Edith Cowan University
POLICY

Policy Title: **Advanced Standing**

Policy Owner: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Keywords: **Advanced Standing, Credit Transfer,
                       Recognition of Prior Learning**

Policy Code: **PL031 [ac059]**

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1.   INTENT

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the granting of advanced standing towards completion of ECU courses is applied equitably and consistently across the University.

In the granting of advanced standing, ECU seeks to ensure:
- that students have their formal, non-formal and informal learning recognised for advanced standing towards a qualification;
- consistency in the provision of advanced standing in all parts of the University;
- the quality, integrity and standing of ECU qualifications; and
- that students have the right to request a review of decisions made by the University in relation to advanced standing assessments.

2.   ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

All ECU students and staff and prospective students

3.   DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
advanced standing	The granting of credit towards the completion of a course.
Advanced Standing Database (ASDB)	A publically available database that states the credit available for ECU courses, categorised by country, institution, the institution course and the ECU course.
AEI-NOOSR	The Australian government authority on the recognition of overseas qualifications using the AQF as the benchmark.
articulation	The process of students progressing from one institution to another, normally including advanced standing.

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TERM	DEFINITION
articulation agreement	An agreement between ECU and another higher education provider that specifies an approved pathway from one designated award course to another and details the amount the advanced standing to be granted to the student.
AQF qualification	A qualification that meets the standards of the Australian Qualifications Framework.
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	The national policy for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system.
credit	The provision of credit in a course as the result of a successful recognition of prior learning or credit transfer application. This may include: • **specified credit:** the student is given credit for specific subjects, modules, units or competencies; • **unspecified credit:** the student is given credit so that they are required to complete fewer credit points, subjects, modules, units or competencies (e.g. credit for elective units or an unspecified unit set or minor); • **block credit:** the student is given credit for a block component of a course (e.g. first semester - 60 credit points or first year - 120 credit points); and • **preclusions/substitutions:** the student is required to undertake alternative work in place of a module, unit or units scheduled in the course.
credit transfer*	The recognition of a unit, module or qualification an individual has achieved (through formal learning) to gain entry or claim credit in an ECU course. Credit based on credit transfer is determined by assessing the extent to which the prior achievement is equivalent to the required learning outcomes or competencies in an ECU module, unit or units.
formal learning	Learning that has occurred in courses recognised as part of the AQF, or overseas courses recognised by AEI-NOOSR or NARIC, or in other formal courses of study recognised by ECU as leading to a qualification, the standing of which can be assessed by ECU.
informal learning	Learning that has occurred outside courses of study (either formal or informal) e.g. work experience or life experience.
Institutional Advanced Standing Statement (IASS)	A statement that outlines the amount of advanced standing for an institution into an ECU course.
NARIC	The National Academic Information Centre for European Courses that provides a means of comparing academic

TERM	DEFINITION
	qualifications across European countries.
non-formal learning	Learning that has occurred in courses not recognised as part of the AQF, nor overseas courses recognised by AEI-NOOSR or NARIC, nor in other formal courses of study recognised by ECU as leading to a qualification, the standing of which can be assessed by ECU e.g. professional development courses provided by an employer to employees.
recognition of prior learning (RPL)*	The recognition of skills and knowledge an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system (through non-formal or informal learning) to gain entry or claim credit in an ECU course. Credit based on RPL is determined by assessing the extent to which the prior learning is equivalent to the required learning outcomes or competencies in an ECU module, unit or units.
VET	Vocational Education and Training

*The key distinguishing characteristic between 'recognition of prior learning' and 'credit transfer' is that it is the *student* who is assessed in the case of RPL, and the *course or subject* in the case of credit transfer. That is, in credit transfer the judgement is about the learning program, outcomes and assessment in the course, unit or subject previously undertaken by the student.

4. POLICY CONTENT

4.1 This policy provides the framework for staff when assessing prior learning and experience for credit into an ECU course and outlines the process for granting Institutional Advanced Standing arrangements. The policy adheres to the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy and follows the principle of granting maximum credit, for AQF awards, wherever possible (refer to the Advanced Standing Maximum Credit Table).

4.2 Purpose of Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning

Credit transfer and recognition of prior learning can be used in two ways:

    a. for possible entry to a course or qualification; and

    b. for the provision of credit in a course or qualification, leading to the partial or full completion of the requirements for that course or qualification*.

4.3 Fees

No fee shall be charged for assessing students for recognition of prior learning or credit transfer for entry to ECU higher education courses, in accordance with the provisions of the Higher Education Support Act (2003) and VET Fees and Charges Policy (2014 Department of Training and Workforce Development).

4.4 Approval

Decisions on the level of credit to be granted in a particular course shall be determined by the Executive Dean, or academic nominee in accordance with criteria, conditions,

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policies, procedures and frameworks established by the relevant School Executive and approved by the Education Committee (in compliance with Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules).

