



Recognition of Prior Learning

for the

Higher School Certificate

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1 Introduction

The Board of Studies uses the term Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as a generic term for the two mechanisms (credit transfer and advanced standing) by which the Board recognises formal or informal study and/or relevant life experience as contributing to the award of the Higher School Certificate.

The Board's RPL arrangements are intended to provide for *individual* students. The provisions are primarily for those students who are re-entering the education system to seek the award of the Higher School Certificate. The Board may grant this recognition as:

- credit transfer for study successfully completed in TAFE or another recognised post-secondary institution;
- advanced standing under which students may be exempted from certain study requirements of a particular Board course if they are able to demonstrate that they have already achieved the relevant outcomes.

Key Principles of RPL

The principles applying to the recognition of prior learning for the Higher School Certificate are as follows:

1. The recognition of prior learning (RPL) focuses on the learning outcomes achieved as a result of formal and informal learning, not how, when or where that learning occurred.
2. RPL should be as accessible as possible to all potential applicants.
3. RPL should involve processes that are fair to all concerned, based on clear criteria, support mechanisms and with a review phase.

The Board of Studies' flexible Higher School Certificate Pathways provisions encourage mature-age students to re-enter the education system to undertake Higher School Certificate programs in schools, community and senior colleges, and colleges of TAFE. These students come to their Higher School Certificate program with knowledge, understandings and skills gained through formal education or training programs in Australia or overseas and in more informal ways such as work and life experience. The Board defines recognition of this learning in terms of Credit Transfer and Advanced Standing.

Credit Transfer

Courses satisfactorily completed in TAFE or other recognised post-secondary institutions may provide credit in the form of units of study towards the Preliminary and/or HSC study pattern required for the Higher School Certificate, up to a maximum of 10 units (6 Preliminary and 4 HSC) and subject to the provisions in section 2. (See section 7 for details on credit transfer procedures.)

Key Principles of Credit Transfer

The prior learning for which credit transfer is sought should:

1. be a TAFE course or another recognised post-secondary course;
2. increase the educational and/or vocational options for the student;
3. reflect equal educational and/or vocational opportunities;
4. contain a well-defined knowledge/understanding component;
5. be comparable in depth of treatment with those courses which the Board develops and/or endorses;
6. comply with the Board's indicative hours requirements for the unit value sought;
7. contain specific learning outcomes for each major content area;
8. contain a schedule of assessment tasks and their weightings, including at least one formal examination task (as appropriate).

Note: Formal examinations are defined as any form of examination conducted under conditions similar to those used for the Higher School Certificate for similar tasks and which apply equally to all students in the course. Examination tasks can therefore include submission of practical work or research projects provided that there are clear and consistent guidelines, procedures and criteria associated with their design, development and assessment.

Advanced Standing

Students may be exempted from certain study requirements (eg the Preliminary component) of a particular Board course if they are able to demonstrate that they have already achieved the relevant outcomes through prior formal or informal learning. (See section 8 for details on advanced standing procedures.)

Key Principles of Advanced Standing

The prior learning for which advanced standing is sought must:

1. relate to the learning outcomes of the relevant Board course;
2. have outcomes able to be accurately assessed by a range of techniques;
3. relate to a course (either Board Developed or Board Endorsed) which is already offered for Higher School Certificate study.

Determinations about advanced standing are made by principals after assessing the documentary and other evidence provided by students. Cases requiring notification to the Office of the Board are indicated in section 4.

2 Scope of the Higher School Certificate RPL Provisions

This document provides information and guidance to assist schools and TAFE staff in their role in Higher School Certificate RPL processes. Students undertaking Higher School Certificate study may be granted recognition of prior learning with the following conditions:

Advanced Standing

- advanced standing may be granted for a Preliminary course, part of a Preliminary course or part of an HSC course but cannot be granted for the whole of an HSC course;
- advanced standing may be claimed in English, but credit transfer will not be granted for English;

Credit Transfer

- credit transfer will not be given in the form of exemption from study within a Board Developed or Board Endorsed course; the amount of credit granted under credit transfer will be no more than 6 units in the Preliminary study pattern and/or 4 units in the HSC study pattern;
- the minimum amount of credit transfer granted for a course will be two units. Courses (or parts of courses) of less than 120 hours duration will not be granted credit transfer;
- credit transfer units will be counted as Board Endorsed units but without a mark being reported on the Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement;
- formal study for which credit transfer is sought must have been completed *within the previous five years*.

