

Credit Transfer and Recognition
of Prior Learning Policy

NIDA

Policy Number	AC10
Approving Authority	Academic Board
Date Implemented	November 2024
Current Version	4.2
Date of Review	December 2025
Contact Officer	Head of Academic Development and Research
Related Policies, Procedures and Documents	NIDA Student Charter and NIDA Student Code of Conduct Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy Student Handbook Admissions Policy Assessment Policy Course Regulations Subject Outlines

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the conditions applied to credit transfer and the recognition of prior learning (RPL) for NIDAs accredited courses.

2. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to:

Undergraduate Courses (BFAs)	Postgraduate Courses (MFAs)	Vocational Diplomas
		

- a. All students seeking to gain credit for previous studies and/or non-formal learning experiences

for an accredited course at NIDA.

- b. All NIDA staff responsible for assessing and processing applications for credit for previous studies and/or non-formal learning experiences for accredited course at NIDA.

This policy and procedure has rights and responsibilities as follows: Director Learning and Innovation is responsible for:

Director Learning and Innovation is responsible for:

- a. Ensuring the accessibility of this policy by staff and students.
- b. Implementation of this policy.

The Head of Academic Development and Research is responsible for:

- a. Coordinating with the relevant Course Leaders to review applications for recognition of prior learning (RPL) or credit transfer,
- b. Recording the outcomes of all applications on the relevant RPL Register
- c. Reporting to the Academic Board annually on all applications and their outcomes.

The Head of Academic Development and Research is responsible for reviewing and the final sign off of all recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credit transfer decisions prior to the notification to students being made.

3. PRINCIPLES

The principles underlying the assessment of credit transfer/Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applications are that the policy and procedures are:

- a. Aligned to the Higher Education Standards Framework and the Vocational Standards for RTOs.
- b. Designed to maintain the integrity and reputation of NIDA's accredited courses for which credit or RPL is applied and support the collaborative nature of NIDA's conservatoire training model.
- c. Consistent, equitable, transparent, and accountable.
- d. Based on processes of comparable standard and integrity to those used to assess the relevant subject.
- e. That students are not disadvantaged in achieving the expected learning outcomes for the course of study or qualification.

4. POLICY

NIDA is committed to maintaining the integrity and reputation of its higher education degree courses and vocational qualifications whilst also seeking to recognise the value of previous learning experiences, both formal and informal in relation to course work requirements for accredited courses at NIDA.

4.1 NIDA may grant credit for:

- a. Formal study undertaken in recognised education institutions in Australia, including universities, colleges, TAFE and other post-secondary education institutions and for study at recognised overseas institutions.
- b. Credentialed courses provided by recognised professional bodies, employers and other authorities, where appropriate certification is available; and
- c. Prior learning, where such learning can be sufficiently evidenced.

4.2 Credit transfer applications will be managed in a timely manner, although determinations and assessment time frames may depend on the quality and quantity of supporting evidence supplied by a student.

- 4.3 Credit Transfers and RPL will be managed on a case-by-case basis after submission of an application for Credit/RPL.

Higher Education

- 4.4 To support NIDA's commitment to integrity of assessment and standards and the principles of recognising prior learning, NIDA applies the following criteria when assessing an application for Credit Transfer for Higher Education courses:
- The granting of credit is subject to the admission of the applicant.
 - Any credit is applied subject to the Course Regulations for the course in which the student is enrolled.
 - Credit granted must align with the governing rules of progression.
 - The maximum amount of credit will be no more than 50% of the course units.
 - Credit will not be granted for study or other demonstrated learning achievements that have been completed more than ten years prior to the time of application for credit.
 - When credit is granted for prior study, the grades achieved in the prior study are not included in the NIDA academic transcript and are not included in any calculation of grade aggregates.
 - Credit will not be granted for undergraduate units if the application is for a Master by course work degree.
 - Professional experience, professional development activities or training and other experience, through work or life, may be taken into account in the granting of RPL credit, provided that the learning can be documented, and the applicant can demonstrate the standards and outcomes they achieved from participating in these activities is comparable to the standards and learning outcomes in the subject in which they are seeking credit.
 - The applicant must provide appropriate evidence that demonstrates the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding.
 - Credit granted as a result of an application process is course specific and may not be applied to another NIDA course should a student alter their enrolment.
 - NIDA reserves the right to withdraw credit where an error has been made in assessing an application or where the documentation provided by the applicant was incomplete, misleading or invalid.
 - NIDA considers the collaborative nature of the training to be essential to the achievement of course learning outcomes and no credit will be granted if the granting of credit/RPL has a negative impact on a student's ability to engage collaboratively or to engage with industry.
 - All candidates are offered the opportunity to have their existing skills, knowledge and abilities recognised.
 - All candidates must be made fully aware of the requirements for Recognition of Prior Learning.
 - Recognition of Prior Learning is a form of assessment.
 - All assessment decisions must be approved by the Head of Academic Development and Research.
 - Outcomes of assessment are confidential between the Assessor, the candidate, the Course Leader and the Head of Academic Development and Research.

