Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures

Scope

This policy is applicable to Holmes Institute Pty Ltd, ("Holmes") and is to be used when seeking or reviewing recognition of prior learning towards Holmes' Higher Education and Vocational Education programs.

Purpose

The Policy and Procedures:

- Provide a streamlined framework for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) towards Holmes qualifications, consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy
- Outline the principles and processes used in determining when RPL is granted towards Holmes' admission or RPL towards programs
- Ensure the academic integrity and standards of Holmes qualifications are safeguarded.

Definitions

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is defined in the AQF as an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior education, skills and experience to determine entry or credit outcomes.

RPL can result in the following outcomes:

Credit Transfer - when a student's previous academic work or study is deemed to be equivalent to a unit, or component of a unit or course offered by Holmes.

Articulation Agreements – predetermined credit arrangements towards Holmes programs that apply within relevant Holmes programs and between Holmes and other, specified education providers.

Block credit - credit granted towards a whole stage or component of a qualification. Block credit is normally considered to fulfil progression requirements for a stage of a program.

Specified credit - credit granted towards core and/or specific components of a qualification. At Holmes, specified credit is given for a specific unit.

An exemption - a type of specified credit where the student is waived the requirement to complete a unit but is required to complete another unit of the same credit point value.

Unspecified credit is general credit granted towards elective units or components within a qualification. Only the credit point value and level of the unit credited are identified on the student's transcript.

Policy Statements

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) aims to:

- Negate the need for a student retake a unit for which they can demonstrate satisfactory achievement of the required competency or learning outcome for entry into, and/or partial completion of a qualification.
- Facilitate the movement of students' between education providers and between various programs of study. It achieves this by duly considering students' relevant previous experience in relation to their proposed study at Holmes.

Policy Principles

- Students can attain learning experiences relevant to their study at Holmes through formal, non formal and informal experiences, such as through previous or current training, work experience and / or life experience.
- RPL is granted for units deemed to be equivalent to Holmes units.
- Students who possess relevant prior learning may apply for RPL by submitting evidence of their prior learning for assessment.
- All RPL decisions are considered on a case by case basis with due regard to the student's prior learning and its relevance to the program a student wishes to articulate into.
- RPL decisions are undertaken by appropriately qualified staff.
- Students are required to have achieved a pass grade for credit to be granted.
- Holmes does not guarantee the transferability of credit granted by other educational institutions. A new RPL application must be made for credit to be granted at Holmes.
- Holmes will grant credit or admission to a student where a student's prior learning experiences are assessed as equivalent to the AQF level, content and learning outcomes of a Holmes unit or pre-requisites for the proposed course of study, respectively.
- Credit will generally not be awarded for studies completed more than 10 years prior to the date of application.
- Holmes Institute will not grant partial credit for a unit, except in the case of a Vocational Education and Training course.
- Credit is not normally awarded for studies undertaken at overseas institutions. However, prospective students are encouraged to apply for an assessment should they want an RPL assessment undertaken (refer to the Procedures section, for more information about how to apply).
  - Qualifications from overseas institutions are assessed according to the Department of Education and Training's guidelines (via Country Education Profiles (CEP) online tool) and contemporary knowledge of conditions in particular countries and institutions.
- Holmes will not grant RPL where the grant of credit will disadvantage the student in future study or where credit will jeopardise the academic integrity or credibility of a Holmes qualification. To this end, Holmes has credit limits that apply in giving credit towards its programs.

Credit Limits for qualifications from other education providers

- Applicable limits on the maximum credit to be granted towards a Holmes Institute program of study are outlined in the table below.

Qualification Level	Percentage Maximum Credit	Minimum number of Units
Bachelor	50%	At least 12 units of the 24 required must be completed at Holmes Institute**

Qualification Level	Percentage Maximum Credit	Minimum number of Units
Graduate Diploma	50%	At least 4 units of the 8 required must be completed at Holmes Institute
Master	50%	At least 6 units of the 12 required must be completed at Holmes Institute

**In limited circumstances, the Academic Board can waive the credit limits listed above. These circumstances include but are not limited to, where:
- there is a formal articulation arrangement between Holmes and another provider
- Credit transfer between Holmes courses in similar disciplines
- In the case of transitional arrangements due to a merger or acquisition,
- Where another provider closes or stops delivering a program of study and Holmes agrees to teach those students to completion, or
- Where Holmes is teaching out students from a provider under the terms of an Agreement.

Holmes Institute Articulation Arrangements
The following outlines current credit/ articulation arrangements at Holmes. The articulation arrangements outline the maximum credit applicable for each Holmes degree.

<u>Australian Qualifications</u>
Students in possession of a qualification awarded by Holmes or a similar qualification awarded under the AQF are eligible for credit as outlined below.

Credits awarded for a Diploma to Bachelor Degree
Up to 8 credits (units) can be awarded towards a Holmes Institute Bachelor degree, where previous learning demonstrates equivalency to Holmes units and courses.***

Credits awarded for an Advanced Diploma to Bachelor Degree
Up to 12 credits (units) can be awarded towards a Holmes Institute Bachelor degree, where previous learning demonstrates equivalency to Holmes courses.

