



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Frequently Asked Questions - Assessor

1. What is Recognition of Prior Learning?

Recognition of Prior Learning is a way that people can get their existing skills, knowledge and experience formally recognised, without having to attend training or do further study.

Any related formal qualifications that a person holds should be taken into account when they apply for recognition.

2. What is the difference between RPL, Recognition of Current Competency (RCC), Credit, Credit Transfer and National Recognition?

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

RPL is an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit. (AQF, second edition January 2013)

RECOGNITION OF CURRENT COMPETENCY (RCC)

RCC applies if a client has previously successfully completed the requirements for a unit of competency or module and is now required to be reassessed to ensure that the competence is being maintained. (AVETMISS Data element definitions, edition 2.1 from Jan 2012)

The costs for candidates undertaking RCC should be calculated on a commercial basis.

CREDIT

Credit is the value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcome between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit reduces the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification and may be through credit transfer, articulation, RPL or advanced standing. (AQF, second edition, January 2013)

CREDIT TRANSFER

Credit transfer is a 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. (AQF, second edition, January 2013)

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Under VET Regulation Standards, RTOs must recognise the AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by all other RTOs, thereby enabling national recognition of the qualifications and statements of attainment issued to any person. Previously this was known as "Mutual Recognition".

3. What is the difference between informal, non formal and formal learning?

FORMAL LEARNING

Formal learning is the learning that takes place through a structured program of learning that leads the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification. See also informal and non-formal learning. (AQF, second edition, January 2013)

NON-FORMAL LEARNING

Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of learning but does not lead to an officially accredited qualification. (AQF, second edition, January 2013)

INFORMAL LEARNING

Informal learning is learning gained through work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences. Unlike formal or non-formal learning, informal learning is not organised or externally structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. See also formal and non-formal learning. (AQF, second edition, January 2013)

4. Does RPL have the same requirements as other assessment?

Yes! The assessment process must be as rigorous (but no more or no less rigorous) as any other assessment. The type of evidence you require of a candidate may vary from that required of a student in class, but basically RPL is an assessment like any other assessment

5. What codes should be used for RPL?

State Training Providers use the following codes:

Delivery code	Result code
R	PR (RPL granted) or UR (RPL not granted)

Private RTOs use the following codes:

Delivery code	Result code
90	6 (RPL granted) or 7 (RPL not granted)

6. What does RPL cost a candidate?

From 2014, the fees payable by RPL candidates are determined by individual training providers.

7. When a student comes back to redo First Aid, should the fees charged be on a commercial basis?

Once the initial training has occurred and a student is deemed competent, it is then the student's responsibility to maintain their skills and knowledge. Hence if a student needs to demonstrate their First Aid skills are being maintained and in order to do this enrolls in a first aid course via a unit of competency or a module, the fees charged should be calculated on a commercial basis. If the unit changes and it is not equivalent, the fees charged should NOT be calculated on a commercial basis.

8. Are there any situations where a student enrolled for RPL that is government subsidised can be charged resource fees?

The relevant annual VET Fees and Charges Policy should be consulted for information on resource fees. The 2014 Policy (5.1.2) states

*"The resource fee covers materials purchased by the RTO to be consumed or transformed by students in the course of **instruction**."*

As RPL does not involve instruction, resources fees should not be charged.

9. If a student enrolls for RPL and is not successful, will they have to pay again?

Yes, the student will need to enrol in class and pay for the enrolment.

Students need to receive sound advice from assessors/RTOs to minimise the chances of their RPL application being unsuccessful.

10. Is there public funding available for Recognition of Prior Learning?

For State Training Providers, public funding forms part of existing profile delivery funding. STPs should contact their Planning Officer for further information.

For private RTOs currently contracted by the Department of Training and Workforce Development to deliver Training Services, costs associated with conducting RPL form part of the Contract.

11. If a person wants RPL for a publicly funded qualification that has pre-requisite units of competency, is RPL for the pre-requisite units funded?

If the qualification has mandated pre-requisite units of competency, RPL for these units will be funded. The pre-requisite units will form part of the qualification requirements.

12. Are there any rules about the amount of RPL that can be completed in a traineeship?

No, there are no rules to specify the amount of RPL i.e. 50% or more, that can be completed in a traineeship. The pathway undertaken depends on what is most appropriate for the individual.

13. A student has enrolled in class and after 1 week decided that he already has the required skills and knowledge. If I assess his skills upfront, is this regarded as RPL?

Yes, this would be regarded as RPL if the training that has occurred is not significant. Once you have assessed the student, for those students who are successful, you need to make sure that the enrolment and delivery code are changed and that a correct reporting code that reflects an RPL assessment is used.

