

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PP80

PURPOSE

This policy and procedure describes the processes that Southern Cross Education Institute (SCEI) follows in the management of applications for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) from students seeking RPL for units of competency and/or courses offered by SCEI

SCOPE

This policy and procedure applies to all prospective and current students, who have substantial evidence to support an application for RPL for units of competency they are enrolled in at SCEI, and to all staff who are responsible for facilitating RPL.

DEFINITIONS

Credit Transfer	Process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications
CoE (or eCoE)	Confirmation of Enrolment (electronic Confirmation of Enrolment)
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	An assessment process that assesses an individual's non-formal and formal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification
International Student	A person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, but does not include students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations

PRISMS	The Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) is the system used to process information given to the Secretary of DEST by registered providers.
SCEI	Southern Cross Education Institute
Student	Active, on-campus student with a current course of enrolment with Southern Cross Education Institute. Includes a person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, but does not include students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations
Unit of Competency	Specification of the standards of performance required in the workplace as defined in a training package

POLICY

1. SCEI is committed to providing all potential and current students with a fair, flexible and accessible process for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
2. The process acknowledges the skills, knowledge, performance outcomes and learning achieved prior to undertaking a course of study with SCEI through either formal or informal learning pathways. Such prior learning may include formal learning such as employer provided training or learning and assessment pathways or informal learning such as work or life experiences.
3. Through the collection and submission of a portfolio of evidence and discussion with SCEI assessors, students may apply to have their existing knowledge and skills assessed against the units of competency contained in an AQF or Accredited course on SCEI's scope of registration.
4. SCEI provides students with sufficient information to self-assess whether RPL is an appropriate pathway. Detailed information is provided in the RPL Kit available on request from SCEI Course Coordinators and Training Managers.
5. Granting of RPL will be in accordance with:
 - 5.1. The Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025
 - 5.2. The Australian Quality Framework (AQF)
6. SCEI implements an assessment system that ensures that VET assessment (including Recognition of Prior Learning) complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence.
7. Principles of Assessment:

Fairness

- The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process.
- Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO (without jeopardising the principles of assessments and the requirements of the training package) to take into account the individual learner's needs.
- The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the student with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.

Flexibility

- Assessment is flexible to the learner by: o reflecting the learner's needs; o assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired and
- drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency or module and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.

Validity

- Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.
- Validity requires:
 - assessment against the unit(s) of competency or module and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance;
 - assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application;
 - assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and
 - judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency or module and associated assessment requirements. Reliability
- Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.

8. 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 or module 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.

PROCEDURE

1. Application

- 1.1. All prospective and current students are made aware either in print or electronic form (such as through the Student Handbook, SCEI website, brochures, course information) of the ability to apply for RPL.
- 1.2. Applications for RPL can only proceed when a student has enrolled in the unit(s) of study for a qualification, or at the time a student is enrolling in a qualification.
- 1.3. International students are to place an application by the 2nd week of the first term of study in their enrolled course, but prior to the commencement date of the unit of competency for which they are applying for RPL
- 1.4. Domestic students may apply for RPL after enrolment to the course, but prior to the commencement date of the unit of competency for which they are applying for RPL
- 1.5. **Diploma of Nursing:** Credit Transfer (CT) for **HLTENN** units is granted only for students who have completed a Diploma of Nursing program accredited by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) and acknowledged as 'an approved program of study' by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) in accordance with the Enrolled Nurse Accreditation Standards
- 1.6. **Diploma of Community Services (Case Management)** For Australian Community Workers Association (ACWA) accredited courses, up to 40% RPL is accepted. If the Qualification was achieved more than 10 years ago, prospective students will need to show that they are current in their professional knowledge. They can do this by providing evidence of 20 hours of professional development for each of the last 2 years.
- 1.7. Students cannot complete the majority of units at a non ACWA accredited provider and then move to an accredited provider to obtain a ACWA approved Qualification. SCEI will assess the application based on ACWA requirements when receiving requests for RPL

- 1.8. Students applying for RPL will receive an RPL Kit relevant to their enrolled course of study.
- 1.9. Students will be supported by the Course Coordinator, Trainer and/or Training Managers in understanding and completing the RPL Kit. A timeframe for submission of the completed RPL kit will be provided to the student.
- 1.10. Completed RPL Kits are to be submitted to Student Administration and include original documents of evidence to be sighted and copied by Student Administration.
- 1.11. This evidence must be clearly identifiable and support the student's case for Recognition of Prior Learning by addressing the relationship of evidence to the Unit of Competency RPL being sought. The supporting evidence may include, but is not limited to:
 - 1.11.1. Relevant CV or work history
 - 1.11.2. Certificates/results of assessment
 - 1.11.3. Certificates – vendor training courses, in house courses, workshops, seminars
 - 1.11.4. Certificates – club courses e.g. first aid, officials, surf lifesaving, etc.
 - 1.11.5. Photographs of work undertaken
 - 1.11.6. Sample print work/products
 - 1.11.7. Work diaries
 - 1.11.8. Site training records
 - 1.11.9. Site competencies held record
 - 1.11.10. Relevant hobbies/interests/special skills outside work
 - 1.11.11. References
 - 1.11.12. Any other documentation that may demonstrate the necessary skills and knowledge
 - 1.11.13. Students must also provide contact details for one or two referees who can confirm their industry skills and knowledge in context and over time.
 - 1.11.14. Students must pay all RPL fees before the RPL application is assessed by an assessor.

