

OTAGO POLYTECHNIC ACADEMIC POLICY		Number: AP0501.10
Title:	Recognition of Prior Learning	
Baldrige Criteria:	3 Customers	
Chief Executive Approval:	Approval Date: 21 March 2017	Effective Date: 21 March 2017
Previous Policy No:	na	Review Date: as required
Contact Authority:	Director: Quality Services	Status: Current

Purpose This policy describes the nature of recognition of prior learning and the relevant policies for its application and administration, including issues of enrolment, fees, appeals and academic results.

Definitions

Target Course

The course for which credit is sought.

Source Course

The course for which the applicant already holds credit. This may be another Otago Polytechnic course, or one from any other provider.

Credit Transfer

Credit for same course is applicable in situations where the Target and Source courses are exactly the same entity. The course may be a local course or a NQF unit standard. Formal evidence must be provided by the learner to indicate that they hold the relevant result.

In the case of Credit Transfer for an NZQF unit, no result is sent to NZQA as they must already have it. SMS automatically ensures this, provided the CT option is entered.

Cross Credit

Cross crediting is applicable in situations where the target and source courses are not the same entity. However the material covered is equivalent. For Cross Credit to be awarded, the learning outcomes in the target course must all have been adequately covered in the source course. For example, a pass in a university paper may gain CC for a similar degree course at Otago Polytechnic.

Sometimes it may require more than one source course to cover a single target course, eg a learner may need both Psychology 101 and Anthropology 201 to cover the learning outcomes for a single target course in an Otago Polytechnic programme.

In the case of cross credit for a target course consisting of an NZQF unit, a result must be sent to NZQA. SMS automatically ensures this, provided the CC option is entered.

This may in some cases require a small piece of further assessment to be undertaken. In such cases, once the assessment is complete, a cross credit would be entered.

Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

The applicant must provide evidence that the learning outcomes in the target course have been acquired from relevant experience in the workplace, community or other settings and/or courses that have been completed elsewhere. An APEL assessment would consider the whole of a person's learning from experience. This may result in a mix of outcomes including cross credits, credit transfer, advanced standing or a complete qualification assessment and credit where appropriate.

Advanced Standing

Advanced Standing is used when, following an assessment of prior learning or qualifications equivalence, it is evident that a learner can enter a programme at an advanced level. The rules for Advanced Standing must be detailed in the approved programme document.

Advanced standing applies where an RPL applicant has been assessed for courses, qualifications and/or an APEL process in which the outcomes equate to at least 60 credits towards an Otago Polytechnic qualification. An exception is the Masters of Professional Practice where Advanced Standing can be awarded for outcomes that equate to at least 30 credits.

Advanced Standing may include cross credits and credit transfers, however these will be indicated separately on transcripts.

Programme regulations will clearly identify how Advanced Standing is determined and what assessment and evaluation processes are to be used.

Advanced Standing will be annotated on transcript documents as indicated in section 7 below.

Advisor/Facilitator

The advisor /facilitator is the person who gives advice to the applicant on the operation of the APEL process and negotiates with the applicant the particular form of assessment that will be required.

Assessor

The assessor is the person who makes the assessment judgement on the basis of the evidence provided by the applicant in accord with the assessments agreed between applicant and advisor/facilitator.

In APEL, the **advisor/facilitator and the assessor** are not to be the same person.

Student Management System (SMS)

The SMS is the electronic student management system in which all learner enrolments and academic records are recorded. It is often referred to by the system name currently EBS or EBS4.

External Codes

The External Code to be entered in the case of Cross Credit is to be the other provider's course code for the source course. This will appear on the other provider's transcript. Cross Credit applications will not be approved unless the other provider's transcript or results notice is provided.

The name of the source course is also to be as per the other provider's transcript or results notice. This will enable us to use SMS data as the basis of information to the proposed national cross credit database. External stakeholders must be able to identify the source course on this database, so we must use actual external codes. The SMS is able to provide reports detailing cross credits, recognition of prior learning and advanced standing.

Verified Documentation

Any record of student achievement presented for use in the RPL process must be the original which was produced by the accredited provider of the result/qualification eg NZQA Record of Learning, University Transcript. Any copies of such original documents must be verified by the accredited provider, or a verified copy signed by a Justice of the Peace.

