

Definitions

Block credit is credit granted towards whole stages or components of a program of learning leading to a qualification.

Specified credit is credit granted towards particular or specific components of a qualification or program of learning.

Unspecified credit is credit granted towards elective components of a qualification or program of learning.

1. Application for credit transfer

1.1 An application for credit transfer must be accompanied by an official academic record except for an application based on prior study at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC).

1.2 Extracts from institutional handbooks or other official documentation giving sufficient details of the studies to allow an assessment of the application for credit must be supplied. Where the University has an established credit precedent as identified in the University's credit database or an approved articulation agreement, then accompanying official documents do not need to be supplied.

1.3 Where credit is being sought for recognition of prior learning (RPL), appropriate certified documentation must be submitted. Supporting documentation may include references, samples of work, project briefs, reports, publications, employment history and employment position descriptions.

1.4 All supporting documentation must be in English.

1.5 Applications for credit may be lodged at any time. However, they should be lodged in time for credit transfer to be assessed and the applicant notified prior to the commencement of any teaching period in which the award of credit may affect the student's study program.

1.6 When credit is granted for prior study, the grades achieved in the prior study are not included in the USC academic transcript and are not included in the calculation of a grade point average.

2. Assessment of an application for credit

Assessment of an application for credit transfer or recognition of prior learning takes into consideration the following:

Step 1: Determine if a precedent or an articulation agreement for the credit transfer exists.

Step 2: If this is not the case, consideration should be given to the following:

- type of studies undertaken
- institution where the studies were undertaken
- Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) level of studies
- amount of study
- learning outcomes of the studies
- currency of the studies
- University's limits on credit transfer
- any restrictions placed by relevant external professional accreditation or registration bodies on the amount and type of credit.

2.1 Credit precedents

2.1.1 Where an application for credit based on prior complete or incomplete formal study is approved by the Program Coordinator, an option is provided for the decision to be recorded as a credit precedent. If the decision is identified as a precedent it is recorded in a database and is automatically applied to subsequent credit applications based on the same prior studies.

2.1.2 The Director, Student Services and Engagement (or nominee) is responsible for providing information to potential domestic credit applicants about approved articulation agreements and credit precedents.

2.1.3 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality) (or nominee) is responsible for providing information to potential international credit applicants about approved articulation agreements and credit precedents.

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

DESIGNATED OFFICER

Director, Student Services and Engagement

FIRST APPROVED

5 November 2008

LAST AMENDED

10 December 2019

REVIEW DATE

3 December 2024

STATUS

Active

2.1.4 Credit precedents including articulation arrangements will be reviewed periodically by the Schools and must be reviewed when a program undergoes a substantial change.

2.1.5 When a review results in a change to an existing articulation arrangements, the partner institution should be consulted.

2.2 The type of studies undertaken

2.2.1 Credit on the basis of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

An RPL assessment is made on the basis that learning can be documented and the applicant can demonstrate the standard they achieved from participating in these activities is comparable to the standards in the program in which they are seeking credit. Learning may include relevant professional and paraprofessional experience, continuing professional development activities and other work/life experiences. The onus shall be on the applicant to provide evidence that demonstrates relevant skills, knowledge and understanding.

2.2.2 Credit on the basis of advanced secondary school level studies

In specific cases, where it is considered that the secondary school level study is judged to be substantially comparable in level and content with undergraduate award study, credit may be granted. For example, this may apply where a student, as part of their senior school certificate has undertaken: the International Baccalaureate; studies where a School and the University have jointly developed the curriculum; and higher level VET certificates.

Credit will not be granted where professional accreditation requirements limit the granting of credit based on secondary school level studies.

2.2.3 Credit on the basis of Pass Conceded grades

Credit is not given for courses for which a grade of Pass Conceded (or equivalent grade) has been achieved.

2.3 Basis for credit assessment

The credit assessment should be based on the following:

2.3.1 Institutions in Australia

A National Register of Higher Education Providers is maintained by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency: <http://www.teqsa.gov.au/national-register>

Studies offered by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) in Australia. See <http://training.gov.au/>.

2.3.2 Institutions outside Australia

Studies offered by a recognised higher education provider or training organisation on the basis of assessments made by Australian Education International (AEI).

