

Name of the Policy	PP05 RPL and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure
Distribution:	All Staff & Students
Entity relating to	Stirling Institute of Australia Pty Ltd trading as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academy of Hypnotic Science • Stirling Institute of Counselling • Stirling Institute • Stirling Institute of Hypnotherapy • Stirling Institute of Business • Stirling Institute of Children’s Services
Reference to HESG:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills First Program Schedule 1 Clause 5 and 7 • Skills First Quality Charter Principle 4
Related Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPL Application Form • Form 28a Credit Transfer Application Form • Form 28b RPL Application Form • Student Handbook • Fees & Charges Schedule • PP02 Student Fees & Charges Policy and Procedure • PP07 Students Complaints, Grievance & Appeals Policy and Procedure • PP28 Training and Assessment Policy and Procedure • PP41 Pre-Training Review & LLN Policy and Procedure
Statutory References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 • Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 Clause 3.5, 1.8 – 1.12
Legislative Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy and data protection Act 2014 • Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) • Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) • National Principles and Operational Guidelines for Recognition of Prior Learning • Equal Opportunity Act 2010 • Fair Work Act 2009 • Refer to Legislation and Standards Register

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1. Policy

Stirling Institute of Australia Pty Ltd (Stirling Institute) is committed to providing a fair, flexible and accessible process for credit transfer and recognition of prior learning that acknowledges the skills, knowledge, performance outcomes and learning achieved through formal or informal pathways, including work and life experience, prior to commencing with Stirling Institute. Students may apply to have their skills and knowledge recognized against the units of competency contained in an AQF or Accredited course on Stirling Institute's scope of registration.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide a user-friendly, supportive, streamlined framework for the assessment and recognition of various types of prior competencies obtained by an individual through previous and/or current training, work experience and/or life experience.

3. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to students wishing to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning and/or Credit Transfer.

4. Definitions

Recognition of Prior Learning is an assessment process that assesses an individual's non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion, of a qualification. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is defined in the AQF as follows:

"Recognition of prior learning is an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit."

Credit Transfer determines the extent to which a unit of competency is equivalent to the unit/s noted on the training plan, for the qualification. Credit transfer is defined in the AQF as follows:

"Credit transfer is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications"

Credit is an exemption from enrolment in a particular part of the course as a result of previous study, experience or recognition of a competency currently held, including academic credit and recognition of prior learning; also referred to as course credit.

Unit of Competency is the specification of the standards of performance required in the workplace as defined in the training package

Document refers to a Testamur/Statement, Statement of Attainment or Record of Results.

AQF is the Australian Qualifications Framework which can be accessed at <http://www.aqf.edu.au/>

Statement of Attainment confirms that one or more nationally recognised units or modules have been achieved by an individual but is only used where there has been partial completion of a qualification or VET accredited course.

Self-assessment involves the candidate documenting skills, knowledge and experience in the relevant unit(s) of competence for which credit is being applied.

Testamur is an official certification document that confirms that an AQF qualification has been awarded to an individual. This may be called an 'award', 'qualification' 'parchment', or 'certificate'

Informal Learning refers to learning occurring through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities, without being part of a structured program of study.

Student is an active, individual with a current course of enrolment.

5. Requirements

Recognition of Prior Learning

- 1 RPL is the formal recognition of the skills and knowledge a person has regardless of how or where they have been attained, that is, through informal or non-formal training, work experience, (paid and unpaid) voluntary work and life experience. RPL is a form of assessment and under the Standards for RTOs must:
 - meet the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course;
 - be conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence; and
 - meet workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements.
- 2 The underlying principle of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is that no student should be required to undertake a unit of study for which they are able to demonstrate satisfactory achievement of the required competency standard or learning outcome for entry into, and/or partial or total completion of a qualification.
- 3 This policy therefore aims to maximise the recognition of an individual's prior skills and knowledge whilst at all times maintaining the integrity and standards of the defined learning outcomes of the specific course of study.
- 4 Assessment of all RPL applications shall be undertaken by a qualified assessor who has successfully completed Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40110) or its updated equivalent, and who has the vocational competencies in the unit they are assessing the student's competency.
- 5 RPL is an assessment process so therefore must adhere to the requirements of assessment and there is no training provided as a part of RPL assessment.
- 6 The evidence collect for the RPL process would normally comprise a portfolio containing a range of supporting materials, and evidence attesting to the student having met the learning outcomes of the identified course, such as:
 - Work based curriculum vitae
 - Essays
 - Certified copies of professional references
 - Certified copies of industry awards
 - Reports
 - Workplace documentation, such as position description, third party reports (performance, plan and reports)
 - Work samples, professional development activities

