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Course Credit and RPL Policy and Procedure – Standard 1.6 and 1.7

Scope

This policy applies to all prospective and enrolled students of Polytechnic Victoria, including domestic and overseas students, and all staff involved in the administration, assessment, and processing of RPL and Credit Transfer (CT) applications.

Purpose

This policy ensures Polytechnic Victoria implements a structured, fair, and transparent process for granting Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer. The policy outlines a systematic approach to recognising students' prior skills and experience gained through formal, non-formal, or informal learning (in the case of RPL), and through previously completed nationally recognised training (in the case of Credit Transfer). It ensures alignment with:

- NVR Revised Standards for RTOs 2025 the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), and
- The Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
- The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018)

This recognition process supports appropriate enrolment decisions, may contribute to reduction in course duration, and ensures accurate documentation and reporting in the student's enrolment record.

Policy

This policy outlines Polytechnic Victoria's process for recognising prior learning and granting course credit in compliance with:

- **Standards 1.6 and 1.7 of the Standards for RTOs 2025**, which require RTOs to:
  - Offer students opportunities to apply for recognition of prior learning (Standard 1.6(a)) and Credit Transfer (Standard 1.7(a));
  - Base decisions on valid evidence of prior learning or completion of equivalent units (Standard 1.6(b) and 1.7(b));
  - Document decisions in a manner that is fair, transparent, consistent, and maintains the integrity of the training product (Standard 1.6(c) and 1.7(c)).
- **The Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and Standards 2.3 and 2.4 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018**, which require providers to:
  - Accurately reflect any change to course duration in the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) if RPL or course credit is granted before the visa is issued (Standard 2.3);

  - Report changes to course duration through PRISMS if RPL or course credit is granted after the visa is issued (Standard 2.4).
- RPL and course credit are available to all students, including domestic students, enrolled in nationally recognised training products
  - Domestic students are informed of RPL and Credit Transfer opportunities during pre-enrolment discussions and via the student handbook
  - Applications from domestic students are assessed using the same principles of fairness, consistency, and evidence-based decision-making
  - RPL decisions for domestic students also align with the AQF framework and the relevant training package requirements
  - Any adjustment to a domestic student's course duration or study load following an RPL or credit transfer outcome will be reflected in their individual training plan
  - Domestic students who receive RPL or credit transfer will have the results recorded in the Student Management System, consistent with reporting obligations under the AVETMISS framework.

This ensures that:

- Students are informed of RPL and CT opportunities during pre-enrolment and orientation;
- Applications are submitted within the first two weeks of course commencement;
- Assessments comply with AQF requirements, Principles of Assessment, and Rules of Evidence;
- All outcomes are recorded in the Student Management System;
- Any reduction in course duration is accurately reflected and reported in accordance with visa conditions and PRISMS;
- RPL may be deemed inappropriate in specific cases (e.g. short, low-cost courses), and such decisions will be transparently communicated and justified.

Definitions

COE:	Confirmation of Enrolment document issued through PRISMS
Overseas Student:	A person holding an Australian student visa, enrolled in a CRICOS registered course, at the Polytechnic Victoria.
National Code:	The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.
Course Credit	Defined by the National Code 2018 as follows: Exemption from enrolment in a particular part of the course as a result of previous study, experience or recognition of a competency currently held. This includes academic credit and recognition of prior learning.

Credit Transfer (CT)	A process that allows students to receive recognition for units of competency completed at another registered training organisation, so they do not have to repeat those units in their current course.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	An assessment process that evaluates an individual's existing skills and knowledge gained through formal, informal, or non-formal learning to determine if they meet the requirements of a specific unit of competency or qualification. RPL allows for credit to be granted without the need for further training or assessment when sufficient evidence of competency is provided.
Gap Training:	Structured learning and assessment activities provided to address identified deficiencies in a learner's skills or knowledge, as determined through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or other assessment processes. Gap training targets only the unmet requirements of a unit of competency to ensure the learner achieves full competency without repeating areas where competence has already been demonstrated.
PRISMS:	The Provider Registration and International Student Management System-a government database used by education providers to issue Confirmations of Enrolment (CoEs) and report enrolment details for international students, as required under the ESOS Act.

Actions, Guidelines for Course Credit –Procedure

Course Credit Procedure

This section outlines the overarching process for applying for course credit, which includes both Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer (CT).

1. All students are made aware of their ability to apply for course credit during the enrolment and orientation process. This is supported through information provided in the Student Handbook and Pre-Departure Guide.
2. Applications for course credit must be submitted by the end of the second week of the first term of study.

