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Credit Recognition Policy

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Approval Authority | Mana Whakaae	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic
Contact Officer | Āpiha Whakapā	Dean (Academic Governance)

Purpose

This Policy informs the transfer of credit awarded between Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury qualifications, credit recognition and transfer from another New Zealand Institution, cross-crediting between University of Canterbury qualifications and the award of credit for formal, informal, or non-formal prior learning which has been assessed as being equivalent to specified University of Canterbury courses.

Definitions

Credit – the value assigned to a completed block of learning, such as a course, for the purpose of contributing to the requirements of a qualification.

Formal learning – learning that has been provided and credentialed by a tertiary provider.

Informal learning – learning acquired either through a structured programme of learning that does not result in an officially recognised qualification, or through work and/or life experience which is not organised or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support.

Qualification – a degree, diploma or certificate that is located on the NZQF. The NZQF has 10 qualification levels from Level 1 Certificates to Level 10 Doctorates. UC qualifications usually start from Level 5.

Types of Credit Recognition:

- **Credit exemption** – no credit is awarded, but exemption and right to advance (RTA) to the next level of study is granted on the basis of previous study.

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- **Cross Credit** – credit shared between two undergraduate qualifications. Credit may be internal or external, specified, or unspecified.

- **Formal Articulations** – credit is awarded on the completion of a specific qualification or partial qualification from another university or tertiary provider with whom UC has an articulation agreement. The exact credit awarded may be stated in the articulation agreement or will be determined according to the agreement.

- **Micro-credential** – awards that are not qualifications, limited to between 5 and 40 points, delivered by a tertiary education provider at a specified level on the NZ qualifications framework. Micro-credentials can be "stacked" towards a qualification, which means their credit is transferred to another qualification.

- **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** – a process that involves the formal assessment of a student's relevant and current knowledge and skills (gained through prior learning) to determine achievement of learning outcomes of a course or courses for the purpose of awarding credit towards that qualification.

- **Subsuming** – The process of incorporating a conferred UC qualification into a larger or higher-level UC qualification and crediting all credits earned for the completed UC qualification to the larger UC qualification. Where subsuming occurs, the following terminology will be used.

    a. **Subsuming Qualification** - refers to the qualification that is of a greater points value, and sometimes at a higher qualification level, than the subsumed qualification.

    b. **Subsumed Qualification** - refers to the qualification that is of lesser points value than the subsuming qualification.

- **Transfer of credit** – the process whereby credit is moved, or transferred, from one unconfirmed qualification to a second unconfirmed qualification. Credit may be internal or external, specified, or unspecified.

    a. *Specified credit* – credit given as the equivalent of a specific course, e.g., credit for COSC121.

    b. *Unspecified credit* – credit given as equivalent to a subject or schedule, at a specified level, but not as equivalent to a specific course, e.g., credit for 15 points Commerce at 100-level.

    c. *Internal credit* – credit from another UC qualification.

    d. *External credit* – credit from a recognised (Aotearoa New Zealand or overseas) tertiary university or institution external to UC.

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Credit Assessment Principles

The principles for the credit transfer process (including recognition of prior learning) are outlined below.

1. The assessment process must align with *General Conditions for Credit Regulations (University Regulations website)* and *Credit Recognition and Transfer Regulations (University Regulations website)*.

2. Credit transfer arrangements must recognise the distinctive differences among providers and the integrity of their programmes. The aim is to facilitate access and promote new study opportunities without compromising the quality or standards of qualifications.

3. In respect of previous studies, credit should be granted for recorded success, whether or not it forms part of a complete qualification. Wherever possible, specified credit that satisfies prerequisites should be granted, rather than unspecified credit that is of limited use.

4. In respect of uncertified and non-formal prior learning, credit should be based on an appraisal of the student's achievements in relation to the objectives of the relevant courses, according to Recognition of Prior Learning procedures.

5. The approval process is at the discretion of the relevant Executive Dean or delegate and may not be available for certain courses or qualifications, particularly professional qualifications.

6. The assessment procedure should be completed prior to the programme of study commencing.

7. Eligibility for credit does not guarantee a place in a qualification or course in which that credit would be available.

