VET Recognition Procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') acknowledges that an individual's skills, knowledge, and experience can be gained through formal, non-formal and informal learning. These prior competencies are recognised in accordance with the 2025 Standards for RTOs (or successor).

(2) The University recognises the mobility of VET units of competency by granting credit transfer (CT) to students who have completed an equivalent unit at another RTO.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) This procedure outlines the University's process for assessing a student's previous learning, skills, and knowledge to determine the extent to which they have achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, and training product outcomes for partial or total completion of a VET training product.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This procedure applies to current and prospective VET students applying for credit transfer (CT), recognition of prior learning (RPL) or recognition of current competency (RCC) for VET training products on the University's scope of registration and the University employees involved in the administration and assessment of these applications.

Section 4 - Procedure

General rules

(5) To ensure consistency, fairness and transparency, the University will facilitate and support the progression of VET students by providing information on RPL, RCC, or CT prior to or upon enrolment.

(6) Students who have previously completed any of the units or the previous equivalent versions in their enrolled course may be eligible for CT. Students who have previously gained any skills and knowledge relevant to their course may be eligible for RPL. RCC is a specific form of RPL; it only applies where an individual is required to maintain current competency in one or more units of competency linked to a license or regulatory requirement. To meet these requirements, individuals may present for re-assessment in units previously attained.

a. RPL is a formal assessment process where all unit requirements are addressed, and the judgement is made using evidence that meets all the rules of evidence. RPL will only be granted if:
    i. the applicant will not be disadvantaged in achieving the expected learning outcomes for the course;
    ii. the integrity of the course and the qualification are maintained; and
    iii. the applicant provides valid and appropriate evidence to support their claim.

(7) Once recognition has been attained for a unit of competency, the grade is reported on the student's record and is

portable locally and nationally, and they can apply to be credited into further training products as per the National Register of VET (training.gov.au). Recognition is at the assessor's discretion and, per the Academic Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, must align with the training product outcomes. Recognition may be limited when an individual study plan includes electives that meet the packaging rules but not the overarching intent and job role of the training product.

Compulsory Transfer

(8) Students in a superseded course who are not expected to complete must be compulsorily transferred to the replacement course in line with VET Student Transition Procedure timelines.

(9) Compulsory transfer must protect students from disadvantage and maximise the recognition for the learning and assessment already gained in the expiring training product. The VET Lecturer must analyse the units and create administrative mapping to identify and record learning and assessment requirements that are equivalent in intent and extent between the expiring and new training products. Mapping is categorised in the following ways:

a. Units with the same code and title are carried across from the superseded training product into the new training product via a credit transfer.
b. Units are superseded in the new training product and are deemed equivalent on training.gov.au but have new unit requirements: These new requirements must be identified and recorded, and a determination made as to whether continuing students can be assessed via RPL or must be enrolled for training and assessment. The new requirements are also then incorporated into the enduring training and assessment and RPL resources.
c. Units are superseded in the new training product, are not deemed equivalent on training.gov.au, and have new unit requirements: The new requirements must be identified and recorded, and a determination made as to whether continuing students can be assessed via RPL or must be enrolled for training and assessment. The new requirements are also then incorporated into the enduring training and assessment and RPL resources.
d. Units that are new and have no superseded relationship with the expiring training product will not be recognised in the new training product.

(10) There are no student fees associated with compulsory transfer.

(11) Compulsory recognition is applied in the following ways:

a. Where units with the same code and title have been carried across from the superseded qualification into the new qualification and where units (multiple or single) are replaced in the new qualification and are deemed equivalent on training.gov.au:
    i. Students who are ungraded in the unit or already hold a Continuing Enrolment (CE) grade because they are engaged in learning must be issued an Insufficient Participation (IP) grade in the expiring qualification and reenrolled in the same unit in the new qualification and issued a Continuing Enrolment (CE) grade.
    ii. Students who are ungraded in the unit because they are not engaged in learning must be issued a Never Started (NS) grade or Withdrawn without financial penalty (W) grade. They can then be reenrolled in the new unit when appropriate.
    iii. Students with an Ongoing Workplace Assessment (OWA) grade must be issued an Insufficient Participation (IP) grade in the expiring qualification and where there are no additional unit requirements in the new version the student will be issued an OWA grade in the new unit and continue with their workplace assessment. Where there are additional unit requirements in the new version of the unit the student will be enrolled via RPL and their status set to ‘assessing’.
    iv. Students who have already achieved competency and have final grades are enrolled in the new unit in the new qualification and issued CT grades.

