



<b>POLICY NUMBER</b>	<b>IIE010</b>	
<b>POLICY NAME</b>	<b>Qualification Completion, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, Articulation and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy</b>	
<b>POLICY VERSION</b>	<b>14</b>	
<b>LEGEND</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. This Policy was a merger of the Academic Credit and Qualification Completion Policy (IIE004) and the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (IIE010) – IIE004 has therefore been revoked.</b></li> <li><b>2. The v11 of this Policy was renamed – Qualification Completion, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, Articulation and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.</b></li> <li><b>3. Minor Review to section 4.4 (1) of the Policy. Version was not changed. S68: 2025/04/16 Item 10.2.7</b></li> </ol>	
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<sup>1</sup> S22:2009-12-01 (whole policy review)

<sup>2</sup> S28: 2011-11-22 Item 8.4 (whole policy review)

<sup>3</sup> S40: 2015-11-05 Item 7.2.5 (whole policy review-merger of IIE 004 and IIE 010 Policies)

<sup>4</sup> Post S43: 2016-11-03 Policy was edited to align with IIE009 v9 Policy, re-numbered and the Glossary and Roles moved before the Introduction.

<sup>5</sup> Changes made to v5 to align with IIE009 Policy changes made at S45: 2017-08-24.

<sup>6</sup> S47: 2018-03-02 Item 7.2.2

<sup>7</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4.

<sup>8</sup> Approved via Senate Round Robin – Changes to align with the Student Information System

<sup>9</sup> Updated Section 4.3 to include Postgraduate 180 credit qualification (Master's Programmes)

<sup>10</sup> S64: 2023/11/13 (Full review) Policy renamed Qualification Completion, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, Articulation and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy as the Qualification Completion section has been moved up and a new section on Articulation has been included based on the CHE's, March 2023 Policy on Articulation into and within Higher Education. Procedures have been removed and where applicable captured in the relevant Annexures and How to Guides. Glossary and Roles section has been updated. Section on the "Rules for Discontinuation has been pulled from the IIE009 Policy. Section on the "Special Repeat Offerings out of Semester removed from this Policy and incorporated in the Institutional Culture, Student Services and Academic Resource Allocation Policy (IIE026).

	<b>18 April 2024</b> <b>28 August 2025<sup>11</sup></b> <b>04 December 2025</b>	<b>January 2025</b> <b>January 2026</b> <b>January 2026</b>
<b>DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW</b>	<b>2028</b>	
<b>RELATED POLICIES</b>	<b>IIE001: Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy</b> <b>IIE002: Admissions Policy</b> <b>IIE005: Qualification Design and Programme Review Policy</b> <b>IIE006: Work-Integrated Learning Policy</b> <b>IIE007: Research and Postgraduate Studies Policy</b> <b>IIE009: Assessment Strategy and Policy</b> <b>IIE011: Student Records Policy</b> <b>IIE023: Intellectual Integrity Policy</b> <b>IIE026: Student Support and Professional Development Policy</b> <b>IIE029: Distance Education Policy</b> <b>IIE030: IIE Internationalisation Policy</b> <b>IIE031: Governance Policy</b> <b>IIE032: Personal Information, Intellectual Property and Cyber Security Policy</b> <b>IIE033: Policy on the Integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Teaching and Learning Practices</b>	

<sup>11</sup> S69:2025/08/28 ad S70:2025/12/04 Update to section 2.6 Minimum and Maximum completion schedules.

<b>POLICY ANNEXURES</b>	<b>Annexure A: RPL Procedure: Information for Candidates and Committee</b> <b>Annexure B: Guidelines for Candidates: RPL Portfolio of Evidence</b> <b>Annexure C: RPL Cover Page and Application Form</b> <b>Annexure D: RPL Report to Senate</b>
<b>POLICY PROCEDURES<sup>12</sup></b>	<b>HTG: RPL Review, Tracking and Reporting</b>
<b>STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM REFERENCING GUIDES (QRGs)<sup>13</sup></b>	<b>QRG003: Managing Academic Alerts/Holds and Alerts for Special Concessions on the Student Information System</b> <b>QRG007(a) Internal and External Credit Applications Administrative Procedures v8</b> <b>HTG53 Procedure for Processing of Increased Credit Load Applications V6</b> <b>HTG54 Extension of Maximum Completion Time Applications Administrative Procedures V8</b>

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<sup>12</sup> Procedure / HTG is for internal use only.

<sup>13</sup> SIS QRGs/HTGs are for internal use only.

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## GLOSSARY AND ROLES

<b>Access</b>	The opportunity to pursue higher education. <sup>14</sup>
<b>Advanced Standing</b>	Is the status/exemption granted to a student for admission to study at a higher level than the student's prior knowledge and skills and /or formal studies would have allowed. Granting advanced standing does not entitle the student to claim achievement of the exempted qualification.
<b>Appeals Committee</b>	The Executive: T&L or Research who was not part of the Assessment Committee, and one additional academic who is a subject-matter expert, will consider the appeal. The Office of the Registrar manages the appeal process.
<b>Applied Competence</b>	Evidence of the ability of a person to integrate learned knowledge in real-life contexts, expressed in practical proficiency.
<b>Articulation</b>	<p>Means the process of forming systemic, specific, and individual possibilities of connection between qualifications and/or part-qualifications to allow for the horizontal (or lateral), vertical and diagonal movement of learners through the formal education and training system and its linkages with the world of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Horizontal articulation</b> is articulation within and between NQF Sub-Frameworks, on the same NQF level.</li> <li>• <b>Vertical articulation</b> is articulation across NQF levels within an NQF Sub-Framework.</li> <li>• <b>Diagonal articulation</b> is articulation across NQF levels and across NQF Sub-Frameworks.</li> <li>• <b>Systemic articulation</b> is a 'joined up' system including qualifications, professional designations, policies, and various other official elements that support learning and work pathways.</li> <li>• <b>Specific articulation</b> means aligning qualifications through inter- or intra-institutional agreements, such as memoranda of understanding, credit accumulation and transfer and other mechanisms.</li> <li>• <b>Individual articulation</b> refers to learners being supported in their learning and work pathways through flexible admission, curriculum, learning and teaching, and learner support systems such as the quality of qualifications and learning, career development services, and other mechanisms.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	The process of making judgements about students' knowledge, skills and competencies.
<b>Assessment criteria</b>	The standards used to guide the RPL and assess learner achievement and/or evaluate and certify competence. <sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>15</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<b>Assessment opportunity</b>	An opportunity to write or submit an assessment.
<b>Campus</b>	An organised space (physical or virtual) where teaching and learning and associated activities take place. Also known as a registered site of delivery of The IIE (Independent Institute of Education)
<b>Centre of Academic Excellence (ACE)</b>	The IIE team responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality review of the student learning journey (IQAF)</li> <li>• Design and periodically review of qualifications and associated curricula</li> <li>• Customisation and integration of technology and processes that enhance teaching and learning</li> <li>• Ensuring regulatory compliance</li> <li>• Industry-leading development programmes for academics (Sirius)</li> <li>• Publishing of multiple accredited academic journals and hosting national and international conferences</li> </ul>
<b>Cohort</b>	Used to refer to a year group of students who registered and are tracked towards graduation on a specific qualification.
<b>Competence</b>	Means the ability to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and values successfully against a set of criteria.
<b>Council on Higher Education (CHE)</b>	The Quality Council for Higher Education, responsible for quality assurance and promotion through the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) and it is responsible for accreditation, audits, and reviews. <sup>16</sup>
<b>Credits (sometimes also referred to as academic credit)</b>	A credit is a measure of a unit of learning, or, the volume of learning required for a qualification, or part-qualification. Each module has a designated credit value where each credit represents the amount of learning that can be achieved in 10 notional hours of study and includes all learning activities. The granting of credit, therefore, refers to the recognition of learning for qualification purposes against the credits and outcomes associated with a particular module.
<b>Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)*</b>	The process through which credits awarded in other qualifications are recognised towards learning and certification of the qualification under consideration.
<b>Curriculum structure</b>	Curriculum structure refers to the organisation of the curriculum of a programme. Thus, the fundamental, core and (if relevant) elective modules of each year level of the qualification; inclusive of progression requirements of modules and, where relevant, cross-cutting, or cross-curricular themes.  The IIE may amend the structure of the curriculum of a qualification from time to time. When this happens, the new

<sup>16</sup> Definition amended by item 8.2.2 of S64:2023-11/13.

