

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Kaplan Higher Education Pty Ltd.



Scope

This policy is applicable to Kaplan Higher Education Pty Ltd, trading as Kaplan Professional (“Kaplan”).

Purpose

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is defined within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) as an assessment process that involves the assessment of an individual’s relevant prior learning to determine entry and credit outcomes.

All students who possess prior learning may submit evidence of such and apply for advanced standing. Kaplan may award advanced standing towards the achievement of an award for various forms of prior learning.

For the purposes of this policy, advanced standing is broadly interpreted as:

- automatic exemptions
- credit
- credit transfers
- exemption
- specified credit
- unspecified credit and
- other similar outcomes.

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a:

- process and framework for the provision of recognition of prior learning as advanced standing towards Kaplan award subjects
- service which is consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework and the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy
- fair and equitable means of recognising an individual’s prior education, skills and experience
- process to ensure academic integrity and standards are safeguarded.

Policy statement

Kaplan has established a fair, transparent and evidence focused process for the assessment and determination of applications for Recognition of Prior Learning.

The assessment of applications for recognition of prior learning will be evidence-based using sound academic judgement. Recognition of Prior Learning assessments will be supported by the appropriate internal Kaplan policies and processes with each application assessed based on its own merits.

Principles

Kaplan follows two key principles when assessing an application for recognition of prior learning:

- Providing advanced standing where it is legitimate and reducing potential disadvantage for students.
- Maintaining the integrity of Kaplan qualifications and program structures.

Definitions

Applicant: A person applying for recognition of prior learning at Kaplan.

Authorised issuing organisation: An authorised issuing organisation either is authorised through Commonwealth, state or territory legislation to issue AQF qualifications or has been given responsibility to issue its own AQF qualifications (*AQF Glossary of Terminology, 2013*). For the purpose of this Policy, authorised issuing organisations will be referred to as “Providers”.

Award course: A qualification offered by Kaplan that has been accredited by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

Block credit: Advanced standing granted towards whole stages or components of an officially accredited qualification, applicable only to students who are being taught out from another provider under the terms of an agreement.

Formal learning: Formal learning is the learning that takes place through a structured program of learning that leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification (*AQF Glossary of Terminology, 2013*).

Informal learning: Informal learning is 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 (*AQF Glossary of Terminology, 2013*).

Learning outcomes: Learning outcomes are 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 (*AQF Glossary of Terminology, 2013*).

Nested qualification: Nested qualifications are qualifications that include articulated arrangements from a lower level qualification into a higher level qualification to enable multiple entry and exit points (*AQF Glossary of Terminology, 2013*).

Non-formal learning: Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of learning but does not lead to an officially accredited qualification (*AQF Glossary of Terminology, 2013*).

Prior learning: Learning that is Formal, Informal and/or Non-Formal and which is evidenced, current and relevant to the award qualification into which advanced standing is being sought.

Specified credit: Advanced standing granted towards core subjects within the program structure of an award course.

Unspecified credit: Advanced standing granted towards elective or optional subjects within the program structure of an award course.

Methods of achieving recognition

Automatic advanced standing

Students may be eligible for an automatic advanced standing based on previous studies with a recognised institution as detailed within this policy. The Academic Board or its delegate will approve automatic advanced standing.

Kaplan will maintain a public Precedent List on the Kaplan Professional website. Precedents are provided as a guide only and should be viewed in conjunction with chosen courses and applicable course requirements. To qualify for advanced standing under the Precedent List, students will need to provide a certified copy of their transcript, certificate or other credentials in conjunction with their application to verify they have met the recognition of prior learning requirements for the subject(s).

Advanced standing

Students who have completed related studies from an authorised issuing organisation, including Kaplan, that are not on the automatic advanced standing or Credit Precedent List may apply for advanced standing. With the exception of students who have completed prior studies at Kaplan, students must submit the relevant form available from the Kaplan website along with the relevant subject outlines (i.e. syllabi, objectives, assessment details etc), verified copies of certificates and transcripts and other documentation to show equivalencies to the requested subject learning outcomes.

