*Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy & Procedure*

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|---|---|
| **Accountability** | Academic Dean |
| **Operational Responsibility** | Faculty |
| **Date of Approval** | Dec 2017 |
| **Next Review** | Q1 2019 |
| **Approval Authority** | T&LSPC<br>Academic Board |

# Objectives

LCI Melbourne recognises academic completion and credit transfers from other local, national and international institutions, as well as prior learning and work experience, whilst adhering to LCI Melbourne's academic calibre, values and curriculum. The procedure contained within this document outlines provisions for evaluating credit transfer and informal prior learning. These process are promoted to prospective and existing students to enable them to make well-informed choices about appropriate pathways and promoting the credit transfer or prior learning credit that may be available to them. The information is periodically reviewed to maximise applicability to new and updated qualifications and to students and industry needs.

# Scope

This policy applies to any applications for academic credit or prior learning assessment, submitted by students enrolling in a program at LCI Melbourne.

# Exclusions

There are no exclusions to this policy.

# Definitions

### Credit Transfer

Credit transfer is when a student applies for credit for an equivalent course they have previously completed elsewhere. Credit transfers are only issued if a course or group of units are determined to be equivalent to the course for which transfer credit is being requested.

### Recognised Prior Learning Assessment (RPL)

RPL is comprised of any relevant prior work experience or qualifications in line with the learning outcomes of the curriculum to be studied that is completed outside the educational system, such as: work or life experience, self-directed study, travel, volunteer work and participation in training sessions offered by professional and industry associations. To earn prior learning credit for a course or units offered by a post-secondary institution, students must provide evidence and demonstrate that the learning is equivalent to learning that would have been acquired had they previously taken the course(s).

### Student Study Permit Compliance for Onshore International Students

Onshore international students are required to complete their study within the expected program duration (Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000). Onshore International students need to be enrolled in an 80% load each semester unless LCI Melbourne has sought and been granted a reduced study load via PRISMs. If a student is granted a block of exemptions this may change the expected program duration, this should be reported via PRISMs and students may be expected to complete the program in the revised timeframe. Notwithstanding, these exemptions, transfer or prior learning credit should be granted for one or two units only.

**Provisions**

The Academic Dean of LCI Melbourne is ultimately responsible for the credit transfer evaluation. The Academic Dean delegates individual assessments to the Program Coordinator.

In determining credit transfer or prior learning comparability and equivalence, the following criteria is evaluated:

- Program of study, including content, for transfer credit;
- Learning and assessment approaches, for transfer credit;
- Type of accomplishments and professional experience, for recognition of prior learning;
- Learning outcomes;
- Volume of learning.

Decisions are evidence-based, equitable and transparent, applied consistently and fairly and are subject to appeal and review. LCI Melbourne recognises learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided that the learning is relevant and current and has a relationship to the outcomes of the qualification from LCI Melbourne.

The decisions must be academically defensible and take into account the student's ability to meet the learning outcomes of the qualification successfully. The decisions are made in a timely manner to ensure that students' access to qualifications is not unnecessarily inhibited.

Decisions allow for credit outcomes to be used for the partial fulfilment of the requirements of a qualification and are formally documented for the student including any reasons for not giving credit.

All requests for credit transfers and prior learning must be directed to the Student Services Manager according to the established procedure and time frame specified in the student handbook and school calendar. If students are registered in a course for which they are requesting a credit transfer or prior learning credit, the requests must be made and granted **before the beginning of the program start date but certainly no later than census date**. Ideally, students will submit requests for credit transfers and prior learning as far in advance as possible of the beginning of the term for which they are making the request.

In order to analyse transfer credit or prior learning, students are responsible for submitting justification materials to support their requests. Any student who presents falsified documents will incur penalties and disciplinary measures that could lead to their dismissal from LCI Melbourne.

Depending on the number of requests, a minimum of three (3) weeks is required to evaluate requests. The Academic Dean may require students to pass an exam before requested credit transfers or prior learning credit is granted.

If credit transfers or prior learning credit are granted, the abbreviation "Credit" will appear on the student's transcripts at the end of the current semester.

In the case of a transfer originating from an LCI Education network institution, up to a maximum of 50% credit for any similar program may be granted to the student.

In the case of a transfer originating from external institutions in similar disciplines, the following table will be employed.

| Completed Award Course Level | Credit Granted |
|---|---|
| Diploma | up to 100 credit points (may require 1 - 2 additional Contextual Studies units) |
| Advanced Diploma | up to 150 credit points (may require 2 - 3 additional Contextual Studies units) |
| Associate Degree | up to 200 credit points (may require up to 2 additional Contextual Studies units) |

In the case of recognition of prior learning accomplishments and professional experience, up to a maximum of credit for three (3) units in a related program may be granted to the student, unless otherwise authorised by the Dean.

