

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy & Procedure



Australian Technical College
Western Australia

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Introduction

Australian Technical College Western Australia (ATCWA) supports students with prior skills, knowledge and competencies to seek recognition of prior learning (RPL) so that they can progress through the relevant training product. Where an international student applies for and is granted course credit through RPL, ATCWA ensures that it is appropriately reflected in the student's enrolment on PRISMS and that the credit awarded is provided to and accepted by the student in writing.

Purpose

To ensure that ATCWA systematically and appropriately recognises prior learning in accordance with the Standards for RTOs and, for international students, the ESOS framework. ATCWA is proactive in making students aware of RPL and in supporting students with suitable prior learning, experience or skills to seek it. RPL decisions are based on evidence, are made in accordance with ATCWA's assessment system, and are documented in a way that is fair, transparent and consistent. Students are kept informed by ATCWA by giving the students a copy of the course credit granted for their records. If necessary, the duration of study is adjusted accordingly on the international student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) on PRISMS and students are advised in writing of ATCWA granting course credit for recognition of prior learning.

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all students enrolled, or intending to enrol, in a training product delivered by ATCWA, including international students enrolled in CRICOS registered courses. Requirements that apply only to international students, including those relating to the CoE and PRISMS, are identified as such. It has been developed in accordance with the National Code 2018 (as amended), Outcome Standard 1.6 of the 2025 Standards for RTOs and section 19 of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000, as set out in the Alignment table below. Credit transfer is covered by the Credit Transfer (CT) Policy & Procedures. Where a student's prior study is not like-for-like with the unit sought, it is assessed under this policy as recognition of prior learning.

Responsibilities

Student Administration (Admin Officer and Student Support Officer); Training (qualified trainers and assessors); Academic Coordinator; Director of Studies & Compliance (referred to in this policy as the Director of Studies).

Definitions

Accepted student for ATCWA means accepted student of the CRICOS registered course and **not** 'accepted student of the provider' until such time as further guidance is provided by the Department of Education to confirm otherwise. The reason for this is that ATCWA recognises that an international student might be accepted international student for multiple courses with ATCWA spanning any number

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of months or years. Where for example an international student has a total pathway duration of six (6) years, if the term 'accepted student' were to be interpreted as a literal 'accepted student of the provider', this would mean that the provider would need to maintain those records for potentially eight (8) years.

Credit Transfer means national recognition, where the unit of competency, module or subject is equivalent and like for like. Credit transfer is covered by the Credit Transfer (CT) Policy & Procedures.

International student means international students or intending international students on a student visa under the Migration Act 1958.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means 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.

Alignment	
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018, as amended)	
Part B (Standard)	2.1.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5.1, 2.5.2
2025 Standards for RTOs – National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for Registered Training Organisations) Instrument 2025	
Outcome Standards	1.6 (Recognition of prior learning). Related: 1.3 and 1.4 (Assessment), 1.5 (Validation), 2.1 (Information), 2.4 (Reasonable adjustments), 2.8 (Appeals), 3.2 and 3.3 (Trainer and assessor competencies)
National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and Fit and Proper Person Requirements) Instrument 2025	
Clause	10 (Record retention)
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000	
Section	19(1)(e) (Reporting a change in course duration through PRISMS within 31 days)

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Policy Statement

ATCWA will ensure that students with prior skills, knowledge and competencies are supported to seek recognition of prior learning and, in granting course credit through RPL, ATCWA must:

- a) Offer students the opportunity to seek RPL and make them aware of this policy and procedure before they accept an offer of enrolment (Outcome Standards 1.6 and 2.1; National Code 2018, Standard 2.1.1 for international students);
- b) Have documented procedures for the assessing, granting and recording of RPL and course credit;
- c) Provide a record of the course credit granted to the student, which must be signed or otherwise accepted by the student, and be placed on the student's file; and
- d) For international students, retain the written record of acceptance for two (2) years after the international student ceases to be an accepted student (National Code 2018, Standard 2.4).

Where ATCWA grants the international student course credit through RPL which leads to a shortening of the international student's CRICOS registered course, ATCWA must:

- a) If the course credit is granted before the international student visa grant, indicate the actual net course duration (as reduced by course credit) in the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) issued for that international student for that CRICOS registered course; and
- b) If the course credit is granted after the international student visa grant, report the change of course duration through PRISMS within 31 days, under section 19(1)(e) of the ESOS Act.

