

C8 - CREDIT TRANSFER POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1 PURPOSE

This policy outlines how **credit transfer** from prior formal academic accomplishments is recognised (for recognition of prior learning, please refer to the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure).

2 BACKGROUND

BBI – The Australian Institute of Theological Education (BBI) is committed to quality learning and teaching, as reflected in its primarily educational mission. To implement Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency's (TEQSA) principle of maximising credit available to students of its courses, BBI has developed the following policy.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all students and courses of study at BBI.

4 DEFINITIONS

Credit Transfer: refers to credit awarded on the basis of completed formal academic studies that an authorised institution has assessed and certified (i.e. units of learning that are “quality assured” against known standards) or completed studies at other institutions of learning which BBI has assessed as equivalent in learning volume and rigour to a BBI unit, thus reducing the overall length of the course.

Formal Study: Refers to study completed through a structured program of learning which leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification.

Non-Formal Study: Refers to study that takes place through a structured program of learning but does not lead to an officially accredited qualification.

5 POLICY

BBI recognises the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and grants credit transfer accordingly. In keeping with the intent of the AQF BBI uses:

- “whole of institution” rather than piecemeal applications;
- a standard form of application;
- clear guidelines on the closing dates for applications, the nature and legal status of evidentiary material required for applications; and
- the adoption of limitations on the award of credit transfer.

Limits on credit transfer:

BBI limits the award of credit transfer to one half maximum. That is, students must complete no less than one half of their total coursework as BBI enrolled students.

Types of Credit:

1. **Specified Academic Credit:** may be given for a specified unit or units where prior learning is regarded as having satisfied both the objectives and the assessment requirements of related BBI unit(s). Such prior learning may be formal study which has been undertaken through previous study that has already been assessed by an authorised institution, or where BBI has determined that informal study completed at another institution of learning satisfies both the objectives and the assessment requirements of related BBI unit(s) in accordance with the procedure below.
2. **Unspecified Academic Credit:** may be given through recognising a number of credit points rather than a specific unit where prior learning is regarded to be consistent with the broad outcomes of the course being undertaken. Such credit may be granted to students who have completed relevant studies which align with the Course Specific Graduate Outcomes of a student's course and BBI's assessment requirements, but do not necessarily reflect the objectives of a specific unit. Unspecified Academic Credit may also be used to acknowledge where a student has completed previous studies in a cognate area at a lower AQF level which, in accordance with AQF, reduces the overall volume of learning of their course of study. Where such an arrangement applies it will be clearly noted in the Course of Study's Admission Rules.
3. **Credit without Advanced Standing:** may be given where students have completed similar subject material in another award, and thus are exempted from a particular unit, but receive no credit point recognition.
4. **Concurrent Studies:** refers to credit awarded for successful completion of approved concurrent (cross-institutional) studies.

Currency of Prior Learning:

- Where an application for the award of advanced standing is predicated on completion of relevant studies towards a recognized award without the applicant having received that award, only studies completed in the previous 10 years will be considered.
- Where the applicant has gained the relevant recognised award, studies towards that award will be considered where the final completion date of that award was within the past 10 years.

Decision Making:

Decisions on the applications of advanced standing are to be made by the Registrar on the recommendation of the relevant Course Coordinator. They are to be informed by careful professional judgment that is transparent and fair in accordance with the procedure below. Where precedent cases exist for awarding credit transfer, the Registrar may award credit transfer again without consulting the relevant Course Coordinator.

6 PROCEDURE

Student Responsibilities:

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the process of applying for Credit Transfer by filling out and submitting the Credit Application Form and requisite evidence either during their application process or within their first year of study (please also consult the Verification of Documents Policy).

For Credit Transfer applications which relate to formal study, students must provide certified evidence of their study, including:

- 1) Certified copies of transcripts and testamurs (if applicable), issued by the institution at which they completed their studies.
- 2) Copies of the unit outlines (or equivalent) which provide details of unit outcomes, content, and assessment tasks.

For Credit Transfer applications which relate to non-formal study, students must provide certified evidence of their study, including:

- 1) Certified copies of transcripts, certificates of completion, letters of endorsement, or equivalent from the institution at which they completed their studies.
- 2) Copies of the unit outlines (or equivalent) which provide details of unit outcomes, content, and assessment tasks.
- 3) Copies of completed and marked assessment tasks for review.

BBI Responsibilities:

The Registrar receives all Credit Application Forms, and processes them according to the following procedure:

- 1) Where the student has provided adequate documentation and there is a precedent case for the credit (such as a previous request for credit transfer for the same unit from the same institution which was approved or rejected) the Registrar approves or rejects the credit accordingly and advises the student in writing.
- 2) Where the student has provided adequate documentation and their request for credit refers to prior learning in a cognate area at a lower AQF level, and this prior learning is specified in their Course of Study's admission rules as eligible for reducing the volume of learning of their course, the Registrar approves the credit according to the Admission Rules and advises the student in writing.
- 3) Where the student has provided adequate documentation and no precedent exists, the Registrar compiles all documentation and sends it to the Course Coordinator, who:
 - a. Where the credit application is for previous formal study, assesses this as per Schedule 1 for:
 - i. Specified Academic Credit, where a student's previous formal study reflects the outcomes and assessment requirements of an existing BBI unit, utilising the Review of Prior Study Instrument. Where this is the case, Specific Academic Credit is offered to the student and is noted on their transcript alongside the relevant BBI unit code. The Registrar notifies the student in writing.

