

Recognising learning for credit

Skills and knowledge can be gained in many ways. From formal learning, independent study, work, and life experience.

Recognition of learning for credit is where your existing skills and knowledge (from formal learning) can be assessed for credit, for example, toward a qualification.

Recognising learning for credit enables learners to progress more easily through tertiary education by having their formal and non-formal skills and knowledge along with them, so they don't have to re-learn what they already know or can do.

To help learners better access this recognition and tertiary education, NZQA and tertiary education providers have developed some resources.

Guidelines for tertiary education organisations

[Guidelines for the recognition and award of learning for credit](#)

Taking your learning with you - a student guide to recognising learning for credit

The purpose of this guide is to help you better understand how your formal and non-formal learning can be recognised for credit towards a qualification.

Recognition of learning for credit can help you to progress further and to move more easily between tertiary providers.

What is recognition of learning for credit?

Skills and knowledge can be gained in many ways. For example, this could be through formal or informal learning, independent study, work, and life experience.

Recognition of learning for credit is a process where your existing skills and knowledge are compared against the outcomes of a qualification, programme, course, module or assessment standard.

If your skills and knowledge meet some or all the outcomes, these can be recognised towards a qualification, programme, course, module or assessment standard. This means that you already know, and can achieve your qualification faster.

What terms describe recognition of learning for credit?

There are many terms used to describe the recognition of learning.

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority uses the terms *credit recognition* and *recognition of learning* (RPL). CRT generally describes credit from formal, credentialed learning from a tertiary institution, while RPL generally describes credit from learning that has not been formally credentialed.

Tertiary education organisations may use these or other terms. Check with your provider about their terminology and policies.

What is CRT?

CRT is where credit you gained towards a qualification is recognised by another provider. This credit is from formal learning that has been provided and credentialed by a tertiary institution.

For example, if you have partially completed study toward one diploma qualification at a tertiary provider or to another qualification, you may be able to transfer some or all of that credit to your new provider or qualification. This means that you may not have to repeat the learning.

What is RPL?

RPL is where existing skills and knowledge, usually gained through work, life experience, are recognised as being equivalent to those taught in a formal program and awarded credit toward a qualification.

For example, if you have skills and knowledge of coaching sports gained through work, you may be able to be credited some or all of a sport and recreation qualification through RPL.

How to obtain CRT and RPL?

Your provider should have information regarding CRT and RPL policies and procedures in your student handbook.

The information should contain:

- a clear description of how credit can be awarded
- indicative timeframes
- fees for credit
- an outline of what you will be required to do in providing documentation
- the identification of further work that may be required to complete your program

When can I get CRT or RPL?

CRT and RPL should generally be sought at the point of application and enrolment. Your knowledge can be assessed as early as possible. That way your program can be adjusted. However, you may also request CRT or RPL later on.

Please discuss CRT and RPL with your provider during application and enrolment. If you receive a significant amount of credit, it may affect your eligibility for student loans and grants. For more information on CRT and RPL with [StudyLink](#).

How do I find out if my skills and knowledge can be credited?

To understand what learning you may be able to obtain credit for, you will need to identify the skills and knowledge you have gained.

Your provider can work with you to:

- discover and evaluate your skills and knowledge
- assess your skills and knowledge against the outcomes of the qualification
- assist you to identify and fill gaps in your learning towards achieving your qualification

How much credit can I get?

This depends on your previous learning, the type and extent of evidence you can provide, and the credit you would like to be awarded.

For example, you may be able to receive more credit through CRT if you have completed a qualification at one provider to a similar business-related qualification at another provider, or if transferring to a performing arts qualification.

Similarly, if you are a chef with experience in running a kitchen and restaurant, you may be eligible for the credit toward culinary arts qualification through RPL, but may be eligible for more credit in business majoring in hospitality management.

What evidence and documents do I need for credit?

This depends on your learning and the credit you are seeking.

For example, if you have completed or undertaken formal study at a tertiary institution, you may need to provide an official academic transcript detailing your achievement.

For RPL, you may be asked to produce a portfolio of evidence to show what you have learned. Your provider should advise what documents and evidence are needed.

How is my previous learning going to be assessed?

The purpose of assessment is to determine if you have the skills and knowledge for the programme, course and assessment standard for which you are seeking credit.

In the case of CRT, an assessor usually evaluates your verified official New Zealand Record of Achievement to identify qualifications, programmes and standards achieved. The assessor determines if the outcomes achieved are partly or wholly equivalent to the outcomes you are seeking credit for.

In the case of RPL, an assessor will evaluate your existing skills and knowledge against the programme, course and assessment standard for which you are seeking credit. The assessor is likely to work alongside subject matter experts and/or a panel of assessors.

Depending on the credit sought and the nature of your previous study or experience, the assessment may include:

- challenge test
- practical assessment
- professional conversation or interview with the assessor(s)
- presentation of and a review of the portfolio of evidence with the assessor(s)
- further work may be required if there are gaps in your knowledge in relation to the assessment standard.

For some qualifications, especially at the higher levels, there may be multiple assessment methods.

How is the credit going to be recorded?

Credit awarded from recognition of learning is recorded on your official academic record.

If the credit is based on a CRT application, the grade you have achieved will be recorded and transferred at the same value.

What should I do if I do not get the credit I am seeking?

If your provider has not awarded you some or all of the credit you are seeking, it may be that your skills and knowledge has not met the outcomes of the qualification, programme or course for which you are seeking credit.

Your assessors should discuss any gaps you may have and how you may complete your qualification.

You should discuss with your provider the reasons for their decision. If you are able to use their review and appeals process.