## RECOGNITION & CREDIT TRANSFER POLICY

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to:

- clarify 4Life's policy in regards to providing status under Credit Transfer and/or Recognition of Prior Learning arrangements;
- provide guidance to stakeholders and in particular Assessors as to the procedure required for CT and RPL.

POLICY

4Life's policy in relation to National Recognition is to recognise learners' AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any other Australian Registered Training Organisation (RTO) including TAFE.

It is the policy 4Life to recognise through Credit Transfer (CT) and/or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) the experience, knowledge, skills and former studies of learners.

Learners may apply to have previous study, informal and formal training, acquired knowledge, work experience and/or life experiences recognised for credit toward courses or qualifications they undertake.

CT and RPL decisions will be valid, fair, reliable, authentic and flexible.

Learners may apply for both CT and RPL, and there is no limit to the status which can be given towards a qualification or accredited course.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all training and assessment, Recognition of Prior Learning, Recognition of Current Competencies and Credit Transfer offered through 4Life and encompasses all accredited and non-accredited qualifications and courses conducted for all Domestic and International Students.

DEFINITIONS

Accredited Training: An accredited program of study that leads to vocational qualifications and credentials that are recognised across Australia. Only registered training organisations that meet government quality standards such as TAFE, private providers, enterprise registered training organisations and vocational divisions of universities can provide nationally recognised training. It includes accredited courses, endorsed training package qualifications and associated subjects.

Also called: Nationally Recognised Training

Accountable Officer: The Accountable Officer is the senior trainer/assessor. They are responsible for the quality of training and assessment and student completion.

At the time of publication of this policy the Accountable Officer is Mr Bruce Cameron.

Appeal or Complaint Process: Processes by which students and other stakeholders may appeal decisions or formally register a complaint.

- Refer to the Complaint Process Policy and Procedure or Appeal Process Policy and Procedure or speak with a staff member for assistance.
<table>
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<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Competency</td>
<td>The consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.</td>
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<td>Competency Based Assessment</td>
<td>The gathering and judging of evidence in order to decide whether a person has achieved a standard of competence.</td>
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<td>Competency Standard</td>
<td>An industry-determined specification of performance, which set out the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to operate effectively in employment. In vocational education and training (VET), competency standards were made up of units of competency, which were themselves made up of elements of competency, together with performance criteria, a range of variables, and an evidence guide.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit Transfer</td>
<td>The granting of status or credit by an institution or training organisation to students for modules (subjects) or units of competency completed at the same or another institution or training organisation.</td>
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<td>Current Competency</td>
<td>A competency which continues to have currency in an industry or occupation. People can lose competence over time and may need further training and practice to demonstrate current competency.</td>
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<td>Education Director</td>
<td>The Education Director is responsible for the operations of higher level decision making such as the continuance of students.</td>
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<td>Equivalency Test</td>
<td>A test to measure the extent to which a person’s existing knowledge or skills satisfy the requirements of an education or training program or a job.</td>
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<td>Formal Education</td>
<td><em>Education provided in the system of schools, colleges, universities and other formal educational institutions that normally constitutes a continuous 'ladder' of full-time education for children and young people, generally beginning at age five to seven and continuing up to 20 or 25 years old.</em></td>
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<td>Formal Training</td>
<td>Training that is given in an orderly, logical, planned and systematic manner in a specially equipped workshop under the guidance of a qualified trainer for a specific period of time in the specified field.</td>
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<td>Informal Education</td>
<td><em>The acquisition of knowledge and skills that usually occurs outside the classroom.</em></td>
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<td>Informal Learning</td>
<td>Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). Informal learning in most cases is <em>unintentional from the learner's perspective. It typically does not lead to certification.</em></td>
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<td>Informal Training</td>
<td>Training that usually occurs on the job through interactions with coworkers as part of the day-to-day work.</td>
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<td>Nationally Recognised Training</td>
<td>See Accredited Training</td>
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<td>Non-formal Education</td>
<td>Any organised and sustained educational activity that does not correspond exactly to the definition of formal education. Non-formal</td>
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education may therefore take place both within and outside educational institutions, and cater to persons of all ages.

