

Course Credit for Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles and processes by which Collarts will assess applications for course credit based on recognition of prior learning. The policy will ensure Collarts maintains academic standards for all courses and complies with the *TEQSA Threshold Standards 2021*, the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000* and the *National Code 2018*.

Scope

This policy applies to all domestic and international students and potential students who request course credit towards an undergraduate or postgraduate course of study at Collarts in recognition of prior learning for course(s) undertaken at another institution or as a Collarts graduate. This policy also applies to College staff who assess and process course credit requests.

All applications for admission to a course of study at Collarts based on recognition of previous study or work/life experiences are assessed in accordance with the *Admissions Policies*. Eligibility for admission based on prior learning does not guarantee eligibility for course credit.

Definition of Key Terms

Advanced Standing is the grade applied for the recognition of previous learning or study that can be credited towards a qualification.

Articulation is the process that enables students to progress from a completed qualification to another with admission and/or credit in a defined qualification pathway. This includes progression from a nested Diploma award into the corresponding Bachelor's degree award at Collarts via the college defined pathway.

Award means the qualification resulting from the successful completion of a specific program of study.

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, recognition of prior learning or advanced standing.

Learning Outcomes the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

Qualification means an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification as the result of an accredited complete program of learning that leads to formal certification that a graduate has achieved learning outcomes as described in the AQF.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means the assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine or credit outcomes of an individual application for credit.

Principles

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning is an assessment process used to determine the extent to which a student has achieved the required learning outcomes of a unit of study to receive credit towards a course of study at Collarts. This may result in the granting of credit via the grade of 'Advanced Standing' (AS) in a specific unit and exemption from that unit.

Granting of credit must not disadvantage the student in achieving the expected learning outcomes for the course, and the integrity of the course of study and qualification must be maintained.

Collarts will recognise prior learning for course credit under the following circumstances:

1. Previous Study

Formal Learning: Formal learning is learning that takes place through a structured program of learning that leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework (or recognised overseas institution), including:

- a) completed higher education subjects or qualifications
- b) completed VET subjects or qualifications at Diploma or Advanced Diploma level

Non-Formal Learning: Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of learning but does not lead to an officially accredited qualification.

2. Work & Life Experiences

Also referred to as Informal Learning gained through work or life experiences. Claims for recognition of learning through work and life experience must meet the following criteria:

- **Authenticity:** the applicant can demonstrate the learning outcomes that are being claimed
- **Currency:** the learning outcomes are still valid and performable
- **Quality:** the learning has reached an acceptable level and is equivalent to the respective AQF level
- **Relevance:** the learning is applicable to the subject claimed
- **Transferability:** the learning outcome can be applied outside the context in which it was learned
- **Comparability:** the learning is comparable in content with the subject(s) in which credit is sought

The onus is on the applicant to provide evidence to demonstrate the required knowledge and skills have been gained through professional and/or life experiences.

3. Articulation

Articulation is a formal arrangement approved by the Academic Board that enables students to progress from one qualification to a particular course of study at Collarts with a specified amount of credit. For example, graduates of a nested Diploma qualification at Collarts can articulate into the corresponding Bachelor's degree award course.

Formal articulation agreements with other institutions are listed on the college website.

A student may articulate between a Graduate Certificate to the relevant Graduate Diploma and then the relevant Master's program, as long as they satisfy the entry requirements for the degree to which they are being admitted. Students may also exit with the lower embedded award if they have satisfactorily completed the units which make up the exiting award structure. Articulation is subject to the approval of the Program Leader.

Students are not permitted to articulate from one degree to another if the original degree has been conferred and awarded. Students articulating between programs should graduate with one degree only.

Currency of Prior Learning

The knowledge and skills gained as a result of prior learning and experiences must be current and relevant in the context of the course in which the applicant is enrolled. As disciplinary knowledge and practices change, it is necessary to set a currency limit to ensure previous learning is undertaken in a timeframe that enables students to achieve course outcomes.

The maximum timeframe for previous study or work and life experience is five years.

The acceptance of qualifications and experiences outside this timeframe is at the discretion of the Program Leader when assessing an application for credit.

Applying for Credit

Applicants seeking course credit for recognition of prior learning must apply using the college 'Application for Course Credit Form' which can be downloaded via the FAQs section of the college website (students can also access at <http://mycollarts.edu.au/login/index.php>). For more details on the procedure for application and the assessment of applications for credit, refer to the Procedures section of this policy.

