Recognition of Prior Learning & Credit Transfer Policy

Purpose:

The objective of this policy is to ensure that an individual's prior learning — achieved through formal training, work experience, or other life experiences — is appropriately recognised. It provides a framework for assessing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer (CT), granting course credits where appropriate while preserving the integrity of Yarra College Australia's qualifications and meeting compliance with:

- Standards for RTOs 2025 (Standards 1.6–1.7)
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- National Code of Practice 2018

Scope:

This policy applies to all:

- Current and prospective students (domestic and international) applying for RPL or CT.
- YCA staff involved in admissions, enrolments, assessment, and compliance.

Definitions:

Terms	Explanations
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	RPL is a formal assessment process used to evaluate a student's existing skills, knowledge, and experience gained through prior formal, non-formal, or informal learning. It allows students to have these competencies recognised without the need to repeat training, provided the evidence is valid, sufficient, authentic, and current.
Credit Transfer (CT)	Credit Transfer is the process of recognising and granting credit for equivalent units of competency or modules that have already been successfully completed at another RTO. Students must provide AQF certification documentation (e.g., Statement of Attainment, qualification, or authenticated VET transcript), and once verified, YCA exempts them from re-studying the same units.
Course Credit	Any exemption from enrolment/study in a unit of a course granted through RPL or CT.
Formal Learning	This refers to education delivered in a structured and accredited setting, such as schools, colleges, universities, or registered training organisations. It results in a recognised qualification or award (e.g., certificates, diplomas, or degrees) under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
Non-Formal Learning	This involves structured training or education that does not lead to a formal qualification, but still provides valuable skills and knowledge. Examples include professional development workshops, in-house workplace training, or short courses provided by employers or community organisations.
Informal Learning	This type of learning occurs through everyday experiences, self-study, or practical exposure rather than structured programs. It includes skills gained through work experience, volunteering, hobbies, or community involvement, and while not formally recognised, it can be assessed for RPL purposes.

Assessment of RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning):

Yarra College Australia (YCA) acknowledges that students may have acquired skills and knowledge through a variety of learning pathways such as prior formal education, workplace training, community involvement, or life experience. The RPL process provides an opportunity for these achievements to be formally recognised so that students are not required to repeat learning they have already mastered.

- RPL is applied in line with YCA's access and equity principles, ensuring all students have fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate their competence.
- Assessments are carried out only by qualified and approved assessors, who are trained in RPL practices and experienced in making evidence-based judgements.
- All assessments strictly comply with the requirements of the relevant training package or accredited course, as well as the Standards for RTOs 2025, to ensure national consistency and quality.
- Information about the RPL process, eligibility, and application steps is made available to students during pre-enrolment and orientation, supporting informed decision-making.
- Evidence presented by students must meet the Rules of Evidence — it must be valid (directly related to the competency), sufficient (enough to demonstrate competence), authentic (the student's own work), and current (reflecting up-to-date skills and knowledge).
- Students dissatisfied with the outcome of their RPL application are entitled to lodge an appeal under YCA's Complaints and Appeals Policy, ensuring transparency, procedural fairness, and the opportunity for review.

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Process & Procedure for RPL:

1. Student enquiry & information
   - Admissions/Compliance provides RPL info (eligibility, evidence types, fees, timelines, appeals) at pre-enrolment/orientation and via the website/student handbook.
2. Application lodgement
   - Student submits the RPL Application Form with ID/USI, units requested, and an evidence portfolio (e.g., position descriptions, work samples, third-party reports, logs, videos, prior quals/SoAs, CPD, licences).
   - Admin acknowledges receipt within 3 business days and opens a case in the SMS.
3. Pre-screen & file setup (Admin)
   - Check completeness and identity/USI.
   - Confirm the target qualification/units and training package version.
   - If incomplete, request missing items with a 10 working-day return window.
4. Assessor allocation & conflict check
   - Training Manager assigns a qualified assessor (competent in the units; no conflict of interest). Record the allocation in the SMS.
5. Evidence mapping (Assessor)
   - Map supplied evidence to each unit's elements/performance criteria, performance evidence, knowledge evidence, foundation skills, and assessment conditions.
   - Note gaps (if any) and propose gap-assessment options.
6. Competency conversation & verification
   - Conduct an evidence-based interview; verify authenticity (e.g., supervisor contact), currency (typically within 3–5 years unless industry requires shorter windows), and sufficiency.
   - Where needed, schedule challenge tasks, practical demonstrations, workplace observations, or additional third-party reports.
7. Decision & outcomes
   - For each unit: Granted / Partially Granted (gap) / Not Granted.
   - Apply the Rules of Evidence (valid, sufficient, authentic, current) and Principles of Assessment (fair, flexible, valid, reliable).
   - If gaps remain, agree a gap-training/assessment plan (timeframes, fees).
8. Notification to student
   - Issue a written RPL Outcome Letter (unit-level decision reasons, any gap plan, fees, and appeal rights).
   - Update the student's Training Plan where applicable.
9. Recording & certification
   - Enter results in the SMS and student file; retain the mapping and assessor judgement.
   - When a full qualification's requirements are met, issue AQF documentation per the Issuing Certification Policy.
10. International students — CoE/PRISMS
    - If RPL reduces course duration, Admissions updates study load and amends the CoE; report in PRISMS within 14 working days; advise the student to check any visa implications.
11. Fees & invoicing
    - RPL charged per unit as per the Fees & Refunds Policy (no CT charge). Invoice and receipt in finance system; keep all financial records linked to the RPL case.
12. Appeals & review
    - If disputed, student may lodge an appeal under the Complaints & Appeals Policy. Keep all internal review notes and outcomes on file.
13. Records & retention
    - Keep the full RPL kit (application, mapping, verified evidence list, decision, correspondence) in the student file. Retain certification records 30 years; retain required written acceptances per ESOS.

Assessment of CT (Credit Transfer):

Yarra College Australia (YCA) is committed to recognising prior study completed with other registered training organisations (RTOs) to avoid unnecessary duplication of learning for students. Credit Transfer provides students with recognition for units or modules they have previously completed, ensuring a fair and efficient pathway to completing their current qualification.

- YCA recognises all AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by other Australian RTOs, in accordance with the Standards for RTOs 2025 and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
- CT may be applied for at the time of enrolment or at any stage during the course, ensuring students have flexibility in seeking recognition.
- Equivalence is determined by verifying that:
  - The unit code and title match exactly, or
  - The unit has been superseded and deemed equivalent by the training package developer on the National Register (training.gov.au).

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- Students are required to provide certified copies of AQF certification documentation such as a Statement of Attainment, qualification, or authenticated VET transcript from the USI Registry System.
- There are no fees for applying for Credit Transfer; however, students are encouraged to submit their applications early to allow for adjustments in their study plan and, where applicable, Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).
- Where Credit Transfer results in a reduction of course duration for international students, YCA will:
  - Amend the student's CoE to reflect the shorter duration, and
  - Report the change via PRISMS within 14 days, in line with ESOS and National Code 2018 requirements.
- All decisions regarding Credit Transfer applications will be formally recorded in the Student Management System (SMS) and communicated in writing to the student.
- If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of their CT application, they have the right to appeal under the Complaints & Appeals Policy, ensuring procedural fairness and the opportunity for independent review.

Process & Procedure for Credit Transfer:

1. Application lodgement
   - Student submits the CT Application Form with AQF certification documentation: Statement of Attainment/Qualification and (where available) USI authenticated VET transcript. CT is free of charge.
2. Admin verification
   - Verify identity/USI and authenticate documents (issuing RTO details, seals/signatures; contact issuing RTO if needed; confirm via USI transcript when available).
3. Equivalence check (Training Coordinator/Assessor)
   - Confirm exact unit code/title match; if superseded, confirm equivalence per training.gov.au mapping.
   - If not equivalent, advise RPL pathway instead of CT.
4. Decision
   - Approve/decline CT per unit. Record rationale (equivalent, superseded-equivalent, not equivalent).
5. Notification
   - Issue a CT Outcome Letter listing granted units and any implications for study plan.
6. Recording
   - Enter CT credits in the SMS and update the Training Plan/timetable as required.
7. International students — CoE/PRISMS
   - If CT reduces course duration, adjust study plan and amend the CoE; report change in PRISMS within 14 working days; notify the student re: visa considerations.
8. Issuing documentation
   - Where CT contributes to full qualification completion, issue AQF documentation in line with the Issuing Certification Policy.
9. Appeals
   - Provide appeal pathway via the Complaints & Appeals Policy; record any review outcomes.
10. Records
    - File the CT form, verified certification copies, equivalence check, decision letter, and SMS notes in the student record.