If the RPL is not successful the student should remain in class and complete training and assessment. The student would then be re-assessed at the conclusion of the training.

Each assessor will need to make the decision as to whether the situation should be deemed RPL or not. Generally if the training that has occurred is not significant, RPL is justified.

14. I am involved in assessing in the workplace. Some workplaces have a qualified trainer/assessor who does all the training and in some workplaces the supervisor does the training. As my RTO only does the assessing, is this considered to be RPL?

In these situations, if a student has enrolled prior to the training occurring, even though your RTO does not do the training it is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the training is completed to an appropriate standard. As the learning has not occurred prior to the student enrolling this would **not** be considered as RPL.

15. What does my RTO have to do so that it can offer RPL for Class A and Class B qualifications?

RTOs must have the AQF qualification listed on their scope of registration to offer RPL for Class A and Class B qualifications.

RTOs who are actively involved in the training and assessment of apprentices and have established links with industry are best placed to conduct RPL for Class A and B qualifications.

16. How will the VET Regulator i.e. ASQA or TAC audit the RPL process?

ASQA or TAC will audit RPL through the normal audit process.

17. I have a student who enrolled in a Class A qualification via RPL (trades skills recognition) and then completes the qualification by undertaking an apprenticeship. When the student receives the certificate for the qualification will it indicate that the qualification was achieved through apprenticeship arrangements?

Yes, as the student was an apprentice at the time the qualification was completed, the certificate will indicate that the qualification was achieved through an apprenticeship arrangement.

18. I have a student that commenced a Class A qualification as an apprentice but the Training Contract was terminated before completion. The student has now come back to complete the qualification via the RPL pathway. Will the certificate for the qualification indicate that part of the qualification was completed through an apprenticeship arrangement?

As the student will not be an apprentice at the time that the qualification is completed, the certificate will be silent on the pathway/s through which the qualification was achieved.

19. Is there anything I need to know about offering RPL for qualifications with a licensed or regulated outcomes?

In areas where a qualification is linked to a licensed or regulated outcome, RTOs must meet that licensing/regulatory authority's requirements to ensure that the Recognition of Prior Learning process is appropriate.

RTOs should also ensure that they have considered any other legislative requirements related to the qualification in accordance with the requirements of the training package.

20. Are there any assessment tools to help me provide the RPL service?

The Department's website www.dtwd.wa.gov.au has information on RPL.

21. How will people know my RTO offers RPL?

RTOs will be able to advertise RPL services to the public. In addition, RPL will also be actively promoted through relevant industry associations.

22. What role does the Career Centre have in the RPL process?

The Career Centre, located at Level 7 of the GPO Building in Forrest Place Perth, acts as a point of contact for those wishing to access RPL. For those people interested in finding out about RPL, the Career Centre provides information about the process and advises of the RTO's (private and publicly funded) that have the qualification on scope and hence can offer RPL. Career and training advice are provided to those people who think they may not be eligible for RPL.

The Career Centre can be contacted on T: 13 23 98

23. I have an enquiry from a person who is in Australia on a 457 Visa. Can they enrol in RPL?

If the person is the primary holder of a 457 Visa, they are **not** eligible for publicly funded RPL or training. If the person wishes to enrol in RPL or training, the cost must be calculated on a fee for service commercial basis.

If the person is a secondary holder (e.g. spouse or dependent) of a 457 Visa they are eligible for government subsidised training and RPL.

The *VET Fees and Charges Policy* provides further information on the fees and charges applicable to temporary residents and international students.

24. What is TRA? Who can it help to have their skills recognised?

Trade Recognition Australia (TRA) is an assessment authority for a range of trades and associate professional occupations. TRA provides occupational skills assessment services for people intending to migrate to Australia and domestic skills assessments for Australian residents. Occupations assessed by TRA are listed on the Skilled Occupations List (SOL).

Those intending to migrate to Australia under a general skilled migration category must have had their skills assessed by the relevant Australian assessing authority before lodging an application with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

TRA issues Australian Recognised Trade Certificates (ARTCs) in metal and electrical trades to eligible Australian residents who have developed skills by means other than through an Australian apprenticeship. Occupations that are assessed by TRA are listed in the Trades Assessed List .

Further information can be obtained from the website <http://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

Since 1 September 2007, VETASSESS has led a group that assesses, in a limited number of trades, the skills of people intending to migrate to Australia from the United Kingdom, India, Sri Lanka, South Africa and the Philippines. If the VETASSESS assessment is successful, the person will be issued with an Australian qualification (for non-licensed trades) or an Offshore Technical Record (for licensed trades).

The VETASSESS process involves a self assessment, a paper based assessment and a practical assessment. Further information can be obtained from the VETASSESS website www.vetassess.com.au