

Recognition Policy (VET)

Approved by: Executive Director Course Development and Quality

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Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, TAFE NSW acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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Section 1. Purpose

- 1.1 TAFE NSW is committed to acknowledging the diverse skills, knowledge, and competencies that Vocational Education and Training (VET) students have gained from previous education, work experience, and other learning opportunities. Through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer (CT), TAFE NSW facilitates student progression through training programs, while maintaining the integrity of those programs.
- 1.2 TAFE NSW implements a fair, transparent and consistent approach to RPL and CT, aligning with organisational priorities and meeting all relevant regulatory and legislative requirements, including:
- a [Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)](#).
 - b [Standards for Vocational Education and Training \(VET\) Accreditation courses 2021](#).
 - c [National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations\) 2025](#). (Outcome Standards).
 - d [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 \(National Code\)](#).
 - e [National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011](#).
 - f And any other relevant licensing, contractual and regulatory requirements.

Section 2. Scope and audience

- 2.1 This policy applies to:
- a all prospective, new and current VET students; and
 - b staff involved in VET training, assessing, or processing RPL or CT at TAFE NSW, including contractors and third parties.
- 2.2 The provisions of this policy are put into practice through [Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure \(VET\)](#), the [Credit Transfer Procedure \(VET\)](#) and other TAFE NSW policies and procedures referenced throughout this policy.
- 2.3 This policy does not apply to:
- a The provision of recognition services on trade tests conducted on behalf of the NSW Vocational Training Tribunal.
 - b Non-nationally recognised (NNR) courses.
 - c TAFE NSW Higher Education qualifications or courses. Refer to the [Higher Education Qualification Pathways and Credit Policy](#) and the [Higher Education Qualification Pathway and Credit Procedure](#).

Section 3. Principles

- 3.1 The TAFE NSW recognition processes must be rigorous, fair, and transparent, ensuring that the learning outcomes recognised are equivalent to those required by the relevant units of competency and aligned with Australian Quality Framework (AQF).
- 3.2 TAFE NSW will:
- a Promote inclusivity and equal opportunity by facilitating RPL and CT access and equity, ensuring all eligible students can apply for RPL and CT without discrimination.
 - b Ensure transparency by clearly communicating the RPL and CT processes, including eligibility criteria and assessment methods, to all stakeholders and by making this policy, the [Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure \(VET\)](#), and the [Credit Transfer Procedure \(VET\)](#) available on the TAFE NSW website.
 - c Maintain quality standards and integrity by ensuring the RPL and CT processes meet competency standards and align with the [Outcome Standards](#) and requirements detailed in the [National Training Register](#).
 - d Ensure consistency and fairness in the assessment of all RPL and CT applications.
 - e Conduct RPL and CT processes in a timely manner to support learner progression and minimise delays to that progression.

Section 4. Policy requirements

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- 4.1 RPL is an assessment process that involves assessment of a student's relevant prior learning and experience (including skills and knowledge obtained through formal and informal learning) to determine the extent to which the student meets requirements specified in the training product.
- 4.2 The assessment and granting of RPL must comply with the requirements of the [Outcome Standards](#), the [Assessment Policy](#), be based on evidence of prior skills, learning, and experience and maintain the integrity of the training product.
- 4.3 TAFE NSW must inform all VET students about the opportunity to seek RPL, including:
- a Specifying circumstances where RPL is not offered (such as in short and low-cost courses).
 - b Providing access to this policy and the Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure (VET) on the TAFE NSW website.
 - c Providing information about, and access to, the application process and where there are different processes for domestic and international students.
 - d Providing information about how any granted Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may impact course fees, including the processes and timeframes for recalculating fees.

- e Providing information about how any RPL granted may affect the duration of a student's enrolment and/or required hours.
- f Advice that, prior to submitting an RPL application, students should seek information about possible impacts on income support, visa status and requirements, graded courses, and eligibility for prizes or medals.

