

# RTO 1.05 Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer

## 1. Policy Purpose

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a principle that is central to the VET education system, enabling all types of learning to be formally accredited through assessment-only processes. It is an important justice-seeking educational practice designed to acknowledge different learning styles and educational experiences, including skills and wisdom from lived experience. RPL may be granted whether competencies are gained through work and life experience, formal qualifications, or non-accredited courses. It is a requirement for RTOs to offer RPL to all students. This policy specifies the RTO requirements for granting recognition of prior learning. This includes the types of learning that may be recognised, the procedures for recognition and the outcomes of recognition, including credit transfer as a separate, related process.

## 2. Policy Statement

Recognition of prior learning will be offered to all students of The Institute. RPL assessment will comply with the principles of assessment and rules of evidence. Flexible modes of evidence-gathering and moderation of assessment outcomes will be applied to support access and equity.

## 3. Scope

This Policy applies to all current and prospective students of The Institute seeking recognition of prior learning.

## 4. Definitions

- 4.1 **AQF** - the Australian Qualifications Framework.
- 4.2 **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** – an assessment-only process to recognise competencies acquired through formal, informal or non-formal learning
- 4.3 **RTO** - Registered Training Organisation.
- 4.4 **The Institute** – Relationships Australia South Australia Limited trading as The Australian Institute of Social Relations.

## 5. Procedures

5.1. RPL is a form of assessment of a learner's competence. The RPL assessment process uses evidence from formal, non-formal and informal learning (for example through life and work experience or non-accredited training) that the learner has acquired.

- 5.1.1. 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).
- 5.1.2. 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).

- 5.1.3. 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).
- 5.2. The RPL assessment determines the extent to which an individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses.
- 5.3. 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.
- 5.4. 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.
- 5.5. 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.
- 5.6. 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).
- 5.7. The following factors will be taken into account when assessing RPL applications:
  - 5.7.1. The principles of assessment and the rules of evidence (see Policy RTO 1.1).
  - 5.7.2. The currency of the evidence presented may impact its validity.

#### **5.8 CREDIT TRANSFER:**

- 5.8.1. Providing credit for previous formal studies is not an 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.
- 5.8.2. The Institute will accept and provide credit to learners for units of competency and/or modules in all cases where the learner provides formal evidence of completion (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this). 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.
- 5.8.3. 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.
- 5.8.4. Learners may provide evidence of qualifications from other AQF-authorised organisations (such as universities) that are not aligned to national competency standards. In this case 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.
- 5.8.5. 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.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1. The Institute is responsible for:

- 6.1.1. making available up to date and relevant recognition of prior learning information to all students at enrolment and whilst enrolled.
- 6.1.2. responding to all applications for RPL and implementing decisions in a timely and consistent manner.

6.2. The Manager, Education and Training is responsible for:

- 6.2.1. the application of this Policy and may delegate all or part of it to a trainer/Assessor of The Institute who holds a TAE qualification.

6.3. The Manager, Education and Training or Trainer/Assessor is responsible to:

- 6.3.1. determine the method by which individual applications for recognition will be assessed and follow this method for all assessments.
- 6.3.2. formulate rules that regulate the automatic granting of recognition to applicants for specified prior study or work experience, account for the time elapsed between the original study and the application for recognition and enable the efficient resolution of applications administratively.
- 6.3.3. maintain a record of precedents to facilitate the formulation and future application of the above rules.

Appendix

STANDARDS FOR REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS 2015

Conduct effective assessment

Clause 1.8

The RTO implements an assessment system that ensures that assessment (including recognition of prior learning):

- complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course
- is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment contained in Table 1.8-1 and the Rules of Evidence contained in Table 1.8-2.

Table 1.8-1: Principles of assessment

Fairness	<p>The individual learner’s needs are considered in the assessment process.</p> <p>Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner’s needs.</p> <p>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.</p>
Flexibility	<p>Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflecting the learner’s needs</li> <li>• assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
Validity	<p>Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.</p> <p>Validity requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application</li> <li>• assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations</li> <li>• judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.</li> </ul>
Reliability	<p>Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.</p>

**Table 1.8-2: 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 enables 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.