

P12- National Recognition, Credit Transfer & Recognition of prior learning

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline the process to be followed by Baxter Institute to grant and record course credit to eligible candidates. If necessary, the duration of study will be adjusted accordingly and the candidate advised of Baxter Institute's granting of credit. Baxter Institute will ensure that National Recognition, Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning is offered to all candidates upon enrolment and that the process is structured to minimise the time and cost to the candidate. Baxter Institute also provides adequate information and support to enable candidates to gather reliable evidence to support their claim for recognition of competencies currently held, regardless of how, when or where the learning occurred.

This policy and procedure is to meet the compliance requirements within Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, the ESOS Act 2000, National Code 2018 and of the training packages

2.0 Responsibility

- 2.1 The Director of Studies is responsible for the implementation of this procedure and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its application and that staff implement its requirements.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 **Course Credit:** is defined as exemption from enrollment in a particular part of the course as a result of previous study, experience or recognition of a competency currently held. Includes academic credit and recognition of prior learning.
- 3.2 **National Recognition (NR)** is the recognition by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications and statements of attainment issued by all other RTOs.
- 3.3 **Credit Transfer (CT)** is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched units of competency/ qualifications.
- 3.4 **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is a process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit.

4.0 Procedures

General requirements

- 4.1 All candidates must be informed through pre-enrolment information of the opportunity to apply for NR, CT or RPL. Pre-enrolment information is accessible in the Course Guide, Student Handbook and/or discussed during the Pre-training review process. The candidate will be assisted to firstly identify eligibility for NR, followed by CT and finally RPL.
- 4.2 Candidates will be requested to apply for NR, CT and RPL at the time of enrolment if applicable. Where students are already enrolled at Baxter Institute, they are given 30 days after orientation to apply.
- 4.3 If candidates/current students express interest in NR, CT or RPL, Baxter Institute would engage in a discussion with them including relevant fees, process, timeline and requirements ideally prior to submission of an enrolment application. The candidate is able to negotiate the timeline. Once the units to be assessed and evidence have been identified, the candidate should complete a NR/CT/RPL form.

- 4.4 When a student/candidate applies for NR/CT or RPL, he/she must provide an original or certified true copy of Statement of Attainment/Qualification from an RTO.
- 4.5 Supporting documentation provided for NR/CT or RPL are verified (if required) by trained staff (including verification from RTOs regarding the authenticity of the Statement of Attainment/Qualification provided).
- 4.6 All NR/CT or RPL applications must be approved by the Course Coordinator or Head Trainers to ensure each application is granted or not granted with diligence and accuracy.
- 4.7 For RPL assessments, the assessor is required to verify all third-party evidence and minimise any risk of identity fraud. For all practical observation tasks performed the assessor must attach photographs with the evidence gathering.
- 4.8 If the application is successful, the administration staff will check that an appropriate Letter of Offer, Letter of Acceptance, Student Agreement, Training Plan and eCoE (where applicable for international students) have been issued and that a USI has been verified. The student's course duration maybe reduced as a result of CT or RPL, and a reduction in course fees may apply.
- 4.9 For students who have commenced a unit, there will be no refund of fees for that unit.

National Recognition (NR) procedure

- 4.10 National recognition applications are made using form SS104 in addition with an appropriate Enrolment form.
- 4.11 The NR application must have original sighted or certified true copy of Statement of Attainment/Qualification from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).
- 4.12 If the units presented are similar, but NOT the same as units listed in the training package, then NR cannot be awarded.

Credit Transfer (CT) procedure – Internal Credit Transfers

This applies to students applying for Credit Transfer for units obtained from ATMC/Baxter Institute courses that share common units.

- 4.13 Where a student is enrolled in more than one qualification with the RTO, if there are units that are eligible for Credit Transfer, they will be automatically applied without the student needing to apply for them. The form SS106 Internal Credit Transfer is to be completed by Student Support Team when a student moves between courses and Credit Transfer is applicable.

Credit Transfer (CT) procedure – External Credit Transfers

This applies to students applying for Credit Transfer for units obtained from external RTOs

- 4.14 Credit Transfer applications are made using form SS104 in addition with an appropriate Enrolment form.
- 4.15 Credit Transfer reviews a qualification and/or Units of Competency that the candidate presents that they believe to be similar to those listed as one or more Units of Competency in the qualification for which they intend to study.
- 4.16 On receipt of a completed form, Baxter Institute will review the Elements, Performance Criteria, Required Skills and Knowledge, Critical Aspects of Evidence and the Range statement of the submitted Units of Competency (or equivalent, if an overseas qualification, the course outline) and compare these with the requirements for the unit that equivalency is sought.
- 4.17 A review of the application will be conducted by the relevant Academic department and the application will be granted or not granted by the Course Coordinator or Head Trainer. As evidence of the CT being

assessed, the final outcome must have the unit descriptors of the unit the student has achieved competency and the unit CT is being sought.

