

CREDIT POLICY



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Approved by Academic Board: 20 Feb 2015
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Related Documents

Admissions Policy

Appeals Policy

Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 section 1.2

National Code 2.3

1. Rationale and Objectives

1.1 This Policy provides the framework for the award of credit at the University, including recognition of prior learning or external study or exemption from requirements of a course of study, in conjunction with the specific credit provisions found in the Regulation and Schedule governing each award of the University.

2. Scope

2.1 This Policy applies to all students enrolled in a course of study towards a University of Divinity award and to applicants applying for admission to a course of study at the University of Divinity.

3. Principles

3.1 Students or applicants for admission to the University are entitled to apply for and be granted credit.

3.2 Credit may only be permitted if:

- a) students are not disadvantaged in achieving the Course Outcomes for the course of study into which credit is granted; and
- b) the integrity of the course of study is maintained.
- c) not exceeding the maximum allowed by the specific Course Regulation.

4. Definitions and Conditions

4.1 Definitions

4.1.1 **Credit:** Any or all terms defined in this Policy which contribute towards reduction of the requirements of a course of study and includes:

- a) Course Transfer
- b) Exemption without Credit (EWOC)
- c) External Study

- d) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- e) Block Credit
- f) Specified Credit
- g) Unspecified Credit

4.1.2 **Formal Learning:** Learning that takes place through a structured program undertaken at an accredited education provider that leads to the full or partial achievement of an Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) qualification or an international equivalent recognised by the University.

4.1.3 **Informal Learning:** Learning gained through work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences. Unlike formal and non-formal learning, informal learning is not organised or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support.

4.1.4 **Learning or Competency Outcomes:** A learning or competency outcome that a learner should be able to demonstrate as a result of being involved in a learning process. The learning should indicate a conceptual as well as a practical understanding of the knowledge or competency required and should be applicable outside the environment in which it was acquired.

4.1.5 **Non-Formal Learning:** The learning that takes place though a structured program of learning but which does not lead to an officially accredited qualification.

4.2 **Conditions:**

4.2.1 Credit may be granted if students are not disadvantaged in achieving their course learning outcomes and the course structure integrity is maintained.

4.2.2 Credit may not be granted for credits already received, conceded passes, or when the credit points will exceed the maximum allowed in the Regulation governing an award.

4.2.3 Credit may be granted for units in a partially completed or uncompleted University of Divinity award according to the Course Transfer Rules (section 9) below.

4.2.4 Credit will be granted for CPE units undertaken at University of Divinity or equivalent accredited provider and that have not been used towards the completion of another award.

5. **Specified Credit Rules**

5.1 Specified Credit means the award of credit which contributes both to the volume of learning and the specific requirements of a course, and is equivalent to study at a specified level or discipline or of a specified unit or units at the University of Divinity.

5.2 Specified Credit may be granted for study undertaken towards either a theological or non-theological award provided that the study demonstrably contributes towards the Course Outcomes of the relevant award.

5.3 Specified Credit may only be granted:

- a) for a specific unit or units or for a complete award which is undertaken at the University of Divinity or at an [institution recognised by the Academic Board](#); and

- b) for a unit, units or award completed no more than ten years before the year in which application for credit is made; and
- c) for a unit, units or award assessed as equivalent to a unit or units of study required for the University of Divinity award towards which credit is sought.

5.4 Specified Credit may only be granted (including in combination with any other form of credit) to the maximum volume defined by the Regulation governing the relevant award, which must be not more than two-thirds of an undergraduate award or one-half of a postgraduate award, provided always that there is no maximum limit for credit for units undertaken at the University of Divinity that have not been used for graduation in another award.

5.5 Applications for Specified Credit are assessed on the basis of whether or not the completed study is equivalent to a specific unit or sequence of units at the University of Divinity, and must ensure the dynamic equivalence of the volume of learning, level of learning, unit content, learning outcomes, and assessment tasks assessed as a whole without disadvantaging the student.

5.6 Specified Credit is identified on a student's record either by assignment of the volume of learning, specified level and discipline, or use of the code or codes for the equivalent University of Divinity unit or units, and stating any reduction of the time permitted for minimum or maximum completion of the award as required by the relevant Regulation.