Granting Course Credit

Credit is granted when it is determined that there is equivalence of discipline, content and learning outcomes between the knowledge and skills gained from prior learning (previous formal or non-formal study, or work and life experience) and the unit of study at Collarts for which credit is being sought. In granting credit, Collarts must be assured that all requirements of the course of study will be fulfilled. As such, each Application for Credit is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

In assessing an application for credit, the following factors will be considered when determining equivalency:

- course and/or unit outcomes
- volume of learning
- depth and breadth of course content
- assessment methods
- reference and reading materials
- resources and facilities such as equipment, library, computer labs, software etc.

Course Credit for Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

- academic results
- substantiated relevant and current professional and/or life experience

Where course credit is granted, the student will be awarded the grade 'Advanced Standing' (AS) and is exempt from attending and completing that particular unit in order to complete the qualification.

Credit Limitations

Credit is not granted for failed or incomplete units of study. A Conceded Pass (or equivalent) is not considered as successful completion and therefore ineligible for credit.

Credit and/or exemptions awarded at another institution cannot be used for credit towards a Collarts qualification.

Credit is not granted towards postgraduate courses for prior learning from undergraduate courses or units of study.

The maximum number of units for which exemption may be granted is 50% of the total credit points for the course, less, where professional accreditation limits the maximum credit that can be granted. At their discretion, the Dean may recognise credit beyond 50% in cases where the applicant was previously a student at Collarts and is enrolling in a new course of study at Collarts. In other cases, the Dean must recommend credit recognition beyond 50% to the Academic Board for their approval.

Partial credit is not granted.

Course Credit & Implications for International Student Visas

International students should be aware that receiving credit for four or more units of study may affect the course duration and therefore the length of their student visa. Where course credit changes the expected completion date and therefore shortens the expected duration of the course of study for an international student, Collarts will:

- a) adjust the course duration in the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) when course credit is granted at the time of admission ie. prior to the issue of the student visa
- b) report the change in course duration to the Department of Education, Skills and Employment via PRISMS in accordance with Standard 8 of the *National Code 2018* when course credit is granted after admission and the original CoE.

Appeal

Applicants may appeal a decision for course credit in line with the college *Grievance & Appeals Policy*. For details on the procedure for appealing a decision to deny credit, see Procedures Step 5b (page 6).

Procedures

1. Submit an application to the Office of the Registrar (via Student Services)

Responsible: Applicant

Applicants seeking course credit for recognition of prior learning should download an *Application for Course Credit Form*, which can be downloaded via the FAQs section of the college website (students can also access at <http://mycollarts.edu.au/login/index.php>).

Applications are not accepted if incomplete, unsigned and/or without the required documentary evidence. It is the responsibility of the student to attach the required documentary evidence to support of their application as outlined below:

a) Previous Study

Applicants must attach the following documentary evidence in relation to the unit(s) for which exemption or credit is sought based on relevant study completed within the previous five years:

- Academic transcript(s) including year completed and grades attained
- Course award and description
- Official unit outline from the time of study which shows:
 - learning outcomes
 - assessment tasks
 - study load
 - subject content
 - reference and reading materials

b) Work or Life Experience

The applicant must attach supporting documentation in relation to the unit(s) for which exemption or credit is sought based on work or life experience. This may include portfolios/work samples, position description, curriculum vitae and references.

c) Articulation

Collarts students articulating between related courses do not need to attach documentary evidence to the application form.

All documentary evidence should be copies of originals as certified by a Justice of the Peace. However, if this is not possible, the original documentation can be presented with the application and Student Services will take copies and witness them as being true copies of originals presented. Any international documentation must be translated to English.

Completed Applications should be submitted to Student Services.

Applications in recognition of previous study or experience should be submitted at the time of enrolment (or application to study) where possible. Failing this, applications should be made ten days prior to the trimester's Commencement Date, but no later than five working days before the trimester's Census Day. Applications received after Census Date will only be considered for the following trimester.

Applications to articulate may be submitted in the last trimester of Certificate IV or Diploma study and a decision will be made within ten working days after the release of final results.

It is recommended that the student to take a copy of their completed application form and supporting documentation for their records before submitting to Student Services. Collarts is not responsible for taking or providing the applicant with a copy at the time of submission.

