



COURSE CREDIT AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: PP005

RESPONSIBILITY: Head of Training

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1. Scope of Policy and Procedure

This document supports the granting of credit to students as required under Clause 3.5 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015:

Clause 3.5: The RTO accepts and provides credit to learners for units of competency and/or modules (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this) where these are evidenced by:

- (i) AQF certification documentation issued by any other RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation, or
- (ii) Authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar.

This document also outlines WAIFS' policy and procedure for students to be granted Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) if they have suitable prior training and/or experience.

West Australian Institute of Further Studies Pty Ltd (WAIFS) will ensure that clear information about course credit/credit transfer (hereinafter referred to as Credit Transfer/CT) and/or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is provided to each student prior to enrolment.

Credit Transfer (CT) is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications (Australian Qualifications Framework – AQF Glossary of Terminology).

Recognition of Prior Learning (or RPL) is an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit (National Quality Council Training Packages glossary).



2. Background – Recruitment of an International Student – National Code 2018 Standard 2

2.1 Prior to accepting a student or intending student for enrolment in a course, the registered provider must make comprehensive, current and plain English information available to the student or intending students on:

2.1.1 The requirements for a student’s acceptance into a course including the minimum level of English proficiency, educational qualifications or work experience required, and course credit (if applicable).

2.2 The registered provider must have and implement a documented policy and process for assessing and recording recognition of prior learning (RPL), and granting and recording course credit, if it intends to assess RPL or grant course credit. The decision to assess prior learning or grant course credit must preserve the integrity of the award to which it applies and comply with requirements of the underpinning educational framework of the course.

2.3 If the registered provider grants RPL or course credit to an overseas student, the registered provider must give a written record of the decision to the overseas student to accept and retain the written record of acceptance for two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.

2.4 If the registered provider grants the overseas student RPL or course credit that reduces the overseas student’s course length, the provider must:

2.4.1 Inform the student of the reduced course duration following granting of RPL and ensure the confirmation of enrolment (CoE) is issued only for the reduced duration of the course.

2.4.2 Report any change in course duration in PRISMS if RPL or course credit is granted after the overseas student’s visa is granted.

3. Background – Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015

Clause 3.5 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015:

The RTO accepts and provides credit to learners for units of competency and/or modules (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this) where these are evidenced by:

- (i) *AQF certification documentation issued by any other RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation, or*
- (ii) *Authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar.*

“A key pillar of the national VET system is that nationally endorsed qualifications, skill sets and units of competency are recognised and portable across the country—regardless of where they were issued. Students must not be required to repeat any unit or module in which they have already been assessed as competent, unless a regulatory requirement or licence condition (including an industry licensing scheme) requires this. If a student provides suitable evidence they have successfully completed a unit or module at any RTO, your RTO must provide credit for the unit or module.”

Note that providing credit for previous studies is not recognition of prior learning. RPL is an assessment-only pathway of determining the competence of a person, while providing credit is recognising the equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications previously undertaken and completed successfully

Recognition of prior learning is simply a form of assessment of a student’s competence. Recognition of prior learning uses evidence from formal, non-formal and informal learning rather than from specific assessment activities directed by the RTO. This evidence is often combined with assessment activities sometimes known as ‘challenge testing’. As such, recognition of prior learning must be conducted with the same rigour as any other form of assessment.

Implementing the principles of assessment

No matter which assessment pathway or methods you use, the principles of fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability must be met.

Fairness

- At enrolment or prior to commencement of training, make recognition of prior learning available to all students. Ensure any required adjustments are made to the training and assessment program for each student.

<https://www.asqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-03/Users%27%20Guide%20to%20the%20Standards%20for%20RTOs%202015%20%28v2.3%29.pdf>



4. Credit Transfer (CT) – What is it?

CT is recognition that a student has previously completed a unit of their course through VET or higher education. To receive a CT for a unit a student must provide formal evidence that they've previously completed the unit or a unit which matches in content and outcome. Formal evidence can be a qualification certificate or transcript, statement of attainment or USI transcript. When CT is recognised, a student will not need to repeat training or assessment for that unit.

5. Credit Transfer – If a unit of competency has been superseded but is still equivalent

<https://www.asqa.gov.au/news-events/news/asqa-clarifies-position-credit-transfers>

“When a student presents a superseded equivalent unit of competency for credit transfer for the purpose of reducing the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification or skill set, as the training package has determined the unit of competency to be superseded equivalent, a provider can grant credit for that unit without needing to map unit outcomes.

