# Agenda

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<th>Time</th>
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| 10.00am – 10.05am | Legislative Frameworks: *What? When? How?*                                  | *Professor Dominic Verity*  
Chair, Academic Senate  
Chair, Senate Learning and Teaching Committee |
| 10.05am – 10.15am | Policy: *Discussions, decisions and drafting.*  
- RPL Policy: Second Draft (ATTACHMENT 1)  
- RPL Issues Paper: Stage One (ATTACHMENT 2)  
- RPL Issues Paper: Stage Two (ATTACHMENT 3) | *Professor Dominic Verity*  
Chair, Academic Senate  
*Mrs Hayley Harris*  
Project Officer, Governance Services |
| 10.15am – 11.00am | Recognition of learning arising from experiences outside university programs. | *Professor Stephen Billett*  
Professor of Adult and Vocational Education, Griffith University |
| 11.00am – 11.20am | RPL - practical and pedagogical dilemmas.                                    | *Dr. Theresa Winchester-Seeto*  
Senior Lecturer Higher Education Development, Learning and Teaching Centre |
| 11.20am – 11.40am | Open Wide, Come Inside: The Warawara approach to RPL in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student entry to university | *Associate Professor Susan Page*  
Associate Professor of Indigenous Studies, Warawara |
| 11.40am – 12.00pm | Workshop: *Assessment: Evidence and Methodologies.*                          | *Professor Stephen Billett*  
Professor of Adult and Vocational Education, Griffith University |
| 12.00pm - 12.55pm | Informal debrief lunch: An opportunity for participants to share their experiences with, and thoughts on, the recognition of prior learning. | All participants |
| 12.55pm - 1:00pm  | Thank you & ‘Where to from here...’                                         | *Professor Dominic Verity*  
Chair, Academic Senate  
Chair, Senate Learning and Teaching Committee |
Abstracts

Prof. Stephen Billett, \textit{“Recognition of learning arising from experiences outside university programs.”} 

Although the assessment and recognition of learning in settings outside the university have long been practised in some disciplines, new imperatives are requiring a broader consideration of these processes both for entry into and credit within Australian higher education programs. This talk will consider and critically appraise the origins, purposes and processes used in a number of schemes through which learning occurring outside of the particular university can be assessed and recognised within it. The intent is to engage and advance discussions about these matters at Macquarie. As part of this, consideration will be given to the nature and quality of learning arising outside of educational programs to assist the discussion about the kinds of experiences that might be included in such considerations, and the kinds of learning which might be recognised. All this is set within an educational context in which the Australian Quality Framework (AQF) is expanding to shape much of the ordering, organisation, duration and focus for higher education programs.

Dr. Theresa Winchester-Seeto, \textit{“RPL - practical and pedagogical dilemmas.”} 

Recognition of Prior Learning has been practised in various forms and guises at Macquarie and across the world for decades. The renewed focus, courtesy of TEQSA, highlights some of the associated practical and pedagogical realities that need to be considered. The actual numbers of students availing themselves of RPL are likely to be relatively small, but such a cohort will include students who will respond readily to university teaching and those who will struggle for a variety of reasons. This will bring interesting pedagogical challenges for us as educators. Similarly, the process of RPL brings several practical issues to the fore, and these will be discussed in relation to Participation units. Ultimately RPL raises some ethical dilemmas that need to be discussed around our obligations to the wider community, to the individual students involved, and to the students who are already in our charge.

Dr. Susan Page, \textit{“Open Wide, Come Inside: The Warawara approach to RPL in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student entry to university.”} 

The federal government’s widening participation agenda, along with improvements in year twelve retention, mean that increasing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are entering universities. However many of these potential students will not achieve an entrance score which, alone, would lead to being offered a university place. This presentation will outline some of the entry characteristics of Indigenous students, and provide an overview of the Warawara Alternative Entry Programs, including the existing structures for ongoing support. The presentation will also highlight evidence of some of the positive outcomes when Indigenous students do 'come inside' an institution. Potential for broader application will be raised along with the possible challenges of the approach in the wider context.
POLICY

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Purpose

To validate and encourage lifelong learning that has taken place in a range of contexts in order to support student mobility.

