



ITIL[®] Qualification Credit Administration Policy

ITIL Qualification Board policy regarding the
administration of credit for overlapping ITIL
V2 and V3 qualification content

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1. Background

The development of the V3 qualification scheme introduced a modular credit system for each of the now 13 ITIL V3 modules that comprise the Scheme. Modules are given a credit value which can be applied toward the ITIL Expert level of ITIL achievement. Candidates meeting the requisite entrance requirements and accumulating a sufficient number of credits (22) can apply for recognition as an ITIL Expert. The credit values for ITIL V3 qualifications are:

V3 Qualification	Credit Value
Foundation	2
Intermediate Service Lifecycle Modules ;	
Service Strategy	3
Service Design	3
Service Transition	3
Service Operation	3
Continual Service Improvement	3
Intermediate Service Capability ;	
Planning, Protection & Optimization	4
Release, Control & Validation	4
Service Offerings & Agreements	4
Service Operation & Analysis	4
Managing Across the Lifecycle	5

A policy adopted at the ITIL Qualification Board (QB), early in the development of V3 modules, was to recognize existing V2 certifications as part of the credit system, to retain their value to candidates in their pursuit of ITIL qualifications and to recognize that former V2 process based content remains a part of ITIL and as such, the V3 qualifications scheme would reflect this.

A review was conducted of all V2 certifications and a credit value assigned to them based on the amount of content coverage resident in the syllabuses that was also resident in V3. These values were communicated to the public as a commitment by the QB to continue to recognize V2 achievements. The QB policy to assign credit values to V2 qualifications also introduced the need to provide a mechanism to utilize those credits for ITIL Expert achievement and to provide requisite credits to enter into the V3 qualifications using V2 credits. The QB approved the introduction of bridging qualifications, intended to have a finite life span and to satisfy the credit requirements to apply for ITIL Expert accreditation.

The credit values agreed by the Board for ITIL V2 and V3 Bridge qualifications are:

V2 / Bridge Qualification	Credit Value
Foundation	1.5
Foundation Bridge	.5
Practitioner single process	2
Practitioner cluster process groups	3.5
Service Manager	17
Manager Bridge	5



The subsuming of V2 publication content into V3 was also reflected in the V3 scheme – the existing 10 processes and 1 function covered in V2 qualifications - as enhanced and updated processes and functions. The policy to recognize V2 qualifications as credits toward V3 ITIL Expert introduces the complexity of overlap between some of the V2 and V3 modules.

Since one of the basic premises of the V3 Scheme is to provide ITIL Expert achievement to candidates who demonstrate a superior and well balanced knowledge of ITIL, through achievement of qualifications, an additional policy is needed to mandate how qualifications with overlapped content will be assigned credit recognition and how this will factor into the ITIL Expert accreditation, while still ensuring that an appropriate balance of knowledge is achieved across the V3 qualification spectrum.

In order to help candidates make sound choices about their choice of qualifications, the Accreditor created the Credit Profiler System; a web-based application, to track candidate qualifications and offer guidance in additional module selection to achieve a balanced ITIL V3 knowledge base.

The balance of this document outlines the review of the ITIL V3 examiners and the adopted recommendations of the ITIL V3 Chief Examiner for this policy to mandate the application and recognition of ITIL module credits.

This policy applies equally to all Examination Institutes and to the operation and use of the Credit Profiler System.

2. Candidate Educational Objectives

In support of the proposed credit application policy, it is important to substantiate the possible educational objectives candidates have in order to provide the proper guidance for module selection and to provide a fair, unbiased application of credits.

There are a variety of potential educational objectives and characteristic-driven candidate profiles that can underpin the base structure of the scheme.

ITIL Foundation Awareness

This type of candidate will be interested in this qualification for one of two reasons:

1. The candidate requires a solid understanding of the basic concepts of ITIL. They need to be literate in ITIL terminology and understanding, and will likely have a role in their organization that requires a basic understanding of ITIL but does not require a high level of proficiency in a particular practice area of ITIL.
2. The candidate requires specialized knowledge in one or more ITIL practice areas and must meet the prerequisite entry level for entrance into the Intermediate level modules.

The ITIL Capability Specialist

This type of candidate will be interested in gaining qualifications that offer intense, specialized knowledge in one or more process areas of ITIL best practices. This type of candidate will likely have a role in their organization or be seeking such a role, that is focused in a particular area of ITIL practice, that has fairly well defined boundaries of responsibility and who for whom, specialized process level knowledge and certification is the primary objective.

