



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure

- **Student Guide to Recognition of Prior Learning Process**

| POLICY | RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) |
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| 2025 Standards | <p>Outcome Standard, Quality Area 1 – Division 3 Standard 1.6: “VET students with prior skills, knowledge and competencies are supported to seek recognition of prior learning to progress through the relevant training product.”</p> |
| Statement | <p>AACI’s Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPL) is designed to ensure that an applicant’s prior skills, learning, achieved through formal and informal training, work experience and other life experiences, is appropriately processed and recognised.</p> <p>RPL at AACI is conducted as assessment and applies the same system, tools, records and validation as other assessments. Decisions are transparent, defensible and documented, and maintain the integrity of the training product</p> <p>This policy details the criteria, process, and documents that shall implemented when assessing applicant’s RPL application to ensure it is decided in a way that is fair, transparent, consistent and maintains the integrity of the training product.</p> |
| Objectives | <p>In consideration of the above principles, the objectives of the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, Practices and Policy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are made aware of their opportunity and right to have their prior learning acknowledged through the RPL process via AACI’s Student Handbook, website, policies and Pretraining Review process. • Increase access to RPL by individuals entering any formal and/or recognised training program RPL approach accommodates the variety of experiences and learning pathways; • Ensure that RPL is an integral component of the assessment of an individual’s eligibility for an award or formally recognised competency; • Ensure that the procedure for RPL incorporates a range of valid and reliable techniques designed to accurately assess competencies held; • Promote ‘non-traditional’ learning processes as valid pathways to competency achievement and recognised training outcomes; • Ensure students are made aware of the role any third party will play in their RPL assessment (eg. Third Party Supervisor Reports). • ensure staff understand that granting RPL to a student that does not meet the requirements of the training product may have serious consequences for the student, public safety, industry confidence and the reputation of the VET sector • ensure the risks of the RPL process are eliminated or minimised as best as possible in the circumstances. • If credit transfer is not granted due to a unit of competency being not deemed equivalent, applicants will be provided RPL pathway • RPL shall not be promoted as “easy or quick or deliver a guaranteed outcome. All decisions are evidence-based and may require gap training. |
| Scope | <p>This Policy/Procedure addresses Recognition of Prior Learning in the context of formal courses recognised in the Australian Qualifications Framework, where</p> |

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| | <p>the course/competency leads to an endorsed qualification and applies to all applications for Recognition of Prior Learning and Recognition of Current Competencies by students.</p> |
| <p>Principles</p> | <p>National Training Framework Committee</p> <p><i>AACI has adopted the following principles of the National Training Framework Committee:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assessment processes will provide for the recognition of current competencies, regardless of where these may have been acquired.</i> • <i>Recognition of prior learning focuses on identifying the endorsed industry / enterprise competency standards currently held by individuals as a result of formal and informal training, not how, when or where the learning occurred.</i> • <i>Recognition of prior learning underpins any system of competency based training. It is essential to have a demonstrable commitment to recognising the prior learning of individuals.</i> • <i>Recognition of prior learning will be available to all potential applicants.</i> • <i>Recognition of prior learning will involve processes that are fair to all parties involved.</i> • <i>Recognition of prior learning will involve the provision of adequate support to potential applicants.</i> |
| <p>Fees and Charges for RPL Services</p> | <p>In determining fees and charges for Recognition of Prior Learning the principles of access and fairness under the Australian Quality Training Framework will be applied.</p> <p>A RPL Application fee of \$2,500 upfront and non refundable and plus \$150 per unit of competency, plus additional fee of \$100 per hour (Plus GST) will be charged to students for the assessment of an RPL Application, unless otherwise agreed to in writing.</p> <p>RPL Fees are non-refundable.</p> |
| <p>Stages of the RPL Process</p> | <p>The RPL process will include the following stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information supplied by the AACI on the RPL process • Initial support and counselling provided by the AACI • Self-assessment by the student in creating their supporting evidence • Student to submit Application for RPL • Assessment of student RPL Application and supporting evidence • Post-assessment guidance provided by the AACI • Certification by the AACI <p>Students are provided with the opportunity to question assessments and access to the AACI's complaints and appeals process for a review and an appeal of assessment decisions if required.</p> |

