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## POLICY S5.6

# CREDIT AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Context

The AIM Business School (ABS) values opportunities for students to build upon their prior learning, whether this learning was acquired through prior formal or non-formal learning or gained through appropriate professional work experience, ensuring students do not have to repeat learning that has been successfully completed elsewhere.

### 1.2 Purpose

This policy provides the principles and responsibilities for managing credit at ABS, in order to maximise the credit that students can gain from their completed prior learning and enhance progression into and between qualifications.

### 1.3 Scope

This policy and its procedure apply to applicants seeking admission with advanced standing due to prior formal and non-formal learning, and to current students seeking credit or recognition of prior learning during their course enrolment. This policy and its procedure also apply to ABS and third-party staff with responsibilities to assess, approve and record applications for credit and recognition of prior learning.

### 1.4 Scope Exceptions

None.

## 2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students are responsible to read and ensure they understand this policy and its procedure.
2. The Executive Director, ABS or delegate will determine applications for specified credit for individual applicants or students.
3. The Executive Director, ABS or delegate is responsible to determine applications for other types of credit.
4. The nominated position in a third-party agreement, where applicable, is responsible to consider applications for credit and make recommendations to the Executive Director, ABS.

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5. The Executive Director, ABS is responsible to make the final determination on the third-party's recommendations.
  6. The Executive Director, ABS is responsible to approve formal articulation pathways.
  7. Block credit arrangements must be approved by Academic Board.
  8. The Executive Director, ABS or delegate is responsible to maintain a central Credit Register which includes precedent credit decisions, formal articulation pathways and block credit.
  9. Once a credit decision has been determined, the Executive Director, ABS is responsible to apply the same decision to identical credit application scenarios (precedent credit decisions).

## 3.0 POLICY

### 3.1 Principles

1. ABS acknowledges the value of providing students with opportunities to build upon prior learning, whether this learning was acquired through prior formal or non-formal learning or gained through appropriate professional work experience.
2. Credit decisions will aim to ensure that students do not have to repeat learning that has been successfully completed elsewhere, whilst not disadvantaging a student in achieving the course-level learning outcomes.
3. In accordance with the principles of the *AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy* for making decisions about awarding credit, decisions at ABS will:
  - a. maximise the credit that students can gain (up to 50% of a qualification);
  - b. enhance student progression into and between qualifications;
  - c. be evidence based, equitable and transparent;
  - d. be applied consistently and fairly with decisions subject to appropriate appeal and review;
  - e. recognise learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired provided that the learning is relevant and current and has a relationship to the learning outcomes of the qualification;
  - f. be academically defensible and take into account the student's ability to successfully meet the learning outcomes of the qualification;

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- g. be decided in a timely way so that student's study progress is not unnecessarily inhibited; and
      - h. be formally documented (including reasons for not providing credit where applicable).
    4. ABS will not recognise part or all of a student's prior learning where it is not deemed equivalent, or where credit transfer is prohibited by course rules.
    5. ABS maintains a Credit Register to ensure the same credit/RPL decision is made for identical credit applications.
    6. All credit decisions are recorded on the student record.

## 3.2 Types of Credit

### 1. Specified Credit

- a. Specified credit may be granted on the basis of prior formal learning that is deemed to be equivalent when considering the learning outcomes, volume of learning, program of study (including content) as well as learning and assessment approaches. *Note: in higher education, equivalence must be 80% or more, from an accredited higher education institution, and be gained within the last ten years.*
- b. When approved, specified credit will be transferred to specified units within a course, and recorded as Advanced Standing on the academic transcript, with the code AS. It recognises that the student has achieved equivalent unit(s) learning outcomes and can be used to meet pre-requisite requirements.

### 2. Block credit

- a. Block credit is granted when a student has completed a formal qualification set out as part of an approved pathway or formal articulation agreement. The amount of block credit granted is determined as part of the approved pathway or articulation agreement and will be automatically applied at the point of entry.
- b. Block credit exempts a student from completing multiple units - usually specified stages or components of a course - and is recorded as Advanced Standing, with the AS on the academic transcript. It does not recognise that the student has achieved equivalent unit(s) learning outcomes.

### 3. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- a. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a form of credit that results from an assessment of an individual's relevant prior informal and/or non-formal learning against a unit or course learning outcomes. Additional formal learning may also be taken into account when establishing RPL.
- b. When approved, RPL will be transferred against specified units within the course, and recorded as Advanced Standing on the academic transcript with the code AS. It recognises that the student has achieved equivalent unit(s) learning outcomes and can be used to meet pre-requisite requirements.

