

Griffith College
Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policies, Procedures, Practices
and Guidelines

Title	Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure
Document No.	QAE C3
Initial Approval by APC	September 2009
Approval of current version by APC	January 2019
Responsibility for Implementation	Admissions Office International Office
Related Documents	Griffith College RPL Handbook
	Prior Experiential Learning (QQI, 2001)
	Appeal Procedure (QAE E15)

QAE C3 - Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure

1. Objectives

- 1.1 To indicate the information which should be made known to recognition of prior learning applicants prior to application
- 1.2 To set out the College's recognition of prior learning procedure.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This procedure applies to the Recognition of Prior Learning at undergraduate and postgraduate level
- 2.2 This procedure may be varied under the terms of an Institutional Agreement where a programme of study is delivered as a collaborative initiative with a partner institution or in accordance with a policy amendment on the part of a validating body.

3. Responsibility for Implementation

- 3.1 Admissions Officer/International Office Manager
- 3.2 Applicant
- 3.3 Programme Director
- 3.4 Director of Academic Programmes
- 3.5 Admissions Sub-Committee

4. Provision of Information to RPL Applicants

- 4.1 Applicants should be made aware (through the College website) of the College's RPL guidelines, specifically:
 - The need to apply for RPL at the time of application
 - Any fees applicable to RPL applications
 - How and when to make an RPL application - portfolio compilation/documentation required etc.
 - Any specific rules with reference to credit minimum/maximum thresholds, and extent to which the assessment criteria must be met for an exemption to be awarded etc.
 - Procedures governing appeals against RPL decisions
 - Any implications of entry with advanced standing for progression/transfer/interim awards/recognition of any professional, regulatory or statutory body associated with the programme
 - That exempted modules will not be calculated as part of their GPA or final award classification and may constrain the range of award classifications available to them
 - How RPL will be represented on their official transcripts
 - Entitlements for the reuse of RPL against further awards

5. Procedures for the Recognition of Prior Learning

5.1 Recognition of Prior Accredited Learning

- 5.1.1 The Marketing Department/International Office will normally require an applicant who wishes to have their prior accredited learning considered for recognition, to indicate their intention to do so at the time of application on the requisite application form
- 5.1.2 An applicant will be required to support their application with relevant documentation in the form of a portfolio of evidence within an agreed time limit
- 5.1.3 In the majority of cases it is expected that the Marketing Department/International Office will submit the portfolio to the relevant Programme Director who will make a decision on the award of credit
- 5.1.4 The Programme Director or a delegated Faculty member will complete the application for exemptions form and send it to the Admissions Officer/International Office Manager who will in turn inform the applicant
- 5.1.5 In more complex cases the Programme Director may request that the Admissions Officer/International Office Manager refer the case to the Director of Academic Programmes and request that the Admissions Sub-Committee be convened. The Admissions Sub-Committee will be chaired by the Director of Academic Programmes and include at least two other senior academic staff members, one of whom will be the relevant Programme Director
- 5.1.6 Having reviewed the case, the Director of Academic Programmes will inform the Admissions Officer/International Office Manager of the outcome of the Assessment Sub-Committee's review. The Admissions Officer/International Office Manager will in turn inform the applicant
- 5.1.7 An applicant wishing to appeal against the decision of the Admissions Sub-Committee may do so by invoking the College Appeal Procedure (QAE E15)

5.2 Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning

- 5.2.1 The Marketing Department/International Office will normally require an applicant who wishes to have their prior experiential learning considered for recognition, to indicate their intention to do so at the time of application on the requisite application form
- 5.2.2 Due to the difficult nature of compiling and assessing evidence of experiential learning it is important that the applicant first discuss their prior experiential learning with the Programme Director or delegated Faculty member at the

time of application, to advise whether or not there are possible grounds for accreditation