To define the ways in which Macquarie University will recognise prior learning for the purposes of admission and/or credit transfer.

Overview

The University acknowledges that learning can take place outside of the formal education system, and aims to recognise formal, informal and non-formal learning to support individual's lifelong learning goals.

The overarching principle of this policy is to preserve the integrity and distinctiveness of Macquarie University awards.

Within this principle, the University also aims to:
- encourage mobility between institutions, and progression through levels of qualifications;
- ensure students do not need to repeat learning successfully undertaken in a prior context;
- support individual's lifelong learning goals by recognising prior learning and experiences;
- ensure consistency and transparency in the offering of admission and granting of credit transfer;
- establish a framework for credit transfer arrangements in formal articulation agreements between the University and other institutions, and
- ensure consistency with the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy, and the TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards).

This policy outlines how the University will maximise a student's access to admission and credit transfer based on learning already undertaken, whilst preserving the integrity and distinctiveness of the Macquarie University award.

This policy complies with the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

DEFINITIONS

Articulation: a process that enables students to progress from a completed award to another with predetermined admission and/or credit arrangements. Articulation may be formalised by an approved institutional agreement.
**Award:** the qualification resulting from successful completion of a specific program of study.

**Credit:** the value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or awards. Credit may be granted as Specified or Unspecified. See specified credit and unspecified credit.

**Credit transfer:** a process that provides students with consistent credit outcomes for components of an award based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes.

**Formal learning:** learning that takes place through a structured program of learning that leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification.

**Informal learning:** learning gained through work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences. Unlike formal or non-formal learning, informal learning is not organised or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support.

**Learning outcomes:** the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

**Level:** The level at which a unit is taught indicates the amount of prior knowledge required to study it successfully. For example, 100-level units may be entered in the first year of study and often do not have any prerequisite units, while 200-level units generally have 100-level prerequisites.

**Nested Award:** A set of Macquarie University awards approved by Academic Senate that form stages within the highest award, where each stage may operate as an entry and/or exit point. Nested Awards are designed to allow full credit transfer between the Macquarie University awards. **Nested Awards are recorded in a Schedule of Nested Awards.**

**Non-formal learning:** learning that takes place through a structured program of learning but does not lead to an officially accredited qualification.

**Prior learning:** learning that is evidenced, current and relevant, and has taken place:
- outside of Macquarie University, or
- within a completed Macquarie University award.

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1 AQF Glossary of Terminology
2 AQF Glossary of Terminology
3 AQF Glossary of Terminology
4 AQF Glossary of Terminology
**Program of study**: the combination of units that must be satisfactorily completed to qualify for a Macquarie University award.

**Recognition of prior learning (RPL)**: a process that involves assessment of an individual’s relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine eligibility for admission to an award and/or the granting of credit.

**Specified credit**: credit granted towards specific units or components of an award or program of study. Specified credit may reduce the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification.

**Unspecified credit**: credit granted towards elective units or components of an award or program of study. Unspecified credit may be granted with, or without, subject area designation.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all coursework awards offered by Macquarie University. This policy governs all Articulation Agreements of the University.

**Policy**

The University will establish a transparent, equitable and evidence-based process for the assessment and determination of RPL.

The University may, at its discretion, set additional requirements for the process of recognising prior learning, including testing, interviews and portfolio submission.

1. **ADMISSION**

   All applications for admission are assessed on a competitive basis.

   The University may recognise prior formal, informal and non-formal learning in the determination of eligibility for admission to an award, provided the prior learning is current and relevant to the admission requirements of the award.

   1.1. **CURRENCY**

   Prior learning that has been attained within twelve years of the date of application for admission will generally be considered current.

   Academic Senate may approve changes to this timeframe for an award or group of awards.

   1.2. **RELEVANCY**

   The assessment of prior-learning for the purposes of admission will be evidence-based, equitable and academically defensible.

