

# Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Version number	2
Approved by	Academic Board
Date of approval	16/09/2019

## Purpose

Sydney Institute of Higher Education (SI) is committed to enabling student access to higher education through a range of pathways that maintain the integrity of SI programs. This includes through recognition of prior formal learning. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) must be applied through a consistent process that promotes and protects the integrity and quality of SI's higher education degrees.

This *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy* sets out the principles underpinning the RPL process at SI. It outlines the process of applying for RPL and SI assessment of RPL applications.

## Scope

This policy applies to students applying for entry to a higher education program at SI, and all positions and bodies at SI involved in admissions and assessment of recognition of prior learning applications.

## Principles

All SI higher education programs will comply with the quality and integrity standards of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015*.

*Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)* will occur through a transparent, fair, and accountable process.

The RPL process may be applied in order to:

- Meet the prerequisites of a program and thus be eligible for admission
- Meet selected progression requirements of a program and thus gain credit for the program.

To maintain the integrity and quality of SI's higher education degrees, SI must ensure that:

- Credit for RPL is granted on the basis of evidence
- Credit granted is academically defensible and take into account the students' ability to meet the learning outcomes or competencies inherent in the qualification
- Credit applications are dealt with equitably and in a transparent process
- Credit is applied consistently and fairly with decisions subject to appeal and review
- Credit decisions are decided in a timely way so that students' access to qualifications is not unnecessarily inhibited, and
- Credit decisions are formally documented (including reasons for not giving credit, where

applicable)

Credit will only be granted if

- Granting credit will not disadvantage the student in terms of achieving the program learning outcomes and
- the integrity of the program of study and the qualification is maintained

The RPL process does not guarantee entry into a program at SI.

SI reserves the right not to recognise part or all of a student's prior learning where it is not deemed equivalent, or where the transfer is prohibited by degree accreditation rules.

Where certified documents are required, these documents must be certified in accordance with *SI's Certification Guidelines*.

## Procedures

### *RPL Applications*

- Recognition of Prior Learning applications should demonstrate prior study in a relevant field. The prior study must be from an accredited Australian Higher education institution or a foreign institution listed in the AEI NOOSR Country Education Profiles.

Requests for credit must include copies of academic transcripts and any other documentation required by SI.

SI will not consider requests for credit that do not include the required information and documentation.

When applying for credit based on formal learning, students must complete all required forms and provide:

- an AQF qualification testamur issued by an accredited institution, or
- an official academic transcript issued by an accredited institution, or
- a statement of attainment issued by an accredited institution, or
- an overseas qualification issued by an institution listed in the AEI NOOSR Country Education Profiles, and
- a syllabus copy detailing the learning outcomes and assessments of the unit(s) undertaken.

All supporting documents must be in English and be certified copies unless SI sights the original.

### *Assessing RPL applications*

The *Admissions Committee* is a permanent committee, consisting of the Dean and the relevant Program Director for each program. The *Admissions Committee* will assess the application using only the information provided in the application, or provided by the prospective student on request. The *Admissions Committee* shall maintain a register of prior decisions which it shall consult for the means of ensuring consistency of decisions.

Credit will be awarded based on equivalency of successfully completed prior formal learning to one or more units within a qualification, taking into account all of the factors listed under Principles.

The final decision will be recorded and stored in accordance with the *Data and Records Integrity Policy*.

Students will be advised, in writing, of the outcome of their application within 10 working days of their application. If an application is rejected, either entirely or in part, the notification to the student will include the reasons for not awarding credit and the avenues they may take to appeal the decision.

### ***Rescinding Credit***

Credit granted to a student may be rescinded:

- At the request of the student
- Where an error has been made in assessing the application
- Where the documentation provided by the applicant has been shown to be incomplete, misleading or invalid (in which case the relevant misconduct policy may apply)

### ***Limits to Credit granted***

- Credit will only be awarded for whole units. SI will not grant credit for partial units.
- Where credit is granted on the basis of formal learning, the total value of credit granted cannot exceed the total credit value of the original units.
- Credit will only be granted where the prior learning is relevant.
- Credit will only be granted where the prior learning has been completed within the previous seven years.
- Credit will not be granted for more than half the program.
- The Dean may approve advanced standing beyond the limit prescribed here, providing there is an academic rationale consistent with the principles of this Policy. This includes instances where another provider ceases to deliver a qualification and SI agrees to teach those students to completion.

### ***Effect of award of credit***

When approved, the credit will be transferred to specified units within the qualification and recorded as ***CRDT-TRANS (credit transfer)***.

Credit recognises that the student has achieved equivalent unit learning outcomes. Credit can be used to meet pre-requisite requirements in other units of study.

### ***Appeals***

Students may appeal the decision made regarding their application for RPL in accordance with the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

## **Policy Implementation and Monitoring**

The *Academic Board* delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Student Administration Coordinator, working with the *Admissions Committee*. The *Admissions*

*Committee* will make all academic decisions and carry out annual reviews which will be considered by the *Academic Board* in accordance with the *Compliance Calendar*.

Credit decisions will be periodically reviewed. General reviews will assess whether decisions do not academically disadvantage students, that they meet the intended aims of this Policy, and remain current. The specific review will include tracking the progress of students granted credit to assess whether their progress is comparable to other students. These reviews will be presented to the *Academic Board* on a yearly basis.

The *Academic Board* will review all periodic reports from relevant committees and staff members, in accordance with the *Compliance Calendar*.

Additionally, the *Academic Board* will review all relevant student complaints, concerns raised by staff members, and instances of student or staff misconduct in accordance with the *Compliance Calendar*.

Based on these monitoring activities, the *Academic Board*, in accordance with the *Compliance Calendar*, must provide a report to the *Corporate Governance Board* and ensure that findings are taken into account in monitoring all student admissions process, and with planning, quality assurance and improvement processes overall.

## Definitions

**Academic Board:** the SI governing body responsible for academic oversight, including SI learning and teaching environment and practices, program development and approval, workforce planning, research and scholarship, and academic policies and procedures. The *Academic Board* advises the *Corporate Governance Board* on academic matters.

**Credit points:** Points gained for each unit a student passes as they progress through the program. The student must gain a specified number of credit points in order to graduate.

**Formal learning:** Learning that takes place through a structured program that leads to the attainment of a formally recognised qualification.

**Informal learning:** Learning that takes place outside of a formal program of study.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):** A process that enables students to claim credit for prior formal, informal, and non-formal learning towards their studies at SI.

## Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version History				
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval date:	Revision notes:	Next review date:

1	Academic Board	25/10/2017		
2	Academic Board	16/09/2019	Changes to RPL procedures	16/09/2022

### ▲ Related Documents

☞	<a href="#">Academic and Professional Integrity Policy</a>
☞	<a href="#">Academic Standards Policy</a>
☞	<a href="#">Admissions Policy</a>
☞	<a href="#">Data and Records Integrity Policy</a>
☞	<a href="#">Student Complaints and Appeals Policy</a>
☞	<a href="#">Certification Guidelines</a>
☞	<a href="#">Admissions Committee - Terms of Reference</a>

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