth Institute ("WIN") is committed to develop open and accessible guidelines to grant advanced standing (credit) for learning that is relevant, current and equivalent to the learning required for WIN's academic programs and courses, whether that learning be from formal studies or professional work experience.

WIN's policy on the granting of credit is based on the following broad principles:

- WIN will recognise prior learning, and grant credit for that learning, provided it is relevant, current and equivalent to the learning required for WIN's academic programs and courses, and in accordance with this policy.
- Determining equivalence requires academic judgement based on appropriate evidence provided by the student of the prior learning.
- Giving credit should not compromise the integrity of qualification outcomes and discipline requirements.
- This policy and any related procedures will be consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

2. Granting of credit

2.1 General

- Entry to WIN's courses is based on specific published entry criteria and decisions regarding student selection will be in accordance with *Student Selection and Admissions Policy and Procedure*.
- An offer of credit does not guarantee admission into a specific course.
- The assessment of the amount of credit to be granted in particular courses shall be determined by the Course Coordinator within the framework of this policy and must be reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee.

- Regardless of the credit granted, the requirements of each course must be fulfilled.
- Credit will be granted for specified subjects in a course of study as long as the integrity of the higher education award is preserved.
- Candidates for an award from WIN are required to complete a minimum amount of the course through WIN. The total credit granted for prior learning external to WIN shall not exceed 50% of the total credit points required for the award toward which credit is sought. The 50% may comprise a mixture of credit for formal study and credit for work experience, however no more than 25% credit will be granted for learning from relevant and documented work experience.
- Credit granted for a specific course cannot automatically be transferred from one course to another.

2.2 Credit for formal studies

- Credit will not normally be granted for formal study completed more than five years prior to application unless there is evidence of continued relevance of this study for the course towards which credit is sought.
- Credit may be granted for the successful completion of:
 - units of learning which form part of a structured academic program which would lead to either:
 - * an AQF higher education award or international equivalent; or
 - * an AQF Diploma or Advanced Diploma, provided the student has completed the program as well as the unit;
 - units of learning that take place through a structured program that did not lead to a formally recognised qualification
 - non-award courses offered by a recognised higher education institution;
 - accredited courses with a vocational training provider;
 - courses provided by a professional association or other similar body;
 - training delivered by employers or other similar training.
- Credit shall be granted where there is a demonstrable correlation with content and/or learning outcomes of the WIN subject for which credit is claimed.
- When assessing credit for formal studies the following will be taken into account:
 - the general educational practices and standards of the provider(s) or any accreditation obtained by such provider that may be relevant to the course under consideration;
 - the objectives of the particular course and the methods adopted to achieve those objectives;
 - admission requirements to the course;
 - the duration of the course, having regard to entry requirements and course objectives;
 - the breadth, depth and balance in the course material involved and the intellectual effort required;
 - the methods and content of assessment;
 - the relative emphasis on the teaching of skills in relation to the study of the discipline;

- any arrangements for practical training and experience as part of the course.

2.3 Credit for learning from work experience

- Credit may be granted for work experience, volunteering, internships or workplace training where that learning can be documented to the satisfaction of the Course Coordinator that it upholds the integrity of the higher education award to which it applies. The onus shall be on the applicant to provide appropriate evidence or demonstrate the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding that are inherent in the relevant higher education award. NB This may require a student to undertake tasks to enable their learning outcomes to be assessed.
- The maximum credit that can be granted for learning from work experience is 25% of the total credit points required for the course toward which credit is sought.
- When assessing credit for work experience, the following will be taken into account:
 - Authenticity - the applicant has actually demonstrated the learning outcomes that are being claimed;
 - Currency - the learning outcomes are still valid and performable;
 - Quality - the learning has reached the acceptable level;
 - Relevance - the learning is applicable to the subject claimed;
 - Transferability - the learning outcome can be applied outside the specific context in which it was learned;
 - Comparability - the prior learning is comparable in content and standard with the subject(s) in which credit is sought.

2.4 Credit transfer

- Credit transfer may be granted when a student has completed subjects while undertaking a course with WIN and wishes to transfer to another course.
- Credit will be granted for those subjects already undertaken which form part of the course into which the student is transferring.
- The maximum credit that can be granted in these circumstances is not limited.

3. Applications

An application for advanced standing or credit transfer must be made on the appropriate form at the time of application for admission to a course. The application should be accompanied by sufficient documentary evidence to support the application.