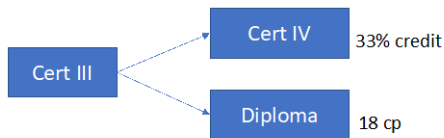
6. Block Credit Rules

6.1 Block credit means the granting of credit which contributes towards a specific portion of a course (e.g. 33.3% or two semester's equivalent in duration of a Bachelor award) for a formal or informal learning achieved by the student prior to their application for admission. Block Credit may be granted where an applicant has completed whole semesters(s) of study in a similar program.

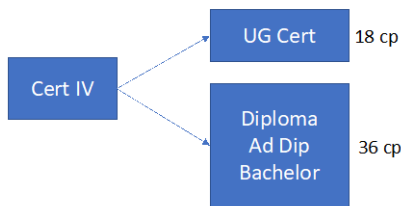
6.2 Block Credit may only be granted (including in combination with any other form of credit) to the maximum volume defined by the Regulation governing the relevant award, which must be not more than two-thirds of an undergraduate award or one-half of a postgraduate award, provided always that there is no maximum limit for credit for units undertaken at the University of Divinity that have not been used towards the completion of another award.

6.4 Block Credit is granted as recognition of successfully completed periods of equivalent study. Block credit is expressed in volume of credit points as illustrated in Figure 1, as approved specified or unspecified units which indicate the level and volume.

Block Credit for a Divinity Related Certificate III (AQF level 3) qualification



Block Credit for level 1 units in a Divinity Related Certificate IV (AQF level 4) qualification



Block Credit for a Divinity Related Diploma (AQF level 5) qualification

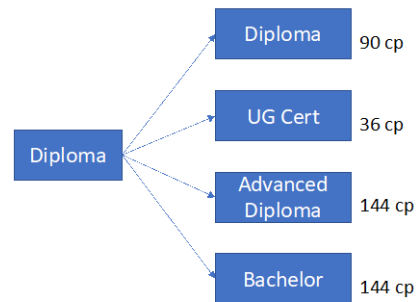


Figure 1 – Representation of a Block Credit to be awarded in a Bachelor or sub-bachelor degrees at the University of Divinity.

Example: A student applies for a Block Credit of a full-time year equivalent in a Bachelor level award at UD based on completing a Divinity related Diploma award (AQF Level 5) from a different institution. Block credit is granted and applied as 144 points (one full-time year at the University of Divinity equivalent to fulfilling the requirements for the first year of study).

7. Unspecified Credit Rules

- 7.1 Unspecified Credit means the award of credit which contributes only to the volume of learning required for a course and does not contribute to the specific requirements of a course.
- 7.2 Unspecified Credit may only be granted if the Academic Board has made provision for Unspecified Credit in the Schedule to the Regulation governing the relevant award. Unspecified Credit cannot be granted in programs which do not contain undergraduate or postgraduate electives.
- 7.3 Unspecified Credit may only be granted (including in combination with any other form of credit) to the maximum volume defined by the Regulation governing the relevant award, which must be not more than two-thirds of an undergraduate award or one-half of a postgraduate award, provided always that there is no maximum limit for credit for units undertaken at the University of Divinity that have not been used towards the completion of another award.
- 7.4 Applications for Unspecified Credit are assessed on the basis of whether or not the completed study meets the requirements specified in the Regulation or Schedule governing the course of study towards which credit is sought.

7.5 Unspecified Credit is identified on a student's record without assignment of a level or discipline and stating any reduction of the time permitted for minimum or maximum completion of the award as required by the relevant Regulation.

8. Exemption without Credit Rules

8.1 Exemption without credit (EWOC) means the award of credit which does not contribute to the volume of learning required for a course but does contribute to the specific requirements of a course, such as a specific unit of study or study at a specific level or discipline.

8.2 Applications for Exemption are assessed on the basis of whether or not the completed study is equivalent to a specific requirement of the course at the University of Divinity, on the basis of equivalence of the volume of learning, content, learning outcomes, and assessment tasks. Exemption may be applied to a specific unit or group of units.