2.1 For whom are these provisions intended?

In general these provisions are intended to cater to the needs of individual students who, through prior learning, are entitled to recognition which would normally not be available to students proceeding directly from School Certificate to Higher School Certificate studies.

2.1.1 Re-entry Students

The Higher School Certificate RPL provisions are intended primarily for students re-entering the education system to pursue a Higher School Certificate program after a period of absence. These students may seek recognition for formal study undertaken within the previous five years or for work/life experience.

2.1.2 Students proceeding directly from School Certificate studies

For students proceeding directly from School Certificate to Higher School Certificate studies, credit transfer or advanced standing is to be granted only in the following circumstances:

- credit transfer will be granted for a TAFE or other accredited VET course of 120 hours or longer previously completed and not counted towards the School Certificate;
- advanced standing will be granted for entire units of competency in a Board VET course only if students are assessed as competent for each relevant unit of competency by a qualified assessor. (See special requirements in section 8.2.)

2.2 What previous learning is not within the scope of these provisions?

2.2.1 Students proceeding directly from Year 10 or equivalent

The Board will not approve advanced standing or credit transfer for a course which has provided credit towards the School Certificate (or towards a credential at a similar level in another system interstate or overseas).

Syllabuses are designed by the Board of Studies (and similar agencies in other school systems) so that the student outcomes and suggested approaches to teaching, learning and assessment are appropriate to the particular stage of learning. So, for example, the study of Ancient Rome as part of the Years 7–10 History syllabus would not entitle a student to RPL in the Preliminary or HSC courses in Ancient History.

The Board acknowledges, however, that schools need to provide for those students who have already made progress towards the achievement of some Preliminary course outcomes because of either their School Certificate pattern of study or other formal or informal learning (eg language proficiency, talent in the performing arts, computing skills).

In these cases, it is expected that schools will continue to make provision for such students through established methods of recognising prior achievements rather than through the RPL provisions described in this booklet. For example, the previous learning of students can be acknowledged through flexible progression, programming alternative options or extension work in the relevant subjects and, if appropriate, by encouraging students to study a higher level course or an alternative subject.

2.2.2 Students transferring from Year 11 or 12 (or equivalent) within NSW or another system interstate or overseas

In cases of students transferring from a school interstate or overseas, principals may determine whether students may enter Preliminary or HSC courses with advanced standing, subject to the conditions set out in sections 11.9.1.1, 11.9.1.4 and 11.4.5.4 of the Board's ACE Manual.

2.2.3 Students seeking School Certificate equivalence for purposes of entry to the Higher School Certificate

As noted in section 11.9 of the ACE manual, a student's prior learning and experience including study in other systems and life/work experience, may be included in the principal's consideration of eligibility to enter for the Higher School Certificate. Such students who are seeking eligibility for entry to Higher School Certificate programs rather than seeking credit transfer or advanced standing in the Higher School Certificate are therefore outside the scope of these provisions. Nevertheless, some of the procedures described in section 7 of this document may be appropriate for use in these circumstances.

2.2.4 Students undertaking a course in TAFE or with another Registered Training Organisation (RTO) concurrently with other Higher School Certificate courses in the expectation that the course will count towards the units of study required for the Higher School Certificate

Students undertaking TAFE or other VET courses concurrently with Board courses may seek Board approval for credit towards the Higher School Certificate. Such credit will not be granted until there is evidence that the course, or a defined stage of the course which is equivalent to a Board Developed or Content Endorsed VET course of 120 hours or longer, has been certified as satisfactorily completed by an RTO.

It may be advisable for students who are planning to undertake such a course to seek advice as to whether that course will be acceptable to the Board for the purposes of credit transfer.