b. Where units are superseded in the expiring training product and not equivalent in the new training product, mapping analysis determines the intent and extent of the learning and assessment not already achieved by the students.
    i. Students who do not have a final grade in the expiring unit must be issued an Insufficient Participation (IP) grade and enrolled in the new unit.
    ii. Where the learning and assessment gap is too significant for assessment via RPL, the student must be enrolled in the new unit via training and assessment.
    iii. Where the learning and assessment gap can be assessed via RPL, the student can be enrolled under RPL with their status set to 'assessing'.
c. Where units are new in the training product, students must be enrolled to commence via training and assessment when appropriate.

(12) Students subsequently enrolled in units via RPL 'assessing' under compulsory transfer arrangements must be assessed following an appropriate RPL strategy that meets the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence, such as questioning of knowledge evidence gaps, direct observation of performance gaps, a third-party report of performance in the workplace and a professional conversation to verify learning. The administrative mapping analysis forms part of the evidence for the student.

Credit Transfer

(13) Credit transfer grades are only applied where the unit held by the student is deemed equivalent to the target unit on the training.gov.au and could have been achieved via training and assessment, RPL or CT.

(14) Students should apply for credit transfer for units of competency they already hold that contribute to the application and job outcomes of the course and meet the packaging rules of the training product they are pursuing.

(15) Students are encouraged to apply for credit transfer during the application process, but CDU will accept requests at any stage. Late applications may impact student enrolment.

(16) The University does not charge student fees for credit transfers and no funding is received by CDU for credit transfer grades applied to a student's record.

(17) Equivalency can be identified under two circumstances:

a. Through identical code and title by the unit being sought and the unit held by the student.
b. Through equivalency notation in the usage recommendation section of the unit site in training.gov.au.

(18) To apply for a credit transfer, students must complete the VET110 - Application for Credit Transfer form located on Forms and guides and provide supporting evidence to the relevant Team leader or delegate. The supporting evidence must meet ASQA Standards or be verified in writing by the issuing RTO.

a. If the credit transfer application is for units attained at CDU, no further evidence is required. Staff will verify the records in the student management system.

(19) The following evidence meets the ASQA Standards for credit transfer evidence:

a. The Unique Student Identifier transcript that shows the unit code and title and the issuing RTO via the following means:
    i. An original pdf transcript from the Unique Student Identifier (USI) database downloaded and submitted by the student, which includes the provided digital security.
    ii. An original pdf extract from the USI database that includes a link and password or QR code for limited-

time access to the student's database to verify the unit code and title and issuing RTO listing.

b. A certified copy of the Statement of Attainment from the issuing RTO that includes the Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) logo, unit code, and title list.

(20) If the student supplies evidence that does not meet the ASQA standards, the student must authorise CDU, through the VET110 Application for Credit Transfer located on Forms and guides, to contact the issuing RTO for verification in writing that the student completed the training with them.

(21) Occasionally units of competency are superseded and equivalent back more than one version. Under these circumstances, CT can still be awarded. However, best practice for compliance, validity, and currency may require a mapping analysis and gap assessment for older equivalent unit content. Under this alternative method an RPL grade would be used and the mapping document included with the evidence.

a. When this determination is made and evidenced, it must be applied consistently to all students with the same qualifications and circumstances.

Recognition of Prior Learning

(22) Under the 2025 Standards for RTOs, CDU must offer RPL to students unless the requirements of the training package or licensing requirements prevent this.

(23) RPL acknowledges that people learn in many ways and that learning may have been obtained through:

a. formal learning accredited through an educational institution;
b. non-accredited non-formal learning such as a micro-credential or professional development;
c. informal learning such as workplace-based learning; or
d. a combination of all the above.

(24) A lecturer appropriately matrixed to the units being sought by the student must assess RPL.

(25) An RPL grade may be a sufficient precedent for a further CT grade in an equivalent unit in a subsequent training product.

(26) An RPL grade is not solely sufficient for further RPL in a related or non-equivalent unit and additional evidence is required in addition to the curriculum mapping between the units.