8. Credit approval may also be subject to any compliance requirements of any external accrediting bodies.

9. Information on credit transfer arrangements should be comprehensive and readily accessible in up-to-date publications.

10. The application process includes a procedure for students to seek a review of initial decisions on credit transfer or recognition of prior learning matters.

Policy Statement

The University is expected to facilitate the movement of students and their credits between qualifications and institutions in a manner that is in the best interests of students. In particular, the University is committed to facilitating access and creating new study opportunities without undermining the quality of University of Canterbury qualifications.

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The University joins other tertiary providers in facilitating such student credit movement. The University supports the principles outlined in the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) document: Recognising learning for credit: Guidelines for the recognition and award of credit for learning. It also endorses the principles for transfer of credit published by Universities New Zealand: *Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) Handbook (Universities New Zealand website).*

A distinction should be made between the separate processes of Admission and Credit Recognition and Transfer.

Transfer of credit and recognition of prior learning for credit are not confirmed until eligibility for admission to the University and qualification is established. (See the *Admission Regulations (University Regulations website)* and the *UC Policy Library (UC Policy Library website)*.)

The regulations for credit recognition and transfer are specified in the General Regulations: *Credit Recognition and Transfer Regulations (University Regulations website)*. In addition, the regulations for individual qualifications may refer to transfer of credit matters that are specific to these qualifications. Notwithstanding the amount of transferred credit, a student must pass a minimum number of University of Canterbury credits in order to graduate with a particular qualification. These are set out in either the qualification regulations or in clause 12 of the *General Conditions for Credit Regulations (University Regulations website)*.

Operating Principles for Transfer of Credit

1. Fair and equitable recognition

The University is committed to finding ways to facilitate learning pathways through the fair and equitable transfer of credit for relevant former study. Where possible, these will be by way of formalised articulation arrangements between institutions.

1.1 The credit recognition between University of Canterbury and other New Zealand universities is primarily through credit transfer, and cross credit, though this does not preclude other forms of credit recognition on a case-by-case basis. This is because the procedures are well established and understood, as CUAP's quality assurance processes apply uniformly to all, and long-standing historical relationships exist between institutions.

1.2 The credit recognition between University of Canterbury for qualifications approved by NZQA at Bachelor Level or higher shall be treated in the same way as from a New Zealand university.

1.3 The credit recognition between University of Canterbury and tertiary education organisations of other nations will be considered on a case-by-case basis, unless articulation agreements are in place.

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1.4 Mature students with work experience and qualifications from previous eras are primarily considered for credit recognition via the *Assessment of Prior Learning* process.

1.5 The University also affords the same recognition to other institutions on quality assurance of their courses and qualifications when it enters into a formal agreement to do so.

2. Protecting the University of Canterbury Qualification

The integrity and distinctiveness of a University of Canterbury qualification will be protected in all credit transfer decisions.

2.1 Any formal articulations between the University and other institutions must protect and preserve the academic integrity of each institution and their qualifications.

2.2 In all credit transfer formal arrangements and case-by-case decisions, the distinctive features of the University of Canterbury qualification must be maintained. Note the guidance provided by Universities New Zealand at *section 5.4 of the CUAP Handbook*,

> "*Credit transfer arrangements must recognise the distinctive differences amongst providers and the integrity of their programmes. The aim is to facilitate access, and promote new study opportunities, without compromising the quality or standards of qualifications. A consistent approach to the recognition of courses and qualifications does not mean rigid uniformity; codified minimum credit arrangements for all students who have passed a course or completed a qualification may be supplemented by grants of additional credit/exemptions to high achievers.*"

3. Admission Criteria must be met

3.1 To maintain the integrity of a University of Canterbury programme and ensure a reasonable chance of success, a transferring student will be required to meet University and programme admission criteria before the transfer is confirmed.

3.2 Students who do not hold a University Entrance qualification under the *Admission Regulations (University Regulations website)* must first apply for University admission. The application for credit will be processed only after University Admission has been granted.