   Prior learning may be recognised where:

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5. AQF Glossary of Terminology

2. CREDIT TRANSFER

The University may recognise prior formal, informal and non-formal learning for the purpose of granting credit towards an award, provided the prior learning is current and relevant to the learning outcomes of the award.

2.1. TYPES OF CREDIT

Credit granted may be in the form of:

- unspecified credit without designation, where the applicant’s prior learning is assessed as being at an appropriate level and standard for an elective component of their program of study. Unspecified credit can be used towards satisfying the elective component and general requirements of a program of study.

- unspecified credit with designation, where the applicant’s prior learning is assessed as being at an appropriate level and standard for a component of their program of study, and equivalent to a recognised subject area offered by the University. Unspecified credit may be used towards satisfying the elective component and general requirements of a program of study.

- specified credit, where the applicant’s prior learning is assessed as meeting the stated learning outcomes for a unit or component of their program of study. Specified credit may be used towards satisfying the specific requirements, including required units, of a program of study.

Where possible, specified credit will be granted.

2.1.2.2. CURRENCY

Prior learning that has been attained within twelve years of the date of application for credit will generally be considered current.

Academic Senate may approve an increase in this timeframe for an entire program of study or a specific unit.

2.2.3. RELEVANCY
The assessment of prior-learning for the purposes of credit transfer will be evidence-based, equitable and academically defensible.

1.1.2.3.1 Prior learning may be recognised for the granting of unspecified credit without designation where there is evidence to demonstrate that:
- the applicant has achieved a quality and standard of learning equivalent to tertiary studies, and
- the prior learning is of an appropriate level.

1.1.2.3.2 Prior learning may be recognised for the granting of unspecified credit with designation where there is evidence to demonstrate that:
- the applicant has achieved a quality and standard of learning equivalent to tertiary studies;
- the prior learning is of an appropriate level, and
- the prior learning is equivalent to a recognised area of study offered by the University.

1.1.3.2.3.3 Prior learning may be recognised for the granting of specified credit where there is evidence to demonstrate that:
- the applicant has achieved a quality and standard of learning equivalent to tertiary studies;
- the prior learning is of an appropriate level;
- the applicant can demonstrate the attainment of the learning outcomes of a specific unit or units, and
- the prior learning is assessed as equivalent in discipline content, depth and breadth.

2.3.2.4 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS AT MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

2.3.2.4.1 The maximum credit transfer allowed towards awards will be determined by the requirement that the student complete a minimum amount of the award at Macquarie University, where:
- the amount is unique to the award, having not been used towards another award, and
- the amount is made up of units or components undertaken as part of the student's enrolment at Macquarie University.

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Sourced from: <url>.
Documents sourced from Policy Central (www.mq.edu.au/policy) take precedence over documents from other sources.
2.3.4.1 The minimum amounts for various award types are outlined in the Schedule of Minimum Requirements at Macquarie University.

2.3.1.2.4.1.2 Amendments to the Schedule of Minimum Requirements at Macquarie University are approved by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC).

2.3.2.4.2. Limits on maximum credit as set out above do not apply to Macquarie University nested awards.

2.4. TYPES OF CREDIT

Credit granted may be in the form of:

• unspecified credit without designation, where the applicant’s prior learning is assessed as being at an appropriate level and standard for an elective component of their program of study. Unspecified credit can be used towards satisfying the elective component and general requirements of a program of study.

• unspecified credit with designation, where the applicant’s prior learning is assessed as being at an appropriate level and standard for an elective component of their program of study, and equivalent to a recognised subject area offered by the University. Unspecified credit may be used towards satisfying the elective component and general requirements of a program of study.

• specified credit, where the applicant’s prior learning is assessed as meeting the stated learning outcomes for a unit or component of their program of study. Specified credit may be used towards satisfying the specific requirements, including required units, of a program of study.

