

## **RPL and Credit Transfer Policy**

### **Purpose and Scope**

These Policies and Procedures will apply to all the ECA College Nationally Recognized Qualifications delivered by the ECA College.

These standards outline ECA College's policies and procedures for granting course credit(s) to potential and current ECA College students with suitable equivalent prior learning or experience.

### **Responsibility**

- The Director of Studies is responsible for the implementation of this policy and is responsible for the day to day management of this policy.

### **Recognition Policy**

In accordance with the requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework, ECA College provides the opportunity for students to apply to have prior learning recognized toward a qualification or units of competence for which they are enrolled.

Recognition generally takes two forms: recognition of prior learning, which is the focus of this policy, and credit transfer which is dealt with in the Credit Transfer section of this manual. For the purposes of this policy, recognition of prior learning will be referred to simply as recognition.

### **What is recognition?**

Recognition involves the assessment of previously unrecognized skills and knowledge an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system. Recognition assesses this unrecognized learning against the requirements of a unit of competence, in respect of both entry requirements and outcomes to be achieved. By removing the need for duplication of learning, recognition 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 recognition is just another form of assessment and requires the same application of policy and procedures outlined in the Assessment section of this manual.

### **Recognition guidelines**

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

- Any student is entitled to apply for recognition in a course or qualification in which they are currently enrolled.
- Students may not apply for recognition for units of competence or qualification which are not included in ECA College's scope of registration.
- Whilst students may apply for recognition at any time, they are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program. This will reduce unnecessary training 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 recognition in that program at no additional charge.
- Assessment via recognition is to apply the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.
- Recognition may only be awarded for whole units of competence.

### **Forms of evidence**

Recognition 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.

Like assessment, recognition is a process whereby evidence is collected and a judgement is made by an assessor or assessment team. The judgement is made on evidence provided by candidates of the skills and knowledge that they have previously learnt through work, study, life and other experiences, and that they are currently using. It also includes evidence to confirm a candidate's ability to adapt prior learning or current competence to the context of the intended workplace or industry.

Forms of evidence toward recognition may include:

- Work records;
- Records of workplace training;
- Assessments of current skills;
- Assessments of current knowledge;
- Third party reports from current and previous supervisors or managers;
- Evidence of relevant unpaid or volunteer experience;
- Examples of work products;
- Observation by an assessor in the workplace;
- Performance appraisal; or
- Duty statements.

Many of these forms of evidence would not be sufficient evidence on their own. When combined together with a number of evidence items, the candidate will start to provide a strong case for competence. ECA College reserves the right to require candidates to undertake practical assessment activities of skills and knowledge in order to satisfy itself of a candidate's current competence.

## **Appealing recognition outcomes**

If the student is not satisfied with the outcomes of a recognition application, they may appeal the outcome like other assessment decisions. Further information on the appeals process is available at section three.

## **Recognition Procedure**

The following procedure is to be applied by ECA College upon receipt of an application for recognition:

### **Step 1**

We will provide sufficient information to candidates to inform them of opportunities for alternative pathways via recognition and the recognition process. This is to include:

- Recognition policy and procedure
- The relevant units of competence

### **Step 2**

Candidates are to be invited to carry out a self-assessment to determine their suitability for a recognition application. This step is not compulsory but is strongly suggested. We will provide the candidate the Recognition Self-Assessment Guide located in the Recognition Tools section that follows.

### **Step 3**

During the preparation of a recognition application, we will provide sufficient assistance to the candidate to assist them to navigate the recognition process and compile their application. This may be recorded into a Recognition Assessment Plan located in the Recognition Tools section that follows. This is to include where possible:

- Helping the candidate to identify appropriate forms of evidence that they may assist their application;
- Guiding the candidate on the use of recognition tools to assist them to represent their application; and
- Counselling the candidate in the assessment process and evidence requirements.

Students are to compile their submission using a Recognition Evidence Report located in the Recognition Tools section that follows. This form allows students to record their particular evidence against each assessment criteria and to attach documentary evidence as required. The level of documentary evidence required should be negotiated during the compilation of the Recognition Assessment Plan. Whilst not limiting the requirement for sufficient evidence, greater emphasis is to place on assessment using observation of a candidate performing the relevant skills and knowledge in a workplace environment. This method of assessment allows the gathering of appropriate evidence

of current skills and knowledge and is highly valid. This approach should significantly reduce the effort required by the candidate to prepare their submission and therefore remove the traditional barriers to competence via recognition.

#### **Step 4**

On receipt of the application, we will appoint an assessor to conduct the assessment (this is not to be the person who assisted the candidate to prepare the application). The details of the application are to be recorded in the ECA College Recognition Register. The assessor is to apply the same assessment procedure as outlined in the Assessment sections of this manual. The assessor is to strictly review the evidence for validity, sufficiency, authenticity and currency. If the assessor has any doubt about a candidate's competence, they are to organize with the candidate for a practical assessment in a workplace (or simulated workplace). Assessors are to use the assessment tools located in the Assessment Tools section of this manual, to record their findings and report outcomes.

#### **Step 5**

At the conclusion of assessment, the assessor is to provide the candidate with written feedback regarding the assessment outcomes, including the procedure for the candidate to appeal the assessment outcome.