4. Credit which may be Granted for Transfer

4.1 Credit transfer to University of Canterbury qualifications

A student may transfer the credits initially completed for one qualification to another with approval of the relevant Executive Dean or delegate of the receiving qualification. In order for the Executive Dean or delegate to approve the transfer the

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student must first have been granted admission to the receiving qualification. The determination of the student's eligibility to transfer credit is made at the time of application for transfer and not based on their eligibility at the time when the credit was completed.

4.2 Credit to conform with University of Canterbury qualification distinctiveness

4.2.1 The University of Canterbury will not give specified credit for disciplines or qualifications that it is not accredited to offer. Where such courses or qualifications are presented for credit transfer from other institutions, unspecified credit may be granted for courses that do not closely align with the University of Canterbury's course offerings but where there is some relevance to the proposed programme of study.

Where there is no alignment at all, no credit shall generally be granted, regardless of the level assigned to the course of study. An exception to this may be permitted where the University of Canterbury qualification allows for greater leniency, e.g. "120 points from any course offered at the University".

4.2.2 In order to be awarded a qualification by the University of Canterbury, students must normally complete the core requirements at the final level of a qualification as an enrolled student at the University of Canterbury. The *Credit Recognition and Transfer Regulations (University Regulations website)* specify the maximum number of credits that may be completed outside of the University and be permitted for transfer in order to ensure the distinctive nature of the University of Canterbury qualification.

4.3 Student chances of success to be considered

Credit will be appropriate to the level and content of the work already completed.

In accordance with guidelines provided by NZQA in recognising learning for credit transfer decisions at the University of Canterbury should be granted at the highest level consistent with the student's chances of success, as demonstrated by completion of part of, or a whole qualification identified on the NZ Qualifications Framework (see *Appendix 1*).

4.4 Levels at which credit may be granted

Normally no credit towards a qualification should be granted for individual courses below Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework. It is also important to consider the relevance of a course at that level: e.g. a Level 5 course in computing, for example, might not equate with level 5 in *computer science* at the University of Canterbury.

It should be noted that the registration of a qualification at a specific level does not mean that all its component parts are at a tertiary level (see *Appendix 1*).

4.5 Limits to maximum credit to be granted

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4.5.1 The maximum amount of credit which may be transferred from a complete or incomplete qualification already completed is stated in the Cross-Credit rules of the *Credit Recognition and Transfer Regulations (University Regulations website)*. These limits may be modified by specific qualifications or where a formal articulation agreement is in place.

4.6 Limits to use of credit granted

The award of credit for previous study does not necessarily guarantee entry into a proposed course of study. Limitation of entry regulations or specific pre-requisites may apply.

4.7 Transfer of Credit between UC Qualifications

In order to transfer credit from one UC qualification to a different UC qualification students should meet with a Faculty Student Advisor who is appropriately qualified to provide advice on new qualification. The Faculty Student Advisors will organise the internal transfer of credit to be processed on the student's academic record.

5. Subsuming a University of Canterbury Qualification

The University offers pathways for students who have completed but not graduated with a lower-qualification to continue to a higher-qualification. However, these pathways do not apply to those who have graduated. In the case of those students who have graduated with the lower-level qualification, subsuming that qualification into a higher-level qualification enables the student to advance their studies by utilising relevant credits already achieved.

5.1 General Principles

5.1.1 The subsumed qualification must be composed of courses which are permitted to be credited to the subsuming qualification.

5.1.2 Completion of the subsumed qualification must be an admission requirement (either explicitly or implicitly) of the subsuming qualification.

5.1.3 Qualifications from institutions other than the University of Canterbury will not be subsumed into a University of Canterbury qualification.

5.1.4 For the purpose of the time-limit of a subsuming qualification, the starting date for the subsuming qualification will be from the date when studies for the subsumed qualification began. If appropriate the relevant dean may vary the time-limit for the subsuming qualification.

5.1.5 The subsuming will be clearly stated on the external transcript.

5.1.6 Students who have had a qualification subsumed may not claim to hold both qualifications, only the subsuming qualification. To claim both qualifications would be considered misrepresentation of academic credentials.

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5.2 Conflicting Regulations

5.2.1 There must not be both an exemption from points for those who have completed a smaller qualification, and the option for that smaller qualification to be subsumed.

