



IONA COLLEGE
TRINITY

TEQSA Provider ID PRV14376 • CRICOS Provider Code 04294D

Qualifications Pathways Policy and Procedure

Approved by the Academic Board on 20 October 2022

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1. Purpose

Iona Trinity College of Higher Education (**the College**) supports lifelong learning and educational pathways for students in line with the *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Qualifications Pathways Policy* which is designed to:

- Strengthen student progression and pathways into and between AQF qualifications, and
- Acknowledge the different student pathways towards entry into an AQF qualification, which can be based on formal, non-formal or informal learning.

This Policy and Procedure outlines how the College recognises prior learning and grants credit into higher education courses in line with the *AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy*, Section 1.2 of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* and Standard 2 of the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*.

2. Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to:

- All applications from students for recognition of their prior formal, non-formal or informal learning (RPL) into a course offered by the College, and
- Staff at the College responsible for making decisions on student applications for credit based on RPL

3. Policy

3.1 Principles

The College will grant credit for successful completion of relevant prior formal, non-formal and/or informal learning.

Assessment of applications for credit on the basis of RPL will be:

- Evidence-based, transparent and equitable
- Applied consistently and fairly with decisions subject to review and appeal
- Defensible, based on the student's ability to meet the learning outcomes successfully and ensuring that the integrity of the course is maintained
- Decided in a timely manner so as not to disadvantage the student
- Formally documented with reasons for the decision, irrespective of whether credit is granted or not

Learning that is related to the learning outcomes of the qualification and current (acquired within the last five years) will be recognised.

Students who are granted credit for prior learning will be allowed to use the credit to meet prerequisites or other specified requirements for entry into a program of study leading to a qualification or for the partial fulfillment of the requirements of a qualification.

In granting credit for prior formal, non-formal and/or informal learning, the College will preserve the integrity of the qualification, ensure that course requirements and learning outcomes are demonstrated and that discipline requirements are maintained.

International students will be advised that any credit granted must comply with the provisions of the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Student 2018*.

The College may enter into articulation agreements with other providers which include standing arrangements for the award of credit.

4. Procedure

4.1 Applying for credit

Applications for credit for prior learning should be submitted with the applicant's application for admission or prior to enrolment using the Credit Application Form.

Applicants who intend to study in Australia on a student visa must submit their applications for credit before admission and the decision should be finalised prior to enrolment or completing the first semester of study in Australia.

Applications for credit made after enrolment will be considered if accompanied by an explanation for not applying for credit prior to enrolment that is deemed reasonable.

The completed application form should be submitted to the Student Services Manager accompanied with the following documents:

- Certified copies of academic transcripts (or certified translations of academic transcripts for international applicants from non-English speaking institutions), and
- Unit outlines and/or course descriptions providing adequate details of unit/course learning outcomes to establish equivalence (in certified translation where required), and
- If the above documents are in a language other than English, certified translation of the documents are also required.

Copies must be certified by:

- an Australian citizen (e.g. at the Australian embassy) or
- by a person:
 - not related to the applicant by birth, marriage or de facto relationship and
 - in the following occupations: legal and medical practitioners, nurses, pharmacists and teachers employed on a permanent full-time or part-time basis at a school or tertiary education institution¹

Applicants for credit based on grounds other than formal learning will be required to submit a portfolio of documentation and may be required to attend an interview to establish professional competence equivalent to learning outcomes in specific units.

¹ This list is adapted from Schedule 2 in the *Statutory Declarations Regulations 2018*

4.2 *Assessing applications for credit*

Applications for credit will be assessed and approved by the relevant Course Coordinator.

In reviewing the application, the Course Coordinator may consult a subject matter expert and will consider:

- the application according to the principles outlined in section 3 of this policy
- course/unit learning outcomes, volume of learning, assessment and currency
- academic standards, academic integrity and quality assurance systems
- credits previously granted by the College
- any credit arrangements with other providers
- in relation to an application for credit for international qualifications from recognised overseas tertiary institutions, their equivalence to Australian qualifications will be assessed with reference to the Department of Education Country Education Profiles.
- potential adverse consequences of granting the credit to the student.

The College will endeavour to notify applicants in writing of a decision on their application prior to enrolment or within two (2) weeks of submission.