Equivalence is generally deemed to be a minimum subject content and learning outcomes coverage match of 80%. Students are required to have achieved a pass grade or higher to be considered for advanced standing. Kaplan does not guarantee the transferability of related studies from other providers.

Other methods

Kaplan may recognise the validity of various forms of prior learning, providing they meet the AQF standards and that the medium of instruction and assessment was completed in English. Kaplan may also require additional assessment methods to assess a student's knowledge of a given subject.

The purpose of additional assessment is to validate the veracity of the application and that the student can demonstrate the required knowledge and skills. Not all subjects offer recognition options, if in doubt students should contact Kaplan for further information.

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Level

Completed studies must be at a comparable AQF level to the subject(s) into which students are seeking recognition of prior learning. Where the completed study is at a lower AQF level, recognition of prior learning will only be granted in accordance with Kaplan's *Existing Provider Transition Policy*.

Specified credit

Specified credit may be granted for one or more subjects in a qualification when advanced standing has been applied and the appropriate credit points have been awarded. Specified credit may be granted where the applicant has met the subject learning outcomes, attained the knowledge and/or developed the skills related to a specific subject.

Unspecified credit

Unspecified credit is granted in the form of credit points which take the place of elective subjects within a qualification. Unspecified credit may be granted where prior learning is judged to be relevant to the overall course learning outcomes.

Currency and relevance of knowledge

Prior learning must be relevant and equivalent to the qualification in which the student is enrolled and must generally have been completed within 10 years of the application for recognition of prior learning, with the exception of subjects on Kaplan's published Precedent List.

Prior learning completed more than ten (10) years prior to admission to Kaplan will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and may include a review of the applicant's relevant employment history. Additional assessment may be required at Kaplan's discretion to validate the veracity of the application and that the student can demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for a specific subject.

Advanced standing prohibition

Any previous prior learning that has been used to grant an exemption or similar outcome, either at Kaplan or at another provider, cannot be used to apply for advanced standing into a Kaplan qualification. Any prior learning that has been used to grant advanced standing will not be used for any Grade Point Average (GPA) calculations.

The advanced standing prohibition does not apply if a student is transferring within a nested Kaplan qualification.

Maximum exemptions

Students may obtain recognition of prior learning for up to 67% of subjects in a specified qualification with the following exceptions:

- Any studies that have been completed at Kaplan that form part of a nested qualification will be eligible to receive full recognition for completed subjects on the provision that the subjects are within the nested qualification program structure at the time of application. Students must complete a minimum of one subject in the new qualification and the advanced standing prohibition will not apply in these cases.
- Between Kaplan Australia institutions where the subjects are within the same field of education. Students must complete at least one subject within the qualification in which the advanced standing is being sought.
- Advanced standing above 67% may be granted in accordance with Kaplan's *Existing Provider Transition Policy*.

Outside of the above exceptions, the Academic Board may approve in limited circumstances advanced standing over 67% towards a Kaplan qualification. Circumstances in which the Academic Board may approve advanced standing over 67% towards a qualification are outlined below:

- in the case of transitional arrangements due to a merger or acquisition
- where Kaplan is teaching out students from another institution under the terms of an agreement. In this instance, block credit to all eligible incoming students (without individual assessments) will be supplied where there is an institution-to-institution agreement
- where another institution closes or stops delivering a subject of study and Kaplan agrees to teach those students to completion. In such an instance, the Academic Board grants discretionary authority to the Academic Dean to exceed the limits stated here for those students only and in line with the terms agreed by the Academic Board from time to time. The decision of the Academic Dean will be reported to the Academic Board at the next Academic Board meeting.

In some instances, course or subject rules may prohibit the awarding of specified credit against particular subjects due to content or delivery deemed unique to Kaplan or legislative constraints.