2.3.3 The Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) level of studies

The Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) is the national policy for the regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each training sector into a single comprehensive national qualification framework: <http://www.aqf.edu.au/>.

The AQF provides learning outcomes (Knowledge, Skills, Application of knowledge and skills) for each AQF level and qualification. The Framework is used as the basis of assessing applications for credit transfer and applications for prior learning, based on volume and level of learning of prior study when compared to the program/course for which credit is sought.

2.3.4 The amount of study

In cases where the amount of studies undertaken by an applicant have not been identified in terms of credit points or equivalent, the number of hours of learning activities per week may have to be used as the basis for a determination.

2.3.5 Learning outcomes for types of credit

Credit transfer will be available where the formal recognition of prior learning (including non-formal or informal studies) for which credit may be granted are assessed as meeting the learning outcomes for specified, unspecified or block credit.

ASSESSMENT FOR SPECIFIC USC COURSES

An application for credit transfer for prior study for a specific USC course must demonstrate:

- equivalence in the Knowledge, Skills, and Application of knowledge and skills of the AQF Level of the program in which credit transfer is sought;
- substantial equivalence / correspondence in learning outcomes with the USC course; and

ASSESSMENT FOR UNSPECIFIED USC COURSES OR BLOCK CREDIT

An application for credit transfer for prior study for a USC unspecified course or block credit must demonstrate:

- equivalence in the Knowledge, Skills, and Application of knowledge and skills of the AQF level of the program in which credit transfer is sought; and
- an equivalent / corresponding level of study duration (e.g. equivalent to a 12-unit course if that is the unit value of the course for which credit transfer may be awarded).

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2.3.6 The currency of the studies

Specified credit will only be granted for studies that have been completed within ten years of the time of application for credit. In considering cases for specified credit where studies were completed more than ten years earlier, post-qualification experience which may contribute to the currency of knowledge or skills may be taken into account.

Unspecified or block credit will be granted for formal studies completed more than ten years before the time of application for credit.

Shorter time limits may be applied to specified credit or for Work Integrated Learning courses where professional accreditation requirements limit the granting of credit or where the relevant Head of School deems that an extended break from study may pose a risk to students, staff or the public.

2.3. University's limits on credit

The amount of credit transferred depends on the level of the prior study and the level of the USC program. Credit limits are prescribed in the Table 1.

Table 1: Unit requirements and credit limits for programs and qualifications

LEVEL OF USC PROGRAM	AQF LEVEL	TOTAL UNITS REQUIRED FOR A USC QUALIFICATION	MIN. NO. OF USC UNITS THAT MUST BE COMPLETED
Diploma	5	96	48
Associate Degree	6	192	96
Bachelor Degree – 3 years	7	288	96
Bachelor Degree – 4 years	7	384	96
Double Degree	7	min. 384	96 in each component degree
Double Degree – including a Bachelor Honours Degree	8	min. 384	96 in each component degree (min. 72 at Honours level)
Bachelor Honours Degree – (Embedded Four year)	8	384	96
Bachelor Honours Degree – (Embedded Differentiated Pathway)	8	384	96 (min. 72 at Honours level)
Bachelor Honours Degree (End-on)	8	96	72
Graduate Certificate	8	48	24
Graduate Diploma	8	96	48
Master Degree	9	96 - 192	48

2.3. Cross-Sector Credit Transfer

Table 2 identifies the basis of negotiation for the amount of credit in the same or a related discipline that may be transferred in cross-sector (vocational education and training to higher education) arrangements at undergraduate level.

No credit will be granted for studies completed at Certificate I, II and III levels.

Where Certificate III and IV studies have been completed as part of a Diploma program, credit will be granted on the basis of partial completion of Diploma studies.

Table 2: Cross-Sector Credit Transfer

AQF QUALIFICATION	VOLUME OF LEARNING - DURATION	USC PROGRAM	AMOUNT OF CREDIT (UNITS)
Associate Degree (AQF Level 6)	2 years	Bachelor Degree	192
Advanced Diploma (AQF Level 6)	1.5-2 years	Bachelor Degree	144

Associate Degree	96		
Diploma (AQF Level 5)	1-2 years	Bachelor Degree or Associate Degree	96
Certificate IV (AQF Level 4)	0.5-2 years	Bachelor Degree or Associate Degree	48

The amount of credit transfer (as identified in Table 2) may be exceeded where a formal articulation agreement exists and with the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

The amount of credit awarded may be reduced where the volume of learning is determined to be at a level less than the typical duration.

