

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING AND CREDIT POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Ikon Institute of Australia (Ikon) is committed to enabling students access to higher education through a range of pathways.
- 1.2 This policy provides the fair and equitable framework for the granting of credit towards Ikon qualifications based on prior learning and experience, through the processes of credit transfer, recognising an individual's education, skills, and experience, whilst safeguarding the academic integrity and academic standards of Ikon courses.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to current and prospective students, for all Ikon courses that lead to an AQF qualification.
- 2.2 This policy applies all staff involved in admissions and assessment of credit applications.

3. Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Application for Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit
- Credit Register
- Assessment Policy
- Student Admission Policy
- Student Academic Progress Policy
- Grievance and Appeals Policy
- Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Policy
- Records Management Policy

This policy and related documents can be accessed via the [Policy and Procedures](#) section of the Ikon website and the student and staff policy libraries.

4. Definitions

"Articulation Agreement" means a partnership between Ikon and another education institution to recognise credits toward a degree.

"Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)" is the framework that identifies learning outcomes for each AQF level and qualification, policy requirements, educational and economic objectives, and governing and monitoring arrangements for courses.

"Block Credit" means the credit granted towards whole stages or components of a course of learning leading to a qualification.

"Credit" means the value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit reduces the amount of learning

required to achieve a qualification and may be through credit transfer, articulation, and recognition of prior learning or advanced standing

"Prior Learning" means the learning that takes place through a structured course of learning that leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification.

"Prior Experience" means the learning gained through work, social, family, life experiences, or non-accredited courses.

"Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)" means the assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning or prior experience to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit.

"Specified Credit" means credit granted for a specific component of a course where the student has completed and passed curriculum which:

- is substantially the same
- constitutes at least the same proportion of full-time study, and
- the standard attained is substantially the standard required for a pass in the specified course component.

"Unspecified Credit" means the credit granted towards elective components of a qualification or course, where there is no equivalent component in the lkon course for the work completed elsewhere.

POLICY

5. Principles

5.1 All lkon higher education courses will align with the AQF and meet the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

5.2 The recognition of and granting of credit/ is based on the following principles:

- recognising knowledge and skills that students already have which meet the learning outcomes of accredited courses or the subjects within them
- granting maximum recognition for prior learning
- ensuring a consistent and equitable approach to the recognition of prior learning
- ensuring recognition of prior learning and experience, and credit transfer provisions and procedures, are clear and transparent to students.

5.3 To maintain the integrity of lkon 's higher education degrees:

- credit will only be granted based on evidence provided by the applicant
- granting credit will not disadvantage the student in terms of achieving the course learning outcomes.

6. Types of Credit

Block Credit

6.1 Block credit may be granted when a student has completed a qualification that is set out in a formal credit or articulation agreement with other education providers for award at a particular level.

- 6.2 The agreement will identify the amount of credit the student is automatically granted at the time of admission due to the level of prior learning. The agreement exempts the student from completing some stages or components within the course. A block credit agreement does not recognise that the student has achieved equivalent subjects or content but through the mapping of desired learning outcomes, with consideration given to facilitating academic progression.
- 6.3 Authority for approving formal credit or articulation agreements sits with the Academic Board.

Specified Credit

- 6.4 When specified credit is granted based on prior learning, it must be based on learning that is deemed to be equivalent when considering the learning outcomes, volume of learning, AQF level, and content of a specific unit/s of study within a course and the degree if equivalence needs to be at least 80%.
- 6.5 When specified credit is granted based on prior experience, it must be based on evidenced skills and knowledge gained during employment, professional development, short courses, on-the-job training or life experience that is deemed equivalent to the learning outcomes and volume of learning of a specific unit/s of study with a course.
- 6.6 When approved, specified credit will be applied to specific subjects within the course being undertaken, which exempts the student from taking the subject to meet course requirements.
- 6.7 As specified credit recognises that the student has achieved equivalent subject learning outcomes, it can be used to meet pre-requisites. Specified credit will be determined on a case-by-case basis or determined as part of an articulation agreement.

