



# RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING AND COURSE CREDIT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

## Purpose

This policy describes the commitment of ACE to provide all domestic students and international students with a fair and accessible process for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). This policy outlines the process for Recognition of Prior Learning & Course Credit for all students before enrolment and assessing the amount of training ACE will provide keeping in mind the student's existing skills and knowledge. The RPL process acknowledges the skills, knowledge, performance outcomes and learning achieved prior to undertaking a program of study with ACE through either formal, non-formal or informal learning.

This policy and procedure is designed to ensure ACE complies with the 2022 Standard VET Funding Contract - Skills First Program, 2022 Guidelines about Eligibility Skills First Program; Skills Quality Charter, 2022 Guidelines about Apprenticeship / Traineeship Training Delivery - Skills First Program; VET Quality Framework, USI Registry requirements, National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 and the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 which states:

- *"The RTO determines the support needs of individual learners and provides access to the educational and support services necessary for the individual learner to meet the requirements of the training product as specified in training packages or VET accredited courses."* (Standard 1.7)
- *"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:*
  - *AQF certification documentation issued by any other RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation, or*
  - *authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar"* (Standard 3.5)
- *"Accurate and accessible information about an RTO, its services and performance is available to inform prospective and current learners and clients."* (Standard 4)
- *"Each learner is properly informed and protected ".* (Standard 5)

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Marketing
- Student Engagement Prior to Enrolment - Domestic and International
- Pre-Training Review (Domestic)
- Formalisation of Enrolment Policy and Procedure – Domestic and International

## Scope

This document applies to all domestic students and international students applying for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Course Credit and to all staff involved in the RPL and Course Credit process.

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## Definitions

AQF certification documentation	is the set of official documents that confirms that an AQF qualification or statement of attainment has been issued to an individual.
AQF qualification	means an AQF qualification type endorsed in a training package or accredited in a VET accredited course.
Authenticated VET transcript	has the meaning given in the <i>Student Identifiers Act 2014</i> which means a document prepared by the Registrar that sets out information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) that relates to the VET undertaken by the individual; and</li> <li>(b) that is prescribed by the regulations.</li> </ul>
Course Credit	Exemption from enrolment in a particular part of the course as a result of previous study, experience or recognition of a competency currently held. Includes academic credit and recognition of prior learning.
Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE):	A document, provided electronically (via PRISMS), which is issued by the registered provider to intending overseas students and which must accompany their application for a student visa. It confirms the overseas student's eligibility to enrol in the particular course of the registered provider.
PRISMS:	The Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) is the system used to process information given to the Secretary of DET by registered providers.
Learner/Students	means a person being trained and/or assessed by the RTO for the purpose of issuing AQF certification documentation.
Statement of attainment	means a statement issued to a person confirming that the person has satisfied the requirements of the unit/s of competency or accredited short course specified in the statement.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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 or university degree);</li> <li>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</li> <li>c. 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).</li> </ul>



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## Policy

### 1.0 General

- 1.1 ACE shall assess and record Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and Course Credit.
- 1.2 If ACE decides to grant RPL or Course Credits, which reduces the international student's course length, ACE shall:
  - 1.2.1 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;
  - 1.2.2 inform the student of the reduced course duration (if applicable) and issue a Certificate of Enrolment (CoE) for the reduced duration of the course; and
  - 1.2.3 report any change in course duration in PRISMS if RPL or course credit is granted after the overseas student's visa is granted.

### 2.0 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- 2.1 ACE does not have current mechanisms in place to process and assess informal learning or work experience gained overseas by students.
- 2.2 ACE shall advertise the availability of RPL prior to enrolment through the Pre-Enrolment Course Flyers, on its website and in the Pre-Enrolment Brochure. ACE shall provide sufficient information on the requirements for this process in order for the student to self-assess whether RPL is an appropriate pathway that can be used for the award of credit in a program or qualification, leading to the partial or full completion of the requirements for that program or qualification.
- 2.3 ACE shall offer RPL to students to assess their previously acquired skills and knowledge, which were achieved either through formal, non-formal or informal learning, against the requirements of a qualification or a unit of competence, where:
  - a. formal learning shall refer 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);
  - b. non-formal learning shall refer 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 shall refer 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).
- 2.4 ACE shall collect from the student applying for RPL an evidence portfolio to support the claim of prior learning. Evidence may include but not limited to:
  - a. Demonstration of skill or competence, (supplemented by assessment of the knowledge underpinning such skills);
  - b. Reflective papers, journals or portfolios that relate past learning to the learning or competency outcomes of the current unit of competence;
  - c. Provision of examples of the student's work drawn from the workplace, social, community or other setting in which the student applies their learning, skill or competence;
  - d. testimonials of learning, skill or competence; or
  - e. a combination of any of the above.

