

Granting of Course Credit Policy and Procedure

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to acknowledge that students may have previously gained the knowledge and skills equivalent to the learning outcomes of units of study or units of competency offered by one of the Think: Colleges.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to students who seek exemptions in a course or unit of study through Think: Colleges for equivalent previous academic study or informal learning through work/life experience.

Definitions

Refer to *Glossary of Terms*.

Policy Content

The granting of Course Credit implies that students commence study at a level that appropriately recognizes their previous learning experiences, and are not required to repeat equivalent learning activities that have been achieved elsewhere. This ensures that students are able to gain an award in the least time possible while adhering to the requirements for the conferring of that award.

The College will undertake assessment of an *Application for Course Credit* to ensure that prior learning has been of a comparable standard to that which would allow a student to pass or be deemed competent in the units of study/competency within a particular course. Applicants may request that their prior learning be assessed for Course Credit towards any Think: Colleges course.

Course Credit is a formal pathway to achieving all or part of an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification. It can reflect both informal and formal methods of learning.

Granting Course Credit is the assessment of a student's formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which the student has achieved the required learning outcomes, competencies, or standards for entry to, or completion of a qualification at Think: Colleges. Course Credit can recognise learning gained in many different contexts including work, involvement in social community or sporting activities, prior study, travel or learning through life experience generally.

Granting Course Credit based on Prior Informal Learning

Prior Informal Learning refers to the College's policy of acknowledging learning in other contexts that can be applied to the knowledge and skills in an accredited course and/or training package qualification. Recognition may be granted for learning gained from work or life experience. Such prior learning includes work-based programs, self-tuition, and non-accredited professional development courses.

Granting Course Credit based on Previous Academic Study

To have previous academic study recognised students need to demonstrate that their current skills and knowledge are comparable to those developed in a course or subject at Think: Colleges. This is usually achieved by providing evidence that they have achieved these outcomes, for example, by detailed subject information on previous studies, interviews, observation and questioning, formal tests, work samples or presenting other documentation. Often a combination of these types of assessment will be used.

The decision to grant course credit based on prior informal learning or previous academic study rests with the Head of College (or delegated nominee). In some circumstances an *Application for Course Credit* may also require an interview and/or demonstration with the Head of College (or delegated nominee) at which all documentation is presented. For overseas students and students not living within reasonable travel distance

to the College campus, this may be a phone interview or an interview and/or demonstration on-campus after arrival.

The Head of College (or delegated nominee) reserves the right not to recognise part or all of any previous experience if he/she believes that the competencies or knowledge demonstrated and recorded fall significantly short of the industry standard maintained by Think: Colleges and/or Training Package requirements. In such a case the student may be required to complete or repeat further training in some unit of study/competency.

Think: Colleges are committed to recognising qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by other Registered Training Organisations (RTO) and Higher Education Providers.

To receive Course Credit for a subject, a student must demonstrate:

- All of the learning outcomes/unit of competency between previous unit of study and the relevant Think: Colleges unit of study.
- An academic transcript showing a full pass for the attempted unit of study (not conceded pass).
- In practical applications, demonstrate competency.

In the case of vocational training and education, to receive Course Credit for individual units of competency, a student must:

- Provide an academic transcript showing competence in specific units.
- Nominate the previous RTO with provider codes.
- In practical applications, demonstrate competency.

Procedure for Implementation

1. If a student feels they have the potential to apply for Course Credit, they should initially discuss their qualification(s) and/or experience with their Agent or Course & Career Advisor prior to enrolment. If a student is already enrolled in a course of study, they should consult and submit their application during the first week of their study.
2. If the student wishes to proceed, he/she should obtain an *Application for Course Credit* form from their Agent/Course & Career Advisor or from the website of their respective college (see <http://www.think.edu.au>). Students on campus can request a copy from Think: Student Services.
3. Once the *Application for Course Credit* form has been completed by the student, it should be submitted as part of the initial application for enrolment for new students or to Think: Student Services for students already enrolled. Course Credit applications must be accompanied by original or certified copy documents. The Course & Career Advisor (new students) or Think: Student Services staff (enrolled students) record the application in Hermes and a copy of the application is placed in the Student's file.
4. The Course & Career Advisor (new students) or Think: Student Services staff (enrolled students) will use the following procedures to verify the equivalency and authenticity of documents:
 - Overseas and domestic academic qualifications presented for an application for course credit may only be authenticated via the two methods:
 - Original documents (i.e. Testamur and transcript of results) provided by the candidate to an authorised Think: Education Group representative
 - Copies of the original documents (i.e. Testamur and transcript of results) provided by the candidate which have been either:
 - Notarised by a Justice of the Peace or equivalent authority in the country of origin;