Mixed cases of recognition:

- 1 When a student has studied in the past and has gained a Statement of Attainment in a unit/s of competency that are not fully equivalent to the units noted on the training plan, then students can request recognition for the Unit/s of Competence and the gap in competency will be assessed.
- 2 In a mixed case of recognition, an RPL assessment may be used to supplement credit transfer.
- 3 The quality requirements for credit transfer and RPL will then apply separately to the two processes – assessment of the past studies and assessment of the individual's skills and knowledge.
- 4 The result of mixed recognition is to be reported as RPL

Credit Transfer

The credit transfer process involves:

- 1 Mapping, comparing and evaluating the extent to which the learning outcome, discipline content and assessment requirements of the individual components of one qualification are equivalent to the learning outcomes, discipline content and assessment requirements of the individual components of another qualification, and
- 2 Making a judgment about the credit to be assigned between the matched components of the two qualifications.

The agreed credit outcomes may include any form of credit: block, specified or unspecified credit.

AQF Qualifications

AQF qualifications and/or statements of attainment provided by applicants must clearly identify the following:

- Nationally recognised training
- Name of RTO issuing the AQF qualification or statement of attainment
- National provider number of RTO
- Full surname and first name of the recipient
- The qualification title
- Record of results identifying the units of competency attained
- The issuing RTO is registered to issue the certification which is acceptable within the guidelines of the relevant Nationally Endorsed Training Package

Trainer/Assessor Qualifications

Assessment is only conducted by persons who have:

- vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed;
- current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided; and
- current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment and,
- TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, or its successor as defined in the Standards for RTOs

A current Trainers Skills Matrix must be used to record the qualifications and experience of trainers/assessors.

6. Process & Procedures

Procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Stage 1: Information

- 1 All prospective and enrolling students will be informed in all pre-enrolment information of the opportunity to apply for RPL. Students can apply for RPL for the unit of competency prior to the commencement of delivery of the unit of competency.
- 2 The information provided to students will include that:
 - a. RPL can be granted to an individual who has demonstrated evidence of prior knowledge and experience in life and work relating to the unit of competency for which recognition is applied
 - b. RPL is awarded for a total unit of competency (no partial RPL of a unit of competency will be awarded).
 - c. Applicable fees - Stirling Institute has set fees and charges in place. These fees are detailed on the Fees & Charges Schedule and uploaded to website www.sia.edu.au Adjustment to tuition fees where a Credit Transfer (CT) or Recognition to Prior Learning (RPL) application is approved will be made according to the fees and charges schedule.

- 4 Students can apply for RPL who have gained learning through the following means:
- *Formal Learning:* Formal learning means the students has completed part, or all, of an accredited qualification.
 - *Informal Learning:* Informal learning means the students has acquired learning was through a structured program that was not part of an accredited qualification.
 - *Non-Formal Learning:* Non-Formal learning means the students' learning was acquired through work or life experience.