	structure is treated as a new version of the qualification and students registered on the old structure are assisted to complete it as quickly as possible. These changes do not impact the qualification exit level outcomes.
<b>Dean: Academic Development and Support</b>	The Brand Academic Head responsible for all undergraduate qualifications and teaching and learning. This person ratifies the RPL decisions at the undergraduate level.
<b>Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies</b>	The person responsible for research and postgraduate studies at Barnd. This person ratifies the RPL decisions at the post-graduate level.
<b>Formal Learning<sup>17</sup></b>	Learning that occurs in an organised and structured education and training environment, and that is explicitly designated as such <sup>18</sup> .
<b>Faculty Dean</b>	The senior academic of a faculty..
<b>Programme Leads</b>	An academic responsible for academic leadership for one or more programmes within a faculty. Also known as National Lecturers.
<b>Assist/</b>	Institutional Platform (Assist) for all students' queries and complaints
<b>Informal Learning<sup>19</sup></b>	Learning that results from daily activities related to paid or unpaid work, family or community life, or leisure.
<b>Level Descriptor</b>	"Level descriptor" means a statement describing learning achievement at a particular level of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that provides a broad indication of the types of learning outcomes and assessment criteria that are appropriate to a qualification, and the modules of a qualification, at that level.
<b>Mode of Delivery</b>	A mode of delivery refers to how a qualification is delivered – either in contact (where synchronous engagement between lecturers and students is on a site with face-to-face lectures or online). The distance mode of delivery is technologically mediated and there is reduced synchronous engagement between lecturers and students).
<b>Non-formal Learning</b>	Planned learning activities not specifically designated as learning towards the achievement of a qualification, or part-qualification. It is often associated with learning that results in improved workplace practice.
<b>Non-Qualification Purpose (NQP) Course or Module</b>	Any course or module taken by students without any goal of accumulating credit(s) that will contribute toward attaining a full qualification. <sup>20</sup>
<b>Phase-out (sometimes also referred to as teach-out)</b>	The process used to discontinue an offering, which includes special assessment concessions to help students complete their qualification.

<sup>17</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>18</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>19</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>20</sup> Definition amended under item 8.2.1.1 of S63:2023-09-07



<b>Portfolio of Evidence (PoE)</b>	A compilation of evidence to demonstrate knowledge and skills gained towards a specific qualification or part-qualification for assessment purposes. At the module level, a PoE is a compilation of documents to demonstrate competence against a set of learning outcomes.
<b>Programme</b>	A year of study in a full qualification that includes a purposeful and structured set of learning experiences. Where relevant, combined programmes lead to a qualification or part-qualification (SAQA, 2023). <sup>21</sup>
<b>Faculty Managers</b>	The Brands person responsible to project manage and coordinate material development and delivery, and related tasks in collaboration with ACE.
<b>Provider<sup>22</sup></b>	An educational institution registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training to offer qualifications registered on the NQF.
<b>Qualification</b>	A qualification consists of a planned combination of learning outcomes with a defined purpose, intended to provide qualifying learners with applied competence and a basis for further learning (SAQA, 2023). Where relevant, combined programmes lead to a qualification. In order to qualify as a qualification, it must be accredited by the HEQC and registered on the NQF and DHET. A qualification must comprise of at least 120 credits. <sup>23</sup>
<b>Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)</b>	The principle and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated, and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition, or further learning and development. <sup>24</sup>
<b>Responsible Academic</b>	The most senior academic in the faculty will appoint – at the request of the responsible person – the academic who is responsible for compiling the criteria and the first-level screening of the application. The responsible academic makes the initial recommendation to the Assessment Committee.
<b>Responsible Person</b>	A campus that handles an application will appoint a responsible person; this is normally an academic, but if it is not an academic, the responsible person needs to work under the guidance of an academic person. This person needs to manage the process. A brand may choose to involve a member of their national office to support the responsible person.

<sup>21</sup> Definition amended by item 8.2.2 of S64:2023-11-13.

<sup>22</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>23</sup> Definition amended by item 8.2.2 of S64:2023-11-13.

<sup>24</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<b>Short Learning Programme (SLP)</b>	A short learning programme is any course of study less than 120 credits (normally a year) that is not accredited and cannot be registered. It is not a qualification; instead, it is targeted and focuses on learning and skills interventions.
<b>South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)</b>	A statutory body, regulated in terms of the National Qualifications Framework Act No. 67 of 2008. SAQA is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registering qualifications and part qualifications, as recommended by the relevant Quality Council on the National Qualifications Framework.</li> <li>• The verification of SA qualifications.</li> <li>• Recognition of professional bodies.</li> <li>• Verification of foreign qualifications.</li> <li>• Issuing registered qualifications with a SAQA ID.</li> </ul>
<b>Student Information System (SIS)/ Student Information Management System (SIMS)</b>	The IIE system for academic management used for admissions and all student records.
<b>The IIE</b>	The Independent Institute of Education (Pty) Ltd.
<b>Working Days</b>	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Public holidays are not working days. Any timeline referring to working days means the next working day after the assessment date or deadline and the relevant number of working days from there including the day of submission. For example, “five working days” after the date of an assessment written on a Tuesday would be the following Tuesday.

<sup>25</sup> Definition amended by item 8.2.2 of S64:2023-11-13.

# 1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- (1) The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework of principles for the implementation of Qualification Completion, Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)\*, Articulation and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL at The Independent Institute of Education (Pty) Ltd (The IIE).
- (2) Through this Policy, The IIE also seeks to contribute to the enablement and increase of access, mobility, and progression of students into and within higher education, between the three sub-frameworks of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and within and between academic programmes at The IIE (faculties, schools, and sites) as well as from and into other higher education institutions where admission requirements are shown to be met.
- (3) This Institutional Policy is formulated in the context of existing policies and frameworks as developed by the Department of Higher Education and Training, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and other Quality Councils:
  - a) Higher Education Act, Act 101 of 1997, as amended;
  - b) National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act 67 of 2008;
  - c) Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) Framework for Delegated Functions (2008);
  - d) National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level Descriptors (SAQA, 2012);
  - e) Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (2013);
  - f) White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (2014);
  - g) National Policy for Designing and Implementing Assessment for National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Qualifications and Part-Qualifications and Professional Designations (SAQA, 2014);
  - h) Policy for Credit Accumulation and Transfer on the National Qualifications Framework<sup>26</sup> (SAQA, 2014);
  - i) The Articulation Policy for the Post-School Education and Training System of South Africa (2017);
  - j) Policies on the Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, and Assessment in Higher Education (CHE, 2016);
  - k) National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of RPL (SAQA, 2019);
  - l) Policy and Criteria for CAT within the NQF (SAQA, 2021);
  - m) Policy on Articulation into and within Higher Education (CHE, 2023).
- (4) This Policy should be read particularly in the context of the Assessment Strategy and Policy (IIE009), Admissions Policy (IIE002), Qualification Design and Programme Review Policy (IIE005) and in conjunction with the other IIE-related Policies and Procedures and relevant Student Information Management System “Quick Reference Guides” as stipulated on the cover page of this Policy.

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<sup>26</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

## 2 QUALIFICATION COMPLETION AND OUTSTANDING MODULES

### 2.1 General

- (1) Qualifications are awarded once a student has demonstrated the required competence against the exit-level outcomes of the qualification, as manifested in the particular modules and related outcomes that make up a qualification.
- (2) This competence is measured and demonstrated in three ways:
  - a) Conventional programme-specific assessment, which is governed by the Assessment Strategy and Policy (IIE009).
  - b) Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)\*<sup>27</sup> where credits awarded in other qualifications are recognised towards learning and certification of the qualification under consideration.
  - c) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) of formal, informal, and non-formal learning.

### 2.2 Rules of Progression<sup>28</sup>

- (1) The same rules apply to contact and distance students.
- (2) Students' academic progression starts with meeting the entry requirements for the qualification concerned provided that, in exceptional cases, students can be admitted conditionally.
- (3) Students may not enrol for a module without having successfully completed the pre-requisite module.
- (4) A student must register for a co-requisite module either before or at least in the same academic year as the module for which it is a co-requisite.
- (5) Exemption from registration for some of the modules in the qualification can be achieved in terms of the nationally prescribed credit accumulation and transfer rules as detailed in this Policy.
- (6) Entry to the summative assessment, where this is an examination, is governed by the Assessment Strategy and Policy (IIE009).
- (7) The module or final mark is a combination of the CASS and summative mark in the stipulated ratios. A module mark of 50% is required for a student to pass a module.
- (8) Where a student has not achieved the subminimum for a summative assessment, they will fail the module even if their final mark is 50% or above, unless the student is subject to any of the exceptions in the Assessment Strategy and Policy (IIE009).