Decisions relating to RPL will be based on evidence of prior skills, learning and experience, made in accordance with ATCWA's assessment system, and documented and decided in a way that is fair, transparent and consistent amongst students and that maintains the integrity of the training product (Outcome Standard 1.6).

Where ATCWA accepts an *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit*, the assessment of that application must ensure that it complies with the underpinning educational framework of the course and preserves the integrity of the award to which that application applies (Outcome Standard 1.6; National Code 2018, Standard 2.3 for international students).

Procedure

1. Applying for Recognition of Prior Learning

- 1.1 ATCWA charges a fee for RPL assessment. Information about RPL, including this policy and procedure and the RPL assessment fee, how it is calculated, when it is payable and whether it is refundable, will be made available to prospective students before they accept an offer of enrolment, and the fee will be itemised in the Letter of Offer. For applications made after enrolment, the fee will be disclosed to the student in writing before the application is lodged.

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- 1.2 If possible, during the application for enrolment process, students who intend to apply for RPL need to identify to ATCWA their intention to apply and their eligibility for course credit on the *Enrolment Form*.
- 1.3 Where it is not possible for the student to apply for RPL at the time of enrolment, the student's application will be made as soon as practicable after enrolment to allow assessment of the student's eligibility for course credit.
- 1.4 Where the student has indicated that they have an intention to apply for RPL but it has not been applied for at the enrolment process stage, the student will again be asked to complete an *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* upon arrival and, should they reject this offer, the student will acknowledge the rejection of the offer by signing the declaration 'Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit Rejected'.
- 1.5 Students who, outside this process, still wish to apply for RPL will be advised to complete an *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* which will be made available to the student upon request.
- 1.6 To gain course credit through RPL, the applicant must provide certified copies of evidence of their prior learning with their application. Applicants must provide additional evidence if requested by the assessor.
- 1.7 Evidence that can be used to support the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* can include, but is not limited to:
 - 1.7.1 Qualifications achieved and/or units of competency completed under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), including transcripts from other providers (including for short courses where the courses have been assessed);
 - 1.7.2 Work samples, workplace records, logbooks, licenses and certificates;
 - 1.7.3 Employer or supervisor statements, references and other third-party reports; and
 - 1.7.4 A resume, position descriptions and other evidence of relevant work, life or study experience.
- 1.8 The evidence provided by the student must be originally in English or have been professionally translated by a National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) qualified translator.

2. Assessing Recognition of Prior Learning

- 2.1 Initial screening of applications for course credit (if applicable) is carried out by the Director of Studies. Course credit will be assessed by a qualified assessor and granted (if appropriate) at the time of application for enrolment, and the adjusted duration will be reflected in the Letter of Offer, Condition Letter of Offer and, for international students, the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

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- 2.2 Upon receipt of the *Enrolment Form*, the Admin Officer or Student Support Officer will forward the application form to the Director of Studies who will allocate it to a qualified assessor to assess the evidence provided, or issue an indication of any potential credit that might be applicable.
- 2.3 All course credit assessments must be conducted by a qualified assessor who holds the credentials required by the Credential Policy and has current industry skills and knowledge at least to the level of the training product being assessed (Outcome Standards 3.2 and 3.3). The Director of Studies allocates applications to assessors and oversees the process. Where possible, the assessor will meet with the student to undergo the RPL process.
- 2.4 A successful application for course credit may reduce the length of a student's course and must be assessed by the training department, as this is a training and assessment function.
- 2.5 RPL assessments are conducted using the RPL Kit for the relevant qualification, which forms part of ATCWA's assessment system. The assessment will include practical application components that enable the student to demonstrate the relevant skills and knowledge in a practical setting (for example, a practical task or demonstration), in addition to documentary evidence (Outcome Standard 1.4).
- 2.6 The assessment of the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* must preserve the integrity of the award to which it applies, including for example, but not limited to:
 - 2.6.1 That it meets the underpinning educational framework requirements of the course and that a full set of evidence is available to support any grant of course credit for a satisfactory assessment of recognition of prior learning under Outcome Standard 1.6 of the 2025 Standards for RTOs or other relevant accreditation framework;
 - 2.6.2 That there is sufficient evidence that meets the principles of assessment and rules of evidence, particularly in relation to the areas of authenticity and currency (Outcome Standard 1.4); and
 - 2.6.3 That it demonstrates that the evidence provided by the student would meet the requirements of an Australian workplace context for the grant of course credit.
- 2.7 The assessor will assess the evidence in accordance with Outcome Standard 1.6 of the 2025 Standards for RTOs and ATCWA's assessment system.
- 2.8 The assessor will maintain and review sufficient evidence provided by the student and document the assessment of that evidence by mapping against individual units of competency in the relevant Training Package, modules in the accredited course or subjects in the relevant course and confirming that the evidence does not compromise