Policy

1. Implementation and use of RPL

- 1.1 RPL is to be enabling for potential learners and candidates, rather than a barrier.
- 1.2 Applications for RPL from learners who are intending to enrol in programmes are to be made on the generic application form (Appendix A).

2. Information to learners

- 2.1 Information to learners must include information on the nature of RPL, the courses within the programme for which RPL applications may be made, and the application procedures, as detailed in approved programme documents.

3. Scope

- 3.1 Credit may be granted under RPL for whole courses only. Credit will not be granted for parts of a course. (NB prior completions of unit standards which form part of a course will be recorded for academic purposes, but this will not result in credit for the course itself until the other units in the course are completed according to the completion requirements for that course. In such cases, the student will still enrol in the full course and pay full fees.
- 3.2 Unit standards based programmes must be structured to allow a fair application of RPL policy. If a majority of learners are likely to have already completed a particular unit, this unit should be left as a course in its own right in the programme schedule of the programme. Failure to structure the programme in this way would mean learners are required to enrol in the full course (and pay the full fee) even if they hold credits for all but one of the units in that course. However, it is recognised that unit standards are assessment tools and should not be the sole driver of the structure of the teaching programme.
- 3.3 RPL including advanced standing applications may be received from learners enrolling in Otago Polytechnic programmes and/or Capable NZ learners seeking assessment for whole or part qualifications.

4. Fees

- 4.1 *Application Fee* – this fee is charged to cover costs of initial consideration, administration and recording, and must accompany the RPL application form (Appendix A). The fee must be paid at the time of application regardless of whether the RPL application is granted or declined. For international learners, the fee is included in the fees that they have already paid.
- 4.2 *Assessment Fee* – this fee is calculated for the time and resources required to assess the RPL application.
- 4.3 *Additional Fees* – NZQF credit fees (\$1.58 per credit) or NZ Dip Bus paper fees (\$10.22 per paper).
- 4.4 Any outstanding fees at year end will result in the inability of a student to graduate and continued non-payment may result in the debt being forwarded to a collection agency.
- 4.5 The **total fee** charged cannot be greater than the fee that would be payable if the applicant enrolled in the target course.

- 4.6 The RPL assessment fee is not Loan approvable, however student loans may be available for any courses in which the candidate is required to complete as part of the APEL process subject to meeting student loans eligibility criteria.

	Application Fee	Assessment Fee
Credit Transfer	Nil	Nil
Cross Credit	\$80.00 (GST incl) per course/programme	Yes – as determined by HOS
APEL	\$80.00 (GST incl) per course/programme	Yes – as determined by HOS
Advanced Standing	Nil	Nil

Notes:

- If an application is received for more than one course in a programme at the same time, it will be treated as a single application and will attract a single application fee.
- Where the result of an RPL application requires withdrawal from a course the withdrawal will be enacted (with reference to policy MP0351 Students Withdrawal and Refund Policy for Year XXXX) at the same time as processing the RPL result. This may impact the learners EFTS and financial assistance.
- When discussing RPL with learners the school/college must clarify the result of the RPL on the learners' EFTS as it may affect their entitlement to Student Loans and Allowances. For international learners, granting RPL with the subsequent path of study change may contravene the learner's visa.

5. Refunds

- 5.1 The amount of any refund of tuition fees will depend on the amount of the assessment fee plus any NZQF fees and the resources consumed and will be determined on recommendation from the Head of School/College.
- 5.2 If RPL is awarded for an International learner the learner will receive a refund of the international fee for that course minus any assessment or equivalence fees that have been calculated in determining the RPL.

6. Assessment

Assessments will be conducted by assessors who are experienced in the subject/content areas and are also experienced assessors. All assessors must be trained in RPL assessment methods and processes. Training is available through Capable NZ. All assessments must follow the guidelines indicated in the assessment policies, **AP0908 Moderation of Assessment**, and **AP0900 Assessment**. It is the responsibility of the Head of School/College to ensure that fair, valid and reliable decisions are made in regard to determining equivalence of courses supported by evidence from subject matter/subject experts.

