

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy & Procedure

1. Purpose

This policy ensures that VET students with relevant prior skills, knowledge, and competencies are supported to seek Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in accordance with Standard 1.6 of the Outcome Standards for RTOs 2025.

2. Student Details

RPL recognises learning achieved outside the formal education system and reduces unnecessary duplication of training. It supports students to progress efficiently through training products, while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

3. Policy Statement

ACBI offers RPL to all students and provides clear, timely, and accessible information about the process. All RPL decisions are based on valid, sufficient, current, and authentic evidence, and align with ACBI's assessment system.

All students are informed of ACBI's recognition of prior learning policy and procedure in the pre-enrolment information, during orientation, and via the Student Handbook. Students may apply for recognition of prior learning at any time, however, they are requested in pre-enrolment information to apply before commencing training.

ACBI only offers recognition of prior learning for units of competency or qualification(s) which are included on its scope of registration. Recognition of prior learning may only be awarded for whole units of competency.

Due to the time and administrative costs associated with RPL assessment, applicants for RPL must acknowledge any applicable fees as outlined in the schedule of administrative fees published on the ACBI website and outlined in the student's written agreement.

4. Definitions

Assessment: the process by which an NVR registered training organisation, or a third party delivering services on its behalf, collects evidence for the purposes of determining whether a VET student is competent to perform to the standard specified in the training product.

Recognition of prior learning: an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning and experience (including skills and knowledge obtained through formal and informal learning) to determine the extent to which the individual meets requirements specified in the training product.

Training product: AQF qualification, skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course and module.

5. Responsibilities

CEO: Ensures implementation and compliance.

Admissions/Academic team: Provide access to RPL documentation and coordinate applications.

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Assessors: Conduct assessments, provide feedback, and document decisions.

6. Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

- Outcome Standards for RTOs 2025: Standard 1.6

Outcome Standard

- (1) VET students with prior skills, knowledge and competencies are supported to seek recognition of prior learning to progress through the relevant training product.

Performance Indicators

- (2) An NVR registered training organisation demonstrates:
 - a. VET students are offered opportunities to seek recognition of prior learning and are made aware of the organisation's policies for seeking recognition of prior learning;
 - b. decisions relating to recognition of prior learning are based on evidence of prior skills, learning and experience, and are undertaken in accordance with the organisation's assessment system; and
 - c. decisions relating to recognition of prior learning are documented and decided in a way that is fair, transparent, consistent amongst VET students, and maintains the integrity of the training product.

- Standards for RTOs (Compliance Requirements) 2025

- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education to Overseas Students

7. Scope

This policy applies to all prospective and enrolled students seeking to have their prior learning recognised toward a training product within ACBI's scope of registration.

8. Procedure

All students are informed about the availability of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) at the pre-enrolment stage via the Student Handbook, website, and communication with Admissions and/or a Student Recruitment Manager. Students who wish to pursue RPL are encouraged to complete an optional self-assessment to identify their readiness and gather preliminary evidence of their prior learning.

To begin the formal process, students complete and submit the RPL Application Form along with any supporting documents such as portfolios, work samples, or references. Once the form has been submitted, the applicant will be charged a fee per unit of competency applied for to cover the assessor's time and administrative costs.

An ACBI assessor then conducts an RPL planning interview with the student to identify the units for which RPL may be applicable and discuss the types of evidence required.

An evidence plan is developed collaboratively and may include:

- A competency conversation with a qualified assessor,

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- A practical demonstration of skills,
- Third-party reports or employer verification of the students skills and experience.

Students are given sufficient time and guidance to compile their evidence, which may include documentation, third-party reports, competency conversations, or practical demonstrations. The assessor evaluates the evidence against unit requirements in accordance with ACBI's assessment system, applying the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

If the evidence is sufficient, the assessor grants RPL. If gaps are identified, the assessor may recommend additional assessment or gap training. All decisions are documented, and students are advised in writing of the outcome, including their right to appeal.

Administrative staff update the student management system and store all documentation in the student's file. For international students, if RPL results in a shortened course duration, a new Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) is issued and PRISMS updated accordingly.

Limited Applicability of RPL for Short, Low-Cost Courses

While Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a fundamental component of ACBI's assessment system, there are circumstances where the practical value of RPL may be limited. This is particularly relevant for courses that are:

- Very short in duration (e.g., one-day or micro-credential programs), and
- Low in cost, such that the time and administrative resources required to process an RPL application would outweigh the benefit to the student.

In such cases, ACBI may determine that offering a full RPL process does not represent a reasonable or meaningful option for students. However, this determination must not be arbitrary.

ACBI must:

- Clearly document the rationale for this position, including course duration, fee structure, historical RPL uptake, and any industry or stakeholder feedback; and
- Transparently communicate this information to prospective students prior to enrolment, through published course information, the student handbook, or pre-enrolment materials.

Affected students must still have the opportunity to enquire about RPL and receive an individual response. Where a case for RPL is made, the RTO will consider the application on a case-by-case basis.

The decision not to routinely offer RPL for a specific course must be documented and be available for review during internal or external audits.

For particularly short, one or two day courses, it is often more practical for students to complete the assessments in the Assessment Booklet than to undertake the time and effort required to prepare a full RPL evidence portfolio. In these instances, ACBI offers the Assessment Only pathway to students who can demonstrate during the enrolment process substantial prior on-the-job experience or previous competence.