2.2.5 Students enrolling in a TAFE or other post-secondary training course (other than a Higher School Certificate program) and seeking credit towards that course for Higher School Certificate courses previously completed

These students are provided for in two ways:

- Under arrangements which have been negotiated between the Board and TAFE students may gain advanced standing in TAFE courses by studying certain courses in their Higher School Certificate program. This applies to general and vocational HSC courses.
- Under the Australian Recognition Framework, Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) certificates and statements of attainment issued by an RTO must be recognised by other RTOs in granting advanced standing. Students who have studied HSC VET courses are entitled to advanced standing for those units of competency listed on their AQF certificate or statement.

3 Credit Transfer, Advanced Standing or Both?

In some cases students may be entitled to both credit transfer and advanced standing. It should be noted, however, that for any particular learning credit will be granted only once (either as credit transfer or advanced standing).

For example, the principal grants a student advanced standing for the whole Preliminary course in Business Studies on the basis of outcomes achieved during a period of time in which the student ran a small business. If the student also asks for credit transfer in the form of a number of units of study this may be granted but only if the credit were given on another basis, such as for the completion of a formal course of study at TAFE or another recognised post-secondary institution.

4 Steps in the Credit Transfer and Advanced Standing Process

The steps in the RPL process are:

- information to the student
- counselling and support
- making the application
- the assessment of the application
- informing the student of the result of the application

5 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Responsibilities of School and College Principals

5.1.1 Information and support to students

If the Higher School Certificate RPL provisions are to work in practice students need to be provided with the necessary information and support. Students should be informed of these provisions and given appropriate support. (A sample information sheet is provided in appendix 1.)

5.1.2 Processing applications for credit transfer

Within the broad principles set out in section 1, the principal should assess and advise applicants for credit transfer and assist students making applications to the Board. Principals should sight the original relevant documentation, copies of which must accompany the application.

5.1.3 Processing applications for advanced standing

It should be noted that the Board of Studies has delegated to schools and colleges the authority to assess and approve applications for advanced standing. The principal's decision should be made in accordance with the principles outlined in section 8 and the Board need only be advised on the student's Preliminary/HSC entry form(s) of the principal's determination. Advice on advanced standing procedures is provided in section 8.

5.2 The Role of the Board

In cases requiring the Board's approval, the Board will consider the application and any relevant documentation and advise the school in writing of its determination regarding the extent of recognition to be granted.

6 Information and Support to Students

It is important that students are made aware of RPL and that they understand the criteria and methods used to assess the extent of recognition that they might be granted.

Students re-entering the education system to undertake a Higher School Certificate program should be provided with information about Higher School Certificate RPL and relevant application forms (provided in appendices 1, 2 and 3).

Students should be made aware of any implications of their RPL application for Higher School Certificate requirements, UAI purposes and Youth Allowance. Students should be informed of advisers in the school and the community who can assist them with further information and counselling or in preparing their applications for RPL. (See appendix 4.)

7 Credit Transfer Procedures

Step 1: Preparing the application

A proforma application for credit transfer is provided in appendix 2. Schools and colleges may photocopy and use this form.

Students should provide originals of relevant documentation, such as TAFE transcripts and result notices and certificates. However, originals should not be forwarded to the Office of the Board. A photocopy certified as authentic by the school principal is sufficient.

A description of the course content and **hours of study** from the college handbook or other official publications should also be included, together with a covering letter from the principal or school representative.

Step 2: Assessment of the application

The principal examines the application for credit transfer and the accompanying documentation and, on the basis of the principles outlined in section 1 and the evidence provided, makes a recommendation to the Board on:

- the extent of credit transfer considered appropriate in terms of Board Equivalent Hours (at the rate of 60 hours per unit).
- the way in which the units are to be allocated to the appropriate pattern of study (eg 3 Preliminary units and 2 HSC units).

[**Note:** Credit transfer can be granted for a maximum of six Preliminary units and four HSC units. The minimum amount of credit transfer granted for a course is two units. Courses (or parts of courses) of less than 120 hours duration will not be granted credit transfer.]

The application, together with the principal's recommendation and accompanying documentation, is to be forwarded to the Office of the Board of Studies.