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<sup>27</sup> CAT\* means Credit Accumulation and Transfer, whilst CAT refers to The IIE's Central Academic Team

<sup>28</sup> S24: 2010-07-27 Item 9.1.1 editorial change – approved Rules of Progression added to the policy.

- (9) For students to be permitted a second attempt at a summative assessment, the sub-minimum and other rules as stipulated in the Assessment Strategy and Policy (IIE009) apply.
- (10) No year of study may exceed 180 credits of study, except in instances where an application has been made to and approved by the Student Hub.
- (11) To progress to the second year of academic study, students must have successfully completed at least 50% of the credit value of the first year and met any conditions under which they were admitted and, to be considered to be in their second year of study, the student needs to have registered for at least 60% of the module credit value of the prescribed second-year curriculum. A student who is registered for second-year modules that constitute less than 60% of the prescribed second-year curriculum will be considered to still be in their first academic year of study. The same registration proportions between the second and third and third and fourth years of study apply.
- (12) Repeat modules should be attempted in the year following the failed attempt.
- (13) Students are eligible to complete a Dean's Examination if they have one module outstanding to graduate:
  - a) The Dean's Examination only applies to undergraduate qualifications, namely. all undergraduate qualification<sup>29</sup> types at NQF levels 5 to 7, i.e., Higher Certificates, Advanced Certificates, Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Postgraduate Certificates, Bachelors Degrees, including Bachelor's Degrees at NQF level 8.
  - b) The Dean's Examination does not apply to Honours degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas, Master's degrees and Doctorates.
  - c) The additional assessment opportunity must be taken in the first examination session after it is determined that the student only has one module left to graduate. Students can only do the Dean's exam in the year directly after their exit level year based on their intake. If not completed at this time, then the module must be repeated.
    - i) If the curriculum or learning material has changed, the onus is on the student to master the added content or to elect to repeat the module. The onus is on the student to find out what changes, if any, have been made.
    - ii) Where a student fails to attend the Dean's Examination sitting, without a valid reason, they forfeit the opportunity to graduate and will have to repeat the module. Where a valid reason is provided, they may register for the Dean's Examination again in the next cycle of examination sittings.
    - iii) Students who write their supplementary examination in the third sitting will not be afforded a Dean's examination in the same academic year/cycle.
    - iv) A mark cap of 50% applies for the examination result and becomes the final mark replacing the CASS contribution.

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<sup>29</sup> Alignment of Policy with HEQSF, 2013 section 39.

- (14) For those students who have been admitted to degree study conditionally while they are permitted to repeat one module on their higher certificate the following apply:
- a) If the student does not complete their one repeat module on the higher certificate by the end of the first year of study of the degree, they will not be permitted to register for any second-year level modules until the higher certificate is complete.
  - b) They may however, repeat any failed first-year level degree modules while they repeat their higher certificate module.
- (15) To graduate, students are required to complete the prescribed curriculum including all pre-and co-requirements, assessments and any related attendance requirements, work experience, practical training or other certification (such as first aid) where required<sup>30</sup> within the prescribed maximum period of study, including any extension of maximum completion times, and students are required to have met any conditions associated with their initial registration. However, for interrupted studies, the rules in 2.5 apply<sup>31</sup>.

## 2.3 Lifespan of Modules <sup>32</sup>

- (1) A module credit does not expire if the maximum qualification completion time has not been exceeded. When a student is permitted to register for another (revised) curriculum of the same qualification or to apply for module credit into another qualification, the currency (shelf life) of the credit, if it is awarded at first registration into the new curriculum or qualification, is extended until the maximum completion time of the qualification in which the student has now registered has been reached.
- (2) The lifespan of modules is normally as follows<sup>33</sup>:
- a) Information Technology (IT) credits normally expire after eight years,<sup>34</sup>
  - b) Any modules that involve software, or where there is a substantial change in something other than software, will be treated as exceptions on a case-by-case basis as they arise. Exceptions will be decided on by Faculty Boards and communicated accordingly. These will be kept to an absolute minimum.

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<sup>30</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>31</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>32</sup> S22: 2009-12-01 Item 8.29

<sup>33</sup> S24: 2010-07027 Item 6.3

<sup>34</sup> S47: 2018-03-02 Item 7.2.2

## 2.4 Minimum and Maximum Completion Times and Faculty and Senate Discretions for Extensions <sup>35 36</sup>

- (1) The following minimum and maximum completion times per qualification type as well as Faculty and Senate discretions for extensions apply. All the numbers in this table are years and may be dependent on stipulations from professional bodies, where applicable.
- (2) The minimum and maximum completion times for distance part-time and contact part-time are the same and distance full-time and contact full-time are the same.

Credits of Qualification	Qualification Type	Years (full-time minimum completion time = N)	Proposal (years) Maximum completion time (Years)	Faculty Discretion – (request considered on the 120 credits as guiding principle) * (one additional year)	<b>TOTAL</b>	Senate Discretion (Faculty to consider shelf life of module/s before recommendation to Senate) ** (one additional year)	Part-time students
<b>120 credits</b>	Higher Certificate Advanced Certificate Advanced Diploma Postgraduate Certificate Honours Degree and Postgraduate Diploma	1	<b>N + 2</b>	+1	<b>4</b>	+1	+1
<b>180 credits</b>	Master's qualifications	1	<b>N + 2</b>	+1	<b>4</b>	+1	+1
<b>360 credits</b>	Undergraduate qualification	3	<b>N + 2</b>	+1	<b>6</b>	+1	+1
<b>360 credits</b>	Doctoral Qualification	2	<b>N + 3</b>	+1	<b>6</b>	+1	+1
<b>480 credits</b>	Undergraduate qualification	4	<b>N + 3</b>	+1	<b>8</b>	+1	+1

### 2.4.1. Exceeding Maximum Completion Times- Principles

- (1) If a student has reached the maximum completion time of an offering and has not yet completed this offering, the options are detailed below. It should be noted that the

<sup>35</sup> S65: 2024-04-18 Item 8.2.4 – whole section change

<sup>36</sup> S69: 2025/08/28 Item 10.2.3 and approved via Round Robin 24 October 2025 and S70:2025/12/04 Item 10.2.3

general provision for undertaking a credit load above 180 credits in a given academic year does not apply to students who have exceeded the maximum completion time, as it is not considered to be in their best academic interest to permit an excessive load when they have already not managed to complete in the maximum time permitted.

- (2) If the maximum completion time for the offering has been reached and it is possible for the student to complete the qualification in no more than one additional academic year, and if they have no more than 180 credits of study to complete, they may be permitted only one additional year to do so. This applies to all students.
  - a) **If the qualification is still being offered (same curriculum):**
    - i) If the same qualification is still being offered and has not been discontinued and there are other students still registered, the student will be granted an extension of time of normally one academic year, to be evaluated annually.<sup>38</sup>.
    - ii) This option is only available to students where there has not been any curriculum change (except a direct module replacement) and is a simple extension of completion time.
  - b) **If the qualification is still being offered (new curriculum):**
    - i) If the same qualification is still being offered and some of the modules the student needs to complete are not being offered the student will be required to complete any new / replacement modules.
  - c) **If the qualification is not still being offered:**
    - i) The student will be required to transfer to a new qualification. Credit for modules completed can be awarded into the new qualification where applicable. In this case, modules will not expire until the maximum completion time of the new qualification is reached

#### **2.4.1.1. Possible to complete in one additional year- 120 credits or less: Faculty approval**

- (1) \*If the student has 120 credits or fewer to complete in the first additional discretionary year, then the responsible academic of the applicable Faculty may approve the request.

#### **2.4.1.2. Possible to complete in one additional year- 120 credits or more: Registrar approval**

- (1) \*If the student has more than 120 credits still to complete in the first additional discretionary year then this request must be approved by the Registrar and recorded at Senate.

#### **2.4.1.3. \*\* Senate Approval in addition to the first additional discretionary year**

- (1) Should a student still have modules outstanding to complete upon exceeding the maximum completion time (the one additional discretionary year has already been granted by either Faculty or the Registrar's office as required) then the student may

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<sup>38</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4



apply for **Senate discretion** of one last additional year. Faculty will be requested to provide support or oppose the request based on the number of outstanding credits to be completed in this one additional year (120 credits, more or less) and considering the shelf life of the credits already completed. The Faculty will consider the relevance of the modules already completed and the effect on the **Exit Level Outcomes** – these cannot be compromised. The Faculty will primarily provide guidance on the shelf life of modules already completed on this application. To support this each Faculty may be required to determine a set of guiding principles i.e. relevance of modules, foundational modules can have a longer shelf life, etc.

