



Policy and Procedure – Course Credit

Purpose

RTO Standards

RTO Standards for Registered Training Organisations (2015) requires that:

The RTO accepts and provides credit to learners for units of competency and/or modules (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevents this) where these are evidenced by:

- a. AQF certification documentation issued by another RTO or AQF authorized issuing organization, or
- b. Authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar.

Related Policy and Procedure – Provide Secure Certification and Participate in the Student Identifier Scheme.

ESOS Standards

The National Code 2018 requires registered providers to have an implement a documented policy and process for assessing and recording recognition of prior learning (RPL); and granting and recording course credit, if it intends to assess RPL or grant course credit. The decision to assess prior learning or grant course credit must preserve the integrity of the award to which it applies and comply with requirements of the underpinning education framework of the course. [ES 2.3]

If the registered provider grants RPL or course credit to an overseas student, the registered provider must give a written record of the decision to the overseas student to accept and retain the written record of acceptance for two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student. [ES 2.4]

If the registered provider grants the overseas student RPL or course credit that reduces the overseas student's course length, the provider must: [ES 2.5]

- Inform the student of the reduced course duration following granting of RPL and ensure the confirmation of enrolment (CoE) is issued only for the reduced duration of the course [ES 2.5.1]
- Report any change in course duration in PRISMS if RPL or course credit is granted after the overseas student's visa is granted. [ES 2.5.2]

Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All overseas students before obtaining a visa grant and those currently enrolled with Lawson College Australia; and
- All Staff of Lawson College Australia involved in the process of course credit.

Note: Lawson College Australia is not obliged to meet or respond in any form (phone, email etc) to any request received from the agent, lawyer or similar seeking personal information which may be perceived to have a conflict of interest or any commercial interest whatsoever. Any disclosure of personal information to a third party would be governed under Lawson College Australia's Privacy Policy.

Note: In the event of Distance (e.g. online) learning being implemented for on-shore ELICOS and VET courses, due to Government, Regulatory Authorities and Public Health Official requirements (for example, Social Distancing due to COVID-19), Lawson College Australia has in place Cloud Learning @ Lawson.