Assessment of the application will be undertaken by the Course Coordinator who will advise the applicant in writing of the result of their application. A record of any credit granted will be signed by the Course Coordinator and the student and placed on the student's file.

It is the intention of this policy that students should be advised of the credit that is offered at the time they accept a place in a course.

All decisions of the Course Coordinator in relation to the granting of credit will be reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee.

Specified credit: Specified credit will be awarded when prior learning achieves expected learning outcomes equivalent to those achieved in a course offered at WIN and the integrity of the program in which it is offered is maintained.

Unspecified credit: Unspecified credit will be awarded for work from another institution that is of a similar standard to work at WIN, but for which there is no direct course equivalent.

4. International students

If the applicant is an international student applying for a study visa the following applies:

- Where credit is granted before the issue of a visa, the actual course duration in the eCoE issued to the student will be reduced.
- Where credit is granted after the issue of a visa, WIN will report the change of course duration to the DIBP via PRISMS.

If an international student is granted credit that shortens their course, it remains a visa condition that they continue to study full-time.

5. Articulation agreements

WIN may enter into agreements with other tertiary education institutions to provide graduates of specific courses offered by that institution credit for particular subjects which form part of an institution course. In order to assess the quantum of credit which may be awarded, WIN will map the specified learning outcomes for the course provided by the institution against the learning outcomes of subjects within the relevant Institute course. Advanced standing for a subject within a WIN course will only be granted where there is a substantial match against the learning outcomes of that subject.

Advanced standing will only be provided under the articulation agreement for specific subjects - there will be no unspecified or block credit.

Evidence of the mapping of the learning outcomes of the external course against the WIN course underpinning the development of the articulation agreement will be considered by the Teaching and Learning Committee which will advise Academic Board. Only the Academic Board can approve articulation agreements on consideration of advice from the Teaching and Learning Committee.

6. Appeals

A student may appeal against a decision on the award of credit. The grounds for appeal are that the decision is inconsistent with this policy. Appeals must be made in writing and lodged with the Dean within ten working days of the student receiving written notification of the decision. The Dean will respond to the appeal within twenty working days and may confirm or vary the decision. All decisions of the Dean in relation to appeals will be reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee.

If a student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal against a decision regarding the award of credit they may utilise WIN's grievance handling procedures.

7. Related documentation

Advanced Standing/Credit Transfer Application Form

APPENDIX 1

AVCC POLICY GUIDELINES ON CROSS-SECTOR QUALIFICATION LINKAGES

Section 1 Preamble

The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) supports the development of closer connections between Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education. The development of structured arrangements to link qualifications across the sectors represents a key process in building closer inter-sectoral relationships.

Qualification linkages enable individual learners to move from one qualification to another in more efficient and effective learning pathways. Qualification linkages also provide a mechanism for creating a more open, accessible and relevant tertiary education system and a vehicle for implementing lifelong learning.

The term 'cross-sector qualification linkage' is used deliberately to identify the scope of the Policy Guidelines as any formal connection between qualifications issued within VET and higher education. These connections may be based on articulation and credit transfer arrangements and the current standard credit model developed by the AVCC but also extend to newer models of integrated cross-sectoral qualifications linkages.

The Policy Guidelines support a diversity of organisational models for forging linkages from individual partnerships between institutions to state-wide VET partnerships with individual higher education institutions to consortia models and national arrangements between Industry Training Advisory Boards and partner universities

The Guidelines have been developed with particular attention to reforms in the VET sector involving the introduction of Training Packages and the Australian Recognition Framework.

These Policy Guidelines relate to formal linkages between qualifications across sectors.

These AVCC Policy Guidelines replace the guidelines on articulation and credit transfer included in the existing AVCC policy (December 1993).

Section 2 Objectives of the Policy Guidelines

These Guidelines have been developed to provide the organisations involved in determining structured cross-sector qualification linkages with a framework to guide and facilitate these arrangements.

The Guidelines are also designed to provide students and other interested individuals and organisations with information about these processes to assist understanding and clarify pathways and outcomes.

The Guidelines are based on acceptance of and support for a diverse set of arrangements and models for linking qualifications across the sectors. Different models have different strengths and reflect differing needs and contexts. The intent is to encourage a diversity of approach.

