

# A guide to credit transfer

required, subject to the specific policies of the university, and could include academic and employment references to support the case for credit transfer.

Remember: to ensure the success of negotiations for credit transfer, all information with the potential to assist the application must be passed on to the university.

## Developing a basis for credit transfer

Credit transfer arrangements are designed to give value to qualifications already achieved, which is then applied towards the next level of study. The credit transfer process therefore provides a basis for establishing equivalence between the VET qualification and the university course the student hopes to study. The characteristics of each of the qualifications, including the content and level of the qualification, affect the amount of credit granted.

The Australian Qualifications Framework handbook contains useful information about the characteristics of qualifications and the forms of credit that may be granted; namely,

- ☑ *Specified credit*: credit granted for one or more units on the basis of successful completion of similar content to the same level required for a pass at another institution
- ☑ *Unspecified credit*: credit granted when work completed elsewhere as part of an accredited program of study has no equivalent component in a university course. Unspecified credit is usually granted as credit towards electives, minors or supporting majors in the university course
- ☑ *Block credit*: credit granted for a period or block of time as recognition of successfully completed periods of equivalent study. Block credit is granted to all students on the basis of the completion of a whole qualification.

## Points to remember

- ☑ Do not assume exact parallels between apparently comparable credit and articulation applications; delivery and content may be different enough to result in varying credit transfer outcomes.
- ☑ Staff in partner organisations have a great deal of experience and ability in their specific areas which may prove invaluable for students mounting a case for credit transfer and articulation.
- ☑ Some students may prefer to undertake the complete course of study to which they have articulated and should not be forced to apply for credit transfer.

## Useful policy resources

- ☑ The *National guidelines on cross sectoral qualification linkages* <[http://www.aqf.edu.au/Portals/0/Documents/Handbook/AQF\\_Handbook\\_07.pdf](http://www.aqf.edu.au/Portals/0/Documents/Handbook/AQF_Handbook_07.pdf)>
- ☑ The MCEECDYA\* *Good practice principles for credit transfer and articulation from VET to higher education* <[http://www.mceetya.edu.au/mceecdya/report\\_of\\_the\\_national\\_study\\_on\\_credit\\_transfer/11910.html](http://www.mceetya.edu.au/mceecdya/report_of_the_national_study_on_credit_transfer/11910.html)>
- ☑ The MCEECDYA *Principles for good practice information provision on credit transfer and articulation from vocational education and training to higher education* <<http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/default.asp?id=11902>>.

\* Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs



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This guide is intended to provide background information for students, career counsellors and those helping vocational education and training (VET) students to navigate credit transfer and articulation pathways between TAFE and other training organisations and universities. Each university in Australia has its own policies and procedures for managing applications for credit transfer and articulation. These need to be kept in mind when consulting these guidelines.

The guide is based on a research project which investigated the concept of learning pathways and was informed by the:

- ☑ local credit arrangements in degree structures at Deakin University and the partnerships between Deakin and three TAFE institutes—Box Hill, South West and the Gordon Institute
- ☑ pathway arrangements available to individuals who have undertaken training through enterprise-based registered training organisations.

## Establishing a pathway destination and negotiating credit

- ☑ Students should make sure they are familiar with the credit transfer and articulation policy—where there is one—of the university they hope to move to. Being able to access all the information necessary for making an application for credit transfer and receiving personalised assistance and advice are crucial to the success of the application.
- ☑ Basically, credit transfer between vocational education providers and universities takes place formally or informally. A *formal* relationship between a TAFE or other VET provider and a university is generally expressed in a memorandum of understanding. In a formal relationship each organisation participating in the credit transfer arrangements will have established a process for exchanging information about their respective qualifications or programs. Having these arrangements in place will make the students' negotiations for credit transfer and articulation more straightforward—and less complex.

Students should keep in mind that formal credit transfer arrangements for particular subjects/courses are intended to allow recognition of the current education achievement (the TAFE or VET course) in the destination university program (the degree course). The recognition is often based on common areas across disciplines between the VET qualification and the university program; for example, between a Diploma of Business and a Bachelor of Business or Bachelor of Commerce qualification.

- ☑ An *informal* relationship is one which operates in the absence of a systematic credit transfer arrangement. Typically, a student will apply to a university faculty requesting recognition of the qualifications already held (or subjects completed) and the course/subjects they are hoping to receive credit for.

In an informal situation, the student should ensure that all the information relating to their education achievement (qualification title, content, provider details and any other important information) is made available to the granting university. Additional information may be



This guide is based on the report, *Crediting vocational education and training for learner mobility*, by Sandra Walls and John Parry, available from the NCVER website at <<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2249.html>>.