(27) In determining where RPL may be granted, the assessor must be confident of the currency of the student's competency. In fields where practices and technology change rapidly, RPL may not be granted without currency. Similarly, where licenced outcomes prohibit RPL, no applications will be accepted.

(28) The RPL assessment strategy must be fully described in the training and assessment summary (TAS). This can be either a discrete RPL cohort for all students in the training product or an integrated strategy within each cohort.

Conflicts of Interest

(29) There may be potential for real or perceived conflicts of interest when staff members apply for RPL through the University. As such, there is a moratorium for University staff members seeking RPL at CDU.

Applying for recognition

(30) Students are encouraged to pursue recognition where appropriate, and they are encouraged to discuss with their lecturers eligibility for skills recognition, evidence requirements and fees, as well as seek advice on completing the self-assessment and application form and gathering reliable evidence.

(31) CDU must protect and inform students by ensuring they are suitable candidates for RPL before their enrolment. Through initial triage and provision of an RPL guide and self-assessment tool, the student can make an informed decision about proceeding with RPL or enrolling via training and assessment.

(32) Team Leaders must manage RPL volume, processes, timelines, and their RPL workforce efficiently to sustain the RPL market for their industry areas and the typical RPL cohort. Strategies can include tailored assessment methods and processes, structured intakes and units by teaching period, intake census dates, or where students commence near the end of the year to only enrol them in units they can accomplish before the end of the year.

Enquiry and Triage

(33) Recognition enquiries can come via several means and must be triaged appropriately:

a. Direct contact to Student Administration. Under these circumstances, VET teams can provide preparatory questions and information to the customer service staff or request that the enquiry be passed directly on to the appropriate enrolments team member for triage.
b. Direct contact to an Enrolments officer. Under these circumstances, the VET team can provide preparatory questions and information to the enrolment office staff or request that the enquiry be passed directly on to the team leader or delegate for triage.
c. Direct to a lecturer. Under these circumstances, the lecturer can triage the student enquiry directly.

(34) Triage includes the following:

a. Identifying a short series of questions drawn from the key performance evidence of the training product and/or threshold criteria, such as licencing or relevant employment positions that can be posed to the student to validate their pursuit of recognition. If the student cannot meet these initial criteria and is thus unlikely to be a good candidate for recognition, they can be encouraged to enrol in the training product or return to their workplace to develop further skills and knowledge.
b. If appropriate, the student can be encouraged to complete the self-assessment questionnaire to consolidate their enquiry further.
c. Analysing the student's academic transcript for relevance towards RPL or equivalency via credit transfer.
d. A literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy assessment or equivalent capability through alternative means such as a prior training product, compulsory schooling, or work experience.
e. Issuing them an RPL information guide suited to their industry area that outlines the process costs.

(35) Once triage is completed, Student Administration or the Enrolment Officer forwards all communication and documentation to the Team Leader or delegate.

Self-Assessment

(36) If not completed during enquiry and triage, the student must initially submit the completed self-assessment questionnaire. The self-assessment questionnaire must be developed based on at least the performance evidence of each unit and ask the student what evidence they are likely to be able to provide of their skills against a suggested list.

(37) The assessor must review the provided answers and advise the student on their next steps based on the cohort they fall within for the units in their study plan.

Enrolment

(38) Once the self-assessment is completed, the units of competency in a training product may be assessed against the student’s RPL.

(39) Cohort One refers to an RPL student with sufficient prior learning and experience with authentic and current evidence of the same. In the self-assessment questionnaire, this student has met the performance requirements recently and often. They are often active in the job role for which they seek the training product.

(40) Recognition of current competency (RCC) falls within this cohort because the student has a previous version of the training product and requires assessment to be granted the latest version.

(41) At the discretion of the VET team, there can be a tolerance for minimal gap training and assessment in this cohort. This is most common in the knowledge evidence if students have gained their prior learning and experience on the job. If this is the case, students can benefit from some learning inherent to their RPL journey by being given the knowledge evidence assessments to complete as self-directed assessments. If there are also minimal gaps in their performance evidence or any question of currency, or there is a mandate for direct observation in the unit assessment conditions, the student can be issued a performance assessment in a simulation on campus or in the workplace.

(42) This student is enrolled via RPL for the appropriate units.