- 4.18 The outcome of the application will be provided within 15 working days after the application is received by Baxter Institute.
- 4.19 If the unit is deemed to be equivalent then Credit Transfer for that unit(s) may be granted.
- 4.20 After Credit(s) are granted, a candidate/student's course schedule must be reviewed and any reduction in the scheduled attendance and the reasons for the reduction must be recorded and placed on the candidate/student's file. The candidate will be notified in writing of the units granted.
- 4.21 If a candidate/student is granted one or more credits then the fees will be subject to reduction.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) procedure

General requirements

- 4.22 The RPL process is structured so that the assessment is streamlined, and minimises the cost and time for the candidate whilst maintaining the integrity of the assessment process (required by the Standards for RTOs 2015 and requirements of Training Packages or Curriculum documents assessment guidelines).
 - 4.23 Baxter Institute must ensure that any candidate for RPL is provided with information about the competencies relevant to their RPL application. The candidate must be provided with:
 - Adequate information and support to enable them to gather reliable evidence of competency
 - Baxter Institute's expected level of performance
 - Opportunities to obtain feedback on the evidence proposed prior to finalisation of the application
- The information is available in Baxter Institute's RPL Information Pack.
- 4.24 Competencies for which RPL are being requested may have been developed through formal/ informal education and training, through employment experience or training and through life experiences.
 - 4.25 It is accepted that RPL is an assessment of an individual's current knowledge, skills and attitudes even though the evidence produced in support of the claim for recognition may be drawn from the past. The RPL assessor will judge whether the evidence provided demonstrates current knowledge; this assessment is made in accordance with the principles of assessment and rules of evidence. Refer to Baxter Institute's RPL information Pack for further details.
 - 4.26 Candidates who are eligible for CT must not be required to undertake an RPL process.

Application process: *Refer to RPL process map PM2.21 for entire process (including timelines for each step)*

Step 1: RPL applications are made using form SS105 in addition to an appropriate Enrolment form. The candidate will have to provide Baxter Institute with a self-assessment. The candidate is provided with an information pack relevant to the RPL being sought and with an evidence guide. The candidate is provided with prompt guidance on completing the student RPL application, including self-assessment, and how to gather reliable evidence. Ideally, the units applied for and the evidence are discussed prior to submission, see *General requirements above*.

The candidate will be required to prepare a portfolio of documentary evidence and submit it with the RPL application. Evidence must include training qualifications, evidence of employment, reports from work supervisors and other necessary evidence specified by Baxter Institute. The Director of Studies/Course Coordinator then allocates a suitably qualified and experienced assessor to conduct a preliminary review of the submitted documentary evidence. This includes thorough identity verification and fraud detection.

Step 2: The assessor will conduct an interview with candidate, to verify the evidence and clarify any information if applicable. The assessor will complete an evidence matrix whilst conducting the assessment of the documentary evidence. Where the candidate has provided information relating to their previous work experience for example, the Assessor may request that the candidate provides a third-party report which is included in the Assessor Pack (the template of the report given to the candidate by the assessor has been designed so that a work supervisor can verify whether or not the candidate has satisfied key performance relevant to a specific unit of competency).

The assessor will contact current or previous workplace contacts provided on the RPL application form. Upon completion of the evidence matrix, the assessor will make a determination on whether the candidate will fall into one of the following categories:

- Can gain recognition for the unit of competency (RPL assessment is complete)
- Needs to proceed to the next step of gathering 'further evidence' (i.e. conversation and or practical task)
- Needs to undergo training (does not have sufficient evidence for the RPL assessment)

Step 3: If further evidence is required, the assessor will facilitate a technical conversation in relation to the candidate's current skills and knowledge. The assessor will use a question bank which comprises of a series of direct questions which have been designed in accordance with required skills and knowledge of the unit of competency; these questions are mapped to the unit of competency.

The candidate will be required to demonstrate a broader area of knowledge and experience, the assessor may elicit further information in addition to direct questioning. Appropriate responses to questions are included in the assessor's marking guide as these will support the assessor in eliciting for more specific information. Where the candidate requires support in understanding the nature of the question the assessor will exercise flexibility and fairness by restating the question without altering its meaning and allow more time or where the candidate feels more comfortable to state their responses in writing, the assessor in being supportive will accommodate the candidate's needs.

