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Purpose

Articulation refers to the process of comparing the content of courses that are transferred between post-secondary institutions such as Polytechnics, Colleges, or Universities and involves one institution matching its course requirements to course work completed by a student at another institution. Students use course articulation to assure that the courses they complete at one institution will not have to be repeated if they transfer to another institution.

In New Zealand, and at UCOL, course articulation would typically be referred to as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). UCOL's Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure states:

“Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is based on the principle assertion that it is wasteful and demotivating for the applicant and education provider to spend time and effort studying or teaching knowledge, skills or attitudes that have already been achieved.

RPL involves UCOL making a fair and valid assessment of an applicant's abilities. The assessment may result in the applicant receiving credit for some portion of a programme (or in some cases the whole programme) that leads to a qualification”.

For the purpose of an International Academic Articulation Agreement, Cross Credit, the terms of which are in UCOL's RPL Procedure, would be the only type of RPL that would be applicable. Cross Credit, the award of credit for recognition of what may be regarded as equivalent courses in the context of another qualification ie when learning has already been assessed and credit received for similar courses toward another qualification, from another accredited education provider.

Although RPL can be conducted between institutions in separate countries, the process (when conducted on an ad-hoc basis) can be complicated, expensive and time consuming due to significant differences in the structure of post-secondary education across the globe.

In the instances where UCOL wishes to develop relationships with high quality academic institutions in other countries for the purposes of encouraging students to subsequently undertake study at UCOL (and in particular in degree and post graduate qualifications), then an International Academic Articulation Agreement may be developed between UCOL and that other institution.

The purpose of such Agreement(s) will be to document the arrangements made between UCOL and the other institution(s) for recognising credit towards appropriate or equivalent UCOL qualifications. This process will always be based on a rigorous and systematic analysis of curricula, coursework, and learning outcomes covered by the International Academic Articulation Agreement.

International Academic Articulation Agreements will supersede the requirement to undertake RPL on a student by student basis, provided that the student has successfully

completed part or all of a qualification(s) included in an International Academic Articulation Agreement and meets all other applicable admission and entry requirements.

Scope

This policy applies to students who have successfully completed part or all of a qualification(s) at overseas institutions.

Responsibility

Executive Director Business Development

Policy Statements

Where UCOL believes that there is merit in establishing a closer relationship with overseas institutions, and particularly to facilitate the regular exchange of students between them, then an International Academic Articulation Agreement may be developed.

The decision to pursue the development of an International Academic Articulation Agreement should be made by the Executive Dean in consultation with the Executive Director Academic Quality and the Executive Director Business Development, giving due regard to a broad range of factors including the reputation of both institutions, the synergies that may accrue from such a collaborative arrangement, and the potential benefits for students.

Such International Academic Articulation Agreements will be based on a standard template which has been approved by the Academic Board of UCOL, and be operational for a fixed-term only unless renewed or varied by mutual written agreement.

The responsibility for developing each specific instance of an International Academic Articulation Agreement will belong to the Faculty Board of Educational Improvement within which the qualification(s) to be specified by the International Academic Articulation Agreement are located.

In developing an International Academic Articulation Agreement, it is desirable that a Memorandum of Understanding or Memorandum of Collaboration between UCOL and the other institution already exists, and that appropriate academic staff from each institution have had the prior opportunity to visit the other and form a view around the general appropriateness of the proposed match.

In developing the International Academic Articulation Agreement, the Executive Director Business Development, in consultation with the applicable UCOL Executive Dean will seek or obtain the following information:

1. Clear confirmation of the name and status at law of the other entity (e.g. institution, college, university, etc., or part thereof) and the country(s) in which they are normally resident, registered or recognised;
2. Evidence of the quality-assured status of that institution in the applicable country;
3. Evidence of the quality-approved status of the proposed qualification(s) that would be the basis of the International Academic Articulation Agreement;
4. Current version of the curricula for the qualification(s) that would be the basis of the International Academic Articulation Agreement;
5. Any and all supporting documentation as deemed by the Executive Dean to be required in order to understand the detailed content of the qualification(s) that form the basis of the International Academic Articulation Agreement, learning hours undertaken by the student and the structure and level of credits achieved.

This may include the capability and experience of academic staff teaching on the qualification(s).

Each draft International Academic Articulation Agreement will be submitted to the applicable Faculty Board of Educational Improvement for support. Once supported by the Faculty Board of Educational Improvement each International Academic Articulation Agreement will then be submitted to Academic Board for approval prior to sign off by the Chief Executive (or delegate).

Once approved, applications for admission and enrolment by students wishing to undertake study with UCOL will be assessed. Where the student has successfully gained part or all of a qualification(s) that is covered by an International Academic Articulation Agreement, and provided they meet all other admission and entry requirements for both NZQA and the UCOL qualification(s) in which they are seeking to enrol, they will be offered an unconditional place in the applicable UCOL qualification without further reference to the Executive Dean.

In the case where a student (as outlined above) does not meet all the requirements of the International Academic Articulation Agreement, or admission or entry requirements, (for example they have successfully completed some courses only at the overseas institution), then the application will be referred by Registry to the applicable Executive Dean, and an individual RPL process may be required.

In monitoring the International Academic Articulation Agreement, in consultation with the Executive Director Business Development or the Executive Director Quality, the applicable Executive Dean will actively seek feedback from academic staff involved in the delivery of a UCOL qualification covered by an International Academic Articulation Agreement. This will be sought on an annual basis throughout the term of the International Academic Articulation Agreement, giving due regard to the apparent general readiness to study of students from the contributing institution.

In monitoring the International Academic Articulation Agreement, the applicable Executive Dean will ensure that they are aware of material issues in the arrangement that indicate that changes in the arrangement maybe required. This is to ensure the on-going success of the transferring students, and that the Executive Dean takes responsibility for ensuring that such changes are formally made and agreed in writing between the parties.

Related Documentation

- Approved template for International Academic Articulation Agreements
- Approved Programme Curricula for entry criteria and programme regulations specifying restrictions on limits to recognition of prior learning
- [Contract Development and Management Policy](#)
- [Admission and Enrolment Policy](#)