- 5.2.3 Where there are possible grounds for recognition, the applicant will be required to provide evidence, of their prior experiential learning on which the claim for recognition will be assessed. This would normally be in the form of a portfolio of evidence, and/or summative assessment and/or interview which demonstrates the successful achievement of learning outcomes relevant to the module(s) for which they is seeking exemption(s). In the case of summative assessment, the Examinations Office must be informed
- 5.2.4 When the portfolio of evidence has been received the Admissions Officer/International Office Manager will refer the case to the Programme Director for assessment. The relevant module leader may also be referred to for evaluation of summative assessment. The programme Director will inform the Admissions Officer/International Office Manager of the outcome by completing the application for exemptions form. The Admissions Officer/International Office Manager will in turn inform the applicant
- 5.2.5 In more complicated applications the Faculty will refer the case to the Director of Academic Programmes and request that the Admissions Sub-Committee be convened. The Admissions Sub-Committee will be chaired by the Director of Academic Programmes and include at least two other senior academic staff members, one of whom will be the relevant Programme Director
- 5.2.6 The Director of Academic Programmes will inform the Admissions Officer/International Office Manager of the outcome of the Assessment Sub-Committee's review. The Admissions Officer/International Office Manager will in turn inform the applicant
- 5.2.7 An applicant wishing to appeal against the decision of the Admissions Sub-Committee may do so by invoking the College Appeal Procedure (QAE E15)

5.3 Procedure on the Systematic Transfer of Groups of Learners from Potential Partner Institutions

- 5.3.1 Proposals for an Articulation Agreement encompassing the transfer of learners from a potential partner institution to a College programme must be endorsed by the College Management Board in consultation with the relevant faculty.
- 5.3.2 Agreements to engage in such partnerships can only be entered into with the approval of both the College Management Board and the separate approval of the College Academic and Professional Council (APC). All such articulation agreements must be signed by the College President or a nominee of the President.

- 5.3.3 A master list of all articulation agreements existing, and in development, shall be maintained by the office of the Head of Academic Programmes.
- 5.3.4 Guidelines for developing Articulation Agreements are available in QAE CA5.
- 5.3.5 Step 1: A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is the first stage in developing a formal contract. It commits the parties to work together to a common purpose. The MOU should be completed using the Memorandum of Understanding template QAE CA4.

An MOU between GC and a potential partner institution can be initiated through the Marketing Department, International Department, or Faculty and must be signed by the College President, or a nominee of the President.

Where potential partners have their own MOU template which they are required to use, that can be used as long as it does not commit GC to some activity that cannot be delivered and does not contravene the QAE procedures of GC.

The MOU shall be forwarded to the Head of Academic Programmes, and to the Heads of Faculty.

- 5.3.6 Step 2: The Faculty concerned will appoint an academic to engage in an academic analysis and mapping of learning to see if an articulation from the identified programme to the Griffith College programme is feasible.
- 5.3.7 Step 3: The Faculty, in consultation with the proposer, will examine the business case for the articulation agreement with a view to identifying any extra resource requirements or other overheads that the articulation agreement gives rise to. If the initial academic and business case analysis suggests that an articulation agreement is desirable, then a formal proposal to investigate further shall be submitted to the QAE Office by the Faculty.
- 5.3.8 Step 4: On receipt of a proposal, the QAE Office shall create, update and retain a copy of the Articulation Agreement Control Sheet.
- 5.3.9 Step 5: The QAE Office working with a senior academic shall carry out a due diligence analysis of the proposed partner using the Due Diligence Report template QAE CA2. Where an existing articulation agreement already exists with the partner college, the due diligence report will not be needed, but the academic analysis of the programme involved shall be carried out by the faculty and signed off by the Head of Faculty.

In the case of all potential partner institutions:

- The relevant qualifications framework should be consulted

- Affiliation with national and international Quality Assurance and Enhancement bodies should, where possible, be identified and equivalencies of awards should be ascertained through these channels.
- A site visit should normally be conducted.
- This may include an assessment the facilities and campus, interviews with learners and meetings with academic staff

5.3.10 Step 6: A copy of the initial proposal, the Due Diligence report, and the business case shall be submitted by the QAE Office for Management Board for approval. Where approval is not granted that is noted by the QAE Officer the Articulation Agreement Control Sheet and by the faculty and the partner institution shall be informed.

5.3.11 Step 7: Where the proposal is approved by the Management Board, the completed due diligence report shall be submitted along with the proposal for consideration by the College APC and a decision to either approve or reject the proposal shall be taken.

5.3.12 In all cases, whether the proposal has been approved or rejected, the files from proposal to completion are retained by the QAE Office.

5.3.13 Following approval by the Management Board and the College APC, the President or nominee of the President, jointly with the partner institution(s) and the proposer, shall prepare an Articulation Agreement (QAE CA3).

5.3.14 The Articulation Agreement represents the formal legal agreement between the College and a partner institution and sets out the defined responsibilities for each party involved in respect of the articulation.

