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## Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Academic Policy Group

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### 1 Purpose

This policy governs the credit awarded towards Victoria University of Wellington ('Victoria') programmes from courses taken at other tertiary institutions ('transfer credit') and credit awarded for informal or uncertificated prior learning ('RPL credit') that has been assessed by Victoria as equivalent to specified Victoria courses. Credit of Victoria courses to more than one Victoria programme ('cross-credit') is governed by the statutes for each qualification and the Personal Courses of Study Statute.

### 2 Organisational Scope

This is a University-wide policy.

### 3 Definitions

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Exemption:	Exemption from completing a particular degree, major, or prerequisite requirement. An exemption does not imply that credit has been granted for the courses associated with the requirement.
Fully specified credit:	Awarded credit that is defined as a specific course code (where the previous study is considered to be equivalent or a superset of that particular Victoria course).
Partially specified credit:	Awarded credit that is defined in terms of a subject or faculty code and level (where the previous study is broadly equivalent to material covered in that discipline or faculty at that level, but not equivalent to a specific course).
RPL (recognition of informal prior learning) credit:	Credit awarded on the basis of prior learning that occurred outside accredited courses or qualifications. This may include workplace training, marae-based learning or independent learning. RPL credit is always fully specified credit.
Transfer credit:	Credit awarded towards a Victoria qualification on the basis of courses previously passed at another tertiary institution.
Unspecified credit:	Awarded credit that is defined at a particular level, but does not specify a subject area (where the previous study is broadly equivalent to material at that level, in a subject area that could properly be taught at degree level in a university). Unspecified credit is identified with the 'subject' code UNSP.

## 4 Principles

- (a) The award of a qualification must be on the basis that the student has met the full academic requirements of the qualification, irrespective of the extent of any transfer credit or RPL credit.
- (b) The award of a Victoria qualification requires that a sufficient proportion of the courses for the qualification has been passed at Victoria University, and that the courses passed at Victoria include a sufficient number at advanced levels to establish its distinctive character as a Victoria qualification.
- (c) Credit should be awarded at the highest level that is consistent with the nature of the previous learning and appropriate for the student's programme of study at Victoria.

## 5 Responsibilities

- (a) Decisions on the award of transfer credit are made by the Associate Dean (Students) or equivalent in the relevant faculty. The Associate Dean will consult with the relevant Head of School where specified in s8.
- (b) Decisions on RPL credit are made by the Associate Dean on the recommendation of the relevant Head of School.
- (c) Applicants are responsible for providing acceptable evidence of their prior learning, and any additional materials that may be requested in order to assess its content, level and value. Credit will not be awarded unless satisfactory information is provided.

## 6 Learning for which credit may be awarded

### 6.1 *Credit must be based on the original learning*

All assessment of transfer credit and RPL credit must be based on the original learning. Transfer credit can only be awarded on the basis of achievement at the institution where the course was originally taken. The awarding of transfer credit for a course by another institution is not sufficient grounds for Victoria University to award transfer credit for the same course. Transfer credit cannot be awarded on the basis of RPL credit awarded by another institution.

### 6.2 *Courses passed at another tertiary institution*

- (a) Transfer credit may be awarded in respect of courses that are:
  - (i) available for degree programmes at other New Zealand universities; or
  - (ii) registered on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework at Level 5 or above and in a subject which could properly be taught at degree level in a university; or
  - (iii) offered by an educational institution and recognised by the Associate Dean as being of equivalent standard to courses in (i) or (ii) of this section.
- (b) Transfer credit will not be awarded in respect of courses taken elsewhere when the content is substantially similar to courses passed at Victoria.
- (c) Transfer credit will not be awarded for courses passed more than ten years before the date of application for credit unless the course content is still valid material that could properly be taught as part of a current programme.
- (d) Credit will not be awarded for courses passed while the student was suspended from Victoria on academic misconduct grounds.

- (e) Credit will not normally be awarded for courses passed while the student was suspended or excluded from any other tertiary institution on academic misconduct grounds.

## **7 Types of credit that may be awarded at Victoria University**

### **7.1 Transfer credit**

- (a) Transfer credit may be awarded as:
  - (i) fully specified credit, that is, a Victoria course identified by subject and course code and usually having the normal point value of that course. Subject to s8, specified credit may be used to satisfy any degree, major or prerequisite requirement that would be satisfied by the relevant Victoria course; or
  - (ii) partially specified credit in a particular subject at a particular level, but not specifying a course code. Subject to s8, partially specified credit may be used to satisfy degree, major or prerequisite requirements that would be satisfied by courses with the same subject code and level or degree schedule and level; or
  - (iii) unspecified credit at a particular level but which does not specify a subject or course code. Unspecified credit may be used to satisfy degree, major or prerequisite requirements expressed in terms of any points at the same level.

*Note: Under the provisions in the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Associate Dean may exempt a student from particular degree, major or prerequisite requirements. Such exemptions may be based on prior learning, and may be in addition to, or instead of, the award of any transfer credit.*

- (b) Unspecified or partially specified transfer credit may be reassessed if the student seeks an alternative qualification.

### **7.2 RPL credit**

#### **7.2.1 Principles for the award of RPL credit**

- (a) RPL credit may only be awarded as fully specified credit, normally at 100-level, and is regarded as full Victoria credit in terms of meeting degree, major or prerequisite requirements.
- (b) Credit may only be awarded in courses that have been approved for RPL credit by the Academic Committee in accordance with s7.2.2 below.
- (c) Credit may only be awarded for courses currently listed on the schedule to a Victoria qualification.
- (d) Credit may only be awarded for prior learning that satisfies the course learning objectives as set out in the relevant course outline. Credit is not awarded purely on the basis of practical experience.

