



RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) POLICY

Purpose

Lincoln Education Australia (LEA**) is committed to enabling student access to higher education through a range of pathway options that maintain the integrity of LEA courses.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) facilitates the progression of students through qualifications by giving credit for learning outcomes they have already achieved. This includes entry into a qualification and/or credit towards a qualification.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), also referred to as advanced standing or subject exemption, is a process for establishing credit or advanced standing. RPL enables credit to be given for student achievement through other formal, non-formal or informal learning.

This Policy enables RPL to be applied through a consistent and equitable process that protects the integrity and quality of LEA's higher education degrees and at the same time recognises students' previous learning, gained in relevant contexts and at appropriate levels.

This Policy provides a fair and equitable RPL framework for recognising an individual's education, skills and experience, whilst safeguarding academic integrity and academic standards.

**The trading name for the Lincoln Institute of Higher Education (LIHE) is Lincoln Education Australia (LEA).

Scope

This policy applies to students applying for entry to a higher education course at LEA and all positions and entities at LEA involved in admissions and assessment of recognition of prior learning applications.

Principles

All LEA higher education courses shall comply with the AQF and the quality and integrity standards of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015*.

The RPL process may be applied in order to:

- Meet the prerequisites of a course and thus fulfil the requirements for admission; and,
- Meet selected progression requirements of a course and thus gain credit for one or more subjects in a course.



RPL does not guarantee entry into a course at LEA.

To maintain the integrity and quality of LEA's higher education degrees, LEA shall ensure that:

- Credit for RPL is granted on the basis of evidence provided by the applicant
- Granting credit for RPL shall not disadvantage the student in terms of achieving the course learning outcomes

RPL Considerations

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level

Completed studies shall be at a comparable AQF level to the subject for which students are seeking an exemption. If the prior study was at a lower AQF level to that in which the exemption is sought, the application shall include evidence (e.g. verified CV, job description, employer letter) showing that the applicant operates at the higher level (e.g. extensive work experience at the higher level).

Maximum Exemptions

Students may typically obtain exemptions for up to 50% of subjects in a specified course.

The Academic Board may approve more than 50% credit towards an LEA qualification in limited circumstances such as:

- Previous studies are determined to articulate directly with the LEA subjects/course;
- A provider ceases to deliver the courses and LEA agrees to teach those students to achieve completion of the course. In such circumstances, the Academic Dean might be given specific authority by the Academic Board to exceed the 30% limit and report back on the decision outcomes;
- In the case of a merger with or acquisition by LEA.

Currency and Relevance of Knowledge

Courses shall be relevant and equivalent to the course in which the student is enrolled and shall generally have been completed within five (5) years of the application. Any study completed by a student more than five (5) years prior to admission to LEA shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and may include a review of the applicant's relevant work history.

Exemption for an Exemption

Previous study graded as an exemption cannot be used for an exemption into a LEA qualification.



Specified Credit

Specified credit is granted for one or more specific subjects in a course, where the applicant has met the learning outcomes, attained the knowledge and/or developed the skills related to a specific subject.

Unspecified Credit

Unspecified credit is granted in the form of credit points which take the place of elective subjects (listed or free choice) or other optional components in a course. Unspecified credit may be granted where prior learning is judged to be relevant to the learning outcomes of a course as a whole.

Block Credit

Block credit is a pre-determined form of the granting of credit specified in formal articulation agreements between LEA and partner higher education institutions offering comparable courses of study.

Block credit is granted towards whole stages or components of a course leading to a qualification. Where a sequence of subjects undertaken at another provider is deemed sufficiently equivalent to the content and learning outcomes of a sequence of subjects at LEA, block credit may be granted.

Institution-to-institution articulation agreements involving block credit arrangements indicate specific subjects for which credit, typically not exceeding 50% of a course is determined through cross-curricular mapping of like-for-like subjects and similar levels of knowledge and skill.

Cross-institutional Study

Students who are enrolled in a LEA course and wish to study an equivalent subject at another recognised institution should speak to the Course Coordinator. LEA's maximum exemptions may apply.

Articulation Arrangements

LEA may enter into articulation arrangements with reputed, high quality providers (higher education or VET) to provide educational pathways. This may involve recognition of their credentials and/or credit for particular subjects.

Prior to entering into any such agreements, LEA shall map the learning outcomes (or competency subjects for VET providers) of the other provider's course/subjects against the specified learning outcomes of LEA course. The Academic Board shall review the evidence of curriculum mapping prior to approving the articulation arrangement.

Exemptions may be awarded to students who have completed previous studies with an approved education provider that has a current and valid Articulation Agreement with LEA.



These may guarantee the entry of students into a LEA course upon completion of a partner institution's course.

Faculty Deans will coordinate articulation pathways in accordance with the terms of the agreements and manage student cohorts that enter LEA through these pathways.

RPL Applications

Applications for RPL should demonstrate prior study and/or professional experience in a relevant field. Prior learning may be from:

- a recognised higher education provider
- a registered Vocational Education Training (VET) provider
- a professional body

LEA may provide additional methods to assess a student's knowledge of a given subject, which may include a challenge exam, portfolio or other assessment methods.

Students seeking RPL shall be required to provide evidence such as:

- Subject outlines
- Certified copies of certificates and academic transcripts
- A Curriculum Vitae
- Details of relevant work experience (such as a job description or duty statement)
- Professional references

Applications shall include details about the prior learning related directly to the prerequisites of the course, subject or specific learning outcomes of the course.

Subject Outlines

Subject outlines shall include subject description and learning outcomes, graduate attributes, learning resources, assessment details and penalties.

Transcripts

LEA staff shall sight original or certified copies of transcripts in order for RPL to be approved.

Work Experience

Applicants may, in some cases, be required to demonstrate that they have current knowledge of the subject area e.g. through employment history or continuing professional development. This would mean students shall demonstrate that they have recent industry experience e.g. within the last 3-5 years since completion of their study.

Assessing RPL Applications



Students who have completed related studies from an accredited higher education provider may apply for RPL. Prospective students who wish to apply for RPL must indicate this intent on the Student Application Form. The form must be completed in full and submitted to the Admissions Office with the supporting documents.

LEA shall review the application once the student has submitted all relevant documentation. Students shall be advised of the outcome of their application within 10 working days of the application being received.

Advanced Standing

Credit is generally granted for a subject where the prior learning is deemed to cover a minimum subject content of 80%. Students are required to have achieved a pass grade to be considered for exemption. LEA does not guarantee the transferability of exemptions from other educational institutions.

Conditional RPL

Students may be granted conditional RPL in some circumstances such as:

- The student is enrolled or has commenced studying another course at another provider and cannot provide an official transcript yet

International Student Exemptions

LEA may recognise training outside of Australia into its courses, provided they meet the AQF standards.

If an international student is granted credits/exemption into a course **prior** to being granted the student visa, LEA shall indicate the actual course duration (i.e. shorter duration taking account of course credit) in the confirmation of enrolment (CoE) issued to that student for that course.

If an international student is granted credits/exemption into a course **after** the student's visa is granted, LEA shall report the change of course duration via PRISMS as per the *Education Services of Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000* requirement.

Credit awarded through recognition of prior learning will be recorded in the international student's record, which is maintained for a minimum of two years after the student ceases to be an accepted student at LEA and up to 7 years as per the *Data and Records Integrity Policy and Procedure*.

RPL Outcomes

Approval of Advanced Standing



The Course Coordinator or an academic staff member nominated by the Dean with delegated authority may approve RPL for single subjects. The Dean may grant block credits for up to 50% of the course subjects. Where a sequence of subjects undertaken with another provider is deemed sufficiently equivalent to the content and learning outcomes of a sequence of subjects.

Students shall be informed of the decision regarding the approval in writing by the Admissions Office.

Recording of Exemptions

Exemptions shall be recorded on the student's LEA transcript as 'Advanced Standing' once approved. Grades and grade points for subjects given advanced standing are not transferable or calculable as part of the cumulative grade point average at LEA.

Compliance

All prospective students of LEA and staff and entities whose roles and responsibilities fall within the scope of this policy are required to comply with this policy and its procedures, and with related policies and respective procedures. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

File Number	LEA-GEN-COR-70048-D
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Contact Officer	Academic Dean
Legislative Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015</i>• <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i>• <i>Education Services of Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000</i>
Supporting Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure Flowchart</i>
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Admissions Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Academic Standards Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy</i>• <i>Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy</i>
Superseded Documents	<i>LEA Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures V1.0</i>
Effective Date	1 January 2022
Next Review	3 years from the effective date

Definitions

Academic Board: Governing body responsible for academic matters, including learning and teaching, course approval, workforce planning, academic staff appointments, research and professional development, academic policies and procedures, overseeing student grievances and appeals processes.

Articulation Agreement: Partnership between two institutions to recognise credits toward a degree.



Credit points: Points allocated for successful completion of a subject. A student shall complete a predetermined number of credit points to be awarded their degree.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): Assessment process that involves assessment of a student’s relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the academic credit outcomes of a student’s application for academic credit.

Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version History			
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Academic Board	13/08/2020	New policy
1.1	Academic Board		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amendments to Articulation Pathways and related maximum RPL text• Inclusion of minimum 2 years and maximum 7 years maintenance of international student records for RPL purposes.
1.1	Academic Board	22/02/2023	TEQSA and CRICOS requirements incorporated