RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY

Purpose
This policy outlines the principles for granting admission to, and/or awarding Credit towards, an Australian Institute of Business (AIB) qualification based on Non-Formal or Informal Learning. Recognition for prior, Formal Learning is covered under the Credit Transfer Policy. The Recognition of Prior Learning Policy is based on the principles determined by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Council.

Scope
This policy applies to all enrolled and prospective students in AIB undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

Definitions
Unless otherwise defined in this document, all capitalised terms are defined in the glossary.

> **RPL Committee** is a group of AIB staff members, comprising academics and administrators with relevant expertise, who decide on the outcome of RPL assessments.

Details

1. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

1.1 Recognition of Prior Learning covered by this policy relates explicitly to recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. Recognition of Formal Learning, undertaken as a structured program leading to an officially accredited program, is covered by the Credit Transfer Policy.

1.2 Recognition of Prior Learning in the context of this policy seeks to acknowledge, with credit, learning outcomes achieved through a range of experiences including work (paid or unpaid) in organisations and/or voluntary work in community and other learning achieved through family, social or hobby activities. Where the learning activity is structured, the learning is considered to be Non-Formal Learning and may be in the form of workplace education and training programs and/or training through a professional association or organisation.

1.3 Recognition of prior learning (RPL) entails a process of assessment by AIB on the basis of evidence provided by individual students. The onus is always on the student to provide the requisite evidence to support the desired Credit Outcomes.

1.4 The outcome from the RPL assessment process can enable a student to enter an AIB course and/or gain Credit towards components of the course. Credit Outcomes can take the form of Specified Credit, Unspecified Credit or Advanced Standing.

1.5 Specified Credit involves granting Credit for identified subjects within the AIB qualification being pursued, either core or elective subjects.

1.6 Unspecified Credit relates to granting Credit against one or more electives where there is no direct match between existing qualifications and subjects in the AIB qualification. There has to be a match, however, in terms of content and level appropriate to the AIB course overall.

1.7 Advanced Standing entails the granting of Credit in block form in terms of a whole stage or component of a qualification. Advanced Standing is based on deeming the student to have met the learning requirements of the block (semester/s) for which the credit is granted. Awarding of Credit reduces the time required for a student to complete an AIB qualification.

1.8 The determination of Credit to be granted to the student requires academic judgement and the person initially assessing the level of Credit should determine that the learning outcomes for the subject/course have been met.

2. The Maximum Amount of Credit

2.1 The maximum amount of Credit that will be granted towards an AIB qualification will be two thirds of the total credit points of a course. Maximum credit limits for specific qualifications are as follows:
   - Diploma (AQF Level 5) – 50%
   - Associate Degree (AQF Level 6) – 50%
   - Bachelor Degree (AQF level 7) – two thirds
   - Graduate Certificate (AQF Level 8) – 50%
   - Graduate Diploma (AQF Level 8) – 50%
   - Masters Coursework Degree (AQF Level 9) – two thirds
   - Masters Research Degree (AQF Level 9) – two thirds.

2.2 Credit will not be granted towards the Project subject(s) in an AIB qualification.

Course	Total credit points	Maximum credit available (CP)	Minimum AIB component (CP)
Bachelor (AQF Level 7)	240 CP	160 CP	80 CP (which will include the 40CP of business project subjects).
Masters by coursework or partially coursework (AQF Level 9)	120 CP	80CP	40CP (including the Project of 10CP)

2.3   The key elements of the RPL process are enabling students to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning, the RPL assessment process, assessment methods and identifying what evidence is required to support the assessment process.

3.   Enabling Students to Apply for RPL

3.1   Students will be advised of AIB's process and procedures for granting of RPL, including the timeframe for applications. This information will include what evidence is required to meet the standards established for the RPL assessment process.

3.2   The Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form will be included in the student information package along with the detailed procedures for RPL applications. The process, procedures and application form for RPL will also be readily available on the AIB website.

4.   RPL Assessment Process

4.1   Individual applications for Recognition of Prior Learning will be processed by the Course Coordinator who will consult with relevant subject specialists where appropriate and make a recommendation to the RPL Committee.

4.2   Arrangements with individual organisations for Recognition of Prior Learning will be negotiated by an academic or member of the teaching staff nominated by the Academic Director and approved by the RPL Committee and formally recorded.

4.3   Documentary evidence of the decision to award Credit on an RPL basis or to deny an RPL application or grant less Credit than applied for, together with the basis for that decision, will be recorded in the AIB Recognition of Prior Learning Register and the student will be advised of the decision.

4.4   Where a form of RPL is established by precedent or through negotiation with another organisation, the Course Coordinator will undertake the assessment process for an individual in the form agreed under the established precedent or negotiated arrangement. This will include requiring the requisite evidence from the individual students involved. The established precedent or arrangement does not preclude individual students from applying for additional Credit based on additional Non-Formal or Informal Learning.

