



Credit Transfer and RPL Policy

Policy Area: Academic Governance

Approval: Chairperson, Academic Council

Signature:

Date:

1. PURPOSE

Sheridan is committed to the dual principles of: maintaining academic standards that are at least equivalent to those current in Australian universities; and providing the shortest possible pathways to desired awards through the recognition of prior learning wherever such recognition is consistent with these standards.

In general terms, students who have been admitted to one of Sheridan's awards may be granted credit for prior learning where that learning is demonstrably equivalent to learning acquired through successful completion of accredited units at Sheridan, whether that learning has been acquired through previous academic studies or through less formal means.

Credit may also be awarded into a Sheridan degree for studies completed at Sheridan prior to enrolment in the current degree program. After benchmarking its policies against those of its peers, the Academic Council has set maximum levels of credit allowable for every course offered by Sheridan. Credit limits set by the Academic Council for each course must be strictly observed in the granting of credit, and students will not receive double credit for any unit or part thereof.

2. RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Initial approval of policy and later amendments:	Academic Council
Amendment of procedures consistent with the policy:	Executive Principal
Distribution of policy:	Executive Principal
Implementation of policy:	Executive Principal, Director of Student Services, Registrar, Pathways Coordinator
Monitoring and compliance of policy:	Academic Council, Executive Principal, Director of Student Services, Registrar, Pathways Coordinator
Evaluation and recommendations for amendments:	Academic Council, Executive Principal, Director of Student Services, Registrar, Pathways Coordinator

3. DEFINITIONS

"AQF" – Australian Qualifications Framework

"Block credit" – is credit granted towards whole stages or components of a qualification. Refers to both cross credit and/or exemptions. Block credit means the individual is not required to undertake a

block of qualification components such as a block of units, subjects, modules or a time period of learning such as a semester or a whole year or more of the qualification.

“Credit Transfer” – a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications.

“Exemption” – where a student is not required to take a certain unit(s) on the basis of work already completed but is required to undertake an alternative unit of equivalent credit points.

“Formal Learning” – learning that takes place through a structured program of learning and assessment that leads to a full or partial attainment of a recognized AQF qualification or other formally approved qualification.

“Merit grade” – a grade awarded based on student performance in the assessment of a unit

“Non-formal learning” – learning that takes place through a structured program of learning but does not lead to a formally recognised qualification.

“PLP” – Prior Learning Portfolio

“Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)” – an assessment process that involves assessment of the individual’s prior learning to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit.

“Specified Credit” – credit granted towards particular or specific components in a qualification, such as a specific unit from which a student is exempted.

“TAFE” – Technical and Further Education

“Informal Learning” – learning gained through work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences. Unlike formal and non-formal learning, informal learning is not organized or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support.

“Unspecified Credit” – credit granted towards elective components in a qualification. It is credit which is given without the direct correlation of learning outcomes.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1. In Sheridan courses, prior learning is recognised and/or credit is granted from previous non-Sheridan study in particular units. Block credit and advanced standing may also be applied.
- 4.2. The decision to grant credit to a student will be done so with the expectation the student will not be disadvantaged in achieving the expected learning outcomes for the course of study or qualification. Further, the decision will ensure the integrity of the course of study and qualification will be maintained.
- 4.3. Vocational learning outcomes are competency/performance based and may differ from academic learning outcomes which are more research/knowledge based. In order not to disadvantage a vocational student seeking credit, when comparing similarity of vocational learning outcomes for credit transfer purposes, the domain of the vocational course (i.e. management, marketing) and the assessment of demonstrated domain abilities should be compared.
- 4.4. No more than 33% of a Sheridan award can be granted in credit from prior **non-Sheridan** study or learning or from single unit enrolments at Sheridan.
- 4.5. No credit can be granted from units or an award completed at undergraduate level towards a Master degree or embedded Graduate Diploma.
- 4.6. A unit successfully completed or for which credit has been granted in a Sheridan award cannot be attempted in another award of Sheridan. However, if it can be demonstrated that the

subject matter of a project or seminar is different from that completed in another award, permission to enrol may be given.

- 4.7. No unit already passed or for which credit has been granted in a Sheridan award can be repeated for a merit grade.
- 4.8. Units for which credit is granted from non-Sheridan awards are to be appropriately designated on the student's academic transcript as credit transferred from an equivalent award or institution or granted on the basis of RPL.
- 4.9. Where credit is granted from a non-Sheridan source towards one or more assessment pieces within a unit, those units are not eligible for a merit grade.
- 4.10. The extent to which credit may be granted in a Sheridan award is dependent on the individual course rules.
- 4.11. Applications should be submitted before the student enrolls in a Sheridan course, and will not normally be considered once the student has commenced study.
- 4.12. Students who apply for credit based on non-Sheridan study towards a Sheridan award in which their enrolment was current at the time of the completion of the non-Sheridan study must have first received permission from the Executive Principal of Sheridan for the credit application is to be considered based on such study.

5. CREDIT TRANSFER

- 5.1 Credit may be granted in a unit of a Sheridan award if the study on which the application is based occurred no more than ten years before the commencement of study in the Sheridan award and the applicant can demonstrate the previous study may be regarded as having satisfied the objectives and the assessment requirements of the unit in the Sheridan award.
- 5.2 Where formal learning has been towards qualifications outside the AQF, evidence is to be provided to enable evaluation, for example, academic standing and any accreditation, course contents and assessment criteria, contact-hours.
- 5.3 University students granted approval to count Sheridan units in their university degrees may take up to 32 credit points of Sheridan units. If the approved credit must be at advanced level, such students may take Sheridan foundational level units at advanced level as long as approval has been given by the Executive Principal on application from the approved institution.
- 5.4 Exemptions for units may be granted in cases where there is no direct correlation between units studied and those for which the student is seeking credit, but where it is felt that the student would not benefit from repeating material similar in nature to that already completed elsewhere. The granting of exemptions does not reduce a student's credit load for an award.

6. RECOGNISED PRIOR LEARNING

Applications for credit based on recognition of prior learning will be considered in accordance with the guidelines published in "AQF Recognition of Prior Learning: An Explanation" (<https://www.aqf.edu.au/sites/aqf/files/rpl-explanation.pdf>). RPL relates to all prior learning from non-formal and informal learning, and for formal learning not otherwise covered in credit transfer.

6.1. How RPL is assessed

The key distinguishing characteristic is that it is the student who is assessed for RPL, as opposed to the previous course or unit(s) of study in the case of credit transfer.

In order to recognise prior learning it is necessary to compare the informal or non-formal learning the individual has achieved against the learning outcomes or performance criteria of

the course or qualification to which the student is seeking entry; and to determine if the prior learning fulfils some or any of them.

The processes used to assess RPL applications may take several forms, for example:

- Participation in exactly the same or modified versions of the assessment the student would be required to complete as part of the full course;
- Assessment based on a portfolio of evidence;
- Direct observation of demonstration of skill or competence;
- Reflective papers, journals or portfolios that relate past learning to the learning or competency outcomes of the current course or qualification;
- Provision of examples of the student's work drawn from the workplace, social, community or other setting in which the student applied their learning, skill or competence;
- Testimonials of learning, skill or competence;
- Combinations of any of the above.

The assessment of prior learning for recognition in an award should consider prior learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided that the learning is current and relevant to the learning or competency outcomes in a subject, unit, module, course or qualification.

7. APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTING OF CREDIT

7.1. Credit Transfer

Any student wishing to apply for assessment for the granting of credit transfer on the basis of formal learning should provide:

- Certified copies of academic transcript(s) of the course(s) for which credit transfer is sought.

In addition it may be necessary to provide:

- Documentation stating the objectives, learning outcomes and content of the units in the course
- For each unit successfully completed, details of any formal assessment of learning undertaken and, if relevant, grades obtained;
- Details of the contact hours of the units in the course

Where prior formal learning is recognised by a formal articulation pathway agreement with Sheridan, no application for credit transfer will be necessary. Credit decisions will be based on the achievement of the prior qualification and the terms of the articulation agreement between Sheridan and the pathway institution. Prospective students also retain the option to decline any offer of credit based on a formal articulation agreement.

7.2. Credit on basis of RPL

Any student wishing to apply for credit on the basis of RPL should prepare a **portfolio** which details their previous work experience, education and training details, and other interests and skills.

The portfolio should contain a variety of supporting documentation:

- 4.2.1 Relating to non-formal learning, and any formal learning not otherwise covered in credit transfer:

- Certified copies of statement(s) of satisfactory completion of a course or units in a course offered by a professional body or enterprise, private educational institution, or by any other provider recognised by a university;
- Documentation stating the objectives, learning outcomes and content of the units in the course;
- For each unit successfully completed, details of any formal assessment of learning undertaken and, if relevant, grades obtained;
- Details of the contact hours of the units in a course

4.2.2 Relating to informal learning:

- Details of prior learning experience(s) to support the claim for credit in units of the proposed Sheridan courses;
- A detailed curriculum vitae;
- Letters of support from appropriate persons/organisations who can verify these details.

The application should outline the link between the student's learning experiences and the learning outcomes of the unit(s) in which the student is seeking credit (applicants may wish to identify Sheridan units against which the credit may be granted).