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| | <p>Assessment covers both on and off-the-job components of training. Procedures allow students to seek recognition in one or more of the units of competency without having to participate in a training program.</p> |
| <p>Risk Management and Quality Assurance</p> | <p>RPL may be granted for any proportion of a training product where the evidence meets the principles of assessment and rules of evidence, and unit and licensing requirements. RPL will not be limited by percentage or volume, only by evidence and integrity requirements.</p> <p>The extent of recognition sought may be up to 100 but it is acknowledged that there is a higher risk associated with this degree of recognition. The amount of risk in the RPL process is directly related to the amount of evidence to be collected; the degree of rigor required; the number of assessors to be used; and the costs of implementing RPL processes.</p> <p>The general principle to be observed is that as the level of risk increases there should be a corresponding increase in the rigor of the RPL processes.</p> <p>This increased rigor can be achieved through requiring more evidence of higher quality and the involvement of more assessors to review the evidence and make the final assessment decision.</p> <p>AACI shall ensure all RPL evidence of overseas qualifications or competencies are mapped to specific Australian legislative and regulatory industry requirements and/or gap training and assessments shall be required to be completed by the student.</p> <p>AACI does not outsource RPL assessment to any regulated and unregulated third party in accordance with requirements of Standards 3.2 and 3.3.</p> <p>AACI shall ensure sufficient inquiries are undertaken about a students seeking RPL so as to confident that the student is not a nongenuine student.</p> |
| <p>Defintions</p> <p>Principles of Assessment</p> | <p>(see Student Guide to the RPL Process – Schedule 1)</p> <p><i>All AACI assessors are provided with the AACI Assessor Guidance in RPL Process Applying - Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence specifically in the RPL contexts</i></p> <p><i>Assessment processes must be valid, reliable, flexible and fair. It is imperative that in the assessment of competencies for the recognition of prior learning, the following principles be observed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Validity (assessing the right competency, aligned to the unit)</p> <p>Assessments will cover the range of skills and knowledge needed to demonstrate competency. Assessment of competencies will integrate knowledge and skills with their practical application. Assessment of a student’s competency will be judged on sufficient evidence gathered on a number of occasions and in a variety of contexts or situations and using different methods. The evidence will be collected from</p> |

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| | <p>activities and tasks that can be clearly related to the unit of competency or learning outcomes specified and demonstrate that the performance criteria have been met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability (consistent decisions across assessors) The criteria for the judgment of competence must be stated clearly and adhered to and benchmarked consistently. • Fairness (candidate-centred, transparent, supported) Assessment practices and methods should be fair and equitable to all students. Assessment procedures and the criteria for judging performance must be made clear to all students seeking assessment. Assessment should be based on a consultative approach. The process of assessment should be jointly developed / agreed between those involved. Students should be provided with the opportunity to challenge assessments and provision should be made for a review and an appeal of assessment decisions. • Flexibility (multiple evidence options, multiple ways to demonstrate competence) Assessment should cover both on and off-the-job components of training. Procedures should allow students to seek recognition in one or more of the units of competency without having to participate in a training program. |
| Rules of Evidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Validity (evidence relates to the unit requirements) Is this evidence about the skills and knowledge for this unit? • Sufficiency (enough evidence to make a confident judgement) Is there enough evidence to show you are competent across all requirements • Authenticity (the evidence is the candidate's own work) Can the assessor be assured that the evidence provided is that of the student and reflects their competence • Currency (evidence reflects current competence) Does the evidence show your current skills and knowledge |

| PROCEDURE | RRECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) |
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| Action/Method | <p>1. Preliminary Information on RPL Process</p> <p>1.1 All students will be issued with information on RPL/RCC via the Student Information Guide, website, RPL and Credit Transfer policies and procedures during pre-enrolment process including AACI's Student Guide to the RPL Process. (Schedule 1)</p> <p><i>1.1.1 If equivalence is established (current unit/course code or superseded=equivalent on National Register), AACI shall process as credit transfer after authentication. If code is not equivalent, AACI shall offer RPL with mapping and gap training options.</i></p> <p>1.2 Students who consider applying for RPL should contact AACI administrator, who will provide a brief explanation of the process and advice, and supply the <u>RPL and Credit transfer Policy and Procedure, Student Handbook, RPL Kit and Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form</u> available via email.</p> <p>1.3 The applicant must read the AACI <i>Student Guide to applying to the RPL Process</i> and complete Student Enrolment form and/or the <u>Prior Learning Application Form and provide evidence</u> in the following major categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.3.1 Personal details and contact information 1.3.2 Qualifications and Statements of Attainment, Certificates 1.3.3 Copies of formal and informal training certificates/statements. i.e., Certificates of Attendance/Participation in workplace education 1.3.4 CPD - Professional development (formal or informal) 1.3.5 Work Placements and name(s) of practice supervisor 1.3.6 Work experience (eg. Detailed resume, job descriptions (current and previous), references) 1.3.7 Other Attributes (other interests & Skills if appropriate & relevant) 1.3.8 A current CV – that includes work tasks relevant to the units for which you are seeking RPL 1.3.9 Job References or work documents eg Job contracts or pay slips or documentation or presentations 1.3.10 Videos demonstrating your skills 1.3.11 Supervisor Third party reports (including supervisor details) 1.3.12 Observation checklist completed by a supervisor 1.3.13 Membership of relevant professional associations <p>All Australian issued qualifications shall be either authenticated in person and/or by copies stamped as original and/or checked by requesting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. access to the student's USI account and National Training Register and/or 2. a copy that is stamped and certified as an original and/or |

3. their party supervisor in the case of overseas¹ based students.

2. Applying for RPL

2.1 Students will need to complete the Student Enrolment Application Form and/or RPL Application Form for each course they seek recognition for either in part or whole.