#### **2.4.1.4. Qualifications, Modes of Offering and Curricula that are being Discontinued/ Phased out**

- (1) Once a qualification, mode of offering or curriculum has been earmarked for discontinuation, students are required to complete the offering in the time stipulated.
- (2) In particular, where a student has exceeded maximum completion time, The IIE is no longer obliged to make either the offering or the outstanding modules available.
- (3) The IIE will keep qualifications open on the Student Information Management System for three academic years only after the discontinuation examinations. A student who has not completed their qualification by the time the discontinuation examinations are written may attempt to complete ONLY if the modules are being offered in other qualifications or for Non-Degree Purposes (NQP).
- (4) Where these modules are no longer on offer, the student is required to transfer to a new or appropriate qualification.

## **2.5 Interrupted Study Impact on Maximum Completion**

- (1) The maximum time for completing a qualification is as per the table in 2.4 above.
- (2) Any year of interruption (non-registration) does not extend the maximum time permitted. Students who have interrupted their studies are required to complete the curriculum structure of the qualification as it is being offered when they return to study – there can be no expectation that the original module structure has not been changed. They are also expected to complete the qualification in the period available to students who have not interrupted their study on a qualification that is to be phased out.
- (3) The onus is on any student who interrupts their study, to ascertain any changes in the requirements for the qualification when they return – including but not limited to curriculum changes.
- (4) Where a programme is being phased out and formal phase-out information has been given to all registered students, the maximum completion times may be shortened as a result of the phase-out. The onus is on any student who has interrupted their study to provide contact information to the campus concerned so that phase-out information can be provided.

## 2.6 Maximum Completion Time Extensions Exhausted

If a student has more than 180 credits to complete, after the above additional extensions have been exercised, the student will have to transfer to an appropriate qualification and will be eligible for internal credit.

## 2.7 Application Processes

- (1) Applications for Extension of Maximum Completion Time are processed on the IIE Assist .
- (2) The approval and processing procedure for maximum completion time is laid out in the Student Information System relevant “*QRG003–Managing Academic Alerts Holds and Alerts for Special Concessions on the Student Information System*”.

## 3 INCREASED CREDIT LOAD

### 3.1 Principles for Approving Increased Credit Load

- (1) A “normal” workload for an academic year is 120 credits or 1200 notional hours of learning at undergraduate level. The credit load for students in any year of study is capped at 180 credits, including repeat subjects.
- (2) The following principles apply – applications that fall outside of these principles need to be declined.
  - a) A credit load of up to 180 credits is normally approved if one-third of the modules being undertaken are repeat modules – where less than one-third of the modules are being repeated care should be taken with approving the load as students will be under significant pressure.
  - b) A credit load of more than 180 credits per year will be approved where the qualification is in phase-out **and** where the student is repeating at least one-third of the modules for which he/ she wishes to register in that year.
  - c) A credit load of more than 180 credits per year will be approved for a student where the credit value of one module is the reason that the total is in excess of 180 credits and where removing the modules of the **lowest** value would have resulted in a value of 180 credits or less. (Example: Five modules of 25 credits each; four modules of 20 credits each would give you 205 credits – removing one module of 20 credits would give you a total of 185 credits which is still over 180 credits, and the student would therefore not be permitted to carry this load. Removing a second 20-credit module would give you a total of 165 credits – that is, the only reason the total is over 180 credits is due to the value of this module and the student would be below 180 credits if this module were removed. In this case, the student would be permitted to do the five modules of 25 credits **and** three modules of 20 credits each but would not be permitted to do the fourth 20-credit module.)

- (3) Applications for an **Increase in Credit Load** need to be processed within two weeks of registration as this would impact the student's billing.

## 3.2 Application Process

- (1) Applications for **Increase in Credit Load** are processed via the IIE Assist .
- (2) The approval and processing procedure for an increased credit load is laid out in the Student Information System relevant "QRG003 – *Managing Academic Alerts Holds and Alerts for Special Concessions on the Student Information System*".
- (3) Increase in credit load decisions are made by the -National Office based on policy precedents or via the Registrar approval of this precedent and this is then audited by the Office of the Registrar through relevant IIE Assist and Academic System Management reporting.
- (4) The National Office generates the relevant IIE Assist and SIS reports on Increase in Credit Load and submits it to the Secretariat for tabling at the last Senate meeting of the year.

## 4 RULES FOR DISCONTINUATION (PHASING OUT/TEACHING OUT) OF A QUALIFICATIONS, MODE OF OFFERING OR, CURRICULUM

### 4.1 Definition and Application

- (1) When The IIE elects to discontinue a qualification, curriculum, or mode of offering to students on a campus, at a brand, or in its entirety:
  - a) The offering is then phased out over a period, not exceeding the maximum completion time, and these are referred to as "phase-out" arrangements.
- (2) If this section, or the Policy, does not cater for the scenario of a particular student, a decision, coherent with the principles of this Policy and the policies of The IIE may be made by:
  - a) the Registrar, or
  - b) the Director, or
  - c) the Executive Teaching and Learning or
  - d) the Executive Dean: Academics and
  - e) in consultation with the Dean of Faculty concerned.
- (3) There are two types of Phase-Outs. These are:
  - a) Where a qualification/mode of offering is phased out in totality by a campus/brand or the institution

- b) Where a pre-standardised credit curriculum is phased out and replaced.
- (4) Curriculum changes on programmes with standardised credits will apply the module replacement rules.
- (5) The terms Discontinuation Assessment and Replacement Assessment are used interchangeably depending on the nature of the phase-out – full qualification versus module replacement.

## 4.2 General Principles when Phasing-Out

- (1) An offering can be phased out entirely or on one or more campuses, across a whole brand, across the whole institution, or a mode of delivery can be phased out.
- (2) All Phase-out / module replacement communication must be shared with the students before the first formative assessment of the last intake year for the qualification or module offering. Any exceptions to this must be approved by the relevant Dean.

## 4.3 Phase-Out Rules

- (1) For qualifications / modes of offering being phased out (both standardised and non-standardised credits), the campus/brand/institution will continue offering the qualification until the maximum completion time for the last cohort intake has been reached.
- (2) All Policy requirements apply.
- (3) Modules are offered as “normal,” but in instances with exceptionally low student numbers (fewer than 15), reduced (normally 40% of the contact time) contact time may be considered for repeat students only, as the contact will become more personal.

## 4.4 Discontinuation Examinations

- (1) Any student who has failed or did not qualify for<sup>39</sup> the supplementary assessment may write a discontinuation examination/resubmit their assessment (third assessment opportunity) for that module the next time there is an examination sitting for that module, normally the E3<sup>40</sup>sitting, provided they have attempted the module but irrespective of CASS or subminimum marks. In the case of any sitting being missed for any reason, a fourth assessment opportunity will not be possible.
- (2) If the summative is a non-invigilated or similar assessment, students can resubmit their assessment with improvements and do not have to complete a new one. This takes place during the E3 assessment period as per point 1 above.

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<sup>39</sup> S68: 2025/04/16 Item 10.2.7

<sup>40</sup> Clarification – discussed on Nexus 16126\_Jan 2025

- (3) The mark for this discontinuation assessment is capped at 50% and becomes the final mark for the module and replaces the CASS contribution.
- (4) If a student has still not passed a module after the discontinuation assessment and does not qualify for a Dean's Exam under the qualification completion provisions, the following options for that module are available if the student is still within maximum completion time:
  - a) Repeat the module as part of for Non-Qualification Purpose (NQP) if the module is still being offered on that campus, or another campus of The IIE or in the distance mode, or
  - b) Register for an alternative module for NQP, where one has been identified by the faculty, and be awarded internal credit against the required module; or
  - c) Register for a similar approved module at another institution and be awarded an external credit against the required module.

## 4.5 Phase-out Planning

- (1) It is the joint responsibility of the faculty and the brand to apply to Faculty Board to phase out an offering.
- (2) When a phase-out is planned, it is the responsibility of the Brand to ensure that the rules are applied and communicated, and registered students are tracked and supported.
- (3) When a phase-out is planned, it is the responsibility of the faculty in collaboration with the brands to:
  - a) Draft a phase-out communication plan and letters for all students who will be affected, informing the students about the planned phase-out and the last year in which the qualification will be offered, based on maximum completion time for last intake of students in that qualification; or-
  - b) Draft a communication plan and letters to all registered students informing them about the planned module replacement.
  - c) Identify alternative/ equivalent modules for all the modules where possible, and where the replacement module has a different (lower) credit value from the original module approval is needed from the Faculty Board for the substitution.
  - d) Explicitly identify the path to graduation for those students for whom there are no internal alternative modules.
  - e) Track and manage the curriculum arrangements, which include recording all changes to the initial arrangements with the relevant Faculty Board.