5.2.2 Where a qualification is equivalent to Part I of a Master's degree, no subsuming into the Master's degree is permitted. In this case it should be clearly indicated that the qualification is equivalent to Part I or meets the requirements for entry to Part II.

5.3 Qualification Level Subsuming Rules

Qualification	Subsuming Rule
CERTIFICATES	A certificate may be subsumed into a diploma and a degree for which the courses taken are permitted.
• **LEVEL 4 CERTIFICATES**	A level 4 certificate may be subsumed into a level 4 diploma for which the courses taken are permitted.
• **GRADUATE CERTFICATES**	May not be subsumed into a Graduate Diploma in the same subject area.
• **POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATES**	May be subsumed into postgraduate diplomas, Honours degrees and Master's degrees in the same subject. Where a Master's degree requires a postgraduate diploma or honours degree for entry then the postgraduate certificate may only be subsumed within the postgraduate diploma or Honours degree
DIPLOMAS	A diploma may be subsumed into a degree for which the courses taken are permitted.
• **LEVEL 4 DIPLOMAS**	May not be subsumed.
• **GRADUATE DIPLOMAS**	May not normally be subsumed.
• **POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS**	May be subsumed by a Master's degree provided that the Postgraduate Diploma is not equivalent to Part I of a Master's degree that can be completed through Part II alone.
BACHELORS DEGREES	Cannot be subsumed
HONOURS DEGREES	May be subsumed by a Master's degree

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	provided that the Honour's degree is not equivalent to Part I of a Master's degree that can be complete through Part II alone.
MASTER'S DEGREES	Cannot be subsumed.
DOCTORAL DEGREES	Cannot be subsumed.
HIGHER DOCTORAL DEGREES	Cannot be subsumed.

6. Credit from Micro-credentials

6.1 Micro-credentials can be credited to a qualification as outlined in the *Credit Recognition and Transfer Regulations (University Regulations website)*.

6.2 When assessing the micro-credential for credit, the Executive Dean or delegate should only credit the micro-credential when:

- the NZQF level of the micro-credential is appropriate for the qualification; and
- the content of the micro-credential is appropriate for a University qualification; and
- the content of the micro-credential meets the requirements of the qualification; and
- the micro-credential was taken meets the time limits of the qualification.

6.3 Credit can be given as a specified credit or unspecified credit, with or without restrictions and with or without right to advance. A set of micro-credentials should be considered together to maximise the credit and the right to advance.

7. Recognition of Prior Learning

7.1 The University of Canterbury distinguishes recognition of prior learning (RPL) from transfer of credit. RPL credit may be awarded as specified in *Credit Recognition and Transfer Regulations (University Regulations website)*.

7.2 Evidence must be provided demonstrating that the applicant has met the learning outcomes of a specific courses at the NZQF level stipulated. Details can be found in the Recognition of Prior Learning for Credit Process Guide.

7.3 The process for assessment is outlined in the Recognition of Prior Learning for Credit Process Guide and will:

- Take into account the relevancy and currency in discipline knowledge and practices and any external accreditation requirements; and

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- Ensure that the prior learning was undertaken in a timeframe that enables the student to progress and achieve the graduate profile of the target qualification.

7.4 A fee will be charged for RPL credit applications, listed in the *Fees and Fines Regulations (University Regulations website)*.

8. Time Elapsed since Previous Study / Experience

8.1 For the purpose of the time-limit of the receiving qualification, the date of the course commencement is used and not the date of the transfer. Consequently the relevant Dean or delegate may need to consider a variation on the completion time-limit.

8.2 Credit transfer will be time-bound. It is expected that only credit transfer applications for study completed within the last five years will normally be considered. Beyond that time applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the relevant Dean or delegate.

9. Grade Point Average Calculation

All courses transferred, cross-credited or subsumed will contribute to the grade point calculations for a student. The calculation of a GPA is subject to the conventions stipulated by the relevant Dean for each qualification. In the case of any external credits the courses are credited with a “Pass” grade.

10. Precedents

The University will compile established credit transfer precedents wherever appropriate. These shall be revised regularly or as curriculum content (of either party) changes.

11. Documentation of Decision on the Transcript

Decisions to transfer credit, cross-credit, subsume, and/or recognise prior learning will be noted on the student’s transcript.