2.2 Applicants may use the information contained within the RPL Kit and RPL Application Form to conduct a preliminary self-assessment against the **course learning outcomes** (that is underpinning knowledge and skills in unit of competency also to be supplied).

2.3 Applicants should consider how they have achieved each learning outcome and if they can satisfy the performance criteria by submitting valid, sufficient, authentic and current evidence.

2.4 Applications for RPL must be accompanied by written evidence and supporting documents gathered by the applicant and submitted to Assessor directly or via Student Administration.

2.4 – AACI may utilise Supervisor Third Party Reports that shall be signed off by duly qualified supervisors that are either qualified Veterinarians or Vet Nurses that provide a signed declaration that they have previously supervised the student perform work place tasks in the animal care industry with the student.

Regardless of the type of evidence that is submitted, Assessors must be confident that the evidence meets the following criteria:

- requirements of the Unit of Competency (Training Product);
- any Regulatory or licensing requirements;
- authenticity – that it is a student’s own evidence and can be authenticated;
- students have performed the competency consistently and reliably;
- Is at the standard expected in the industry and set out in the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF);
- Sufficiency – There is sufficient evidence to make a judgment

If the Application does not meet all the requirements of the Training Product

3.1 If the applicant has been identified by AACI assessor to have skills gaps, then AACI will provide the applicant the opportunity to either:

- Present further information and evidence to AACI
- Clarify existing evidence with further authentication

¹ Overseas evidence must demonstrate currency (normally <3–5 years unless industry specifies), and compliance with Australian legislative/regulatory requirements. Where local practice cannot be evidenced, gap training and assessment is required.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for an explanation as to why a gap has been identified. • Recommend and require Gap training to occur • identifying and arranging any necessary gap training including detailing its cost, delivery method and timing. <p>Completion of the RPL Process</p> <p>4.1 The Assessor shall complete the RPL Evidence Matrix and submit a RPL Report on their findings to the RTO Manager.</p> <p>4.2 The Assessor and/or RTO Manager shall review the RPL Report and make a recommendation whether the student meets the requirements of the training product.</p> <p>4.3 All Applications for RPL are required to be confirmed by RTO Manager and/or lead Assessor</p> <p>4.3 Following advice from the Assessor, the CEO or Administrator will notify the student within 7 days as to whether their RPL application has been successful, unsuccessful, or if further evidence is required.</p> <p>4.4 Administrator shall arrange for results of successful RPL outcomes to be recorded in Assessment Results immediately and filed in the Student's academic folder, together with RPL Application forms and associated evidence such as RPL assessor's kit and RPL evidence matrix.</p> <p>4.5 A student may lodge an appeal on the AACI's RPL decision in accordance with the AACI's Complaints and Appeals Policy. There is no cost to the student for the Internal Complaints and Appeals Process.</p> |
| Record Keeping | RPL records (application, mapping, authentication logs, assessor judgements, decision letter) are retained in accordance with AACI Assessment & Records policies for the same period as all assessment evidence |
| Equivalence or Equivalent | <p>is determined by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a unit of competency with the current unit code and title • a superseded unit of competency that the training package developer has determined to be equivalent (as published on the National Register) |
| Validation of RPL Practices | AACI shall validate on a regular basis our RPL practices and processes to ensure decisions are being made in accordance with the Standards. This shall be undertaken on a similar timetable to that outlined in our Validation Policy and Procedure. |
| Attached Documentation | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RPL Kit (including Student Guide to applying to the RPL Process) 2. RPL Application Form (includes guide to completing application form) 3. Supervisor Third Party Report Template 4. Assessor Guide to RPL Process 5. RPL Evidence Matrix |

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| | 6. Letter confirming RPL Application Outcome |
| <p>Related Legislation</p> | <p>Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act • ASQA Standards released in 2025 - (Compliance Standards, Outcome Standards and Credential Policy) • Reference to Standard 1.6: VET students with prior skills, knowledge and competencies are supported to seek recognition of prior learning to progress through the relevant training product. Standard 1.7: VET students who have completed an equivalent training product are supported to obtain a credit transfer. • Guidance from • Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 <p>Policies & Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment • Course Credit • Credit transfer • Records Management, Maintenance and Security • Privacy Policy • Enrolment • Complaints and Appeals • Fees and Charges • Mutual Recognition of Qualifications <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessor Guidance in RPL Process Applying - Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence specifically in RPL contexts • AACI Student Guide to RPL Process (see Schedule 1) • AACI Student Information Guide • Assessment Records and Correspondence |
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VERSION CONTROL

Review / amendment history

Policy Approved by: Chief Executive Officer / RTO Manager

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer / RTO Manager

Next Policy Review Date: 1 September 2026

| Version | Date | Details |
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| 1.0 | 4 August 2021 | Policy approved and issued |
| 2.0 | 1 March 2022 | Minor Changes |
| 3.0 | 1 September 2022 | RTO Registration TOID and contact details |
| 4.0 | 1 September 2023 | Minor Changes and formatting |
| 5.0 | 1 September 2024 | Updates – Reference to ASQA 2025 Standards |
| 6.0 | 1 September 2025 | <p>Updated in accordance to performance indicators, recommendation and risks set out in the June 2025 ASQA Practice Guide RPL and Credit Transfer (Standard 1.6, 1.7)</p> <p>Introduced – As Part of Pre-Enrolment Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AACI's <i>Student Guide to RPL Process</i> - AACI Assessor Guidance in RPL Process Applying - Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence specifically in RPL contexts (see Schedule 1) |
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Schedule 1 –

Student Guide to Recognition of Prior Learning Process

- Understanding the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence in RPL

Who this guide is for?