(43) Cohort Two refers to a student with significant prior experience, but it is either not current and/or no evidence is available. In the self-assessment questionnaire, they have done the performance requirements, but perhaps not all of them, or not often or recently. They often have significant experience in the job role and can demonstrate the skills but may not have an active workplace to do so and no formal learning of knowledge evidence.

(44) At the discretion of the VET team, a threshold is determined up to which a cohort two candidate remains an RPL enrolment with an assessment strategy that can generate sufficient evidence of their skills and knowledge plus any necessary gap training and assessment.

(45) Beyond the threshold, this student is enrolled via an assessment-only (AO) pathway for the appropriate units.

(46) Cohort Three refers to students with insufficient prior learning and experience based on the self-assessment questionnaire.

(47) This student is enrolled via a training and assessment (TA) pathway for the appropriate units.

(48) Students must complete the TAFE101 Enrolment Form located on Forms and guides and indicate which units are enrolled in via RPL, AO, or TA pathway. This stage must also include developing a realistic plan with timelines, milestones, and review dates to complete the study plan that the assessor and student must agree upon. RPL student fees are applied at the point of enrolment.

Supporting Evidence

(49) Evidence can take many forms and be gathered from several sources however, there must be an appropriate balance to ensure that, overall, the evidence collected meets the rules of evidence. Evidence can be categorised as:

a. direct evidence, which is evidence that is observed or witnessed by the assessor in real-time. This could include observation of workplace performance, oral questioning, role play, and challenge tests.
b. indirect evidence, which is evidence the student themselves has engaged with that can be reviewed or examined by the assessor. This could include finished products, written assignments or tests, or a portfolio of previous work or a logbook with or without reflection.
c. supplementary evidence, which is evidence neither produced by the student nor directly observed by the assessor, but which supports the student's claim of competence. This could include reports from supervisors, colleagues and/or clients, testimonials from employers, workplace documents such as their position description, or evidence of training and the curriculum followed. Students should be informed that former institutions and/or current/former employers may be contacted for further information and/or clarification of claims.

(50) RPL assessment tools are created by the VET lecturer and can be designed by modifying existing assessment tools used for the unit of competency. Alternatively, a new suite of RPL assessment tools can be developed.

(51) RPL assessment tools must be pre-validated prior to use and submitted to the VET Assessment Panel through the Senior TAFE Quality Manager for review and approval. Refer to the VET Assessment System Policy and Procedure.

(52) Applicants should not send original documents.

a. For official documents such as licences, training products, or identification, they must be photocopied and certified (signed and dated) as a true copy of the original document by an authorised person, such as a Justice of the Peace, police officer, doctor, accountant, school principal or bank manager who has seen both the original and the photocopy.
b. For non-official documents such as workplace documents, no certification is required.
c. Students must comply with any commercial-in-confidence requirements from their workplace. They should seek permission from their organisation to submit commercial documents or items in confidence. The RPL assessor can provide a declaration that they will protect the information.
d. The Australian Privacy Principles must be adhered to, where no individual (other than the candidate) should be named in the documents. Any names or other information identifying the individual should be blanked out.
e. An English translation must accompany documents in languages other than English. The translator must be accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) or an equivalent body for offshore students.

Assessment Principles

(53) The following principles will apply in the assessment of applications for RPL:

a. RPL will be undertaken by lecturer with expertise in the subject, content or skills area;
b. RPL assessment will be at the same standard as other assessments for the training product using appropriate evidence-gathering methods and tools;
c. Recognise learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided the learning is relevant to the learning outcomes and meets the assessment conditions in the unit of competency;
    i. Currency time frames are determined following industry or regulatory requirements at the unit and/or training product level and must be documented in the student-facing RPL kit;
d. Ensure that the evidence provided of that learning is valid, authentic, current and sufficient and that the process is fair, flexible, reliable and valid; and be supported by documentation that maps the evidence provided by the student back to the unit requirements to ensure all components are covered; and
e. Include reasonable adjustment for the literacy levels, cultural background, and experiences of students. It should not be a proxy for the assessment of skills such as literacy except where these are intrinsic to the learning outcomes of the training product component.

Conducting Assessment

(54) RPL assessment must be conducted using a pre-validated kit developed to suit the type of cohort and the industry area for the training product of the following forms. All RPL kits must include expected benchmark answers and space to capture student responses and assessor comments, a summary of the assessment outcomes and a place for student feedback. Options include:

a. A stand-alone document for a full training product with each unit assessed separately or some units clustered with an assessment mapping matrix for each unit and cluster.
b. An integrated document within the training and assessment tool with additional columns in the assessment

mapping matrix for the RPL assessment methods.

c. A digital tool that forms part of the University's ICT environment and meets the needs of the student and the requirements of the Information Security and Access Policy.

