

Recognition of Prior Learning

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Policy Statement:

Tocal College provides students with the opportunity to apply to have their previous experience, knowledge and industry currency recognised for targeted units of competency in any training product in which they nominate to enrol. Tocal College approaches the RPL process on an individual basis using comprehensive mapping tools to record evidence of previous experience and acquired knowledge along with details on how LLN requirements for each unit of competence have been met. Gaps in evidence for individual units or within a full qualification are identified and further training needs are included in the training plan negotiated with each student. This training plan is the basis for supporting individuals to achieve identified educational outcomes. Verification of competence and authenticity of evidence must be undertaken as part of the process to ensure that all documents provided to support assessment are legitimately linked to the applicant.

Scope:

The following policy guidelines are to be followed when an application for RPL is received:

- Any student can apply for RPL in a course or qualification (training product) in which they are currently enrolled.
- Students may not apply for RPL for units of competency or qualification that are not on Tocal College's scope of registration.
- Students wishing to apply for RPL for any portion of a training product must undertake a formal interview and complete the RPL application form prior to being considered as eligible to be assessed this way.
- Students may apply for RPL at any time, they are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program. This will reduce the amount of training that they will be required to attend and guide the student down a more efficient path to competence.

- Students who are currently enrolled in a training program are eligible to apply for RPL in that program at no additional charge.
- Assessment via RPL is to apply the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.
- RPL may only be awarded for whole units of competency
- RPL cannot make up more than 60% of a full qualification unless authorised by the Principal of the College.
- Mapping of RPL must be completed using the Tocal College RPL Toolkit
- All RPL tools and assessments are to be included in the Tocal College validation schedule.
- All RPL assessment tools are to be reviewed by the RPL administrator and the compliance officer prior to being approved for use.

Information on how to apply for RPL is provided on the Tocal website as well as via the provision of the Tocal College student handbook. Tocal College has a dedicated RPL administrator who independently oversees the submission of RPL applications and the completion of the RPL toolkit to ensure compliance with ASQA 2025 standards and that evidence collected meets the rules of assessment. Assessors that are subject matter experts are assigned to review evidence against individual units of competency within their field of expertise and to identify any required gap training.

A broad range of evidence is collected, and a judgement is made by an assessor or assessment team. The judgement is made on evidence provided by the student on the skills and knowledge that they have developed through work, study, life and other experiences, and that they are currently using. It also includes evidence to confirm a student's ability to adapt prior learning or current competence to the context of the intended workplace or industry.

Requirements:

RPL acknowledges that workplace skills and knowledge may be gained through a variety of ways including both formal and informal learning or through work-based or life experience.

In evaluating assessment evidence, Tocal College applies the following rules of evidence:

- Sufficient
- Valid
- Authentic
- Current.

Many forms of evidence will be considered toward a final judgement on RPL and may include:

- Workplace records or documents
- Records of workplace training
- Mapping of previous nationally recognised units of competence against targeted unit for RPL
- Current resume and letters of support or references from industry associations

- Third party reports from current and previous supervisors, managers or clients
- Evidence of relevant unpaid or volunteer experience
- Examples of work products and samples
- Direct observation by an assessor in the workplace along with verbal questioning
- Performance appraisal or professional development plans completed
- Duty statements and work rosters

Many of these forms of evidence are not sufficient on their own, therefore a range of evidence may be required to demonstrate competence, the more comprehensive the range of evidence the stronger the case for deeming a student competent.

Total College reserves the right to require students to undertake practical assessment activities of skills and respond to verbal questioning to satisfy assessors of a student's current competence or to address any gaps identified during the mapping process. Students may also nominate to complete an assessment only pathway if they are confident their current skills and knowledge will allow them to successfully complete the assessments without attending training or undertaking formative assessments.

Roles and responsibilities:

- Principal of College oversees RPL applications for full qualifications to ensure that candidates are adequately experienced and able to provide the range of evidence required to cover all units within the nominated qualification.
- Compliance Officer oversees compliance of assessment tools, scheduling of validations and review of templates annually as well as quality assuring student results and data.
- RPL Administrator oversees the application process, quality of evidence collected, eligibility of students to be assessed for RPL and monitoring of progress.
- Team leaders allocate resources to conduct RPL and review progress and completion of outcomes within timeframes.
- Trainers/assessors review the evidence against the mapping tools, identifies gaps, conducts training and assessment activities, provides feedback to students, completes RPL documentation, updates student records/notes and provides final outcomes to student administration.
- Student administration enrolls student, monitors progress, finalises results, reports to STS, issues test amurs and Certificates, respond to student enquiries, provides access to training and assessment resources to trainers and students, receipts payments and finalises student records.

Associated documents:

Policies

- Training and Assessment
- Complaints and Feedback

- Appeals
- Student enrolments

Documents

- Student handbook 2026
- Course guides
- RPL Toolkit
- RPL Procedure – gathering evidence of competency against a unit of competence

Definitions:

- **Assessment** means the process of gathering evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as specified in a training package or a vocational education and training accredited course.
- **Assessment only pathway** means a student will be assessed using the normal assessment methods usually involving a form of knowledge assessment and observation assessment of the student performing the tasks required by the unit of competency. Assessment only pathway implies that the student demonstrated their prior competency as part of the enrolment process and therefore was approved not to participate in training but to move directly to undertaking the assessment.
- **Formative assessments** means that they undertake activities to assist them to gauge their knowledge and skills prior to completing a final summative assessment.
- **Training package** means the nationally endorsed document that records the competencies required by different occupations and industries and describe how these competencies may be packaged into nationally recognised and portable qualifications that comply with the Australian Qualifications Framework.
- **Training product** means AQF qualification, skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course and module.
- **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** means the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system. RPL assesses this unrecognised learning against the requirements of a unit of competency, in respect of both entry requirements and outcomes to be achieved. By removing the need for duplication of learning, RPL encourages an individual to continue upgrading their skills and knowledge through structured education and training towards formal qualifications and improved employment outcomes. This has benefits for the individual and industry. Most importantly, it should be noted that RPL is just another form of assessment and requires the same application of policy and procedures outlined in the Assessment Policy and Procedure.

References

- Outcome Standards for RTOs, Quality Area 1 – Training and Assessment, Standard 1.4: The assessment system ensures assessment is conducted in a fair and appropriate way and enables accurate judgements of VET student competency.
- Outcome Standards for RTOs, Quality Area 1 – Training and Assessment, Standard 1.6: VET students with prior skills, knowledge and competencies are supported to seek recognition of prior learning to progress through the training product.