7. Results

- 7.1 All RPL assessment results shown on result notices and academic transcripts will be those taken from the grade table. These may include advanced standing, cross credits, credit transfers, or any other grade table result approved by Academic Board.
- 7.2 For Credit Transfers, the result code will be shown on result notices and academic transcripts as CT.
- 7.3 For Cross Credits, the result code will be shown on result notices and academic transcripts as CC.
- 7.4 For APEL, the result code will be shown on result notices and academic transcripts as either Pass or APEL, except in cases where the target course comprises NZQF unit or multiple NZQF units, in which case the code is passed (as for any NZQF unit).
- 7.5 Where an RPL application is received for a target course, and the result achieved includes evidence of APEL, the final target course level result will be treated as for APEL, not CT or CC.
- 7.6 For Advanced Standing, where the candidate has been assessed for APEL for courses and/or the graduate profile within a qualification of at least 60 credits (for Masters of Professional Practice only at least 30 credits), the result code shown on result notices and academic transcripts is Advanced Standing and will include the amount of credit gained for advanced standing by semester or year, e.g. Advanced standing year 1, 30, 60 or 120 credits.¹
 - 7.6.1 The evidence supporting the award of advanced standing must be entered into the SMS. Where cross credits or credit transfers are used these will be indicated separately.

8. Appeal process

AP0600 Academic Appeal Process for Students requires this RPL policy to have its own appeals section.

- 8.1 Appeals against RPL decisions must be made in writing to the Head of School/College within seven working days of receiving the decision. Capable NZ candidates must write to the Head of Capable NZ.
- 8.2 The Head of School/College/Capable NZ will review the decision and notify the applicant of the outcome within seven working days of receipt of appeal. Should the applicant be dissatisfied with the decision they may enter the normal academic appeal process for learners (policy AP600) at step 5, ie by writing to the Director: Quality Services within seven working days of receiving the decision, saying what the decision is, and explaining the grounds for appeal.

9. Responsibilities of Heads of School/College

- 9.1 Determining which courses RPL will not apply to and ensuring this is included in the approved programme documents. The rationale for not allowing RPL in a programme must be clearly articulated in the programme document, for example where external agency requirements place limits on RPL such as those the Nursing Council of New Zealand have in place.
- 9.2 Ensuring moderation processes are in place and are followed, including Capable NZ assessments;

¹ Some health programmes require external approval and may have limits on credits offered through RPL.

- 9.3 Ensuring that sufficient staff in the school/programmes are familiar with RPL and can act as assessors and advisors/facilitators for APEL;
- 9.4 Monitoring, reviewing and revising school RPL processes as necessary and at least annually;
- 9.5 Ensuring schools document the process and outcomes for RPL decisions, inform learners of RPL processes and the outcome of RPL claims and maintain records about RPL.
- 9.6 Providing advice for assessments and moderation for Capable NZ processes.
- 9.7 Providing assessors for RPL assessments.

10. Responsibilities of Capable NZ

- 10.1 Providing facilitation and assessment processes.
- 10.2 Ensuring moderation processes are in place and are followed, in line with school requirements;
- 10.3 Reporting results of assessments
- 10.4 Providing advice and liaising with Heads of School/College in respect of relevant Capable NZ assessments.

11. Training for Advisors/Facilitators and Assessors

RPL education is to be included in the ongoing Professional Development Programme of Otago Polytechnic.

12. Other Authorities

Where Otago Polytechnic carries out assessments and/or issues qualifications on behalf of an external authority other than NZQA, RPL procedures will be carried out only with the approval of that authority.

13. General

- 13.1 RPL credit at Otago Polytechnic is available only for courses in which Otago Polytechnic is accredited.
- 13.2 Capable NZ candidates may be assessed for qualifications according to Capable NZ RPL processes.

14. Review

The Otago Polytechnic Academic Board is responsible for reviewing and revising Otago Polytechnic RPL policies.

15. Timing of RPL Applications

- 15.1 Credit Transfers and Cross Credits. Applications for credit transfer of NZQF units or non NZQF courses should be handled at the time of initial enrolment. Results must be entered in SMS at that time. However, applications can be accepted at any time.
- 15.2 Programme reviews must take into consideration programme/ course flexibility to enable learners to enrol in a target programme at the earliest opportunity. Barriers to access programmes should be minimised as much as possible.