4.5 Assessment of Prior Learning

4.5.1 When assessing a student's prior learning, it is necessary to:

   a. compare the informal and non-formal learning that has been achieved against the learning outcomes or performance criteria of the course and/or units for which the student is seeking entry or the provision of credit; and

   b. determine appropriate evidence to support the claim of prior learning.

It is the responsibility of the student to provide appropriate evidence to support the claim of prior learning.

4.5.2 An applicant may be allowed to complete an assessment to determine the level of prior learning. This could be a written and/or oral/practical assessment, including the requirement to sit the final examination for the unit/module. The Course Coordinator, in consultation with appropriate academic staff, will determine whether an assessment is allowed.

4.5.3 Staff carrying out the assessment should have a detailed knowledge of the course for which the applicant is seeking credit and expertise in, or access to advice on, prior learning assessment methods.

4.5.4 Credit will not normally be granted for studies (or other prior learning) that have been completed more than ten years prior to the time of application for credit.

4.6 Assessment of Credit

4.6.1 In determining credit transfer, the academic staff member or the Admissions Coordinator should:

   a. determine the application is submitted by the deadlines published on the application form;

   b. view copies of qualifications and/or academic transcripts for the initial formal studies;

   c. compare the qualification studied (e.g. via AQF or AEI-NOOSR or NARIC or based on prior assessments and course information) with the course for which the student is seeking entry or the provision of credit and determine the actual credit to be provided; and

   d. ensure the assessment of maximum credit transfer is consistent with the Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules (Rule 4.4).

4.6.2 The maximum amount of credit given for Higher Education and VET awards must be consistent with the requirements of the Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules (refer to Guideline 5).

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4.6.3 In circumstances where an applicant is unable to present sufficient documentary evidence to allow for the normal determination of credit, the applicant may be allowed to undertake an assessment process which may be written and/or oral/ practical assessment. The Course Coordinator responsible for the course, in consultation with appropriate academic staff, will determine whether an assessment is allowed.

4.7 Limitations of the Policy

4.7.1 Eligibility for credit does not guarantee an applicant a place in a course.

4.7.2 Regardless of the nature or amount of credit granted, any specific requirements of the course must be fulfilled, including any conditions associated with professional recognition of the award (see Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules).

4.7.3 If a student transfers from one program to another, the credit approved in the original program will not be transferred as a matter of course and will require a new assessment.

4.7.4 Once a student has been awarded credit on the basis of credit transfer, subsequent credit transfer will not include a re-assessment of the initial course(s), unit(s) or subject(s), but will be based on assessing other courses, units or subjects.

4.7.5 Limits to the maximum extent of RPL or credit transfer will be determined from time to time and appear in the Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules and the Guidelines attached to this policy.

4.8 Additional Credit

Where additional credit above that recommended by the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) is proposed by the School, approval must be received from the Executive Dean and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and referred to the following Academic Board for noting.

4.9 Student Request for a Review of Advanced Standing Decisions

There are two levels of review that apply to an advanced standing query as outlined in Procedure 2 and these must be followed in sequence as listed below:

4.9.1 *Informal Review Query* (available to prospective and current ECU students)

Prospective and/or current students should contact the person responsible for the advanced standing decision to discuss their concerns and review the assessment they are querying. If not satisfied with an outcome, then a formal Advanced Standing Review may be submitted.

4.9.2 *Formal Advanced Standing Review* (only available to current ECU students)

The Advanced Standing Review Procedures attached to this policy outline the procedures to be followed for a formal review of an advanced standing decision. (Refer Procedure 3).

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4.10 Institutional Advanced Standing Arrangements

Institutional Advanced Standing arrangements take the form of either Institutional Advanced Standing Statements or Articulation Agreements. Procedure 4 should be followed when approving, developing and reviewing these arrangements.

4.10.1 Articulation Agreements are formal contracts made between ECU and another institution. These agreements are generally for a period of three years and require the following approvals:

a. *Domestic* Articulation Agreements are approved by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor ;

b. *International* Articulation Agreements are approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International).

4.10.2 The Precedent Database will record the credit arrangements for each institutional arrangement.

5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Policy Owner, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation.

Staff and students required to comply with the content of this policy and to seek guidance in the event of uncertainty as its application from the Academic Registrar.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

6.1 The policy is supported by the following Guidelines:

Procedure 1: Assessing courses for credit into ECU courses
Procedure 2: Assessing Prior Learning for ECU Courses and Units
Procedure 3: Advanced Standing appeal
Procedure 4: Institutional Advanced Standing arrangements
Advanced Standing Maximum Credit Table

6.2 Other documents which are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

a. Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules
b. Admissions Policy
c. Curriculum Planning and Development Policy
d. English Standards Policy
e. Australian Qualifications Framework

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

Policy Owner	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)
All Enquiries Contact:	Academic Registrar
Telephone:	08 6304 3888
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8. APPROVAL HISTORY

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