Advanced Standing - Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Policy Code: ACA-002  Version: 1.1  Effective Date: 13 August 2010

Purpose:
The policy provides a broad framework, set of principles and minimal requirements for:

(a) recognition and assessment of the prior learning obtained by an intending or enrolled student of Endeavour College of Natural Health through the student’s previous non-formal or informal studies or other learning (eg: training courses undertaken during employment, adult education classes, extensive work experience, extensive community and volunteer work, extensive participation in a leisure pursuit, life experience) and

(b) on the basis of that assessment, determining any grant of credit to the student towards completion of a course of Endeavour College.

The policy is subsidiary to the Assessment Policy, and complementary to the separate Advanced Standing - Credit Transfer Policy.

Scope:  
- All campuses
- All courses
- All staff, decision-making bodies, students, agents and partners of Endeavour College

Policy Statement:

1. The meaning of Recognition of Prior Learning for course credit

1.1. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for course credit is a process that involves the assessment of a student’s or an intending student’s knowledge and skills obtained through that person’s previous non-formal or informal studies or other learning (eg: training courses undertaken during employment, adult education classes, extensive work experience, extensive community and volunteer work, extensive participation in a leisure pursuit, life experience), in
order to determine:
(a) whether the knowledge and skills previously acquired by the student or intending student contribute to meeting the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a subject or course at Endeavour College of Natural Health; and
(b) whether that prior learning may be counted (credited) as equivalent to successful completion of a subject or subjects, and towards completion of a course.

1.2. When an assessment is made that the prior learning is equivalent and may be credited towards completion of a course, the prior learning may replace some subjects in that course.

1.3. The amount and type of credit granted for RPL will vary depending on the assessment made, the type of credit granted and any limitations on amounts of credit that may be granted for a particular course.

2. Provision of RPL for course credit

2.1. Endeavour College will provide RPL for course credit in order that a student may gain credit for the student’s previous non-formal or informal studies or other learning towards completion of an award course within Endeavour College, where this is appropriate to the particular course.

3. Purpose of RPL for course credit

3.1. Arrangements for RPL for course credit will be designed to:
(a) encourage individuals to participate in learning pathways that include formal, non-formal and informal learning
(b) contribute to development of diverse and inclusive pathways to lifelong learning
(c) remove duplication of learning and promote a continuum of learning
(d) contribute to improved success in higher education by groups with historically low participation and success rates
(e) provide opportunity for students to have their non-formal and informal learning recognised and counted towards a qualification, regardless of how, when and where that learning was acquired, provided that the learning is equivalent to learning outcomes in subjects within the course to which the qualification applies
(f) enable students, wherever possible, to gain a qualification in minimal time provided that the quality, integrity and standing of that qualification is not diminished in the process.

(g) reduce Endeavour College’s exposure to risk with respect to academic standards.

4. Context for RPL for course credit

4.1. RPL for course credit will be provided by the College consistent with the requirements and guidelines contained within the current versions of the:

- Australian Qualifications Framework Implementation Handbook
- National Principles and Operational Guidelines of Prior Learning (Australian Qualifications Framework)
- Principles for the Provision of Education by Australian Universities (Universities Australia)
- Provision of Education to International Students, Code of Practice and Guidelines for Australian Universities (Universities Australia)
- National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students.

5. Availability of RPL for course credit

5.1. Credit for RPL will be available only where it is suitable and appropriate to a specific award course and only where a student’s or intending student’s previous non-formal or informal learning is assessed as:

(a) meeting the learning outcomes and assessment criteria required for satisfactory completion of a particular subject or particular subjects within the relevant award course

(c) comparable and having direct relevance to learning outcomes expected in studies such as elective or optional subjects or at a particular level of study, eg: the first year of study in a course, and being a suitable alternative to such subjects available within the award course

5.2. Credit for RPL will not be available:

(a) towards completion of award courses that are subject to any external accreditation or professional registration or similar recognition requirements that prohibit credit for RPL, or

(b) when the award of such credit could bring into question the quality,
integrity and standing of the award course and qualification, and
(d) for a part of a subject or parts of subjects in a course – credit for RPL will be granted and transferred only for whole subjects or in unit values equal to those of a subject or subjects in a course.