Step 3: Advice on result of application

The Board will advise the principal in writing of its determination in relation to the credit transfer application.

Step 4: Appeals

Students may appeal to the Board for a review of the credit transfer decision. The appeal should be lodged in writing together with any relevant documentation.

Step 5: Credentialling

The student's entry for the Higher School Certificate should indicate that credit transfer has been approved. The Board's letter of acknowledgment that credit transfer has been granted must accompany the entry.

When the Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement is issued, the credit transfer will be listed together with the appropriate unit value. The units will count as Board Endorsed units. A mark will not be reported.

8 Advanced Standing Procedures

8.1 Procedures for Principals

Advanced standing procedures that are implemented by schools should be consistent with the principles and guidelines outlined in the preceding sections. In this section, specific procedures are described as examples of approaches that could be used.

Step 1: Focus on learning outcomes

Following information and advice from the school or college, the student will have chosen courses to meet their needs, interests and future aspirations. Initial discussion should elicit how the student's prior learning or experience relates to those courses. As advanced standing is a complex process, discussion should then focus on the learning outcomes for those courses where it appears that significant advanced standing might be appropriate. The statements of learning outcomes for those courses (whether Board Developed or Board Endorsed) should be collated and a copy provided to the student. Support and assistance should be provided to ensure that the student understands the expected learning outcomes.

Step 2: Student provides evidence

The student submits an application for advanced standing to the school or college principal (the proforma in appendix 3 could be used). The student is invited to provide evidence as to how their prior learning relates to the outcomes of the course(s) chosen. This evidence may take a variety of forms, for example:

- documentation relating to courses previously completed could be provided (certificates, transcripts, extracts from college guides, course syllabuses – together with results);
- the student uses the statements of learning outcomes as checklists and ticks those outcomes they believe they are able to demonstrate;
- the student could submit samples of work, eg written work and/or a product designed and made as part of a practical project;
- the student may present a case for advanced standing in writing and/or verbally;
- a list of tasks performed in previous employment;
- references from previous employers or other referees.

Step 3: Assessing the learning outcomes

Schools and colleges may employ a range of techniques to assess the extent to which the student has achieved the outcomes of the course(s) for which advanced standing is sought. These might include one or more of:

- written tests or other writing tasks;
- informal questioning, interviews or oral examinations;

- practical tests and demonstrations;
- self-assessment by the student (eg through use of learning outcome checklists) which is validated by more formal assessment tasks based on a sample of the outcomes.

The assessment strategies should be appropriate to the learning outcomes being assessed. For example, students should not be prevented from demonstrating the relevant learning outcomes by the use of assessment strategies which require a high level of English language proficiency in those cases where this is not an explicit requirement for the demonstration of the outcomes in question.

Step 4: Criteria for Granting Advanced Standing

It should be noted that students do not necessarily need to demonstrate all of the outcomes of a given course in order to be granted advanced standing. It should also be noted that assessment for advanced standing purposes should only relate to outcomes of the course to do with knowledge, skills and understanding, not to outcomes in the attitude/values area. Nevertheless, principals should be satisfied that the student can demonstrate sufficient outcomes:

1. to warrant exemption from certain course requirements;
2. for the purpose of certifying the satisfactory achievement of the relevant course requirements (eg a particular assessment task; the Preliminary course);
3. to ensure that the student has an adequate foundation to satisfactorily proceed to the next component of the course.

Note: For VET courses, assessment of competencies achieved must be according to syllabus and/or training package requirements (see section 8.2).

Step 5: Advice on the Result of the Application

The school should advise the student, preferably in writing, of:

1. the extent of advanced standing granted in each subject;
2. whether any special conditions apply;
3. if applicable, the reasons for rejecting the application totally or partially;
4. if applicable, an indication, that the student has the right of appeal.

The proforma provided in appendix 3 should be given to students applying for advanced standing. Where the principal grants advanced standing, the completed proforma should be retained by the school and details notified to the Office of the Board on the Preliminary/HSC entry form.

Step 6: Credentialling

Where advanced standing has been granted for the whole of a Preliminary course, the student's entry for the Higher School Certificate should indicate this. When the Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement is issued, the course name, unit value and acknowledgment that advanced standing has been granted will be listed.