This guide is for students who want to apply for **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** with AACI. It explains what RPL is, how the RPL process works, and—most importantly—how to prepare evidence that meets the **Principles of Assessment** and the **Rules of Evidence**. These are national requirements that RTOs must apply to ensure assessments are fair and valid.

This guide will help you:

- understand what assessors must do to assess RPL properly
- understand what you must provide to support your RPL application
- prepare a stronger evidence portfolio the first time
- avoid common mistakes that delay decisions

1. What is RPL?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process that recognises skills and knowledge you already have. This learning may have come from:

- work experience (paid or unpaid)
- volunteering
- workplace training or short courses
- life experience (where relevant to the unit outcomes)
- previous study or qualifications

RPL is not a shortcut or automatic credit. It is an **assessment pathway**. This means you must still demonstrate that you meet the unit requirements—just using evidence you already have, rather than completing the usual training and assessment activities.

RPL outcomes

Your RPL application may result in:

- **RPL Granted (Competent)** – you have demonstrated competency through evidence
- **Further evidence required** – you have some evidence, but not enough to confirm all requirements
- **Not Yet Competent (NYC)** – the evidence does not demonstrate the required competency standard

If you are asked for further evidence, this is not a failure—it is a normal part of ensuring decisions are accurate and fair.

RPL Process Steps (what to expect)

Good examples (3)

1. **Clear evidence submission:** Student labels files E1–E12, includes an evidence list, and each item has a short note explaining what it demonstrates and the workplace context.
2. **Smooth competency conversation:** Student attends interview prepared, can explain each work sample, and provides real examples of tasks and decisions.
3. **Efficient gap closure:** Student has 80% coverage, completes two targeted gap tasks within a week (e.g., scenario response + supervisor verification), and the assessor finalises the outcome quickly.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Disorganised portfolio:** Student uploads 40 unnamed photos and PDFs with no labels or explanations; assessor cannot map evidence efficiently and must request resubmission in a clearer format.
2. **No context provided:** Student uploads workplace policies only, with no evidence showing how they personally applied them; assessor cannot confirm competence.
3. **Referee unavailable:** Student lists a supervisor who has left the business and cannot be contacted; authenticity/verification becomes difficult and delays the decision.

2. Why do Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence matter in RPL?

When AACI assesses your RPL application, the assessor must follow national assessment rules to ensure:

- the decision is fair to you
- the evidence is strong enough to confirm competency
- the decision is consistent across students
- the decision can be justified if audited

These requirements are called:

- the **Principles of Assessment:** fairness, flexibility, validity, reliability
- the **Rules of Evidence:** validity, sufficiency, authenticity, currency

In RPL contexts, these rules become very important because the assessor is relying heavily on evidence you provide from real workplaces or prior learning.

Good examples (3)

1. **Clear briefing:** Student receives a pre-RPL info pack and understands evidence expectations, timeline, and their rights to support and appeal.
2. **Support used appropriately:** Student asks early for clarification on acceptable evidence due to confidentiality limits; AACI provides alternate options (de-identified samples + third-party report + interview).
3. **Reasonable adjustment applied:** Student with a support need completes a verbal competency conversation instead of long written responses, without changing unit requirements.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Student doesn't understand requirements:** Student assumes "years of experience" is enough and submits only a resume; outcome is delayed because evidence doesn't demonstrate unit outcomes.
2. **Lack of communication:** Student ignores requests for clarification and misses deadlines; assessor cannot progress the application.
3. **Inappropriate adjustment request:** Student asks to skip a competency conversation entirely even when authenticity is unclear; assessor cannot do so because it would compromise assessment integrity.

3. The RPL process: What to expect (step-by-step)

While details can vary by qualification, an RPL process usually includes the steps below.

Step 1: Initial enquiry and suitability check

AACI will discuss:

- what units/qualification you want RPL for
- your work history, roles and tasks
- whether RPL is suitable (some units require strong practical demonstration or specific conditions)

You may be asked to complete a self-assessment checklist.

Step 2: RPL information and evidence instructions

You will receive:

- a list of units applied for
- what types of evidence are acceptable
- templates (e.g., third-party report)
- guidance on how to label and submit evidence

Step 3: Evidence collection and submission

You collect and submit evidence. You should organise it clearly and label items so the assessor can easily review them.