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Definitions

AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework. www.aqf.edu.au
Cloud Learning @ Lawson	The online method of delivery enabling structured formal learning that emulates the classroom environment using a learning management system (LMS), Moodle, that allows face to face interaction between the trainer and students and participation in various training and assessment activities. These activities can be synchronous (where the students and trainer participate at the same time) or asynchronous (where students and trainers are not necessarily expected to participate in sessions at the same time). Some of the interactive tools used may include videoconferencing applications (Big Blue Button, Zoom), chat rooms, white board, messaging etc. For any avoidance of doubt, Cloud Learning @ Lawson, may be offered to on-shore international students where classroom-based learning cannot be practically delivered due to extenuating/ exceptional circumstances (e.g. Government/Regulatory Authorities directives during the COVID-19 pandemic).
CoE	A document, provided electronically, which is issued by the registered provider to intending overseas students and which must accompany their application for a student visa. It confirms the overseas student's eligibility to enrol in the particular course of the registered provider.
Course Convenor	A "Course Convenor" is the academic staff member of the educational organisation appointed by the CEO and is responsible for the coordination of a program (and the units offered within that program) leading to an award of the educational organisation. Also known as course/program/unit coordinator.
Course Credit	Exemption from enrolment in a particular part of the course as a result of previous study, experience, or recognition of a competency currently held. Includes academic credit and recognition of prior learning.
Credit Transfer [CT]	Credit transfer is defined in the AQF as a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications. Students who have completed a Nationally Recognised qualification / unit that have the exact same code as a unit currently enrolled will be eligible for credit transfer for the particular unit(s). The student must provide the original certificate and transcript to be sighted by Lawson College Australia to verify/authenticate the Credit Transfer. Credit Transfer cannot be rescinded unless compelling education reasons are presented.
Distance/ online learning	Distance learning is an umbrella term that covers ways in which training can be provided by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) remotely to a student, without face-to-face contact at a site. Perhaps the most common and widely recognised example of this is 'online learning', though distance learning can also include 'e-learning' and 'blended learning'. https://www.asqa.gov.au/distance-learning . Online learning is where training is delivered primarily via the internet, commonly using a learning management system (LMS) and can be synchronous or asynchronous. https://www.asqa.gov.au/distance-learning
DoHA	Department of Home Affairs. https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/
ESOS	Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 as amended from time to time
Evidence	Evidence is the material that is presented as an indicator of competence. Evidence is proof of having reached a level of performance that meets that outlined in the unit of competency. Evidence may be collected via <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documentation of practical experiences in the workplace or the community including photo's, newspaper articles, reports etc ▪ Statements of results from both formal and informal training that you have completed ▪ Copies of projects that you have undertaken Documents you create that link your training and assessment to the units of competency
International Student	A person holding an Australian student visa and defined as an 'Overseas Student' in the ESOS Act. See also Student.
Learning Management System (LMS)	An LMS provides a learning space online. Lawson College Australia uses the LMS Moodle, which enables students and staff to access student support services information and forms, course materials, submit assessments, gain feedback, communicate, see grades and much more all by logging in to their very own online account. See also Cloud Learning @ Lawson.
National Code	The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
Portfolio of evidence	A portfolio is a collection of items – in this case, a collection of evidence of competence. Portfolios will usually include a combination of many different types of evidence. Evidence can take the form of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products of things a student has made • Reports a student has written • Statements made by a student (written or verbal) • Video or audio tapes a student has produced • Participation in exactly the same or modified versions of the assessment you would be required to complete as part of the full course • Assessment based on a portfolio of evidence • Direct observation of skill or competency • Reflective papers, journals or portfolios that relate past learning to the learning or competency outcomes of the current course or qualification • Provision of examples of work drawn from the workplace, social, community or other setting in which you may apply your learning, skill, or competence

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testimonials of learning, skill or competence; and • Combinations of any of the above
PRISMS	Provider Registration and International Student Management System [PRISMS] . Through PRISMS, certain Australian Government agencies can monitor student compliance with visa conditions and provider compliance with the <i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</i> (ESOS Act). PRISMS is a secure system for providers to: - issue 'Confirmations of Enrolment' [CoE] to overseas students intending to study in Australia.
Recognition of Prior Learning [RPL]	Means an assessment process that assesses the competency/s of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of a AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree); 2. Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, in-house professional development program conducted by a business); and 3. Informal learning refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities (for example the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through several years as a sales representative. RPL is awarded for a total unit of competency (no partial RPL of a unit will be awarded)
Social Distancing	Social Distancing, also referred to as Physical Distancing, are measures to protect the health and well-being of the population imposed by Government Public Health officials to stop or slow down the spread of a highly contagious disease. https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert
Student	A student who is enrolled at Lawson College Australia and includes both prospective students and enrolled students who are 'overseas students' as defined in the National Code and hold a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, and to students of Lawson College Australia who do not hold student visas and are studying off-shore; but does not include domestic students.
Support Person	A friend or relative of a student who can provide support, if needed. Please note Agents of any kind, Lawyers or anyone who has a perceived commercial interest are not permitted to attend as a Support Person, as they are considered to have a conflict of interest. A Lawson College Australia Student Support Officer will be available if the student does not have someone who can attend with them and they require support. <i>Lawson College Australia is not obliged to meet or respond in any form (phone, email etc) to any request received from the agent, lawyer or similar seeking personal information which may be perceived to have a conflict of interest or any commercial interest whatsoever. Any disclosure of personal information to a third party would be governed under Lawson College Australia's Privacy Policy.</i>
USI	All students doing nationally recognised training need to have Unique Student Identifier (USI). The USI is a reference number that creates an online record of training and qualifications attained in Australia. A USI is required to receive a qualification or statement of attainment. https://www.usi.gov.au/about