Where advanced standing is sought from a qualification below AQF level 8 into an AQF level 8 or higher qualification, the advanced standing is awarded in accordance with Kaplan's *Existing Provider Transition Policy*.

Cross-institutional study

Students who are enrolled in a Kaplan subject and wish to study an equivalent subject at another recognised institution should contact Kaplan to discuss potential arrangements. Kaplan's maximum exemption rules apply.

Non-award study

Kaplan recognises that on occasion students may enrol into subjects offered by Kaplan on a non-award basis. If a student subsequently enrolls into an award course at Kaplan, the student may be eligible for recognition of prior learning for the non-award subject under the following conditions:

- the student completed the non-award subject within the past twelve (12) months prior to enrolling in an award course offered by Kaplan; and/or
- the subject is being offered as a part of the program structure at the time of enrolment into the award course.

Recognised institution

At Kaplan, prior learning may be from an:

- authorised issuing organisation including:
 - a recognised higher education provider
 - a TAFE or other recognised Vocational Education Training (VET) provider
 - a professional body, enterprise, private educational institution, or other similar body that is recognised on the Kaplan Credit Precedent List.
- work experience or other forms of practical experience, including voluntary work. Kaplan reserves the right to request that the student complete a challenge examination on a case-by-case basis.

Transcripts

Original or certified copies of transcripts must be provided to Kaplan as part of an application for recognition of prior learning before advanced standing may be granted.

Work experience

Relevant work experience, including voluntary work, may be recognised as prior learning by Kaplan, however this process necessitates a significantly more comprehensive application that involves a lengthy written submission addressing all the learning outcomes for the subject(s) for which recognition of prior learning is being sought, a detailed CV, employer references, and other supplementary evidence in support of the student's claim that their work experience is directly and extensively related to the subject for which advanced standing is sought.

This written submission must demonstrate that the work experience meets all the learning outcomes of the subject(s) for which advanced standing is being awarded and be supported by verifiable supporting evidence. Advanced standing will not be awarded if the written submission does not address all the learning outcomes for the subject(s) for which advanced standing is being sought at the appropriate AQF level.

Work experience based RPL may not be applicable for subjects that require students to complete their studies by coursework in order to meet professional accreditation and/or legislative requirements.

Application assessment

An appropriately qualified staff member will undertake a rigorous academic review of a student's recognition of prior learning application on an individual basis, which will include any supporting evidence provided by the student. Kaplan may contact the student if further details or supporting evidence is required to assess the application, which may result in a delay in the assessment. Kaplan will advise a student of the outcome of their application within 15 business days of the application being received, subject to sufficient supporting evidence being provided by the student.

If the application for recognition of prior learning is approved, advanced standing may be granted for the relevant subjects. If the application for recognition of prior learning is declined, the student will be required to enrol into and complete the relevant subjects in order to complete their qualification.

Students must enrol into an associated Kaplan award course within 12 weeks of a successful outcome. Failure to do so may require the student to submit a new application for recognition of prior learning.

Supporting evidence

The following evidence is required to enable Kaplan to assess applications for recognition of prior learning. Applications that do not contain relevant evidence will not be assessed.

- Copies of subject outlines, which must include details relating to learning outcomes, weekly structure, topic lists, assessment details, contact hours and student workload.
- Certified copies of any qualifications and academic transcripts. Information on who can certify documentation is provided on the Kaplan Professional website.
- Evidence of professional learning.
- Recent CV/resume, including third party reports.

Guidelines

- Evidence supporting an application based on formal learning must demonstrate a minimum of 80% equivalence to the subject learning outcomes and the content for each subject for which advanced standing is being applied.
- Formal learning cited in an application must have been completed no more than ten (10) years prior to the date of application, with the study being accredited by the appropriate authorised issuing organisation at the time that the study was completed.
- Formal learning must be at a comparable AQF level, with the following exception:
 - Formal learning at a lower AQF level may be assessed in accordance with the Existing Adviser Transition Policy.
- Non-formal learning cited in an application must be current at the date of application, with the study being accredited by a recognised institution on the Credit Precedent List.