Step 7: Appeals

It is expected that claims relating to advanced standing will be resolved between the student and the school or college.

Note: A student who is granted advanced standing within a course (eg is granted the whole of the Preliminary component) and who then fails to progress satisfactorily, should have their progress reviewed by the school in sufficient time for the problem to be rectified. If the principal believes that the advanced standing has become inappropriate, the student may be allowed to undertake a study program to enable them to catch up on the work that is impeding the progress, or, if necessary, the student could be allowed to commence the exempted course work (in this example the Preliminary course) from the beginning. Obviously, it is advisable for the school to warn the student at the commencement of the advanced standing process that the onus is on the student to be sure that the prior learning that is forming the basis for the advanced standing claim is sufficient to sustain progress throughout the course.

8.2 Special Advanced Standing Requirements for VET Courses

The Board has developed or endorsed a number of VET courses which give students access to national vocational qualifications under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). These include:

- the seven Industry Curriculum Frameworks (Business Services (Administration); Construction; Information Technology; Metal & Engineering; Primary Industries; Retail; Tourism and Hospitality);
- the Board Developed TAFE delivered courses (Accounting and Electronics Technology);
- the VET Content Endorsed courses (school delivered and TAFE delivered).

Special Advanced Standing procedures apply to these courses. These are:

1. A formal RPL process including a range of assessment methods should be used. This requirement will be waived if students provide satisfactory documentation attesting to achievement of identical units of competency drawn from national training packages, identical national modules or identical modules accredited by VETAB.
2. Assessment for purposes of RPL may only be conducted by a teacher accredited to teach the course or by a qualified assessor as defined by the relevant training package or accredited by the relevant industry training body.
3. In assessing achievement of competencies in framework courses the teacher/assessor will need to make a judgement according to the criteria set out in the national training package and the curriculum framework. For non-framework courses, the teacher/assessor should make judgements according to the criteria set out in the relevant modules.
4. Advanced standing for a unit of competency or module should only be granted where the student is able to demonstrate achievement of all of the learning outcomes for that unit of competency or module. The student would then be exempted from undertaking the unit of competency or module. (The words ‘advanced standing’ should then be noted next to the relevant units of competency/modules submitted to the Office of the Board to indicate which have been completed.)
5. Unless students are able to demonstrate all the elements of a unit of competency or all the learning outcomes for a module either
 - (i) they must not be granted advanced standing and they must undertake the entire unit of competency/module even though they may be repeating some prior learning;
 OR
 - (ii) at the discretion of the school or college, they may be granted advanced standing for the relevant elements/outcomes and undertake a structured individual learning program designed to provide them with the opportunity to achieve the elements/outcomes in which they are deficient, conducted by an accredited teacher/trainer.

It is acknowledged that there are considerable resource requirements in the approach recommended in 5 (ii) above. Therefore, in most circumstances, it is anticipated that advanced standing will be granted at the level of the unit of competency/module only.

9 Recognition of Prior Learning for Languages Other Than English

Given that nearly 40 language syllabuses are offered by the Board and that there are many people in our multicultural community with proficiency in a language other than English, a variety of claims for advanced standing and credit transfer can be expected.

The largest category of applicants will probably be background speakers of a given language who claim that their first language proficiency means they have met, or can meet, the outcomes of a Preliminary course in advance of the normal cohort of students. Such applicants are more likely to claim advanced standing than credit transfer, although they might apply for the latter if they have undertaken formal study as well (eg as an interpreter/translator).

Non-background speakers may also claim RPL based on such things as overseas study and/or residence, outside tuition, being gifted and talented, language-specific work experience etc.

As with all other applications, the distinctions between advanced standing and credit transfer will apply.

- The granting of advanced standing would assume some demonstrated proficiency in the language, and would require a judgment as to whether that proficiency met or exceeded outcomes within the course in the language.
- Credit transfer would be based on a request for credit in the form of units of study towards the Preliminary and/or HSC study pattern, stemming from recognition of certain 'formal' courses in, or relating to, languages undertaken beyond school.