The ITIL Lifecycle Specialist

This type of candidate will be interested in ITIL from a Lifecycle stages perspective and will often have, or be seeking a management or team leader role in their company that requires a broader focus on the management of ITIL practice areas and their interaction across the Service Lifecycle spectrum, than on the day-to-day execution level of detail. Candidates who work across teams or manage multiple capability areas will benefit from Lifecycle specialization.

Blended Expertise

It is also likely that many candidates will use the flexibility of the scheme to acquire qualifications in both Lifecycle and Capability streams. This will be of interest to candidates charting a career that requires qualification and demonstrated skill in particular genres of ITIL. For some, an in-depth focus on one or more capability areas, supplemented with broader management focused qualification(s) from the Lifecycle stream will be of interest.

The ITIL Expert

This type of candidate is primarily interested in demonstrating a superior level of knowledge of ITIL V3 in its entirety and possibly for personal or professional recognition and career advancement. This type of candidate may also be pursuing ITIL Master level achievement and wish to gain ITIL Expert achievement to satisfy the requisite for the Master programme.

Due to the flexibility of the modular credit system, the possible permutations of these characteristics are many.

3. Review of Qualification Content Overlap

The Scheme is clear on the credit value each qualification independently provides. In order to deliver useful guidance to candidates on module selection and to fairly administer the credit system, it is important to first understand the candidate's educational objectives. The basic educational objective profiles from the previous section, should be the first criteria to consider when providing guidance to candidates. The issue of content overlap is not sufficient by itself to mandate rules for administering credits, unless the overlap contravenes the spirit and intent of the scheme – namely attempting to reach Expert or Master achievement levels without having acquired a superior and balanced knowledge of ITIL. Credit overlap should also be considered as part of an impact or risk evaluation for candidates from an investment perspective.

Chief Examiner Review

In the initial release of the ITIL V3 qualification scheme, some course choice options were provided as basic guidance for matching modules across the two Intermediate streams, to help ensure a balance candidate curriculum. Along with choice options, an initial mapping was undertaken to determine the degree of overlap between V2 and V3 syllabuses, and to apportion credits appropriately for this overlap. As such, the V2 Foundation, Practitioner, and Service Manager were allocated credit values. While this clarifies the paths that must be followed to bridge into V3 or to achieve ITIL Expert, it does not adequately address how to account for direct overlap between V2 and V3 qualifications.

The Credit Profiler System used the initial mappings to generate qualification recommendations for candidate's but it could not entirely account for the specific degree of overlap, rather just a one-for-one process and function overlap response. It was agreed that further logic was needed for the CPS. A further review was undertaken by a team of V3 Examiners to validate the initial review's areas of overlap and to help provide the basis for recommendation for a policy in administering credits in cases of overlap.

In addition, while a basic understanding that a few particular qualifications had overlapping content and the syllabuses for each qualification were being developed and balanced, the Qualification Board did not have a clear view to articulate policy for exempting or disallowing specific qualification credits, and as a results EI's have interpreted the QB intent differently and an inconsistent application of credit administration may result.

Syllabus Content Overlap Review

The V3 Chief Examiner and selected members of the Examiner Panel have undertaken reviews in two stages to determine the degree of overlap between the various V2 and V3 qualifications. The first, to validate the earlier mapping and provide additional general insight on content overlap with a view to building additional guidance for candidates to help choose a balanced portfolio of qualifications.

The second stage focuses on specific content overlap, the extent of overlap and the aggregated effect of overlap in each V2 and V3 qualification. This forms the basis to apply a consistent credit administration policy.

The following tables list the qualifications reviewed.

