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## Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

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**Definitions: Prior Learning:** Learning which has taken place prior to enrolment at the EIT, which has allowed a student to achieve the learning outcomes and competency required in a course module/unit. Prior learning may be either:

- Formal - Learning acquired through a formal learning process, such as successful completion of (part of) a course at another recognised educational institution.
- Informal – Learning acquired through an informal process, such as employer/workplace based training, and through relevant work and/or life experience.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):** Recognition of prior learning is an assessment 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.

**Credit Transfer:** Credit transfer is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications. A credit transfer student will therefore have a reduction in the number of units/modules required to complete an EIT program of study.

**Exemption:** Where a student has received credit/exemption for a particular unit/module, due to either formal or informal prior learning which has enabled the student to satisfactorily meet the specified requirements and outcomes. The student is therefore accepted to have the necessary knowledge and skills and will not be required to complete the unit.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements for assessing and granting credit and exemptions for students undertaking EIT academic programs.

**Scope:** This policy is relevant to all EIT students and administrators.



**Overview:** This policy outlines the principles for recognising prior learning (RPL). It defines how students who have demonstrable, verifiable prior learning based on previous studies or work-based learning and experience may be awarded credit towards the requirements of an EIT course and/or unit/module and thus reduce the number of units/modules the student has to complete to receive an EIT award.

**Essential Supporting Documents:**

- RPL Application Form
- RPL Record of Interview
- RPL Guidelines

**Related Documents:**

- Application and Enrolment Policy
- Enrolment Form – Part One and Two

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The Engineering Institute of Technology (EIT) offers recognition of prior learning (RPL) for Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) nationally recognised qualifications.

### Starting the process

Prior to enrolment students can contact the Senior Course Advisor for advice on the RPL process. After enrolment students can contact their course coordinator.

The enrolment application form includes a question where the student can indicate that they intend to apply for RPL. As a preliminary step, the student is asked in that question to indicate the specific Unit(s) or Module(s) to which this will apply. Once an application is approved, the student will be sent the detailed RPL claim form to commence the process.

### Types of claim

1. **Credit Transfer** is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes based on equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications (or individual units or modules).

The program for each qualification consists of a series of Units or Modules. As an Australian Nationally VET Regulated (NVR) Registered Training Organisation (RTO), EIT will recognise AQF and VET qualifications and VET statements of attainment issued by any other RTO. If a student has studied the Unit or Module in a previous program and they can provide official evidence (certified statement of attainment, transcript or similar), then the EIT will grant the student with credit transfer for that Unit or Module and this will reduce the overall program fees the student is required to pay.

2. **Recognition of prior learning** is an assessment 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 (*Ref: National Quality Council Training Packages glossary*).

If a student has not studied Units or Modules directly but believes they can present a strong case to demonstrate that they are already competent in the subject matter,



then they need to provide detailed evidence. This will require the student to prepare their case and for the EIT to assess it. If RPL is granted it does not reduce program fees because of the complexity of assessing each application. The EIT will look at the learning outcomes of the Unit or Module and then assess the evidence that the student has provided against those outcomes.

In most cases where credit transfer or RPL is granted the time taken to complete a program with the EIT does not change; the student would simply take a break while the rest of the class proceeded through units or modules for which you were granted exemption.

### **For the student to consider**

The EIT usually recommends that students carefully consider which Units or Modules and to what extent they apply for RPL. There are several reasons why care is needed:

1. By staying with the entire course the student will get the latest information, especially if prior studies in the subject were completed some time ago.
2. The student maintains continuity, which maintains the discipline of the studies.
3. In some cases, claims the EIT receive for exemption are based upon a student's prior studies at a lower level. For example, Advanced Diplomas are at Level 6 in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). Claims for RPL based on previous study must come from qualifications at a similar AQF level.
4. As required by various accrediting bodies, the RPL process is rigorous and requires considerable resources. As a consequence only students who have submitted an enrolment form and had a place confirmed on a program are formally considered for exemption. The RPL process may take some time and may not necessarily be completed before the course starts. Should a student who has enrolled and applied for RPL not be satisfied with the decision of EIT regarding eligibility then that student may either appeal the decision or withdraw and receive a full credit for any Modules or Units not completed and texts not already supplied. A statement of attainment would be issued for Modules or Units successfully completed.
5. The onus is on the prospective student to present a well-documented claim.

### **Submitting an Application**

If a student indicates that they wish to claim RPL, then EIT will provide them with the detailed RPL application form and the RPL Guidelines once that student's enrolment has been officially accepted.

The form will require the student to provide a list of the Units or Modules for which they would like to claim credit transfer or RPL and detailed evidence.

The RPL application form will act as a guide for the student to provide evidence from:



- Existing qualifications (with copies of relevant certificates etc)
- Academic scores (or copy of academic transcripts, statements of attainment or similar)
- The number and title for any modules or units that may be applied towards the RPL claim. Unless the module or unit has a national code which will allow EIT to readily locate details, the description should include nominal hours, content and learning outcomes (broken down into each area covered) and the level at which this study was conducted.
- Relevant career experience: The student will be asked to explain why their career experience demonstrates that they have achieved the learning outcomes and to provide evidence of this. Evidence can take the form of questioning, observation of practical tasks, finished products, presentations, video and/or audio taped evidence, third party reports, documents, and anything else that they can think of that is relevant and proves competence.

EIT may also request that the student undertake an interview, usually by telephone. The purpose of the interview will be to make sure that all relevant learning experiences have been identified and to confirm that the student meets the critical aspects of evidence required to determine current competence.

EIT may ask the student to provide further evidence once the application has been assessed.

### **Fees for RPL**

As noted above, if a claim for credit transfer (*see (1) in "Types of Claim"*) is successful then course fees will be reduced by the value of the Unit(s) or Module(s) that the student is exempt from.

If the student is making a claim for RPL (*as per (2) in "Types of Claim"*) there is no fee, but the program or per unit/module cost will not be reduced due to the level of administrative work involved in assessing an RPL application. If an RPL application is successful, the student will simply be granted exemption from attendance and/or completion of the assignment / exam for the selected Unit(s) or Module(s).

### **How is the decision made (examples)**

All RPL claims will be reviewed by a relevantly qualified Assessor (a senior lecturer or subject matter expert), who will recommend a decision to the course coordinator. This decision will then be communicated to the student.

### **Possible outcomes**

After a claim is evaluated, there are three possible outcomes:

1. Exemption will be granted from the specific Unit(s) or Module(s) with credit given to the student for the Unit(s) or Module(s) (based respectively on their academic results and/or past experience).



2. Further evidence will be requested in order to fully assess the application.
3. The application is rejected. In the event that a student disagrees with the outcome they can appeal with detailed grounds on why they feel the assessment was unfair.