Step 4: Assessment review and competency conversation

The assessor reviews your evidence and may schedule:

- a **competency conversation** (structured interview)
- clarification questions
- verification calls/emails to referees (if needed)

Step 5: Gap assessment (if required)

If some unit requirements are not fully demonstrated, you may be asked to complete **gap tasks**, such as:

- short written tasks
- scenario questions
- workplace observation or videos
- practical demonstrations (where safe and appropriate)
- additional third-party verification

Gap assessment is designed to be targeted—only for what is missing.

Step 6: Outcome and records

You will receive your outcome. AACI keeps assessment records as required.

Part A: Principles of Assessment (Student-friendly explanation)

4. Fairness (you are supported and treated consistently)

Fairness means:

- you know what is required and how decisions are made
- you are given reasonable time and support to gather evidence
- you can ask questions and get clarification
- you can respond to requests for more evidence
- reasonable adjustments can be made if you have a disability or support need (without lowering standards)

What fairness looks like in RPL

In RPL, fairness includes:

- clear instructions on what evidence is needed
- feedback if your evidence does not cover the unit
- a chance to provide additional evidence or complete gap tasks
- the right to appeal an assessment decision (as per AACI policy)

How you can help support fairness

You can support a fair process by:

- asking questions if you don't understand evidence requirements
- being honest about what you have and haven't done
- submitting evidence that genuinely matches your role and tasks
- keeping communication open if you need more time or support

Principles of Assessment: Fairness

Good examples (3)

1. **Clear briefing:** Student receives a pre-RPL info pack and understands evidence expectations, timeline, and their rights to support and appeal.
2. **Support used appropriately:** Student asks early for clarification on acceptable evidence due to confidentiality limits; AACI provides alternate options (de-identified samples + third-party report + interview).
3. **Reasonable adjustment applied:** Student with a support need completes a verbal competency conversation instead of long written responses, without changing unit requirements.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Student doesn't understand requirements:** Student assumes "years of experience" is enough and submits only a resume; outcome is delayed because evidence doesn't demonstrate unit outcomes.

2. **Lack of communication:** Student ignores requests for clarification and misses deadlines; assessor cannot progress the application.
3. **Inappropriate adjustment request:** Student asks to skip a competency conversation entirely even when authenticity is unclear; assessor cannot do so because it would compromise assessment integrity.

5. Flexibility (you can show competence in different ways)

Flexibility means you can demonstrate skills and knowledge using different types of evidence and different assessment methods. People do the same job in different workplaces, so assessors must allow varied evidence, as long as it meets requirements.

What flexibility looks like in RPL

In RPL, flexibility may include:

- accepting a range of workplace documents (if appropriate)
- accepting photos/videos (where privacy rules allow)
- using interviews to confirm understanding
- using third-party reports from supervisors/managers
- using practical demonstration where documents are limited

Your responsibility in flexibility

Flexibility does not mean “anything counts”. Evidence must still meet the Rules of Evidence and match unit requirements. You must provide enough detail and context.

3) Principles of Assessment: Flexibility

Good examples (3)

1. **Multiple evidence types:** Student provides de-identified records, a logbook, photos (approved), and a third-party report to demonstrate workplace performance.
2. **Alternative evidence accepted:** Student can't share client documents due to privacy; assessor accepts supervisor verification + scenario responses + interview to confirm competence.
3. **Role-appropriate evidence:** Student in a small clinic provides roster/task logs and supervisor observations instead of formal policies, which the clinic doesn't produce.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Evidence is “flexible” but irrelevant:** Student submits unrelated certificates (e.g., customer service course) for a technical unit; doesn't demonstrate required tasks.
2. **Over-reliance on one method:** Student provides only a third-party report with no supporting examples; assessor needs more evidence to meet sufficiency.
3. **Workplace evidence cannot be validated:** Student provides screenshots with no dates or business identifiers; assessor cannot confirm context or authenticity.

6. Validity (the assessment is about the right skills)

Validity means your assessor must make sure the evidence relates directly to the unit requirements and shows competency for what the unit is actually assessing.

What validity looks like in RPL

In RPL, validity includes:

- evidence showing the real tasks you performed

- evidence matching the unit outcomes (skills, knowledge, context)
- evidence meeting any assessment conditions (like workplace context)

How you can help with validity

To support validity, ensure your evidence:

- includes your job role and tasks clearly
- shows what you personally did (not just what your workplace does)
- includes dates and workplace context
- matches the unit requirements you are applying for

A good portfolio is not “lots of documents”. It is **the right documents**, clearly linked to unit outcomes.

Validity

Good examples (3)

1. **Evidence matches unit tasks:** Student provides a de-identified completed form/report that directly aligns to required performance tasks.
2. **Correct workplace context:** Evidence shows tasks performed under the correct conditions (e.g., appropriate equipment, safety controls, real workplace setting).
3. **Knowledge confirmed:** Student answers scenario questions showing reasoning, risks, and correct procedures aligned to unit knowledge requirements.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Wrong unit focus:** Student submits animal handling photos for a unit focused on infection control documentation; evidence does not match requirements.
2. **Policy-only evidence:** Student submits the clinic’s policy manual; does not show the student’s competence in applying it.
3. **Evidence doesn’t meet conditions:** Student evidence relates to observing a task, not performing it, where the unit requires independent performance.