ES = related ESOS Standard

Policy

1 General information

- 1.1 **Course Credit** may be considered for studies completed at any authorized issuing organization, such as a university. In the case of any non-equivalent units of competency, mapping and analysis to determine the equivalence of the study completed with the relevant units or models before granting credit, is undertaken.
- 1.2 **Credit Transfer** can be granted for studies completed at a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) for a Nationally Recognised qualification/ unit that is equivalent to the unit currently enrolled at Lawson College Australia for example, has the exact same code and title. The student must provide the original certificate and transcript to be sighted by Lawson College Australia to enable verification/authentication for the Credit Transfer to be approved.
- 1.3 **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** can be granted to an individual who has demonstrated evidence of prior knowledge and experience in life and work relating to the unit of competency for which recognition is applied. RPL is awarded for a total unit of competency (no partial RPL of a unit will be awarded). Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process, which recognizes what has been learnt from:
 - Life experience
 - Work experience

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- Non-accredited/accredited training programs
- 1.4 Students must not be required to repeat any unit or module in which they have already been assessed as competent, unless a regulatory requirement or license condition (including an industry licensing scheme requires this).
 - 1.5 Lawson College Australia is not obliged to issue a qualification or statement of attainment that is achieved wholly through recognition of units and/or modules completed at another RTO or RTOs.
 - 1.6 Provision of credit for previous studies **is not** recognition of prior learning. RPL is an assessment-only pathway of determining the competence of a person, while providing credit is recognizing the equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications previously undertaken and completed successfully [RTO Clause 3.5 - Accept and provide credit to learners].
 - 1.7 All prospective and enrolling individuals must be informed in either print or electronic form of the opportunity to apply for Course Credit
 - 1.8 International students must apply for Course Credit at the time of application to enable course credit to be determined prior to the student visa being granted to enable net course duration to be considered in the Confirmation of Enrolment letter issued to the student.
 - 1.9 If course credit is applied for after on-shore enrolment, students must continue classes until the student is advised in writing of the outcome.
 - 1.10 Students need to acknowledge receipt of the outcome and be given the opportunity to appeal the decision, using the Lawson College Australia's complaints and appeals policy.
 - 1.11 RPL is awarded for a total unit of competency (no partial RPL of a unit will be awarded)
 - 1.12 Credit Transfer cannot be rescinded unless compelling education reasons are presented.

2 Procedure- Student request for Credit Transfer

- 2.1 If a student wishes to apply for Credit Transfer, they must request and complete the 'Form - Application for Course Credit', and specify the units they are seeking Credit Transfer, and submit with evidence to progression@lawsoncollege.edu.au
- 2.2 Please note: A student can request that their transcript be authenticated via the USI. A USI transcript is a valid way to authenticate the training undertaken by a student, comparable to calling the issuing RTO. The student must activate permissions on the USI site before a provider can access their transcript.
- 2.3 The Form - Application for Course Credit and evidence will be assessed and authenticated by a Lawson College Australia Assessor
- 2.4 The Assessment of application by the Assessor will be reviewed by the Lawson College Australia Compliance Manager, and the student notified in writing of the outcome.
- 2.5 The email letter of notification will outline if the request for credit transfer was granted or not granted and in regard to the latter, reasons for refusal.
- 2.6 The student must sign and return to Lawson College Australia a declaration accepting the credit transfer. This signed and returned declaration will be retained on the student's file.
- 2.7 Credit Transfer will be recorded on the Transcript of Results according to the Lawson College Australia results outcome codes, once all aspects of the process, authentication and approval has been completed.

3 Fees charged for processing and assessing Credit Transfer requests

- 3.1 Fee for the Credit Transfer will be \$900 for each unit of competency
- 3.2 All fees are payable before or upon submission of evidence

4 Procedure- Student request for RPL

- 4.1 If a student wishes to apply for RPL they must request and complete the 'Form - Application for Course Credit' and specify the units for which they are seeking RPL and submit with evidence to

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progression@lawsoncollege.edu.au.