Where possible, specified credit will be granted.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The University will safeguard the quality of its awards by ensuring that:

• the assessment of prior learning for admission to an award is evidence-based and questions the applicant’s competency and readiness for tertiary study;

• the assessment of prior learning for credit transfer is evidence-based, and ensures that the learning outcomes have been met;

• credit granted on the basis of learning completed outside of Macquarie University is not recorded with a grade, and does not contribute to any grade point average (GPA);

• credit on the basis of prior formal learning is only granted for
completed units where the final grade is a Pass, or equivalent grade, and higher;

- credit granted by another institution on the basis of prior learning is not transferable to Macquarie University;

- standards for the assessment of prior learning are regularly reviewed and monitored by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC), and

- individual decisions are reviewed and audited, approved and recorded by the Faculty Standards and Quality Committee (FSQC).

4. **APPEAL**

A student may appeal a decision regarding the assessment of RPL for the purpose of admission and/or credit transfer.

Grounds for an appeal are limited to procedural error or breach of procedural fairness.

Appeals will be managed through the Academic Appeals Committee, and should be made in accordance with the appeal procedures set out in ‘XXXX’, RPL Procedures.

**COMPLIANCE AND BREACHES**

The University may commence applicable disciplinary procedures if a person to whom this policy applies breaches this policy (or any of its related procedures).

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<td>Date for Next Review</td>
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<td>Policies/Rules Superseded by this Policy</td>
<td>Credit for Previous Studies: All previous policies, practices, booklets and websites.</td>
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ISSUES PAPER: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)_STAGE ONE

PURPOSE

This paper is intended to capture the higher level conceptual issues of the RPL Policy project for consideration by members of SLTC. To assist with the consideration of these issues, the legislative requirements and principles underpinning them is referenced, and benchmarking of other Australian Universities is presented.

The decisions of SLTC on these issues will shape the RPL Policy and will establish a framework within which the Working Party can operate.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

There are a series of questions which need to be asked, and answered, in order to define the direction of a Macquarie University RPL Policy.

1. ‘What defines a Macquarie award?’

1.1. ‘The higher education provider ensures that it maintains processes to provide for the recognition of prior learning, credit transfer and articulation of awards. These processes are designed to maximise the credit students may gain for learning already undertaken, subject to preserving the integrity of learning outcomes and/or discipline requirements of the award to which it applies.’

1.1.1. How do we express this?

For the purposes of RPL and Credit Transfer, this can be conceptually defined in terms of ‘credit caps on prior learning’ or ‘minimum requirements at Macquarie University’.

1.1.1.1. Which approach best supports our aim to preserve the ‘integrity’ of our awards?

1.1.1.1.1. ‘Credit Caps’: Usually represented as a percentage of the award, or as a maximum amount of credit points.

1.1.1.2. ‘Minimum Requirements at Macquarie University’: Allows for a focus on unique Macquarie qualities, including completion of People, Planet and Participation units; could stipulate that students undertake the higher-level thinking (300-lvl units and above) at Macquarie, and can indirectly imply a ‘credit cap’ by requiring students to complete a minimum amount of study at Macquarie (e.g. 1 FT year of a Bachelor degree).

1.1.2. How much?

Finding a balance between our requirement to ‘maximise the credit students may gain for learning already undertaken’ and our attempt at ‘preserving the integrity of learning outcomes and/or discipline requirements of the award’ is a complex undertaking. This is complicated further by our position as a University in a competitive deregulated environment.

1.1.2.1. What amount of credit is Macquarie willing to grant students on the basis of prior learning? Is this different for undergraduate and postgraduate awards? Is this different for complete and incomplete prior studies?

1.1.2.2. What are other Australian universities doing?

A benchmarking project across 12 Australian universities, including the GO8 and peer institutions, illustrated the following:

1.1.2.2.1. Most Universities apply different ‘caps’ to undergraduate and postgraduate awards.

1.1.2.2.2. Most Universities do not differentiate, in terms of ‘credit caps’, between incomplete and complete prior studies:

1.1.2.2.2.1. In NSW, the only university to restrict the amount of postgraduate credit transfer where a student is applying on the basis of a completed award is the University of Sydney. The only universities to restrict the amount of undergraduate credit transfer where a student is applying on the basis of a completed award are the University of Sydney and the University of Western Sydney.