In the case of a combination of transfer credit and prior learning, up to a maximum of 50% in a related program may be granted to the student.

These agreements do not preclude any further institutional or individual student negotiations for additional credit.

Students must identify which units they will be challenging and provide a non-refundable assessment fee per course challenge. The fee is set at $50 per assessment of an application for up to 100 credit points, and $100 per assessment of an application for more than 100 credit points.

<<In the case that a challenge is successful the student **is required to pay 50% of the normal tuition for the course.>>**

## 1) Provisions for Evaluation of Awarding Credit Transfer

Note: These provisions incorporate the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) guidelines on Admissions and Transfer. Criteria of admissibility:

- Applications for credit transfer (equivalency) must meet the TEQSA specifications for the volume of learning, the expectations of the Academic Dean of LCI Melbourne, the Program Coordinator and the program faculty;
- Credit transfer must be appropriate to the program and credential sought;
- Academic credit older than ten years is reviewed to determine its relevance to today's curriculum;
- Credit transfers are accepted from post-secondary institutions authorised by appropriate legal authorities;
- Corporate or specialised training programs may be used as credit transfer conditional upon the credit transfer being applicable to the program of study;

Conditions followed to grant credit transfers:

- LCI Melbourne automatically grants credit transfers when students come from another institution in the LCI Education network and the equivalent outcomes can be aligned with Australian standards. Students may only be granted a maximum of 50 per cent of the total program credits required for graduation through credit transfer earned from other LCI Education campuses.
- Tertiary-level credits taken at an accredited institution of higher education may be considered for transfer;
- LCI Melbourne may authorise the substitution (SU) of one (1) or several program units, in which a student is registered, with one (1) or more units;
- Granting credit transfer or substitution is a procedure that verifies if the objectives and standards of a course match the objectives and standards of another.
- LCI Melbourne may refer to a substitutions table developed based on previous requests and authorised by the Academic Dean;

## 2) Provisions for Evaluation of Awarding Prior Learning

*Evaluation Methods*

The acquisition of knowledge in an academic setting differs from working life in several ways. Learning in an academic setting evolves from general theoretical to practical knowledge, while learning in other settings evolves from practical to general knowledge. Learning in an academic setting is evaluated within a well-defined framework; other types of learning employ different methods for evaluating knowledge and skills.

Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment may be evaluated using various tools, including:

- Portfolios or personal files;
- A curriculum vitae along with three contactable references;
- Work position descriptions;
- Project reports;

- Work journals;
- Training journals;
- Training certificates;
- Demonstrating particular capabilities;
- Simulation exercises;
- Interviews;
- Exams;
- Presentation of projects;
- Presentation of products.

To determine the appropriate evaluation method, the Program Coordinator or faculty of the concerned program, answer the following questions:

- Are the acquired skills and knowledge measurable?
- Is the evaluation method suitable for the acquired capabilities?
- Can the evaluation method be applied uniformly?
- Is the evaluation method devoid of bias and jargon?
- Does the evaluation method enable candidates to show their knowledge?
- Is the evaluation method the most efficient, fair, valid, reliable and as simple as possible?

**Supporting Procedures**

1) **Procedure for Evaluation of Awarding Credit Transfers (EQ) and Substitutions (SU)**
   Applications for credit transfers (EQ) and substitutions (SU) should ideally be submitted within one (1) week of acceptance into the program and must be submitted at least three (3) weeks prior to the beginning of the program.

   *Role of Participants*

   EQ and SU are granted based on a process in which the roles and responsibilities of each participant are specified.

   The role of the Admissions Office is:
   - To inform students of the Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy;
   - To inform students of the required documents such as official transcripts and course descriptions (course outlines preferred);
   - To consult the Program Coordinator in cases of uncertainty.

   The role of the student is:
   - To present applications in accordance with the rules and conditions of the herein stated policy;
   - To provide legitimate and authentic documents;
   - To accept to undergo whatever evaluations may be required by the Program Coordinator.

   The role of the Student Services Manager is:
   - To assist students in properly completing their application forms and ensure that all necessary supporting documents have been attached.
   - To grant credit for any units which are automatically transferable by an agreement through an MOU between LCI Melbourne and the applicant's former institution.

   The role of the Program Coordinator of the program concerned is:
   - To evaluate the applications;
   - To determine whether or not the credit transfer (EQ) or substitution (SU) is valid;
   - To ask students to participate in challenge exams, if necessary;
   - To make recommendation to the Academic Dean, in writing, to approve or not approve the transfer credit request.