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## 3.0 Course Credit

- 3.1 ACE shall accept and provide credit to students for nationally endorsed qualifications, skill sets and 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
- 3.2 Students shall not be required to repeat any unit or module in which they have already been assessed as competent unless regulatory requirement or license condition (including an industry licensing scheme) requires this.
- 3.3 In the case of any non-equivalent units of competency, ACE shall complete a gap analysis to determine the equivalence of the study completed with the relevant units or modules before granting any credit.
  - a. When the unit of competency has been reviewed and this has resulted in minor changes to the unit code or title (e.g., A code to B code), but the outcomes of the unit have remained substantially the same and there is at least 80% commonality with the original unit;
  - b. When the unit has been transferred from another Training Package/curriculum and recoded, but the learning outcomes remain the same.
- 3.4 Before providing credit on the basis of a qualification, statement of attainment or record of results, ACE shall authenticate the information either by directly accessing the USI transcript online or by contacting the organisation that issued the document to confirm the content is valid.
- 3.5 ACE shall not be obliged to issue a qualification or statement of attainment that is achieved wholly through recognition of units and/or modules completed at another RTO.

## Procedures

### 1.0 Recognition of Prior Learning

- 1.1 Stage 1 – Information
  - a. All prospective and enrolling students will be informed prior to enrolment of the opportunity to apply for RPL. Students can apply for RPL for the unit of competency prior to the commencement of delivery of the unit of competency.
  - b. Information provided to students will include:
    - i. RPL can be granted to a student who has demonstrated evidence of prior knowledge and experience in life and work relating to the unit of competency for which recognition is applied;
    - ii. RPL is awarded for a total unit of competency (no partial RPL of a unit of competency will be awarded).
    - iii. Applicable fees - ACE has set fees and charges in place. These fees are detailed on the Fees & Charges Policy and Procedure, which can be found in ACE's website.
- 1.2 Stage 2 – Application
  - a. Students wishing to apply for RPL must request this by completion of the RPL application form from ACE's Head Office or downloading it from ACE's website.

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- b. ACE's Head Office will provide students the RPL Kit for the qualifications/units they are proposing to gain RPL for the qualification or units in their application. The RPL Kit will include the following information:
    - i. What is RPL
    - ii. What evidence to provide to demonstrate the required skills and knowledge relating to the unit of competency for which recognition is being applied for
    - iii. RPL process, including required skills assessment
- 1.3 Stage 3 – Evidence Portfolio
- a. Students must use the information in the RPL kit to evaluate their own competency levels against the unit requirements and compile the RPL portfolio to support their application. Students will gather all the relevant supporting evidence and documentation to demonstrate their competency. Evidence should be displayed in a clear and concise manner within the portfolio. Students must ensure that application forms and evidence documents are completed accurately. (Incomplete applications may not be processed. ACE may request further information before beginning the assessment process).
  - b. Students must forward their completed RPL portfolio and application form to ACE Head Office.
  - c. Upon receipt of the portfolio, ACE staff in charge will forward the portfolio to the nominated assessor for review and assessment against the relevant competency standards. The assessor may arrange an interview with the applicant to confirm the skills and knowledge levels and/or to confirm the authenticity of particular evidence items. Interviews may be conducted face to face or utilising appropriate technology. The Assessor will document the interview in a Competency Conversation Document, which will also form part of the RPL evidence.
  - d. At this stage, the Assessor will be able to identify if extra evidence is required to further support the RPL application, such as practical demonstrations or third party report. Where practical demonstrations are required, the assessor will confirm the details of when and where these will occur. When appropriate, they may be conducted in the applicant's workplace, or in the RTO's simulated environments.
- 1.4 Stage 4 – Assessment
- a. While assessing the evidence, assessors will consider the following:
    - i. Relevance and nature of evidence provided by the applicant;
    - ii. Scope of subject matter covered by the evidence;
    - iii. Whether the evidence is sufficient to enable a judgment of competence to be made in regard to the unit, taking into account the required knowledge and skills and the critical aspects of evidence in the relevant units
  - b. The Admissions Officer will record the assessment judgement on the Record of Assessment (Competent / Not Competent), which will form part of the RPL evidence. The assessment judgement will also be entered into PRISMS.
  - c. In all cases, a copy of the RPL documentation (i.e., completed RPL Kit and evidence portfolio) will be kept in the student's file.
- 1.5 Stage 5 – Outcome
- a. Where RPL is granted, this outcome will be communicated in writing to the student within 10 working days of completion of the assessment. Subsequently, the Qualification/Statement of Attainment will be issued.