Specific Objectives of the Policy Guidelines

These Guidelines have been developed to:-

- *provide advice* at the national level on developing cross-sector linkages between qualifications
- *assist organisations* involved in developing structured cross-sector qualification linkages by identifying key processes, models and approaches
- *promote the continuing development* of diverse structured cross-sector qualification linkages by organisations
- *facilitate* the establishment of *diverse educational and training pathways* for individuals participating in tertiary education
- *give effect to lifelong learning.*

Section 3 General Principles

1. Nationally registered qualifications provide an agreed framework for designing, developing and issuing recognised qualifications within Australia and for supporting linkages between these qualifications.
2. Individual qualifications set the benchmarks for establishing linkages. In higher education, individual universities determine qualifications content and accredit their own courses. In VET, qualifications are based on competencies and established through industry defined Training Packages and/or through accredited courses developed by State Recognition Authorities and Registered Training Organisations.
3. Cross-sectoral qualification linkages are critical to the achievement of a more efficient, open, integrated and relevant education system that can meet the challenge of rapidly changing needs and priorities for knowledge and skill development, including continuous skilling and lifelong learning.
4. In addition to providing more efficient pathways between qualifications, cross-sector qualification linkages should seek to add value to the learning outcomes for students through development of different approaches to qualification structures.
5. Cross-sector qualification linkages can be established between any of the qualification titles in the AQF, not only between proximate qualifications such as the Advanced Diploma and Bachelor Degree and can take a variety of forms including sequential and concurrent studies. Appropriate care is to be exercised to avoid combinations of qualifications that are not justified.
6. Qualification linkages may be focused on a VET to higher education learning pathway or a higher education to VET learning pathway.
7. Qualification linkages should incorporate admission arrangements in a transparent way, as part of the agreed arrangements.
8. Where appropriate and relevant, linkages between qualifications should identify credit relationships between one qualification and another. Not all qualification linkages will involve granting credit for previous qualifications.
9. Where credit arrangements are established through a structured qualification linkage, the credit should be awarded to individuals who have evidence of

achievement without the need for further assessment or demonstration of the relevant knowledge/skills.

10. The decision to develop qualification linkages is a matter for individual authorised organisations to determine in collaboration with each other.
11. Information about qualification linkages should be widely disseminated to students as part of enrolment information.

Section 4 Operational Advice

Developing linkages between qualifications

- Linkages should define transparent and coherent relationships between the qualifications.
- Linkages will generally be developed between qualifications involving the same, similar or complementary specialisations/fields of study.
- Arrangements reflecting linkages between general and specialised qualifications may also be developed, where appropriate.
- Linkages should reflect and recognise different education and training pathways for achievement.

Processes for developing qualification linkages

- Structured qualification linkages can be established through a number of processes. These include:
 - Articulation of existing awards
 - Credit transfer between components of existing awards
 - Integrated dual-sector sequential awards
 - Integrated dual sector-concurrent programs
- Each of these processes is suited to different purposes and circumstances. Integrated dual-sector awards provide for linkages to be considered as part of the qualification development process, articulation provides a sequential pathway between qualifications whilst credit transfer provides a means of linking individual components of existing awards.
- Where credit transfer is applied, consideration needs to be given as to whether full or partial credit transfer is granted. This will depend on the field or area and the relationship between the university subjects/subjects and the specific requirements of the competencies in the VET qualification.
- In a dual-sector award, credit arrangements should be identified as part of the agreed structure of the award.

Basis of determining the qualification linkage

- Linkages are generally based on a content relationship in which parts of one qualification are recognised as having equivalence with or are integrated into another qualification.
- Some linkages may also be based on acceptance of agreed relativities between different levels of qualifications. These linkages may also involve content interrelationships.

Content equivalence

- Linkages that are determined through a content relationship are established primarily through identification and assessment of same, similar or complementary knowledge and skill requirements across the linked qualifications.
- The instrument used to establish the content linkage is the relevant components of the Training Package, and/or accredited course curriculum (in qualifications recognised outside Training Packages), which are related to and assessed against the learning objectives and/or subject/subject descriptions of the relevant higher education qualifications.

Linkages using Training Package qualifications

- In Training Package derived qualifications, competencies should be used as the instruments to identify content equivalences with higher education qualifications. Training Package Support Materials, including the learning strategies and assessment materials, can also be used as additional tools to identify the linkage, where these materials will more clearly assist in identifying the relationships between the VET qualification and the higher education qualification.
- Where competencies are used directly as the linkage instrument, the whole content of the competency needs to be considered to ensure all knowledge and skills relevant to the linkage have been identified. A key aspect of the competency to be considered is the Evidence Guide.
- Where Learning strategies are used as an additional instrument, the relationship between these materials and the competencies that define the qualification in the Training Package needs to be clearly evident.