9.1 Factors Specific to Languages Other Than English

Some particular factors are relevant and must be considered in making decisions about Recognition of Prior Learning for languages other than English. These factors are examined below.

Q1. Which languages may be recognised for purposes of advanced standing?

Only those languages which have Board Developed or Board Endorsed courses for the Higher School Certificate. Since the application must be judged against the outcomes of the Board syllabus, and not merely against claimed 'proficiency' there would be no appropriate benchmark against which to judge claims in relation to languages (eg Maori, Swahili) which have no Board status.

Q2. What does 'proficiency' mean in regard to the Board's languages courses?

All the Board's syllabuses in modern languages are underpinned by four key objectives that involve the four macro-skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and accessing these through texts. Claiming to be a 'very fluent speaker' of a particular language would not, of itself, automatically justify advanced standing or credit transfer.

Q3. Against what criteria would an applicant be judged?

There are specific eligibility rules for Higher School Certificate courses in languages, and each applicant for RPL would have to be judged against the eligibility rules applying to the applicant's language and background circumstances, and the outcomes expected of students who undertake the particular course involved.

This means that for those languages which have separate background speakers' courses, an applicant for RPL would:

- (a) first have to be considered against the criteria for course eligibility, and
- (b) then be judged against the outcomes expected of students doing that particular course (who may be background speakers).

As an example, a student seeking advanced standing for Japanese (Preliminary course) who had spent part of their schooling in Japan where their parents were working, could in principle be deemed a background speaker for the purposes of course eligibility and in regard to claims for advanced standing.

Q4. Can advanced standing be granted for a Beginners course in a language?

No. These courses assume little or no prior knowledge of the language before the Preliminary course is undertaken. An applicant claiming proficiency or competence that met or exceeded the Beginners course requirements for the Preliminary course, would thereby be demonstrating knowledge and skills that would not be appropriate for Beginners course eligibility in the first place. Such an applicant could, however, be considered against the criteria for another course in the language.

Q5. Can RPL be granted for a classical language (eg Latin Classical Greek or Classical Hebrew)?

Yes. Although the question of 'background speaking proficiency' does not apply, it would be quite possible for applicants to demonstrate that by formal (or informal) study, giftedness etc, they had achieved the equivalent requirements of the Preliminary course, and they could be granted entry to the HSC course.

Q6. What about demonstrated proficiency in a dialect?

For the purposes of course accreditation, the Board recognises only the standard form of a language. Proficiency would therefore have to be demonstrated in the standard language. In the case of some languages (eg Arabic, Chinese) guidance might need to be sought from the Board's languages officers.

Q7. What about RPL based on study at a community languages (ethnic) school?

This could raise a variety of issues, some of which have already been referred to (such as the fact that the language in question must be one with a Board Developed or Endorsed course and must be a standard language rather than a dialect).

Study at a community languages (ethnic) school can occur at any age level, from kindergarten to adults. The programs of study are developed by the community groups running each individual school. Though they are based on language maintenance and/or acquisition, they may not relate directly to Board syllabuses or assessment procedures. The vast majority of students attending community languages schools also attend mainstream schools, where they may or may not study the language at a similar or different level.

There are already mechanisms through which study at a community languages school can be recognised for the School Certificate or Higher School Certificate, the main procedure currently being the Outside Tutor mechanism.

For an applicant to claim advanced standing for a particular Higher School Certificate language course, based on community languages school study, the crucial point would be to demonstrate achievement of course outcomes, irrespective of the means by which those outcomes had been achieved. A specific exception would be a student who, two years previously, had met the Board's Preliminary requirements in a particular language through an outside tutor at a community languages school, but had not proceeded to complete the Higher School Certificate. Such an applicant would presumably seek to demonstrate that he/she had met the requirements of the Board's Preliminary course.

For credit transfer to be claimed, based on community languages school study, it would have to be demonstrated that this study was at a 'recognised post-secondary' level. Under the current structure of community languages schools, which are only now beginning to establish formal links with mainstream primary and secondary school education, a claim that such study equated with recognised post-secondary structures such as TAFE would be difficult to establish.

