RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Policy & Procedure

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide for recognition of various types of a candidate's credentialed and non-credentialed learning, whilst maintaining the integrity and standards of the defined learning outcomes of the specific course of study.

Course credit allows exemption from enrolment in one or more unit(s) of competency (subjects) of a course as a result of previous study, experience or skills recognition of competency currently held. It includes Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to potential and current students seeking recognition for specified units of competency within a particular qualification or other training product on the cope of registration of AFTT.

3. DEFINITIONS

All definitions are located in the *VET Glossary*.

Credit AFTT recognises and provides credit to learners for current/equivalent units of competency unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this) where these are evidenced by:
   a) AQF certification documentation issued by any other RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation; or
   b) Authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar

Such credit only applies for units of competency that are the same as or stated as being equivalent to units of competency which are specified as contributing to the award of the qualification.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is 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 qualifications or VET accredited courses at www.training.gov.au.

   a) 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).
   b) 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
   c) Informal learning refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby, or leisure activities (for example, the acquisition of acting, film or stage management skills developed through several years' experience in the industry).

4. POLICY

The granting of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit /Credit Transfer will be established and maintained in accordance with the Standards for RTOs.

AFTT implements an assessment system that ensures that VET assessment (including Recognition of Prior Learning) complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited programs conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence contained in the table below.

Recognition of Prior Learning must be structured to minimise the cost and time to applicants whilst retaining the integrity required by the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations to recognise competencies in accordance with the requirements of Training Packages or Curriculum documents.

AFTT ensures that any applicant for Recognition of Prior Learning is provided with:
- Information about the competencies and performance criteria relevant to their Recognition of Prior Learning application;
- Adequate information and support to enable the applicant to gather reliable evidence of competency;
- Opportunities to obtain feedback on the evidence proposed prior to finalisation of the application;
- Competencies for which RPL is being requested may have been developed through formal education and training, through work experience, training or through life experiences;
- A written statement or references from an appropriate supervisory person is required to verify or confirm authorship of any workplace documentation submitted.

Students who are eligible for credit for previously achieved current or equivalent units of competency are not required to undertake a RPL process.

This policy is based on the following assumptions:
- Students must apply for RPL and/or Credit Transfers;
- AFTT grants RPL and/or Credit Transfers based on an application and assessment of the required evidence;
- Once the RPL and/or Credit Transfer has been granted, unless compelling educational reasons are presented, it will not be rescinded.

Principles of Assessment

Assessment Principles	
Principle	Definition
Fairness	The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner's needs. The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.
Flexibility	Assessment is flexible to the learner by: reflecting the learner's needs; assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.

Assessment Principles	
Validity	Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner. Validity requires: • assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance; • assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application; • assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Reliability	Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.

Rules of Evidence	
Validity	The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge, and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Sufficiency	The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity, and relevance of the assessment evidence allows a judgement to be made of a learner's competency.
Authenticity	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.
Currency	The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

5. PROCEDURE

In an RPL pathway, the candidate provides current, and quality evidence of their competency against the relevant unit of competency. This process may be directed by the candidate and verified by the Head of Department or delegate. Where the outcomes of this process indicate that the candidate is competent, structured training is not required.

As with all assessment, the Head of Department or delegate must be confident that the evidence indicates that the candidate is currently competent against the endorsed unit of competency. This evidence may take a variety of forms and might include certification, references from past employers, testimonials from clients, work samples and/or observation of the candidate.

The onus is on candidates to provide sufficient evidence to satisfy the Head of Department or delegate that they currently hold the relevant competencies.

In judging evidence, the Head of Department or delegate must ensure that the evidence of prior learning is:
• Authentic - the candidate's own work;
• Valid - directly related to the current version of the relevant endorsed unit of competency;
• Reliable - shows that the candidate consistently meets the endorsed unit of competency;
• Current - reflects the candidate's current capacity to perform the aspect of the work covered by the endorsed unit of competency; and

- Sufficient - covers the full range of elements in the relevant unit of competency and addresses the four (4) dimensions of competency, namely task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills, and job/role environment skills.

The applicant is informed prior to enrolment and at induction that if they have relevant prior learning then they may be eligible for RPL.   The applicant has to identify the unit(s) for which they want to have recognition using the RPL application form. The student discusses this with the nominated Head of Department or delegate who will provide the applicant with information about the types of evidence that can best be used to support their RPL application. The applicant completes the RPL application form, which is provided to the Student Admissions team together with the required fee.

Upon receipt of the RPL application form, the applicant will be provided with a copy of the unit of competency from the National Register. The applicant must state, in general terms, the basis of their claim for RPL, and provide evidence consistent with the ***Performance evidence of the unit of competency.***
For example, for the unit *CUAPPR603 Engage in the business of creative practice,* evidence of the ability to:
- research and evaluate a broad range of complex and varied business information, including business structures, financial considerations, and legal rights and obligations;
- develop cohesive approaches and strategies, that are grounded in research and analysis, for developing and managing own practice;
- interact with other professionals on management and development issues;
- identify professional work opportunities within and beyond the creative sectors, including new and emerging opportunities; and
- apply relevant legal and moral rights and obligations in own practice.

If the evidence provided does not satisfactorily meet the ***Performance evidence requirements of the unit of competency*** then the applicant is advised that the application for RPL is unsuccessful.
If the evidence provided satisfactorily meets the ***Performance evidence of the unit of competency*** then the applicant, following further discussion with the Head of Department or delegate, submits additional evidence to demonstrate the ***Knowledge evidence*** requirements.

The student may be requested to undertake additional assessment of knowledge, if the evidence provided is not conclusive. When the applicant has provided evidence that demonstrates all requirements of the unit of competency, AFTT will advise the applicant, in writing, with acknowledgement of the RPL awarded.

RPL application documentation, assessment processes and outcomes are placed in the student's file. Granting of RPL is recorded as a competent unit outcome in the student's file. Applicants may use the AFTT appeal procedures if dissatisfied with the outcome of their RPL applications.

After any RPL is granted, the student's record and file is amended accordingly - (for international students, Department of Education via PRISMS will be notified if the success of RPL results in the period of study being shortened and a new Coe issued).

Samples of RPL granted will be validated within the assessment validation process of AFTT References – Policy and Procedure Assessment Validation.

6. FEES

A fee of two hundred dollars ($200) per unit of competency is incurred for the RPL assessment. Payment must be made with the RPL application. RPL assessment will not commence until payment is received.

There is no refund of the RPL fee should the student be deemed as unsuccessful in RPL.

If recognition of prior learning is assessed as unfavourable, the student will have the chance to appeal the decision at little or no cost.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

7.1. AFTT Glossary

7.2. Complaints and Appeals Policy and associated procedures

7.3. Assessment Management Policy and Procedure (VET)

7.4. Assessment Validation Policy and Procedure (VET)

7.5. Academic Progression Policy and Procedure (VET)

7.6. AFTT STUDENT HANDBOOK

8. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

8.1. Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025

8.2. Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015

8.3. User Guide Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

8.4. Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

8.5. Australian Qualification Framework (AQF)

8.6. Data Provision Requirements 2012

8.7. National Vocational Education and Training Act 2011

8.8. ESOS National Code 2018

8.9. National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

8.10. Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)

9. POSITIONS RESPONSIBLE

9.1. Campus Manager

9.2. Head/s of Department

9.3. Head of Student Services and Admin

9.4. Administration

10. APPROVAL INFORMATION

Approval Authority	Quality Education and Risk Committee (QERC)
Health Check approval authority	AFTT CEO
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3.0	QERC	02/02/2022	03/02/2022	New template	Superseded
4.0	QERC	30/06/2025	01/07/2025	Std's for RTO's 2025	Current

Acknowledgement

This policy was initially developed with reference to the relevant policies and procedures of the following institutions:

o *Federation University Australia*