### 4. Summary of Credit Types

Credit Type	Specified Credit	Block Credit	RPL
Formal learning – qualification	✓	✓	✗
Formal learning - units	✓	✗	✓
Informal learning and/or non- formal learning	✗	✗	✓

### 3.3 Transferring Credit between Courses

1. If a student has credit approved whilst enrolled in one course and then transfers to a different course, the credit will not be automatically transferred. The student will need to re-apply to have the credit recognised.

### 3.4 Credit Limits

1. Students enrolled in ABS higher education courses must undertake a minimum volume of learning within the course in order to qualify from that course with an ABS award - i.e., they must complete no less than 50% of the qualification.
2. Credit cannot be given for part of a unit, or for an assessment item.

### 3.5 Exceeding Credit Limits

1. The Executive Director, ABS may approve credit beyond the limits shown in this policy, providing there is academic rationale consistent with the policy's principles. This includes instances where an institution discontinues a course, and ABS agrees to teach those students to completion.

2. Where the Executive Director approves credit beyond the limits stated in this policy, this must be reported to the ABS Academic Board with a rationale for the decision.
3. The Credit Limits as set out in clause 3.4.1 of this Policy do not apply to approved ABS nested awards.

### 3.6 Rescission of credit

1. Credit may be rescinded at the request of the student, after admission to the course.
2. Credit may be rescinded by ABS in the following circumstances:
  - a. As part of a strategy to improve the progression outcomes for a student.
  - b. The qualification documentation provided by the student for assessment of credit is found to be fraudulent.

### 3.7 Appealing Credit Decisions

1. Students have the right to appeal against any decision made under this policy and its procedure.
2. The Student Grievance and Complaints Policy and Procedure must be followed for any appeal against a credit decision.

## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Credit** -The value assigned to equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit granted provides students with advanced standing in their course (i.e., it reduces the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification).
- **Credit Register** - a central register of credit decisions.
- **Credit Transfer** -a process which provides students with a consistent value of equivalence for learning outcomes in specified units.
- **Exit award** - an approved, lesser award that a student can choose to graduate with, that forms a complete sub-set of an approved, higher award in which the student was originally enrolled.
- **Formal Learning** - Learning that takes place through a structured training program that leads to the full or partial achievement of an accredited qualification.

- **Informal Learning** - Learning gained through professional work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences, without being organised or structured into objectives or time constraints.
- **Non-formal learning** - Learning that takes place through a structured program of learning that does not lead to an officially accredited qualification, for example short courses.
- **Pathways** - A formal way for students to move through qualification levels with full or partial recognition for the learning outcomes from the qualification they have already achieved.
- **Precedent Credit Decisions** - the application of the same credit decision to identical scenarios in subsequent credit decisions. Precedent credit decisions are recorded on the credit register.
- **Specified Credit** - Credit granted on the basis of formal learning to a specific component of a qualification.
- **Student** - Refers to domestic and international ABS students.
- **Types of Credit** - see clause 3.2 of this policy.
- **Unspecified Credit:** Credit granted on the basis of formal or informal learning to an unspecified component of a qualification.

## 5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- Application for RPL and Credit form
- [AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy](#)
- Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure
- Student Grievances and Complaints Policy
- Student Grievances and Complaints Procedure

## 6.0 POLICY OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Executive Director, ABS
Status	Reviewed on May 2024
Approval Authority	ABS Corporate Board
Date of Approval	25 June 2024
Effective Date	2 July 2024
Implementation Owner	Executive Director, ABS
Maintenance Owner	Head of Compliance
Review Due	May 2027
Content Enquiries	Professor Sabina Cerimagic - Executive Director, ABS Email: <a href="mailto:sabina.cerimagic@aimbusinessschool.edu.au">sabina.cerimagic@aimbusinessschool.edu.au</a>

## 7.0 AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
S5.0	8 June 2017	Head of Compliance, Partners	Initial Document - first draft
S5.1	16 June 2017	Head of Compliance, Partners	Updated with procedure and definitions table. Customised to higher education and updated to new policy template.
S5.2	29 June 2017	Head of Compliance, Partners	Updated to reflect Dean, ABS feedback
S5.3	10 March 2020	Academic Board	General review and update
S5.4	21 October 2021	Corporate Board	Policy and Procedure separated. Rescission of credit/RPL added. Additional definitions. Appendix 1 changed to Schedule 1.
S5.5	10 March 2023	Head of Compliance	Minor Administrative change: update to staffing titles
S5.6	25 June 2024	Executive Director	Reference when maximum credit may be granted for nested courses.