Vocational Education

- 4.5 To support NIDA's commitment to integrity of assessment and standards and the principles of recognising prior learning NIDA applies the following criteria when assessing an application for Credit Transfer for Vocational qualifications:
- All candidates are offered the opportunity to have their existing skills, knowledge and abilities recognised.
 - All candidates must be made fully aware of the requirements for Recognition of Prior Learning.
 - Recognition of Prior Learning is a form of assessment.
 - Only NIDA appointed qualified Assessors can conduct assessments and make assessment decisions.
 - Regardless of whether Credit Transfer or RPL is granted all students are required to attend all classes. Students granted Credit Transfer or RPL may be excused from some assessment for these units, however our assessment tasks are holistic in nature and not in isolation of other units, so attendance and participation is required.

- f. Payment is required regardless of RPL because of the holistic nature of the training and assessment.
- g. For vocational courses NIDA recognises AQF vocational qualifications and statements of attainment issued by another Registered Training Organisation (RTO), as well as the skills, knowledge and abilities of employees obtained through work and life experience.
- h. Credit will not be granted for study or other demonstrated learning achievements that have been completed more than ten years prior to the time of application for credit.
- i. The granting of credit is subject to the admission of the applicant.
- j. Any credit is applied subject to the Course Regulations for the course in which the student is enrolled.
- k. Credit granted must align with the governing rules of progression.
- l. Outcomes of assessment are confidential between the Assessor, the candidate, the VET Manager and the Head of Academic Development and Research.

International Students

- 4.6 International students applying for credit transfer will be advised that the granting of such credit may affect their visa status and or the duration of their visa.
- 4.7 Any RPL decisions that affect the length of a course for an international student will be reported in the PRISMS portal if RPL or Course Credit is approved after the international student's visa is granted.
- 4.8 Where RPL or Course Credit is approved before the issuing of a Confirmation of Enrolment or granting of a visa NIDA will advise the applicant of any reduction in course duration and will ensure that the confirmation of enrolment is issued for the reduced course length.

Outcomes and Academic Appeals

- 4.9 All students will receive a written outcome of the credit transfer/RPL process to accept.
- 4.10 Students who are not granted RPL or credit are able to appeal in accordance with the Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy.

Support

- 4.11 Support and advice with regards to applications is available from Student Services for degree courses and from the Vocational Department for Vocational courses.

Record Keeping

- 4.12 For international students NIDA will keep a copy of this written record of acceptance or advice for a minimum of two (2) years after the international student ceases being an accepted student.
- 4.13 All outcomes will be saved into the student's Content Manager file.
- 4.14 All applications regardless of outcome will be recorded on the relevant Recognition of Prior Learning /Credit Transfer register by the Manager of Learning and Innovation.

Governance

- 4.15 A report on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer applications and their outcomes will be provided to the Academic Board on an annual basis.
- 4.16 A copy of the Academic register will accompany the annual RPL and Credit Transfer report.

5. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Accredited course	An approved higher education or vocational education qualification that leads to the conferral of a degree or the award of a diploma or certificate.
Assessment	A process to determine a student's achievement of identified learning outcomes and may include a range of written and oral methods and practice or demonstration.
Australian Qualifications Framework	Australia's national policy for regulated qualifications. The AQF encompasses higher education, vocational education and training and school education. It provides for national recognition and a consistent understanding of what defines each qualification type. http://www.aqf.edu.au/aqf/about/what-is-the-aqf/
Credit	The value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or courses. Credit reduces the amount of learning required to achieve a higher education degree.
Credit Transfer	A process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for completed components of a course of study based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched courses of study.
Documentary Evidence	Certified transcripts, portfolios, references, work statements, photographs, Curriculum Vitae, referees.
Formal learning	The attainment of formal competencies or qualifications achieved through study at an accredited education provider within the Australian Qualification Framework. (From <i>Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005</i>)
Recognition of Prior Learning	An assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit.
Student	An individual who has enrolled in an accredited course.

6. CHANGE HISTORY

Date	Change Description	Reason for Change	Author	Version
August 2026	Update reference to Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy	New policy	Head of Quality and Compliance	4.2
December 2025	Editorial update to policy titles and review date	Approval of new policy review schedule by Academic Board October 2025	Academic Compliance Manager	4.1
September 2024	Reviewed wording. Updated information with regards to scope to make the inclusion of vocational courses more transparent.	Policy Review	Student Services	NAP_003
July 2022	Reviewed wording and updated information around circumstances relating to RPL for international students.	Review	Student Services	NAP008_02_AB_08_2022
October 2018	Addition of credit linked to progression rules Addition of the information regarding the right to appeal Addition of assessment process criteria Information about international students and credit transfer constraints	Quality Assurance review of all P&P	Learning and Teaching	23/10/18

7. CONSULTATION/BENCHMARKING

Benchmarked against policies and practice from a number of higher education providers and other sources.

Relevant policy documents from the following are gratefully acknowledged:

- Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS)
- Edith Cowan University Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAAPA)
- University of New South Wales (UNSW)

Consultation: NIDA academic and administrative staff and NIDA students

Legislation and Regulatory Frameworks	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 HE Support Act 2003 Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 National Code 2018 Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Disability Standards for Education 2005 National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for Registered Training Organisations) Instrument 2025 ASQA Guidance and Resources
--	---