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- b. Where RPL is not granted, this outcome will be communicated in writing to the student within 10 working days of completion of the assessment, including reason/s for refusal.
- c. Where RPL is not granted and the student disagrees with the outcome, the student may attempt to resolve the matter with ACE through discussion. However, if the first attempt at resolving the matter fails, the student may appeal using the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure, which can be found on ACE's website. The appeal must be lodged in writing no later than 10 business days from notification of the outcome of the application.

## 2.0 Course Credit

- 2.1 Applicants wishing to apply for Course Credit will indicate their completion of previous studies through the following:
  - Domestic students will acknowledge through Pre- Enrolment Form under Section 3 and providing supporting evidence such as Certificate with record of result or Statement of Attainment of previous formal learning. ACE will conduct a Pre-Training Review to identify any competencies previously acquired (Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) or Credit Transfer).
  - International students will acknowledge through Enrolment Form under Section 2 and providing supporting evidence such as Certificate with record of result or Statement of Attainment of previous formal learning. ACE will conduct an assessment to determine if student has previously acquired competency for units of competency (Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL - Formal Learning)).
- 2.2 The Admissions Officer will inform the applicants of the requirements for granting Course Credit:
  - a. AQF certification documentation such as Certificate with record of results or Statement of Attainment issued by any other RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation; or
  - b. Authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar
  - c. Completed and signed Pre enrolment form (domestic students) or Enrolment form (international students) along with the necessary documents required to process the course credit as per their enrolment application.
- 2.3 The Admissions Officer will verify the authenticity of documents submitted by the following:-
  - a. Qualification Certificate / Statement of Attainment – contact the organisation that issued the qualification / statement of attainment and confirm the validity of content or directly accessing the USI transcript online and printing the USI transcript as the evidence.
  - b. If Original Documents are presented – make copies of these documents and stamp them as “certified” using the stamp kept at ACE head office
  - c. If Certified True Copies of Original Documents are presented – ensuring these are certified from an authorised person which is listed in Section 107A of the Evidence (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1958 – Person who can witness statutory declarations.
- 2.4 The Admissions Officer will then forward the application together with the documents submitted to the Course Coordinator for assessment by a qualified trainer/assessor.
- 2.5 To determine whether the Course Credit can be granted or not, the Course Coordinator or Trainer/Assessor will assess the application by:
  - i. Reviewing the documentary evidence provided
  - ii. Referring to and cross-checking with the units of competency of the qualification from Training.gov.au.

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- 2.6 The Admissions Officer will advise the applicant of the assessment outcome within 10 working days from the date the complete application was received as part of the Letter of Offer and Student Acceptance Agreement.
- 2.7 If the Course Credit is granted, the Admissions Officer will ensure the Letter of Offer and Student Acceptance Agreement documents the following:
  - a. The units of competency for which the student has been granted course credit
  - b. the reduction in course duration (if applicable);
  - c. For international students only - issue a Certificate of Enrolment (CoE) for the reduced duration of the course (if applicable); and report any change in course duration in PRISMS within 14 working days of course credit is granted after the overseas student's visa is granted.
- 2.8 If the Course Credit is refused, the Admissions Officer will advise the student in writing about the outcome and the reason/s for the refusal. Grounds for refusal of Course Credit/s would include, but not be limited to:
  - a. If a qualification or statement of attainment is achieved wholly through recognition of units or modules completed at another RTO or RTOs
  - b. If the documents presented are not complete or are not authenticated as per verification with the indicated RTO.

## 3.0 Fees and Charges

- 3.1 An Administration fee applies to process a Recognition of Prior Learning and is paid by the student at the time of submitting the application. Please refer to the *Fees and Charges Policy* for updated fees information and more information.
- 3.2 ACE does not charge any fees for applications of Credit Transfer.

## Legislative Context

- Standards for RTOs 2015, Clause 3.5 – Accept and provide credit to learners
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, Standard 2 – Recruitment of an overseas student
- 2022 Standard VET Funding Contract – Skills First Program
- 2022 Guidelines about Eligibility Skills First Program;
- 2022 Guidelines about Apprenticeship / Traineeship Training Delivery - Skills First Program

## Related Forms / Documentation

- RPL Kit
- RPL Application Form
- Assessment Record Sheet
- Outcome Letter – RPL
- Letter of Offer & Student Acceptance Agreement

## Responsible Parties

The CEO, Course Coordinator, Trainer/Assessor, Compliance Manager and Admissions Officer are responsible for the use and implementation of this policy and procedures.

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## Version History

Version	Date	Description of changes
8.0	01.03.2022	Updated document to add Version History section; and other minor changes to policy and procedure
7.0	01.03.2021	Currently released version