Non-formal Training
Learning that takes place through a program of instruction but does not usually lead to the attainment of a formal qualification or award, for example, in-house professional development programs conducted in the workplace.

Qualification
Formal certification that is awarded by an accredited authority in recognition of the successful completion of an educational program. In the vocational education and training (VET) sector, qualifications are awarded when a person has satisfied all requirements of the units of competency or modules that comprise an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification, as specified by a nationally endorsed training package or an accredited course that provides training for that qualification.

Recognition of Current Competency
(RCC) The assessment of a person’s current capacity to perform; it applies if an individual has previously successfully completed the requirements for a unit of competency or a module and is now required to be reassessed to ensure that the competence is being maintained.

Recognition of Prior Learning
(RPL) The acknowledgement of a person's skills and knowledge acquired through previous training, work or life experience, which may be used to grant status or credit in a subject or module. It can lead to a full qualification in the VET sector.

Registered Training Organisation
Training providers registered by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) or in some cases, a state or territory registering and accrediting body to deliver training and/or conduct assessments and issue nationally recognised qualifications in accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework or the VET Quality Framework. RTOs include TAFE colleges and institutes, adult and community education providers, private providers, community organisations, schools, higher education institutions, commercial and enterprise training providers, industry bodies and other organisations meeting the registration requirements.

Training Package:
A nationally endorsed, integrated set of units of competency, assessment requirements, Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications and credit arrangements, and one or more quality assured companion volumes. Training packages specify the skills and knowledge required to perform effectively in the workplace.

Skills Set
Single units or combinations of units which link to a license or regulatory requirement, or defined industry need. Nationally endorsed skill sets will provide formal recognition of training for a discrete part of a qualification linked to a function or role within an occupation.

Statement of Attainment
Formal certification in the vocational education and training sector by a registered training organisation that a person has achieved: (a) part of an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification; or (b) one or more units of competency from a nationally endorsed training package; or (c) all the units of competency or modules comprising an accredited short course.
Student Support & Protection: The Student Support Officer is responsible for the welfare of all students.

At the time of publication of this policy the Student Support & Protection Officers are Ms Melinda Asquith (South Australia) and Ms Pam Newell (NSW).

DELEGATION OF TRAINING & ASSESSMENT DUTIES

The Education Director has sole delegation for authorising the training and assessment duties of Trainers and Assessors. The Education Director’s decision will be final.

PROCEDURE

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

4Life’s policy in relation to National Recognition is to recognise learners’ AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any other Australian Registered Training Organisation (RTO) including TAFE.

It is the policy 4Life to recognise through Credit Transfer (CT) and/or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) the experience, knowledge, skills and former studies of learners.

Learners may apply to have previous study, informal and formal training, acquired knowledge, work experience and/or life experiences recognised for credit toward courses or qualifications they undertake.

CT and RPL decisions will be valid, fair, reliable, authentic and flexible.

Learners may apply for both CT and RPL, and there is no limit to the status which can be given towards a qualification or accredited course.

COMPETENCY BASED ASSESSMENT

NVR Standard 1, Clauses 1.8 to 1.12 Conduct Effective Assessment

The assessment process completes the learning pathway as it confirms the competency of the learner. The assessment process should be accessible and flexible for all learners.

COMPLIANT ASSESSMENT

4Life’s assessment processes, including RPL, must meet:

- meet the requirements of the relevant training package or accredited course; and
- the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence as listed below;
- and take into consideration validation as per External Validator and Industry Consultation.

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

Fairness

The individual learner’s needs are considered in the assessment process.

Where appropriate reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner’s needs.

The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.
Flexibility

Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:

- reflecting the learner’s needs;
- 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 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 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 and associated assessment requirements.

Reliability

Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.

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 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.

SKILLS RECOGNITION

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Current Competency (RCC)
“Recognition is the process by which a person’s existing skills and knowledge, regardless of how they have been acquired, are assessed, and credited towards the achievement of units of competency from national training package qualifications or accredited courses. Recognition is sometimes known as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) and Assessment only Pathway.’


RPL cannot be given for a module of a UoC, however, status can be documented and gap training conducted leading to the completion of a complete UoC.

Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) is the assessment of a person’s current capacity to competently perform the requirements of one or more UoCs that they previously acquired and may need to be confirmed for example for licence requirements. RCC does not lead to the award of a Statement of Attainment or Qualification.

Skills Recognition must be conducted:

- compliantly with the assessment requirements of the training package or accredited course; and
- in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence as identified above.

Skills recognition assessment of competency must evidence that the learner demonstrates their:

- ability to perform relevant tasks in a variety of workplace situations, or accurately simulated workplace situations
- understanding of what they are doing, and why, when performing tasks
- ability to integrate performance with understanding, to show they are able to adapt to different contexts and environments.

A learner must:

- be assessed against all of the tasks identified in the elements of the unit or module
- demonstrate they are capable of performing these tasks to an acceptable level.

4Life’s Learning & Assessment Strategy documents the process and requirements for each assessment of a UoC or Cluster of UoCs.

Skills Recognition Assessment

Things to consider in regards to skills recognition assessment are:

- what will be the best method of assessment for this individual against particular units of competency;
- has unit clustering been taken into consideration;
- does the candidate require additional support for special needs or disabilities and what are those supports, and how do they affect the assessment process;
- what will be the most appropriate environment for the assessment;
- what is the timeframe and when will appointments occur;
- has sufficient evidence been collected;
- is the appropriate documentation for assessment prepared and ready for completion;
The assessor needs:

- to ensure that the candidate understands how each unit of competency will be assessed;
- to ensure that the process is fair, equitable and transparent and that the candidate is aware of this;
- to be flexible and prepared to make reasonable modifications to how the assessment progresses and the evidence provided e.g. oral questioning may be most appropriate and satisfies the criteria for particular unit(s) of competency;
- provide feedback that is impartial and will affect the outcome of the final assessment decision;
- to be adaptable to the need for additional evidence if conflicting results become evident at the initial assessment.

All required results of evidence and achievements are to be recorded in the appropriate assessment tools as soon as the determination is made.

**Decision making**

The assessor needs to determine the competence of the candidate against units and provide constructive feedback.

In reviewing evidence it may be most beneficial to look at the whole rather than attempting to assess on a piece by piece basis.

The assessor should also consider where and when it may be appropriate to involve another assessor in the process.

The candidate should be provided with feedback in a constructive manner whether they have achieved competence or not. Their strengths and weaknesses should be identified.

If after discussion the candidate is dissatisfied with the assessor’s decision(s) the assessor should direct the candidate to 4Life Appeal Policy and together with the candidate complete the 4Life Complaint/Appeal Report.

If appropriate, and with the candidates written permission, review of the assessment process and achievements with the current employer should be considered.

4Life trainers who will be involved in the ongoing learning and assessment of the candidate should be updated as to the assessment and achievements.

**Recognition Tools**

**Model**

This is schematic of the recognition process.

**Learning & Assessment Strategy - Assessor Guide**

This includes up to date information regarding Recognition processes and information including UoC assessment requirements i.e.:

- performance evidence; and
- knowledge evidence; and
- assessment conditions.

**Application Form**

This is a detailed form that includes information such as which UoC recognition is sought for, qualifications and
So as the person already has, what qualification they are seeking the recognition against.

Recognition Initial Interview Form

This is a standard form that contains questions that guide the Assessor through the first professional conversation with the applicant and provides the basis from which recognition process commences.

Student/Applicant Guide

This will include information such as the process, the cost, what constitutes evidence, how to apply etc. Generally it will include the Model and the Application Form.

RPL Assessment Guide

This is a guide for an assessor in both what needs to be evidenced for the particular qualification and how to assess that evidence.

Who is Recognition Available to

- recognition is to be offered on enrolment to all candidates; and
- the process is structured in such a way as to minimise both time and cost to candidates.

Benefits of Recognition

**Candidate**

The benefits for candidates are:

- skills are recognised;
- earlier completion of a qualification;
- fewer days to attend training - not having to repeat learning of skills and knowledge they already have;
- provides a tool to identify skills and knowledge gaps ensuring individualised training that meets the needs of the candidate and the industry- training and learning is focused on new skills and knowledge;
- in some instances lower cost for learner.