V2 Qualifications Reviewed	ACRONYM USED	QUALIFICATION OWNER
ITIL Practitioner Agree & Define	IPAD	EXIN
ITIL Practitioner Release & Control	IPRC	EXIN
ITIL Practitioner Plan & Improve	IPPI	EXIN
ITIL Practitioner Support & Restore	IPSR	EXIN
Practitioner Certificate in Availability Management	AVM	ISEB
Practitioner Certificate in Capacity Management	CAPM	ISEB
Practitioner Certificate in Change Management	CHM	ISEB
Practitioner Certificate in Financial Management	FINM	ISEB
Practitioner Certificate in Release & Control	CCR	ISEB
Practitioner Certificate in Release Management	RELM	ISEB
Practitioner Certificate in Problem Management	PROBM	ISEB
Practitioner Certificate in Service Level Management	SLM	ISEB
Practitioner Certificate in IT Service Continuity Management	ITSCM	ISEB
Practitioner Certificate in Service Desk & Incident Management	SDI	ISEB
ITIL Service Manager (reviewed at stage two only)	SVCMGR	ISEB EXIN

V3 Qualifications Reviewed	ACRONYM USED	QUALIFICATION OWNER
Intermediate Service Lifecycle – Service Strategy	SS	APMG
Intermediate Service Lifecycle – Service Design	SD	APMG
Intermediate Service Lifecycle – Service Transition	ST	APMG
Intermediate Service Lifecycle – Service Operation	SO	APMG
Intermediate Service Lifecycle – Continual Service Improvement	CSI	APMG
Intermediate Service Capability – Service Offerings & Agreements	SOA	APMG
Intermediate Service Capability – Operational Support & Analysis	OSA	APMG
Intermediate Service Capability – Planning, Protection & Optimization	PPO	APMG
Intermediate Service Capability – Release, Control & Validation	RCV	APMG
Intermediate Capstone – Managing Across the Lifecycle	MALC	APMG

Review Rationale

In order to provide accurate results on the degree of overlap, a common baseline for measuring overlap was determined. Each V3 qualification syllabus was broken down by learning units, the number of contact hours per unit and the percentage of the content each learning unit represents within the syllabus.

Figure 1 - Example of V3 content break down for Service Strategy Module

Learning Unit	contact hours dedicated	% of syllabus coverage
SS Principles	2.50	11.90
Defining Services and Market Spaces	3.00	14.29
Strategic Assessments	3.50	16.67
Financial Management	2.00	9.52
Service Portfolio Management	1.00	4.76
Demand Management	3.50	16.67
Strategy through the lifecycle	2.00	9.52
Critical Success Factors & Risks	2.00	9.52
Exam preparation	1.50	7.14
Totals	21.00	100.00

Since the syllabuses for V2 are constructed differently than V3, a calculation was needed to establish a consistent measurement baseline. Duration of each course and the breakdown of content within each syllabus was used. For example, the IPRC qualification consists primarily of three (3) ITIL Processes – Change, Configuration & Release Management. The course is delivered over five (5) days (approximately 36 contact hours or 7.2 hours per day). It is presumed that approximately equal amounts of time will be spent on each process over the duration of contact hours, so each process is assigned an equal number of hours.

NOTE: sample data tested the accuracy of using equal, or slightly unequal hours to determine if the resulting difference would change the overall percentage. The variance was $\pm 0.003\%$ and considered to have nil effect.

IPRC - Release & Control		
Learning Unit	contact hours dedicated	% of syllabus coverage
Change Management	12.00	33.33
Release Management	12.00	33.33
Configuration Management	12.00	33.33
Totals	36.00	100.00

Figure 2 - example of V2 qualification syllabus coverage calculation

Next, all 25 syllabuses were placed on a horizontal and vertical grid so that each qualification for both V2 and V3 could be compared to every other V2 and V3 qualification. This resulted in 625 combinations of qualifications reviewed and calculated for percentage of overlap. Overlap is defined as an ITIL Process or Function which exists in both V2 and V3 and that are closely similar in their content. In particular, there is one ITIL Process, Financial Management which has changed significantly between V2 and V3. Thus, only a small degree of overlap is noted. The determination of overlap considers the syllabus details of what each process covers.

Overlap Calculation

When one or more ITIL processes and/or functions is closely similar in two or more syllabuses, the degree of overlap is calculated by examining the amount of similar content and the number of hours dedicated to similar process and function content in one syllabus relative to the others. In this way, a close approximation of the degree of content overlap was determined.

4. Policy

The following scale determines how to apply the Policy:

Content Overlap between 1 – 19%

Content overlap in this range is considered negligible over the syllabus curriculum. The upper range of 20% represents 1/5th of a qualification's content, and can be reasonably expected. In some cases, this overlap consists of introductory content based on the ITSM-based curriculum that would be similar across many of the qualifications. In some cases, the duality of process roles and organizational challenges accounts for areas of overlap. In either instance, this overlap is not considered to be sufficient to warrant concern, nor detract from the overall learning experience for the candidate.

