

# Skills Recognition: RPL and Credit Transfers Procedure

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## Introduction

### Purpose

This procedure describes the alternative skills recognition pathways available to enrolled students for the completion of qualifications, and the mechanisms to assess an individual's level of competency and knowledge, based on criteria broader than formal qualifications alone.

### Scope

Skills Recognition, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is available across most courses offered by the Institute. An application can be made for Skills Recognition for competencies, modules or whole qualifications.

Applications can also be made for Credit Transfers across all courses offered by the Institute

## Rationale

### Principles/Statement

The Institute is committed to the provision of Skills Recognition – RPL, and will provide timely advice and support services which assist applicants to identify and achieve their desired outcomes. The Institute acknowledges the full range of an individual's skills and knowledge no matter how this was obtained and encourages individuals to participate in pathways that recognise formal and informal learning.

Skills Recognition, RPL assessment will be evidence- based, and will be fair, timely, equitable, culturally inclusive, flexible, valid and reliable.

## Procedure

### Pre-Training Review

As part of the pre-enrolment process, all TAFE Gippsland applicants for vocational training have a Pre-Training Review conducted. This discussion covers a range of training-related issues (career goals, elective options, literacy and numeracy, special needs etc.), and contributes to the completion of critical enrolment documents, including enrolment form, training plan/individual learning plan. Eligibility and relevance of Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfers (CT) is integral to the Pre-Training Review. Refer to Policy TL 040 Pre-Training Review and Foundation Gap Analysis Procedure.

## Information for students

In accordance with the Standards for RTOs 2015, persons seeking to enrol will be supported in making an informed choice through the provision of information on RPL and CT via the Institute website, a hard copy handout, and through promotional materials used to advertise courses and discussion with a relevant Trainer/Assessor. Enrolled students receive additional information on these options during their student induction sessions for each course.

## Credit Transfers

Students can apply for the recognition of equivalent modules/units to those they have already successfully completed.

Credit transfer is essentially an administrative processes. A Credit Transfer involves neither delivery nor assessment of the student's knowledge.

If the unit or course cannot be deemed equivalent, then by definition some form of assessment must be required to fill the 'gap' and therefore it is not a credit transfer but an RPL or some other form of actual delivery.

The Application for Credit Transfer (TL 006 Form 1) must be completed and evidence of successful completion of the unit/s or module/s attached.

The student is enrolled in the module but not charged a tuition fee.

## When is it a credit transfer?

According to the AQF the credit transfer process involves:

- mapping, comparing and evaluating the extent to which the learning outcome, discipline content and assessment requirements of the individual components of one qualification are equivalent to the learning outcomes, discipline content and assessment requirements of the individual components of another qualification, and
- making a judgment about the credit to be assigned between the matched components of the two qualifications." From Credit Transfer: An Explanation

In essence it all comes down to equivalence. In practice, an assessor will compare the evidence/transcripts provided by the client to determine the extent to which the client's previously achieved course or subject is equivalent to the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards in a qualification they are now undertaking.

Equivalence is often straightforward and objective, such as where an authoritative source such as Training.gov or the relevant Training Package assert explicit equivalence between two units. In other cases "mapping, comparing and evaluating" can be legitimately used to demonstrate equivalence between units that an authoritative source has not identified as equivalent or is silent on. However, while there is some scope for professional judgement, if it is not possible to demonstrate equivalence between the 'learning outcomes, discipline content and assessment requirements' of the two units then they are simply not equivalent, there would be a 'gap' in equivalence and therefore a credit transfer would be unjustifiable.

### Examples:

- A learner will be granted a Credit Transfer in instances where the unit has exactly the same code and title, even if it is not from the same Training Package.
- A learner will be granted a Credit Transfer for any units that either Training.gov or the Training Package explicitly identify as equivalent. See Attachment A for advice on sourcing this information.
- A Credit Transfer will be granted where the unit has been reviewed (mapped) and this has resulted in minor changes to the unit code or title e.g. 'A' code to 'B' code. This indicates that the outcomes of the unit have remained substantially the same.

