

Policy Owner	Academic Director
Contact Officer:	Student Services Officer
Policy Number:	QTDPO002
Approved by:	Senior Management Group (09/08/2018); Learning and Teaching Committee (09/08/2018); Academic Council (23/08.2018)
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Related Policies:	Admissions Policy Complaints and Appeals Policy Enrolment Policy Equal Opportunity Policy Refund Policy
Related Documents:	Application for Exemption Form Entry Portfolio Application Form RPL Application (Pathway) Form RPL Application – Notification Record

1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1. This policy outlines the procedures for granting 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL) in relation to units required for completion of an ECC course. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that granting RPL is applied equitably and consistently at ECC.
- 1.2. This policy aligns with requirements set out in the:
 - Education Services for Overseas (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code
 - National quality assurance frameworks including:
 - Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
 - TEQSA's Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards)

2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to ECC students who are intending to enrol in Units of study or who are currently enrolled in Units of study offered by ECC.
- 2.2. Unit Credit may be granted towards an ECC Course for assessable learning outcomes achieved through Formal Learning and /or Informal Learning, work related experience and/or life experience, to an extent that is consistent with maximising student progression while maintaining established academic standards.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. **Advanced Standing:** see Unit Credit.
- 3.2. **AQF (Australian Quality Framework):** the system that defines and recognises a hierarchy of educational qualifications in Australia by linking school, vocational education/training and Higher Education sectors, to promote mutual recognition of learning outcomes. (<https://www.aqf.edu.au/>)

- 3.3. **ATSI:** Refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- 3.4. **Award:** An accredited course approved by the national regulator and for which there is formal recognition from other Registered Training Organisations (RTO) or Higher Education Providers (HEP).
- 3.5. **Census Date:** refers to the last day of Week 4 in a Study Period.
- 3.6. **COE (Confirmation of Enrolment):** a document registered with Immigration confirming a student's acceptance into a particular course for a specified duration.
- 3.7. **Course:** a formal program of education and/or training made up of study components known as Units.
- 3.8. **DET:** Refers to the Australian Department of Education and Training.
- 3.9. **Exemption:** See Unit Credit.
- 3.10. **Formal Learning:** Learning that has occurred in courses recognized as part of the AQF, or overseas courses recognised by the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR), or in other formal courses of study recognised by ECC as leading to a qualification, subject to meeting ECC's academic and English language requirements.
- 3.11. **Immigration:** refers to the Department of Home Affairs, the Australian government agency responsible for issuing students with visas (<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/>)
- 3.12. **Informal Learning:** Learning that has occurred outside courses of study (either formal or informal) e.g. work-related experience or life experience.
- 3.13. **Portfolio of Evidence:** Collection of documents to demonstrate Informal Learning and abilities which may include evidence of work experience, training documents, resume, personal statement relating to skills/abilities as determined by the Academic Director (or nominee) on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.14. **PRISMS (Provider Registration and International Student Management System):** the database system used to process information given to the Secretary of DET and Immigration by registered education providers.
- 3.15. **RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning):** is a process which assesses the knowledge and skills a *person* has gained through previous learning (formal or informal), work experience, training, volunteer work and/or life experience. A request for RPL may result in the applicant meeting the entry requirements for an ECC Course or being granted Unit Credit for a Unit within an ECC Course.
- 3.16. **Study Period:** refers to a trimester or a semester of study.
- 3.17. **Unit:** A discrete component of study within a Course.
- 3.18. **Unit Credit (also called Advanced Standing or Exemption):** where a student is not required to study a particular Unit on the basis of prior learning (Formal or Informal) where that learning has been assessed by ECC as being equivalent to the learning outcomes or competencies of one or more ECC Units.

4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

- 4.1. ECC will recognise prior learning as a means of qualifying for entry into an ECC course or as a means of gaining Unit Credit in a course. Prior learning includes:
- Units completed towards an accredited Course at any Australian University, Higher Education Provider, TAFE or Registered Training Organisation;
 - Units completed as part of an overseas course recognised by the national Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR);
 - Non-accredited or Informal study/learning, professional/work experience, volunteering or life experience;
- where the prior learning is assessed by ECC as equivalent to learning outcomes and/or competencies that align with an ECC Unit
- 4.2. Equivalence of learning outcomes and competencies will be assessed in line with standards set by the AQF, Edith Cowan University and/or relevant professional bodies.
- 4.3. ECC policies and procedures support participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people and are sensitive to ATSI knowledge and culture. As such, ECC may recognise alternative forms of RPL which are targeted at improving access for ATSI students or others who may be experiencing disadvantage in accessing and participating in education. To that end, the Entry Portfolio process may be applied.