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the integrity of the award to which it applies for the course in which the student is seeking course credit.

- 2.9 The assessor will copy all evidence together with the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* for the student's file. After assessment of the course credit sought, the assessor will record approval of the competencies achieved on the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* form.
- 2.10 The assessor will return the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* form with the result of the application and the 'course credit' record section completed to the Director of Studies.
- 2.11 Where the evidence demonstrates only part of the requirements of a unit, or the assessment is not an exact match due to a transition of a training package or accredited course for example, the assessor must identify any gap training or further assessment required by the applicant, and the Director of Studies will advise the applicant.
- 2.12 RPL decisions will be made consistently amongst students. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disability, and reassessment will be available where necessary (Outcome Standards 1.4 and 2.4).
- 2.13 RPL assessment tools, including the RPL Kit, are reviewed prior to use (Outcome Standard 1.3). RPL assessment tools and judgements form part of ATCWA's assessment system and are subject to ATCWA's assessment validation process (Outcome Standard 1.5).

3. Outcome, Student Acceptance and Recording

- 3.1 The Director of Studies will advise the Admin Officer or Student Support Officer of the course credit granted and whether there is any revision required to the student's expected course duration (for international students, as reflected on the CoE).
- 3.2 The Admin Officer or Student Support Officer will prepare and issue a Letter of Offer with the expected course duration as confirmed by the Director of Studies. The Letter of Offer, together with the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* form with the result of the assessment recorded, will be given to the student to sign and accept where indicated.
- 3.3 Students need to confirm in writing and via their signature that:
 - 3.3.1 Course credit has been offered to them as a result of their *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit*;
 - 3.3.2 The amount of course credit granted to the student;
 - 3.3.3 Whether the course credit reduces the expected course duration as reflected on the Letter of Offer or, for international students, the CoE;

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- 3.3.4 Acknowledgement that if the course credit is accepted by them, that it will or will not reduce the expected course duration (and, for international students, their CoE);
- 3.3.5 Confirmation by the student of acceptance of course credit granted or rejected.
- 3.4 For international students, a successful application for course credit may reduce the length of the course. If this occurs before the visa is granted, ATCWA will indicate the actual net course duration in the CoE issued for that international student for that course. If the course credit is granted after the visa grant, the change in course duration is reported through PRISMS within 31 days, under section 19(1)(e) of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act). The international student will be advised that a reduced course duration may affect their student visa, and that they should seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs or a registered migration agent.
- 3.5 For international students, if the granting of course credit leads to the shortening of the expected course duration, the Director of Studies must:
 - 3.5.1 Indicate the actual net course duration (as reduced by course credit) on the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* form to allow the Admin Officer or Student Support Officer to record the revised expected course duration of the CoE on PRISMS issued for that international student for that CRICOS registered course if the course credit is granted before the student visa is granted; or
 - 3.5.2 Indicate on the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* form to allow the Admin Officer or Student Support Officer to report the change of course duration through PRISMS within 31 days, under section 19(1)(e) of the ESOS Act, if the course credit is granted after the student visa is granted.
- 3.6 Where course credit is not granted, in whole or in part, the student will be advised of the reasons in writing and of any alternative pathway available, such as gap training or further assessment.
- 3.7 The Admin Officer or Student Support Officer will record all documentation and evidence, including the student's signed acceptance or rejection of the course credit, on the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* form, provide it to the Director of Studies within two (2) business days of receiving the student's signed acceptance or rejection, and record the outcome on the student's record file.

4. Appeals and Records

- 4.1 Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of the assessment of their *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit* are provided

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with information in relation to their ability to access the *Complaints and Appeals Policy & Procedure* (Outcome Standard 2.8).