## 4.6 Phase-out/Discontinuation/Module Replacement Communication

- (1) If discontinuation is planned, all students currently registered for that offering need to be notified in writing before the first formative assessment in the year, no new students will be registered in that qualification/mode of offer or module.

- (2) This communication, compiled by the Dean of Faculty, must include the following:
- a) Exact nature of the phase-out (curriculum, qualification, mode, or module).
  - b) Phase-out schedule indicating the last year of the offering of each of the impacted modules that are to be discontinued as part of the offering.
  - c) Details of the impact of failing to complete the offering in the timelines given.

## **4.7 Exemption from Completion of a Module**

- (1) For students still within their maximum completion time, an exemption from successful completion of no more than two modules (ECC) may be applied to the curriculum of the student if:
- a) The IIE does not have an equivalent or alternative module available for a student who has not interrupted their study, or
  - b) If the student did interrupt their study and there is also not an equivalent module available at an external provider that can be recognised for credit. (Note: It is the responsibility of the student to find such an external module and to confirm if the module would qualify for credits.)
- (2) And:
- a) The modules have not been designated as core to the exit level outcomes of the qualification by the faculty at the time that the phase-out was planned; and
  - b) The total credit value of the two modules being exempted must be less than 20% of the total credits for the qualification.
- (3) An application for ECC must be lodged by the student on Assist.

## 5 CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER

### 5.1 General

- (1) The IIE subscribes to the principles as outlined in the Council on Higher Education (CHE) Policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Accumulation, Transfer, and Assessment in higher education.
- (2) To be awarded a qualification, a student must complete the requisite academic modules resulting in the completion of a sufficient number of approved credits in the accepted duration of study. Some of the credits for these modules can be granted in recognition of formal learning from another qualification, registered and accredited institution, approved IIE Short Learning Programme (SLP) or Non-Qualification Purpose (NQP) modules.
- (3) For a module or course to be recognised for academic credit there needs to be sufficient equivalence between the module or course completed and the outcomes and level of the module for which credit is sought. Where specific guidance is not provided in policy on sufficiency, the academic responsible for the module or course for which recognition is sought would apply their minds to ensure that the key learning is represented. This would normally be at least 80% of the outcomes of a module or course.
- (4) Applications for internal and external academic credit are processed via IIE Assist.
- (5) All students whether conditionally accepted, registered or just an applicant may apply for external credits. A fee for external credit applications will be charged.
- (6) As it is not possible to process a credit once formative marks have been captured on a module, campuses will carefully manage the last date on which credit applications will be accepted based on the first date on which results would need to be captured. The student must attend class and undertake all forms of assessment until the outcome of the application is known, but results must not be captured.
- (7) The process of processing an application should not take more than 10 working days of complete application and the appeal process should not take more than five working days to finalise once opened.
- (8) A student may appeal the outcome of an internal or external credit application, with an appropriate motivation, on IIE Assist, within 10 working days of receipt of the outcome letter.

## 5.2 Academic Credit

### 5.2.1 Principles - Internal Academic Credit

- (1) This relates to the recognition by The IIE, for the purposes of academic credit, of its own completed modules, short courses or NQP modules.
- (2) The rules are as follows:
  - a) Credit can only be awarded at the same or lower NQF level and for the same or lower credit value than was originally earned.
  - b) All credits from modules completed in an incomplete qualification<sup>41</sup> may be recognised, where appropriate, towards a different qualification, but once used for that different qualification cannot be used again for another qualification and<sup>42</sup> becomes subject to the rules that follow.
  - c) Fifty percent of the credit value from a completed qualification may be “re-used” where appropriate for a different (normally subsequent) qualification as long as those credits do not, in turn, constitute more than 50% of the credit value of the different/ subsequent qualification.
  - d) Credits from an approved and specified internal SLP or NQP module may be recognised towards a full qualification if the student concerned also qualifies for admission to that full qualification and has met the required performance standards where they exist. An example of the performance standard would be that a student who has completed a module as part of a Higher Certificate or Diploma and wishes to apply for credit based on that module into a degree would sometimes be expected to have achieved e.g., 60% for the module in the Higher Certificate or Diploma.
  - e) Where the same or an appropriate derivative module (“parent” or “child”) or a module that has been designated as similar is in the qualification towards which credit is sought, the granting of credit, subject to the above, is normally uncomplicated. In these instances, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level, an overlap of at least 80% of outcomes and an award of no more credits than the original module is considered, irrespective of the credit value of the module being considered.
  - f) It is possible for a student to present more than one module for consideration if the collective weight of the combined modules will enable meeting the standards above. Alternatively, it may be that one module covers two or more other modules, and this is also permitted if the standards are met<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> One from which a student has not graduated.

<sup>42</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>43</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4.



### 5.2.2 Principles - External Academic Credit

- (1) Credit against one of The IIE modules can be awarded for externally completed modules as follows:
  - a) Academic credits (external) earned for modules towards an accredited qualification<sup>44</sup> or completed for NQP at another provider whether or not the student graduated from that qualification, will only be considered if the level, outcomes and content are sufficiently similar (normally at least 80%) to the relevant IIE module, and if the qualification is accredited and registered on the NQF.
  - b) In the context of the qualification, the two general principles of 50% capping apply.
  - c) External credits are not awarded for Short Learning Programmes (SLPs) from any other provider.
  - d) Credit can only be awarded at the same or lower NQF level and for the same or lower credit value than was originally earned.
  - e) External credits awarded cannot be duplicated/or used again<sup>45</sup>.
  - f) It is possible for a student to present more than one module for consideration if the collective weight of the combined modules will enable meeting the standards above. Alternatively, it may be that one module covers two or more other modules, and this is also permitted if the standards are met<sup>46</sup>.
  - g) External credits may be awarded on the same rules above for foreign qualifications from a provider accredited in the country of origin (see additional requirements in this regard under the application process).

### 5.2.3 Senate Reporting

- (1) As required, the National Office staff member generates the relevant IIE Assist and Student Information Management System report on internal and external credits and submits it to the Secretariat for tabling at the last Senate meeting of the year.

## 5.3 Credits for Research Modules or Output<sup>47</sup>

- (1) **Credit Transfers for Research Methodology Modules:** Candidates who have completed a research methodology module at NQF Levels 8, 9, or 10 may be awarded credits toward any NQF Level 8 qualification research methodology module at The IIE, irrespective of the discipline in which the research methodology module was originally completed.
- (2) **Credit Transfer for Research Completed in Cognate Disciplines:** Candidates who have completed a Master's or Doctoral programme in a cognate discipline may apply for credit transfer for the research methodology module and/or the research project at NQF Levels 8 or 9. However, the total transferred credits must not exceed 50% of the credits required for the qualification.

<sup>44</sup> Accredited by the HEQC and registered on the NQF from an accredited provider. In the case of international credits, the accreditation and registration status in the country of origin would be taken into consideration.

<sup>45</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>46</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>47</sup> S66 2024-09-11 Item 8.2.5

- (3) **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for Exemption in Non-Cognate Disciplines:** Candidates who have completed a Master's or Doctoral programme outside of the cognate disciplines must provide evidence of accredited research outputs within the cognate discipline to be considered for RPL for exemption for the research project in an NQF level 8 qualification. However, the total credits that the student is exempted from completing via RPL must not exceed 50% of the credits required for the qualification.
- (4) **Credit for Research Methodology Module:** Candidates registered for Honours or Master's programmes who hold a relevant higher education qualification at the same or a higher NQF level, may request credit for the research methodology module. However, they must still complete the research project.

## 5.4 Credit for Short Learning Programmes or Modules for NQP

- (1) By definition, SLPs are not credit-bearing and may by regulation not include any reference to an NQF level or credit value when they are advertised or promoted.
- (2) However, recognition for the learning in an SLP is at the discretion of the certifying provider.
- (3) Where it has not been possible in terms of qualification progression rules for a student to complete an internal module for NQP that would have ordinarily been a module in a qualification and where that student has therefore been required to undertake the module as an SLP, credit can be given following the rules for internal credits above.
- (4) Where, in terms of the rules of the qualification and the faculty a student has undertaken a module for NQP, that module can be recognised for credit into the relevant qualification at a later stage if the student is admitted to the qualification having met the criteria.
- (5) No more than 50% of the modules in a qualification can be achieved by this route.
- (6) Credit is never awarded for external SLPs.
- (7) The procedure for applying for credit(s) as detailed in the Student Information System related "*QRG007(a) – Internal and External Credit Applications Administrative Procedures*" applies to SLP recognition as well.