On the other hand, it may be quite possible for applicants for RPL to justify that although their claimed community languages school study of a particular language terminated at the end of the year in which they were part of the mainstream Year 10 cohort, the outcomes achieved in the community languages school met or exceeded the Board's Preliminary course requirements in the same language.

Appendix 1

Information for Students

What are Credit Transfer and Advanced Standing?

Students may come to the Higher School Certificate with knowledge and skills gained through formal education or training programs in Australia or overseas and also through work and life experience. Formal recognition of this learning is provided in two ways:

Credit transfer

Courses previously completed in TAFE or other recognised post-secondary institutions may provide credit in the form of units of study towards the Preliminary and/or HSC study pattern required for the Higher School Certificate, up to a maximum of 6 Preliminary units and 4 HSC units. (See section 7 for details on credit transfer procedures.)

Advanced standing

Students may be exempted from certain study requirements (eg the Preliminary component) of a particular Board course if they are able to demonstrate achievement of the relevant outcomes through prior formal or informal learning. (See section 8 for details on advanced standing procedures.)

Both forms of Recognition of Prior Learning mean that the student may be able to obtain a Higher School Certificate in less time than it takes most other students.

Who are these provisions for?

The Higher School Certificate Credit Transfer and Advanced Standing provisions are intended primarily for students re-entering the education system after a period of absence and seeking recognition for:

- study successfully completed in, for example, TAFE or another recognised post-secondary institution;
- learning outcomes achieved through work and life experience (eg computing skills, proficiency in a language other than English, knowledge and skills in creative and performing arts).

Students proceeding directly from Year 10 to Year 11 are generally not eligible for credit transfer or advanced standing. There are, however, some exceptions relating to languages study or previous study of a vocational course or substantial experience in the workforce. Students should discuss these with their school or college.

If you are thinking about applying for Credit Transfer or Advanced Standing:

- you should have access to information about credit transfer and advanced standing and how they work (ask your school, college or Board of Studies Liaison Officer for more information);
- you should have information about the expected learning outcomes of the courses you've chosen, to help you to decide whether you might be entitled to advanced standing.

If you decide to apply for Credit Transfer or Advanced Standing:

- you can apply for Higher School Certificate credit transfer if you have completed a TAFE or other recognised post-secondary course and it was not counted towards the School Certificate;
- you can ask for help in preparing your application for credit transfer and advanced standing from your school or college;
- you can expect that your application for credit transfer or advanced standing will be considered according to the principles included in the booklet *Recognition of Prior Learning for the Higher School Certificate*, a copy of which is available in all schools and TAFE colleges;
- you can make your case for advanced standing in a variety of ways (including in writing and/or orally, by submission of written or practical work, by submission of work and personal references or certificates etc);
- you can expect that a variety of methods will be used to assess the extent of advanced standing you can be granted (eg written or oral/aural tests, formal interviews, self-assessment checklists, informal questioning, written or practical projects);
- you have a right to know the result of your application for RPL and to an appeal if you wish.

What are your responsibilities?

You have the following responsibilities:

- information in your application for RPL must be true and correct to the best of your knowledge;
- you must provide official documents and other evidence you have of any formal courses or work experience you've undertaken. Your school or college can advise on the type of documentation required;
- you must complete a written application for RPL and submit it to your school or college principal;
- you must carefully consider how your application for RPL could affect your chances of success at the Higher School Certificate and, perhaps, your UAI or Youth Allowance. You should speak to a teacher and/or student adviser about this;
- if, through personal circumstances, you are unable to provide official documentation or evidence of courses or work experience previously undertaken, you must provide this information in the form of a statutory declaration.

How can you get information and help?

Further enquiries should be directed to your student adviser or the principal of your school or college. You can also contact the Board of Studies Liaison Officer in your area.