Although not required, providers may take a best practice approach and conduct mapping analysis, especially for those units that have been superseded twice or more despite still being deemed equivalent, to assure themselves the assessment of competence is still relevant.

The clarification that a provider **can grant credit for a superseded equivalent unit without needing to conduct mapping** should alleviate confusion as to which units of competency are acceptable and not acceptable for credit transfer.”

6. Can credit transfers be applied across different AQF levels?

“Credit transfer is offered for a unit of competency or module, and not for a qualification. Units of competency are not assigned an AQF level.

Where a student has been found competent in a unit of competency, they have demonstrated they have met all requirements of that unit. A student may complete a unit of competency as part of a qualification and then seek to have that unit recognised in another qualification that may be of a different AQF level.

Providing the qualification packaging rules allow it, WAIFS must accept and provide credit to the student for that unit of competency.”

<https://www.asqa.gov.au/faqs/can-credit-transfers-be-applied-across-different-aqf-levels>

7. Credit Transfer – Procedure for applying for Credit Transfer and Outcome Management

Policy and Procedure

Applications for course credit transfer will only be accepted if:

- (i) A Course Credit Application form is submitted with all required supporting documents, and
- (ii) The student is enrolled in an approved course of WAIFS.

How does a candidate start the process?

Step 1: Complete (fully and accurately) a signed Course Credit Application Form and return to WAIFS with full supporting documentation, as required by WAIFS

Step 2: Course credit/CT outcome will be notified by WAIFS directly to the student – by email and within 7 working days of:

- A fully and accurately completed and signed Course Credit Application Form
- All documents required by WAIFS

Having been submitted to WAIFS.

Step 3: Course duration is amended (if applicable) and Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) duration is adjusted in PRISMS (if applicable) to reflect reduction in study period.

8. Credit Transfer – Fee for Credit Transfer processing = \$NIL

Where an application is made for Credit Transfer, no fee is payable for the credit transfer application.

Where an applicant seeks Credit Transfer AND IT IS GRANTED:

- (i) Prior to enrolment or up to week 4 of their course - the fee for that unit will generally not be charged and course fees will be adjusted with any fee reduction being taken from the last scheduled payment for that unit;
- (ii) After the delivery of the unit (Even if prior to week 4 of the course) - the fee for that unit will generally be charged and course fees will NOT be adjusted



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For emphasis and to clarify: If the Credit Transfer Application Form is submitted after week 4 of course commencement OR after the unit/s has/have been delivered, Credit Transfer may be granted however any credit transfer granted DOES NOT qualify for a refund or fee adjustment.

9. Applying for Credit Transfer with WAIFS

Step 1 – Course Credit Application Form completed

An Application for Course Credit Transfer Form is available:

- (i) On WAIFS' website www.waifs.wa.edu.au
- (ii) From WAIFS' reception on campus
- (iii) By emailing admissions@waifs.wa.edu.au and requesting a Course Credit Application Form

A student fully and accurately completes and signs a Course Credit Application Form

A student provides all supporting documents as required by WAIFS which confirm the requested CT (detailed on the form).

A student submits the Course Credit Application Form (with all required supporting documents) to admissions@waifs.wa.edu.au or returns the hard copies to WAIFS' reception.

Step 2 – Course Credit Outcome – Student Notified

The outcome of the Course Credit Application will be notified to the student in writing (generally by email) and within 7 working days of both the fully and accurately completed and signed Course Credit Application Form and ALL WAIFS' required supporting documentation having been provided to WAIFS.

If a student does not accept the amount of CT granted, they are informed that they can access the WAIFS' Complaints and Appeals process, details of which can be found at www.waifs.wa.edu.au

Step 3 – Course Credit Outcome – Course Duration Amendment (if applicable)

For international students:

If WAIFS grants course credit/CT which leads to a shortening of a student's course before the student visa is granted, the student will be informed and the CoE will be amended in PRISMS to indicate the actual net course duration for the course.

If the course credit/CT granted will not affect the duration of the course, WAIFS records the course credit/CT in the student's file but does not need to take any other action.

If the course credit/CT granted will affect the duration of the course, an appropriate employee of the admissions department records a change of course duration on PRISMS. To do this, an appropriate employee of the admissions department uses the Student Course Variation function and indicates that the student has requested a change to the existing enrolment. An appropriate employee of the admissions department then chooses 'transfer student into same course' and then changes the end date of the course. This process will result in the creation of a new CoE (with the revised end date) and the cancellation of the original CoE.

