Credit Policy

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Policy provides a principled basis for the granting of credit towards Victoria University (VU) Awards and accredited courses and units on the basis of formal, informal and non-formal learning, through credit transfer, academic credit, recognition of prior learning, and recognition of current competency.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to current and future domestic and international students of all VU Award and accredited courses, or accredited units within non-accredited courses, whether in Higher Education (HE) or Vocational Education and Training (VET).

(3) This Policy applies to credit granted on the basis of:

a. applications from individual students;
b. formal credit agreements within VU;
c. formal credit agreements and pathways between VU and other tertiary institutions, whether within Australia or overseas; and
d. formal agreements between VU and industry partners.

(4) This Policy covers:

a. credit granted for prior or concurrent formal learning;
b. credit granted for recognition of prior learning; and
c. credit granted for recognition of current competency.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

Part A - General

(5) The objectives of this Policy are to:

a. provide a basis for granting students with credit for learning already achieved;
b. support the development and implementation of qualification pathways for students;
c. recognise that learning can be formal, non-formal or informal; and
d. provide consistency in outcomes for applicants.

(6) The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth), the Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025 and the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy apply to the assessment of credit at VU and form the basis of the rules below. In particular:

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.

a. pathways for credit will be available into and between qualifications;
b. credit pathways may be horizontal across qualifications with outcomes at the same Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level as well as vertical between qualifications with outcomes at different AQF levels;
c. all pathways will be clearly publicised;
d. credit is available for units and skills within courses;
e. decisions regarding applications for credit will be fair, transparent and evidence-based;
f. Where AQF certification documentation forms evidence for credit, the records will be maintained and able to be accessed; and,
g. student outcomes where credit has been applied will be monitored to support quality outcomes for students.

(7) Credit can facilitate student progress, completion and mobility. However, the integrity of VU Awards and accredited courses and units, and the potential for success of students, are the primary considerations in decisions regarding credit. Credit will not be granted if it would:

a. impair the integrity of the Award or accredited course;
b. reduce a student's likelihood of success in the program; or
c. impact on entry into regulated professions.

Part B - Eligibility for Credit

(8) A student is eligible for credit for learning or evidenced experience that:

a. is relevant;
b. is equivalent to current knowledge and/or practices. For HE courses, the learning must have been completed within 10 years of the application for credit;
c. accords with the requirements of professional accreditation bodies. Where a shorter currency period than 10 years is specified for professional accreditation reasons, the currency limit is recorded in CAMS, approved by Courses Committee and published on Course Finder; and,
d. satisfies the current learning or competency outcomes of the course.

(9) Credit is available towards a VU Award or accredited course regardless of the location at which the course is taught.

(10) Credit may be available for formal, informal or non-formal learning undertaken in any language and any mode. In the case of formal learning undertaken outside Australia, the award must be deemed by reference to the Country Education Profiles (CEPs) or UK ENIC to be equivalent in level to an AQF qualification for which credit would be available, as advised by VU Global or Domestic Admissions.

(11) Where the learning has been undertaken in a language other than English, applicants' English language proficiency must be demonstrated. English language proficiency requirements and methods of demonstrating them are established in the Admissions - English Language Admission Requirements Procedure.

(12) Learning will be measured against the learning or competency outcomes of the courses for which the student has applied for credit.

(13) To be eligible for credit, a student must have successfully completed the relevant course or unit. Provided that the student has passed, credit is not dependent on grades achieved in the formal study which forms the basis of the student's application.

(14) Credit will not be given on the basis of:

a. a failed course or unit;
b. a conceded pass or equivalent (however, credit is available for a supplementary pass); or
c. credit awarded towards a previous course on the basis of credit transfer.

(15) VU reserves the right to review and verify the credit determinations made by other providers, where these are relied upon by an applicant.