Appendix 2

Application for Credit Transfer

.....
BOS Student Number

1. Student's full name
.....
2. Name of school/college at which the student is currently enrolled for the Higher School Certificate
.....
3. Correct title and course number (if relevant) of the course previously completed, together with the name of the TAFE or other institution at which the course was completed. Please include total hours of study undertaken in the course.
.....
.....
4. The year(s) during which the study was undertaken and whether study was undertaken on a full or part-time basis in each of those years
.....
.....
5. The number of units of credit sought and whether these are Preliminary or HSC units. Note that a maximum of 6 Preliminary units and/or 4 HSC units will be granted.
.....
.....
.....
6. Principal's Recommendations (Principals should refer to the key principles on the following page.)
.....
.....
.....
.....
7. **IMPORTANT:** Please attach copies of relevant documents
8. Name and phone number of school/college contact person
.....
.....

Signed

Student
Date/.../.....

Principal
Date/.../.....

Higher School Certificate Credit Transfer

Key Principles

The course for which Higher School Certificate credit transfer is sought should:

1. be a TAFE course or another recognised post-secondary course;
2. increase the educational and/or vocational options for students;
3. reflect equal educational and/or vocational opportunities;
4. contain a well-defined knowledge/understanding component;
5. be comparable in depth of treatment with those courses which the Board develops or endorses;
6. comply with the Board's indicative hours requirements for the unit value sought;
7. contain specific learning outcomes for each major content area;
8. contain a schedule of assessment tasks and their weightings, including at least one formal examination task.

Note: Formal examinations are defined as any form of examination conducted under conditions similar to those used for the Higher School Certificate for similar tasks and which apply equally to all students in the course. Examination tasks can therefore include submission of practical work or research projects provided that there are clear and consistent guidelines, procedures and criteria associated with their design, development and assessment.

Appendix 3

Application for Advanced Standing

1. Student's full name
.....
2. Name of school/college at which the student is currently enrolled for the Higher School Certificate
.....
3. If you are seeking advanced standing on the basis of completion of a formal course of study, please complete the following:
 - (a) Correct title and course number (if relevant) of the course previously completed, together with the name of the TAFE or other institution at which the course was completed
.....
 - (b) The year(s) during which this course was undertaken and whether full or part-time
.....
4. If you are seeking advanced standing on the basis of other life or work experience, list this experience below and briefly explain in an attached statement how you think it relates to particular courses you have chosen for the Higher School Certificate. (You are also advised to attach a copy of the outcomes for these courses and tick those which you believe you can demonstrate.)
.....
.....
.....
5. Are you seeking advanced standing for an entire Preliminary course? If yes, which course(s)?
.....
.....
.....
7. IMPORTANT: Attach any relevant documents (eg certificates, references, college transcripts). Talk to your teacher/student adviser about other forms of proof of prior learning that you can submit as part of your application (eg practical work)
8. Principal's decision (Principals should refer to the key principles on the following page)
.....
.....

Signed Student
 Date / /

Principal
Date / /

Advanced Standing for the Higher School Certificate

Key Principles

The prior learning for which advanced standing is sought should:

1. be able to be demonstrated as evidence of accumulated learning experiences as they relate to the learning outcomes of the relevant Board course;
2. have outcomes able to be accurately assessed by a range of techniques;
3. relate to a course (either Board Developed or Board Endorsed) which is already offered for Higher School Certificate study.

Appendix 4

Sources of Further Information and Advice

The following people and organisations may be able to provide information, advice or assistance relating to credit transfer and advanced standing.

At your school or college

- Careers Adviser
- Counsellor or Student Adviser
- Year Adviser
- Principal
- Subject Coordinator/Head Teacher
- ESL Teacher

In your area

- Board of Studies Liaison Officer

Metropolitan East	9568 8218
Metropolitan North	9367 8356
Metropolitan South West	9806 1547
Metropolitan North West	9806 1549
North Coast	6659 3274
North West	6755 5043
Riverina	6937 3889
South Coast	4226 8607
Western	6334 8048
Hunter	4924 9976

- Curriculum consultants/advisers in post-compulsory education, vocational education etc. Look in the phone book under Department of Education and Training or Catholic Education Office or the Association of Independent Schools.

Industry Specific Advice/Information

For contact numbers for Industry Training and Advisory Boards (ITABS) and details see the website for the Australian National Training Authority (www.anta.gov.au).