**RTO**

The benefits for the RTO are:

- a process that saves time and resources;
- clients that are satisfied and encouraged with the quality and flexibility of the RTO;
- flexibility in the provision of pathway(s) to qualifications;
- control of the integrity of qualifications issued.

Stages of the Recognition Process

Please refer to 4Life RPL Application Kit for initial information and direction provided to potential candidates and RPL Model – a schematic of the recognition process.

There are six stages of the recognition process. The six stages do not stand alone and tasks from one stage may be completed in a previous stage or may be clustered.
Context

Context is about establishing the environment in which recognition will take place e.g.:

- understanding the RPL process and potential outcomes
- the industry
- location
- workplace or RTO setting
- level of qualification sought
- what specific legislation, regulations or licensing apply to the industry
- what relevant experience or prior training does the individual have
- whether the candidate is currently employed and in which industry – is the job relevant to the recognition being sought
- tasks they perform in their current job and at what level
- workplace environment eg high risk, customer service focussed, privacy issues, mainly manipulative skilled based, technology used, etc and how will this affect the collection of evidence
- employer support for the process.

The context step includes the initial contact by the candidate requesting information and the provision of the application kit.

Once the application has been lodged the next step is normally interview during which the assessor confirms with the candidate the information provided in the application kit ie what recognition is, how the process works and possible outcomes.

At this time the assessor commences the process of identifying potential units of competency and/or qualifications that may be achieved. The assessor needs to assess evidence provided and help to identify additional evidence that the candidate may provide. The assessor would help the candidate to identify support and avenues of collecting additional evidence.

Information

The information step is where 4Life administrative and training employees are available to answer questions and clarify information.

This step ensures that the candidate can access information or advice readily.

The assessor at this stage, as well as making sure that the candidate is well versed in the process and knows who their point(s) of contact are, the assessor may provide additional information/resources e.g. “Have your skills recognised” Candidate Guide produced by COAG & ASQA (refer Additional Resources page), provide additional self assessment information relation to units of competency not previously requested.

Evidence

The Rules of Evidence have been provided to the candidate in the application kit and the assessor should reaffirm these.

Flexibility in regards to suitable evidence is encouraged. The question to be asked of each piece of evidence is ‘does this provide proof of competence”. The process of providing evidence should be simplified for the candidate and assessor.
Skills Recognition assessment considers evidence such as:

- work experience:
  - knowledge and skills that have been learnt and practiced in the course of employment.

- life experience:
  - community group involvement,
  - business pursuits,
  - sports and/or hobbies,
  - household management,
  - previous training

The type of evidence and how the evidence is provided for Skills Recognition is also flexible and may include:

- examples of finished products or samples of work. These can be photographs or videos, written documents or other.

- copies of Statements of Attainments or Certificates.

- third party written or verbal feedback/references eg letters from current or ex employers that provide confirmation of claims; testimonials from clients etc. Where there is additional evidence third party reports may be taken verbally and documented clearly. **Please note that a letter that states 'this person worked for me and did a good job' is not acceptable. The letters need to address the units of the course or give a detailed indication of the work undertaken.**

- hardcopy examples of work.

- video/DVD/live demonstration of skills.

- presentations.

- oral or written assessment.

- completing a project.

- discussion or interview.

- professional/occupational licenses.

- Performance Evaluation report from current and/or previous workplace.

- An on-the-job assessment record;

- Copies of completed assignments.

Additional evidence may be developed/collected through:

- questioning – written, verbal, interview;

- observation of practical skills either in the workplace or a simulated environment or classroom;

- presentation by the candidate
What next? – provision of Statements of Attainment/Qualification and/or Follow up Actions

Once the recognition process has been completed the assessor advises the candidate how and when they will receive the Statement of Attainment or Qualification.

At this time options for completing the qualification should be discussed and if appropriate a training plan developed in conjunction with the candidate.

Candidates may require follow up support in the form of:

- opportunity for re-assessment in one or more units;
- additional/alternative supports;
- gap training or further training;
- referral for career advice/counselling.

Once follow up support has been negotiated and arranged the assessor must ensure that the record keeping process is finalised.

CREDIT TRANSFER (CT)

Credit Transfer is the recognition of Qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by other Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTO’s).