3. All applications must be submitted to the Administration Office and include original documents for sighting and photocopying by the Student Support Officer. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
4. Students applying for RPL must submit evidence of prior learning, including relevant work or life experience, as outlined in the RPL-Credit Transfer Application Form - Form 12.1 – RPL and Credit Transfer Application.
5. Students applying for Credit Transfer must include certified copies of nationally recognised qualifications, including detailed Statements of Attainment listing unit codes, titles, and completion dates.
6. All applications will be reviewed for completeness and authenticity, including USI verification and validation of issuing RTOs where necessary.

Credit Transfer

Credit Transfer Procedure

1. Students submit a Credit Transfer Application Form with required evidence. Evidence must include nationally recognised Statements of Attainment or transcripts listing the relevant units of competency. Only official AQF certification documentation is accepted for CT, and these documents may be verified with the issuing provider or via the USI Registry
2. The Trainer and Assessor validates the submitted documentation in accordance with the training package and AQF requirements. The Operations Manager provides oversight and may approve complex decisions to ensure consistency and compliance with the Standards for RTOs..
3. Automatic credit is granted for units with the same code and title. For non-equivalent units, a detailed analysis is conducted to determine equivalence, and gap assessments may be required.
4. Outcomes are documented and signed by both the student and Trainer & Assessor.
5. Training Plans are updated to reflect Credit Transfer.
6. Where applicable, changes in course duration are reported through PRISMS.
7. Course Duration Adjustment:
    - Before the student visa is granted - If Credit Transfer results in a reduced course duration before the student visa is granted, this shorter duration must be reflected in the initial Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) issued, this shorter duration must be reflected in the initial Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) issued. The reduction in duration will depend on the availability of suitable batches that enable the student to complete other units of competency during that period. If no suitable batch is available, the original duration will remain unchanged on the Confirmation of Enrolment.
    - After the student visa is granted - If Credit Transfer is granted after the visa is granted, Polytechnic Victoria will update PRISMS and issue a revised CoE reflecting the new end date.
8. All records are retained in the student file.
9. Students may appeal Credit Transfer outcomes via the Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

Credit Transfer Equivalence and Eligibility Rules

The following guidelines are applied by Polytechnic Victoria when determining Credit Transfer outcomes, in line with nationally accepted practices:

1. **Current vs Expired Qualifications:**
- Credit Transfer is granted where a unit code and title match exactly and the qualification is current.
- Where a qualification or unit is superseded but still equivalent (based on training.gov.au mapping), CT may be granted if completed within the last 5 years.
- If not equivalent or issued beyond acceptable currency, RPL may be required.
2. **Equivalence Judgement:**
- All equivalence decisions must be guided by:
    - Mapping tables on training.gov.au;
    - Endorsed training package equivalence statements;
    - Internal comparison tables approved by the Operations Manager.
3. **Scope of Registration:**
- Polytechnic Victoria may grant CT for units not currently on its scope, provided the unit is verified as equivalent and AQF issued by an authorised provider.
4. **Packaging Rule Compatibility:**
- CT is only granted where it meets the packaging rules for the target qualification (core vs elective status and allowable imported units).
5. **Vocational Outcome Relevance:**
- CT requests must align with the job role outcomes of the qualification.
- Units irrelevant to the intended occupational outcome may be declined or redirected to RPL.
6. **Authentication of Documentation:**
- Certificates and Statements of Attainment must be authenticated through:
    - Verification of RTO via training.gov.au;
    - Validation of unit scope and equivalence;
    - Where necessary, direct contact with the issuing RTO.
7. **USI and AVETMISS Recording:**
- Students must provide permission for Polytechnic Victoria to verify past training via the USI Registry.
- All granted CT must be recorded in the student management system as "CT" (not "C" or "Competent").
8. **Communication to Students:**
- Pre-enrolment information (handbook, website, and course flyers) must explain:
    - The CT process and documentation requirements;
    - The difference between CT and RPL;
    - Where applicable, how CT applies to replacement qualifications or updated units.

9. **Authority and Review:**

- The Operations Manager oversees equivalence decisions and provides written advice on complex requests.
- Administration staff may process routine CT where equivalence is clearly documented.
- All CT decisions are subject to audit and quality assurance review.

Recognition of Prior Learning
RPL Procedure
Application and Pre-Assessment

1. RPL applications are made using the Student RPL Application Form to collect general information about the applicant's background.
2. Prior to application completion, Polytechnic Victoria provides applicants with access to relevant units.
3. A Trainer & Assessor from Polytechnic Victoria meets with the RPL applicant to:
    - Explain the RPL process;
    - Review proposed units for RPL;
    - Examine and provide advice on supporting evidence;
    - Develop an RPL Assessment Plan with the applicant
4. The applicant submits the completed RPL Application Form [12.1 – RPL and Credit Transfer] along with supporting documentation.
5. The Student Administrator files the application and supporting documents.

