

## **Policy and Procedure:**

# **Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure**

### **Objective:**

Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) is a process where an individual can use their existing knowledge, skills and experiences gained through life experiences and/or other employment to demonstrate existing competency in particular unit/s. This Policy and Procedure is in place to inform applicants, enrolling students and staff of the Australian Institute of Fitness (AIF) of how to administer Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and the related Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) for any nationally recognised qualification or unit of competency (unit) offered, where appropriate.

This Policy and Procedure also outlines AIF's commitment to mutually recognising units of competencies, accredited courses, skill sets and full qualifications issued by other Registered Training Organisations (RTO), or AQF authorised issuing organisation or authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar of Unique Student Identifier (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this).

### **Effective Date:**

**18 July 2022**

### **Definitions:**

ASQA stands for the Australian Skills Quality Authority, which is the national VET Regulator.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) means the framework for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system, as agreed by the Commonwealth, State and Territory ministerial council with responsibility for higher education. For VET, it refers to all accredited training offered from Certificate I level through to Advanced Diploma levels however also includes the higher education post graduate qualifications through to doctorate level.

Credit Transfer (CT) refers to exemption from enrolment in a particular part of an accredited qualification as a result of previous academic studies of these unit/s of competency and where the completion of study is evidenced and verified by the RTO.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means an assessment process that assesses an individual's 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. It is closely linked to Recognition of Current Competencies, where:

- 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 instructions, 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 from 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).

RTO means Registered Training Organisation, commonly known as a Training Provider or Provider and has the meaning given as defined in the NVR Act 2011.

Unit of Competency means the specification of industry knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance expected in the workplace as defined in the training package. All accredited training is grouped into individual units of competency, which form a full qualification or skill set.

VET means vocational education and training.

**VET Student Loan (VSL) Common Definitions:**

Approved courses are courses delivered only by an approved course provider that has been approved to offer that particular approved course.

CAN means the Commonwealth Assistance Notice which is issued after the Census date and includes information about the Student's enrolment, any HELP debt incurred or Student contribution amounts paid to date and any loan fee incurred.

Census Day is the day the student incurs financial liability for the unit of study. Students may cancel their enrolment by the census day without incurring tuition fees (or a HELP or VET Student Loans debt) for the course or the part of the course.

CHESSN is the Student ID issued as part of the Student's Commonwealth Assessment Notice (CAN).

Covered fees are the amount of the course tuition fees to be covered by a VET Student Loan and is set out on the Student's VET Student Loans Statement of Covered Fees.

Course loan cap means the total amount of loan an eligible student may access for a particular course.

Fee periods are the tuition fees for the course which are proportionately distributed across at least three sequential fee periods. Each fee period contains at least one Census Day. Therefore, there are at least three census days/three units over the course.

Gap fees are the difference between the covered fees and the total tuition fee for a course.

Genuine student is one that has been determined by the RTO as having demonstrated they are reasonably engaged in the course and have completed the student progression requirements.

HELP loan limit is the maximum amount a person can borrow over their lifetime for VET Student Loans, VET FEE HELP, FEE-HELP, and HECS-HELP. (Note, only HECS-HELP incurred after 1 January 2020 counts towards the HELP loan limit). The HELP loan limit is indexed annually on 1 January.

HELP balance is a person's HELP limit minus any VET Student Loans, VET FEE HELP, FEE HELP and HECS-HELP loans they have used.

Provider fee limit is the maximum dollar amount for VET Student Loans that can be paid to an approved course provider for a particular period of time and/or for a particular approved course(s).

Tuition fees are the total fees for the course (including the covered fees plus any gap fee).

Unit of study may comprise a group of units of competency or one unit of study may equal one unit of competency. Rules apply to providers in respect of units of study, such as determining census days, publishing fees, issuing notices, reporting fees and completions, and withdrawal and penalty provisions.

VSL tuition protection levy is a risk-based annual levy, payable by leviable providers, to fund tuition protection arrangements for the VSL program.

**Policy:**

This Policy and Procedure ensures applicant and enrolling student's prior gained competencies, regardless of how they were obtained, are systematically assessed for recognition purposes in alignment with the rules of evidence, through an application process.

For the purposes of ease, RPL and RCC will be referred to as 'RPL' within this Policy and Procedure.

AIF acknowledges and ensures that the same rules and evidence and assessment principles as for all other assessment activities are adhered to in their delivery of RPL services. RPL services are always conducted with the same rigour as any other form of assessment and its RPL training product material is developed to align with the packaging rules of the relevant qualification. This includes review by a qualified Assessor (known as Coach).