2. Processing Applications

- 3.1. The RPL Application is submitted to the Training Managers, who will assign a Course Coordinator or Assessor to the student.
- 3.2. The Assessor will review the completed RPL kit and determine which units of competency, if any, the student has sufficient evidence to support an application of RPL.
- 3.3. The student will have the opportunity to discuss and identify previous experience with the Assessor. The Assessor will use the RPL Assessment Tool to record this stage of the assessment in the document review section.
- 3.4. There may be instances where the student has little, or no, documentary evidence of experience. This is not a barrier to gaining recognition; however, this will require the Assessor to rely on the questioning, practical assessment tasks and referee validation phases of the RPL process.
- 3.5. The Assessor will then arrange a time to undertake a competency conversation with the student. The RPL Assessment Tools for each unit provides questions that the Assessor can ask the students to determine industry skills and knowledge. The Assessor may ask extension and/or supplementary questions which are not listed on the RPL Assessment Tool.
- 3.6. After the competency conversation, the Assessor will identify any practical assessment required to confirm competency and/or industry currency.
- 3.7. It is expected the practical assessment will comprise only those competencies the applicant is still unable to demonstrate knowledge/experience in after documentary review and questioning have been applied. These assessments contain the practical skills and application of knowledge for the qualification. Assessing through observation and questioning, particularly on the job, will speed up and streamline the RPL assessment process.
- 3.8. Where an applicant's documentation and questions meet the assessment requirement, it is still strongly recommended the applicant undertake one practical assessment / workplace observation so that the Assessor is confident in making a judgment of "competent". The practical assessment selection should be negotiated between the Assessor and the applicant
- 3.9. Applicant responses, observations of demonstrated skills and documents presented as evidence must be noted in enough detail so anyone external to the process (e.g. a fellow assessor, auditor, lawyer, etc.) can read the record and retrace the Assessor's judgment.
- 3.10. Where any application for RPL is received by SCEI, SCEI is to assess the application and provide an outcome to the application within 14 days of receiving it, or as soon as practical where further information is required to determine the outcome.

3. Outcome of Application

- 3.1. Once completed, the Training Manager is to inform the student of the outcome of their RPL application through LET12 Confirming Outcome of Credit/RPL Application letter. This letter will be posted and emailed to the student. A copy of the letter will be filed in the students Administration File and in the Student Management System.
- 3.2. Any application for RPL that has been approved will be recorded in the student's training plan and Student Management System (SMS).
- 3.3. Where an application for RPL is assessed and an outcome is reached, the following must occur:
 - 1.3.1. The student must sign the LET12 Confirming Outcome of Credit/RPL Application letter to indicate agreement with the outcomes of the application. A copy of this student signed letter is to be filed in the students Administration File and in the Student Management System.
 - 1.3.2. In the case that the RPL application is not successful, the assessor must provide the student with a rationale for why RPL was not granted
- 3.4. No refund of fees and charges is available after the RPL process has completed, regardless of whether the RPL application is successful or unsuccessful.
- 3.5. If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of SCEI, the student may appeal following SCEI's PP11 Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure.

4. International Students

- 4.1. If RPL is granted to an International student, a full-time study load must be maintained by adjusting the student's course schedule and duration for completion of the course of study.
- 4.2. If RPL is granted *before* the student visa has been granted, the Enrolment Officer will record the refined course duration in the eCoE issued for the student
- 4.3. If RPL is granted *after* the student has been issued a student visa, and it will reduce the course duration, the Enrolment Officer will record a change to the course duration in PRISMS, cancel the original eCoE and issue a new eCoE.
- 4.4. If RPL is granted after the student has been issued a student visa, and it will **not** affect the course duration, the Enrolment Officer will notify Student Administration to have the student's file updated with the relevant units granted RPL.
- 4.5. There will be no reduction in student tuition fees for RPL being granted for international students

5. RPL Assessment Process

Step 1: Analyse the application. Identify any links between the evidence documents provided by the applicant and the units of competency. Identify any key questions for competency conversation.

Step 2: Record results of analysis in Document Review table found in RPL Kit Part 1 Applicant Booklet.

Step 3: Conduct competency conversation using RPL Assessment Tool.

Step 4: Utilise RPL Assessment Tool and record applicant's responses on Assessment Tools where provided.

Step 5: Identify any practical assessment required to confirm competency. Observe practical assessment either by observing the student in their workplace or organising a simulated situation.

Step 6: Complete RPL Practical Assessment Record.

Step 7: Identify areas where 3rd party verification is needed and inform student. Confirm / Verify 3rd party reports.

Step 8: Review completed Third party reports.

Step 9: Complete assessment, sign off and file documentation. Assessed RLP Kit verified by Training Manager and student informed of final outcome.

Step 10: Issue qualification or statement of attainment, apply RPL to student record, revised training, or advise of gap training as appropriate to the RPL outcome.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- LET12 Confirming outcome of Credit/RPL Application
- PP11 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- PP15 Course Credit Policy and Procedure
- PP77 Assessment Policy and Procedure

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

- Australian Qualifications Framework
- National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018; Standard 2
- Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025; Standards 1.4 - 1.6
- Standard VET Funding Contract Skills First Program; Clause 5 and Clauses 5, 7 and 11 of Schedule

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Training Managers are responsible for the implementation of this procedure and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its application and that staff implement its requirements.
- Trainers and Assessors are responsible for following this policy and procedure in processing a student's RPL application.

Author	Compliance Manager
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