- 4.4 RPL assessment must be conducted by a qualified assessor, as detailed in the [Employee Qualifications Procedure](#), who will assess and determine whether the submitted evidence meets the requirements of the training product.
- 4.5 The assessment and decision to grant RPL can be determined through various methods, including face-to-face assessments, online evaluations and workplace assessments. All methods must adhere to clause 4.2 and ensure that students' practical skills and knowledge can be appropriately integrated into their new or current VET enrolment.
- 4.6 The assessment of RPL applications will consider, for individual units, the specific work activities and the performance standards necessary for the workplace.
- 4.7 A unit of competency is the smallest component of education and training for which RPL can be granted.
- 4.8 Students must be advised in writing of the outcome of the RPL application within 15 working days from the time the assessor received the application. Where RPL has not been granted, reasons must be provided in the written outcome.
- 4.9 Students can appeal an RPL decision under the provisions of the [Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).
- 4.10 All RPL assessments must be documented in a manner that is aligned to the requirements of clause 3.1. All applications and documentation associated with outcome must be retained in accordance with the requirements of the [Retention of Student Education Evidence Procedures](#).
- 4.11 Where RPL is granted, it must be recorded as such on the student's enrolment record and the student's individual training/learning plan updated. The [Record Unit Outcome Results Procedure](#) details the requirements for entering student grades.

Credit Transfer (CT)

- 4.12 CT grants credit towards a qualification for a unit of competency completed at TAFE NSW or another registered training organisation. Once credit transfer is granted, a student does not need to repeat the unit for which they have received credit. This may reduce the overall time and cost required to complete their qualification.
- 4.13 TAFE NSW must inform all VET students about the opportunity to seek CT, including:
- a Specifying the circumstances under which credit transfers are offered.
 - b Providing access to this policy and the [Credit Transfer Procedure \(VET\)](#) on the TAFE NSW website.

- c Providing information about, and access to, the application process and where there are different processes for domestic and international students.
- d Providing information about the effect that any CTs may have on course fees and the processes and timeframes for fee recalculations.
- e Providing information about how any CTs granted may affect the duration of a student's enrolment and/or required hours.
- f Advice that, prior to submitting a CT application, students should seek information about possible impacts on income support, visa status and requirements, graded courses, and eligibility for prizes or medals.

- 4.14 Students are eligible to apply for credit transfer if they have successfully completed a nationally accredited unit of competency and:
- a The unit is listed as core, equivalent or elective in the relevant training package on training.gov.au, regardless of the unit's inclusion in the TAFE NSW Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS); or
 - b The unit is not listed in the relevant training package on training.gov.au, but the packaging rules permit unlisted imported or elective units and the unit that has been completed meets the training package rules.
- 4.15 Credit transfer will not be granted if regulatory, accreditation, or licensing requirements prohibit it, or there are concerns about the integrity of the training product or the quality of the student learning experience and course outcomes.
- 4.16 Where practical and compliant with clause 4.15, system-based automated identification of eligible units of competency is used to grant student's credit transfer, saving students from having to apply for the CT.
- 4.17 Where automated credit transfer is not practical, students are informed of, and supported through, an application process which is set out in the [Credit Transfer Procedure \(VET\)](#).
- 4.18 Credit transfer granted to International Students under the provision of clauses 4.13 and 4.14 will consider and manage TAFE NSW obligations under the [ESOS National Code](#). The [Credit Transfer Procedure \(VET\)](#) outlines the specific requirements and guidelines for granting credit transfers.
- 4.19 If a student applies for credit transfer for a unit that has been superseded more than twice but is still listed as equivalent on the National Register, the Head Teacher may determine that a mapping exercise is required to be conducted by an appropriate trainer or assessor to confirm that the assessment of competency is still relevant.
- 4.20 The CT process should be finalised before training delivery and recorded no later than six weeks after training commencement.
- 4.21 Decisions are based on evidence of prior completion of an equivalent training product demonstrated by AQF certification documentation or an authenticated USI transcript (unless prevented by licensing or regulatory requirements of the training product).

- 4.22 Decisions are documented and decided in a way that is fair, transparent, consistent amongst VET students, and maintains the integrity of the training product.
- 4.23 Credit Transfer (CT) decisions are communicated in writing. If students disagree with the outcome, they should first contact the Head Teacher for a review. If they remain unsatisfied, they can file a formal complaint as per the TAFE NSW [Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy](#).
- 4.24 Where CT is granted, it must be recorded as 'Credit Transfer' on the student's enrolment record and the student's individual training/learning plan updated. The [Record Unit Outcome Results Procedure](#) details the requirements for entering student grades.

