GROUP OF 8 UNIVERSITIES
CREDIT TRANSFER AGREEMENT

Report to Vice-Chancellor’s Advisory Group (VCAG) meeting of 21 February 2007

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1. **DRAFT GROUP OF EIGHT CREDIT TRANSFER AGREEMENT**

On 2 February 2007 the Go8 Academic Registrars, their equivalents or their nominees’ met at the Go8 offices in Canberra and agreed a draft agreement, as set out below, in respect of credit transfer for students transferring between Go8 universities.

**GROUP OF EIGHT CREDIT TRANSFER AGREEMENT**

**MARCH 2007**

Group of Eight universities are The Australian National University, Monash University, The University of Adelaide, The University of Melbourne, The University of NSW, The University of Sydney, The University of Queensland and The University of Western Australia.

**AIM**

In recognition of the excellence of teaching and research that exists in Group of Eight universities, members agree to enhance the mobility of students between them by facilitating the transfer of credit earned at their institutions.

The Agreement is based on an acceptance that the assessment regimes at all Group of Eight universities are comparable and transferable.

**PRINCIPLES**

1. Credit will be granted to undergraduate students who are accepted for admission into a degree program at a Group of Eight university for appropriate units of study successfully completed while enrolled at another Group of Eight university.

2. Credit transfer will be available to students in all undergraduate degree programs who have successfully completed at least one year of equivalent full-time study at a Group of Eight university.

3. Transferring undergraduate students will be required to complete at least one year of equivalent full-time study in the university from which they graduate.

4. Credit will be considered for postgraduate degree programs that have similar content. Postgraduate students will be granted credit for a maximum of 50% of the relevant degree program.

5. Students must meet all requirements of the degree program in which they enrol.

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1 In attendance:

Professor Merran Evans – PVC Planning, Monash University (who chaired the meeting)
Mr Tim Beckett – Registrar, The Australian National University
Professor Fred McDougall – DVC Academic, The University of Adelaide
Dr William Adams – Registrar, The University of Sydney
Professor Anthony Dooley – President, Academic Board, The University of NSW
Professor Michael Keniger – DVC Academic, The University of Queensland
Ms Trudi McGlade – Deputy University Secretary, The University of Western Australia
Ms Linda Bird – Academic Registrar, The University of Queensland (by phone)
And
Kerrie Thornton – Senior Policy Officer, Go8
6. Credit transfer for units of study successfully completed as part of a previously completed degree will be considered in accordance with the rules of the degree program into which the student is seeking admission.

Agreed by:

……..

(Note: The generic term “program” has been used here. The equivalent term at UWA is “course”.)

2. BACKGROUND

At the June 2006 Go8 Board meeting, it had been decided that steps to implement a Credit Transfer Agreement between the Go8 universities should be taken.

The objectives of the agreement were agreed to be to:

• signal the mutual recognition of the Go8 universities as Australia’s leading universities;
• streamline the process of credit transfer for Go8 students;
• increase the attraction of Go8 universities to domestic and international students; and
• strengthen the voice of the Go8 in the Government’s Bologna Process discussions.

It was decided that the most appropriate way to implement such an agreement would be to allow for block transfer of credit from one degree course into its equivalent at another Go8 university.

The key features of the agreement to be statements of:

• aims;
• eligibility requirements; and
• grading compatibility.

It was decided that each university would nominate a representative to be involved in the process of formulating this agreement. Following some email discussion a meeting was held on 2 February to resolve some issues and the draft agreement as set out above was agreed.

3. COMPATABILITY WITH UWA’S CURRENT CREDIT TRANSFER RULES

Credit granted towards undergraduate and postgraduate courses is governed by University General Rules 1.2.1.11 and 1.2.1.12. Which provide as follows:

Credit for Previously Completed Units of Study or Professional Experience

Credit towards Undergraduate Courses

1.2.1.11(1) A faculty may grant credit towards one of its undergraduate courses on the basis of units of study of the appropriate weight and level completed—

(a) in another course offered by this institution; or

(b) at another tertiary institution or other place of learning; or
(c) through Continuing Education at this University, provided they were not completed prior to 1995.