7. Reliability (a consistent decision, no matter who assesses it)

Reliability means the assessor’s decision should be consistent and repeatable. If another qualified assessor looked at your evidence, they should reasonably come to the same conclusion.

What reliability looks like in RPL

In RPL, reliability is supported by:

- using standard templates
- mapping evidence to unit outcomes
- keeping clear records of how decisions were made
- using structured interview questions
- applying the Rules of Evidence consistently

How you can help reliability

You can support reliability by:

- labelling evidence clearly (E1, E2, E3 etc.)
- explaining what each piece of evidence shows

- providing third-party verification where appropriate
- ensuring evidence is complete and not missing key pages

Reliability

Good examples (3)

1. **Consistent documentation:** Student's evidence is labelled, mapped, and easy to trace, enabling a consistent judgement process.
2. **Clear third-party verification:** Supervisor report uses specific examples, frequency, and confirms direct observation—reducing ambiguity.
3. **Comparable outcomes:** Two students with similar roles submit similar evidence sets and receive consistent decisions because evidence quality and mapping are clear.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Vague verification:** Third-party report says “good worker” with no tasks, examples, or frequency; assessor judgement becomes less reliable.
2. **Evidence is inconsistent:** Student claims they routinely performed tasks, but evidence shows only minor involvement; assessor must investigate further.
3. **Unclear decision trail:** Student submits mixed files without dates/context; different assessors could interpret differently, increasing risk of inconsistent outcomes.

Part B: Rules of Evidence (Student-friendly explanation)

8. Validity (does the evidence match the unit?)

Validity (as a rule of evidence) asks: **Is this evidence about the skills and knowledge for this unit?**

Examples of valid evidence in RPL

Depending on the unit, valid evidence may include:

- work samples you created (e.g., plans, checklists, reports)
- workplace records showing tasks you performed
- certificates of completion for relevant training
- photos/videos of you performing tasks (with permissions)
- logbooks or job sheets showing consistent practice
- supervisor statements verifying your competence

Common validity mistakes

Evidence may be invalid if:

- it describes what the business does, not what *you* do
- it is unrelated to the unit outcomes
- it is too general (e.g., a generic PD without task detail)
- it shows participation, not competence (e.g., “attended training” without outcomes)

Validity (evidence relevance)

Good examples (3)

1. **Work sample aligned:** Student provides a de-identified report they completed that demonstrates required skills and knowledge.
2. **Task evidence matched:** Evidence shows the student completing the specific tasks the unit requires (not adjacent tasks).
3. **Interview supports relevance:** Student explains how each evidence item links to their role and the unit outcomes.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Irrelevant certificate:** Student submits a certificate unrelated to unit requirements (e.g., “leadership webinar”) as main evidence for hands-on tasks.
2. **Evidence for someone else’s role:** Student submits evidence from a different job function that doesn’t match the unit requirements.
3. **Generic statements:** Student writes “I do this every day” without any examples, documents, or verification.

9. Sufficiency (is there enough evidence?)

Sufficiency asks: **Is there enough evidence to show you are competent across all requirements?**

One document rarely proves a whole unit.

What “enough” evidence means in RPL

Sufficient evidence usually shows:

- you have performed the tasks more than once (where relevant)
- you have handled different situations or scenarios
- you can explain why you do things (knowledge)
- you meet safety and quality requirements
- you can perform to the standard expected in the workplace

Common sufficiency mistakes

Evidence may be insufficient if:

- it only covers one part of the unit
- it is a single example with no range
- it is missing underpinning knowledge
- it has no third-party verification and cannot be confirmed

Sufficiency (enough coverage)

Good examples (3)

1. **Range of examples:** Student provides multiple examples across time and situations (different shifts, different cases, different contexts).
2. **Full coverage:** Portfolio includes evidence for practical tasks + underpinning knowledge (documents + interview + third-party report).
3. **Gaps addressed:** Student completes targeted gap tasks for the missing areas, resulting in full unit coverage.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Single example only:** Student provides one photo or one document for a unit requiring repeated performance and broader evidence.
2. **No underpinning knowledge:** Student provides only work samples but cannot explain why procedures are done a certain way during interview.
3. **Overly narrow role:** Student's role only covered part of the unit (e.g., assisting only). Evidence cannot show full competence; outcome may be "further evidence required" or NYC.

10. Authenticity (is it really your work?)

Authenticity asks: **Can the assessor trust that this evidence is your own work and reflects your competence?**

This is critical in RPL because evidence can sometimes be shared, templated, or created by others.

