

Recognition Policy and Procedure

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| Policy and Procedure Name | Recognition Policy and Procedure |
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1. Purpose and Scope

Australian Institute of Accreditation has a commitment to providing students with opportunities to have their existing skills and knowledge (regardless of how they were acquired i.e., both formal and informal learning) recognised towards the achievement of a nationally recognised qualification or statement of attainment. The following policy and procedure outlines Australian Institute of Accreditation systematic approach to recognition assessment and explains how the framework ensures effective assessment practices that meet the “Principles of Assessment” and the “Rules of Evidence”.

The Recognition policy and procedure applies to staff, students, employers, clients and potential consumers and is used across all products on Australian Institute of Accreditation current scope of registration.

It should be read in conjunction with the Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure, Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure, Validation and Moderation Policy and Procedure.

2. Abbreviations / Definitions

The following abbreviations have been sourced from National Centre for Vocational Education Research “Glossary” www.ncver.edu.au

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| Assessment | The process of gathering and judging evidence in order to decide whether a person has achieved a standard or objective |
| Credit | Assesses courses/unit/modules against each other to determine equivalency. |
| Credit Transfer | The granting of credit by an RTO to students for units of competence completed at another RTO/institution. |
| Nationally Recognised Qualification | An accredited program of study that leads to vocational qualifications and credentials that are recognised throughout Australia. |
| RPL | Recognition of Prior Learning |
| Recognition | Recognition is a term that includes Recognition of Prior Learning, Recognition of Current Competency and Skill Recognition. |
| Recognition of Current Competency | The assessment of a person’s current capacity to perform; it applies if an individual has previously completed the requirements for a unit of competence and is now required to ensure the competence has been maintained. |

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3. Policy

Australian Institute of Accreditation recognition process has been designed to provide an assessment only pathway for a course, qualification, or for the award of unit(s) of competency that form part of a qualification. Recognition offers the student an alternative and flexible approach to having their knowledge and skills assessed against the competencies stipulated in the training package or accredited course. The general principles underpinning Australian Institute of Accreditation recognition process are as follows;

- Consumers are provided with sufficient information and screening to make an informed decision about their enrolment and to understand their rights and responsibilities.
- Recognition assessment is promoted to all students and employers on enquiry and throughout application and enrolment.
- Recognition acknowledges that learning can be informal, non-formal or formal.
- The recognition model is flexible enough to meet the specific requirements of the qualification and/or unit of competency.
- Industry are engaged throughout all stages of the products cycle (RPL Kit(s)).
- Staff are well informed about recognition requirements and are provided with ongoing training, support and guidance.
- Assessment is undertaken according to the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.
- Assessment decisions are accountable, transparent and subject to appeal and review.
- Recognition systems and tools are systematically monitored, reviewed and evaluated to ensure they are of the highest quality and meet all of the requirements outlined in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015.
- Quality review, validation and moderation of recognition tools/assessments are undertaken at scheduled intervals.

4. Procedure

The following procedure outlines the framework and process of recognition assessment and has been summarised in **Diagram 1** – Recognition Flow Chart.

4.1 Information

4.1.1 Pre-enrolment

In addition to general information provided to consumer's recognition specific information is also made available. The recognition process, costs and timeframes, contact person(s) and how to apply is available to all consumers via a variety of different methods including the website, marketing material, and the student handbook.

Information included in pre-enrolment documents include;

- What recognition is and its benefits
- Course outcomes and requirements
- Recognition flow chart – See Diagram 1
- Pathways specific to the course
- Cost and timeframes
- Appeals and review process

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4.1.2 Self –Assessment

Consumers are provided with an application form and a self-assessment tool. There will be an opportunity to have a discussion on the phone with an Australian Institute of Accreditation staff member to assess their suitability to enrol in a recognition pathway program. The types of evidence that would need to be collected/ demonstrated and the different ways that this may occur is included, regardless of the method. This information is comprehensive enough for the consumer to make a decision as to whether or not to apply for recognition and forms the first part of the student screening process.

Once the self-assessment tool has been completed, it is to be sent to the Australian Institute of Accreditation for review, along with the accompanying initial application form paperwork.

Where the consumer decides that they do not want to apply for recognition of prior learning, Australian Institute of Accreditation staff will discuss possible alternatives including but not limited to;

- Developing the experience, skills and knowledge before applying for recognition.
- Training and assessment (alternative training methods) in selected units of competency or the full qualification.
- Alternative qualifications

4.1.3 Staff requirements, training and support

Various staff members within the Australian Institute of Accreditation may be involved in some aspect of the student's recognition process. To ensure that recognition assessment is undertaken with the same rigor and transparency as other forms of assessment and that the clients experience is high quality, staff undergo training on how to complete the tasks specific to their role and function. Staff are also provided with ongoing support and guidance.