#### **Step 6**

If the student is not satisfied with the outcomes of a recognition application, they may appeal the outcome like other assessment decisions. Further information on the appeals process can be found in the Complaints and Appeals section of this manual.

#### **Step 7**

When all assessment and appeal processes have concluded, we will appropriately record the outcome in the recognition register and issue the candidate with written advice of the outcome. This may include issuing statements of attainment or qualifications awarded through recognition in accordance with our Qualifications Issuance policies and procedures.

The ECA College will be committed to provide up to date and relevant Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) information to all students at enrolment and whilst enrolled. The ECA College's staff will provide support and guidance regarding RPL and Credit transfer enquiries in a timely manner.

- 1) In accordance with regulatory requirements, ECA College recognizes all AQF Qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by other Registered Training Organizations and grants academic credit for such courses/units upon a prospective or existing student's application (supported by the requisite documentary evidence) for such course credit.
- 2) Students will be offered the opportunity to apply for Credit Transfer and/or RPL prior to enrolment into their chosen qualification.

- 3) ECA College will grant RPL recognition of prior learning based on evidence received and reviewed through the ECA College RPL Process.
- 4) All students can apply for credit transfer or RPL during the course of the program, but the application must be made no later than 3 weeks prior to the applicable unit commencing.
- 5) The ECA College Director of Studies is responsible for assessments of Credit Transfer /RPL, but may, as appropriate, delegate individual assessments to assessors who have immediate and relevant qualifications relating to the Nationally Recognized Qualification and/or Unit of Competency.

### **Credit Transfer Policy**

ECA College acknowledges the requirement as a Registered Training Organization to recognize the awards issued by other RTOs. This is limited to outcomes that are drawn from the national skills framework being units of competence awarded and accurately identified in statements of attainment and qualifications.

### **What is credit transfer?**

Credit transfer is the recognition of learning achieved through formal education and training. Under the Australian Quality Training Framework, qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any RTO are to be accepted and recognized by all other RTOs. Credit transfer allows a student to be awarded a unit of competency based on successful completion of the unit which has been previously awarded.

### **When unit codes and titles are different**

If credit transfer is being sought for a unit of competence which has a different title or code, then it is necessary to establish the equivalence between the unit held and the unit being sought. In many cases this information can be found in mapping documents published in the relevant Training Package or by State registering authorities who provide purchasing guidelines or mapping guides. Our administrative staff will obtain this information and validate claims of equivalence.

As a general guide, if there is no such mapping available then we are not obliged to recognize the unit through credit transfer. In these circumstances, the applicant should be referred for recognition in accordance with our Recognition policies and procedures.

### **Evidence requirements**

An applicant will be required to present his or her statement of attainment or qualification for examination by ECA College. These documents will provide the detail of what units of competence the applicant has been previously issued. Applicants must provide satisfactory evidence that the statement of attainment or qualification is theirs and that it has been issued by an Australian RTO. Statements of attainment or qualifications should be in the correct format as outlined in the Australian Qualifications Framework Implementation Handbook. The applicant is required to submit copies only which are certified as a true copy of the original by a Justice of the Peace (or equivalent).

## **Credit transfer guidelines**

The following guidelines are to be followed when an application for credit transfer is received:

### **Credit Transfer Procedure**

- Any student is entitled to apply for credit transfer in a course or qualification in which they are currently enrolled.
- Students may not apply for credit transfer for units of competence or qualification which are not included in our scope of registration.
- Whilst students may apply for credit transfer at any time, they are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program. This will reduce unnecessary training and guide the student down a more efficient path to competence.
- The student does not incur any fees for credit transfer and we do not receive any funding when credit transfer is granted.
- Credit transfer may only be awarded for whole units of competence. Where a mapping guide identifies a partial credit, this will not be considered for credit transfer and the applicant will be advised to seek recognition.
- Credit transfer will only be issued when the student's enrolment includes at least one other unit of competence for which the student is participating in training or is seeking recognition. Student may not enroll only for credit transfer.

The following procedure is to be applied by ECA College upon receipt of an application for credit transfer:

#### **Step 1**

We will provide sufficient information to candidates to inform them of opportunities for alternative pathways via credit transfer and credit transfer policy. Ideally, this information should be provided to candidates prior to enrolment.

#### **Step 2**

To apply for credit transfer, the applicant must complete and submit the following documentation to ECA College:

- Credit Transfer Application Form, available in the Credit Transfer Tools section that follows;
- Certified copy of the qualification or statement of attainment; and
- Enrolment application for the training program applicable to the units of competence for which credit transfer is requested.

### **Step 3**

On receipt of the application, we will check the qualification or statement of attainment for authenticity and grant credit transfer for the units of competence that have been completed at any other Registered Training Organization.

### **Step 4**

Where the units of competence do not align with the units of competence requested, further information is to be sought in the form of Training Package mapping guides or purchasing guides.

### **Step 5**

Verified copies of qualifications and statements of attainment used as the basis for granting credit transfer must be kept on the student file.

### **Step 6**

The completed credit transfer application form must be signed by the student and the ECA College Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) and retained on the student's file at ECA College.

### **Step 7**

Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application. This may include issuing statements of attainment or qualifications awarded through credit transfer in accordance with our Qualifications Issuance policies and procedures.