If credit is granted, the College will give a written record of the decision to the student to accept. The student should return their acceptance of the College's decision to grant credit as soon as practicable, which the College will retain for two years after the student ceases to be enrolled at the College.

Where a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) has already been issued to an international student and the subsequent award of credit reduces the duration of the course as indicated on the CoE, a new CoE will be issued to the student for the reduced duration. If a student visa has been granted based on the initial CoE, the College will report the change to government authorities through PRISMS for any required changes to the student visa expiry date.

Approved applications for credit must be recorded in the College's student management system so that appropriate adjustments are made to individual students' course structures.

Award of credit must be recorded and stored for at least two (2) years after the student ceases to be an enrolled at the College.

4.3 *Credit Transfer under a Teach-Out Agreement*

Students applying for admission to the College under an approved teach-out agreement may be granted additional credit, subject to the terms in this Policy and Procedure.

4.4 *Withdrawal of credit*

The College reserves the right to withdraw credits granted, if the College discovers that fraudulent or misleading documents were provided and the decision to grant the credit was based on the fraudulent or misleading documents.

4.5 Records

In addition to records of credit awarded being retained on a student's files, the College will also maintain a Register of Credit Decisions, which will record all credit decisions made and which will be used as a guide for subsequent decision-making and to facilitate monitoring and review.

5. Monitoring and Improvement

Towards the end of each year, the College will engage an independent expert to audit the admissions process to ensure applicants have been assessed and admitted fairly, consistently and in accordance with this policy and procedure.

The College will also seek feedback from applicants about their experience on the admissions process.

The audit outcomes and student feedback results will be collated and the findings, including recommendations for improvements, documented in a report which would be provided to the Principal for consideration and the Academic Board for approval of any recommendations for improvement.

The Board of Directors will be kept informed by the Academic Board Chair of changes to the admission process, including approved changes to entry requirements and the potential impact, if any, on the College's financial viability.

6. Responsibilities

The Principal is responsible for making recommendations to Academic Board for improvements in the granting of credit.

Course Coordinators are responsible for assessing applications for credit for prior learning.

The Academic Board is responsible for making recommendations to the Board of Directors on articulation agreements after due consideration of alignment of the other provider's course profile with the College's course profile. Where there are potential conflicts arising between a member's interest in the articulation agreement, this conflict will be managed in line with the College's *Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure*.

7. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy and Procedure, the following terms are defined as follows:

Articulation	Is a process occurring when a formal agreement exists between the College and another education provider, which establishes learning equivalence and associated credit for prior learning arrangements between courses offered at either provider, and facilitates the transition of the student from their course at their initial education provider into a course at the College
Confirmation of Enrolment	An electronic document issued by the College to a prospective international student to confirm the student's eligibility to enrol into a course offered by the College

Credit Transfer	The process by which students are awarded credit towards a new course offered by the College for identical and equivalent units successfully completed within another course at the College
International student	Any overseas student, including those who have student visas, temporary residency, bridging visas and provisional residency (as falling under the <i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</i>)
PRISMS	The Provider Registration International Student Management System is a secure database owned and maintained by the Commonwealth Department of Education for the purposes of administering the <i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</i>
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	The recognition of relevant and equivalent prior formal, non-formal or informal learning obtained by students which may lead to a reduction in the number of academic units or credit points required to successfully complete a course at the College. Recognition of prior learning may be given for specific units as well as specified and unspecified electives

8. Version history

Version #	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
1.0	Original version	Academic Board	20/10/2022
2.0	Section 4.1: Equivalency to be assessed according to course/unit learning outcomes. Section 4.2: All international qualifications to be assessed according to section 4.2.	Academic Board	15/12/2022
2.1	Section 4.1: Application timeframes clarified. Section 4.2: Expanded criteria for credit assessment.	Academic Board	27/07/2023

9. Additional Information

Policy Status	Approved
Policy Owner	Principal

Next Review Date	3 years from Approval Date
Associated Internal Documents	Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure Records Management Policy and Procedure Student Appeals Policy and Procedure Student Grievance Policy and Procedure
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	Standards 1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 5.3.5 and 5.3.7
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	Standards 1.2.3, 2.2, 3.1
Other Applicable Legislation and Instruments	Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000

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