Credit Transfer recognition requires:

- **that the document is an original or a *notated copy.**
- that the unit/course/qualification(s) were issued by an RTO registered under the VET Quality Framework and must include:
  - the RTO’s name
  - the RTO’s National & State Code
  - the individual Units of Competency National Codes and the Qualification Code the units form part of or the Qualification Code for the completed qualification
  - date issued
  - document registration/ID number.
- that the unit/course/qualification(s) are acceptable under the guidelines relevant with the Nationally Endorsed Training Package.
- are verified by RTO.

* A notated copy is a copy which has been witnessed as a true and correct copy of the original by an authorised notary (a person authorised under law to sign Statutory Declarations).

* A learner may have their copy witnessed by a Trainers and Assessors if the original is provided for comparison at the time the copy is lodged.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

If 4Life grants an overseas student RPL and Credit Transfer, it may impact on student visa conditions through a shortening of the student's course. Overseas students wishing to apply for RPL and/or Credit Transfer are advised to contact DIBP to discuss this.
RESPONSIBILITY

MANAGING DIRECTOR

It is the overall responsibility of the Managing Director to ensure that 4Life complies with National Recognition standards.

ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER

It is the responsibility of Accountable Officer to ensure that:

- Recognition and Credit Transfer is conducted as per 4Life’s guidelines and standards and that all candidates are treated fairly and equitably;
- Recognition and Credit Transfer is only conducted by:
  - appropriately qualified assessors; or
  - a trainer supervised by an appropriately qualified assessor who carries accountability for the assessment evidence collected. Recognition and Credit Transfer must be signed off by the qualified assessor;
  - appropriately qualified assessor in collaboration with an industry qualified expert. Recognition and Credit Transfer must be signed off by the qualified assessor.
- Candidates dissatisfied with a Recognition or Credit Transfer decision are provided with access to the 4Life Appeal Process (Learning & Assessment).

ASSESSORS

It is the responsibility of Assessors to ensure that:

- their professional development is at a level that ensures their expert ability to provide Recognition and Credit Transfer appropriately for candidates;
- all candidates are treated fairly and equitably in line with 4Life guidelines and VQF compliance;
- if conducting a Recognition assessment in collaboration with a supervised trainer (as part of their professional training) or an industry expert ensure that the assessment process is conducted appropriately and meets both the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

STAFF

It is the responsibility of all staff to acquaint themselves with the process for both RPL and Credit Transfer ensuring prompt and knowledgeable responses to candidate enquiries.

APPLICABLE STANDARDS

STANDARDS FOR REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS 2015 – DOMESTIC STUDENTS

Made under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011:

Standard 1: Training & Assessment Strategies

Clauses 1.8 to 1.12 Conduct Effective Assessment

Clause 1.8

The RTO implements an assessment system that ensures that assessment (including recognition of prior learning):
complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course; and

**Clause 1.12- Recognition of Prior Learning**

The RTO offers recognition of prior learning to individual learners.

**Standard 3 - The RTO Issues, Maintains AND Accepts AQF Certification Documentation In Accordance With These Standards AND Provides Access TO Learner Records.**

**Clause 3.5 - Provide credit for prior studies**

The RTO accepts and provides credit to learners for units of competency and/or modules (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this) where these are evidenced by:

- AQF certification documentation issued by any other RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation, or
- authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar.

**STANDARDS FOR REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS 2015 – INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Made under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000:

**Standard 12 – Course Credit**

Registered providers appropriately recognise course credit within the ESOS framework.

**Clause 12.1**

Where the registered provider grants course credit, the registered provider must:

a. have documented procedures for the granting and recording of course credit, and

b. provide a record of the course credit to the student, which must be signed or otherwise accepted by the student, and place it on the student’s file.

**Clause 12.2**

If the registered provider grants the student course credit which leads to a shortening of the student's course, the registered provider must:

a. if the course credit is granted before the student visa grant, indicate the actual net course duration (as reduced by course credit) in the confirmation of enrolment issued for that student for that course, or

b. if the course credit is granted after the student visa grant, report the change of course duration via PRISMS under section 19 of the ESOS Act.