15.3 Any final or outstanding RPL applications must be loaded and paid for no later than six weeks before the student's graduation date.

16. Learners who enrol at Otago Polytechnic in order to gain a qualification are to have an academic record on the SMS which is capable of showing whether or not the approved certification requirements have been met. Learners who gain credit through RPL in any of the courses of that qualification must have the credit entered to the SMS by the approved method, and have the result indicated as the academic result for that course.

Procedures

- Learners complete application form and submit together with appropriate application fee to Head of School. (See Appendix A)
- The following then applies:

Credit Transfer

Otago Polytechnic is required to:

Action	Responsibility	Notes
Identify evidence required	HOS/C or delegate	
Verify documentation	HOS/C or delegate	For NZQF, official NZQA Record of Learning (ROL)
	For other, verified transcripts	HOS/C is responsible for confirming authenticity of source documentation.
Record sighting of evidence and retain a copy	HOS/C or delegate	Evidence to be held in school records
Enter credit transfer into SMS	Results Administrator/s	SMS staff responsible for process and training
Notify student in writing of credit transfer granted and advise of need to enrol if not granted	HOS/C/Programme Manager/School Administrator/s	
Ensure the Path of Study records the credit transfer	HOS/C	

Cross Credit

Otago Polytechnic is required to:

Action	Responsibility	Notes
Identify evidence required	HOS/C or delegate	
Determine equivalence	HOS/C or delegate	
Verify documentation	HOS/C or delegate	Must use verified/certified transcripts
Record sighting of evidence and retain a copy	HOS/C or delegate	
Enter cross credit into SMS	Student Administrator/s	SMS staff responsible for process and training
Notify student in writing of whether cross credit granted and advise of need to enrol if not granted	HOS/C/School Administrator/s	

Ensure the Path of Study records the credit transfer if possible HOS/C

Advanced Standing

Otago Polytechnic is required to:

Action	Responsibility	Notes
Identify evidence required	HOS/C or delegate	
Determine equivalence	HOS/C or delegate	
Verify documentation	HOS/C or delegate	Must use verified/certified transcripts/qualifications/APEL
Record sighting of evidence and retain a copy	HOS/C or delegate	
Enter Advanced Standing into SMS	Student Administrator/s	SMS staff responsible for process and training
Notify student in writing of whether Advanced Standing granted and advise of need to enrol if not granted	HOS/C/School Administrator/s	

APEL

The granting of credit for prior experiential learning is managed either by the School/Programmes or by Capable NZ.

Management of APEL Process

Capable NZ manages applications for whole or part qualification for learners seeking RPL and who are unlikely to enrol in the taught programme other than to achieve balance of learning to complete a qualification

Applications from learners who enrol in taught programmes are dealt with within schools. There will be an application fee of \$80 (GST incl) and Heads of School/College are to determine an appropriate assessment fee based on the level of verification, evaluation and recording required. The total fee charged cannot be greater than the fee that would be payable if the applicant enrolled in the course or programme.

APEL Procedure

Otago Polytechnic is required to:

Action	Responsibility	Notes
Assign an advisor/facilitator to applicant	HOS/C	
Determine whether APEL is appropriate for applicant	Advisor/Facilitator	
Determine precise scope of course APEL	Advisor/Facilitator	Identify courses or outcomes
Determine appropriate assessment method/s to be used	Advisor/Facilitator	
Carry out the assessment	Assessor	
Confirm assessment judgement	Assessor and Moderator	
Enrol student/modify enrolment to reflect APEL status	HOS/C/School and Student Administrator/s	

Enter APEL result into SMS	Administrator/s	SMS staff responsible process and training
Notify student in writing of whether APEL credit granted	HOS/C/ Administrator/s	
Modify Path of Study	HOS/C/delegate	
Complete withdrawal form	Student and HOS/C/delegate	
Maintain records of APEL judgements	HOS/C/delegate	