Evidence Requirements

Applicants must provide a range of evidence that demonstrates competency, including but not limited to:

- Certificates, statements of attainment, or transcripts from previous training.
- Work samples, job descriptions, or performance appraisals.
- Letters of reference from employers.
- Videos or photos demonstrating practical skills.
- Statutory declarations or affidavits verifying experience. All evidence must be valid, sufficient, authentic, and current to meet ASQA standards.

Evidence Submission and Assessment

1. The Assessor reviews the application and supporting evidence.
2. The assessor uses the RPL Assessor Kit to guide the process. This includes:
    - Competency conversation using a unit-specific question bank;
    - Gathering and reviewing third-party reports where applicable;
    - Observing practical demonstrations or conducting challenge tasks.
3. The applicant may be required to submit further evidence or undertake an interview, practical assessment, or competency conversation.
4. The assessment is mapped against unit elements, performance criteria, skills, and knowledge using the RPL Evidence Mapping Tool.
5. Evidence must be mapped to all elements, performance criteria, knowledge and performance evidence, and foundation skills in the unit.
6. If additional evidence is required:
    - The applicant is advised and supported to provide further documentation;
    - The assessor may use parts of Polytechnic Victoria's standard assessment tools to fill any gaps.

7. All assessment decisions must be recorded in the RPL Assessment Form and summarised in the Assessor Summary Sheet.
8. If evidence collected is outside the standard RPL Kit mapping, the assessor:
    - Updates the mapping document to reflect the new evidence;
    - Notes this on the assessment summary.

Assessment Decision and Documentation

1. RPL decisions are made without the need for further assessment provided the evidence is sufficient. Where gaps are identified, further assessment may be required.
2. The assessor ensures that the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence are met.
3. Assessors are responsible for verifying equivalence and relevance of prior learning, especially for imported or superseded units, in accordance with training package requirements.
4. The applicant receives feedback on the outcome.
5. If the applicant is deemed competent, the result is recorded in their academic file.
6. If gap training is required, an adjusted training plan is developed.
7. The applicant signs the Record of RPL Granted confirming the outcome.
8. The applicant is advised of the RPL application outcome. If the application is unsuccessful, they are informed of Polytechnic Victoria's Complaints and Appeals procedure.
9. All records related to the RPL process are maintained on the individual applicant's file and recorded in the Course Credit Register.
10. Once the RPL process is completed, data is entered into the my.pv system.

Gap Training and Support

- If the RPL assessment identifies skill gaps, students may undertake gap training.
- Gap training is provided through structured learning activities aligned with the missing competencies.
- Students receive support to complete any required practical tasks or assessments.
- Completion of gap training is documented, and competency is reassessed.

Appeals Process

- If a student wishes to appeal an RPL decision, they must first discuss the matter with their assessor.
- If unresolved, the student submits a formal appeal within 14 days using the Complaints and Appeals Form.
- The Operations Manager reviews the appeal and may appoint another assessor for re-evaluation.
- The applicant is notified of the final decision in writing.
- If dissatisfied, the applicant may activate an external appeal process.

Fees and Charges

- RPL fees are determined per unit and communicated to applicants before application.
- Payment must be made before the assessment commences.
- No refunds are provided once the RPL assessment has started.

Record Keeping and Compliance

- All RPL applications and assessments are documented and retained as per Polytechnic Victoria record-keeping requirements.
- Compliance with regulatory bodies is maintained, and RPL assessments are subject to internal validation and quality checks.

Validation and Quality Assurance

- RPL assessments are subject to internal validation to ensure consistency and compliance.
- Trainers and assessors participate in periodic validation activities.
- Any rectifications or improvements identified through validation are implemented.
- RPL outcomes are reviewed to ensure alignment with industry standards and training package requirements.

Review and Continuous Improvement

- This policy is reviewed annually as part of Polytechnic Victoria
- 's continuous improvement cycle.
- Feedback from students and assessors is collected to enhance the RPL process.
- Updates are made in response to changes in regulatory requirements or industry standards.

Responsibilities

Operations Manager
Admin manager
Student Support Officer

Policy Base

- ESOS Act 2000.
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (The National Code).

Forms

- 12.1 Application form for RPL or Credit Transfer
- 12.2 RPL or Credit Transfer Outcome