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Think: Colleges Pty Ltd trading as: Australasian College of Natural Therapies, William Blue College of Hospitality & Tourism, APM College of Business & Communication, and Billy Blue College of Design CRICOS Provider No 00246M
APM Training Institute CRICOS Provider No 01897A

- Verified as a true and correct copy of the original documents by an approved Think: Education Group representative.
 - Where an authorised Think: Education Group representative may suspect that an academic document presented by an applicant may be altered or fraudulently created, the authorised Think: Education Group representative will make direct contact with the conferring institution to validate the claims of the applicant.
 - All claimed work experience must be relevant to the qualification being applied for and be within the last 3 years of date of application. Applicants must provide Statements of Service on official company letterhead providing contact details of the employer. Past employers will be contacted to verify work experience on a case by case basis.
5. The completed *Application for Course Credit* is forwarded to the Head of College (or delegated nominee) for assessment. The Head of College (or delegated nominee) will
 - verify that the previous studies are at an appropriate level to apply for course credit
 - review learning outcomes/units of competency based on supporting documents and compare to those required by Think: Colleges
 - use the *Granting Course Credit* form to record his/her decision
 - Once completed, the Head of College (or delegated nominee) returns all documentation to the Course & Careers Advisor for processing if the student has not started or to Think: Student Services if the student has already started classes.
 6. Course credit applicants are advised in writing within seven (7) working days on the outcome of their application either:
 - By the Course & Careers Advisor in the student's *Letter of Offer* and *Written agreement* for prospective new students, or
 - By Think: Student Services in a revised *Letter of offer* and *Written agreement* or a *letter of Rejection* for students already enrolled
 7. If the student is currently enrolled, he/she must attend all classes until the application is granted and the student has signed and returned a revised *Written agreement* to Think: Student Services.
 8. If the course credit application is granted, the student will be required to accept the course credit by signing the *Written agreement* and returning it to their Course & Careers Advisor (new students) or Think: Student Services (students already enrolled). The Course & Careers Advisor or Think: Student Services updates the student's enrolment in Hermes and a copy of the signed *Written agreement* is placed in the Student's file.
 9. If the *Course Credit application* is refused, the student has an option to appeal the decision within 20 working days after receiving the *letter of Rejection*. (Refer to the *Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*)

Additional steps for overseas students applications

If a College intends to grant Course Credit to an overseas student this may shorten a student's study period. Either of the following procedures will be used:

- If the College grants Course Credit before the visa is granted, the Course & Careers Advisor must provide the actual net duration (as reduced by course credit) on the *CoE*, *Letter of Offer*, and *Written Agreement* (National Code 2007, Standard 12.2 a).

- If the College grants Course Credit after the visa is granted, Think: Student Services must report the change in the course duration via PRISMS (National Code 2007, Standard 12.2 b)
- Think: Student Services will ensure that the overseas student is attending a minimum of 20 hours per week of classes unless the student is in his/her final study period and the subjects required to complete the course are less than 20 hours per week of classes.

Publication

These procedures are to be published for students on the Think: Colleges website and in the Student Handbook to ensure current and prospective students have up to date and accurate information publicly available to them.

Responsibility	Head of College, Course & Careers Advisor, Student Services Officer
Record Management	Application for Course Credit form Granting Course Credit form Student File HERMES
Reference	Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure Glossary of Terms
Policy applies to	Billy Blue College of Design William Blue College of Hospitality and Tourism Australasian College of Natural Therapies APM College of Business and Communication APM Training Institute Think: Education Group Administrative Divisions
Policy Developed By	Academic Director
Policy Endorsed By	Academic Board
Policy Approved By	Board of Directors
Policy Complies with	AUQA, AQTF 2007 & National Code 2007
Version Number	4.0
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