## 5.5 Repeating Modules to Improve Marks

- (1) Students may repeat modules to improve their marks (for example, for access to Postgraduate Studies). In such instances, the following applies:
  - a) If still registered on a qualification BEFORE having been graduated on the Student Information Management System:

- i) The student may be registered for the selected module(s) as a second registration.
  - ii) Both attempts and their results would appear on the transcript – the second attempt will not override or replace the first attempt.
- b) AFTER having been graduated on the Student Information Management System:
- i) The student can register for the selected module(s) for Non-Qualification Purpose (NQP).
  - ii) The second attempt would be on a separate transcript from that of the originally completed qualification.

## 6 ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES RELATED TO THE STUDENT INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM<sup>48</sup>

### 6.1 Marks and Credits in “Resumed” Qualifications – Transcript Issues

- (1) All internal module credits are transferred in their totality to any other programme – that is, the mark is transferred to the student record and used in calculations of distinctions, etc., as long as the new curriculum contains that same module (even if an updated version of it). It is the final result that is reflected in the transcript.
  - a) All external module credits are simply recorded as Academic Credit -External (EC). Anything marked “EC” will not be calculated for qualification distinction.
  - b) If a student has been credited for a module from an internal IIE qualification, the transcript will be marked “Academic Credit - Internal (IC)” and the result will show.
  - c) If a student has been credited for an SLP or an internal NQP module into a full IIE qualification, the student's transcript will be annotated "IC", and a mark will be shown.

## 7 ARTICULATION

### 7.1 Articulation - Principles

- (1) **Articulation happens by design and through systemic processes and promotes lifelong learning.** The IIE programme and curriculum design teams design IIE offerings to optimise horizontal, vertical, and diagonal articulation between and within the NQF sub-frameworks. The IIE programmes are designed, amongst others, to address scarce skills, thereby providing a pathway for students to reach their career aspirations and to continue to engage in continuous professional development programmes in their respective careers.
- (2) **Articulation is both systemic and specific.** System articulation is based on legislation, national Policy and formal requirements within the education and training system. Specific articulation will be implemented as required and in this regard, The IIE will seek

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<sup>48</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

to develop articulation agreements with other higher education institutions and other institutions within the Post-School Education and Training sector, such as TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) colleges, industry, and professional bodies. These will be guided by the principle of “parity of esteem,” i. e., that there is equal value of similar learning outcomes achieved in different formal settings within the NQF.

- (3) **Articulation includes credible and fair procedures and practices to validate learning.** The IIE has credible internal quality assurance processes in place to assess and validate learning from internal programmes as well as learning from external programmes, whether formal or informal.
- (4) **Articulation ensures redress, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, and student engagement.** The IIE Admissions Policy (IIE002) promotes access into and in higher education programmes. Furthermore, through its Student Information Management System and surveys, The IIE will gather and analyse data from students who articulated within IIE Programmes and from externally into IIE programmes.
- (5) **Institutional Responsibility.** The IIE is committed to further developing its processes on articulation that will be in line with the CHE Good Practice Guide, once this becomes available. The IIE is, however, aware that articulation requires effective support to learners as they transition along their pathways.

## 8 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

### 8.1 Key Principles

- (1) In terms of CHE CAT and RPL Policy, 2016: *“RPL rooted within the context of life-long learning and the need to redress inequities of the past, as it provides alternative routes of access to higher education. It is the process through which formal, non-formal and informal learning are measured, evaluated, and “translated” into their perceived formal equivalents for recognition across different contexts. Its intended outcome is the recognition of such prior learning for the purposes of alternative access and admission to higher education learning programmes, or for advancement within qualification programmes.”*<sup>49</sup>.
- (2) Furthermore, RPL<sup>50</sup> *“seeks to promote inclusion and to overcome a variety of barriers to access and success in higher education. RPL should be premised on overcoming barriers faced by applicants for admission to, or registration for higher education studies for those people who lack the formal prerequisites.”*
- (3) Qualifications are not awarded through RPL.

<sup>49</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>50</sup> CHE Policies on the Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, and Assessment in higher education – August 2016 page 6 and 7

- (4) Credits towards a qualification are not awarded by RPL but can be achieved through the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Process.
- (5) RPL can be used to give a person **access** to a qualification if they have the required prior qualification, but not at the performance level normally required.<sup>51</sup>.
- (6) RPL can be used to give a person<sup>52</sup> admission to a qualification without having completed a qualification normally required at a lower level.
- (7) RPL can be used to grant a person access to a postgraduate qualification in a particular field of the Classification of Education Subject (CESM) category, but who does not hold an undergraduate degree in that field or CESM category. Such persons may be given advance standing but without the award of the primary qualifications(s).
- (8) Normally, only 10% of any cohort per programme institutionally can be admitted through RPL.
- (9) For admissions, alternative access, or advanced standing and exemption, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the process of assessing and moderating prior learning to determine eligibility for entry into a qualification or to grant advanced standing or exemption from certain modules or credits. This involves evaluating an individual's formal, informal, or non-formal learning experiences to see if they align with the specified entry or progression requirements. Subject matter experts assess the evidence of prior learning to determine if the individual has the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies required for admission or exemption. Moderation ensures the process is fair, consistent, and aligned with institutional and regulatory standards. Content knowledge gaps are not a primary concern if they can be easily addressed and will not impede the individual's academic progression.<sup>53</sup>
- (10) RPL lends itself to an integrated form of assessment. As the learning is normally not gained entirely through a formal process, it is often something the candidate is best able to present in an integrated manner through the presentation of evidence (often from their work environment) and/ or the completion of a task or tasks that will enable demonstration of the required competencies.
- (11) Normally, therefore, a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) is presented.
- (12) The assessment seeks to recognise:
  - a) learning resulting from experience, and not from the quantum of experience *per se*;
  - b) learning that is on the level of the specific level descriptors of the qualification/ unit standard that would normally precede the qualification for which admission is sought; and

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<sup>51</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4.

<sup>52</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>53</sup> S67: 2024/11/07 Item 8.2.3.1

- c) learning that is in line with applied competence and has a balance between theory and practical application, appropriate to the qualification the candidate wishes to pursue.
- (13) Candidates will be supported in the compilation of the PoE.
  - (14) Candidates have the right to appeal against an assessment that they do not possess the required competencies and must do so within 10 working days of receipt of the RPL Outcomes Letter.
  - (15) An RPL candidate who has been declined is not allowed to reapply within the same academic year and will have to wait for the following year to submit a new application.
  - (16) RPL information (Policy and Guidelines for Candidates) is available on The IIE website.

## 8.2 The RPL Process – Key Points

- (1) The RPL process is administered through the Student Information Management System.
- (2) The process of RPL, including an admission decision (RPL approval for registration), needs to be completed before the student can participate in a qualification and therefore the time taken to process an application needs to be taken into consideration before it is started<sup>54</sup>. It may take up to 21 working days to complete the process once the complete PoE has been submitted; however, the whole process from application to registration may take up to 3 months.
- (3) A fee may be charged for the RPL application and review process.
- (4) There is a robust process of quality assurance in place for RPL- see related Procedure and Annexures A, B, C & D.

## 8.3 Reporting

- (1) A report (see Annexure D) on RPL outcomes is compiled annually for Senate in any year in which requests for RPL assessments are made. This report contains both numerical and case information, as well as issues requiring reflection and debate.
- (2) At the end of the first year of study of the student admitted by RPL and at the end of the minimum time for the qualification and on graduation, the academic progress of admitted students is included in the report<sup>55</sup>.
- (3) The report is compiled by the brands, where RPL has been implemented in consultation with the responsible academic in the faculty.

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<sup>54</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>55</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

- (4) Quarterly reports (SAQA National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of RPL, March 2019)<sup>56</sup> on student achievement via RPL will be submitted to the CHE and SAQA as required; however, The IIE has been reporting to the HEQCIS on RPL achievement, specifically RPL for access<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> This will be done when the mechanism for reporting is available.

