

1. Purpose

This policy is in place to ensure that all applicants undertaking courses at ACOT can apply for Course Credit either for equivalent units being approved for Credit Transfer (CT) or through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Credit Transfer or RPL will be granted when all the stated learning outcomes and performance criteria of the unit/s of competency have been met.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all students enrolled in or seeking a place in a qualification/course provided by ACOT.

3. Relevant Standards from Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015

Standard 3, Clause 3.5 Provide Credit for prior studies

As the Registered Training Organisation (RTO), ACOT 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:

a. AQF certification documentation issued by any other RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation,

or

b. Authenticated VET transcripts issued by the registrar

Outcome of Standard 3, Clause 3.5

Learners must not be required to repeat any unit or module in which they have already been assessed as competent, unless a regulatory requirement or license condition (including industry licensing schemes) requires this. Where a learner provides suitable evidence, they have successfully completed a unit or module at any RTO, ACOT must provide credit for that unit or module.

Credit must be granted not only for studies completed at another RTO, but at any authorised issuing organisation, such as a university. In such cases, an analysis as to the equivalence of the study completed with the relevant unit/s or module/s would need to be completed before any credit could be granted.

Before providing credit based on a qualification, statement of attainment or record of results, ACOT will authenticate the information in the document (e.g. by contacting the organisation that issued the document and confirming the content is valid).

ACOT is not obliged to issue a qualification or statement of attainment that is achieved wholly through recognition of units and/or modules completed at another RTO or RTOs.

In some cases, licensing or regulatory requirements may prevent a unit or module being awarded through a credit process.

Note that providing credit for previous studies is not recognition of prior learning (RPL) process. RPL is a form of assessment of the competence of a person, while providing credit (credit transfer) is recognising the equivalence of studies previously undertaken and completed successfully.

ESOS National Code

Registered providers such as ACOT appropriately recognise course credit within the ESOS framework.

4. Definitions & Key Words

- **The Registered Provider – Australian College of Trade (ACOT)**
- **Standards for Registered Training Organisations-2015**
- **The National Code 2018 – refers to the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities**

and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

- **Department of Education, Skills and Employment**
- **DHA – refers to the Department of Home Affairs**
- **ESOS – refers to the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000**
- **Course Credit– The ESOS National Code defines course credit as Exemption from enrolment in a part of the course because of previous study, experience or recognition of a competency currently held. Includes academic credit and recognition of prior learning**

Learners must not be required to repeat any unit or module in which they have already been assessed as competent, unless a regulatory requirement or license condition (including industry licensing schemes) requires this.

Where a learner provides suitable evidence of having successfully completed a unit or module at any RTO, ACOT must provide credit for that unit or module.

Credit must be granted not only for studies completed at another RTO, but at any authorised issuing organisation. In such cases, an analysis as to the equivalence of the study completed with the relevant unit/s or module/s would need to be completed before any credit could be granted.

Before providing credit based on a qualification, statement of attainment or record of results, you should authenticate the information in the document (e.g. by contacting the organisation that issued the document and confirming the content is valid).

ACOT is not obliged to issue a qualification or statement of attainment that is achieved wholly through recognition of units and/or modules completed at another RTO or RTOs.

In some cases, licensing or regulatory requirements may prevent a unit or module being awarded through a credit process.

Note that providing credit for previous studies is not a recognition of prior learning (RPL) process. RPL is a form of assessment of the competence of a person, while providing credit is recognising the equivalence of studies previously undertaken and completed successfully.

Where ACOT, as the registered provider grants course credit, it 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.

Where ACOT, as the registered provider grants the international student course credit which leads to a shortening of the student's course, it 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 as per the ESOS Act.

5. Course Credit

Where an applicant considers that they have already acquired the learning outcomes of one or more units of competency in an ACOT course, they may formally apply to have the skills and knowledge recognised as follows:

a. Credit transfer

Credit Transfer for equivalent units of competency achieved at another Registered Training Organisation

If applicants have already achieved the same unit of competence at another RTO, this will automatically be fully recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) on production of an original Statement of Attainment, Record of results or Qualification awarded by another RTO.

b. RPL (Recognition of prior learning)

RPL is based on the awareness that people learn in many ways throughout their lifetime – through work experience and life experience as well as through education and training. RPL considers a person's skills and experiences, no matter where these were learned, to enable people to get credit in a course of study.

6. Compliance Evidence

For a provider to show it is complying with the above standards, it may need some of the following as evidence:

- a documented procedure for the granting and recording of course credit;
- a record of course credit granted placed on the student's file;
- if course credit via credit transfer was granted after visa grant for an international student and this led to a reduction in course length, evidence on the student's or provider's file that the change had been reported via PRISMS; and
- applications for credit transfer which have been rejected, along with the reasons for refusal
- applications for RPL which have been received and the acceptance/rejection documents relating to each application
- Completed RPL documentation including application, applicant's RPL checklist, Resume/CV from applicant, employer/supervisor references, assessor's observation evidence of applicant's workplace competency, written assessments where required and any additional evidence deemed relevant by the trainer/assessor.