(2) Credit granted towards undergraduate courses for units completed through Continuing Education must not exceed one sixth of the total points value of the course towards which the credit is granted.

(3) The value of credit granted by a faculty towards an undergraduate diploma course on the basis of units of study completed as part of a previously completed award must not exceed 50 per cent of the total points value of the new course towards which the credit is granted.

(4) If a faculty permits a student to transfer into one of its undergraduate courses from another incomplete course of this University, it may credit towards the new course the units completed in the previous course but the student will not be permitted to take out the relevant new award unless they have enrolled in and completed at least one unit in the new course.

(5) Subject to (6) and (7), a student who is granted credit by a faculty towards a bachelor’s degree course on the basis of units of study completed in another tertiary institution will not be awarded a bachelor’s degree of this University without having completed at this University—

either

(a) units of the highest level required for the course to the value of at least 48 points, including the final unit or units of any major required in the course;

or

(b) units to a value of at least half the total points value of the course.

(6) A student is not permitted to take out a bachelor’s degree unless at least half the total points value of the degree course is derived from units which have not been credited towards another completed bachelor’s degree course or are not being credited concurrently towards another course.

(7) The Academic Board may approve exceptions to (5) in the case of approved joint award courses.

Credit towards Postgraduate Courses

1.2.1.12(1) A faculty may grant credit towards one of its postgraduate courses on the basis of—

(a) work completed in equivalent postgraduate courses at this or another recognised tertiary institution; or

(b) units of the appropriate level completed through Continuing Education at this University provided they were not completed prior to 1995; or

(c) in the case of professionally-oriented courses—

(i) work completed in courses provided by professional providers or private educational institutions or similar; or

(ii) relevant professional experience.
(2) Credit granted for units completed through Continuing Education must not exceed one sixth of the total value of the course towards which the credit is granted.

(3) Credit granted towards a professionally-oriented postgraduate course on the basis of work described in (1)(c) must not exceed 25 per cent of the total value of the course towards which the credit is granted.

(4) A faculty must not grant credit towards a postgraduate course with a value of 24 points on the basis of units of study completed as part of a previously completed award.

(5) For postgraduate courses with a value greater than 24 points, the value of credit granted by a faculty on the basis of units of study completed as part of a previously completed award must not exceed 50 per cent of the total points value of the new course towards which the credit is granted.

(6) Except in the case of candidates transferring from one course of this University to another [see (10)], the value of credit granted towards a postgraduate award for units completed as part of an incomplete award must not exceed 50 per cent of the total points value of the course towards which the credit is granted.

(7) A candidate who is admitted to a course for a postgraduate award that is part of a continuum of related postgraduate awards (an articulated course) after completing the course for a lesser award in the continuum, is credited by the faculty with all units credited to or completed in the lesser award course.

(8) Credit granted in terms of (7) is not included in the 50 per cent limit in (5).

(9) The Academic Board may approve exceptions to (6) in the case of approved joint award courses.

(10) If a faculty permits a student to transfer into one of its postgraduate courses from another incomplete course of this University, it may credit towards the new course the units completed in the previous course but the student will not be permitted to take out the relevant new award unless they have enrolled in and completed at least one unit in the new course.

There is nothing in the draft Go8 Agreement that conflicts with these rules. There is no need for UWA to make any changes to the rules as they currently stand. What is required, however, is an acceptance by the faculties that units taken at other Go8 universities are indeed compatible with our units/courses and credit is granted accordingly.

4. ANNOTATED TEXT OF THE GO8 CREDIT TRANSFER AGREEMENT

The text of the agreement is reproduced below (in italics) with notes by way of explanation for each clause.