2.3. Any restrictions placed by relevant external professional accreditation or registration bodies on the amount and type of credit.

Credit for courses in a program that has external professional accreditation, may be subject to restrictions on credit transfer imposed by the professional body that are more restrictive than those of the University.

2.4 USC Master degrees (Coursework)

Courses undertaken in programs within the University which formally articulate with a Master degree may be counted towards satisfying the requirements of the Master degree. These arrangements are not limited by the restrictions on the amount of credit which may be granted as set out above.

2.5 Bachelor Honours Degrees

No credit transfer is available towards the research project within a Bachelor Honours Degree. Please refer to the Bachelor Honours Degree – Procedures.

3. Articulation agreements

3.1 All articulation agreements must state:

- the period for which the agreement will have currency (usually no more than three years)
- provisions for review of the agreement before the expiry date
- a specific date on which the agreement will end.

3.2 Articulation agreements within the provisions of this policy are approved by the relevant Head of School.

3.3 A copy of the signed articulation agreement will be provided to Student Services and Engagement for recording in the credit precedent database.

3.4 Articulation arrangements will be reviewed periodically and must be reviewed when a program undergoes a substantial change. When a review may result in a change to existing arrangements, the partner institution should be consulted.

4. Approval of credit

4.1 The Program Coordinator with responsibility for a program is also responsible for assessing and approving credit applications. This includes making credit assessments on a course administered by another School contained in the program.

4.2 Where a precedent has been established and recorded for a particular credit transfer, the responsibility for approving the credit transfer is transferred to the Director, Student Services and Engagement (or nominee).

5. Notification and recording

5.1 On the basis of the credit transfer and RPL assessment, the applicant will be provided with a Notice of Credit Transfer containing details of the credit transfer and RPL assessment.

5.2 International students who have received a notice of assessment for credit transfer and RPL should check that acceptance of any credit transfer and RPL is consistent with any visa or scholarship conditions.

5.3 Credit transfer and RPL assessment are recorded on the student's record.

6. Withdrawal of Credit

6.1 The University reserves the right to withdraw credit where an error has been made in assessing an application or where the documentation provided by the applicant is incomplete, invalid or fraudulent. The Director, Student Services and Engagement is responsible for ensuring that credit is withdrawn in such circumstances and will consult with the Head of School (or nominee) and undertake any other action as required in order to ensure compliance with University policies.

6.2 Credit already granted may not be withdrawn due to changes made to the provisions of the Credit Transfer – Academic Policy or related procedures; or where a precedent or articulation is reviewed and changed.

7. Grievances

7.1 Applicants for credit who are dissatisfied with the outcome of a credit application may request a review of the decision under the provisions of Student Grievance Resolution – Governing Policy and associated procedures. Such a review request must be accompanied by a substantiated statement concerning the basis for the review.

7.2 A request for a review of a credit decision is determined by the Director, Student Services and Engagement (or nominee) who will review the initial decision in terms of this Credit Transfer – Academic Policy and related procedures.

7.3 Where the basis of the review request relates to the academic judgement of the equivalence of prior study, learning or experience to a program or course, the Director, Student Services and Engagement (or nominee) will refer the review request, to the Head of School for a decision.

7.4 On completion of the review, the Director, Student Services and Engagement (or nominee) provides the applicant with a written response detailing the review outcomes.

7.5 A student who remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their review of credit, may have grounds to appeal the review decision under the provisions of Student Grievance Resolution – Governing Policy.

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

[Credit Transfer - Academic Policy](#)

[Grades and Grade Point Average \(GPA\) - Academic Policy](#)

[Student Grievance Resolution - Governing Policy](#)

LINKED DOCUMENTS

[Credit Transfer - Academic Policy](#)

RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

[Australian Qualifications Framework](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015](#)