The policy for any two qualifications that overlap within this range is:

The degree of overlap is negligible and does not negate or exempt the credit acquisition of either or any of the syllabuses which fall into this range. Candidates are allowed to use the credits gained in any two or more of the qualifications in this range toward the ITIL Expert achievement, or to acquire the qualifications toward a balanced ITIL knowledge qualification portfolio.

Content Overlap between 20 – 39%

Content overlap in this range is moderate and in most cases results from the same process (es) being covered, but to a minimal degree of depth. This overlap is most consistently seen between the Service Lifecycle and Service Capability qualifications, where the same processes and functions are resident in both a Lifecycle and Capability syllabus, but the Lifecycle syllabus covers only surface depth detail. The differences in content and depth still comprise the majority of the learning content, and therefore are considered to be a minimal degree of overlap.

Because the degree of overlap is considered moderate, any candidate wishing to ensure a proper balance of knowledge for their education investment should be advised to avoid combining two qualifications in this range. While doing so will not overlap enough learning unit content to consider it duplication, greater benefit in an overall balance is the best guidance and investment.

The policy for this level of overlap is to apply guidance to avoid overlap, but not to mandate it.

The policy for qualifications that overlap within this range is:

In order to obtain a broad and balanced understanding of ITIL, the QB recommends the following certifications should be avoided. However, candidates who do study for and pass these certificates can count both sets of units towards their Expert Certification.

The following example illustrates how this might be applied in counselling candidate:

EXAMPLE: V3 combined with other V3 qualifications

- Can be combined
- Should not be combined

ANY COMBINATION	SS	SD	ST	SO	CSI	SOA	OSA	PPO	RCV
SS									
SD									
ST									
SO									
CSI									
SOA									
OSA									
PPO									
RCV									

Using the above examples as guidance, any combination choices made from among these V3 Intermediate qualifications will provide a balanced portfolio of qualifications, presumably to the maximum credit required. This strengthens a candidate's knowledge base to succeed at the MALC qualification and achieve the ITIL Expert accreditation if that is the desired outcome.

Content Overlap Over Between 40 – 79%

This range of content overlap is considered significant and constitutes a duplicated learning unit outcome.

Of the 25 qualifications reviewed, six current V2 and V3 qualifications fall into this range:

Qualification	Overlaps with	Percentage of Overlap
SOA	IPAD	44
PPO	IPPI	49
RCV	IPRC	40
RCV	CCR	44
IPSR	SDI	66
IPRC	CCR	100

Note: Overlap between any two V2 qualifications are not in scope of this policy, but were reviewed for completeness of the qualification set.

An overlap of this degree is enough to compromise a balanced knowledge base when two or more overlapping syllabuses are combined. This should be taken into account when evaluating a candidate's qualification portfolio.

Candidates who are using their accumulation of credits to gain Expert status, are at risk of not having a proper balance of ITIL knowledge if they combine overlapping qualifications in this range. This places these candidates at increased risk of not having the knowledge to succeed at MALC, which presupposes a full base knowledge of ITIL V3.

Credit Exemption Policy

The policy recommendation is that any candidate **whose objective is to apply for ITIL Expert accreditation** through credit accumulation should not be permitted to use credits from both of two overlapping qualifications. While any candidate is free to take any qualification, they should be counselled that credit from only one of the overlapping qualifications can be submitted for application for ITIL Expert. From a candidate investment perspective, they should be encouraged to make up credits by selecting a qualification that does not overlap. The credit exemption policy is only mandated for candidates applying for ITIL Expert accreditation.

To apply the policy fairly and take into account the elapsed time that candidate may have already acquired qualification from the overlapping V2 and V3 modules, the QB offers a period of exemption to this policy for candidates who already possess any of the V2 qualifications; IPAD, IPPI, IPRC or CCR AND one or more of the overlapping V3 qualifications. This allows time to implement and communicate the policy and not penalize candidates who have already invested in overlapped qualifications in good faith, due to the absence of clear guidelines. **This rule comes into effect 01 May 2009.**

Candidate's who apply for ITIL Expert accreditation beyond this date, must prove they acquired the overlapping qualifications prior to **August 1, 2009** in order to be eligible for the exemption. After this date all candidates should be counselled to acquire additional credits from non-overlapped modules in V3 and that failure to do so results in credits for one of the overlapped modules being disallowed for ITIL Expert accreditation.