5.3.15 All such arrangements shall involve on-going monitoring and review as is the case with all College programmes. These arrangements shall be clearly detailed in the Articulation Agreement and be informed by existing QAE policies in both Griffith College and the Partner Institution. Such arrangements shall include at least the following:

- A senior academic will be appointed in each partner to liaise in respect of the on-going delivery of the programmes
- Communication (at least annually) will be involved in advance of each cohort to ensure the alignment of programmes to meet agreed learning outcomes.
- Planned programmatic reviews/changes to syllabi/entry requirements will be notified immediately to the corresponding partner to facilitate continuing progression entitlements, ensuring that learners are not disadvantaged.

- The performance of (progressing) learners will be communicated to the partner institution (at a minimum) following each semester's results.

5.3.16 Once the Articulation Agreement has been formally signed. The APC shall be formally notified of the agreed date of commencement of the programme of articulation.

6. Monitoring and Review

- 6.1 RPL policies and procedures are subject to on-going monitoring and review through Programme Reviews (see Programme Review Procedure (QAE G1), Programmatic Reviews (see Programmatic Review Procedure (QAE G4) and scheduled QAE manual policy reviews.
- 6.2 Any modifications made to a GC programme, that is part of an articulation agreement, must be notified to the partner involved in a prompt manner by the relevant programme director. The annual review of the agreement shall ensure that any modification to programmes at either partner institution are communicated to all involved.

7. Recording of RPL applications

- 7.1 All RPL applications and outcomes (Individual and group) are recorded centrally by the Admissions Office/International Office for ongoing reference purposes.
- 7.2 Copies of reports and agreements in respect of the transfer of groups of learners from potential partner institutions detailed above should be circulated to the APC/Management Board for approval
- 7.3 Admissions will receive all applications in respect of these agreements and will process applications on an individual basis taking into account both the requirements of the faculty and the requirements of Griffith College.

8. Responsibilities

8.1 Admissions Officer/International Office

- Ensures applicant is made aware of RPL guidelines, including need to apply for RPL at the time of application for the programme [5.1.1, 5.2.1]
- Refers applications for the recognition of prior accredited learning to the appropriate Programme Director [5.1.3]
- Refers applications for the recognition of prior experiential learning to the Director of Academic Programmes who convenes the Admissions Sub-Committee [5.2.4]
- Maintains a record of all RPL applications and outcomes [7.1]

8.2 Applicant

- Provides appropriate evidence to support RPL application [5.1.2, 5.2.3]
- May appeal a decision against their RPL application by invoking the College appeal procedure [5.1.6, 5.2.6]

8.3 Programme Director

- Makes decision on majority of applications for recognition of prior accredited learning [5.1.3]
- Advises applicant wishing to apply for RPL or delegates nominee to do so [5.2.2]
- Requests the Admissions Officer/International Office Manager refer an application to the Director of Academic Programmes who shall in turn convene the Admissions Sub-Committee [5.1.4]
- Acts as a member of the Admissions Sub-Committee [5.1.4, 5.2.4]
- Informs partner to any articulation agreement of any modifications to programmes in a prompt manner. [6.2]

8.4 Director of Academic Programmes

- Convenes and Chairs the Admissions Sub-Committee [5.1.4, 5.2.4]
- Informs Admissions Officer/International Office Manager of outcome of Admissions Sub-Committee's consideration [5.1.5, 5.2.5]

8.5 Admissions Sub-Committee

- Reviews cases of recognition of prior accredited learning referred by the Programme Director [5.1.4]
- Reviews cases of recognition of prior experiential learning referred by the Programme Director [5.2.4]

8.6 Management Board

- Approve Articulation Agreements [5.3.2], [5.3.10]

8.7 Academic and Professional Council

- Approve Articulation Agreements [5.3.2], [5.3.11]

8.8 College President

- The College President, or his nominee, must sign all MOUs and Articulation Agreements. [5.3.5]

8.9 Head of Faculty

- Appoint an academic to engage in academic analysis of programmes involved. [5.3.6]
- Work with proposer to examine the business case for an agreement. [5.3.7]
- Appoint academic to management committee for programme [5.3.15]
- Ensure all articulation agreements are reviewed annually as part of the annual programme review procedure. [6.1]

8.10 QAE Office

- Maintain an Articulation Agreement Control Sheet. [5.3.8]
- Work with a senior academic to carry out a due diligence analysis of the proposed partner using the Due Diligence Report template QAE CA2. [5.3.9]
- Submit due diligence and business case reports to Management Board for approval. [5.3.10]
- Maintain all files relating to a proposed articulation agreement. [5.3.12]