In order to grant RPL, AIF Coaches determine whether the RPL student is currently competent against the endorsed industry or enterprise competency standards or outcomes specified in Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) accredited qualifications and courses, through application of a range of assessment strategies.

AIF appreciates the value of workplace and industry experience and recognises that students will acquire vocational skills and knowledge from a variety of sources other than formal training. These skills are legitimate irrespective of how they were acquired and the RPL process is designed to provide validation of such relevant skills, without the need to repeat this learning should RPL be granted.

**Responsibilities  
and  
Accountabilities:**

This version of the policy and procedure and any amendments to related documents, have been authorised by AIF's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Head of Training, as delegated by the CEO, is responsible for ensuring this policy and procedure is implemented at all times across AIF and ensuring that all staff are fully trained in its operation.

AIF's Compliance Coordinator is also responsible for ensuring this policy and procedure and related documents are maintained and up to date through an annual revision, as well as through any ongoing quality activities including audits and feedback.

In accordance with the AIF Code of Conduct, any breach of this policy is dealt with seriously and may result in disciplinary action including termination of employment, depending on the severity of the breach.

Where Team Members consider that significant departures from the principles of this policy have occurred, they are obligated to report it immediately to their Line Manager or iExec Team Member. Failure to do so constitutes a breach of this policy & AIF Code of Conduct.

**Procedure:****Information about RPL**

Applicants who believe they have already obtained current skills and knowledge that would otherwise be covered in the qualification/unit of competence for which they intend to study, or where these skills and knowledge is identified by a Coach, will be encouraged to apply for RPL at the time of enrolment or at least 14 working days prior to the unit/s commencement to allow for sufficient assessment of the evidence submitted. Reference to RPL services is made available to the students in summary through the Success Plan and in the Student Handbook as well as available on the AIF website.

A Student may seek recognition for all relevant training and industry experience of relevant units of competency and qualifications that they have already achieved through applying this Policy and Procedure and which may result in fewer units of competency needing to be completed for the qualification.

**Recognition of Prior Learning/Competencies**

Applicants seeking recognition of prior learning or skills, are required to, in the first instance, submit an RPL Application Form. The receipt of this Form triggers the commencement of the formal RPL process and the RPL candidate will be assigned a Coach to work with the candidate and assess the evidence provided. A Candidate will receive the following documents following this process:

***Step One (Self-Evaluation) provided by Guru or Support Team:***

- RPL Candidate Guide
- Candidate Self-Evaluation Tool.

***Step Two (Evidence Gathering):***

- Workplace Representative Form
- RPL Evidence Table.

Applicants are encouraged to provide as much evidence as possible, which includes but is not limited to:

- Detailed resume
- Verified/certified copies of academic transcripts and/or statements of attainment
- Certificates of participation, awards or letters of commendation
- Duty statements and/or workplace reports
- Registration certificates
- Conference or workshop attendance certificates
- Projects and/or documents developed or implemented
- Samples of real work that support competence in a particular area, for example programs developed for clients
- References or written testimonials from employers or past employers
- stating achievement of competency/ies

- Statements or validations from clients verifying services provided
- Performance appraisal reports
- Video tapes, tape recordings and or photographs of work activities
- Written validation from workplace supervisors
- Position description/s or duty statement/s.

Once these documents and evidence are submitted, the Coach will assess each, using the RPL Assessor Guide prepared for each qualification on AIF's scope of registration.

#### *Step 3: Competency Conversation*

The Coach will organise where they believe that they require further information to satisfy all assessment requirements, arrange to meet with the Student. The purpose of this activity is to seek clarification and to gather any other evidence that may have been omitted, to support the Coach's final decision.

#### *Step 4: Practical Skills Observation*

The Coach will, where required by the Training Package, also organise for a practical skills observation to be undertaken, with the Practical Skills Observation Checklist completed.

A practical skills observation may also form part of a supplementary Competency Conversation, should the assessing Coach require further evidence to ensure that the candidate sufficiently meets all the Training Package requirements and demonstrates all competencies to a satisfactory level.

Wherever relevant, Coaches will also remind students of this assessment option progressively throughout their time in training, in order to provide multiple opportunities for students to engage in the RPL process. Once again, the student must submit their RPL application no later than 14 working days prior to the unit/s commencement to allow for sufficient assessment of the evidence submitted.