1.1.2.2.2.2. Within the Group of Eight, the only universities to restrict the amount of postgraduate credit transfer where a student is applying on the basis of a completed award are the University of Sydney and the

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University of Western Australia, with UWA only applying this restriction to programs of 0.5 FTE years or less. The only universities to restrict the amount of undergraduate credit transfer where a student is applying on the basis of a completed award are the University of Sydney and the University of Melbourne.

### 1.1.2.3. Can we preserve the integrity of our awards other than by overly capping the credit? For example, not allowing the transfer of credit based on units with PC grades, tightening the framework for mapping equivalency of learning outcomes or restricting credit transfer based on informal/non-formal learning.

Should students be eligible for Specified Credit based on Informal or Non-formal studies, provided they can demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes?

### 2. Articulation Agreements

2.1. *"The higher education provider ensures that where it formalises credit arrangements with other providers for any award, it maximises the credit available to eligible students for both entry into and credit towards the award, subject to preserving the integrity of learning outcomes and/or discipline requirements of the award to which credit applies."*

2.1.1. Should Articulation Agreements be governed by the RPL Policy, in particular the decided amount of allowable credit transfer?

In this case, the ‘profit’ of Articulation Agreements would be a seamless transition into the University – a guaranteed, and advertised, ‘package’ of credit.

2.1.2. Or, should they sit outside of it as an exception, allowing for more generous credit transfer arrangements?

In this case, the ‘profit’ of Articulation Agreements would be the marketing advantages of generous credit offerings – a sense of preferential treatment for targeted prospective cohorts.

2.1.2.1. Consideration of current articulation agreements, including SIBT, Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE and the various agreements with international partners.

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1. Credit cannot be granted towards a course with a value of [0.5 FTE Years] on the basis of study undertaken in a course that was completed.

3. Nested Awards

3.1. “[This policy] aims to...enhance student progression into and between AQF qualifications...”

3.1.1. Currently, the credit transfer arrangements for Macquarie University Nested Awards are inconsistent. Students starting in a lesser award, upon meeting course requirements for the lesser award, can qualify with the lesser award and receive a full credit transfer to the higher award. Students starting in a higher award, upon meeting course requirements for the lesser award, can qualify with the lesser award but will only receive a 25% credit transfer to the higher award.

3.1.2. Should Nested Awards be governed by the RPL Policy, in particular the decided amount of allowable credit transfer? Or, should they sit outside of it as an exception, allowing for the continuation of consistent application of generous credit transfer arrangements?

3.1.3. How can Macquarie University create parity in the Nested Award arrangements?

3.1.3.1. Students are permitted to qualify with all awards in a Nested Award sequence upon meeting the specific course requirements, and receive full credit transfer, regardless of whether they commenced at the lesser or higher level of the sequence.5

3.1.3.2. Students are permitted to qualify with the higher award in a Nested Award sequence only. That is, students who elect to qualify with one of the lesser awards will be bound by any applicable ‘credit caps’ where they decide to continue to the higher award in the sequence.6

3.1.3.3. Students are permitted to qualify with the higher award in a Nested Award sequence only, however a Completion Letter can be provided as a formal statement of progression through the sequence. Students who elect to qualify with one of the lesser awards will be bound by any applicable ‘credit caps’ where they decide to continue to the higher award in the sequence.7

4. For Noting

4.1. Policy will need to encompass mechanisms for evidence-based recognition of informal and non-formal learning for credit transfer and admissions purposes:

"Recognition of prior learning or advanced standing for relevant and current informal or non-formal learning will be available for students and may be used for entry requirements or credit towards an AQF qualification."8

"...decision to give credit into or towards an award is information based, equitable, transparent, timely and academically defensible."9

Hayley Harris,
Project Officer, Governance Services
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T: 9850 1126

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5 Based on the Nested Award principles employed by the University of Melbourne.
6 Based on the Nested Award principles employed by the University of Sydney.
7 Based on the Nested Award principles employed by the Swinburne University of Technology.
ISSUES PAPER: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) _STAGE TWO

PURPOSE

Capitalising on feedback previously obtained and early consultation, an RPL Policy has been drafted as a starting point for discussion.

This paper is intended to capture key questions arising from the RPL Policy drafting which need to be considered by members of SLTC and other key internal stakeholders.

Acknowledging that the RPL Policy raises many complex philosophical, conceptual and procedural issues, this paper aims to facilitate targeted consultation and encourage focus on a number of the ‘big ticket items’.

To ensure that this policy can be practically applied, this paper also seeks to prompt thought and discussion in relation to the procedural framework that will support it.

OVERVIEW

A policy is designed to ‘set out principles for an area of activity, and high level rules’ with ‘tangled, over-detailed policy [being] unlikely to be read and understood by staff, let alone students.’

With this in mind, and in keeping with the University Policy Framework, the attempt has been to capture the higher level concepts in the policy, with the detailed ‘hows’ to sit within the procedure.

However, consideration of how the procedure/operations fit within this broad framework is essential to the development of a meaningful and relevant policy.

COMPONENTS FOR CONSIDERATION

There are a series of questions relating to components of the draft policy which need to be asked, and answered, in order to refine the Macquarie University RPL Policy.

1. CURRENCY:

1.1. ‘The condition of currency also applies to students resuming studies following a period of discontinuation or exclusion.’

1.1.1. Overview: Current wording suggests that all students, including readmitting students, will only have credit recognised where the prior learning was undertaken within 10 years.

1.1.2. Principle: Students qualifying from MQU will be leaving with current learning. That is, a student cannot qualify with an award in 2013 if they completed a proportion of the learning in 1967.

1.1.3. Question 1: Should readmitting students be bound by this condition of currency? [Consideration of procedural implications]

2. RELEVANCY:

2.1. Overview: Relevancy of prior learning has been divided into categories depending on what we are looking for to ensure quality, content, depth and breadth have been met, as appropriate.
2.1.2. **Question 2:** Are the conceptual ‘checks & balances’ for each category of relevancy appropriate and complete?

2.1.3. **Question 3:** Can each of the points be assessed/evidenced/demonstrated? [Consideration of procedural implications]

3. **NESTED AWARDS:**

3.1. Definition: ‘A set of Macquarie University awards approved by Academic Senate that form stages within the highest award, where each stage may operate as an entry and/or exit point. Nested Awards are designed to allow full credit transfer between the Macquarie University awards.’

Exceptions clause: ‘Limits on maximum credit as set out above do not apply to Macquarie University nested awards.’

2.1.1. **Overview:** Currently, the credit transfer arrangements for Macquarie University Nested Awards are inconsistent:

Students starting in a lesser award, upon meeting course requirements for the lesser award, can qualify with the lesser award and receive a full credit transfer to the higher award.

Students starting in a higher award, upon meeting course requirements for the lesser award, can qualify with the lesser award but will only receive a 25% credit transfer to the higher award.

Proposed Nested Award definition, and exception, allow for credit to be granted upwards and downwards through the nested sequence. That is, a student admitted to the ‘MastersXYZ’ can, upon meeting requirements, elect to qualify with the ‘PGDipXYZ’ and still continue towards completion of the Masters without penalty or credit capping.

3.1.2. **Principle:** To create parity in the generous application of credit for students admitted to an award in a nested sequence.

3.1.3. **Question 4:** Is there general agreeance that the Nested Award exception to credit transfer limitations should apply regardless of whether the student commenced in a lesser or higher award?

4. **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS AT MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY:**

4.1. ‘The maximum credit transfer allowed towards undergraduate awards will be determined by the requirement that the student complete a minimum of the equivalent of one full-time year of the award at Macquarie University.’

‘The maximum credit transfer allowed towards postgraduate awards will be determined by the requirement that the student complete a minimum of the equivalent of half of the award at Macquarie University.’

4.1.1. **Overview:** Current ‘minimum requirements’ are stated as 1 year for a UG award, and half for a PG award.
Benchmarking showed average ‘credit caps’ across 12 Australian universities\(^3\) to be 61% for UG awards and 46% for PG awards.

Benchmarking showed little difference between the amounts of credit granted based on complete or incomplete formal studies.

The intention is to supplement this conceptual idea with a ‘credit cap’ matrix/table for the various award types at MQU within the procedure document.