Precedent for credit exemption

It is recognized that this policy recommendation could have political sensitivity within the general public and ATO community. It will be important to communicate the reason for the policy and support its logic by positioning it as an extension of the precedent already in place within the scheme.

The scheme already grants exemption to candidates with a V2 Service Manager qualification or those with 12 or more V2 Practitioner credits. Under this policy, candidates are already exempt from some V3 qualifications due to the recognition of overlapping knowledge and are permitted to enrol in the Manager Bridge and for V2 Practitioners, proceed directly to MALC. This fact establishes the opportunity to refine current policy further by addressing the candidate population who fall outside the current exemption guidelines, and for whom guidance is necessary to ensure they gain a balanced knowledge base to proceed to MALC and then apply for ITIL Expert accreditation. This particular credit exemption policy in reality, only applies to a subset of candidate's – those who have already acquired one or two practitioner clustered qualifications, or a combination of single practitioner qualifications, whose credit accumulation is below 12 credits. Any candidate with 12 practitioner credits is exempt from all Intermediate V3 qualifications, except MALC.

V2 Credit Maximum Policy

The intent of permitting V2 credits as part of credit accumulation when applying for the ITIL Expert achievement is to recognize knowledge ITIL gained in prior schemes and to exempt such candidates from repeating this in the V3 scheme. The credits awarded for V2 Service Manager and V2 Practitioner, permit a fast track option that many candidates will opt for when applying for ITIL Expert achievement. In order to ensure that the prime objective of the scheme is met – that every candidate awarded the ITIL Expert achievement to possess well balanced V3 content knowledge - the policy mandates a maximum of v2 credits that can be used within the fast track and that must be combined with the requisite v3 bridge options as the single route to apply v2 credits toward ITIL Expert.

Therefore, the policy recommended would be applied as follows:

Candidates that wish to apply for ITIL Expert achievement and who will use V2 credits can do so only if they have fulfilled the mandated requirements by one of the following routes:

- ***Use of V2 Service Manager – Maximum of 17 V2 credits PLUS V3 Manager Bridge***
- ***Use of V2 Practitioner – Maximum of 12 credits PLUS Manager Bridge PLUS Managing Across the Lifecycle (MALC)***

Candidates with V2 Service Manager and/or V2 Practitioner credits can elect any of the other V3 modules they wish, but can ONLY apply for ITIL Expert if they satisfy the credit maximum and mandatory routes.

Should any candidate wish to use only V3 module credits to apply for ITIL Expert, they can do so by following the standard rules of the Qualification scheme.

V2 Partial Credit Values

In addition to all prerequisites being satisfied, no partial qualification credits will be allowed to count toward ITIL Expert Achievement. This is specifically directed to any current and future qualifications accepted for credit into the V3 Scheme that require more than one examination to complete

Future Qualifications

The Accreditor plans to consider the recognition of other qualification products into the V3 credit scheme. The Chief Examiner recommends that this policy be reviewed and further recommendations considered each time a additional qualification is proposed. The review should consider the impact across all V2 and V3 qualification products to ensure that their introduction does not adversely impact the terms of this policy and that additional credits are accounted for in the overall intent of the Scheme and the execution of this policy.

The Credit maximum policy applies in these cases and that amendments to this policy will result when a external qualification is approved by the Qualification Board for inclusion in the V3 Scheme. Care must be exercised to analyze the amount of credit and how it can be applied within the context of the credit administration policy. In addition, any resulting amendments to this policy as the result of the adoption of future external qualifications, be agreed, amended and communicated to stakeholders before implementing.

5. Conclusion

The policy helps complete the credit administration for V2 and V3 credits under the V3 Qualification Scheme and promotes a responsible, fair and unbiased approach that meets the two of the primary objectives of the Scheme:

1. To offer a flexible, robust set of qualifications that meet the ITSM professionalism industry needs for superior, balanced and complete ITIL knowledge through accredited training and examination.
2. To recognize the existing investment in V2 qualification, while ensuring the channels to ITIL Expert accreditation are sound, balanced and responsible.

The Qualification Board has adopted and embedded this policy in its operation of its ITIL Qualification Scheme.

The Accreditor will consider candidate profile types as a mechanism to help further refine module choices. The use of questions to solicit matching to profile types can further refine a candidate from a base profile to a personalized profile and hence build further guidance logic into the Credit Profiler System.