#### **RPL Approval**

The Coach will advise the General Manager - Training or delegate of the recommended outcomes of their RPL assessment. It is the responsibility of the General Manager - Training or delegate to review all the evidence and the Coach's judgement, and make a decision on the outcome of the RPL application.

#### **Attendance Credit**

AIF training programs are segmented into sessions and modules. Attendance at specific sessions or modules is optional (not compulsory) if the student has all the competencies covered in the session or module.

#### **Assessment Credit**

Assessments are conducted throughout and at the end of each module and program participation in a specific assessment and judging of competency is not required if the student has all the competencies being assessed in an assessment.

#### **Financial Credit**

Due to the integration of competencies across delivery of sessions, assessments, and modules, as well as the participation quotas applied to all programs, financial credit for a module or program applied for will only be granted at a module or program level, where all competencies have been granted in that module. Where partial completion of a module or program is granted through the RPL process, full payment for the module or program will apply.

**RPL Fees**

RPL applicants are advised that this service will incur a \$200 per unit assessment fee as part of the application, specifically in the RPL Guidelines.

**Ensuring Authenticity**

All employment evidence is verified by the assessing Coach as part of the RPL service, in relation to the authenticity of employment and detailed the industry experience of, and qualifications held by, the letter/s' author/s.

**Outcome of the RPL Service**

Written advice of the outcome will be forwarded to the applicant/student within 3 days of the final decision by the Support team. For units that are granted RPL:

- The student is exempt from having to complete those units
- The units will contribute to the student's eligibility to obtain their full qualification.

The General Manager - Training or delegate will:

- Review and make the appropriate adjustments to the student's planned Training Plan/Course Outline
- Advise the Support team so that full recognition is granted and the appropriate recording is made within aXcelerate, AIF's student management system against the approved units, and that a review of the fees and charges is made with a fee refund organised if eligible
- Stores the student's completed documents and evidence and accompanying evidence on the designated student file in aXcelerate.

Should the General Manager - Training or delegate deem that the student does not fully satisfy all the qualification/unit requirements, he/she will initially request further evidence to be assessed by the Coach, and should that remain insufficient:

- Recommend gap training and/or confirm the original training schedule
- Advise the Support team so that the appropriate recording is made within aXcelerate
- Ensure the documents are stored on the designated student file in aXcelerate..

AIF takes care to ensure that the sequence of any gap training and assessment and the RPL are in accordance with unit of competency requirements, whereby RPL is not granted for competencies where AIF provides training and assessment for the underpinning pre-requisite(s).

**Appealing the RPL Decision**

All RPL applicants have the right to appeal any decision made about their RPL application, in accordance with AIF's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure. Should their application not be successful, the Student is provided with further detail about this procedure as part of the outcome advice of their application.

**Information about Credit Transfer**

Students who have completed a nationally recognised qualification/unit that have the exact same code as a unit currently enrolled/enrolling within will be eligible for credit transfer for the particular unit(s) and will be referred to the Credit Transfer arrangement in place.

Information provided to AIF for the purposes of a credit transfer is verified by way of:

- USI transcript verification, or
- Requests for certified copies of original documents and always through
- Validation with the issuing RTO, using the Student Consent for Qualification Verification Form.

In the case where the issuing RTO has closed, the Support team will contact ASQA to seek a confirmation of previous studies.

If a student indicates that they wish to apply for Credit Transfer, AIF will issue a Credit Transfer Form for the student's completion and advise of the evidence required.

### **Credit Transfer Fees**

There is no cost associated with credit transfer services.

### **Credit Transfer Requirements**

Students may apply for credit transfer at any time but are encouraged to apply before commencing the relevant unit/s of competency. Applications must be received at least 14 days prior to the unit/s commencement to allow time for verification of the evidence submitted.

Credit Transfer may only be awarded for whole units of competency. Where a partial credit is identified the applicant will be advised to consider Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) services.

Credit Transfer arrangement is not contingent on the applicant demonstrating their currency. If the unit has been previously awarded and equivalence can be demonstrated, then the unit will be recognised.

When a student presents a superseded equivalent (as determined by training package) unit of competency for credit transfer, for the purpose of reducing the amount of learning required to achieve the qualification, AIF will grant credit for that unit without needing to map unit outcome. If the unit of competency has been superseded twice or more, despite deemed equivalent, AIF will conduct mapping to assure assessment of competency is still relevant.

Students cannot apply for Credit Transfer for units of competency or qualification which are not included in AIF's scope of registration unless they meet the packaging rules of the chosen qualification.