Granting & Reporting:

A. Decision & Documentation

- Complete Assessor Decision Record (per unit): Mark outcome as Granted / Partially Granted (gap) / Not Granted for RPL; Granted / Not Granted for CT, with concise reasons.
- Evidence Mapping File: Finalise the unit-level mapping (elements/PC, PE, KE, FS, conditions) and note how the Rules of Evidence (validity, sufficiency, authenticity, currency) were met.
- Internal QA check: Training Manager (or delegate) conducts a risk-based check (e.g., sample moderation, high-risk units, large volume RPL) and endorses the decision.
- Outcome Letter to student: Issue a written outcome with a unit table, reasons, any gap-training/assessment plan (for RPL), fee impacts (RPL only), and appeal rights.

B. Student Acknowledgement (ESOS where applicable)

- Written acceptance (keep on file): If the decision reduces course duration (RPL or CT for international students), obtain the student's written acknowledgment of the outcome and implications; retain per ESOS requirements.

C. Systems & Study Plan Updates

- Enter results in SMS (same day):
  - RPL outcomes recorded as C (RPL) or equivalent code per SMS conventions.
  - CT outcomes recorded as CT Granted (credit/exemption) with source RTO and document details.
- Update Training Plan/timetable: Adjust unit enrolments, assessment schedule, and delivery load; notify trainer/assessor and timetabling.

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- Amend Payment Plan (if applicable): Apply RPL fees per unit; no fees for CT. Update finance notes and instalment schedule.

D. CoE & PRISMS (International Students)

- Calculate impact on duration: If RPL/CT shortens the course, recast study load and expected end date.
- Amend CoE & report in PRISMS: Process the CoE variation and report within 14 calendar days; file PRISMS evidence and the revised course outline. Advise the student to check any visa implications.

E. Issuing Certification (when applicable)

- Trigger certification when complete: If the decision completes a unit/qualification, issue AQF documentation within 30 calendar days in line with Issuing Certification Policy (USI verified; fees settled).
- Record issuance: Update the Qualification/SoA Register and archive the print/PDF copy per records policy.

F. Records, Retention & Privacy

- File the complete pack: Application form, verified identity/USI, certified AQF docs (for CT), evidence list and mapping (for RPL), decision record, QA check, outcome letter, student acceptance (if any), CoE/PRISMS notes.
- Retention: Keep certification records 30 years; retain other RPL/CT decision records per YCA Records Management/Privacy Policy.

G. Appeals & Continuous Improvement

- Appeal pathway: If the student appeals, action under Complaints & Appeals Policy; record all review notes and final outcome in SMS and file.
- Quality loop: Table complex/edge cases in validation; log any systemic improvements in the Continuous Improvement Register (e.g., evidence guidance, mapping templates, assessor PD).

Responsibilities:

Role within YCA	Area of Responsibility
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Final approval authority for this policy and procedure; ensures compliance with SRTOs 2025 and overall governance.
Compliance Manager / Training Manager	Oversees day-to-day implementation of RPL/CT processes across departments; ensures operational efficiency, staff resourcing, and alignment with compliance requirements. Development, review, and continuous improvement of the Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedures. Provides compliance oversight and quality assurance. Reports to the CEO.
Training Coordinator	Monitoring and evaluation of RPL/CT processes; ensures timely assessment outcomes are recorded in the Student Management System (SMS).
Support Officer(s)	Maintains compliance by managing records, assisting students with applications, and providing administrative support.
Trainers / Assessors	Implement RPL/CT processes, conduct assessments, verify evidence, and communicate results to students in line with the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

Related Legislation and Regulations

- Standards for RTOs 2025 – Clauses 1.6–1.7 (RPL & Credit Transfer).
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 – Standard 2.
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000.
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011.
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019.
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Related Policies, Procedures and Documents

- RPL and Credit Transfer Procedures
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Student Intervention Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure
- RPL Application Form
- Credit Transfer (CT) Application Form
- Letter of Offer and Acceptance of Offer

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