(55) Planning and facilitating RPL assessment evidence collection, communications, face-to-face meetings, video conferences, feedback, task allocation, reminders, reviews and encouragement and guidance are all parts of RPL assessment and are managed at the team level.

a. Multiple assessors can be included in the assessment process.
b. Assessors and students will have input into the documentation of the assessment process.
c. Enrolments are manual, and lecturers can add students' personal email to facilitate self-assessment and then change it to their CDU email once enrolled.
d. Student details and documentation must be kept confidential between the assessor/s and student.
e. Once the assessment process is finalised, all evidence must be stored in the CDU TAFE SharePoint team library.

(56) A combination of assessment methods is required when assessing RPL. The following options are indicative only and not exhaustive; some industries suit other assessment methods, such as a reflective journal or client role-play.

a. Where there is an active workplace such as Cohort One or the training product is very performance-centric: Direct observation with oral questioning and portfolio evidence, written questions, and a workplace supervisor third-party report.
b. Where there is no active workplace such as Cohort Two or the training product is document-centric: Portfolio evidence, professional conversation and/or written questions, and a challenge test observation.

(57) The assessor will conduct an assessment in accordance with the assessment principles above. As the student presents evidence that meets the expected benchmarks and thus can be checked off against the unit components, a summary of the remaining evidence required must be shared with the student however is most appropriate. Once sufficient evidence has been provided, the judgement can be made, and an RPL grade granted.

(58) The RPL assessor will:

a. Review the evidence, marking off unit components covered and identify remaining gaps and other additional evidence requirements.
b. Prepare necessary gap training and assess the extra evidence once submitted.
c. Determine whether RPL is granted or not granted.
d. Store all evidence collected in the CDU TAFE SharePoint repository.
e. Submit the RPL Resulting form to the relevant Enrolments Officer for processing.
f. An RPL student will be deemed unsuccessful under the following circumstances and be issued an RPL-NOT grade for the relevant unit. They will then be offered the opportunity to enrol in the unit as a training and assessment pathway student and normal fees will be applied.
    i. Failure to submit the required evidence or meet the required benchmarks.
    ii. Failure to meet the agreed assessment milestones after all reasonable steps have been taken to engage the student.

(59) RPL assessment must be finalised within six (6) months from enrolment so no applicant is disadvantaged. If the process is expected to go beyond that period, an exemption must be sought from the relevant TAFE Deputy Chief Executive or Academy of the Arts Director. There are no continuing enrolment grades in RPL for when students are still being assessed across the end-of-year closure so RPL enrolment and assessment planning must be managed so all grading at the unit level is completed before the end of the year. The student can continue their RPL journey into the

new calendar year with any remaining units.

(60) Where RPL is not granted, the student will be informed of training and assessment enrolment opportunities.

(61) Should a student receive an RPL-NOT grade and wish to appeal they may contact their assessor, the Team Leader or the student complaints area of CDU.

Records

(62) In the case of successful RPL assessment judgements, the evidence collected must include all evidence provided by the student and the assessor’s mapping of that student's evidence against the unit requirements.

(63) There is currently a moratorium on the disposal of evidence. Retain the RPL application form, the self-assessment questionnaire, all evidence and the completed mapping until further notice in the CDU TAFE SharePoint team library.

(64) Where RPL evidence is collected as part of an integrated training and assessment pathway via Learnline, the evidence can stay within the Learnline site.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(65) Non-compliance with governance documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct - Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct - Students.

(66) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(67) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	12th December 2024
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Approval Date	12th December 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Lisa Papatraianou Deputy Provost
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"VET" - Means Vocational Education and Training. VET includes all students of CDU TAFE and all TAFE courses.

"University" - Charles Darwin University, a body corporate established under section 4 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003. The University is comprised of the various faculties, CDU TAFE, organisational units, and formal committees, including the governing University Council and Academic Board.

"Governance document" - means policy or procedure published in the Governance Document Library. Policies and procedures are collectively called ‘governance documents’ and are often referred to as ‘policy’ or ‘University policy’.