- 4.2 The process involved in the RPL process is to be outlined and counselling session/s with an RPL assessor is provided.
- 4.3 Students applying for RPL will be asked for detailed records of experience, employment and training etc. which may be relevant.
- 4.4 Students will conduct a self-assessment of each performance criteria
- 4.5 Students will provide evidence against each of the performance criteria in a unit of competency (i.e. evidence that students can demonstrate skills and knowledge outlined in the performance criteria).
- 4.6 Students will be interviewed by a trainer who will examine the portfolio of evidence.
- 4.7 The Form - Application for RPL and evidence will be assessed and authenticated by a Lawson College Australia Assessor.
- 4.8 The Assessment of application by the Assessor will be reviewed by the Lawson College Australia Compliance Manager, and the student notified in writing within 10 business days, of the outcome.
- 4.9 The email letter of notification will outline if the request for RPL was granted or not granted and in regard to the latter, reasons for refusal.
- 4.10 The student must sign and return to Lawson College Australia a declaration accepting the RPL. This signed and returned declaration will be retained on the student's file.
- 4.11 RPL will be recorded on the Statement of Results according to the Lawson College Australia grading codes once all aspects of the process, authentication and approval has been completed.

5. Fees charged for processing and assessing RPL requests

- 5.1 The student will be advised of charges applicable for course credit via an RPL process
- 5.2 Charges for the RPL process will not exceed \$900 for each the unit of competency.
- 5.3 All fees are payable before or upon submission of evidence portfolio.
- 5.4 If RPL is granted the student will be recorded as competent in the given unit and will not need to complete the unit.
- 5.5 RPL will be recorded on the Transcript of Results according to the Lawson College Australia results outcomes codes
- 5.6 If RPL is not granted, the student will be required to complete the given unit and the monies paid will then go toward the payment of the given unit. There is no refund applicable in this instance.

6. Evidence required enabling assessment of RPL

- 6.1 Evidence should be
 - Authentic (it is students' work or original certified qualification)
 - Valid (relate directly to the unit of competency)
 - Reliable and current (demonstrating competency);
 And, at a level of
 - Complexity that matches the unit of competency.
 - Sufficient (to enable a decision to be made)
- 6.2 Original documents such as certificates, workplace reports, etc, to be copied after being sighted by the
- 6.3 assessor and then signed with a date, signature, printed name and a brief statement of what unit this relates to and how it relates to the required competency.
- 6.4 Several pieces of evidence should be combined to adequately cover competencies for each unit.
- 6.5 A piece of evidence may be used more than once provided it demonstrates achievement of competencies outlined in the unit where RPL is sought. For example meeting notes can be evidence for demonstrating competency in more than one unit.
- 6.6 All evidence submitted must be the students' work, or directly relate to the student. Students must sign a document to this effect

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7. Process of assessing RPL

- 7.1 The RPL process shall cover the following steps:
- Information supplied by the student
 - Initial support and counselling if required
 - Application;
 - Assessment;
 - Post-assessment guidance; and/or;
 - Certification.
- 7.2 Lawson College Australia ensures that all RPL assessment undertaken is completed and recorded appropriately.
- 7.3 On receipt of the self-assessment and relevant documentation from the participant, the portfolio of evidence will be assessed against the competency standards for the particular units.
- 7.4 Assessors when marking an assessment will consider the following:
- relevance and nature of evidence provided by the applicant
 - scope of subject matter covered by the evidence
 - whether the evidence is sufficient to enable a judgment of competence to be made in regard to the unit, taking into account the required knowledge and skills and the critical aspects of evidence in the relevant units
- 7.5 Where evidence and documentation require additional information or clarification, this will be discussed with the applicant via a phone call or via a scheduled meeting
- 7.6 All original documents such as certificates, workplace reports, etc., should be copied after being sighted by the assessor and then the copy signed with a date, signature, printed name of the assessor.
- 7.7 Where RPL is 'Granted' this information will be communicated in writing to the participant within 10 business days of completion of the assessment, and the qualification / statement of attainment will then be issued
- 7.8 Where RPL is 'Not Granted' participants will be notified in writing of the outcome within 10 business days of completion of the assessment. The written communication to the student is to include a reason for refusal (where applicable)
- 7.9 In all cases, a copy of the RPL documentation and outcome will be kept in the student's file.