12. Delegated Authority

12.1 Decisions for credit are made by the Executive Deans or their delegates, under delegation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), who in turn holds delegated authority from the Vice-Chancellor. See the *Delegations Schedule (University website)* for further information on delegated authority.

12.2 Process decisions are made by the Academic Administration Committee (AAC), on recommendation from the Academic Services Managers and Admissions Office.

13. Appeals

Students who have been declined credit will be advised of the established processes for appeal of credit transfer decisions under the *Appeals Regulations (University Regulations website).*

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Related Documents and Information

Regulations

- Admission Regulations (University Regulations website)
- Appeal Regulations (University Regulations website)
- Fees and Fines Regulations (University Regulations website)
- Credit Recognition and Transfer Regulations (University Regulations website)
- General Conditions for Credit Regulations (University Regulations website)

External

- Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) Handbook (Universities New Zealand website)
- Delegations Schedule (University website)
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA website)
- Tertiary Education Strategy (Ministry of Education website)
- Transfer of Credit Application Forms (University website)

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Qualification Levels on the Qualifications Framework.

Document History and Version Control Table			
Version	**Action**	**Approval Authority**	**Action Date**
For document history and versioning prior to 2013 contact ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz			
1.00	Conversion of document onto new template and hyperlinks updated	Policy Unit	Sep 2013
1.01	A/A changed from Chair, Academic Board to DVC(A&I).	Policy Unit	Mar 2014
1.02	Hyperlinks updated, external document details updated.	Policy Unit	Jul 2014
1.03	Review date pushed out.	Policy Unit	Sep 2014
1.04	Scheduled review date moved to June 2017 to align with regulations review.	DVC(A)	Jun 2016
2.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer, major changes, addition of subsuming qualification section and definitions, policy renamed *from Credit Transfer to Students From New Zealand Institutions Guiding*	DVC(A)	May 2018

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	Principles		
3.0	Scheduled review. Major changes.	DVC(A)	Sep 2023

APPENDIX 1:

QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK LEVELS

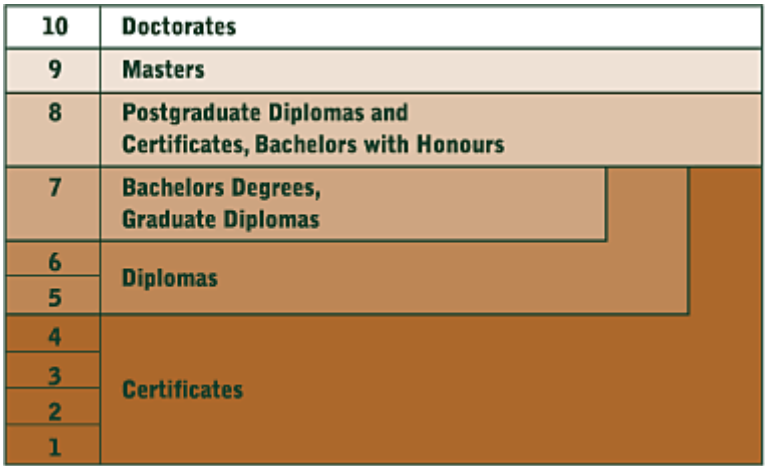
Explanation of the NZQA Qualifications Framework Levels

For more details see *New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA website)*

Credit transfer for formal study at a New Zealand institution should be possible only for qualifications, or parts of qualifications, registered at Levels 5 – 10 on the *New Zealand Qualifications Framework of Quality Assured Qualifications*.

Qualifications are registered as shown on the table below:
Note that -

- Level 5 = 100 level (or first year of bachelor degree level study)
- Level 6 = 200 level (or second year of bachelor degree level study)
- Level 7 = 300 level (or third year of bachelor degree level study)



- Qualifications are registered at the highest level of study within the qualification. A diploma, for example, must: be registered at Level 5, 6 or 7, with the top 72 credits defining the level at which it can be registered. The level of a diploma is determined by beginning with the highest level credits and counting back until a total of 72 credits is reached. The level at which the total of 72 is reached determines the level of the diploma.

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