Students approved for this option are usually invited to attend assessment activities alongside a scheduled group course, where they participate in the assessment component only, without engaging in the training sessions.

The RPL process is structured to ensure students are fairly assessed on their existing skills, knowledge, and experience, in alignment with national competency standards. The procedure includes ten clearly defined steps involving the student, assessor, and administrative staff. Each step is outlined below:

The table below outlines the step-by-step RPL process:

Step	Action	Responsible	Timeframe
1. Pre-enrolment Information	Provide pre-enrolment RPL information in the Student Handbook and enrolment interview. Inform prospective students about the availability of RPL, what it involves, and how it may affect their study duration and fees.	Student Recruitment team/Admissions team	Ongoing; prior to or at enrolment
2. Self-Assessment	Student completes self-assessment to determine readiness for RPL. The self-assessment helps the student reflect on their skills and experience and decide whether they are likely to meet the RPL requirements	Student	Prior to submitting RPL application
3. RPL Application Submission	Student formally submits the RPL Application Form and supporting documents or portfolio for review. Applicant acknowledges that a fee will be incurred per unit of competency applied for as RPL.	Student	After student has completed their own self-assessment
4. Planning Interview and Evidence Plan Development	Conduct RPL planning interview, identify relevant units, and RPL kit in collaboration with the student. During this meeting, the assessor and student review the student's background and select relevant units. An RPL kit is developed to guide the RPL process.	Assessor	Within 10 business days of application submission
5. Evidence Collection and Submission	Student gathers and submits any additional evidence requested (e.g. third-party reports, samples, references). The student collects	Student	Up to 20 business days (flexible)

	and submits the agreed-upon forms of evidence in line with the evidence plan. This may include work documents, references, or third-party reports.		
6. Assessment of Evidence	Assessor reviews any additional evidence, conducts competency conversation or arranges to assess a skills demonstration if required. The assessor reviews all submitted evidence and conducts any required discussions or demonstrations to validate the student's competence	Assessor	Within 10 business days of evidence submission
7. Competency Decision and Gap Identification	Assess evidence against unit requirements. Identify gaps and offer gap training where needed. The assessor compares the evidence against the unit's performance criteria and determines whether additional training is required to fill gaps.	Assessor	Within 10 business days of final evidence review
8. Outcome Notification and Right to Appeal	Document outcome and notify student in writing. Provide appeal information. All RPL outcomes are formally recorded in the Credit Transfer and RPL Register, and students are informed of the result. Appeal rights and feedback opportunities are provided	Assessor/Admissions team	Within 5 business days of assessment decision
9. Determine and document when RPL is not routinely offered	Where RPL is deemed to have limited value for a short or low-cost course, document the rationale, ensure this is approved, and transparently communicate this to students prior to enrolment.	Director of Studies	At course development or annual review
10. Record- keeping and Administration	Record outcome in SMS. Store evidence and decisions securely. Outcomes are entered into the Student Management System (SMS), and all records are retained securely for audit and validation purposes.	Admissions/Academic team	Within 5 business days of outcome notification

9. Policy Implementation

The RPL Policy is published on the ACBI website. Administrative staff and assessors are trained to support students through the RPL process.

10. Review and Continuous Improvement

This Policy and Procedure will undergo an annual review, or sooner if required, to ensure it remains relevant and effective in guiding the operations and strategies or as needed to reflect any changes in the regulatory environment or operational practices.

RPL outcomes are reviewed for consistency and integrity through moderation, internal audits, and student feedback. ACBI maintains records for analysis and continuous improvement

Feedback will be collated and analysed and discussed at the monthly management meetings, for noting or action with any necessary changes documented in a Continuous Improvement Form and in the Continuous Improvement Register.

Document Control

Version number:	1.0	Approved by:	CEO
Approval date:	21/08/2025	Review date:	21/08/2026
Standards: SRT0.1.4, SRT0. 1.6 Indirectly supports Standard 2.1 (student information is clear and accessible) Standard 2.2 (advising students on training suitability) Standard 4.4 (monitoring and evaluation, via structured assessor notes and admin tracking)			

Version History:

Version	Date	Author	Reason	Sections
1.0	21/08/2025	Sam Hartley	Revised RTO Standards 2025	All

CRICOS ADDENDUM

1. Purpose of the Addendum

This addendum outlines CRICOS-specific considerations related to the granting of recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credit transfer for overseas students, as required by Standard 2.3 of the National Code 2018. These considerations ensure academic integrity, transparency, and visa compliance.

2. Applicable National Code Standard(s)

Standard 2.3 – Grant and record course credit

“Where the registered provider grants course credit that reduces the overseas student’s course length, the provider must:

- a) inform the student of the outcome in writing, and
- b) ensure the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) is adjusted in PRISMS.”

3. CRICOS-Specific Obligations

In addition to compliance with the Standards for RTOs 2025, ACBI must:

- Ensure RPL or credit transfer applications submitted before enrolment result in a revised CoE being issued (if course duration is reduced).
- Ensure RPL or credit transfer granted after enrolment is still reported and CoE updated accordingly.
- Provide written confirmation of the outcome to the student.
- Ensure students are aware of the visa implications of a reduced course duration.

4. Recordkeeping Requirements

- ACBI must retain the following for all overseas students:
- Completed RPL and Credit Transfer Applications
- Written outcomes and student acknowledgement
- CoE variation and PRISMS records
- Mapping of prior credit and units granted