

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1 This document applies to the Innovative Institute of Australia, its courses, its clients (students) and its controlled entities (collectively "IIA", "Institute", "the Institute", "we", "us", "our").
- 2 This document provides a standardised approach to grant Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and ensures that the relevant requirements of the National Code are met.
- 3 In this file, words that import gender include all other genders; the singular 'they' is gender-neutral and used to avoid specifying a person's gender; words in the singular number include the plural and vice versa.
- 4 This file does not deprive the student of the right to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.
- 5 The Institute reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions at any time.
- 6 This policy is implemented in compliance with the requirements of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (the ESOS Act), the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (2025), and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code 2018).

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system. RPL assesses this unrecognised learning against the requirements of a unit of competency, including both entry requirements and the outcomes to be achieved. By removing the need to repeat learning, RPL encourages individuals to continue upgrading their skills and knowledge through structured education and training toward formal qualifications, thereby improving employment outcomes. RPL offers benefits for individuals and the industry. Most importantly, RPL is just another form of assessment and requires the same application of the policies and procedures outlined in the Assessment Policy and Procedure.

- 2.2 Assessment is the process of gathering evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, confirming that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as specified in a training package or a vocational education and training-accredited course.
- 2.3 An assessment-only pathway means a student will be assessed using standard assessment methods, typically including a knowledge assessment and observation of the student performing the tasks required by the unit of competency. The assessment-only pathway indicates that the student demonstrated prior competency during the enrolment process and was therefore approved to proceed directly to the assessment rather than participate in training.
- 2.4 Training package means the nationally endorsed document that records the competencies required by different occupations and industries and describes how these competencies may be packaged into nationally recognised and portable qualifications that comply with the Australian Qualifications Framework.
- 2.5 An education agent refers to an entity (in or outside Australia) that
- 2.6 Engages in any of the following activities in relation to a provider:
- 2.7 The recruitment of overseas students, or intending overseas students;
- 2.8 providing information, advice or assistance to overseas students, or intending overseas students, in relation to enrolment;
- 2.9 otherwise dealing with overseas students, or intending overseas students; and
- 2.10 is not a permanent full-time or part-time officer or employee of the Institute.
- 2.11 Agent Agreement refers to the agreement between the Institute and the agent, including the schedules.
- 2.12 CRICOS refers to the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students.
- 2.13 ESOS Act refers to the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 of the Commonwealth of Australia*.

- 2.14 National Code refers to the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*.
- 2.15 Prospective student/applicant/client refers to a person who intends to become, or who has taken any steps towards becoming, an 'overseas student' or 'intending overseas student' as defined by the *ESOS Act*.
- 2.16 DHA refers to the Department of Home Affairs.
- 2.17 OSHC refers to the Overseas Student Health Cover.
- 2.18 eCoE refers to the electronic Confirmation of Enrolment.
- 2.19 2025 Standards for RTOs refers to the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations) Instrument 2025*.

3. Policy

- 3.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is where
- i. An assessment process used to evaluate an individual's competencies—gained through formal, non-formal, or informal learning—to determine how well they meet the requirements of the relevant training package or VET-accredited course.
 - ii. The relevant evidence must cover ALL requirements of the unit.
- 3.2 The RPL information will be provided to students before their enrolment.
- 3.3 An RPL processing fee applies; details are provided upon initial enquiry.
- 3.4 Applicants for RPL must complete the Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form. The form is available at the Institute's main campus reception, on the Institute's website, or by email.
- 3.5 Recognition of Prior Learning must be structured to minimise the cost and time to applicants whilst retaining the integrity required by the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 to recognise competencies in accordance with the requirements of Training Packages or Curriculum documents.