Stage 2: Application

- 1 If a student wishes to apply for RPL they must complete the front page of the 'RPL Application Form' and submit to Stirling Institute. This will usually occur at the time of the Pre-training Review.
- 2 Students will then meet with a representative of Stirling Institute (assessor or training Manager) to assist them in deciding which unit/s of competency to apply for and complete Section 2 of the RPL Application form. The student should be prepared to provide / discuss initial information, such as resume, work history and qualifications, to assist the Stirling Institute representative in providing sound advice to the student. At this stage, there is no cost to the student and no obligation to continue in the RPL process. At the end of the interview the student will be able to make an informed decision as to proceed with the RPL process or not.
- 3 If students wish to continue in the RPL process, then they are to complete Section 2 of the RPL Application Form, sign and submit to Stirling Institute.
- 4 After submitting the form, the student will be provided either an adjustment to their Statement of fees or a new statement of fees with the total cost for the RPL. The fee must be paid prior to receiving the RPL Kit. The RPL fee is charged at 50% of the standard tuition fee rate of the unit (total tuition fee divided by the number of units). If a student applies for RPL and the application is unsuccessful, there will be no refund.
- 5 On notification of payment of the RPL fee, the Training Manager will provide the student with the RPL Kit and a time for an interview with the assessor to assist the student with the RPL Kit. This initial non-assessment interview can be by phone or skype.
- 6 At the interview, the assessor and student will discuss the RPL Kit and any issues they may be having. They will do an initial review of the applicant's self-assessment and provide feedback on their application process.
- 7 If a student decides to not proceed, the notes of the interview and the Application are stored on the students file and the student continues with the course with no adjustments to the training plan.
- 8 Ideally it would be preferred that this process be completed prior to the students commencing the course to ensure the best outcome for the student.

Stage 3: Assessment process

- 1 Stirling Institute is required to ensure that all RPL assessment undertaken is completed and recorded appropriately.
- 2 All original documents such as certificates, workplace reports, etc., should be provided as a certified copy. Where this is not possible the original documents are to be copied after being sighted by the assessor and then the copy signed with a date, signature, printed name of the assessor.
- 3 When the completed RPL Kit is submitted by the student to Stirling Institute:

The assessor will review the submission and determine if:

- Further evidence is required; and
- Conduct an interview with the student to discuss in full the submission.

In marking an assessment, assessors will consider the following:

- Relevance and nature of evidence provided by the applicant
- Scope of subject matter covered by the evidence

- Whether the evidence is sufficient to enable a judgement of competence to be made in regard to the unit, taking into account the required knowledge and skills and the critical aspects of evidence in the relevant units
- Determine if the evidence is sufficient and reliable
- Where evidence and documentation requires additional information or clarification, this will be discussed with the applicant via a phone call or a scheduled meeting.
- The interview will be conducted once the assessor has all the documentation and the interview information will be document in a Report which will be stored with the students RPL Kit submission and evidence submitted on the student file. Assessor completes Section 3 of the form.

Stage 4: Outcome of the process

- 1 Where RPL is granted this information will be communicated in writing to the student within 10 business days of completion of the assessment, and Statement of Attainment will then be issued.
- 2 Where RPL is not granted students will be notified in writing of the outcome within 10 business days of completion of the assessment. The written communication to the student is to include a reason for refusal (where applicable).
- 3 In all cases, a copy of the RPL documentation and outcome will be kept in the student's file.
- 4 Section 4 and Section 5 of the form to be completed by the Training Manager and Data and Finance Manager respectively.

Credit Transfer

Stage 1: Information

Credit Transfers can be granted under any of the following circumstances:

- Under the principles of National Recognition, a student is granted an automatic credit for any equivalent unit that they successfully completed at any other Registered Training Organisation.
- When the unit has exactly the same code and title, even if it is not from the same Training Package.
- The unit reviewed has resulted in minor changes to the unit code e.g. upgrade from an A code to B code. The outcomes of the unit have remained substantially the same and therefore, the unit is equivalent to the new unit as published on <http://training.gov.au> .
- When the unit has been transferred from another Training Package/curriculum and recoded, however the learning outcomes remain the same.
- Documentation must relate to courses that were successfully passed within the last 5 years as credit can only be granted for courses passed within the last 5 years.
- The student applying for Credit transfer with Stirling Institute should be enrolled in the qualification.