Linkages using accredited courses

- Where the qualifications in VET are based on accredited courses, a content linkage should be determined by comparing the modules of the VET curriculum against the subject/subject content of the higher education courses.
- All content-based linkages will be assisted by clear identification in the relevant higher education qualifications of expected learning outcomes and individual subject/subject descriptions.

Linkages based on agreed relativities between qualifications

- Linkages that incorporate an agreed connection and credit value between awards are suited to articulation and dual qualification arrangements that establish a sequential or concurrent pathway, particularly between Diploma level qualifications and Bachelor Degrees.
- These linkages are usually predicated on an accepted equivalence in content across a similar field or discipline between the linked awards.

Guide to credit levels

- The following linkage relationships are identified as a guide in developing articulation arrangements and dual award qualifications in the same fields between Diploma and Bachelor qualifications:-
 - 50% credit for an Advanced Diploma when linked to a three year Bachelor degree
 - 37.5% credit for an Advanced Diploma when linked to a four year Bachelor degree
 - 33% credit for a Diploma when linked to a three year Bachelor degree
 - 25% credit for a Diploma when linked to a four year Bachelor degree.

Application of the linkage

- The specific organisation(s) involved in the linkage process will determine which process to use in determining a linkage.
- It is accepted that differing credit outcomes may be established to reflect the differing requirements of individual awards.
- Linkages only have application between the agreed parties.

Responsibility for developing qualification linkages

- Responsibility for developing qualification linkages, between VET and higher education and higher education and VET is the responsibility of universities in partnership with:
 - individual Registered Training Organisations
 - Training Package Developers
 - State Training Authorities.

Responsibility for endorsement and maintenance

- The formal endorsement of a linkage should be given by the institution/authority responsible for issuing the destination qualification.
- Maintenance of the linkage is the responsibility of the partnership organisations.
- A Training Package Endorsement and/or Review and/or course accreditation in VET or a restructuring of the higher education qualification is the catalyst for review of linkage arrangements.

Credit outcomes

- Where Credit is an outcome of the formal linkage, it is standardised, that is, the quantum of credit is predetermined as part of the linkage process. The quantum of standardised credit in qualification linkages will vary with each linkage and is dependent upon the level of agreed overlap and equivalence and the agreed relationships between awards.

Factors impacting on credit

- Credit should not be conditional on students meeting other substituted requirements in order to make up a 'normal load'.
- Individuals who have completed part of the relevant previous award may be entitled to receive credit for the specific components they have achieved. Restraints on credit may be employed where there is a significant time elapse between achievement of the qualification/part qualification and an application for credit in the destination qualification.

Forms of credit

- Credit can be granted in different forms. These include specified credit, unspecified credit and block credit. The form of credit will depend on the circumstances and context. Variables may include:-
 - the linkage process
 - the qualification levels being linked
 - the discipline areas.
- As a general guide:
 - specified credit is most relevant to credit transfer based linkages based on specific content linkages, ie module Y in VET is equivalent to Subject X in higher education
 - specified credit is also the most appropriate form for incomplete qualifications
 - unspecified credit is most appropriate to articulation arrangements based on agreed relative value of awards being linked and/or linkages between generic qualifications
 - unspecified credit taken as a block is most appropriate in dual and nested awards.

Provision of information to individuals

- Organisations involved in establishing structured qualification linkages, with or without credit, should disseminate information on their arrangements via Faculty Handbooks, Websites and through State/Territory Admissions Centres.
- Information about linkages should include advice that indicates the existence of a pathway/linkage between qualifications does not imply automatic entry into the destination qualification. However, if admission is part of the agreement, this should be clearly stated.

- Information on linkages should clearly indicate, where appropriate, whether the meeting of additional requirements (such as bridging courses) designed to provide prerequisite knowledge or skills not included in the original qualification is a condition of the pathway/linkage.
- Information about linkages which involve the applicant incurring costs should indicate whether, and in what form, such costs will be recovered

Appeal mechanisms

- An effective means of appeal should be established in each institution in relation to credit transfer/articulation decisions. In the VET sector, the Australian Quality Training Framework provides for investigation of complaints.