Students may be required to undertake some form of test or assessment to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes stated.

7.3. Overseas Applicants

Overseas applicants for admission to a Sheridan course who wish to be considered for credit transfer or RPL should lodge full documentation as above when they lodge their application for admission.

In addition to all relevant processes outlined above, the Registrar must document the effect of credit or RPL on course length in the case of students holding student visas.

The Registrar adds the following paragraph to the letter advising any international student of credit awarded:

"I must remind you that it is a condition of your visa that you be enrolled in full-time study. Even though you have been awarded credit for some units, you must still enrol in a full load each semester until you finish your course. If you finish your course earlier than anticipated because of the credit you have been awarded, you must either enrol in another registered course at that time, or leave Australia."

The Registrar checks to see whether the credit awarded will shorten the course length. If so, Registrar submits the revised course end date to PRISMS and adds the following paragraph to the student letter (following the one above):

"The credit you have been granted will shorten the time you need to complete your course as a full-time student. Your revised CoE reflecting the new course end date is enclosed. Please take careful note of your revised course end date. After this date you must either enrol in another registered course or leave Australia."

8. RECORDING OF DECISIONS TO GRANT CREDIT

- 8.1. Students who are granted credit will be informed in writing within four weeks of the approval, and a copy of the letter placed in their file. The amount of credit given is also recorded on the student's electronic record in the system database.

- 8.2. Sheridan will collate and review all credit and RPL decisions, establishing precedent registers for formal learning not elsewhere covered by credit transfer or articulation agreements, and for non-formal learning that may have broader application than for a single person.

9. APPENDIX: DOCUMENT HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL RECORD

Document Title:	Credit Transfer and RPL Policy
Source Documents:	<i>Adapted with permission from:</i> Wesley Institute Credit and RPL Policy and Procedures (PO-STU-02) http://repository.wi.edu.au/alfresco/d/d/workspace/SpacesStore/76211aba-d40d-4d99-b6f2-a5c4bbd1aa23/PO-STU-02%20Credit%20and%20RPL%20Policy%20and%20Procedures.pdf?guest=true <i>Other sources include:</i> Australian College of Theology Credit Transfer and Recognised Prior Learning Policy; AQF National Policy Guidelines on Credit Arrangement, Final Draft, May 2009
Associated Internal Documents:	Sheridan Student Handbook; Admissions Policy; Domestic Student Refund Policy; Overseas Student Refund Policy; Variation on Enrolment Policy;
Associated External Documents:	AQF National Policy Guidelines on Credit Arrangement, Final Draft, May 2009 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education to Overseas Students State Accrediting Authorities Registers of Accredited Courses AQF <i>National Guidelines on Cross-Sectoral Qualification Linkages</i> http://www.aqf.edu.au/cs.htm AEI-NOOSR <i>Country Education Profiles Online</i> http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/CEP/Default.htm MCEECDYA <i>Good Practice Principles for Credit Transfer and Articulation from VET to Higher Education</i> http://www.mceetya.edu.au/mceetya/default.asp?id=11908 MCEECDYA <i>Principles for Good Practice Information Provision on Credit Transfer and Articulation from Vocational Training and Education to Higher Education</i> http://www.mceetya.edu.au/mceetya/default.asp?id=11902 DEEWR The National Code 2007 TEQSA Guidance Note on Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning https://www.teqsa.gov.au/for-providers/resources/guidance-note-credit-and-recognition-prior-learning
Authorised Officer:	Chairperson, Academic Council

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Approved by: Professor Rajasundram Sathiendrakumar

Date of Approval: May 2021

Next Review Before: May 2022

Version Number	Version Date	Authorised Officer	Amendment Details
0.01	30 May 2011	N/A	Draft prepared for Sheridan College and Vose College
0.02	22 Mar 2012	N/A	Revised by Vose College Academic Board
0.03	29 Jan 2013	N/A	Revised for Sheridan College Board of Directors
1.00	02 Mar 2013	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Submitted to TEQSA for Sheridan College HEP registration: Attachment 6.3j Credit Transfer and RPL Policy 1.00
1.01	16 Dec 2014	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Change to version control box
1.02	21 April 2017	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Minor adjustments made to ensure full compliance with Threshold Standards
2.00	22 Mar 2018	Chair, Academic Council	Policy updates sections 4.1 and 4.3 to better resolve applications for credit from VET sector providers.
2.01	14 Mar 2019	Chair, Academic Council	Addition of Pathways Coordinator to Clause 2 Responsibilities and Accountability Principal changed to Executive Principal AQF reference updated in Clause 6 TEQSA Guidance Note added to references
2.04	24 May 2021	Chair, Academic Council	Updated name and logo; revisions to Section 7.1