Applications based on work experience must be within at least five (5) years from the date of any application submitted for recognition of prior learning, with evidence of a minimum of three (3) years of relevant work experience within those five (5) years. Kaplan reserves the right to request students to complete a challenge examination in order to validate the veracity of their application.

This process validates that the evidence provided demonstrates all the learning outcomes of the subject(s) for which they are being awarded advanced standing.

Re-assessment of recognition of prior learning

Kaplan will only re-assess a recognition of prior learning application under the following circumstances, which may involve the student having to submit a new recognition of prior learning application. These circumstances include but are not limited to:

- When transferring to another award course within Kaplan.
- If a student has identified additional prior learning that was not originally assessed.
- On re-admission to an award course after a period of absence.

Fees and charges

Kaplan reserves the right to apply an administrative charge or fee relating to applications for recognition of prior learning. Information regarding any fees or charges will be published on the applicable recognition of prior learning application form, as well as on the Kaplan Professional website.

Recording of advanced standing

Advanced standing will be recorded on the student's transcript as 'Advanced Standing' once approved. Advanced standing subject grades and grade points are not transferable or calculable as part of the cumulative grade point average at Kaplan.

Appealing the outcome

The final decision on whether to award recognition of prior learning resides with Kaplan and depends on factors such as the currency and relevancy of any prior learning and the supporting evidence provided.

Applicants who are denied recognition of prior learning should refer to the *Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy* located on the Kaplan Professional website for further information.

Transfer of advanced standing between Kaplan institutions

Advanced standing for subjects completed towards a qualification at one of Kaplan Australia's institutions may be transferred to another Kaplan Australia institution upon acceptance into that institution. Advanced standing awarded may be based on:

- Subject descriptions, objectives, or outcomes being assessed as being minimum 80% equivalent.
- Applicability of any core/major subjects to the qualification.
- Subjects have been completed within ten (10) years of applying for recognition of prior learning.

Students applying for transfer of advanced standing from another Kaplan Australia institution may apply for recognition of prior learning provided at least one subject is completed within the new qualification. Recognition of prior learning will only be assessed provided that the subjects for which recognition of prior learning is being sought are from the same field of education.

Students transferring between Kaplan Australia institutions must fulfil their financial obligations at any previously attended Kaplan Australia institution prior to enrolment.

Relevant legislation

As an institute of higher education, Kaplan operates under strict laws and regulations. Policies and Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with such laws. Listed below are the most relevant legislations which apply to this policy:

- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Kaplan policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Existing Provider Transition Policy
- Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Progression Policy

***Note:** *Financial Advisers seeking recognition of prior learning to meet legislative requirements, please refer to the Existing Provider Transition Policy.*

Version Control and Accountable Officers

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

Policy Category	Academic			
Responsible Officer	Vice President, Academic			
Implementation Officer	Head of Academic Governance and Compliance, Academic Dean			
Review Due Date	March 2026			
Approved by				
KHE Academic Board				
Version	Authored by	Brief Description of the changes	Date Approved:	Effective Date:
3.5	Compliance and Quality Assurance (Higher Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity provided regarding work experience based RPL. Updated Implementation Officer. 	N/A	26.06.2023
3.6	Compliance and Quality Assurance (Higher Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed conditional advanced standing. Updated <i>Work Experience</i>. Updated <i>Assessment of Application</i>. Updated <i>Guidelines</i>. Added <i>Re-assessment of Recognition of Prior Learning</i>. Updated <i>Appealing the Outcome</i>. Added <i>Relevant Legislation</i>. 	21.09.2023	25.09.2023
3.7	Quality, Regulations and Standards Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated related policy names Updated work experience section to include RPL exclusions due to legislative requirements 	03.12.2024	03.12.2024