The role of the Academic Dean is:

- To ensure that practices conform to those in the Admissions Policy;
- To review the application and recommendation of the Program Coordinator;
- To make the final decision on the approval of the transfer credit request and inform the Student Services Manager in writing.

*Steps in the Procedure*

Students wishing to apply for Prior Learning Assessment must submit an EQ/SU request form (see Appendix I, this policy). They must complete this form for each course for which they wish to receive an EQ/SU and submit them to the Student Services Manager.

The Program Coordinator ensures that applications satisfy requirements and, if necessary, suggests additional supporting documentation to students.

Regarding applications for credit transfers (EQ), students must document their applications as precisely as possible and provide translations, if necessary. Only credible documents will be analysed.
Poorly or insufficiently documented files could be refused by the school administration.

The Program Coordinator reserves the right to require that students write an exam  before granting the requested substitution or credit transfer. Exams will be held at a time and place dictated by the Program Coordinator, otherwise requests will be considered null and void.

The Program Coordinator makes recommendation to the Academic Dean, in writing,  to approve or not approve a transfer credit request. If the decision is negative, a written explanation is recorded on the request form.

*Decisions and Record Keeping*

The Academic Dean communicates decisions to the Student Services Manager to validate and record them in student files.

The Student Services Manager is responsible for informing students of decisions. If the decision is negative, the student will receive a copy of the written explanation as recorded on the request form. If decisions are positive, students are informed by the Student Services Manager and will find that applications have been accepted on their progression charts. LCI Melbourne updates EQ/SU at the end of the session.

*Exceptions*

In accordance with the program-oriented approach, the Program Coordinator can refuse applications for EQ/SU for the following reasons:

- Students present an application that is  incompatible with their program of study;
- The technology previously learned is not comparable or is considered obsolete;
- Students' capabilities need to be updated.

*Appeal Procedure*

A student who feels he or she has not been treated fairly by LCI Melbourne in its application of the said Policy has the right to appeal by following the procedures below:

- The student will meet with the Academic Dean to request a review of the decision which was rendered;
- Subsequent to the above noted meeting, if the student remains dissatisfied with the decision, he or she may appeal to the President, who will render a final decision.

2) **Procedure for Evaluation of Prior Learning**

Applications for prior learning assessment should ideally be submitted within one (1) week of acceptance into the program and must be submitted at least three (3) weeks prior to the beginning of the program.

*Role of Participants*

Credit for prior learning is granted based on a process in which the roles and responsibilities of each participant are specified.

The role of the Admissions Office is:
- To inform students of the Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy;
- To inform students of the required documents such as official transcripts and course descriptions (course outlines preferred), journals, portfolios etc.;
- To consult the Program Coordinator in cases of uncertainty.

The role of the student is:
- To present applications in accordance with the rules and conditions of the herein stated policy;
- To provide legitimate and authentic documents and other types of evidence;
- To accept to undergo whatever evaluations may be required by the evaluator(s).

The role of the Student Services Manager is:
- To assist students in properly completing their application forms and ensure that all necessary supporting documents have been attached;
- To record evaluation results and inform students of the decision.

The role of the Program Coordinator of the program concerned is:
- To meet with the students to provide in-depth information about the process, ensure that applications are complete and;
- To meet with candidates and help identify the scholastic knowledge they have acquired;
- To show candidates a copy of a course outline and informing them of the associated skills or capabilities;
- To assist students to prepare for exams evaluating their knowledge, if required;
- To assist students to prepare necessary evidence and ways to demonstrate their knowledge ;
- To assign an appropriate evaluator for each course under consideration (faculty member(s) who teach or are field experts in the course(s) under consideration), should students wish to pursue their applications;
- To follow-up on files until they are approved (or not approved), and make recommendation to the Academic Dean, in writing, to approve or not approve the transfer credit request.

The role of the Evaluators (Faculty) of the program concerned is:
- To evaluate candidates;
- To recommend recognition of students' extracurricular achievement or require that students write an exam.

The role of the Academic Dean is:
- To ensure that practices conform to those in the Admissions Policy;
- To review the application and recommendation of the Program Coordinator;
- To make the final decision on the approval of the prior learning credit request and inform the Student Services Manager in writing.

*Steps in the Procedure*

1. Students wishing to apply for recognition of Prior Learning Assessment must submit an Extracurricular Achievements Equivalency Request Form (Appendix II, this policy). They must complete this form for each course for which they wish to receive an EQ/SU and submit them to the Student Services Manager.