- 3.6 All candidates may apply for RPL to reduce their study load and course duration, if the courses are included in the Institute's scope of registration.
- 3.7 Whilst students may apply for RPL at any time, they are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program to avoid unnecessary training and guide them toward a more efficient path to competence.
- 3.8 An RPL applicant should clearly indicate the units for RPL consideration.
- 3.9 It is entirely the applicant's decision which units they will apply for RPL.
- 3.10 Applications for RPL require candidates to submit evidence demonstrating competency against the relevant unit's criteria, including skills, knowledge, and critical evidence.
 - i. The evidence must be relevant, current, authentic, sufficient, and comprehensive across all assessment criteria.
 - ii. The evidence may include performance appraisals, workplace documents, practical demonstrations, formal training transcripts and third-party reports verified by assessors.
- 3.11 RPL applications are accepted only for current competencies, typically within the past two (2) years.
- 3.12 The Institute provides RPL applicants with
 - i. information about the competencies and performance criteria relevant to the Recognition of Prior Learning application, and
 - ii. adequate information and support to applicants to gather reliable evidence of competency, and
 - iii. opportunities to obtain feedback on the evidence proposed before finalisation of applications.
- 3.13 Competencies for which RPL is being requested may have been developed through formal education and training, work experience or life experiences.
- 3.14 A written statement from an appropriate supervisory person is required to confirm authorship of any work submitted.

- 3.15 It is accepted that RPL assesses an individual's current knowledge, skills, and attitudes, even when the evidence supporting recognition may be drawn from the past. It is up to the RPL assessor to judge whether the evidence produced demonstrates current knowledge, skills and attitudes
- 3.16 Students who are eligible for Credit Transfer must not be required to undertake an RPL process and should be referred to the Credit Transfer procedure.
- 3.17 All staff must be provided with information about the RPL application process and assist students in completing applications.
- 3.18 Assessors must hold relevant vocational qualifications and TAE40116 Certificate IV Training and Assessment (or equivalent).
- 3.19 Competency assessments are conducted by qualified staff. Successful evidence submissions result in recognition of competence.
- 3.20 The Procedure section defines the process for handling applications for Recognition of Prior Learning.
- 3.21 The Institute's CEO is responsible for implementing this procedure and ensuring that staff and students are aware of its application and that staff comply with its requirements.
- 3.22 The Institute processes Recognition of Prior Learning requests in a current, transparent, fair and timely manner. Applicants may appeal assessment decisions in accordance with the Institute's Complaints & Appeals Policy.
 - i. Applicants may submit a Complaints & Appeals Form to the Admin Manager by email, post or face-to-face within ten (10) working days of receiving their assessment results.
 - ii. Applicants may get Complaints & Appeals Forms from the Institute's main campus reception, the Institute's website or by contacting the Institute via email.
 - iii. An alternative assessor reviews contested assessments, documenting outcomes and justifications.
 - iv. Applicants receive written notification of outcomes within 10 working days, including the right to access external appeals processes if dissatisfied.

- 3.23 Short Course: For particularly short, low-cost courses, the process of conducting recognition of prior learning will generally require the student to invest more time and effort in preparing recognition of prior learning evidence, rather than simply attending a face-to-face assessment, which may require a few hours. For these short, low-cost courses, the Institute will offer an assessment-only pathway for students who can demonstrate significant prior on-the-job experience or prior competency during enrolment. Students will be invited to attend assessment-only activities, usually at the same time as a group course is being delivered. They will simply join the group and assess with them.

4. Procedure

4.1 Provide RPL information to students

- i. Provide sufficient information to prospective students about opportunities for alternative pathways via RPL and the RPL process.
- ii. Person/s responsible: Student Support Officer

4.2 Before commencement

- i. A review of each student's previous education, training, and work experience will be conducted to determine whether there is a need to recognise existing competencies through recognition of prior learning and/or mutual recognition.
- ii. Person/s responsible: Admin Team

4.3 Self-assessment

- i. The student should be provided with an electronic version of the RPL application documents specific to the qualification or unit of competency they are enrolling in.
- ii. Person/s responsible: student

4.4 Before an RPL application is accepted,

- i. an applicant may seek initial assessor consultation and provision of industry-standard documents.
- ii. Person/s responsible: admin and academic team.