### Credit Transfer Application Process

1. Credit Transfers should be discussed during a learner's pre-training review.
2. Applications for Credit Transfer must be submitted by the learner or teacher after enrolment and within four weeks of commencement of the course and can be lodged at Customer Service areas at any Campus.
3. TAFE Gippsland will only consider applications for units/modules that have been delivered by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), Higher Education provider or School.
4. In the case of Information Technology/Computer units, TAFE Gippsland will only consider Credit Transfers for those units that have been completed not more than five years previously.
5. For all other units/modules, TAFE Gippsland will only consider Credit Transfers for those units/modules that have been completed not more than ten years previously.
6. Where a learner wishes to make application beyond these timeframes, specific evidence must be provided showing that the content of the units/modules has not changed significantly, and this must be supported by the relevant Course Team.
7. The learner must provide an official academic transcript of modules/units successfully completed and if required an outline of these modules/units.
8. The application and supporting documentation will be assessed by a teacher within the appropriate discipline and must be authorised by the relevant Education Manager within ten working days of the date of receipt of the application. The Education Manager must then forward the application to the SMC.
9. The SMC will verify the application, add the modules/units to the learner enrolment, record the result and forward an academic transcript to the learner.
10. If the application is not approved by the teacher within the appropriate discipline and relevant Education Manager, the Education Manager must attach a written explanation to the Student Management Centre, justifying the decision. The SMC will notify the learner of this outcome and advise the learner of the appropriate Education Manager to contact should they wish to make further enquiries.

## Application Process for RPL

Intending applicants will be provided with:

- The Skills Recognition (RPL) student handout
- Access (electronic/hardcopy/disc) to an outline of elements and performance criteria for each Qualification or module/unit for which Skills Recognition - RPL is to be lodged.
- Information regarding fees and charges including clarification re:
  - government funded Skills Recognition (RPL), if applicable
  - access to Skills Recognition via fee for service where a government funded place is not possible
- A Specific Departmental Application form if applicable.

## Enrolment Process

Steps for the Assessor once a candidate decides to proceed with Recognition of Prior Learning at TAFE Gippsland. Note: It is possible that all types of Skills Recognition might need to be addressed in the Individual Learning Plan. Each type of SR has its own procedure.

1. All interactions with candidate are to be documented e.g. correspondence including emails, file notes as well as the time spent on each task. (For CQI purposes)
2. An Individual Learning Plan is prepared with the student (is also applicable for student seeking RPL during course delivery)
3. Ensure that a correctly filled in Enrolment form and Unique Student Identifier form are completed by applicant. Ensure certified copies of documents are provided or that original documents are sighted by TAFE Gippsland personnel authorized to do so
4. Once the applicant is enrolled all other paperwork can be distributed to the student:
  - Provide a copy of the Skills Recognition Guide (do not distribute until after enrolment)
  - Provide a copy of their Individual Learning Plan
  - Ask the student to sign the Procedural Checklist (this is a checklist of all actions required of the Assessor up to the completion of the assessment (see Attachment) The student will sign the section that says that they have received all relevant information prior to enrolment. For students that cannot attend in person an acknowledgement email will be required. The Assessor retains the Checklist to guide them and ensure proper process is followed

## **VET STUDENT LOAN**

Where a course of study at Diploma level or above is eligible for VET STUDENT LOAN then Tuition Fees for RPL will be in accordance with the VET STUDENT LOAN and Student Review Procedure TL 029.

### **Assessment of the Evidence Portfolio**

The process used to assess Skills Recognition - RPL evidence portfolios may involve one or more of the following:

- participation in exactly the same or modified versions of the assessment that the student would be required to complete as part of the full course;
- assessment based on a portfolio of evidence;
- direct observation of demonstration of skill or competence;
- professional conversations with candidate;
- reflective papers, journals or portfolios that relate past learning to the learning or competency outcomes of the current course or qualification;
- 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;
- testimonials of learning, skill or competence;
- other forms of evidence as discussed with the Assessor, and
- combinations of any of the above.

Upon receipt of an evidence portfolio and enrolment, the relevant Team Manager or Curriculum co-ordinator will assign one or more appropriately qualified assessors to assess the application as per the Australian Qualifications Framework 'National Principles and Operational Guidelines for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)'. Where more than one assessor is assigned, one assessor will be designated the role of lead assessor responsible for managing communication with the applicant.

Where a Skills Recognition - RPL applicant lodges an evidence portfolio seeking recognition for units /modules within a Certificate IV or above, and/or modules comprising more than 50% of the nominal hours within a qualification, then the Team Manager or Curriculum Co-ordinator will form a panel with a minimum of two qualified assessors, one of whom must be a content expert, to undertake the Skills Recognition - RPL assessment process.

While completed evidence portfolio is being assessed, the assigned assessor will notify the applicant if they anticipate that they will be unable to process the application within ten (10) working days, indicating when the student might expect an outcome.

The Skills Recognition - RPL assessor and/or panel in the teaching team will review the evidence submitted for any obvious gaps or lack of adequate details and either seek additional information from the applicant, or if more detailed assessment is warranted, select a module/unit expert to assess the application or consult with other appropriate staff.