<sup>57</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

## **ANNEXURE A: RPL PROCEDURE<sup>58</sup> - INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES AND COMMITTEE**

### **1 Application and Support**

- (1) Candidates applying for RPL do so under the guidance of the campus-designated member of staff (responsible person). Once the responsible person is made aware of a potential applicant, they will work with the designated responsible academic to compile the criteria (see below).
- (2) The candidate is provided with documentation describing the process (see Annexures B and C) and an indication of what the RPL fee (where applicable) will be for the assessment.
- (3) The responsible person provides the candidate with:
  - a) the criteria for the assessment, including the rubrics to be used;
  - b) exit-level outcomes of the programme for which recognition is being sought, the module-level outcomes AND the level descriptors for qualifications at that level (an indication of knowledge and competence levels that would normally have been demonstrated through a qualification at that level) and/ or registered unit standards;
  - c) any additional statements of learning that need to be met; and
  - d) details of any examination or other assessment that needs to be undertaken.
- (4) Candidates are informed of when the last date for submission of the Portfolio is. Recommendations are normally made to Senate for a decision, or if there is not a Senate meeting close enough to the registration date the Dean of Faculty may evaluate the recommendation of the Assessment Committee but may then not be part of the committee or consider any appeals.
- (5) A conversation may be held with the responsible academic or another designated academic to discuss with the candidate how to prepare the Portfolio, should they decide to proceed. This may include discussing the kind of evidence that the candidate has.
- (6) If the candidate wishes to proceed, they will complete the application form (Annexure C), compile the Portfolio (Annexure B), and pay the fee (where applicable). Only once the fee has been received will the Portfolio be assessed.
- (7) RPL for access concerns admission. Consequently, candidates can only register for the qualification once their RPL application has been approved. Campuses are not permitted to accept candidates into programmes until the RPL process is complete. This means that successful RPL candidates may have to wait until the next academic registration cycle to commence the programme.

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<sup>58</sup> Also refer to the HTG:RPL Review, Tracking and Reporting



- (8) Upon completion of the assessment, the National Office releases either an RPL Approved Outcome letter or RPL Declined Outcome Letter. At this stage, campuses may only register a student for a programme via RPL if they were issued with the RPL Approved Outcome letter.  
Please also see section 3 (6) below pertaining to appeals.

## 2 Assessment<sup>59</sup>

- (1) The campus will escalate all the information to their National Office, who will load the documents on the Student Information Management System and assign the item to the relevant Dean of Faculty.
- (2) The Dean of Faculty will appoint two subject matter experts (SMEs) to review the application against the criteria. . However, the assessor cannot be the individual who assisted the candidate with the application.
- (3) The Dean of Faculty will then review the decisions taken by the two assessors and make a recommendation. If the Dean of Faculty served as one of the SMEs, then another senior member of ACE must make a recommendation to the National Office.
- (4) The decision of the Dean of Faculty is ratified by the delegate of the National Office . For access to undergraduate qualifications, this is the Dean: Academic Development and Support and for postgraduate qualifications, this is the Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies.

## 3 Decision and Appeal

- (1) Only if all members of the Assessment Committee agree, a recommendation is made to the Dean acting on behalf of Senate<sup>60</sup>, to admit the candidate, in the prescribed format, by the responsible person.
- (2) The responsible person communicates with the candidate after the Dean has ratified the decision.
- (3) The assessor feedback sheets will be provided to the candidate.
- (4) If the Assessment Committee does not recommend acceptance, the responsible person communicates this to the candidate with reasons and informs the person of their right to appeal and to do so on IIE Assist, within 10 working days of receipt of the Outcome Letter.
- (5) If a candidate submits an appeal, the Admissions Manager will consult with the relevant Dean who was not involved in the first decision<sup>61</sup>. This Dean will then liaise with another

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<sup>59</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>60</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

<sup>61</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4

academic (subject-matter expert) to consider the appeal. Their decision is final and binding and is reported to Senate.

- (6) Should the outcome be changed to Approved, the Dean will communicate this to the Registry Clerk, via IIE Assist. The Registry Clerk will issue the Post-Appeal RPL Approved Outcome Letter to the student via SIS. Campuses may only register students for a programme via RPL if the student was issued with this letter.
- (7) Should the outcome remain as declined, the Registry Clerk will issue the Post-Appeal RPL Declined Outcome Letter to the student via SIMS.

## **ANNEXURE B: GUIDELINES FOR CANDIDATES: RPL PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE**

(Placed on relevant letterhead and shared with campus SME and candidate when they meet for the first time)

### **1 The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Brief**

- (1) Candidates are not permitted to attend classes until they have been admitted via the RPL process and have been registered.
- (2) The candidate is briefed by a subject matter expert (SME) on the specific criteria for the application. This is typically managed by the campus Programme Manager or Module Discipline Leader/Discipline Module Support.
- (3) The campus will appoint a lecturer/ mentor who is an SME in the discipline to mentor and support the RPL candidate in the conceptualisation and completion of the RPL application.
- (4) The candidate must provide arguments for how they have met the criteria, with reference to supporting evidence (included in the PoE). The mentor can assist the candidate during this process by answering any questions that may arise. The candidate must submit both the argument and the PoE electronically in the template provided. Any additional evidence should be clearly labelled and referenced accordingly in the PoE.
- (5) Once the student has submitted the PoE on the Student Information Management System, the National Office representative notifies the relevant Dean of Faculty via SIMS.
- (6) The Dean of Faculty will appoint two SMEs to review the application against the criteria. However, the assessor cannot be the individual who assisted the candidate with the application.
- (7) The Dean of Faculty will review the decisions taken by the two assessors and make a recommendation. If the Dean of Faculty served as one of the SMEs, then another senior member of the faculty must make a recommendation to the Registrar.
- (8) The decision of the Dean of Faculty is ratified by Dean of Academic Development and Support and or the Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies.
- (9) The Dean of Faculty, or relevant individual in a brand's National Office will then inform the campus of the decision. The campus will inform the candidate. This information will include the Assessor's reports. The RPL process may take 21 working days to complete from the date of submission of the complete PoE.

- (10) The Dean of Faculty/ School, or National Office representative, will ensure that all documentation required for Senate reporting is loaded onto the Student's Record on the Student Information System.
- (11) The National Office (Admissions Manager) will prepare a report on successful applicants to Senate.
- (12) All successful RPL applicants will be reported at the next Senate meeting.
- (13) Candidates can appeal the decision taken by the assessors via IIE Assist within 10 working days of receipt of the RPL outcome letter.
- (14) An RPL candidate who has been declined is not allowed to reapply within the same academic year and will have to wait for the following year to submit a new application.

## 2 The Criteria for the PoE

- (1) RPL is not simply the submission of a CV and an academic transcript. The submission from the candidate **requires an argument for how the criteria have been met, supported by a portfolio of evidence.**
- (2) RPL for admission into a qualification:
  - a) For **undergraduate qualifications**, The IIE strongly discourages such applications as there are alternative avenues for entrance into undergraduate qualifications (e.g., Higher Certificates).
  - b) **For Honours:** It is mandatory for students to have completed a major in the specific discipline in which they want to pursue their Honour Studies. This entails either that students successfully completed discipline-specific modules at NQF level 7. The IIE will establish the necessary criteria for RPL into the NQF 8 programme. This RPL process must align with the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) level 8 descriptors and adhere to discipline-specific criteria.
  - c) **For Master's (NQF9):** It is mandatory for students to have completed a major in the specific discipline in which they want to pursue their Master's Studies. This entails either that students successfully completed discipline-specific modules at NQF level 8. The IIE will establish the necessary criteria for RPL into the NQF 9 programme. This RPL process must align with the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) level 8 descriptors and adhere to discipline-specific criteria.
  - d) **For Doctoral (NQF10):** It is mandatory for students to have completed a major in the specific discipline in which they want to pursue their Doctoral Studies. This entails either that students successfully completed discipline-specific modules at NQF level 9 or that they completed a dissertation on a topic within that discipline.

The IIE will establish the necessary criteria for RPL into the NQF 10 programme. This RPL process must align with the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) level 9 descriptors and adhere to discipline-specific criteria.