8. Appeals

- 8.1 Where the outcome of Course Credit is not granted and the participant disagrees with the outcome, they should first try to resolve the matter informally.
- 8.2 Where the outcome remains unresolved following informal discussions, the individual may appeal by using the methods outlined in the Lawson College Australia Policy - 'Complaints and appeals' - <http://lawsoncollege.edu.au/international-student-policies/>
- 8.3 In the event that a complaint and appeals process is initiated please note in definitions Lawson College Australia's conditions regarding 'Support Person'

9. Granting Course Credit [Credit Transfer and RPL] and net course duration

- 9.1 For International students, a full-time load for the student should be maintained by adjusting a student's course schedule and duration for completion of the course.
- 9.2 If Lawson College Australia grants course credit which leads to a shortening of the student's course, Lawson College Australia must:
- a. if the course credit is granted before the student visa grant, indicate the actual net course duration (as reduced by course credit) in the confirmation of enrolment issued for that student for that course; or
 - b. if the course credit is granted after the student visa grant, report the change of course duration via

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PRISMS under section 19 of the ESOS Act. To do this, the Enrolment Officer used the Student Course Variation function, and indicate that the student has requested a change to existing enrolment. The Enrolment Officer then chooses 'transfer student into same course' and then changes the end date of the course. This process will result in the creation of a new CoE (with the revised end date) and the cancellation of the original CoE.

- c. counsel the student to review the conditions of their Visa. If the student finishes his/her course early, he/she must either enrol in another CRICOS registered course immediately or depart Australia immediately unless given authorisation by DoHA to remain in Australia.

9.3 If Lawson College Australia grants course credit which does not affect the duration of the student's course, the Enrolment Officer will record the course credit in the student's file but does not need to take any further action.

10. Retaining Records of RPL or Course Credit granted

- 10.1 If Lawson College Australia grants RPL or Course Credit to an overseas student, Lawson College Australia will provide a written record of the decision to the overseas student to accept. [ES 2.4]
- 10.2 Lawson College Australia retains the written record of acceptance for two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student. [ES 2.4]

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Document History and Version Control Table

Version Number	Date approved	Approved by	Type of change	Extent
V 2.0	18/9/2014	GRMC	Major	Reviewed
V 2.1	18/9/2015	GRMC	Minor	Reformatted: CRICOS Code added. RTO Standard 1 & 3 included. Added definition of domestic student
V 2.2	1/12/2017	CEO	Minor	Reviewed and re-edited
V 3.0	4/4/2018	CEO	Major	Separated information relating to Credit Transfer and RPL.
V 4.0	30/9/2019	QACC	Major	Added ESOS standards 2.3-2.5 in Purpose Section Added definitions – AQF, Evidence, USI (Removed domestic student). Updated National Code Changed 1.2 to Course Credit Added section 2.1 (USI) Added section 10
V4.1	20/4/2020	CEO	Minor	Title changed to 'Policy & Procedure- Course Credit' Revised Section 9 Granting Course Credit [Credit Transfer and RPL] and net course duration Added section 9.3 Changed heading for Sections 2 and 3 to include 'Procedure'
V4.2	15/09/2020	QACC/ CEO	Minor	Added Notes – page 1 Added definitions – Cloud Learning @ Lawson, LMS, Student, Support Person, Social Distancing Updated USI definition Moved 1.1 to 1.2 and vice-versa Added 8.3 Reformatted

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