If additional evidence is required in addition to that submitted in the original evidence portfolio, the Skills Recognition - RPL assessor may initiate an interview with the applicant. Unless otherwise negotiated with the applicant, the interview will be conducted within ten (10) working days of notification that an interview is required.

Where additional evidence is requested, the student will be required to submit it within twenty (20) working days. A workplace visit may be requested to further demonstrate competence, covering information that is confidential and therefore cannot be included in the application.

### **Notification of Assessment Outcomes**

The lead assessor will notify the applicant of the result of the evidence assessment within three (3) working days of completion of the assessment. If the application is successful, a "Granted" outcome will be recorded against the unit. The applicant will be notified of the outcome via the method they have nominated.

If the application is unsuccessful, a "Not Granted" outcome will be recorded against the unit and the applicant will be notified via the method they have nominated. The student may also appeal the outcome of the Skills Recognition assessment as per the Appeals Process described in the Assessment Appeals Policy & Procedure T&L 007.

If unsuccessful in his/her application for Skills Recognition then the student may negotiate to undertake training in the identified unit/s.

In the event that the evidence provided for one or more units demonstrates partial competence then the applicant will be resulted as unsuccessful and advised of his/her options for enrolment in the unit so that an individualised learning strategy can be negotiated for completion of the identified unit/module/s.

### **Learning Pathways for Skills Recognition students**

Support will be offered to students to ensure they engage in appropriate learning pathways as a consequence of their Skills Recognition - RPL process. This may include advice about 'gap' training, or education that may be necessary to meet the full requirements of the qualification.

## Reference and Supporting Information

### Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Skills Recognition</b>	<p><b>NCVER defines Skills Recognition as:</b></p> <p>'The recognition, acknowledgement or verification of skills and qualifications by educational institutions, professional bodies, employers, registration authorities and other organisations</p> <p>It is the process then, by which people can gain entry to, or credit in, recognised courses based on competencies gained through experience in the workplace, in voluntary work, in social or domestic activities or through informal or formal training. It includes Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).</p>
<b>Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)</b>	<p>Means 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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>• 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>• 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). (Users' Guide for the Standards for RTOs 2015 p 95)</li> </ul>
<b>Credit Transfers</b>	<p>Credit transfer is training credit for a unit of competency or subject (module) previously completed by a client and includes granted application for mutual recognition. Credit transfer and a granted application for mutual recognition are essentially administrative processes. These are not formal enrolments in the normal sense, because they involve neither delivery nor assessment of the student's knowledge. However, credit transfers need to be recorded and reported, firstly to exempt the student from the need to enrol in the unit, and secondly for the purposes of provider and systems calculation of qualification eligibility.</p> <p>Upon application by the client, the provider consults curriculum documents or official lists to determine the extent to which the client's previously achieved program (course) or subject is equivalent to the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards in a qualification they are now undertaking. (SVTS Guide to end of year reporting 2014)</p>
<b>Mutual Recognition</b>	<p>Mutual recognition is a training credit granted for modules/units completed at another training organisation</p>



<b>Curriculum Coordinator</b>	Teacher/assessor designated by teaching team as responsible for delivery and assessment of a course or qualification
<b>Course Team</b>	Team responsible for the establishment and approval of a course within a particular field of study. This includes ongoing responsibility and maintenance of course structure and curriculum; delivery methods and training resources; assessment validation/moderation principles; staff vocational competency requirements; articulation/pathways and dual awards associated with course; and ensuring industry group consultation is included in decision making.

## Supporting Documents

AQF Recognition of Prior Learning – Explanation

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)

ASQA Standards for RTOs 2015

Pre-Training Review and Foundation Gap Analysis Procedure TL 040

## Procedures, Forms and Templates

Recognition of Prior Learning Student Handout

Student Induction Guide

Unit Mapping to Accompany Credit Transfer template

Application for Credit Transfer TL 006 Form 1

Skills Recognition SMS Notification Form 2

RPL –SMS Results Sheet TL 006 Form 3

VET Student Loan and Student Review Procedure TL 029

## Responsibility

Director Academic Governance

Please Note: For further information or assistance regarding policies and procedures contact:

[ga@tafegippsland.edu.au](mailto:ga@tafegippsland.edu.au) | URL: [www.tafegippsland.edu.au](http://www.tafegippsland.edu.au)

Document Version Control Table

Item	Summary of Update	Version Control	Revised Date
1	Procedure Developed	V1.0	23/07/2015
2	Procedure Updated	V2.0	31/07/2015
3	Rebranded from Federation Training to TAFE Gippsland	V3.0	27/06/2019
3	Minor administration changes	V3.1	03/02/2020
4	VET FEE HELP updated to VET Student Loan	V3.2	12/02/2020