How AACI checks authenticity

In RPL, authenticity may be confirmed through:

- a signed candidate declaration
- third-party reports from supervisors/managers
- competency conversations (interviews) where you explain the work
- checking details like dates, names, versions, and writing style
- targeted questions about decisions you made and how you performed tasks
- additional demonstrations if doubt remains

How you can strengthen authenticity

To strengthen authenticity:

- include documents with your name, role, or signature where possible
- provide context notes (what the document is, what you did, when, and where)
- ensure third-party reports are completed by someone who directly observed your work

- be ready to talk through your evidence in a competency conversation

Common authenticity risks

Assessors may question authenticity when:

- evidence is very polished but you cannot explain it
- documents look like generic templates with no workplace details
- evidence is produced by the organisation but doesn't show your contribution
- there is no referee or third-party confirmation available

Authenticity (it's your work)

Good examples (3)

1. **Candidate declaration + explanation:** Student signs declaration and can clearly describe how they created each work sample.
2. **Third-party verification:** Supervisor confirms the student performed tasks independently and provides specific examples and timeframes.
3. **Consistency check passes:** Documents match student's role, dates, and workplace context; student answers challenge questions confidently.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Cannot explain evidence:** Student submits a perfect document but cannot explain sections or decision points—raises authenticity concerns.
2. **Evidence looks templated:** Portfolio is entirely generic templates with no workplace identifiers or personal contribution.
3. **No verifiable referee:** Student refuses third-party verification and has no alternative authenticity checks; assessor must require additional confirmation.

11. Currency (is it recent enough to show current competence?)

Currency asks: **Does the evidence show your current skills and knowledge?**

This matters because workplace practices, equipment, regulations, and standards can change.

How currency is judged

Currency can depend on the unit and industry, but generally:

- evidence should be recent and relevant
- older evidence may still be accepted if you can show you have continued practice since then
- if evidence is older, AACI may confirm currency through an interview or gap tasks

How you can strengthen currency

To strengthen currency:

- include recent examples of work (current year where possible)
- include recent training records and professional development
- include a current resume with role descriptions
- use a logbook or supervisor verification confirming recent practice

Currency (current competence)

Good examples (3)

1. **Recent evidence provided:** Work samples and logs are from the last 6–12 months and reflect current workplace practice.
2. **Continuous practice verified:** Student provides older documents but supervisor confirms ongoing performance and current duties.
3. **Current knowledge demonstrated:** Student explains current standards, updated processes, and current equipment/procedures in interview.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Old evidence only:** Student provides documents from 8 years ago with no proof of continued practice; assessor cannot confirm current competence.
2. **Outdated practices described:** Student explains procedures that are no longer used; indicates skills may not be current.
3. **Role changed:** Student previously performed tasks but has been in a different role for years; current competence cannot be confirmed without additional assessment.

Part C: Evidence types and how to build a strong RPL portfolio

12. Types of evidence that work well in RPL

Different units require different evidence, but strong RPL portfolios often include a mix of:

Direct evidence (best type)

Shows you actually did the work:

- job sheets, task records, rosters, logs
- completed workplace forms you filled in
- reports you wrote
- plans you developed
- photos/videos of you completing tasks (with permission)
- observation reports (if completed)

Indirect evidence

Supports your claim of competence:

- supervisor statements
- third-party reports
- emails confirming you completed tasks
- meeting minutes showing your contributions
- performance reviews describing relevant duties

Supplementary evidence

Shows underpinning knowledge or related learning:

- certificates from workshops/short courses
- transcripts or statements of attainment
- CPD records
- policies/procedures you used (only useful if linked to how you applied them)

Important: workplace policies alone usually do not prove competence unless they show how you applied them.

13. How to organise your evidence (so it's easy to assess)

AACI recommends (not mandatory) the following structure:

1. **Cover page / candidate details**
2. **Resume / work history summary**
3. **Evidence list** (table of E1, E2, E3...)
4. **Evidence items** uploaded in order
5. **Third-party reports**
6. Any additional notes for the assessor

Labelling system (recommended)

Label each item clearly:

- E1: Resume
- E2: Job description (signed/dated)

- E3: Work sample – client communication record (de-identified)
- E4: Supervisor verification report
- E5: Photos/video evidence (permission confirmed)
- E6: Training certificate (date, provider)

If you submit 30 files called “scan1.pdf”, it will slow the process and may lead to follow-up requests.

Evidence Organisation and Labelling (portfolio quality)

Good examples (3)

1. **Evidence register included:** Student provides a table listing E1–E15 with description, date, workplace, and unit link.
2. **Readable files:** PDFs are clear, complete, and oriented correctly; photos are labelled and accompanied by short explanations.
3. **De-identified correctly:** Student removes client/patient identifiers and keeps only what’s necessary to demonstrate competence.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Unreadable scans:** Photos are blurry, cropped, or missing pages; assessor cannot rely on them.
2. **No file names:** Files are titled “scan, scan2, document(1)” with no explanation; mapping becomes slow and error-prone.
3. **Too much irrelevant content:** Student uploads entire manuals and unrelated paperwork; assessor must sort through excessive material to find relevant evidence.