Benefits of Course Credit via either Credit Transfer or RPL:

- Speeds up the process for a participant to gain their qualification
- Conforms to the requirements for equity in adult education
- Avoids the problem of participants having to unnecessarily repeat learning experiences
- Encourages the development of various assessment procedures
- Assesses the candidate's current competence in comparison to the stated standards of competence required
- The RPL process can clarify what relevant skills the participant does and does not possess – so that the learning program can be tailored accordingly

Evidence for Credit transfer:

- Credit transfer is directly related to competencies gained from education and training
- Credit transfer procedures require documentation of competencies achieved so that they can be matched with the outcomes of the training package/course being applied for

It is recommended that credit transfer should only apply to units of competency that are equivalent as per each unit's elements and performance criteria.

Education and training

- Formal, accredited and informal training
- Copies of certificates, qualifications achieved from other courses, school or tertiary results
- Statements outlining courses and or study that you have undertaken and the learning outcomes/ competencies achieved from these

Evidence of competencies gained via prior learning that is not exclusively from education and training:

There are many ways that evidence of the competencies can be shown. For RPL applications submitted at ACOT there are a few examples of the ways evidence can be provided as listed below.

(Applicants will need to include a variety of these in the RPL Checklist and their application form.)

Work related experience

- Positions held in the relevant area
- Resume/CV of work experience
- Copies of any statements, references or articles about your employment or community involvement

Life experiences

- Relevant work or other experiences
- Evidence of home/self-directed study which may include a list of recent readings, synopsis of seminars attended, reports of own research/analysis undertaken

Please remember, the above are only examples. Applicants should provide all the documentation they can which clearly shows evidence of the competencies held.

7. PROCEDURE

Applying for Course Credit

Credit Transfer or Recognition of Prior Learning

Approving Course Credit via either Credit Transfer (CT) or Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process that allows the studies, skills and abilities achieved by an applicant to be recognised. This might include similar courses or qualifications completed or partially completed at a different Registered Training Organisation, courses studied informally, skills obtained during the applicant's working life or from other life experiences. Obtaining CT or RPL approval will result in certain units of competency being removed from an applicant's program because they have already achieved competency in those areas.

All RTO's must recognise the qualifications and statements of attainment issued by other Registered Training Organisations. This means that students who have satisfactorily completed courses or units of competency while studying at ACOT may be eligible for credit towards courses conducted by other RTO's. Students who have completed units from their course at other institutions will be given recognition on presentation of a verified record of results and Award or Statement of Attainment.

ACOT is committed to providing up to date and relevant Course Credit information to all students at enrolment and whilst enrolled. ACOT staff will provide timely support and guidance regarding enquiries or applications for Course Credit for either CT or RPL.

Where an applicant considers that they have already acquired the learning outcomes of one or more units of competency in an ACOT course, they may formally apply to have the skills and knowledge recognised via:

a. CT (Credit transfer)

Credit Transfer for equivalent units of competency achieved at another Registered Training Organisation

If applicants have already achieved the same unit of competence at another RTO, this will automatically be fully recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) on production of an original Statement of Attainment, Record of results or Qualification awarded by another RTO.

b. RPL (Recognition of prior learning)

RPL is based on the awareness that people learn in many ways throughout their lifetime – through work experience and life experience as well as through education and training. RPL considers a person's skills and experiences, no matter where these were learned, to enable people to get credit in a course of study.

All applicants may apply for course credit via credit transfer or recognition of prior learning either prior to or following the commencement of their enrolment.

Applicants will be approved for Course Credit as follows:

Credit Transfer -Providing Credit for Previous Studies

1. Applicant submits VCID.SMS.30 Application for Credit Transfer/RPL together with copies of Statements of Results and/or attainment and completion documents from their previous academic studies relevant to the course/units for which course credit via credit transfer is being sought. Credit transfer should only apply to units of competency that are equivalent as per each unit's elements and performance criteria.
2. Director of Studies or nominated trainer/assessor will assess the competencies achieved by the applicant in their previous studies. If required, the applicant will be advised if they are required to provide additional information for the application to proceed.
3. Once an application has been assessed a report will be provided, outlining either of the following:
 - a) **Credit Transfer(s) approved.** Equivalent units of competency will be approved and these units will be shown as competent with the code of Credit Transfer-CT. Student Administration will update the applicant's data to show CT against each approved unit within the WISENET student management system. Trainer/assessor will update the applicant's training plan accordingly. Course duration will be adjusted by deducting the training hours of units approved for CT. Where required the applicant's enrolment (COE) will be adjusted in PRISMS to reflect the reduced number of units they will study in their course. Fees will also be rebated to reflect the reduced training required. OR
 - b) **Credit Transfer(s) not approved.** Units of competency are not equivalent and cannot be provided with Credit Transfer. Course duration will remain the same as prior to the application.

