

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) POLICY

APPROVALS AND REVIEW	
Policy Title:	Recognition of Prior Learning
Policy Owner:	Dean of Studies
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Approved by Academic Board	
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POLICY INTENT

INSEARCH provides the opportunity for students to apply to have prior learning considered for credit towards an INSEARCH Diploma course where the outcomes of the prior learning are related to assessable components of the course. Forms of prior learning include previous study from recognised tertiary organisations.

The aim of the INSEARCH *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy* is to:

- Recognise and support the legitimate interests of students in obtaining credit for prior learning;
- Ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the granting of credit for prior learning.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all Diploma courses awarded by INSEARCH and it covers the granting of credit towards an INSEARCH award on the basis of the provision of evidence of prior learning outcomes relevant to the course applied for.

DEFINITIONS

AQF The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.

Admitted student A student who accepts an offer or provisional offer to an INSEARCH course or package of courses by:

1. providing an Acceptance form and
2. paying the required fees

OR providing a proof of payment (through channel partners only)
OR has successfully applied for FEE-HELP (eligible)

domestic students only)

OR who has provided a scholarship letter from an acceptable sponsor (includes INSEARCH sponsorships as well as scholarships from foreign government bodies) and

3. having this change of status recorded on the INSEARCH student database.

Block Credit

Credit granted under pre-determined arrangements for prior study at accredited tertiary providers. Block credit usually refers to a block of subject exemptions either specified or unspecified, or a combination of both.

Credentialed prior learning

INSEARCH course-related learning outcomes from another institution leading to the award of a tertiary qualification. This includes learning from:

- completed higher education subjects and courses
- completed accredited VET courses
- overseas qualifications from National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) recognised higher education institutions.

Course

The accredited (Diploma) study plan to which a student has been admitted.

The term 'course' is used throughout this document to refer to INSEARCH Diploma courses.

Credit transfer

Recognition that the learning outcomes of a block or group of subjects and their associated equivalent academic credit, that have been completed at different institutions, are being recognised as a valid component of a student's enrolled INSEARCH course.

Exemption

The process of releasing a student from undertaking an individual subject and for the granting of equivalent academic credit.

Individual specified credit

Equivalent to a subject exemption. Credit is granted where there is one-to-one, equivalent-level correspondence between the applicant's prior learning (credentialed or non-credentialed) and INSEARCH subject learning outcomes. Only full subject credit can be granted, up to the limit allowable for the course.

Individual unspecified credit

Credit granted where the prior learning (credentialed or non-credentialed) outcomes of the applicant are judged to be relevant to the learning outcomes of a course at the appropriate AQF level but which may not directly correspond to specific learning outcomes of course subjects. Unspecified credit is usually granted towards meeting the learning outcomes of

elective subjects of a course.

Program	See 'Course'.
Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)	The assessment process of recognising for credit, in the form of specified or unspecified credit, what learning has taken place prior to enrolment at INSEARCH, wherever and however the individual/applicant may have acquired the knowledge and/or skills/learning.
Substitution	Replacing a subject with another subject of equal credit value.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

1. INSEARCH recognises prior knowledge and skills that meet course learning outcomes.
2. INSEARCH aims to facilitate student progress, completion and mobility.
3. Granting of credit is based on a consistent, transparent and equitable approach.
4. Applications for RPL are decided in a timely way.
5. The currency of prior knowledge and skills is taken into account when assessing RPL.
6. The INSEARCH policy and procedures for recognition of prior knowledge and skills are publicly available and easily accessible to all prospective and existing students.
7. Credit awarded for previous studies or skills is consistent with the Australian Higher Education Qualification Standards and preserves the integrity of the higher education award to which it applies.
8. In determining credit towards awards, INSEARCH takes into account the comparability and equivalence of the learning outcomes, volume of learning, program of study including content, and learning and assessment approaches.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1 ELIGIBILITY

- 1.1 INSEARCH recognises prior learning for Diploma courses.
Applicants who have relevant prior learning may apply for recognition of this prior learning;
- 1.2 Eligibility for RPL does not guarantee an applicant a place in the course for which recognised prior learning may be available;
- 1.3 Eligibility for RPL does not guarantee that RPL will be offered;
- 1.4 Only Admitted students are eligible to apply for RPL;

- 1.5 A current register of agreements with other institutions regarding specified block credit will be publicly available on the INSEARCH website.

2 APPLICATION

- 2.1 Applications for RPL will normally only be considered before or at the time of admission and must be submitted before commencement of week one of the applicant's first semester in a course;
- 2.2 A decision on an application for RPL will be made within 5 working days of receipt of a completed application;
- 2.3 In determining whether RPL may be granted, INSEARCH must be confident of the currency of the applicant's knowledge. The previous knowledge and skills of an applicant must still be current, in the context of the course to which the student has been admitted, in order for credit recognition to be approved. The timeframe for currency of previous credentialed learning is normally two years unless the applicant has been engaged in recent associated professional practice. In this instance credit recognition would need to be determined by the Associate Dean of Studies;
- 2.4 Previous learning can only be recognised once in any individual Insearch course. That is, previous learning deemed as equivalent to a specific Insearch subject(s) or other course component cannot be used again as credit for another subject or course component in that course;
- 2.5 Previously granted RPL does not preclude a student's right at any time to cancel exemptions or substitutions. (Note that cancellation of exemptions or substitutions often has fee implications);
- 2.6 Students wishing to cancel previously approved RPL must do so prior to their final (re-) enrolment.

3 ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 If an RPL application is successful, applicants are granted either exemptions or substitutions from either specified or unspecified components of their INSEARCH course;
- 3.2 Applicants for RPL may be granted any combination of recognition except where block credit is available;
- 3.3 No student shall usually receive credit that totals more than a maximum of one-third of the relevant academic course;
- 3.4 Additional RPL may be granted in special circumstances by the Dean of Studies;
- 3.5 Regardless of the nature or amount of RPL granted, any specific requirements of an award must be fulfilled, including any conditions associated with the professional recognition of the award;

- 3.6 Reference will be made to the relevant AQF level descriptors in assessing application for RPL;
- 3.7 Wherever possible, NOOSR guidelines should be used for assessing application for RPL on the basis of overseas study;
- 3.8 The student will be given the reasons for the decision and/or recommendation at the time it is made known to the student.

4. REVIEW OF RPL DECISION

- 4.1 An applicant may request a review of a decision made in relation to an application for RPL. Such review will be determined in accordance with any of the following criteria:
 - a) the decision was based on a serious misunderstanding of the substance or content of the applicant's prior learning
 - b) a failure of procedural fairness occurred which affected the decision
 - c) a mistake was made in the assessment of subject equivalence in recognised prior learning.
- 4.2 Reviews of RPL decisions are the responsibility of the Dean of Studies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Dean of Studies – Review of RPL decisions; granting of additional RPL.

Program Manager – Assess applications for RPL; grant RPL; record RPL precedents; notify Admissions of decision.

Admissions – Receive and validate RPL applications; notify student of outcomes.

Associate Dean of Studies - Maintain an up-to-date Register of credit- transfer agreements.

Associate Dean of Studies - Ensures that information on the web about RPL is up-to-date.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Student Application, Admission and Enrolment Policy
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Procedure

VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Date	Version	Approved by and resolution no.	Amendment
19.11.10	PO/EDUC/03/10	Academic Board	
17.04.14	PO/EDUC/V1/03/14	Academic Board	

Signature:		
Name:	Dr Rosie Wickert, Chair of Academic Board	Date: