

Recognition of Prior Learning

Policy No: RTO1.5

Responsibility for Policy:	Executive General Manager, Policy and Programs
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Relevant RTO Standards	1.8, 1.12, 3.5
Associated Forms, etc	RPL Application Form

AIM

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a principle that is central to the VET education system, ensuring that it remains relevant and equitable. The Institute is committed to making available up to date and relevant recognition of prior learning information to all students at enrolment and whilst enrolled. All applications for RPL and decisions will be effected in a timely and consistent manner.

1. WHAT IS RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)?

RPL is a form of assessment of a learner's competence. The assessment process uses evidence from formal, non-formal and informal learning that may have been acquired by the learner to assess their competency(s) (rather than from specific assessment activities directed by the RTO). The assessment determines the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses. 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.

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).

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).

2. HOW DO WE ASSESS RPL APPLICATIONS?

Where assessment is completed via RPL, the requirements of the Standards do not change, although the variety of evidence gathered and considered in making an assessment decision may be greater than when assessment is completed through 'traditional' assessment activities. Similarly, distance and online delivery methods may change the type of evidence considered, although the same requirements apply. Regardless of the mode of delivery or engagement, all assessment must meet the same standards.

Evidence of RPL may be collected in a number of different ways (including face-to-face interview, third party reports, video, and transcript of results).

We will take into account the following factors when assessing RPL applications:

- The principles of assessment and the rules of evidence (see Policy RTO 1.1).
- The currency of the evidence presented may impact on its validity.

3. PROVIDING CREDIT FOR PRIOR STUDIES

*Note that providing credit for previous studies is not a RPL process. RPL is a **form of assessment** of the competence of a person, while providing credit is recognising the equivalence of studies previously undertaken and completed successfully.*

The Institute will accept and provide credit to learners for units of competency and/or modules (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this) in all cases where learner provides suitable evidence of completion. This can be in the form of:

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

The Institute will authenticate all documentation provided as evidence of prior studies by contacting the organisation that issued the document(s) and confirming the content is valid.

AQF authorised issuing organisations include universities. If a learner provides evidence in the form of a university qualification, the Institute will conduct an analysis as to the equivalence of the study completed with the relevant unit/s or module/s before any credit is granted.

The Institute is not obliged to issue a qualification or statement of attainment that is achieved wholly through recognition of units and/or modules completed at another RTO or RTOs.