Unspecified Credit

- 6.8 Unspecified credit will only be granted towards elective components of a course.
- 6.9 Unspecified credit will be granted based on prior learning or experience that is appropriate in regard to the AQF level, volume of learning and learning and assessment approaches, with content that is appropriate to meet an elective option and satisfy overall course learning outcomes.
- 6.10 As unspecified credit does not recognise that the student has achieved equivalent subject learning outcomes, it cannot be used to meet pre-requisites. Unspecified credit will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

7. Granting of Credit

- 7.1 Credit may be granted when:
- the prior study or experience is assessed as equivalent in content and level to the subject(s) for which credit is being sought
 - the recognition of prior learning or experience granted is academically defensible and considers the student's ability to make satisfactory academic progress and to successfully complete the requirements of the remainder of the course
 - it is consistent with the broad integrity and the intended learning outcomes of the course
 - specific requirements of an award are fulfilled, including any conditions associated with the professional accreditation of the award
 - the course approval process permits the granting of credit
 - prior learning that has been completed within the last ten years. This period may vary depending on the nature of the learning and the relevant discipline, with variations made

on a case-by-case basis based on current academic, professional, and industry requirements. Appropriate variations to this period will be determined by the Head of School.

- 7.2 lkon will only grant credit against full subjects and will not grant credit for partial completion of a subject.
- a. If a student transfers from one lkon course to another, credit or recognition of prior learning approved for the original course will not automatically be transferred and students must reapply for credit for the new course.

8. Maximum Credit Limit

- 8.1 Normally, the credit granted to a student for an individual course will not exceed 50% of the total credit points of the course. Exceptions to this will be considered on an individual basis by the Dean, based on evidence provided by the student, and the principles and details within this policy.
- 8.2 Students wishing to graduate with two lkon awards may be granted cross credits not exceeding 50% of the shorter course.

PROCEDURE

9. Application for Credit

- 9.1 Applications must be made using the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit form*, which can be found in the *Policies and Procedures* section on the lkon website and in the student policy library, with supporting evidence.
- 9.2 Evidence of prior learning or experience may be from:
- a recognised higher education provider
 - a TAFE or other registered training organisation providing Vocational Education Training (VET)
 - a professional body or other similar body
 - work experience or other forms of practical experience, including voluntary work
- 9.3 Evidence submitted to support the application must be relevant, valid, sufficient, authentic, and current. Credit from prior learning and credit from prior experience will require different types of evidence, as follows:
- 9.3.1 Evidence for applications of credit from prior experience will include original or certified copies of:
- academic transcripts, qualification or testamurs from a higher education provider or a registered training organisation (RTO) that was completed within the last 10 years
 - subject outlines detailing learning outcomes, weekly structure, topic list, assessment details
 - other evidence may also be requested as outlined in the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit form*.
- 9.3.2 Evidence for applications of credit from prior experience will include original or certified copies of:
- certificates from professional bodies, enterprises or other similar bodies that was completed within 10 years

- current resume or CV (including up to two current referees with contact details to verify any professional experience)
- other evidence may also be requested as outlined in the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit* form.
- Written explanation of how the prior experience meets the learning outcomes for the credit being sought.

9.4 Applications for credit should be lodged at any time prior to enrolment. Once a student has enrolled in the course, applications for credit will incur a significant fee, details of which can be found on the [Fees](#) page of the Ikon website.

9.5 Completed applications accepted by the student will be retained on the student's file.

10. Assessment of Applications for Credit

10.1 All applications for credit will be assessed by the relevant Head of School or a senior academic with discipline expertise, except in cases where a) a formal credit agreement is in place or b) a precedent set of credit subjects from a specific course at a specific provider has been added to the Credit Register by the Head of School, and in these cases, authority to implement the credit transfer can be delegated to the Admissions Team. The student will be notified in writing of the decision within 10 days of receipt of a complete application. Where credit is granted, the student is given a written record of the decision to accept, and the student's acceptance will be retained on the student's file for two years after the student ceases to be an accepted student.

10.2 Credit will be granted on the basis of equivalence which is determined by evaluating the extent to which there is equivalence between the completed components of a qualification and Ikon's course applied for in terms of:

- learning outcomes
- content
- learning and assessment processes
- volume of learning
- level of the qualification.