To facilitate the recognition process Assessors must hold the training and assessment qualification specified in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations RTOs 2015 Schedule 1, 2 or 3 and demonstrate current industry skills to the training and assessment being delivered and current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning.

4.1.4 Industry Consultation

Industry engagement systematically occurs throughout all aspects of the products cycle to ensure that outcomes are consistent with the needs of industry. See '*Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure*' for more information.

4.2 Enrolment

Potential students are required to complete the enrolment process as per the "*Student Selection and Enrolment Policy and Procedure*". As part of the enrolment process, students can request to be considered for RPL by selecting this option in the enrolment form, or by sending an email to info@aia.edu.au. They will then be provided with an RPL Kit which has detailed instructions on the process, roles and responsibilities, how they will be assessed, suggested evidence, what constitutes quality evidence and how to present and submit the collected evidence.

An Assessor contacts the student to discuss the recognition process and RPL kit¹. At this meeting the Assessor will also undertake a professional discussion, confirm unit selection and form an assessment plan. This meeting process ensures that the assessment process is undertaken in accordance with the principles of assessment (i.e. fair, flexible, valid and reliable).

¹ Like all Australian Institute of Accreditation students, Recognition candidates are also provided with information on the appeals process, feedback mechanisms and resubmission process.

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The professional discussion may include a series of questions or a general discussion on specific topics. The Assessor documents this discussion mapping its content to the qualification/UoC requirements. The Professional discussion is also used as a secondary screening mechanism to optimise the student's ability to complete their qualification.

4.3 Evidence Collection

Evidence can be collected in a variety of different ways including;

- Question and answers
- Observation / skills tests
- Third party reports
- Audio/visual evidence
- Work samples
- Letters
- Training/assessment undertaken in the workplace or another institution/ Australian Institute of Accreditation

Once the student has collected the evidence in accordance with RPL kit student's instructions the evidence is submitted to their assessor.

Students are supported by their Assessor throughout the evidence collection process to optimise their completion and ensure that the evidence submitted meets the rules of evidence. Depending on the students' needs additional meetings may need to be organised and the student's assessment plan adjusted. Assessors may need to visit the student's workplace and where required facilitate the collection of additional evidence.

4.4 Evidence Reviewed and Assessment Decision

Assessors are required to review the evidence submitted as a "whole". Assessor may need to contact the student to ask further questions, seek clarification and ensure that the components/dimensions of competence have been demonstrated. Evidence is reviewed against the rules of evidence and mapped against Qualification and UoC requirements. It is the Assessors responsibility to ensure that all evidence is mapped/documented as per the Assessor instructions contained in the RPL kit. Based on the review of the evidence submitted the Assessor will determine an assessment decision. Once a decision has been made the student is provided with detailed feedback.

4.5 Feedback

The student receives feedback both formally and informally throughout the recognition process. Once a decision has been made the student is provided with a rationale for that decision. Students who are dissatisfied with the assessment decision can appeal the decision following Australian Institute of Accreditation '*Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*'. If the decision indicates more evidence is required, the Assessor will discuss this with the student and develop a plan for further collection. If this discussion indicates that the student is unable to collect/show the additional evidence required the Assessor will discuss all available options (e.g. completion of a work-based project, enrolment in a face to face session etc.).

Students are encouraged to provide honest feedback on their experience through the completion of learner satisfaction surveys. Student feedback is then reviewed and where necessary linked in to the organisations continuous improvement process.

4.6 Validation and Moderation

Validation and moderation of assessment judgements are undertaken in accordance with the organisations '*Validation/Moderation Policy and Procedure*' and schedule. Australian Institute of Accreditation undertakes regular validation and moderation of all products on its scope of registration

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to ensure that its assessment systems and practices produce valid assessment judgements and ensure graduates have the skills and knowledge required by industry.

Information from validation and moderation activities links into the programs review and continuous improvement process.

5. References

- Australian Skills Quality Authority (2015) *“Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015”*.
- Department of Western Australia Department of Training and Workforce Development (2013) *“Recognition of prior learning: An assessment resource for VET Practitioners”*.
- National Centre for Vocational Education Research “Glossary” www.ncver.edu.au
- NSW Education and Communities Office of Education (2014) *“NSW Recognition Framework”*.
- NSW Department of Education and Communities (2014) *“Skills Recognition – A Guide for Registered Training Organisations”*.

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Diagram 1: Recognition Flow Chart