Example: A student applies for a EWOC for a unit or units in a postgraduate award at UD based on completing a unit, or units, or a full Postgraduate award in a related field or discipline from a different institution. EWOC is granted for the foundational units of the postgraduate degree, without reducing the credit points required to graduate as per the Regulation. The student must still complete the total required credit points as per the specific Regulation of that award.

8.3 Exemption is identified on a student's record by a statement of the exemption granted.

9. Course Transfer Rules

9.1 Course Transfer occurs when a student applies to change from one course of the University to another and seeks to transfer units from the original course to the new course.

9.2 Applications for course transfer are assessed on the basis of whether or not:

- a) the student is eligible for admission to the new course based on the requirements of the Admissions Policy and the relevant Regulation and Schedule.
- b) the units previously completed by the student are eligible for transfer to the new course, including assessment of level, discipline and any other requirements specified in the relevant Regulation and Schedule.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that after a Course Transfer has been completed, the student is aware of the remaining requirements of the new course.

9.3 Course Transfer is identified on a student's record through maintaining details of the student's enrolment history in each course, and the transfer of units from one course to another. If any units completed are not eligible for transfer they must remain on the student's record, either assigned to the original course or as single units.

9.4 A graduate of the University of Divinity may apply for a Course Transfer by relinquishing the University of Divinity award and seeking to transfer the units which contributed to that award to another course provided all other requirements of this Policy are met. To relinquish the award the graduate must apply in writing to the Dean of Academic Programs and return the testamur and other academic documents. The Dean of

Academic Programs is responsible for recording that the student has relinquished the award and for retaining the returned academic documents on the student's file with the words "Award Relinquished" and the date.

10. External Study Rules

- 10.1 External Study means the award of credit for study undertaken by a student of the University of Divinity at another higher education provider recognised by the Academic Board provided the student has been granted prior approval to undertake the study.
- 10.2 Applications for External Study are assessed on the basis of:
- a) whether or not the proposed study is equivalent to a specific unit or requirement of the course at the University of Divinity, on the basis of equivalence of the volume of learning, content, learning outcomes, and assessment tasks; and
 - b) the rationale provided by the student for undertaking units external to the University of Divinity; and
 - c) the availability of equivalent learning experiences at the University of Divinity.
- 10.3 External Study is identified on a student's record with assignment of a specified level or discipline, or use of the code or codes for the equivalent University of Divinity unit or units, and may only be recorded when the student has supplied an academic transcript from the other institution demonstrating that the study was satisfactorily completed.

11. Recognition of Prior Learning Rules

- 11.1 Recognition of Prior Learning ("RPL") means the award of credit for non-accredited learning, formal, non-formal or informal, such as professional development, occupational training, work experience or other community experience for which evidence exists to show that through the non-accredited learning experience the applicant achieved learning outcomes comparable to those of a specified unit or units at the University of Divinity. RPL may be used for the purposes of gaining credit for units in a course according to the definitions and conditions in Section 4 of this Policy.

Any assessment to recognise prior learning must:

- a) be evidence-based, equitable and transparent; and
 - b) facilitate students' movement between institutions and between courses, without disadvantaging the student and preserving the integrity of the course structure.
- 11.2 Applications for RPL are assessed by the Dean of Academic Programs on the basis of whether or not:
- a) the learning experience is equivalent to a specific unit or requirement of the course at the University of Divinity, on the basis of the dynamic equivalence of the volume of learning, content, and the competencies gained, or outcomes of the experience assessed as a whole; and

b) the evidence provided is sufficient to support the equivalence of the learning experience to accredited study.

11.3 RPL is identified on a student's record in the same manner as unspecified credit or specified credit or exemption depending on the nature of the RPL and the form of credit sought for it.

12. Application Procedures

12.1 Applications for credit must be made using the Credit Application Form approved by the Dean of Academic Programs and available on the University website.

12.2 Applications by applicants intending to study in Australia on an Overseas Student Visa must be made prior to admission and the outcome resolved prior to completion of the first semester of study in Australia.

12.3 An applicant who has been granted credit by the University of Divinity in any form may not transfer that credit to another course of study and must reapply for credit in accordance with this Policy.