Part C - Limitations on Credit

(16) Maximum limitations apply to the application of credit to HE courses.

a. For a Bachelor degree, a student must complete at least 96 credit points of the course at VU.
b. Where a student already holds a Bachelor degree in a similar field of study, a student must complete at least 96 credit points of the related Bachelor degree to gain the award.
c. At least 50 per cent of the credit points required to gain a one-year honours, or sub-bachelor award must be achieved through formal study at VU.
d. For postgraduate coursework awards, a student must complete at least 50% of the course at VU in the relevant Award.
e. Credit is offered for final year units in undergraduate degrees only where these do not form a core requirement of the degree.
f. Credit is not available for capstone units or thesis components of any course.
g. Credit is not available for enabling or bridging courses.

(17) With the exception of nested postgraduate awards, credit that has been applied to a conferred award cannot be re-applied to a further course.

(18) The relevant Executive Dean or College equivalent will verify any restrictions on credit needed to satisfy professional accreditation requirements. This includes limitations of the amount of credit, as well as the nature of what prior learning may be eligible for credit (e.g. credit may be limited to formal study, or may be limited to comparable units with the required volume of professional placement hours). Following this, the Executive Dean may, through Courses Committee, adjust any credit parameters for any course to fulfil professional accreditation requirements.

(19) Limitations of credit still apply even when the prior study has taken place at VU.

(20) There is no limit on credit available for VET courses.

Part D - Designated Credit and GPA

(21) Designated credit is given for specific units undertaken at VU when the result for that unit is also transferred and indicated against the unit on the academic transcript.

(22) Designated credit will count towards GPA when:

a. It is a result of course transition initiated by VU.
b. It is part of nested sequence courses.
c. It is granted to eligible students moving from the bachelor award to the honours award of the related course.
d. It is granted for eligible VU students moving from a three year bachelor award to a four year bachelor award in the related course.

(23) Designated credit is not used for:

a. Credit given when a student elects to move from course to another course and not otherwise listed above.
b. Credit granted for unspecified units.
c. Credit granted from pathways.
d. Credit granted for study undertaken at external institutions, including cross institutional enrolment.
e. Credit granted for recognition of prior learning through work experience or informal study.

(24) VU may decide to apply designated credit in other circumstances to:

a. Resolve a university error.
b. Respond to extenuating circumstances where a student would otherwise be disadvantaged.
c. In these instances, results are typically not included in the GPA calculation.

Part E - Credit and Pathways Agreements

(25) The University may enter into pathway agreements and credit agreements:

a. internally between HE Colleges and TAFE;
b. with other tertiary institutions; and
c. with industry partners.

(26) These agreements may include a commitment to provide students with guaranteed entry into and/or credit towards a course.

(27) A credit agreement may be made within VU, involving courses across AQF levels. Such agreements are only valid if approved by the relevant Executive Dean, the First Year College and, if the agreement involves entry into VET courses, the Executive Director/Director of the relevant TAFE College or Centre.

(28) A credit agreement must include terms establishing the following aspects of the agreement:

a. the courses between which credit is available;
b. definitions of student eligibility for credit; and
c. the amount of credit and the nature of credit available under the agreement.

(29) A pathway / credit agreement may be made between VU and another Australian tertiary institution that issues AQF qualifications. Agreements specifying entry into or credit toward a Higher Education award are only valid if approved by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer.

(30) If the agreement involves entry into or credit toward a VET course, the endorsement of the Chief TAFE Officer must be obtained.

(31) A pathway / credit agreement may be made between VU and an overseas tertiary institution that is deemed by reference to the Country Education Profiles (CEPs) or UK ENIC to offer the qualification for which VU will offer credit at a level equivalent to the corresponding AQF level qualification. Such agreements are only valid if approved by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer.

(32) If the agreement involves entry into VET courses, the endorsement of the Chief TAFE Officer must be obtained.

(33) When negotiating credit agreements with other organisations, the University will consider whether the following aspects of courses involved in the credit agreement are comparable and equivalent:

a. the learning outcomes of the courses and units;

b. the volume of learning;
c. the AQF equivalent level;
d. the course of study and the content of the course; and
e. learning and assessment approaches.