In recognition of the excellence of teaching and research that exists in Group of Eight universities, members agree to enhance the mobility of students between them by facilitating the transfer of credit earned at their institutions.
The Agreement is based on an acceptance that the assessment regimes at all Group of Eight universities are comparable and transferable.

This preamble underpins the agreement. It accepts that there is compatibility and that student mobility is desirable. A student is to be able to easily transfer credit for study at another Go8 university. It remains that case that credit may be granted for study at universities which are not members of the Go8. What is envisaged here is akin to a “Go8 Guarantee” of recognition of study successfully completed at another Go8 university.

**PRINCIPLES**

1. **Credit will be granted to undergraduate students who are accepted for admission into a degree program at a Group of Eight university for appropriate units of study successfully completed while enrolled at another Group of Eight university.**

   A student at another Go8 university who is accepted into a course in this University is to be granted credit for appropriate units of study successfully completed while enrolled at another Go8 university. The intention here is that a student who has completed (say) the equivalent of one-year’s full-time study at another Go8 university will receive credit for one-year’s full-time equivalent study at this University (48 points). The need to undertake pre-requisites is not waived and if a student has not previously taken a particular pre-requisite this will need to be included in the study plan. However faculties are encouraged to consider carefully whether the student already has sufficient knowledge.

2. **Credit transfer will be available to students in all undergraduate degree programs who have successfully completed at least one year of equivalent full-time study at a Group of Eight university.**

   This goes to eligibility – students must complete at least one year of equivalent full-time study at a Go8 university prior to applying for credit transfer under this agreement. This does not preclude a student who has less than one-year’s full-time equivalent study completed applying for credit. Such an application to be assessed on its own merits.

3. **Transferring undergraduate students will be required to complete at least one year of equivalent full-time study in the university from which they graduate.**

   This is in accordance with the University’s rules on credit transfer which requires that a student must complete at least the equivalent of one year’s full-time study at this University in order to be awarded a degree of this University.

4. **Credit will be considered for postgraduate degree programs that have similar content. Postgraduate students will be granted credit for a maximum of 50% of the relevant degree program.**

   Again this accords with the University’s current credit transfer arrangements. Students undertaking Master’s degrees by coursework may apply to transfer into a course with similar content. This is to facilitate completion by students who may be relocated.

5. **Students must meet all requirements of the degree program in which they enrol.**

   This is in order to ensure that incoming students complete all course requirements, for example the requirement to complete the ACE module or IRIS.

6. **Credit transfer for units of study successfully completed as part of a previously completed degree will be considered in accordance with the rules of the degree program into which the student is seeking admission.**

   Again, this accords with UWA’s current rules and provides for some flexibility for students who have completed a degree and wish to undertake further study.
5. IMPLEMENTATION – NEXT STEPS

The draft agreement will be considered by the Vice-Chancellors at the next Go8 Board meeting on 1 March. The recommendation to the Vice-Chancellors, from the meeting of the Go8 Academic Registrars, their equivalents or their nominees, is that the agreement be signed and that it is reviewed in two years (ie at the first Go8 Board meeting in 2009).

Assuming acceptance by the Vice-Chancellors the agreement will then be operational within the universities.

6. ROLE OF THE FACULTY DEANS

This is a very important exercise both from a national and international perspective. It is important that UWA is seen to be part of a bigger group. The workforce in general is becoming more mobile and as individuals and families relocate, universities must be prepared to facilitate the completion of study commenced elsewhere.

Further, with the increasing focus on student mobility overseas, particularly in Europe with the Bologna Process, it is important that Australian universities are seen to be flexible and accommodating to those who, for whatever reason, desire to relocate. Assuming the success of this national agreement, it is hoped that it may be possible to institute a similar agreement with universities overseas.

Faculty Deans are asked to promulgate this agreement within their faculties. It is important that UWA embraces the underpinning acceptance that standards and assessment regimes between Go8 universities are compatible.