4.5 Before the RPL application is completed,

- i. The Institute will provide the RPL applicant with access to the relevant units.
- ii. An Institute's trainer/assessor will meet with the RPL applicant to explain the RPL process, review the units the applicant is considering applying for, review the evidence the applicant has to support the RPL application and provide advice to the applicant on how to collect and present evidence to support their application.
- iii. An Institute's trainer/assessor will advise the applicant which unit the Institute considers for RPL, along with the reasons for that decision. If gaps exist, An Institute's trainer/assessor will provide RPL applicants the option to submit additional evidence or complete gap training.
- iv. The Institute offers RPL applicants opportunities to amend their applications.
- v. Person/s responsible: Academic team.

4.6 Once an RPL application has been received and reviewed, the Institute will appoint qualified trainers/assessors to

- i. Arrange an RPL assessment schedule with the applicant.
- ii. Conduct the RPL assessments by
 - A. Using the evidence of competency provided by the applicant, and matching the evidence against the unit elements, performance criteria, skills, knowledge, range statement and evidence guide, identify areas of competency which, in the assessor's opinion, are met by the evidence provided.

- B. As a corollary, if step (a) identifies competency, knowledge or skill gaps in the evidence provided by the candidate, it provides guidance and an opportunity for the candidate to supply additional evidence of competency.
 - C. Using the Institute assessment tools to provide evidence of competency where gaps remain. The components of the Institute assessment tools to be used in this step will be determined by the assessors' remaining competency gaps.
- iii. When evidence gathered is outside the parameters and response guide of the Institute assessment tool, as in step (a) above, assessors are to
 - D. Amend the Institute assessment mapping document to map the new evidence provided by the RPL applicant.
 - E. Record details of the new evidence provided on the Institute RPL Assessment Form.
 - F. Note on the Institute Assessment Summary / Cover Sheet that additional evidence has been gathered, recorded on the RPL form and mapped on the Institute assessment mapping document for the unit.
- iv. Request further information or an interview with the student before completing the evaluation of an application, where necessary.
- v. Undertake an assessment and comply with the assessment principles of fairness, flexibility, validity, and reliability.
- vi. Undertake an assessment and comply with rules of evidence: validity, sufficiency, authenticity, and currency.
- vii. Complete the assessments for each unit.
- viii. Provide feedback to applicants for each assessment outcome.
- ix. Advise the Institute's Admin Manager of the outcome of RPL assessment applications.

- x. Person/s responsible: Academic team.

4.7 Notify the student of the assessment outcome.

- i. Applicants receive notification of outcomes in writing within ten (10) working days, including the right to access internal appeals processes if dissatisfied.
- ii. Students will be advised of the decisions promptly, clearly, and formally, and will be required to sign and date the record of RPL granted on the Recognition of Prior Learning Application Forms.
- iii. RPL application documentation, assessment processes and outcomes will be placed in the applicant's files.
- iv. Granting of RPL will be recorded as a unit outcome in the student's files.
- v. Person/s responsible: Academic team, Student Support Officer

4.8 Appeal

- i. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of an RPL application, they may appeal it, as with any other assessment decision. Refer the student to the appeals process, which is available in the student Handbook.
- ii. Person/s responsible: Student, Student Support Officer

4.9 Review the RPL process

- i. On completion of the assessment process, the assessor must:
 - A. Review the assessment process.
 - B. Report on the positive and negative features of the RPL assessment to those responsible for the assessment procedures; and
 - C. If necessary, suggest methods to improve the RPL assessment procedures by raising a Continuous Improvement Report.
- ii. Person/s responsible: Academic team, Admin team

VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	September 2021	New policy
2.0	July 2025	Revised and updated to include the changes according to the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (2025).
3.0	December 2025	Revised and updated to include the changes according to the ESOS 2000 Act.