5.3. Where RPL is used as the means for meeting alternative entry requirements for an award course, credit for that same previous non-formal or informal learning may not be granted subsequently towards completion of the course except where that learning or part of that learning has been assessed as meeting the assessment criteria for, or as being equivalent to learning outcomes specified for, a particular subject or particular subjects within the relevant award course.

5.4. RPL for course credit may be available to individual students in conjunction with credit transfer (refer to Credit Transfer Policy).

5.5. The types of credit available to students or intending students for RPL will be:
(a) specified credit for designated subjects – the student is not required to complete one or more specific subjects in the relevant course for the different qualification because the previous non-formal or informal learning of the student has been assessed as meeting the assessment criteria for, or having equivalent learning outcomes to those of, the specified subject/s

(b) unspecified credit – based on an assessment that the previous non-formal or informal learning of the student is comparable and has direct relevance to learning outcomes in subjects such as electives or options, the student is not required to complete the total number of subjects that usually need to be completed successfully in the course in order to gain the relevant qualification and is given credit for subjects such as electives or options; however, the student is still required to complete specific subjects within the number of subjects remaining

(c) block credit – based on an assessment that the previous non-formal or informal learning of the student is comparable and has direct relevance to learning outcomes at a particular level of a subject, the student is not required to complete the total number of subjects that usually need to be completed successfully in the course in order to gain the relevant qualification and is granted credit for a block or set of subjects, e.g. all first semester or first year level subjects in the course, and
(d) **exemption** – based on an assessment that the previous non-formal or informal learning of the student meets the assessment criteria for, or has learning outcomes equivalent to those of, specific subject/s in the course, the student is nonetheless required to complete the total number of subjects that need to be completed successfully in the course in order to gain the relevant qualification but may substitute alternative subjects in place of those subjects for which the student's previous learning was assessed as having met the assessment criteria or having equivalent learning outcomes.

5.6. Credit for RPL that involves specified credit, unspecified credit and block credit will usually enable a student to complete a course in less time, whereas credit involving only exemptions will not reduce the amount of time required to complete the course.

6. **Maximum amounts of credit that may be granted**

6.1. The Academic Board will determine the maximum amount of credit that may be granted towards completion of each award course on the basis of RPL, provided that:

(a) the maxima preclude any student from completing an award course solely on the basis of credit for RPL or a combination of both credit for RPL and credit transfer;

(b) the maximum amount of credit, whether granted on the basis of RPL or a combination of credit granted for RPL and credit transfer for post-secondary education studies, that may be granted for a postgraduate course in the case of an individual student or intending student is:

(i) 50% of the total unit value of a course that is accredited as being of less than two years full-time study

(ii) 67% of the total unit value of a course that is accredited as being two years or more of full-time study, and

(c) the maximum amount of credit for RPL, or a combination of credit granted for RPL and credit transfer for post-secondary education studies, that may be granted towards completion of a Bachelor degree, is 67% of the total unit value of the relevant Bachelor degree course.

6.2. If, at the time this policy takes effect, Endeavour College has entered into a formal contractual agreement with another entity that provides for a grant of...
RPL for course credit that would exceed any maxima specified in item 6.1 above, the arrangements in that contractual agreement will prevail until the conclusion of that agreement and any renewal or extension of the agreement must accord with the provisions in item 6.1.

7. Processes for RPL for course credit

7.1. The Academic Board will ensure and overview the development of procedures or guidelines, consistent with this policy, for assessing and granting credit for previous non-formal or informal learning of an individual intending or enrolled student of Endeavour College to enable that individual student to gain credit towards completion of an award course within this College.

7.2. The procedures and guidelines developed for RPL for course credit will:
(a) be designed to achieve the purposes of RPL for course credit as specified in item 6 above;
(b) detail application processes for individuals seeking RPL for course credit, including in relation to the range of measures that may be used to assess the applicant;
(c) provide for an individual to lodge an application for RPL for course credit simultaneous with an application for entry to a course or at any time during a student’s enrolment in a course;
(d) enable timely and transparent assessment of individual applications for RPL for course credit;
(e) detail general processes and criteria to be used for evidence-based assessment of individual applicants for RPL for course credit, ensuring that the assessment processes and criteria are:
   • designed to assess the applicant’s learning and not the means for acquiring that learning
   • of a comparable standard to the processes used to assess whether learning outcomes in a subject or the relevant course have been met
   • equitable, culturally inclusive, flexible, valid, reliable and transparent
   • designed to provide for a range of ways for students to demonstrate that they have met the assessment criteria required or the learning outcomes expected for recognition and credit for their previous non-formal and informal learning
   • as far as is appropriate, similar across departments and courses
(f) ensure that assessments and decisions concerning RPL and the grant of course credit for individual applicants are made by department staff with an understanding of the relevant discipline or field of study and who are familiar with the subject or course to which the application for RPL for course credit relates;

