RECOGNITION POLICY AND PROCEDURE: RPL AND CREDIT TRANSFER

Recognition Policy and Procedure: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer
Australian Massage and Beauty Institute (AMBI)
Regulatory references

- Standards for RTOs 2025: Outcome Standards, Quality Area 1, Division 3: Standard 1.6 (Recognition of prior learning) and Standard 1.7 (Credit transfer)
- Outcome Standards 1.3 to 1.5 (assessment system, principles of assessment, rules of evidence, validation), which apply to RPL as an assessment process
- Compliance Standards for NVR RTOs 2025: section 9 (issuance of AQF certification documentation) and section 10 (records of assessment)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (overseas students only)
- Student Identifiers Act 2014 (authenticated VET transcripts for credit transfer)

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1. Purpose

This policy sets out how AMBI offers recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credit transfer (CT) to every VET student, how RPL is assessed, and how decisions are made, documented and communicated so that they are fair, transparent, consistent between students and maintain the integrity of the training product.

2. Scope

All training products on AMBI's scope of registration, all VET students (domestic and overseas) and all staff involved in enquiries, enrolment, assessment and certification.

3. Definitions

- Recognition of prior learning (RPL): an assessment process that assesses 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 the requirements of the training product.
- Credit transfer (CT): recognising and awarding credit for prior successful completion of an equivalent unit of competency or module.
- Equivalent unit: a unit shown as equivalent on training.gov.au, or the identical unit code.
- Rules of evidence: evidence must be valid, sufficient, authentic and current.
- Principles of assessment: assessment must be fair, flexible, valid and reliable.

4. Policy statements

- Every VET student is offered the opportunity to apply for RPL and CT and is made aware of this policy before enrolment (Standards 1.6(2)(a), 1.7(2)(a)).
- RPL is an assessment. RPL decisions are based on evidence of prior skills, learning and experience, are made by a qualified assessor under AMBI's assessment system, and apply the same principles of assessment and rules of evidence as any other assessment (Standard 1.6(2)(b)).
- Evidence is judged against the whole unit: elements and performance criteria, performance evidence, knowledge evidence and assessment conditions, as published on training.gov.au.
- Where documentary evidence is insufficient, the assessor gathers further evidence through a structured competency conversation, a practical observation and/or workplace products. RPL is never granted on documents alone where the unit requires demonstrated performance.
- CT decisions are based on AQF certification documentation or an authenticated VET transcript (USI transcript) showing an equivalent unit, unless prevented by licensing or regulatory requirements (Standard 1.7(2)(b)). CT is granted free of charge.
- Every RPL and CT decision is documented, given to the student in writing, and decided consistently between students (Standards 1.6(2)(c), 1.7(2)(c)).
- Students may appeal any RPL or CT decision under the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

5. Responsibilities

- CEO: approves this policy; authorises certification.
- RTO Manager: implements this policy; allocates assessors; checks RPL decisions and records before certification; arranges staff training.
- Assessors: conduct RPL assessment, make and document judgements, provide feedback. Assessors hold the credentials required for the training product and current industry skills.
- Student Services: provide information, process applications, chase evidence, record outcomes in the student management system.

6. Procedure: Recognition of prior learning

6.1 Information before enrolment

- The website, Student Handbook and course information explain RPL and CT in plain language and how to apply.
- Enquiries (phone, email, social media) about RPL are answered with the RPL process and the enrolment form.
- For units with prerequisites (for example tattoo short courses), staff confirm prerequisites before enrolment.

6.2 Application and enrolment

- The applicant indicates RPL and/or CT on the enrolment form.
- Student Services confirms the correct course and fee, issues the invoice, records payment, and enrols the student in the student management system and the eLearning platform.
- The applicant completes a self-assessment against the units of the qualification.

6.3 Pre-assessment interview

- The RTO Manager or an assessor discusses the applicant's experience and the evidence they can provide, explains the RPL kit and evidence requirements, and agrees which units will be assessed by RPL and which require training.
- Overseas students: any RPL granted after commencement affects course duration and study load. The study plan is adjusted, the outcome is confirmed in writing and any change to the CoE is reported as required by the National Code.

6.4 Evidence gathering (current RPL kit)

- The student receives the current RPL kit for the qualification (HLT52021 and SHB50121 RPL kits 2025 are the current templates).
- Typical evidence: identity and personal information; résumé and workplace verification (employer letter, payslips, business documents); online knowledge assessments in the eLearning platform; photographs and video of practical demonstrations; client treatment/consultation records; third-party reports from a workplace supervisor.
- Student Services tracks evidence against the kit checklist and follows up missing items. Students who need help with the eLearning platform or uploading evidence are supported.

6.5 Assessment and mapping

- The allocated assessor maps all evidence against each unit's elements and performance criteria, performance evidence, knowledge evidence and assessment conditions using the RPL evidence mapping tool.
- Each requirement is recorded as evidenced, partly evidenced, or not evidenced. Gaps are closed by a competency conversation (interview with benchmark answers), a practical observation using the observation checklist, and/or workplace products, or the unit is referred to training.
- The assessor confirms the evidence meets the rules of evidence, including authenticity (third-party verification where required) and currency.

6.6 Decision, feedback and records

- The assessor completes the RPL Summary Report, recording the outcome for each unit (RPL granted / not yet competent / referred to training) with reasons; or sufficient evidence mapping record and any gap assessment decisions by assessor.
- The RTO Manager checks the report and records before any outcome is entered in the student management system.
- The student receives written notice of the outcome and feedback, including what is needed for any unit not granted and how to appeal.
- RPL outcomes are reported using the AVETMISS RPL outcome codes.

6.7 Certification

- Certification follows the AQF Certification Issuance Policy and Procedure (issued within 30 calendar days of assessment completion, once fees are paid).

7. Procedure: Credit transfer

- The student provides a certified copy of their AQF certification documentation or authorises AMBI to view their authenticated USI transcript.
- Student Services verifies the document (USI transcript, or verification with the issuing RTO where needed) and checks unit equivalence on training.gov.au.
- The RTO Manager approves CT for equivalent units and records the decision; the student is notified in writing. Where a unit is not equivalent, the student is advised of the RPL option.
- CT outcomes are reported using the AVETMISS credit transfer outcome code.

8. Records and retention

- RPL evidence, mapping tools, assessment records, summary reports and CT verification are retained for at least 2 years after the student completes the training product (Compliance Standards s10(c)), and longer where required for validation or funding contracts.
- Records are stored securely in AMBI's student records system with access limited to authorised staff.

9. Quality assurance

- RPL tools and judgements are included in AMBI's assessment validation schedule (Standard 1.5).
- Outcomes of validation and any complaints or appeals are used to improve RPL tools and this policy through the Continuous Improvement Register.
- The RTO Manager arranges training for Student Services staff and assessors on this procedure.

10. Related documents

- Training and Assessment Policy 2025
- Validation Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- AQF Certification Issuance Policy and Procedure
- RPL kits (HLT52021, SHB50121 2025)
- RPL evidence mapping tool, competency conversation and observation checklist templates
- RPL Application Form, CT Application Form

Version history

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	July 2016	Developed for the Standards for RTOs 2015
2.0	September 2016	Quality assurance check against ASQA fact sheets and ESOS changes
2.1	May 2017	Referred to National Code 2017
2.2	May 2018	Referred to National Code 2018
3.0	December 2025	Rewritten for the Standards for RTOs 2025 (Outcome Standards 1.6 and 1.7); credit transfer procedure added; evidence mapping and gap tools added; retention aligned to Compliance Standards s10; reviewed following ASQA auditor feedback