2. Evaluation Interviews:

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Candidates meet with the Program Coordinator, who informs them about the procedure to follow and fees involved, so they can make a decision to start the process. Candidates are asked to bring the following documents to their interviews: work samples; lecture summaries; curriculum vitae; letters from employers describing the tasks they performed; letters from non-profit organisations, describing the tasks they performed; any additional documents relevant in evaluating their files. The Program Coordinator informs students of the possibility of obtaining more detailed evidence.

3. Applications for Prior Learning Assessment:
Candidates present official applications to the Student Services Manager for the evaluation of achievements, by completing the extracurricular achievements equivalency Request Form (Appendix II, this policy). They must complete a separate form for each course for which they wish to be granted recognition of achievement. Candidates are required to pay a fee for opening their files. This is a one-time non-refundable fee, which is paid when files are opened.

4. Preparing for Evaluations:
Candidates prepare to confirm the knowledge acquired and present all applicable documents to the evaluator who examines them. If deemed necessary, evaluators request that students complete their portfolios by providing additional supporting materials.

5. Summary Portfolio/File Analysis:
Complete files are then analysed by faculty. Should supporting materials be deemed insufficient, candidates will be informed and a period of three (3) days will be granted for providing additional materials. Candidates may then decide to pursue or abandon their applications. It may be necessary, at this stage, with the intentions of evaluating candidates' capability development levels with certainty, to require students to write exams. Candidates are informed of this procedure and may then decide to pursue or abandon their applications.

6. Evaluation and Certification:
The Program Coordinator in collaboration with one or more faculty members who teach in the specific units of the field being challenged evaluate candidates' achievements and decide if they will be approved for official recognition. Evaluators indicate their decisions in the form of recognised or refused credit. Decisions are accompanied by evaluation reports, unless students fail exams, in which case verdicts will not be recorded on their transcripts.

Verdicts are sent to the Academic Dean for approval and the Academic Dean informs the Student Services Manager of his or her decision. The Student Services Manager is responsible for informing students of decisions. If the decision is negative, the student will receive a copy of the written explanation as recorded on the request form. If decisions are positive, students are informed by the Student Services Manager and will find that applications have been accepted on their progression charts. LCI Melbourne updates "Credit" at the end of the term.

*Appeal Procedure*

A student who feels he or she has not been treated fairly by LCI Melbourne in its application of the said Policy has the right to appeal by following the procedures below:

- The student will meet with the Academic Dean to request a review of the decision which was rendered;
- Subsequent to the above noted meeting, if the student remains dissatisfied with the decision, he or she may appeal to the President, who will render a final decision.

**Further Information**
- EQ/SU Request Form (Appendix I, this policy)
- Extracurricular Achievements Equivalency Request Form (Appendix II, this policy)
- Admissions Policy
- Graduation Policy
- Student Assessment Policy

## Accountable Officers

The accountable officers for the implementation and relevant training of this policy are listed below.

| Policy Category | Academic | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Responsible Officer | Academic Dean | | | |
| Review Date | Q3 2018 | | | |
| Approved by | | | | |
| T&LSPC on behalf of the Academic Board | | | | |
| Change and Version Control | | | | |
| Version | Authored by | Brief Description of the changes | Date Approved | Effective Date |
| 1.0 | Academic Dean | Recognition of Prior Learning/Credit Transfer.pdf | Jan 2005 | Jan 2017 |
| 1.1 | Academic Dean | Unpacking of one document into an LCI existing policy | Dec 2017 | Jan 2018 |

## *EQUIVALENCY (EQ) OR SUBSTITUTION (SU) REQUEST FORM*

| Family name: | Given names: | |
|---|---|---|
| Program name: | | Student Number: |
| Courses for which an EQ or an SU is requested | | |
| Course number: | Course title: | |
| Course number: | Course title: | |
| Course number: | Course title: | |
| Course number: | Course title: | |

Add other courses if required:

_____

_____

Educational institution where the course(s) were taken: _____

_____

Year of completion: _____ Final Mark: _____

Briefly describe the reasons why you are requesting an EQ or an SU: _____

Please attach an official sealed transcript and a course description (full outline preferred) of each course for which EQ or SU is requested.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Please note: A 15-day wait is required for the processing and evaluation of the request. Until the final decision is made, the student is required to register for this course. In an EQ or SU is granted on a course that appears on the student's current timetable, the student will be unregistered from this course.

### Reserved for Administration

Request Received On: _____

☐ EQ granted          ☐ SU granted          ☐ EQ not granted          ☐ U not granted

Comments: _____

Date: _____

| | |
|---|---|
| Program Coordinators Signature | |
| Academic Dean's signature | |
| Student Services Manager' signature | |