



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure

Australian Institute of Digital Technology Pty Ltd

Version 2.0 | Effective 1 June 2026

RTO
45801

CRICOS
03983J

ABN
70 643 935 586

Level 1, 377 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
support@aidt.edu.au | 0411 441 061 | www.aidt.edu.au



POLICY 21

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure

Document Number	AIDT-POL-021	Version	2.0
Effective Date	1 June 2026	Next Review Date	June 2027
Policy Owner	Training Manager	Approved By	CEO
Applicable Legislation & Standards	Standards for RTOs 2025 (Standard 3); AQF Policy 2013; Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)		

1. Purpose

This policy establishes AIDT's approach to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) — the formal assessment process through which skills, knowledge, and experience gained outside of an accredited training program can be recognised as meeting the competency requirements of a nationally recognised unit of competency. RPL acknowledges a foundational principle of the Australian VET system: that the standard of competency is what matters, not the pathway by which it was acquired. A person who has spent 10 years working as a cabinet maker has almost certainly developed the competencies described in MSF30322 units — they should not be required to sit through a full course to obtain recognition of what they can already demonstrably do.

This principle is powerful and important. It is also frequently misunderstood and, in the worst cases, abused. RPL is not a rubber stamp for people with relevant work experience. It is not a mechanism by which a qualification can be obtained without genuine assessment. It is a rigorous, evidence-based process that must meet exactly the same quality standards — validity, reliability, flexibility, and fairness — as any other assessment at AIDT. The assessor must be genuinely satisfied, based on sufficient and current evidence, that the candidate can do what the unit describes, to the standard the industry requires, right now.

The importance of this rigour cannot be overstated. A student who receives an RPL outcome at AIDT will be issued a qualification that carries the same AQF standing as a qualification earned through full course completion. The employers who hire that person will trust that qualification. The communities, clients, and service users who rely on the competency of that person — a childcare worker, an aged care worker, a cabinet maker — deserve to know that the qualification is real. AIDT's RPL process exists to ensure that it is.

2. The Fundamental Question in Every RPL Assessment

The fundamental question in every RPL assessment at AIDT is: can this person, right now, perform the tasks described in this unit to the standard required by the relevant industry? Every evidence collection decision, every interview question, and every assessment determination must ultimately serve to answer that question with confidence. Evidence of past experience — no matter how impressive — is a starting point, not a conclusion. The assessor's job is to use that evidence to build a picture of



current capability, and then to verify that picture through direct questioning and, where necessary, direct observation.

3. Evidence Types Accepted in RPL

- **Direct observation:** The assessor directly observes the candidate performing relevant tasks in a genuine or simulated workplace environment. This is the most reliable form of RPL evidence and is required where the unit has significant practical performance requirements that cannot be adequately assessed through portfolio or interview alone.
- **Product evidence:** Work samples, completed documents, plans, correspondence, or other tangible outputs the candidate has produced in a relevant work context. Must be authenticated — the candidate confirms that the product is their own work, and the assessor may seek corroboration from a supervisor.
- **Testimonial evidence:** Statutory declarations, formal referee reports, or employer verification letters from supervisors or managers who have directly observed the candidate's work performance. Testimonials from family members are not accepted. The assessor considers the credibility and specificity of testimonials when weighting them.
- **Formal documentation:** Certificates, licence records, formal qualifications, and records of training completed at registered providers. These are supporting evidence, not substitutes for the oral interview.
- **Oral interview (mandatory):** A structured interview conducted by the assessor covering the full depth and breadth of the unit requirements. The oral interview is mandatory in every RPL application. It is the primary vehicle through which the assessor evaluates the currency, depth, and genuine quality of the candidate's knowledge. The assessor documents the interview in detail, recording both the questions asked and the candidate's responses.

4. RPL Assessment Procedure

1	ENQUIRY AND INFORMATION — The candidate contacts AIDT to discuss RPL eligibility. The Training Manager provides: a plain-language explanation of the RPL process and what it involves; the specific evidence requirements for the units being claimed (derived from the unit's performance evidence and knowledge evidence requirements); the applicable fees; and an honest assessment of the likelihood of success based on the candidate's described background.
2	APPLICATION — The candidate submits a completed RPL Application Form (AIDT-FORM-090) with all supporting evidence. The application must address the evidence requirements for each unit claimed. An incomplete application is returned with a list of the gaps to be addressed.
3	ASSESSOR ASSIGNMENT — The Training Manager assigns a qualified assessor with current vocational competency in the relevant qualification area. The assessor must not have a conflict of interest with the candidate — they must not be a personal friend, family member, or current employer of the candidate.



4	EVIDENCE REVIEW — The assessor reviews all submitted evidence against the performance criteria, performance evidence, knowledge evidence, and assessment conditions of each unit claimed. The assessor maps each piece of evidence to the relevant competency element on the RPL Evidence Mapping Form, notes any gaps, and prepares a list of questions for the oral interview.
5	ORAL INTERVIEW — The assessor conducts a structured oral interview with the candidate, covering the full depth of each unit being claimed. The interview explores: the candidate's specific work experience in the relevant area; their understanding of the principles underlying the work (not just the procedural steps); their ability to apply the knowledge in different or unfamiliar contexts; and their awareness of relevant legislation, standards, and ethical obligations. The interview is documented in detail by the assessor.
6	SUPPLEMENTARY ASSESSMENT — Where the evidence review and oral interview do not provide sufficient evidence of current competency in specific elements, the assessor arranges a supplementary assessment task. This may take the form of a practical demonstration, a written knowledge task, or additional questions. The nature and rationale of the supplementary task are documented.
7	PROVISIONAL OUTCOMES — The assessor records provisional outcomes (Competent or Not Yet Competent) for each unit and prepares a written Gap Analysis for the candidate identifying any units where further evidence is required.
8	FINAL DETERMINATION — The Training Manager reviews and approves the final RPL outcome. The candidate is notified in writing of: each unit granted (Competent); each unit not granted (with specific gap evidence stated); the revised course plan; and the revised fees following any granted units. A revised CoE is issued where the RPL outcome materially affects the course duration.
9	APPEAL — Where the candidate disputes the RPL outcome, they may appeal under AIDT-POL-009 within 10 working days of receiving the written determination.

5. Currency and International Students

Evidence of competency should generally relate to activities within the preceding 3 years to be regarded as demonstrating current competency. Evidence older than 3 years is not automatically excluded — but the assessor must require supplementary evidence of ongoing engagement with the relevant industry. Where a candidate's most recent relevant experience is more than 5 years old, a practical demonstration component is required regardless of the quality of the portfolio evidence, as the assessor cannot otherwise have reasonable confidence in the currency of the candidate's practical skills.

International students may present overseas work experience and overseas qualifications as RPL evidence. AIDT accepts such evidence — but the assessor must be specifically satisfied that the work was performed to a standard genuinely equivalent to what Australian industry requires. In regulated sectors such as early childhood education and care, aged care, and construction, overseas standards may differ materially from Australian standards, and substantial supplementary assessment is typically required. AIDT recommends that international students have a candid



conversation with the Training Manager before paying the RPL application fee about the realistic prospects of success given their specific background.

RPL fees are non-refundable once the assessment process has commenced, regardless of the outcome. The fee covers assessor time for evidence review, oral interview, and any supplementary assessment. Candidates should carefully consider the evidence requirements and their own evidence against them before applying.

6. Related Documents

AIDT-POL-020	Credit Transfer Policy
AIDT-POL-003	Training and Assessment Policy
AIDT-FORM-090	RPL Application Form