AIF's Credit Transfer services are always conducted by the Support team and approved by the designated Regional Training Manager.

### **Outcome of the Credit Transfer Service**

Written advice of the outcome will be forwarded to the applicant/student within 3 days of the final decision by the Support team.

For units that are granted credit transfer:

- The student is exempt from having to complete those units, and
- The units will contribute to the student's eligibility to obtain their full qualification.

Should the General Manager - Training or delegate deem that the student satisfies all the qualification/unit requirements, they will:

- Review and make the appropriate adjustments to the student's planned Training Plan/Course Outline
- Advise the Support team to make the appropriate recording within aXcelerate, AIF's student management system and that a review of the fees and charges is made, with a refund organised if required
- Store the student's completed Credit Transfer Form and accompanying evidence on the designated student file in aXcelerate.

Should the designated General Manager - Training or delegate deem that the student does not fully satisfy all the qualification/unit requirements, he/she will initially request further evidence to be assessed, and should that remain insufficient:

- Recommend gap training and/or confirm the original training schedule
- Advise the Support team to make the appropriate recording within aXcelerate, AIF's student management system and that a review of the fees and charges is made
- Store the student's completed Credit Transfer Form and accompanying evidence on the designated student file in aXcelerate.

### **Appealing the Credit Transfer Decision**

All Credit Transfer applicants have the right to appeal any decision made about their Credit Transfer application, in accordance with AIF's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure. Should their application not be successful, the Support team will provide further detail about this procedure as part of the written outcome advice of the application.

### **NSW Smart and Skilled Program - Additional Requirements:**

To report a Credit Transfer, AIF's Support Team always enters the UoC Outcome Code 60, with the start and end dates reflecting the date Credit Transfer was granted.

To report a RPL, AIF's Support Team always enters the UoC Outcome Code 51, with the start and end dates reflecting the dates RPL was undertaken.

AIF's Career Gurus always enter CT and RPL details into the Provider Calculator (refer AIF's Application and Enrolment Policy and Procedure) to ensure accurate fee and charges are set which are reduced where CT and/or RPL are granted.



**VET Student  
Loans (VSL) -  
Additional  
Requirements:**

A Student can access a loan for a tuition fee that covers the charge for the assessment of RPL, as for other tuition fees.

Where a student receives RPL for a particular approved course, AIF will set a lower tuition fee commensurate with the remaining portion of the course the Student must complete.

RPL fees covered by VET Student Loans are treated similar to other tuition fees and are determined sequentially with a reasonably apportioned fee charging (for example, the fees are spread across at least three Census days over three periods for the course).

Where AIF charges purely an RPL assessment fee for a unit, AIF's Support team will report it with a value against the RPL indicator, for example, if the unit is fundamentally a teaching unit, the value against the RPL indicator will be zero.

AIF's Support team uses the HEIMSHELP coding notes and glossary to ensure that it is accurately reporting all RPL activities.

**VET in Schools  
(VETiS) -  
Additional  
Requirements:**

Nil

**Publication:**

This Policy and Procedure is available through ihub and on the website: [www.fitness.edu.au](http://www.fitness.edu.au) as well as summarised in the Student Handbook.

**Related  
documents:**

RPL Application Form  
RPL Candidate Guide  
Candidate Self Evaluation Tool (RPL)  
Workplace Representative Form (RPL)  
Competency Conversation Recording Tool (RPL)  
Practical Skills Observation Checklist (RPL)  
RPL Evidence Guide  
RPL Assessor Guide  
Credit Transfer Application Form  
Student Consent for Qualification Verification Form  
Online Enrolment Form  
New Deal Template  
Complaints and Appeals Form

**Associated  
Policies and  
Procedures:**

Application and Enrolment policy and procedure  
Fees and Charges policy and procedure  
Quality Training and Assessment policy and procedure  
Access and Equity policy and procedure  
Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure

**Amendments:**

Version	Date	Descriptor
3.0	30 July 2021	RPL and CT amalgamated into one policy and procedure. Credit transfer application

		procedure and Form updated to ensure Coach sees verification from issuing RTO.
4.0	12 October 2021	VSL items added. Updated to reflect strengthened RPL Kits.
5.0	18 July 2022	ASQA advice for Credit Transfer for superseded unit of competency deemed equivalent in a training package Page numbers added to P & P
5.2	1 March 2023	Updated to reflect AIF structure

**Authorised by:****Title:** Head of Compliance and Training**Date Authorised:** 1 March 2023