*Note: Where a student's prior experience has adequately prepared them for direct entry to an advanced course or graduate programme, but it is not appropriate to grant RPL credit, this can be dealt with using the provisions in the Personal Courses of Study Statute, or the entry requirements for individual graduate programmes.*

#### **7.2.2 Approval of courses for RPL credit**

Any school wishing to be able to award RPL credit for a course must submit an RPL proposal for approval by the relevant faculty board and the Academic Committee. The RPL proposal must include:

- (i) the justification for offering RPL credit for the course, which might include information on how students can obtain appropriate learning independently and why there is a demand for RPL credit;
- (ii) the criteria under which a candidate is permitted to apply for RPL credit in the course; and
- (iii) the assessment process to be used, including a statement on how it ensures the student has met the learning outcomes for the course.

### **7.2.3 Assessment procedures**

The proposed assessment procedure must be fair, valid and transparent, and must allow determination of whether the applicant's knowledge, experience and skills satisfy the course learning objectives. Typically, assessment involves one or more of:

- (i) a challenge examination, where the applicant undertakes the same or equivalent assessment to that of students enrolled in the course; or
- (ii) an oral examination, in which the applicant's knowledge and learning are determined through an interview process. The RPL proposal should include information on the nature of such an interview and the staff who would be involved; or
- (iii) a portfolio detailing the relevant experiences of the applicant, identifying the learning achieved in those experiences, and providing supporting evidence such as letters or testimonials from employers or supervisors.

## **8 Amount of transfer and RPL credit to be awarded**

### **8.1 Limits on credit**

Except where different arrangements are specified in the relevant qualification statute, transfer and RPL credit may be awarded towards Victoria qualifications based on the assessed points value for eligible prior learning up to the limits set out below.

### **8.2 Undergraduate Bachelor's degrees**

*Note: This includes BE(Hons) and LLB(Hons).*

#### **8.2.1 Standard provisions for credit transfer**

Except as provided in ss8.2.2 - 8.2.3:

- (i) a maximum of 120 points of transfer credit may be awarded towards a Bachelor's degree;
- (ii) transfer credit cannot be used to satisfy the 300-level (or above) degree, major or minor requirements.

#### **8.2.2 Special circumstances**

Further points and/or points at 300-level (or above) towards degree, major or minor requirements may be credited to a Bachelor's degree in the following circumstances:

- (i) from an approved student exchange programme; and/or
- (ii) where specified within a formal articulation or twinning arrangement between Victoria and another institution; and/or

- (iii) in consultation with the Head of School, from one incomplete external qualification that is very similar in structure and content to the Victoria degree; and/or
- (iv) in consultation with the Head of School, in other exceptional circumstances.

### **8.2.3 Minimum Victoria University content in undergraduate degrees**

- (a) In all circumstances, irrespective of any transfer credit or RPL credit, at least 120 points for each Victoria Bachelor's degree (including those completed within a conjoint degrees programme) must be passed at Victoria.
- (b) Except as provided in s8.2.3(c) the points passed at Victoria must include:
  - (i) at least 40 points, or half the minimum degree requirements at 300-level or above if that is more than 40 points; and
  - (ii) at least half the advanced points (200-level or above) requirements for any major.
- (c) For undergraduate Bachelor's degrees requiring points at 400-level, the points passed at Victoria must include:
  - (i) any research project; and
  - (ii) at least 60 points at 400 level (or above), or the full 400-level (and above) degree requirement if that is less than 60 points; and
  - (iii) half the minimum 300-level (or above) requirements for any major.

### **8.3 Graduate certificates, graduate diplomas, postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas**

Credit may be awarded for up to half the points required for the qualification.

### **8.4 Postgraduate Honours degrees**

- (a) Normally all courses credited to a postgraduate Honours degree must be undertaken at Victoria.
- (b) In exceptional circumstances and in consultation with the Head of School, the Associate Dean may approve up to 60 points of transfer credit within a postgraduate Honours degree, providing the integrity and cohesiveness of the student's programme is maintained.
- (c) In all circumstances, any research project within a postgraduate Honours degree must be undertaken and passed at Victoria.
- (d) RPL credit must not be awarded towards a postgraduate Honours degree.

### **8.5 Master's degrees (including Master's degrees that can be awarded with Honours)**

Transfer credit and/or RPL credit may be awarded towards a Master's degree, providing that in all circumstances at least 120 points, including any thesis or research project worth 60 points or more, is passed at Victoria.

## **9 Appeals**

Any student dissatisfied with the decision of the Associate Dean may apply to have the decision reviewed by the Convenor of the Academic Committee.

## 10 Legislative Compliance

The University is required to manage its policy documentation within a legislative framework. The legislation directing this policy is the Education Act.

## 11 References

Personal Courses of Study Statute.

## 12 Approval Agency

Academic Board.

## 13 Approval Dates

This policy, which replaces the [Credit Transfer Statute](#) and the [Recognition of Prior Informal Learning Policy](#) was originally approved on: 16 August 2016

This version takes effect from: 26 September 2016

## 14 Policy Sponsor

Vice-Provost (Academic and Equity).

## 15 Contact Person

The following person may be approached in relation to this policy:

Senior Academic Policy Adviser.

Ext: 5191.