A12.0 Credit Transfer Policy

1. Context

Torrens University Australia acknowledges the value of providing opportunities for students to build upon their prior learning, whether this learning was acquired through structured courses or gained through life experience. Recognising prior learning is a key principle of the University’s Admission to Coursework Courses Policy which aims to ensure that all students with capacity to succeed in tertiary study have the opportunity to do so.

The University also acknowledges that students should not have to repeat learning that has been successful completed elsewhere. It is committed to providing credit for prior learning provided it is relevant, current and equivalent to learning required for its academic courses.

2. Definitions

**Block credit:** is granted towards whole stages or components of a course of learning leading to a qualification.

**Credit:** 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 learning required to achieve a qualification and may be through credit transfer, articulation, recognition of prior learning and advanced standing.

**Cross-institutional study:** occurs when a student who is enrolled in an Australian institution wishes to concurrently enrol at another institution and have the study credited towards their course at their home institution.

**Formal learning:** is the learning that takes place through a structured course of learning that leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification.
Informal learning: is learning gained through work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences. Unlike formal or non-formal learning, informal learning is not organized or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support.

Learning outcomes: are the expression of the set of knowledge, skills, and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

Non-formal learning: refers to learning that takes place through a structured course of learning but does not lead to an officially accredited qualification.

Specified credit: is credit granted towards particular or specific components of a qualification or course of learning.

Unspecified credit: is credit granted towards elective components of a qualification or course of learning.

3. Scope

This policy applies to students seeking credit for prior formal, in-formal and non-formal learning.

4. Principles

Torrens University Australia has adopted the principles of the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy for making decisions about awarding credit. Decisions will:

- be evidence based, equitable and transparent;
- be applied consistently and fairly with decisions subject to appeal and review;
- 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;
- be academically defensible and take into account the student’s ability to meet the learning outcomes of the qualification successfully;
- be decided in a timely way so that students’ access to qualifications is not unnecessarily inhibited;
- allow for credit outcomes to be used to meet pre-requisites or other specified requirements for entry into a course of study leading to a qualification or for the partial fulfilment of the requirements of a qualification, and
- be formally documented for the student including any reasons for not giving credit.

5. Credit limits

The University will provide credit on the basis of formal, non-formal and informal learning in accordance with the principles of this Policy. In order to protect the integrity of qualification outcomes, there are limits to the amount of credit that will be awarded in total and for different types of prior learning. Credit is not available for the introductory professional subject that is a unique cornerstone subject in all Torrens University Australia’s undergraduate courses. Nor is credit available for the research project which is included as a capstone project in all Master level postgraduate coursework courses.
The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Academic and Research may approve credit for research or coursework completed at another institution at the same level, or for relevant research expertise. Student awarded credit must complete the equivalent of at least one year of full-time study at Torrens University of Australia before submitting their thesis for examination.

The Credit Transfer Table details the maximum units of credit available for each qualification and each type of prior learning.

6. Types of credit

Credit for formal learning may be granted as specified or unspecified credit.

6.1 Specified credit
Specified credit is granted towards specific components of a Torrens University Australia qualification on the basis of prior learning that is assessed to be comparable in terms of learning outcomes, volume of learning, content, and learning and assessment approaches.

Specified credit will be granted on the basis of equivalent subjects in a higher education award, whether the award is complete or not.

Specified credit will also be granted for completed Vocational Education and Training (VET) AQF level 4-6 (Certificate IV, Diplomas or Advanced Diplomas / Associate Degrees) if equivalence in outcomes and assessments is established.

Specified credit may be granted for comparable non-formal and informal learning but is only available towards undergraduate awards.

6.2 Unspecified credit
Unspecified credit is granted towards the elective components of a Torrens University Australia course. Unspecified credit recognises that learning at the required level has been achieved and that the ‘broadening education’ rationale for offering electives has been met.

Unspecified credit will be granted up to the level at which the prior subject was taken; within the limits specified in the Credit Transfer Table, and up to the number of units of electives available in the student’s course.

Unspecified credit will be granted on the basis of complete or incomplete higher education awards.

Where there is no direct equivalence between completed AQF level 4-6 (Certificate IV, Diploma or Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree) VET qualifications and a Torrens University of Australia subject, unspecified credit will be granted to the limits specified in the Credit Transfer Table.

Unspecified credit based on informal and non-formal learning will not be granted.

7. Articulation agreements

Articulation pathways between VET providers, higher education providers or overseas institutions and Torrens University Australia are documented in formal agreements. The amount of block credit granted towards components of a Torrens University Australia course has already been determined.
Information about the University’s articulation arrangements is available on the Articulation Agreement Register.

8. Cross-institutional study

Credit for study at another institution that is concurrent with a student’s enrolment at Torrens University Australia will only be granted if the credit is sought as part of an approved student exchange scheme, or where there is a formal cross-institutional agreement between the University and the other institution.

9. Exemptions

Some postgraduate course rules explicitly allow students to substitute core subjects for elective subjects on the basis of the completion of subjects leading to an AQF 7 or above qualification that have a significant overlap in content with the substituted subjects. Substitution must be approved by the Course Director and must be consistent with the course rules.

10. Applying for credit

Students seeking credit towards their Torrens University Australia course must complete the relevant Undergraduate Credit Application Form or the Postgraduate Credit Application Form and provide the supplementary information requested in the form. For formal learning, supplementary information includes a current academic transcript with grades achieved for the subjects that are the subject of the credit application, or evidence of completion of a VET AQF level 4-6 (Certificate IV, Diploma or Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree). For all prior learning, a detailed description of subjects or prior learning is required.

Students may apply for credit with their application for admission to a Torrens University Australia course or at a later time during their studies. The University’s Precedent Credit Database, which records specified credit that has previously been granted for particular subjects, will assist prospective applicants in assessing the amount of credit they are likely to be granted. The Precedent Credit Database is updated regularly to reflect changes in the subjects and courses presented for credit.

The availability of credit for prior learning does not guarantee admission to any of Torrens University Australia’s courses. Students must still meet the Research or Coursework Entry Requirements for Admission and follow the procedures of the Admission to Coursework Courses Policy.

Students transferring from one Torrens University Australia course to another will need to re-apply for credit in their new course, as eligibility for credit is based on specific course requirements.

11. Assessment and notification

Applications for credit will be assessed on the evidence provided with the relevant Undergraduate Credit Application Form or the Postgraduate Credit Application Form with reference to the Precedent Credit Database, and in accord with the principles of this Policy.

Assessment will take into account the currency of the prior learning for which credit is being sought. Normally credit will not be granted for prior learning undertaken more than 10 years prior to the current application for credit.
Students will be advised of the outcome of their application within 10 working days of their application. If a credit application is rejected, the notification to the student will include the reasons for not awarding credit.

12. Appeals

Students can appeal a decision not to grant credit by following the Academic Grievance Procedures of the University’s Student Grievance Management Policy.

13. References


AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy.