Academic Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') recognises that learners take diverse pathways to achieve qualifications and is committed to maintaining high academic standards.

(2) The University values students' prior learning, whether formal, informal or non-formal and will carefully assess applications for academic credit and recognition of prior learning.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) This policy outlines the principles for awarding academic credit and recognition of prior learning (RPL) while maintaining the academic standards of the University.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This policy applies to all current and prospective students including vocational education and training qualifications, higher education courses, award, non-award, pathway and foundation courses.

Section 4 - Policy

Principles

(5) The University will ensure that Academic Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning will only be granted if:

   a. students are not disadvantaged in achieving the expected learning outcomes for the course of study or qualification; and
   b. the integrity of the course of study and the qualification are maintained; and
   c. the requirements of this policy and the associated procedures are met, including:
      i. [Higher Education Coursework Academic Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure](); or
      ii. [VET Recognition Procedure](); or
      iii. [Higher Degree by Research – Admission and Enrolment Procedure]().

(6) The University will ensure students have an opportunity to build on their prior learning, whether that learning was gained through structured qualifications or life or work experience.

(7) Decisions will:

   a. be evidence-based, equitable and transparent;
   b. be applied consistently and fairly with decisions subject to appeal and review;

c. recognise learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided that the learning is relevant and current and has a relationship to the learning outcomes or competencies of the qualification;

d. be academically defensible and take into account the students' ability to meet the learning outcomes or competencies of the qualification successfully;

e. be decided in a timely way so that students' access to qualifications is not unnecessarily inhibited;

f. allow for outcomes to be used to meet prerequisites or other specified requirements for entry into a program of study leading to a qualification or for the partial fulfillment of the requirements of a qualification; and

g. be formally documented for the student including reasons for decisions and outcomes.

Roles and responsibilities

(8) Students are responsible for:

a. completing an application following the appropriate process and timeline;

b. providing documentation and evidence to support their application, including providing additional information as requested; and

c. understanding their obligations and the impacts on their course of study.

(9) Student Administration is responsible for:

a. providing information regarding the Academic Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and associated procedures through the admission process;

b. communicating with the student;

c. communicating with nominated assessors and supporting them to meet timelines;

d. updating study plans for students;

e. managing updates to the credit precedents database; and

f. recording outcomes and explanations of decisions on student records.

(10) Faculties are responsible for:

a. reviewing course structures and defining where certain types of credit can be approved;

b. producing guidelines relevant to the local area context on assessing applications to ensure consistency of outcomes and compliance with this policy and associated procedures;

c. maintaining a list of nominated assessors that are faculty staff with relevant academic qualifications and understanding of course requirements, able to assess applications;

d. reviewing credit precedents; and

e. ensuring updates or changes to the list of staff and credit precedents are provided to Student Administration.

(11) Nominated assessors are responsible for:

a. assessing applications according to the principles of this policy and following the associated procedures;

b. meeting timelines for assessing applications;

c. providing detailed responses to students to explain decisions; and

d. communicating with students and Student Administration as required; and

e. ensuring all evidence and reasons for decisions are recorded accurately on the student record.

Complaints

(12) A student can submit a complaint in accordance with the [Complaints Policy – Students](#).

Monitoring and reporting

(13) Outcomes and decisions will be periodically reviewed to ensure they do not academically disadvantage students, remain current and meet the intended aims of this Policy.

(14) All applications and supporting documentation submitted will be recorded on the student management system. Records will be disposed of in accordance with the [Records and Information Management Policy and Procedure](#).

Section 5 - Non-compliance

(15) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the [Code of Conduct – Staff](#) or the [Code of Conduct – Students](#), as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the [Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025](#) and the [Code of Conduct – Students](#).

(16) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the [Code of Conduct – Staff](#) and [Code of Conduct - Employees](#).

(17) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the [Fraud and Corruption Control Policy](#) and [Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure](#).

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or parts thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of staff printing this document to always refer to the Governance Document Library for the latest version.

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Implementation Officer	Lisa-Marie Stones Director Student and Academic Services
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