For areas in which adjustments may be made to an assessment approach please refer to '*reasonable adjustments to assessments*' (included in the Information pack). The conversation may be conducted at the workplace and if applicable may be conducted during the demonstration of the practical task as this will speed up and streamline the assessment process.

Step 4: If further evidence is required, the assessor will request the candidate to perform a practical task. The assigned practical task has been developed in accordance with required skills and knowledge of the unit of competency; the observation checklist (used as a marking guide) is mapped to the unit of competency. The assessor will observe and assess the candidate's performance in practice.

Practical tasks provide the opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. It is a requirement that the practical skills assessment is conducted in English and without using an alternative language that the candidate may have a proficiency in, if applicable. The practical task will reflect job tasks which include specific industry requirements. The assessor will use an observation checklist to provide a record of the practical assessment.

The practical assessment may be conducted in Baxter Institute's simulated workshop or at the candidate's workplace. Baxter Institute's simulated workshop complies with applicable OH&S legislative requirements. If the practical task demonstration is scheduled at the workplace, permission must be granted to access the workplace to conduct the assessment. The assessor will use a site checklist to ensure that the list of resources required for the practical task is available at the workplace and to confirm OH&S legislative requirements have been observed. It is preferable that the candidate performs the practical task at Baxter Institute's simulated workshop as all the resources required are readily available and extraneous factors are minimised. This could as a result speed up and streamline the assessment process.

Documenting the assessment decision

- 4.27 Baxter Institute is required to ensure that all RPL assessment undertaken is completed and recorded appropriately. This includes quality assurance processes such as gaining feedback from both the RPL candidate and the assessor who conducted the RPL assessment (*refer to P22 Assessment Validation Policy and Procedure*).
- 4.28 The process of assessing and recording evidence and assessment decision is as follows:
- Assessors will assess whether the documentary evidence provided meets the following criteria:
 - The evidence is relevant
 - The evidence is reliable
 - The evidence adequately covers the scope of the subject matter
 - The evidence is sufficient to enable a judgment of competency to be made in regard to the unit, taking into account the required knowledge and skills and the critical aspects of evidence in the relevant units.
 - All original documentary evidence such as certificates, workplace reports, etc should be sighted by the assessor. Their copies are then made and retained in student's file. The copies must contain assessor's signature and printed name with date.
 - The Assessment summary sheet is used to document the evidence that is linked to the Unit of Competency, and also to list the outcome (Competent/ Not Yet Competent).
 - The outcome of the RPL will be recorded on the student's training plan and there after entered on the student management system.
- 4.29 The completed RPL record must be signed by the student and the assessor.
- 4.30 The evidence collected in the completed RPL kit will be validated and reviewed via random selection by a second assessor to ensure appropriateness.
- 4.31 Candidate will be advised promptly of the decision whether RPL is "Granted¹" in writing within 10 working days of completion of the assessment.
- 4.32 Where RPL is "Not Granted", reasons for refusal will be included in the written notification to the candidate (if applicable). Complaint and appeal procedure will apply.
- 4.33 A copy of the RPL application form and all verified supporting documentation are placed in the student's file.
- 4.34 The course Coordinator/Head Trainer should allocate a suitably qualified and experienced assessor to conduct the assessment.

Conclusion

- 4.35 NR/CT/RPL application documentation, assessment processes, completed RPL kit (only applies to RPL) and outcomes must be placed in the student/candidate file.
- 4.36 Granting of NR/CT/RPL must be recorded as a unit outcome in the student/candidate's file.
- 4.37 The Student Management System (SMS) must be updated to reflect competence for each of the units for which credits have been granted.
- 4.38 After Credit(s) are granted, a candidate/student's course schedule must be reviewed and any reductions in the scheduled attendance and the reasons for the reduction must be recorded and placed on the student's file.

¹ "Competent" in the Result

Complaints and Appeals

- 4.39 The candidate must be informed of their right to appeal using the method outlined in *P08 Complaints and Appeals* in the event that they are not happy with the application outcome. This policy and procedure can be downloaded from Baxter Institute's website.
- 4.40 Baxter Institute must notify the student of the outcome of the appeal process and get their acknowledgement. This is to be filed on the student/candidate file.
- 4.41 If the student's complaint is against an assessor's judgement, the assessor has the right to appeal using the method outlined in Baxter Institute's P19 Staff Grievance Resolution Policy.

_____End_____