(34) Eligibility for credit towards a course on the basis of an agreement does not guarantee entry into the course, unless that is a stated term of the agreement (ie guaranteed pathways).

(35) Students entering a VU course on the basis of a credit agreement may be required to complete prerequisite units where their enrolment in the previous course has not included content equivalent to these prerequisite courses.

(36) The process for developing pathway / credit agreements is established in the Credit - Pathways Procedure.

(37) All pathway / credit agreements are contracts, and must be managed, filed and maintained in accordance with the University's Contracts Policy, Contracts Procedure and Records Management Policy.

Part F - Individual Applications for Credit – HE Courses

Applications for credit based on past formal learning

(38) An applicant or student may apply for credit on an individual basis, outside of a credit or pathway agreement.

(39) Applications for credit must be:

a. timely;
b. appropriately evidenced; and
c. related to prior learning in the same or a similar discipline.

(40) When assessing applications for credit, VU will apply past precedents where available to ensure consistency of outcome. A precedent database will be maintained by Admissions, Pathways and Credit and will enable students to obtain an indication of the credit available to them when deciding whether to apply to VU.

(41) Individual credit applications will be considered in the light of the following elements of the past study:

a. the learning outcomes of the qualification;
b. the volume of learning;
c. the AQF level;
d. the program of study and the content of the program; and
e. learning and assessment approaches.

(42) The process for applying for and assessing individual credit applications is established in the Credit - Academic Credit Procedure (HE).

Applications for credit based on past informal or non-formal learning

(43) Informal and non-formal learning may be used to claim Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Recognition of Current Competency (RCC), to be applied as credit in some HE courses and VET courses respectively.

(44) No RPL or RCC is available for Higher Degree by Research courses at VU.

(45) Where informal or non-formal learning is the basis for an application for credit in a HE course, assessment of learning is conducted initially by the relevant Course Chair or equivalent, and endorsed by the Associate Dean,

Learning and Teaching. This process is outlined in the Credit - Academic Credit Procedure (HE), Part F.

Part G - Individual Applications for Credit – VET Courses

(46) An applicant or student may apply for credit on an individual basis, outside of a credit or pathway agreement.

(47) Applications for credit for VET courses will be assessed in accordance with the Credit - Skills Recognition Procedure (VET).

Part H - Assessing Credit Applications

(48) Decisions regarding applications for credit will be:

a. timely;
b. evidence-based and transparent;
c. fair and consistent;
d. academically defensible;

and will take into account the student's ability to successfully meet the learning outcomes of the Award.

(49) Credit will only be granted if it will not impinge upon:

a. the integrity of the Award or accredited course or unit, and requirements of the relevant discipline; or
b. any conditions associated with the professional accreditation of the qualification.

Part I - Professional Accreditation

(50) The granting of course credit is subject to the conditions of professional accreditation bodies, where these exist. For courses that lead to entry into regulated professions (e.g. Law, Nursing, Education) credit can only be given for formal learning that is considered to be equivalent in a professionally accredited course at another institution.

Part J - Reversal of Credit

(51) Credit may be reversed where:

a. the student requests a reversal (e.g. if they have been admitted on a pathway arrangement, but prefer to still study certain units at VU); or
b. there has been an administrative error which has led to credit being improperly granted; or
c. there is evidence of fraud or falsification of documentation relating to the credit application on behalf of the applicant; or
d. a student's enrolment lapses, and following readmission the credit is no longer current and retaining the credit will impact either the integrity of the award or ability of the student to successfully meet the learning outcomes of the courses or units; or
e. professional accreditation requirements change and render a credit decision incompatible with a graduate being able to enter a regulated profession as per the professional accreditation requirements.

(52) Credit reversal determinations are made by the Manager Admissions Pathways and Credit.

(53) Credit reversals may only occur prior to, or during, the period of a student's enrolment at VU. If it is discovered after the student has graduated that credit was improperly granted or there has been fraud or falsification of documentation, the matter must be handled under the Revocation of Awards provisions in the Awards Regulations 2018.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.