An appropriate employee of the admissions department will report the change of course duration to Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) via PRISMS within 18 days after the event if the student is under 18 years of age and within 31 days after the event for all other students as specified under Section 19 (1A) (a) and (b) of the ESOS Act.

10. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) – What is it?

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is an assessment of skills and knowledge a student has acquired through previous training, work or life experience which are relevant to their course. A student can be granted part or all of a unit of competency by RPL.



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Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means an assessment process that assesses the competency/s of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses.

- formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree);
- non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, in-house professional development programs conducted by a business); and
- informal learning refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities (for example the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through several years as a sales representative).

You can use a variety of documentation to support your application for RPL. This includes, but is not limited to:

- records of completed training
- assessment items
- assessment records
- declarations from a student's employer, and/or
- a copy of student records provided by ASQA.

A superseded non-equivalent unit of competency can be used as part of an RPL process toward the award of a current unit of competency.

However, **currency is a particular risk with recognition of prior learning**. WAIFS may be presented with evidence gathered over a number of years, including evidence of competency from a superseded non-equivalent unit of competency. This does not mean the superseded non-equivalent unit is not valid; however, you must ensure there is sufficient evidence of the person's competence at the time you make the assessment decision.

RPL may use different assessment methods, but they are no less and no more rigorous than conventional methods of assessing competence in the VET sector.

To recognise prior learning it is necessary to:

- Ensure that candidates know that RPL provides an alternative pathway to course attendance (through the availability of this policy on WAIFS website)
- Determine in consultation with the candidate, the learning, skills and knowledge that the candidate is able to demonstrate against the learning outcomes or performance criteria of the course or qualification for which the candidate is seeking entry or the award of credit.
- Determine whether any further evidence is needed to support the claim of competence and arrange for appropriate additional learning experiences or gap training where appropriate.
- Conduct an assessment(s) that confirm(s) competence.

To make RPL a user-friendly assessment pathway, assessors need to adopt a flexible and interactive approach, and provide information, advice and feedback to RPL candidates in the same way that they provide support and assistance to all candidates seeking to have their skills developed and assessed.

It is particularly important when candidates are not engaged in a structured learning program that they receive advice about what is required of them and that they are not being constricted by inappropriately applied paper-based or knowledge-based assessment methods.

The nature of the support provided may differ from the support which is made available to other candidates, but the level and quality of that support will influence outcomes for candidates seeking RPL in the same ways as it influences other candidates.



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11. RPL – Fees for RPL processing

- Application Fee - \$250 – non-refundable
- Per Unit RPL Fee – will be advised to a student before RPL is commenced in writing by email. Fees vary based on the unit of competency.
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12. Applying for RPL with WAIFS

Policy and Procedure

Applications for recognition of prior learning will only be accepted if:

- Recognition of Prior Learning Application form is fully and accurately completed and signed and submitted with all required supporting documents (as required by WAIFS) and a payment receipt (confirming payment of AUD\$250) to admissions@waifs.wa.edu.au or in person to WAIFS' reception, and
- The student is enrolled in an approved course of WAIFS, and
- The appropriate fee has been paid (an AUD\$250 application fee is payable to start the RPL process).

How does a candidate start the process?

Step 1: Complete a Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form (fully and accurately) and sign and submit the form with all required supporting documents (as required by WAIFS) to admissions@waifs.wa.edu.au or in person to WAIFS' reception, and

Step 2: Discuss with Trainer/Assessor (if required) – initial interview with the assessor/self-evaluation process

Step 3: RPL outcome will be notified by WAIFS followed by detailed instructions

Step 1 – RPL Application

An application for Recognition of Prior Learning form is available on WAIFS' website or from reception on campus.

An AUD\$250 application fee must be paid to start the process. There is no refund of the application fee if a student's RPL application/assessment is fully or partially unsuccessful.

As noted in "Recognition of Prior Learning: An Assessment Resource for VET practitioners" 5th Edition 2013 <http://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A65728> it is better to use plain English (not training package terminology) and the application form is therefore a simple one.

Some examples of documentary evidence that can support the process include but are not limited to:

- General employment document
- Resume
- Position description or job description
- Results of any assessments, certificate, statement of attainment, transcript
- Details of in-house courses, training programs, orientation, induction
- References or letters from employers and or supervisors
- Workplace documents
- Diaries/task sheets
- Samples of documents that you have produced
- Emails/letters
- Occupational Health & Safety documentation
- Copies of presentations

These items may be used to support the candidate's claim to competency throughout the RPL process. However, they should not be seen as a sole or sufficient determinant of competence, which is more properly and effectively assessed through interaction, dialogue and the practical demonstration of tasks.