### 3 Instructions to the Candidate

- (1) You should not approach these criteria as theoretical outcomes and the application should not be a theoretical discussion. Rather, the candidate needs to detail how their work experience meets these criteria. You need to match your work experience directly to both the criteria and to your PoE.
- (2) You need to provide an argument for how you have met each criterion. What this means is that you must clearly justify that (and how) the work experience means that the criterion is met. This argument needs to be supported with evidence that should be included in the Portfolio.
  - a) Evidence presented by you must be:
    - i) Valid – the evidence relates to the specific outcomes to be assessed;
    - ii) Authentic – the evidence can be attributed to the candidate;
    - iii) Sufficient – there is adequate evidence to meet all the requirements to certify the candidate is competent; and
    - iv) Current – the evidence relates to current competence.
  - b) It would normally take the form of the following non-exclusive types of evidence:
    - i) **Direct evidence** – the actual evidence produced by the student through:
      - direct observation;
      - questioning; and
      - product and output evaluation.
    - ii) **Indirect evidence** – evidence produced about the student from other sources and used to verify the authenticity of other forms of evidence:
      - Team outputs;
      - Work completed at earlier stages;
      - Reviews and commendations;
      - Training records;
      - Testimonials;
      - Certificates and qualifications;
      - Medals, prizes, and trophies;
      - Customer/ client ratings; and
      - Performance appraisals.
    - iii) **Historical evidence** – evidence of what the student was capable of doing in the past. Examples of historical evidence are:
      - projects and portfolios;
      - video/ audio-taped performance;
      - documentary evidence completed by the student;

- completed work (products);
  - performance appraisals;
  - training records;
  - testimonials;
  - certificates and qualifications;
  - medals, prizes, and trophies;
  - customer/ client rating; and
  - reviews and commendations.
- c) A combination of the above sources of evidence is most likely to be required.
- d) If the presented evidence includes information that may be proprietary to an employer, a letter of consent will be required for use of that information.
- (3) Referring only to a piece of evidence is not sufficient. An argument that relates the piece of evidence to the outcome being addressed should be provided. This argument should speak to the outcome, with the evidence provided as support to the argument, and not a replacement of the argument. For example, how a strategic analysis that you have conducted during work-life meets a criterion. This means that there is an argument against each criterion provided, with reference to the supporting evidence. It is essential that you clearly relate each point of evidence to the point being made in the argument.
- (4) If you are going to include evidence that involves a team, then your role in the team needs to be fully described and evidence provided. This evidence could include, as an example, a letter from an employer/ supervisor/ mentor outlining your role in the team.
- (5) The evidence does not necessarily have to be recent. The application is essentially about all your relevant work experience.

## **4 RPL Application: to be completed by the candidate**

- (1) All forms/documents and the PoE must be submitted electronically.
- (2) You need to submit:
- a) This form (see below), which will be provided to you in electronic format.
  - b) Curriculum Vitae
  - c) Certified certificates, not older than 3 months, of qualifications, courses attended, etc.
  - d) Certified academic transcripts not older than 3 months (for both complete and incomplete qualifications).
  - e) Your argument addressing the criteria (using this template)
  - f) Your PoE providing the evidence to support your argument (using this template)
  - g) Proof of payment of the applicable fee.

- (3) You must provide a letter of authorisation from the organisation from which information is being used to RPL into a specific programme. Often the information shared is sensitive and could be a potential breach of that organisation's sharing of information policy.

## **5 Qualification applied for**

### **5.1 Details of candidate:**

Name:

Address:

Tel/Cell:

## **6 Formal Learning**

### **6.1 Qualifications acquired**

Identify your formal qualifications acquired. Do not include incomplete and current studies. This application must be accompanied by certified certificates of all qualifications and academic transcripts.

### **6.2 Incomplete qualifications**

List any current studies for which you are enrolled, study programmes abandoned before completion and previously RPL'd qualifications. This application must be accompanied by academic transcripts of these attempts.

### **6.3 Informal qualifications/learning**

List all industry qualifications, Short Learning Programmes/ Courses (SLPs) completed and relevant workshops, conferences, etc. Please provide copies of all SLP certificates and other relevant information.

## 7 Relevant Industry Experience

- (1) Compile an electronic Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) of your competence regarding the required outcomes identified below (7.1 or 7.2). Evidence can include documents and/or presentations. It is essential that you:
  - a) consider your prior learning and experience with care to identify the most relevant sources of evidence;
  - b) clearly describe and reference the contents of your PoE in each instance;
  - c) indicate and evidence your level of responsibility and involvement in each instance;
  - d) refer to two/three sources per competency or outcome;
  - e) submit your PoE as a set of clearly identified folders;
  - f) identify your PoE with your name and surname, as follows: **PoE Thomas Bramby**

### **For example**

*Criterion 1: The ability to conduct an annual brand audit in terms of objectives achieved.*

#### **Write the argument here:**

#### For example:

I have conducted several annual brand audits in my 10 years working as a specialist in the advertising industry (please refer to Item 1: Bramby KPAs). It is clear from my KPAs and the roles that I have fulfilled here that I have conducted 7 annual brand audits, with specific sets of objectives.

My roles over the 10 years were..... (please refer to Item 2: Bramby 2015-2018 job specifications). It is clear from the specifications from the job that I have held for the last three years that.....

Specifically, I have been involved in the following brand audits..... (please refer to Item 3: Bramby: brand audits). Etc. Etc

Then re-list all the evidence that supports that you have met this criterion:

Item 1: Bramby KPAs

Item 2: Bramby 2015 -2018 job specifications etc

### **7.1 For entrance into discipline-specific qualifications:**

- a) NQF level X Module Outcome 1 to be inserted before sending to the candidate
- b) NQF level X Module Outcome 2 to be inserted before sending to the candidate
- c) NQF level X Module Outcome 3 to be inserted before sending to the candidate



- d) NQF level X Module Outcome 4 to be inserted before sending to the candidate<sup>62</sup>
- e) NQF level X Module Outcome 5 to be inserted before sending to the candidate

## **7.2 For generic qualifications – e.g., for the Higher Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma**

- a) NQF level X Critical -Crossfield Outcome 1 to be inserted before sending to the candidate
- b) NQF level X Module Outcome 2 to be inserted before sending to the candidate
- c) NQF level X Module Outcome 3 to be inserted before sending to the candidate
- d) NQF level X Module Outcome 4 to be inserted before sending to the candidate<sup>63</sup>
- e) NQF level X Module Outcome 5 to be inserted before sending to the candidate

## **8 A Holistic Assessment**

Please consolidate, in no more than 600 words, a holistic personal reflection on your strategic, task and team management skills:

## **9 Submission of RPL Portfolio and Evidence**

- (1) Once you have paid for the RPL assessment, you can submit your PoE and supporting evidence on the Student Information Management System under the category “RPL Application Supporting Documents”.
- (2) You are required to use the following naming convention for documents being uploaded:  
Application number\_  
Name of document e.g., AP10112345\_PoE
- (3) You may submit multiple documents to support your PoE.

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<sup>62</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4 (b).

<sup>63</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4 (b).

## 10 For Internal Use

(1) These forms must be reviewed by the appointed Assessors.

### Assessors:

Assessor 1 Name:

Assessor 1 Institutional Capacity:

Criteria: (all criteria and specific module outcomes to be inserted before sending to the candidate)

	Criterion Met	Criterion not met
--	---------------	-------------------

Outcome 1 to be inserted

Outcome 2 to be inserted

Outcome 3 to be inserted

Outcome 4 to be inserted

Outcome 5 to be inserted

Feedback report:

Assessor 2 Name:

Assessor 2 Institutional Capacity:

Criteria: (specific module outcomes to be inserted)

	Criterion Met	Criterion not met
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Outcome 1 to be inserted

Outcome 2 to be inserted

Outcome 3 to be inserted

Outcome 4 to be inserted

Outcome 5 to be inserted

Feedback report:

Dean of Faculty:

Recommendation based on Assessor Feedback:

Dean: Academic Development and Support or Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies  
Recommendation based on Assessor Feedback and Dean of Faculty.:

## ANNEXURE C: RPL COVER PAGE AND APPLICATION FORM

**Name of programme for which you are seeking admission:**

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**Name of the Brand/ Campus:**

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**Your information:**

**Name and surname:**

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**ID number:**

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**Contact number:**

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**E-mail address:**

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I am requesting admission to the above programme based on recognition of prior learning. I recognise that the process of assessment of my prior learning is dependent on me providing evidence that I have met the criteria. I acknowledge that I have received and understand the criteria and have been provided with a rubric against which my evidence will be assessed. I acknowledge that The IIE is under no obligation to admit me.

I hereby acknowledge that as soon as I submit the Portfolio of Evidence, I am liable for an RPL assessment fee that needs to be paid before the portfolio will be assessed.

I hereby give consent to The IIE to verify all information provided by me.

I understand that if the assessment is not in favour of my admission, I may appeal the outcome within 10 working days of receipt of the outcome but will need to provide reasons for the appeal that speaks directly to the criteria.

I confirm that this portfolio is my own work.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNEXURE D: RPL REPORT TO SENATE

Name of Brand<sup>64</sup>: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. RPL Admissions- Academic Progress Report-----

Student Name	Programme	Registration Year	Academic Progress of Student for ---- (Insert Year)	Numerical and Case Information, and Issues Requiring Reflection and Debate	Student Number Approval No.
E.g. Nards Wadis	BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication	2107	BRBB8411 – 67% BCSP8412 – 71%	Please complete	

### 2. Admissions Statistics per Programme

Programme Name	Year of 1 <sup>st</sup> Registration	No. of Students Admitted into this Programme	No. of Students Admitted on RPL	Percentage of RPL Admissions
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<sup>64</sup> S51: 2019-07-11 Item 7.2.4.