Stage 2: Application

- 1 The student indicates during their Pre-Training Review they wish to apply for Credit Transfer.
- 2 The student reads the Credit Transfer policy and procedures contained in the student handbook.
- 3 Stirling Institute's RTO Delegate provides the student with a Credit Transfer Application Form during the Pre-Training Review session.
- 4 The student completes and submits Credit Transfer Application Form along with the following documents:
 - Qualification Testamur and an Official Academic Transcript* with final grades
 - Statement of Attainment*

(*All Documents must be originals or certified true copies. Certified copies must bear an original signature and certification the document is a true copy of the original)

- 5 If the student's previous study was at Stirling Institute, then supporting documents are not required.
- 6 Ideally students can apply for Credit transfer within 10 working days of the course commencement however may apply at any stage of their enrolment

Stage 3: Assessment process

- 1 Training Manager completes a check against the students' application and once unit/s of competency are confirmed as equivalent as published on <http://training.gov.au>, grants the Credit Transfer
- 2 The Training Manager should either authenticate the information by directly accessing the USI transcript online or by contacting the organisation that issued the document to confirm the content is valid.
- 3 The Training Manager must always contact the organisation that delivered the training if they have any reason to be concerned about the authenticity of credentials presented.
- 4 Data and Finance Manager gives the final approval on the application outcome.
- 5 Credit Transfer results are recorded on VETTRAK by the Data and Finance Manager.
- 6 Credit Transfer application and supporting evidence is filed as per Records and File Management policy and procedures by the Data and Finance Manager.
- 7 No fees are payable for credit transfer; however, the student must be enrolled in the qualification.
- 8 The outcome of the application is informed to the Training Department along with the updated duration of the course and the Training Plan is updated by the Data and Finance Manager.
- 9 Training Department updates the timetable and informs the trainer about the students Credit Transfer.

Stage 4: Outcome of the process

- 1 The student is informed that their application has been received and will be reviewed and will be notified of the outcome within 48 hours.
- 2 The student applying for credit transfer for units of competency from the qualification, when successful, will receive an updated training plan, timetable and new fees structure for the remainder of the qualification.
- 3 The student will be issued statement of attainment on successful outcome of the application.

7. Appeal

Where RPL/Credit Transfer is not granted and the student disagrees with the outcome, they should first try to resolve the matter informally. Where the outcome remains unresolved following informal discussion, the individual may appeal by using the methods outlined in the 'Students Complaints, Grievance & Appeals Policy and Procedure.'

This policy and procedure can be obtained from the SIA website and is also found in the Student Information Handbook.

8. Responsibility

The Quality and Compliance Manager is responsible for effective implementation and management of this policy as well as provision of information on ways to resolve complaints of breaches of this policy and procedure. The Data and Finance Manager is responsible for collecting, verifying, assessing and filing evidences of competency and prior learning.

The CEO has overall responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy and procedure. Any complaints or breaches in relation to this policy should be reported to the CEO in person or by email to: info@sia.edu.au

9. Review Date

12 months from the date of this version, or as required.

10. Major Version History

Version Number	Date	Reason for change	Prepared by	Approved by
8	Oct 2016	New template, Mapping to SRTOs 2015 and to reflect the current practices of Stirling Institute	Quality and Compliance Manager- JS	CEO- AW
2018_v2.0	July 2018	Updated format and language to align with other Policy	Quality and Compliance Manager	CEO – DY
V 3	September 2018	Reviewed and updated	Quality and Compliance Manager	CEO – DY
V4	November 2018	Reviewed credit transfer and authentication process	Quality and Compliance Manager	CEO – DY
V5	December 2018	Reviewed references to 2018	Quality and Compliance Manager	CEO – DY
V6	February 2019	Reviewed position and responsibilities and references to legislation	Quality and Compliance Manager	CEO – DY
V6.1	July 2019	Reviewed fees for RPL units, included more details in line with fees and refund Policy and Procedure.	Quality and Compliance Manager - GDS	CEO – DY