4.5   AIB will ensure that relevant teaching staff are up-to-date with their knowledge and expertise in the RPL process and undertake the assessment to the same standard as other assessments for the qualification. This entails ensuring that the process is fair, flexible, reliable and valid and is tied to the qualification learning outcomes.

4.6   The course learning outcomes provide the framework for the RPL assessment process and the learning outcomes from the individual subjects form the basic benchmark for assessment.

4.7   The RPL process should be designed to enable recognition of prior learning outcomes - that are relevant to the qualification learning outcomes - regardless of how, when or where the learning activities took place.

5.   RPL Assessment Methods

5.1   The AQF specifies some adjustments that need to be made on the basis of equity and requires that:

> *RPL assessment methods should include reasonable adjustment for the literacy levels, cultural background and experiences of students, and it should not be a proxy for the assessment of skills such as literacy except where these are intrinsic to the learning outcomes of the qualification component.*

5.2   The basic assessment process, according to the AQF, "should address the specific evidence required to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment requirements of the particular qualification components for which credit is sought".

5.3   There should be flexibility in determining the evidence requirements for students to enable them to demonstrate that they have met the required learning outcomes and related assessment requirements for the components for which Credit has been requested.

5.4   The assessment process will always include:
- assessing of learning outcomes from prior Non-Formal and Informal Learning against the learning outcomes and assessment processes of the relevant components (subjects/blocks) of a qualification

and, in addition, can include any of, or a combination of, the following:
- questioning through oral or written means
- observation of performance in a workplace environment/at a workplace event or in a simulated environment including a work test
- challenge examinations or assignments
- assignments that require reflection on past experience (work or otherwise) and that link this experience to the relevant qualification learning outcomes
- assessment of a portfolio which could incorporate business/project reports, visual presentations, videos or articles from conference/seminar talks or publications in journals or professional association communications
- review of evidence provided by third parties such as referee reports/references, personality assessments, performance reviews, documentary evidence from employers, testimonials, awards for service/quality/achievement
- participation in assessments structured on the same or similar basis to those required within the relevant component of the qualification.

6.   Evidence Required for RPL Assessment

6.1   The form of evidence required for an individual's RPL assessment process will vary considerably depending on the variety of the relevant learning and experience, the

complexity of the qualification involved, the level of Credit sought and the duration of learning entailed.

6.2 Evidence required to support an RPL application will always include:
- resume/curriculum vitae
- role descriptions

and may include any of, or a combination of, the following:
- certification by a manager re role/ staff responsibilities
- certificates from short courses or internal/external professional development
- certificates from Continuing Education courses conducted by a training/education provider
- references/referee reports
- reports from psychometric assessment or 360 degree feedback
- business plan, business cases, marketing plan or project reports
- work journals
- work diaries
- employer statements of work undertaken and level of achievement
- performance review and development planning documents
- written speeches or visual presentations
- procedural manuals
- videos produced
- work samples
- reflective journal.

6.3 The Course Coordinator (or appointed academic for institutional arrangements) will determine what additional evidence is required to support an application under this policy. The forms of evidence listed above may be supplemented by an interview, challenge exam or an assignment such as a report entailing structured reflection on work experience/community service. Assessment precedents will be established where possible to enable consistent Credit Outcomes from similar RPL applications.

6.4 Where a student meets the work experience requirements approved by the Academic Board for entry to a qualification and has provided the evidence portfolio determined by the Academic Director, entry to a qualification can be granted by Admissions staff and no formal RPL process will be required.

6.5 Throughout the Recognition of Prior Learning process, AIB will ensure that there is consistency, fairness and transparency in the decision making process. To this end, individual RPL decisions will be made by the RPL Committee in consultation with the relevant Course Coordinator. The RPL Committee will ensure that integrity of the course of study and qualification is maintained and that students are not disadvantaged in achieving the expected learning outcomes for the course of study or qualification. The decision of the RPL Committee is final.

7. Application Process and Time Limits

7.1 A Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form must normally be submitted prior to commencement of the course. Late applications will be considered in exceptional circumstances, in which case an additional fee will be charged.

7.2   It is the student's responsibility in applying for RPL to:
- state clearly what credit is being applied for
- provide evidence in the required format with the requisite components
- demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the relevant component of the qualification have been achieved.

7.3   Recognition of Prior Learning is not an automatic process but relies on informed academic judgement and, as a result, Credit Outcomes will vary between individual student applications unless a precedent has been established or an institutional arrangement agreed.

8. Appeals

8.1   In the first instance when an RPL application is rejected or partially accepted, all students have an opportunity to request a re-assessment of their RPL application. Any request for re-assessment must be supported by substantial additional evidence to strengthen the original RPL application.

8.2   If the student is dissatisfied after re-assessment of the RPL application, appeals against RPL assessments may be made in accordance with the Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure. The appeals process is designed to review whether due process was followed and whether the policies and procedures of the RPL process were complied with during the RPL assessment process.

Related Forms/Registers:
Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form

Responsibility:
Academic Director

Related Policies:
Credit Transfer Policy
Admissions Policy
Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure

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