12.4 An applicant or a student who has previously received credit towards a course offered by another institution must reapply for credit towards a University of Divinity course of study in accordance with this Policy.

12.5 Applications are submitted to a course advisor of the applicant's home College or intended home College.

12.6 Applications must include evidence of the study or learning for which credit is sought. This must include academic transcripts for accredited study, and may include supplementary documentation such as outlines of individual units including details of the volume of learning, learning outcomes, and assessment tasks.

12.7 Applications are assessed by the College course advisor who may refuse the application, seek further information, or forward the application with a recommendation to the Dean of Academic Programs. It is the College course advisor's responsibility to establish how the recommendation meets the requirements of this Policy.

12.8 The outcome of each application is decided by the Dean of Academic Programs taking into account the recommendation of the College.

12.9 The Dean of Academic Programs must report the outcome to the College course advisor and the applicant within 20 working days of receipt. If granted, the report must specify the form and extent of credit as required by this Policy and the corresponding reduction in the volume or requirements of the course.

13. Review and Appeal

13.1 An applicant under this Policy whose application for credit is refused by the applicant's College under section 12.7 of this Policy may apply in writing to the Dean of Academic Programs for a review of the decision.

13.2 An applicant under this Policy may apply in writing to the Chair of the Academic Board for a review of the outcome of a credit application as decided by the Dean of Academic Programs under section 12.8 of this Policy within 5 working days of the applicant

receiving written notice of the refusal. The applicant must clearly state the grounds for the review and is responsible for providing evidence.

13.2 The Chair of the Academic Board must acknowledge receipt of the review request in writing to the appellant within 5 working days.

13.3 The Chair of the Academic Board must consult with the officer or officers of the University or its Colleges involved in making the decision, and review the decision against the relevant Regulations and Schedule and this Policy.

13.4 The Chair of the Academic Board must report the outcome of the review in writing to the appellant, the Dean of Academic Programs, the University Secretary, and the Academic Dean of the College through which the appellant applied within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal.

13.5 The applicant may have recourse to the Appeals Policy to dispute the outcome of the review if the applicant is able to provide evidence of failure to comply with this Policy.

14. Reporting and review

14.1 The Dean of Academic Programs must provide an annual report to the Academic Board on the execution of this Policy, including quantitative data on the number and type of credit applications approved, and including any recommendations for improvement.

15. Date of Next Review

15.1 This Policy is to be reviewed no later than 31 December 2029.

Schedule A:

Credit form

Section D: Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning ("RPL") means the award of credit for non-accredited learning, formal, non-formal or informal, such as professional development, occupational training, work experience or other community experience for which evidence exists to show that through the non-accredited learning experience the applicant achieved learning outcomes comparable to those of a specified unit or units at the University of Divinity. RPL may be used for the purposes of gaining credit for units in a course according to Section the definitions and conditions in Section 4 of the Credit Policy.

Criteria for Recognition of Prior Learning (Please tick all that apply)

- Formal Learning:** Learning that takes place through a structured program undertaken at an accredited education provider that leads to the full or partial achievement of an Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) qualification or an [international equivalent recognised by the University](#).
- Informal Learning:** Learning gained through work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences. Unlike formal and non-formal learning, informal learning is not organised or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support.
- Learning or competency outcomes:** A learning or competency outcome that a learner should be able to demonstrate as a result of being involved in a learning process. The learning should indicate a conceptual as well as a practical understanding of the knowledge or competency required and should be applicable outside the environment in which it was acquired.
- Non-Formal learning:** The learning that takes place though a structured program of learning, but which does not lead to an officially accredited qualification.

Please include below a statement by the applicant (500 characters maximum):

1. Explain how the relevant work and/or life experience addresses the course content and meets the learning outcomes of the unit(s) for which credit is sought
2. Detail the activities, when and where they took place, and their duration and/or frequency; and

Please provide supporting evidence as attached portfolio containing:

1. a resumé;
2. employment positions description;
3. samples of work;
4. project briefs;
5. reports and publications;
6. statements by relevant employers confirming the applicant's work experience, position and length of service; and
7. vocational courses and qualifications