(54) Students must be informed in writing of:

a. confirmation that a student request has been actioned including confirmation of remaining course duration;
b. the decision to reverse the credit;
c. the reasons for the decision;
d. the implications of the decision for their progress in their course;
e. their right to access advice from the University;
f. any other action which the University will take as a result of the decision (e.g. a referral to the Student Misconduct process for a fraud or falsification of documentation matter); and
g. their right to request a review of the decision by the Director, Admissions, Enrolments, and Graduations.

Part K - Review

(55) Applicants who are dissatisfied with a credit outcome may request a review of the decision on the grounds that:

a. the applicant demonstrably met all relevant requirements for the granting of credit; and
b. the application was lodged completely, including providing all requested additional or supporting information, on time and in the correct manner; and
c. the Credit Policy and/or related procedures were not correctly applied.

(56) A request to review the decision must be lodged in writing, addressed to the Director, Admissions, Enrolments, and Graduations within 10 University business days of the communication of the credit decision.

(57) The Director, Admissions, Enrolments, and Graduations will review the credit decision.

(58) A written outcome will be provided within 10 University business days of the date received by the University.

(59) Where the outcome is in favour of the applicant, and a new offer with credit is subsequently made, the applicant will be required to enrol correctly in remaining units.

(60) Where a new offer impacts an applicant's ability to reasonably enrol and commence study, with a view to their ability to succeed in the course, a deferment may be applied on the applicant's behalf.

(61) The review is final and cannot be appealed within the University.

Section 4 - Procedures

(62) Credit - Academic Credit Procedure (HE)

(63) Credit - Pathways Procedure

(64) Credit - Skills Recognition Procedure (VET)

Section 5 - TEQSA/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(65) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth): Standard 1.2; 7.2.

(66) ESOS Act - National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018: Standard 2 (specifically 2.1, 2.3).

(67) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: Standards 1.6, 1.7 Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer; 2.1 & 2.2 Information; 2.7 Feedback, Complaints and Appeals; 4.4 Continuous Improvement.

Section 6 - Definitions

(68) Advanced Standing: Refer to Credit definition. Advanced Standing term is being phased out and referred to as Credit.

(69) Articulation: A method of progression from one completed qualification to another with guaranteed admission and/or credit in a defined pathway.

(70) Block Credit: Granted toward whole stages or components of a qualification, block credit is given for a whole section of a course (e.g. a semester or a year of full-time study) rather than for specific units.

(71) Same/similar discipline: Refers to a prior qualification or studies that is demonstrably the same as or very similar to the discipline to the one for which a person seeks academic credit.

(72) Credit: Credit is 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 time required to achieve a qualification and may be through credit transfer, recognition of prior learning or academic credit.

(73) Credit Transfer: is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for completed components of a course of study. This may be based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched courses of study, or the completion of units of competency or skillsets evidenced by AQF certification documentation or authenticated VET transcripts.

(74) Pathways: Formally agreed structures by which students may move through qualification levels and between courses with full or partial recognition for the qualifications and/or learning outcomes they already have achieved.

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

(76) Specified Credit: Specified credit is granted for one or more specific units in a course, exempting students from those units and awarding the appropriate credit points in their place. Specified credit may be granted where the applicant has met the learning outcomes, attained the knowledge and/or developed the skills related to a specific unit. The result for that unit is not transferred and credit only is indicated on the academic transcript.

(77) Designated Credit: Credit given for specific units undertaken at VU when the result for that unit is also transferred and indicated against the unit on the academic transcript. The result may, or may not contribute to GPA calculation depending on the approved circumstances for the use of designated credit.

(78) Unspecified Credit: Credit granted towards components of a qualification or program of learning, such as minor studies where options exists or where block credit is applied, but the credit is not applied against a specific unit/s.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	10th March 2022
Review Date	10th March 2028
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	2nd March 2022
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Accountable Officer	John Germov Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer +613 9919 5077
Responsible Officer	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310
Enquiries Contact	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.