- ii. Unspecified Academic Credit, where a student's previous formal study does not reflect the outcomes of an existing BBI unit, but is congruent with the Course Specific Graduate Outcomes of the student's course of study *and* has an assessment loading that is sufficiently aligned with the demand of other BBI units within the course of study. The Review of Prior Study Instrument is to be used in determining this outcome. Where this is the case, Unspecified Academic Credit is offered to the student for an appropriate number of credit points and is noted on their transcript. The Registrar notifies the student in writing.
- iii. A combination of i) and ii) may be offered.
- b. Where the credit application is for previous non-formal study, assesses this as per Schedule 1 for:
 - i. Teaching and assessment standards which match the QA requirements of BBI. The Review of Previous Study instrument is to be used for this. Where this criterion is met, continue to (ii) and (iii). Where it is not met, advise the Registrar that the application is to be rejected. The Registrar notifies the student in writing.
 - ii. Specified Academic Credit, where a student's previous formal study reflects the outcomes and assessment requirements of an existing BBI unit. For the avoidance of doubt, this means that the unit outcomes of the student's previous formal study can be defensibly shown to be congruent with an existing BBI unit's outcomes *and* that the assessment loading is sufficiently aligned with the demand of the existing BBI unit. Where this is the case, Specific Academic Credit is offered to the student and is noted on their transcript alongside the relevant BBI unit code. The Registrar notifies the student in writing.
 - iii. Unspecified Academic Credit, where a student's previous formal study does not reflect the outcomes of an existing BBI unit, but is congruent with the Course Specific Graduate Outcomes of the student's course of study *and* has an assessment loading that is sufficiently aligned with the demand of other BBI units within the course of study. Where this is the case, Unspecified Academic Credit is offered to the student for an appropriate number of credit points and is noted on their transcript. The Registrar notifies the student in writing.

7 RELAXING PROVISION

To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any particular case, the Academic Dean may relax any provision of this procedure and report such decisions to Academic Board.

8 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

N/A

9 KEY RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Provider Course Accreditation Standard 3.3.* requires that ‘credit for previous studies or skills (including articulation, recognition of prior learning and credit arrangements) is consistent with the Qualification Standards and preserves the integrity of the higher education award to which it applies.’
- *Qualification Standard 3.1* requires that ‘the higher education provider has clear, accessible and transparent policies and processes to provide award pathways and credit arrangements for students.’
- *Qualification Standard 3.2* requires that ‘the higher education provider can demonstrate that its decision to give credit into or towards an award is information based, equitable, transparent, timely and academically defensible’.
- *Qualification Standard 3.5* requires that ‘in determining credit towards awards, the higher education provider ensures it takes into account the comparability and equivalence of the learning outcomes, volume of learning, program of study including content, and learning and assessment approaches.’
- *Qualification Standard 3.6* requires that ‘the higher education provider ensures it maintain publicly available registers of their formalised agreements and common credit transfer articulation pathways.
- Review of Previous Study Instrument (Schedule 1)
- Verification of Documents Policy
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure

9 NOTES

Contact Officer	Academic Dean
Implementation Officer/s	Academic Dean / Registrar
Approval Authority / Authorities	Academic Standards Sub-committee / Academic Board / Audit and Risk Committee / Board
Date Approved	16-10-15
Date of Commencement	1-1-17
Date for Review	24 MONTHS AFTER COMMENCEMENT
Amendment History	3/11/16 – Relaxing Provision was included.
Key Stakeholders	Faculty & Sessional Academics / Students
Associated Documents	Schedule 1 – Review of Previous Study Instrument

SCHEDULE 1

Review of Previous Study Instrument

To be completed by the Course Coordinator

Student Name:

Student Number:

Credit Application Number:

Institution at which Previous Study was undertaken:

Details of previous study for which credit is being sought (unit code, title):

NB – for RPL, proceed directly to Part 3.

Part 1 – Background Information and Specific Credit:

1. The unit is at an appropriate AQF level (y/n – if y, continue. If n, reject)
2. The unit outcomes are sufficiently congruent with the BBI unit *include BBI unit title here* (y/n and free text – if y, continue. If n, consider for Part 2 - Unspecified Academic Credit)
3. The unit content is sufficiently congruent with the BBI unit (y/n and free text – if y, continue. If n, consider for Unspecified Academic Credit)
4. The volume of learning is sufficiently congruent with the BBI unit (y/n and free text – if y, continue. If n, reject)
5. The unit's assessment tasks are similar in demand to the BBI unit and assess similar competencies (y/n and free text – if y, continue, if n, reject)

Part 2 – Unspecified Academic Credit

1. The unit outcomes are congruent with the Course Specific Graduate Outcomes for the student's course of study (y/n and free text – if y, continue. If n, reject).
2. The unit content is sufficiently congruent with what would be expected of a BBI unit (y/n and free text – if y, continue. If n, reject)
3. The volume of learning is sufficiently congruent with what would be expected of a BBI unit (y/n and free text – if y, continue. If n, reject)
4. The unit's assessment tasks are similar in demand to what would be expected of a BBI unit and assess similar competencies (y/n and free text – if y, continue, if n, reject).

Part 3 – Recognition of Prior Learning

1. *Prima Facie*, the student's case for RPL aligns with the rules set out in the Admission Rules for their course (y/n and free text – if y, continue. If n, reject).
2. The documentation submitted by the student is adequate to assess their RPL, in accordance with the Admission Rules (y/n and free text – if y, continue. If n, contact the Registrar and request further documentation from the student).
3. The student's documentation demonstrates that they fulfil the requirements for RPL set out in the Admission Rules (y/n and free text – if y, continue. If n, reject).

SIGNATURE

DATE