10.3 In making decisions regarding credit from courses undertaken overseas, the Head of School will be guided by the advice provided in the Country Education Profiles supplied by the Department of Education and Training which offers an indication of equivalency between courses at overseas providers and the Australian system.

10.4 The determination of credit to be granted to the student requires academic judgement and the person assessing the level of credit should determine that there is at least 80% equivalence where credit is to be granted.

11. Articulation Agreements with Other Higher Education Providers

11.1 Where Ikon enters into an articulation agreement with another education provider for credit for students towards higher level AQF qualifications in the same or related discipline, having considered comparability and equivalence, the following provision in the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy will be used as the basis of negotiations:

- 50% credit for an Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree linked to a 3-year Bachelor Degree

- 37.5% credit for an Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree linked to a 4-year Bachelor Degree
 - 33% credit for a Diploma linked to a 3-year Bachelor Degree
 - 25% credit for a Diploma linked to a 4-year Bachelor Degree.
- 11.2 Such agreements do not preclude any further institutional or individual student negotiations for additional credit.

12. International Students

- 12.1 International students should be aware that the award of credit may affect their student visa entitlements.
- 12.2 If an international student is granted exemption into a course, which leads to a shortening of their course before the student's visa is granted, Ikon will indicate the actual net course duration (as reduced by course credit) in the confirmation of enrolment.
- 12.3 If an international student is granted exemption into a course which leads to a shortening of their course after the student's visa is granted, Ikon will report the change of course duration via PRISMS in accordance with section 19 of the Education Services of Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000.
- 12.4 Where the award of credit shortens the required duration of study for the course, Ikon is required to adjust the international student's course completion date in PRISMS. This may affect the international student's visa entitlements.

13. Credit Register

- 13.1 Ikon will maintain a register of credit decisions to facilitate transparency and equity across students and courses. The *Credit Register* will document decisions noted in credit agreements and those made on an individual basis.

14. Grading System

- 14.1 Regardless of the type of credit assigned, subjects for which credit has been applied will be allocated the grading nomenclature of AS, or Advanced Standing. The only exception to this is where a student has completed the exact same subject in a different course at Ikon, for example, a nested qualification, for which it will be allocated the grading nomenclature of E, or Exempt.

15. Appeal

- 15.1 A student or prospective student who is dissatisfied with a decision regarding an application for recognition of prior learning or credit may lodge an *Application for Appeal* in accordance with Ikon's *Grievance and Appeals Policy*, both of which can be found in the *Policies and Procedures* section on the Ikon website.

16. Publication

- 16.1 This policy will be published in the *Policy and Procedures* section of the Ikon website, and the student and staff policy libraries.

Policy Information & History

Policy Category	Academic, Admission
Policy ID	AD002A
Approved by	Academic Board
Date of Approval	02 May 2025
Endorsed by	Teaching and Learning Committee
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Previous Versions	13 July 2022. 01 August 2014
Next Review Date	May 2028
Government Legislation	<u>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</u> <u>Higher Education Support Act 2003</u> <u>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</u> <u>National Code 2018</u> <u>Australian Qualifications Framework</u>
Responsible Officer	Dean
Sources:	In developing this policy, the following documents were considered: Australian Qualifications Framework Council, <u><i>AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy</i></u> , January 2013. Australian Qualifications Framework Council, <u><i>Credit Transfer: An Explanation</i></u> , November 2012 Australian Qualifications Framework Council, <u><i>Recognition of Prior Learning: An Explanation</i></u> , November 2012 TEQSA, <u><i>Guidance Note: Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning</i></u> , Version 1.1, March 2019 TEQSA, <u><i>Good Practice Note: Making higher education admissions transparent for prospective students</i></u> , 5 July 2019
Benchmarking:	External referencing activities were conducted against comparable providers and best practice using publicly available information, including Deakin University, RMIT University, CIC Higher Education, Avondale University, Cairnmillar Institute, Kaplan Business School, Australian College of Applied Professions, Excelsia College, Alphacrucis College, Asia Pacific International College, and Australian Institute of Business Intelligence.
Editorial Amendment	29 August 2025 To improve the clarity of language. Approved by: Head of Quality Assurance