Section 5. Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Executive Director Course Development and Quality Branch (Accountable Officer)	Oversight of the overall implementation of this policy aligned to regulatory requirements.
Associate Director Educational Governance and Compliance (Responsible Officer)	Supports the Accountable Officer in the development, monitoring, review, and amendment of this policy to ensure alignment with regulatory and legislative requirements and current TAFE NSW operations.
Executive Director Education Enablement	Is the Accountable Officer of the Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures (VET) and is responsible for ensuring the procedures are aligned to the relevant regulatory requirements and operationalise the provisions of this policy.
Executive Director Student & Campus Services	Is the Accountable Officer of the Credit Transfer Procedures (VET) and is responsible for ensuring the procedures are aligned to the relevant regulatory requirements and operationalise the provisions of this policy.
Head teacher/ Teacher/ Assessor	Responsible for adhering to the requirements of this policy and the Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures (VET) and the Credit Transfer Procedures (VET).
Student	Access and adhere to, where required, TAFE NSW policies and procedures.

Section 6. Monitoring

- 6.1 The Responsible Officer or their delegate will monitor the effectiveness of, and feedback received relating to this policy and take action to ensure its continued improvement and adherence to the legislative requirements.
- 6.2 The Responsible Officer will coordinate a formal review of this policy every two years or where a change to legislation or organisational structure necessitates a review.

Section 7. Governance information

Governance	Details
Legislation, regulations, and standards	<p>This policy is governed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) - National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) - National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations) 2025 - Standards for Vocational Education and Training (VET) Accreditation courses 2021
Related procedures	<p>This policy governs the following procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure (VET) - Credit Transfer Procedure (VET)
Related policies	<p>This policy is to be read together with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment Policy - Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure - Employee Qualifications Procedure - Record Unit Outcome Results Procedure - Retention of Student Education Evidence Procedures
Accountable Officer	Executive Director Course Development and Quality Branch
Responsible Officer	Associate Director Educational Governance and Compliance
Content Manager number	PROJ20/299
Next review date	01/07/2027

Section 8. Definitions

Word	Definition
Appeals Process	A formal mechanism for applicants to challenge recognition assessment decisions.
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.
Competency	The ability to perform tasks and duties to the standard expected in the workplace, as defined by a unit of competency.
Credit Transfer (CT)	The process of recognising and awarding credit for prior successful completion of an equivalent unit of competency or module.
Graded Courses	Courses where results are awarded as grades rather than competency- based outcomes, which may be affected by recognition.
Elective	An elective unit refers to a unit of competency that students can choose to complete as part of their qualification. These units provide flexibility and allow students to tailor their education to better suit their interests and career goals.
Evidence	CT Evidence includes Qualification Certificate or transcript, Statement of Attainment or Unique Student Identifier (USI) transcript. RPL Evidence may include Work Samples, Qualifications and Certificates, Employment Records, Training Records, Third-Party Reports and Self-Assessments.
Equivalent unit	An equivalent unit refers to a unit of competency that has been updated or superseded but is considered to have the same outcomes as the previous version
Imported unit	An imported unit refers to a unit of competency that is included in a qualification but originates from a different training package or accredited course
Income Support Impact	The potential effect of recognition on government payments, as some funding schemes require a minimum study load.

Word	Definition
Industry Standards	The requirements and benchmarks set by industry bodies to ensure qualifications align with workplace expectations.
Learner Support Services	Resources and assistance provided to learners undergoing the recognition process, including guidance on documentation and appeals.
Prizes and Medals Eligibility	The potential impact on a learner's eligibility for academic awards, as some prizes require completion of full coursework rather than RPL.
Qualification	A nationally recognised certification awarded upon successful completion of a structured training program or recognition process.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	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 Package	A set of nationally endorsed standards and qualifications used to guide training delivery and assessment within a specific industry.
Unit of Competency	A specific component of a qualification that defines the skills and knowledge required for a particular job function.
Visa Implications	The effect recognition may have on temporary and/or student visa holders, as study load reductions can impact visa compliance.

Section 9. Document history

No.	Effective	Approved by	Amendment
1	1 July 2025	R/Chief Product and Quality Officer	New policy document.
1.1	5 August 2025	R/Chief Product and Quality Officer	Minor amendment to clauses 4.14-4.16 to clarify CT eligibility and limitations.
2	16 February 2026	Executive Director Course Development and Quality	Administrative amendments to change the Accountable and Responsible Officers to align with the revised TAFE NSW Operating Model. Updates to hyperlinks.