Related Policy, Forms and Documents

Rights and Responsibilities of Students at Otago Polytechnic
 AP0504 Application, Entry and Enrolment
 AP0600 Academic Appeal Process for Students
 AP0602 Student Discipline
 AP0607 Cheating
 AP0901 Students with Disabilities: Circumstances for Assessment
 AP0903 Grade Tables
 AP0904 Final Assessment Process in Postgraduate programmes
 AP0905 Presentation and Submission of Postgraduate Research Thesis or Dissertation
 AP0906 Grading Systems for postgraduate qualifications award
 AP0907 Impaired Performance/Aegrotat
 AP0908 Moderation of Assessment
 AP1005 Results process for Consultancy/Workplace Assessment
 AP1008 Student Results
 MP0101 Records Retention
 MP0351 Student Withdrawal and Refund Policy
 MP0354 Student Fees
 MP1100 Intellectual Property

Other Documents

AcQual 163 Best Practice in the Assessment of Unit Standards
 AcQual 164 Best Practice in the Moderation of Unit Standards
 NQF Accreditation and Moderation Action Plans

Approved by Chief Executive

Date: 21 March 2017





Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Application Form

for use with Cross Credit (CC), Credit Transfer (CT), Advanced Standing (ADV) and/or Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

This form should be used in conjunction with Otago Polytechnic policy AP0501 Recognition of Prior Learning

Student Information

- If you need advice regarding this application, please see the Course Coordinator/Programme Manager
- For a Cross Credit/Credit Transfer/Advanced Standing application, please attach an original or verified copy of your result notification(s)
- Please pay the \$80.00 (GST incl) application fee for CC or APEL at Customer Services
- Return this form to your Department/School Reception for processing

NOTE:

1. Additional fees may be invoiced at a later date (e.g. External fees such as NZQF credit fees, NZDipBus paper fee, or assessment fees where applicable).
2. If applying for a Study Link loan or financial assistance, care must be taken not to bring the total EFTS consumed to below 0.8 EFTS (full year, full-time) or 0.4 EFTS (half year full-time), as this may affect your eligibility.
3. Costs associated with this application (including any additional fees) cannot be added to your student loan.
4. Where the result of an RPL application requires withdrawal from a course the withdrawal will be enacted (with reference to policy MP0351 Students Withdrawal and Refund Policy for Year XXXX) at the same time as processing the RPL result. This may impact the learners EFTS and financial assistance.

Name of Student: Student ID:

Programme Title: Year:

Application Type: Cross Credit Credit Transfer Advanced Standing Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning

Otago Polytechnic Course Code	Original Course Code	Original Course Title	Original Institution

Otago Polytechnic Course Code	(APEL) (ADV) Brief summary of work completed, years, etc (attach on separate page if necessary).

Student Signature: <input type="text"/>	Date: <input type="text"/>
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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Application Received:	Delegated Authority Signature: <i>(Head of School/College/Course Coordinator/Programme Manager)</i>
Date ____/____/____	Sign _____ Position _____
Rationale (if declined): _____	
Verified copy of official Results documentation attached: <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> N/A (APEL applications)	

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Cross Credit

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For example, a pass in a university paper may gain CC for a similar degree course at Otago Polytechnic. Sometimes it may require more than one source course to cover a single target course, e.g. a learner may need both Psychology 101 and Anthropology 201 to cover the learning outcomes for a single target course in an Otago Polytechnic programme.

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CUSTOMER SERVICES / FINANCE USE ONLY		TO BE COMPLETED ONLY IF REFUND DUE	
Processed by: Sign _____ Date _____	CSM authorisation: Sign _____ Date _____	Finance authorisation: Sign _____ Date _____	
Refund authorised: <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not paid <input type="radio"/> Over 50% Total amount \$ _____ Less Admin Fee \$ _____ Refund amount \$ _____	Refund EBS actioned: Sign _____ Date _____ RO# _____	Direct Credit No. _____ Cheque No. _____ Sign _____ Date _____	
Fees not paid: Balance owing \$ _____	Payable to: <input type="radio"/> StudyLink <input type="radio"/> TIA <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) _____ <input type="radio"/> Student <input type="radio"/> Organisation (please specify name and address) _____		
Letter sent: Date _____			
ID Card returned to OPSA <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No			