4.1.2. **Principle**: To set a minimum requirement which balances:

- the preservation of the integrity of MQ awards, and
- remaining competitive in a deregulated environment.

4.2. *The overarching principle of this policy is preservation of the integrity and distinctiveness of Macquarie University awards. Within this framework, the policy aims to...ensure students do not need to repeat learning successfully undertaken in a prior context...’*

4.2.1. **Overview**: The requirement to complete a People, Planet, Participation and Capstone unit contribute to the distinctiveness of Macquarie University awards. In order to preserve this distinctiveness, it was decided by members of SLTC that credit transfer arrangements should not impact this requirement.

4.2.2. **Question 5**: Will the University allow students to be granted specified credit for prior learning which can be evidenced as meeting the learning outcomes of a Macquarie University People, Planet, Participation and/or Capstone unit? [If so, this will need to be added to the minimum requirements at MQU section of the policy.]

4.2.3. **Question 6**: What makes a Macquarie University award unique?

4.2.3.1. **Question 6a**: Do we differentiate the way we express this ‘uniqueness’ across programs of differing length? For example, setting standardised UG minimum requirements based on the length of the award:

- 3 year degree: ‘...student complete a minimum of the equivalent of 1 full-time year of the award at Macquarie University.’
- 4 year degree: ‘...student complete a minimum of the equivalent of 1.5 full-time years of the award at Macquarie University.’
- 5 year degree: ‘...student complete a minimum of the equivalent of 2 full-time years of the award at Macquarie University.’

4.3. *The maximum credit transfer allowed towards postgraduate awards will be determined by the requirement that the student complete a minimum of the equivalent of half of the award at Macquarie University...’*

4.3.1. **Overview**: The aim is to provide a simple and standardised minimum requirement/cap for postgraduate credit transfer, set at half/50%.

4.3.2. **Issue**: This may work for a majority of our Masters by coursework awards, however given the variety in structure and duration, there may be some where this is not a useful tool for preserving the distinctiveness of the award.

4.3.2. **Question 7**: Should we consider applying the half/50% minimum requirement as a default for all postgraduate awards, but allow for some to have a ‘custom minimum requirement’?

4.3.2.1. If this were the case, a rigorous proposal for a ‘custom minimum requirement’ (that is, more

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\(^3\) The 12 Australian universities comprised the Group of Eight (GO8), Sydney-based peer institutions (UTS and UWS), Griffith University and UNE.
generous ‘credit cap’) would need to:

• address which component/proportion of the award makes it distinctly a Macquarie award,
• address how the ‘custom minimum requirement’ still preserves the identified integrity and distinctiveness, and
• be academically defensible.

4.3.3.2. A proposal for ‘custom minimum requirement’ would be:

• prepared by the relevant Department/Faculty,
• presented to ASQC,
• assessed against principles (quality, distinctiveness etc.),
• rejected, or recommended to Academic Senate for approval,
• documented in a schedule,
• periodically reviewed by ASQC.

4.4. ‘The maximum credit transfer allowed towards postgraduate awards will be determined by the requirement that the student complete a minimum of the equivalent of half of the award at Macquarie University...where...the half is made up of the specific requirements at the highest level for the award...’

4.4.1. Overview: This statement was included in the UG minimum requirements to ensure students were undertaking the higher level components of their award. Depending on the program of study, this could be at 300-lvl/400-lvl/500-lvl.

However, most units in the PG programs of study are at similar levels.

4.4.2. Question 8: Is this particular minimum requirements statement necessary at PG level?

4.5. ‘...at Macquarie University.’

4.6. Overview: Credit transfer amounts are capped according to set minimum requirements to be completed ‘at Macquarie University’.

4.6.1. Question 9: How do we refine the concept of ‘at Macquarie University’ for the purposes of this policy?

4.6.1.1. Stating that exchange units are not units ‘at Macquarie University’?

4.6.1.1.1. With the exception of Participation units, as these are developed within the University?

4.6.1.2. Stating that units undertaken via concurrent studies are not units ‘at Macquarie University’?

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