5. POLICY CONTENT

- 5.1. To be eligible for RPL, the previous study and/or experience must be current. That is, the study and/or experience must have been completed within a period of time that is no longer than three times the length of the course for which the student is seeking Unit Credit. (e.g. Unit Credit for a Unit in a one year Diploma must have been completed within the previous three years). A shorter time-limit for eligibility may apply for disciplines where the body of knowledge changes more rapidly.
- 5.2. Applicants should apply for RPL prior to commencement of an Award at ECC. RPL applications can take several weeks to make appropriate investigations and ensure that they are assessed by suitably qualified assessors.
- 5.3. If an applicant submits an application for RPL once he/she has commenced their ECC studies, the application must be lodged before the end of Week 1 of the Study Period in order for it to qualify for an Exemption in that Study Period. Applicants are responsible for providing appropriate evidence to support their RPL claim. Such evidence includes:
- 5.3.1. Certified copies of academic transcripts and/or qualifications with approved English language translations (if applicable)
- 5.3.2. Certified copies of full Unit outlines describing detailed contents of learning outcomes, assessments and other course materials. Such evidence must demonstrate equivalent academic rigour (quality, time frame, depth of study and content) with least 70% overlap to the relevant ECC Unit course content and learning outcomes.
- 5.3.3. Evidence to support informal learning RPL applications should include a Portfolio of Evidence. Where there is insufficient evidence to assess an informal RPL application, applicants may be interviewed and subject to passing an oral, practical and/or written examination.
- 5.3.4. Other evidence as deemed appropriate by the Academic Director (or nominee) in accordance with the criteria, conditions, policies and practices established under ECC's academic governance structures and the respective AQF Standards.

- 5.3.5. Approval of RPL for courses assessed in a language other than English will be approved on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.4. Students may apply for RPL where they have successfully completed Units at a similar level and standard in previous studies. A pass is considered to be 50% or higher. A near pass grade (less than 50%) or conceded pass is not considered to be successful completion of a Unit.
- 5.5. Applicants must successfully complete at least the equivalent number of Units equal to the difference between the Unit Credits granted and the number of Units required for that Award.
- 5.5.1. An ECC Award will only be granted where the RPL applicant has successfully completed at least 50% of the course with ECC.
- 5.5.2. If the applicant completes less than 50% of the course with ECC, he/she is entitled to an academic transcript but not an Award.
- 5.6. Students who enrol in Diploma courses may be eligible for a maximum number of units of advanced standing.

	Completed only Year 11	Completed only Year 12	Completed AQF 5 Equivalent Units
Diploma (Year 1) 8 units (120 credit points)	<i>No advanced standing</i>	<i>Up to 8 units (120 credit points) advanced standing</i>	<i>8 units (120 credit points) advanced standing</i>
Diploma (Year 2) 8 units (120 credit points)	<i>No advanced standing</i>	<i>No advanced standing</i>	<i>Up to 4 units (60 credit points) advanced standing</i>

- 5.7. Students will be notified in writing of any Unit Credit granted.
- 5.8. All documentation including student's acceptance of the Unit Credit granted will be placed on the student file.
- 5.9. Where Unit Credit is granted prior to Course enrolment, the actual Course duration will be recorded on the CoE by ECC Admissions staff.
- 5.10. Where Unit Credit is granted after enrolment, the change of Course duration will be reported via PRISMS under Section 19 of the ESOS Act.
- 5.11. Where an ECC student is approved to change his/her Course prior to its completion but after completing one or more Units, they may apply to transfer Unit Credits to the new Course. ECC will assess if Units studied in the initial course are deemed to be equivalent the Unit requirements of the new Course.
- 5.12. ECC reserves the right to cancel any enrolment and/or RPL where it is deemed that the student has presented false or misleading documentation relating to their RPL application. In cases which result in cancellation of enrolment, the rules relating to serious misconduct applies with respect to the ECC Refund Policy.
- 5.13. Should a student seek RPL for a Unit in which he/she is currently enrolled and not making satisfactory progress, the RPL application will not be approved

Fees

- 5.14. Applicants must submit their application no later than the end of Week 1 of the study period for which they are applying in order to allow sufficient time for the application to be processed and approved before Census Date.
- 5.15. If the RPL application is submitted after Week 4 of the Study Period, Unit Credit may be granted (subject to the student not falling below the minimum study load for visa purposes), however it does not qualify for a refund of Unit fees.
- 5.16. No fees are charged for assessing students for RPL or Unit Credit transfer for entry into ECC Higher Education courses.

Appeal against RPL Decisions

- 5.17. Applicants who wish to appeal the outcome of the RPL application should refer to the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

- 6.1. This policy and related documentation is accessible through the ECC website at: <https://www.edithcowancollege.edu.au/policies>
- 6.2. Where Unit Credit is granted for a Unit that forms part of a Higher Education course, details of that approval will be recorded in the academic transcript issued at the end of the course. From time to time, full details of such approvals are forwarded to ECU as part of the transition to our university partner.
- 6.3. Any recommendations for process improvement or policy change arising will be forwarded to the ECC Senior Management Group for recording and consideration.
- 6.4. Updates to this policy and related procedures will be communicated to staff via email. New staff will receive policy information during the induction process where it relates to their position.