Our Assessor will assist candidates during the RPL process to determine exactly what evidence is required. Candidates will also need to supply contact details of one or two work referees who can confirm the currency of skills and knowledge.



Note: Confidentiality issues

It is important that sensitive information is not included as part of your supporting documentation. You may need authorisation from your supervisor to use some of your evidence, so it is always best to check the privacy and confidentiality policies of the organisation. Client names should be deleted and financial figures or other personal details should be blacked out and made unidentifiable.

Step 2 – Conversation with Assessor or Practical demonstration of your skills

An assessor will review the information you have provided (usually with the candidate) and begin to match up the candidate's skills to the units/subjects in the qualification. At the point of the initial interview, the candidate will have the opportunity to discuss and identify his or her previous experience with the assessor who will understand the industry experience and conduct a competency conversation. The candidate will be required to answer business related questions to identify the current skills.

This component of the RPL assessment process provides an opportunity for the candidate and the assessor to have a professional conversation about the candidate's required knowledge and skills.

It may comprise a series of direct questions or could be a list of topics for discussion drawn from the list of required skills and knowledge. Discussion around topics may provide an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate a broader area of knowledge and experience and may elicit more information than direct questioning. Appropriate responses to questions or topics that should be covered in the conversation should be included as these will support the assessor in probing for more specific information.

If the applicant is not able to attend the initial interview with the assessor and it is intended that if an applicant thinks they may be eligible for RPL they complete the form and might be given a self-evaluation tool where they can more accurately assess their 'prior learning' against the training package requirements for the unit/s in which they are applying for RPL. The self-evaluation tool provides an opportunity for the candidate to self-determine their level of experience and knowledge in the relevant industry. It also provides an overview of the level of the candidate's background experience to assist the assessor to determine if the candidate is likely to be a successful candidate for RPL. It is also an important first step in identifying where the candidate may have gaps in training skills and knowledge and to decide whether to proceed with the RPL process.

The assessor might conduct a practical skills test at the candidate's workplace (if appropriate) or at another suitable venue (e.g. simulated workplace environment). This, again, is an opportunity to demonstrate the level of competence of the candidate. This assessment will be focused on skills that are required in the qualification and the assessor will identify the skills that he/she will want you to demonstrate.

Assessor instructions should indicate which questions/topics are critical to the assessment. An appropriate recording mechanism could be included—such as a purpose-built form and/or a digital recorder—to create a reliable record of the interview for later reference.



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Step 3 – RPL Assessment Outcome

An appropriate employee of WAIFS will conduct a final assessment on the student's RPL request and approve/decline the RPL request and let the candidate know through an email confirmation within 10 working days.

Once the steps have been completed, the trainer can complete the unit RPL Coversheet and sign. Students are required to sign (or otherwise accept) the unit RPL Coversheet. (If a student does not accept the amount of RPL granted, they are informed that they can access the WAIFS Complaints and Appeals process, details of which can be found at www.waifs.wa.edu.au). A copy of unit RPL Coversheet will be kept on the student's file.

If WAIFS grants full/partial RPL which leads to a shortening of the student's course before the student visa is granted, the student's CoE will indicate the actual net course duration for the course.

If the RPL granted **will not affect the duration of the course**, WAIFS records the RPL in the student's file but does not need to take any other action.

If the RPL granted **will affect the duration of the course**, an appropriate employee of the admissions department records a change of course duration on PRISMS. To do this, an appropriate employee of the admissions department uses the Student Course Variation function and indicates that the student has requested a change to the existing enrolment. An appropriate employee of the admissions department then chooses 'transfer student into same course' and then changes the end date of the course. This process will result in the creation of a new CoE (with the revised end date) and the cancellation of the original CoE.

An appropriate employee of the admissions department will report the change of course duration to Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) via PRISMS within 18 days after the event if the student is under 18 years of age and within 31 days after the event for all other students as specified under Section 19 (1A) (a) and (b) of the ESOS Act.

Note: Recognition of prior learning (RPL) - and any course credit given as a result of the RPL process - are applicable only to the course in which the student is enrolled at the time of applying for RPL. If a student changes courses, any RPL/course credit granted will be reassessed to ensure that it still remains appropriate.