Credits awarded towards a Graduate Degree
Students who have completed units in a similar qualification awarded under the AQF related to the course the student wishes to enrol in at Holmes, may be eligible to apply for credit.

AQF Award	Holmes Institute Degree	Maximum Credit Allowable
Graduate Certificate in cognate award	Master of Business Administration Master of Professional Accounting	4 units credit
Graduate Diploma in cognate award	Master of Business Administration Master of Professional Accounting	6 units credit for awards from other providers and 8 in the case of a Holmes Graduate Diploma in Business.

Procedures

- At admission, RPL applications will be assessed and verified by the Admissions Office according to precedents and guidelines set down by senior academic staff and the Academic Board.
- For an RPL assessment to be undertaken, the RPL applicant/ student must provide verifiable/ verified certification documentation. Verification is undertaken through a number of mechanisms, including sighting of original copies by Holmes staff and use of a Document Verification Service.
- Where an application is based on work or life experiences, applicants may be required to demonstrate attainment of learning outcomes or the relevant units of competency using Holmes specified application form. Please contact the Admissions Office for a copy of the Informal Learning RPL form.
  - In the case of credit, the RPL application form will ask the student to complete the application form by identifying the units they wish to be assessed for and demonstrating how they address the elements and performance criteria for each unit of competency or learning outcome.
  - The applicant must also submit evidence in support of their application. This may include portfolios of work and so on.
  - In making an RPL assessment the following will be considered:
    - Sufficiency, relevance and nature of evidence provided by the applicant
    - Scope of unit matter covered by the evidence
  - Where evidence and documentation requires additional information or clarification, this will be discussed with the applicant via a phone call or via a scheduled meeting.
  - In some instances, Holmes may set other assessment tasks to validate a student's eligibility for credit such as challenge tests.
- A fee for service may be charged where a student applies for RPL after more than one study period at Holmes or where the RPL requires extensive skills testing. Where a service charge is to be included, the applicant will be notified before the assessment is undertaken.
- Subject to the conditions and limits stated above, Holmes will grant credit or admission to a student where a student's prior learning experiences are assessed as equivalent.
- Equivalence is deemed to be a content coverage including weighting and a learning outcome match of 75%. Equivalence of content and learning outcomes is measured by:
  - (a) In the case of previous formal learning, a comparison of the AQF level, volume, depth and breadth of content and assessment requirements between the previous successfully completed component of study and the Holmes Institute unit.
  - (b) In the case of previous informal and non-formal learning, an evidence-based assessment between the previous learning experiences and the relevant Holmes Institute unit or Holmes entry requirement.
- Holmes will endeavour to consider relevant matters such as professional accreditation requirements in assessing an RPL application. Applicants are however responsible for ensuring that their RPL application does not jeopardise future professional accreditation outcomes. Holmes will endeavour to advise students where a grant may negatively impact professional accreditation.
- Credit outcomes are expressed as block credit, specified credit or unspecified credit, as appropriate. When making RPL decisions, Holmes Institute will seek to allocate specified credit where possible. For partially completed previous study, credit may be awarded on a pro-rata basis, that is, according to the percentage of the award completed. Credit is only awarded for a total unit (no partial credit will be awarded, except in relation to VET units of competency).
- Where credit is granted, the applicant's record will be updated with granted credit noted against relevant units. Credit transfer reduces the number of units required to complete an award course.
- Where credit is granted for an international student, the student's actual net program duration will be adjusted to accommodate the change in the length of program as reduced by the Credit Transfer. This change will be reflected on the student's Confirmation of Enrolment. Where Credit is granted after visa issue, Holmes will report the change of program duration to the Australian Government via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) system. NOTE

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– The grant of credit does not allow an international student to study less than a full-time load of study.

- RPL applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application in writing generally within 10 days of their application being received.
- Where RPL is denied the applicant will be notified of the outcome in writing including a reason for refusal.
- In all cases, a copy of the RPL documentation and outcome will be kept in the learner's file.
- Where an RPL applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may seek a review of the decision utilising the Holmes Institute Complaints and Appeals process.

Withdrawal of Credit
- Holmes Institute reserves the right to withdraw credit where an error has been made in assessing an application or where the documentation provided by the applicant is incomplete, misleading or invalid.
- A withdrawal of credit must be approved by the Dean (or delegate). However, where a change is made to a provision of this policy, or where a precedent or articulation is reviewed and changed, credit already granted will not be withdrawn.

Version Control and accountable officers
It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this policy.

Responsible Officer(s)	Dean (Academic)			
Implementation Officer	Admissions Manager			
Review Date	July 2022			
Approved by				
Executive Director under a delegation from the Academic Board as per the Policy Framework				
Version	**Authored by**	**Brief Description of the changes**	**Date Approved**	**Effective Date**
1.1	Dean (Governance and Accreditation)	Policy and Procedures unbundled from Policy Manual for publication on web	June 2018	10 September 2018
1.2	Dean (Governance and Accreditation)	Policy amended to better reflect Holmes administrative practices.	3 April 2019	3 April 2019