Recognition of Prior Learning-Providing credit for previous education and/or work/life experience

1. Applicant submits VCID.SMS.30 Application for Credit Transfer/RPL together with copies of Statements of Results and/or attainment and completion documents from their previous academic studies, Resume/CV and other evidence relating to work/life experience and employer and workplace references. Evidence supplied must be sufficient and relevant to the course/units of competency for which RPL is being sought. Each applicant must also submit the RPL checklist for assessment.
2. Director of Studies or nominated trainer/assessor will assess the competencies achieved by the applicant in their previous studies and evaluate the relevancy of their work and life experience. If required, the applicant will be advised if they are required to provide additional information for the application to proceed. Where an applicant is unable to provide sufficient relevant evidence, the application will not proceed. The Director of Studies will advise the applicant accordingly.
3. Assessment of RPL application includes satisfying the following criteria in addition to reviewing and assessing the applicant's previous academic qualifications:
 - a) Formal interview with the applicant discussing work and life experience relevant to the course/units of competency for which RPL is being sought
 - b) Resume/CV and written references
 - c) Visit to the applicant's work place to verify Resume/CV. Meet the applicant's employer, supervisor(s), colleagues and referees. Observe the applicant in their work place during one or more work shift.
 - d) Assign and observe the completion of practical assessments designed to address any skill gaps required to achieve competency

- e) Conduct written and/or oral testing to address any knowledge gaps that are required to achieve competency
4. Once an application has been assessed a report will be provided, outlining either of the following:
- a) **Recognition of Prior Learning approved.** Units of competency in which the applicant has satisfied all the above will be approved and these units will be shown as competent with the code of Recognition of Prior Learning-RPL. Student Administration will update the applicant's data to show RPL against each approved unit within the WISENET student management system. Trainer/assessor will update the applicant's training plan accordingly. Course duration will be adjusted by deducting the training hours of units approved for RPL. Where required the applicant's enrolment (COE) will be adjusted in PRISMS to reflect the reduced number of units they will study in their course. Fees will also be rebated to reflect the reduced training required. OR
- b) **Recognition of Prior Learning not approved.** Units of competency have not been completed satisfactorily and cannot be provided with Recognition of Prior Learning. Course duration will remain the same as prior to the application.

Application Fees

- Applications for Credit Transfer will be processed without cost if submitted prior to the issue of your eCOE or enrolment. There will be an application fee of \$250 charged for each application made after the issue of your eCOE or enrolment. Please carefully read the conditions as stated in your Student Acceptance Agreement.
- The rebate for approved units is calculated as follows: (course cost, divided by the total number of tuition hours, multiplied by the tuition hours of the approved units).
- RPL applications attract a fee of \$200 per unit assessed. Course fees will be rebated for approved units calculated as follows: (course cost, divided by the total number of tuition hours, multiplied by the tuition hours of the approved units). The charge of \$200 per unit remains for non-approved units, which is added to the course cost.
- For Skills First Domestic students there are no fees for RPL applications.

Outcome of approval

- If the applicant accepts the outcomes of the Credit Transfer/RPL assessment, then a record of the outcomes is signed by both the trainer/assessor and the student and placed on the student's file. Student administration will ensure that WISENET is updated to reflect the units approved for either Credit Transfer or Recognition of Prior Learning. Trainer/assessor will modify the training plan that is provided to each student as per the units for which credit was approved.
- For International students who are granted Credit Transfer/RPL prior to the issue of a visa, the net course duration (as reduced by Credit Transfer/RPL) will be indicated on the electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCOE) issued for the student
- For International students who are granted Credit Transfer/RPL after the issue of a visa, the net course duration (as reduced by Credit Transfer/RPL) will be reported via PRISMS.

Appeals

- Each applicant has the right to appeal ACOT's decision if they believe the decision is unfair, unjust or if the evidence has been misinterpreted. If the applicant does not accept the outcome of the Credit Transfer/RPL assessment they have the right to appeal against the assessment decision and to have their assessment reviewed. Applicants must lodge Credit Transfer/RPL appeals in writing with the Director of Studies within 10 working days of being notified of the outcome of their Credit Transfer/RPL application.

- ACOT will commence processing the appeal within 10 working days of receiving an appeal application and will advise the applicant as quickly as practicable of the outcome. Only one appeal is allowed per Credit Transfer/RPL application.
- For an appeal regarding the outcome of an application for Credit Transfer or Recognition of Prior Learning the Director of Studies will constitute and convene a new Credit Transfer/RPL panel.
- The original Credit Transfer/RPL application form, together with any supporting materials and documents, assessor notes, records of interviews, records of client outcomes, letters of advice, logs or agreements will be retained in a hard file by the Director of Studies.

8. Responsibilities

- The Director of Studies or the nominated Trainer/Assessor has the responsibility for Credit transfer or RPL assessment
- The Director of Studies has the responsibility to ensure result is communicated to the student
- The student has the responsibility to accept or appeal ACOT's decision
- The college's Student Administration Staff are responsible for ensuring that all information relating to Course Credit via Credit transfer or RPL is retained on the student's file

9. Procedure Owner

The owner of this procedure is the Director of Studies