- 4.2 A copy of all documentation and evidence to support the *Application for Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit*, and grant of course credit, will be kept on the student's file located at ATCWA.
- 4.3 Records will be retained as follows: the written record of the international student's acceptance of course credit for two (2) years after the international student ceases to be an accepted student (National Code 2018, Standard 2.4); and records of all assessments submitted by the student, including evidence submitted in support of RPL applications, for two (2) years after the student completes the training product (Compliance Standards of the 2025 Standards for RTOs, clause 10(c)).

5. Refund of Fees for Recognition of Prior Learning

- 5.1 A refund of fees for individual units of competency, modules or subjects attained through the RPL process will not be given.
- 5.2 Tuition fees may be reduced only if the student is granted sufficient credits or exemptions to complete the program in a significantly shorter period of time than normal. The final decision on a refund in this situation will be given by the CEO after consideration of an application for refund.

Specific Exemptions and Accreditation Requirements

Apply for RII50520 and RII60520

The following requirements apply only to the RII50520 Diploma of Civil Construction Design and RII60520 Advanced Diploma of Civil Construction Design, delivered as a packaged program aligned to Engineers Australia accreditation requirements. They do not apply to any other course delivered by ATCWA. These requirements operate within, and do not override, the National Code 2018 and Outcome Standard 1.6 of the 2025 Standards for RTOs.

- **Units eligible for RPL:** RPL applies to units that form part of the program of study for the RII50520 Diploma of Civil Construction Design and RII60520 Advanced Diploma of Civil Construction Design. Decisions will be made in accordance with Outcome Standard 1.6.
- **Packaged program:** Where the RII50520 Diploma of Civil Construction Design and RII60520 Advanced Diploma of Civil Construction Design are delivered as a packaged pathway, RPL will be considered in relation to the complete packaged program rather than treating each qualification independently for the purpose of applying these requirements.
- **Review where recognition exceeds 50%:** Where RPL, together with any credit transfer, would account for more than 50% of the units in the packaged program, the Academic Coordinator will review the application before an offer is made. The review will confirm the impact on course duration and the CoE. The student will be advised in writing of that impact, and of any

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implications for Engineers Australia recognition of the program, before accepting the credit. RPL that meets the requirements of Outcome Standard 1.6 will not be refused on the basis of this threshold alone.

- **RIICWD601E – Manage Civil Works Design Processes:** This unit hosts the capstone project of the packaged program. RPL for RIICWD601E will be granted only where the evidence demonstrates all of the requirements of the unit, including the integrated capstone project outcomes, and is assessed to the same standard as the capstone assessment delivered by ATCWA. The student will be advised in writing that the capstone project is a designed component of the program for Engineers Australia accreditation purposes, and will be offered the opportunity to undertake the capstone learning and assessment activities with ATCWA.
- **Verification and assessment:** RPL decisions are based on evidence that demonstrates the requirements of each unit are met. Recognition will not be granted solely on the basis of a job title, length of experience or a previously completed unit with a similar title. Where a student holds a completed equivalent unit, the application will be assessed under the Credit Transfer (CT) Policy & Procedures.
- **Protection of graduate outcomes:** ATCWA will apply these requirements so that RPL decisions preserve the integrity of the award, are fair, transparent and consistent amongst students, and maintain the integrity of the training product (Outcome Standard 1.6).

Related Documents

- Application for Recognition of Prior Learning;
- Application for Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit;
- Credit Transfer (CT) Policy & Procedures;
- Complaints and Appeals Policy & Procedure;
- Enrolment Form;
- Fees and Charges (fee schedule and Letter of Offer);
- RPL Kit for each relevant qualification; and
- Student Declaration of Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and/or Course Credit.

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Document Control			
Version	Date	Author	Change Description
1.0	6 June 2019	ATCWA	Creation of policy
2.0	13 May 2022	ATCWA	Policy review and update.
3.0	23 Jan 2023	ATCWA	Policy review and update.
4.0	5 October 2026	DOS/Compliance	Separated from the combined RPL & CT policy; Reviewed against the 2025 Standards for RTOs (Outcome Standard 1.6), National Code 2018 (as amended) and ESOS Act s 19. Scope extended to all students, including domestic students. RII50520/RII60520 requirements added.