(g) ensure that assessment and decisions concerning the granting of recognition of prior learning to staff studying at Endeavour are dealt with in an open and transparent way through the evaluation and decisions of the application being undertaken by a panel composed of senior academic staff.

(h) make clear the responsibilities of Heads of School, Program Leaders and Subject-Coordinators with respect to various processes associated with RPL for course credit;

(i) incorporate processes for recording and managing records of RPL and associated grants of course credit;

(j) incorporate processes for validating and monitoring RPL and associated grants of course credit;

(k) include information on grievance and appeal processes in relation to decisions made on RPL and associated grants of course credit;

(l) result in production of a statement issued to an applicant that provides details of any grant of credit in association with RPL and, in the case of an international student on a student visa, any associated adjustment of the duration of the student’s course;

(m) incorporate processes for provision of detailed information and advice on RPL for course credit for the College community, College partners and intending students

(n) include processes for evaluating the effectiveness of RPL for course credit in:
   - encouraging individuals to participate in learning pathways that include formal, non-formal and informal learning
   - contributing to development of diverse and inclusive pathways to lifelong learning
   - contributing to improved success in, higher education by groups with historically low participation and success rates
   - providing opportunity for students to have their non-formal and informal learning recognised and counted towards a qualification
enabling students, wherever possible, to gain a qualification in minimal time provided that the quality, integrity and standing of that qualification is not diminished in the process.

7.3. The Academic Board will ensure that the processes for assessment of RPL for course credit will result in a qualification achieved in part or full through credit for RPL being of the same quality and having the same standing as the qualification achieved as a consequence of a student successfully undertaking the complete course.

8. Responsibilities

8.1. The Academic Board is responsible for:
   (a) ensuring and overviewing the development of procedures, guidelines and information for implementation of this policy
   (b) determining the maximum amount of credit that may be granted for RPL within each award course
   (c) validating and monitoring assessment processes and outcomes related to RPL for course credit
   (d) evaluating the effectiveness of RPL for course credit.

8.2. The Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for providing advice to the Academic Board on matters relating to RPL for course credit.

8.3. The Heads of School are responsible for:
   (a) ensuring implementation of this policy and its associated procedures and guidelines within the relevant Departments
   (e) making final decisions on the grant of credit to individual applicants for RPL for course credit in relation to courses offered or administered by the Departments

8.4. Each Program Leader is responsible for:
   (a) authenticating any evidence provided by an applicant as part of an application for RPL for course credit;
   (b) arranging timely assessment of applicants for RPL for course credit, consistent with this policy and its associated procedures and guidelines, by Department staff with expertise in the relevant discipline or field of study and who are familiar with the subject/s or course to which the application relates; and
(c) providing heads of School with detail of assessments made on applicants for RPL for course credit.

Related Procedures:

Advanced Standing – Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures
Application for Recognition of Prior Learning Form

Definitions:

Course – means a set of studies leading to the award of a qualification, eg: a Bachelor of Health Science (Acupuncture) course

Subject – means a specific subject that is studied as a component of an award course

Coursework – means study that involves undertaking subjects.

Credit point – means a numerical value associated with a subject or course, eg: in order to complete a course a student may need to acquire 96 credit points (complete eight courses that have a value of 12 units each or four courses that have a value of 24 points each).

Further Information:

Related Policies:

Advanced Standing – Credit Transfer Policy
Assessment Policy
General Student Grievance Policy

Benchmarking: Not Applicable

Supporting Research and Analysis: Not Applicable

Related Documents:

Application for Recognition of Prior Learning Form

Related Legislation: Not Applicable

Guidelines:

Advanced Standing – Application for Prior Learning – Internal Guidelines
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<td>National Academic Manager – Curriculum</td>
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