2. Check application for completeness

Responsible: Collarts (Student Services/Registrar)

The submitted *Application for Course Credit Form* is checked for completeness by Student Services. Collarts will only accept completed applications as eligible for assessment. Applicants will receive a lodgement receipt as proof of submission.

3. Assessment of the completed application

Responsible: Collarts (Dean/Program Leader)

After the check for completeness, the Registrar's Office forwards the Completed Application to the respective Program Leader (or nominee) for assessment. The Program Leader (or nominee) undertakes a review of the application against the assessment criteria as outlined in the *Course Credit for Recognition of Prior Learning Policy* and makes a decision to grant or deny the application for course credit.

4. Advise assessment decision in writing

Responsible: Collarts (Program Leader & Student Services/Registrar)

Following assessment, the Program Leader (or nominee) will advise the Registrar's Office of its decision to grant or deny the application for course credit.

a) Applications for course credit for previous study or work/life experience

The Registrar's Office will advise the applicant of the decision in writing within ten working days of the receipt of the completed application. A longer time may be required during peak admission and enrolment times but will not exceed fifteen working days.

b) Applications for course credit for articulation to a Bachelor's degree award course

The Registrar's Office advises the applicant of the decision in writing within ten working days of the release of final results by the Moderation Committee.

Where an *Application for Course Credit* is successful, Collarts will send the student an email advising the decision, the course credit(s) to be applied and any implications to course progression and/or course duration as a result of the credit. The student must sign and return a copy of this letter authorising the application of the course credit(s) to their enrolment before a grade of 'Advanced Standing' will be applied and the student management system updated accordingly.

Where an *Application for Course Credit* is denied, Collarts will not grant course credit. The applicant will be sent a 'Refusal of Course Credit Letter' outlining the reasons for decision and their rights to appeal the decision. Applicants wishing to make an appeal should refer to the college *Grievance & Appeals Policy*.

5. Respond to the notification of decision

Responsible: Applicant

a) The applicant accepts the college decision

Applicants who receive written notification advising the decision to grant course credit are not required to respond. However, should the applicant wish to remove any of the granted course credit, they must respond to this notification indicating which credits they wish to have removed.

b) The applicant elects to appeal the college decision

Applicants who receive a written notification letter advising them of the decision to deny course credit may wish to appeal the decision and must do so within twenty working days from the deemed receipt of the notification letter. The first stage of the grievance and appeals process is to lodge a 'Formal Grievance Form' which can be downloaded via the FAQs section of the college website (students can also access at <http://mycollarts.edu.au/login/index.php>). Applicants wishing to lodge an appeal should refer to the college *Grievance & Appeals Policy*.

If the appeal is successful, Steps 4 and 5a in the procedure for course credit is applied. During the appeal process however, where the applicant has commenced study, they remain enrolled in their course of study and are bound by the Collarts policies. The student should continue to attend classes and submit assessments to ensure satisfactory course progression and completion of the course of study within the expected timeframe. Failure to do so may incur an academic and/or financial penalty and, for international students, result in a breach of the conditions of visa which Collarts will be required to report to the Department of Home Affairs in accordance with the *National Code 2018*.

6. Course credit is processed, and enrolment updated

Responsible: Collarts (Student Services)

Student Services assigns a grade of 'Advanced Standing' against the unit in the Student Management System and adjusts the enrolment accordingly. The student is issued with a course map (and timetable in due course) to reflect the application of the 'Advanced Standing' grade(s) in line with the process for admissions and enrolment.

Where four or more 'Advanced Standing' grades for an international student have been granted after the issue of their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), Collarts will report the change of course duration to the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS and the length of the student's visa may be reduced. If a new student visa is issued by the Department of Home Affairs, a copy of the new visa must be provided to Student Services before enrolment is finalised and the student is issued with a new course map (and timetable in due course).

A copy of the application, decision and applicant authorisations, including the new student visa where applicable for an international student, is kept on the student file.

Related Policies

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

- *Admissions Policies for Domestic and International Students*
- *AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy*
- *TEQSA Guidance Note: Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning*
- *Monitoring Academic Progression Policy*
- *Grievance & Appeals Policy*

All college policies and any associated forms referenced in this document can be downloaded from the college website and the MyCollarts Student Portal at <http://mycollarts.edu.au/login/index.php>.

Further Information

Author:	Quality & Compliance Manager	Policy owner:	Dean
Approver:	Academic Board	Next review due:	July 2024
Approved:	7 July 2021	Current status:	Approved