14. Privacy and de-identification (important!)

Many workplaces have privacy rules. If you provide workplace documents, you must:

- remove client names, addresses, phone numbers, ID numbers
- remove patient identifiers if applicable
- avoid sharing confidential business information unless permitted

If you cannot share documents, speak to AACI. Alternative evidence may be accepted (e.g., third-party verification + interview + demonstration).

Privacy and De-identification

Good examples (3)

1. **Client data removed:** Student blacks out names, addresses, phone numbers, and unique IDs while keeping clinical/work task content.
2. **Workplace permission obtained:** Student provides a brief email confirming permission to share de-identified samples for RPL assessment.
3. **Alternative evidence used:** Where documents can’t be shared, student uses supervisor verification + interview + scenario tasks.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Confidential information included:** Student submits documents with client/patient names or personal details—AACI must reject and request corrected versions.
2. **Sensitive business data shared:** Student uploads pricing, internal financials, or confidential business information unnecessarily.
3. **No de-identification attempted:** Student says “I can’t provide anything” due to privacy but does not explore alternative evidence options.

15. Competency conversations (interviews): what they are and how to prepare

A competency conversation is a structured interview where your assessor checks:

- that you understand the tasks you claim
- that your evidence is authentic
- that your knowledge matches workplace practice
- that your skills are current
- that you can apply skills in different scenarios

How to prepare

- Review your evidence and be ready to explain each item
- Think of real examples of tasks you performed
- Be prepared for “why” questions (why you chose a method, what risks you managed, what you did when something changed)

What assessors are looking for

Assessors are not looking to “trick” you. They are confirming the evidence meets the Rules of Evidence and supports a valid decision.

Competency Conversations (structured interviews)

Good examples (3)

1. **Prepared responses:** Student reviews evidence, gives clear examples, and explains decision-making and safety considerations.
2. **Scenario competence:** Student answers scenario questions showing correct judgement, risk controls, and rationale.
3. **Authenticity confirmed:** Student explains how documents were created and what they personally did—confidence supports authenticity.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Cannot describe tasks:** Student gives vague answers like “that’s what we do” without describing their own actions and decisions.
2. **Contradictions:** Student claims they worked independently but later says they only observed; raises reliability/authenticity issues.
3. **Knowledge gaps:** Student cannot explain underpinning knowledge (why a process is required), suggesting evidence may not be sufficient.

16. Gap tasks: why they happen and what they mean

Gap tasks are used when your evidence does not fully cover unit requirements. This can happen if:

- you have experience, but limited documentation
- evidence is old or not clearly linked to unit outcomes
- evidence doesn’t show certain required tasks

- authenticity can't be confirmed without additional confirmation

Gap tasks are targeted

Gap tasks are not “redoing the course.” They focus on the specific missing requirements. Completing gap tasks can often be quicker than trying to find more documents.

Gap Tasks (targeted supplementary assessment)

Good examples (3)

1. **Targeted completion:** Student completes only the missing areas identified by mapping (e.g., WHS risk assessment scenario + one additional work sample).
2. **Improves sufficiency:** Gap task provides the missing evidence needed for full coverage, leading to final competence.
3. **Demonstrates currency:** Gap tasks confirm current practice when portfolio evidence is older.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Student refuses gap tasks:** Student refuses any supplementary evidence; assessor cannot confirm competence → likely outcome is not granted.
2. **Generic gap submission:** Student submits unrelated documents instead of completing the targeted task; gaps remain.
3. **Copied responses:** Written gap tasks appear copied and student cannot explain them in follow-up; authenticity concern.

Common delays and risk triggers (quality issues)

Good examples (3)

1. **Quick clarification:** Student replies promptly and supplies requested missing dates/context.
2. **Referee responsive:** Supervisor completes third-party report accurately and can be contacted if needed.
3. **Evidence aligns first time:** Mapping shows coverage across the unit so minimal follow-up required.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **No response:** Student doesn't respond to assessor questions; application stalls.
2. **Evidence mismatch:** Student applies for units beyond their role scope; mapping shows major gaps.
3. **Unverifiable evidence:** Evidence has no dates, no workplace context, and no referee—cannot be verified.

17. Common reasons RPL applications are delayed (and how to avoid them)

Problem 1: Evidence is too general

Fix: Provide specific examples, documents, and third-party verification.

Problem 2: Evidence is not clearly linked to the unit

Fix: Label evidence and add short notes explaining what it demonstrates.

Problem 3: No authenticity verification

Fix: Provide a strong third-party report and prepare for an interview.

Problem 4: Evidence is old

Fix: Add recent examples, a logbook, or supervisor verification confirming current practice.

Problem 5: Confidentiality prevents evidence submission

Fix: Provide de-identified evidence and use third-party reports and interviews.

Part D: Your rights and responsibilities in RPL

18. Your rights

As an RPL applicant, you have the right to:

- clear information about the RPL process
- support to understand evidence requirements
- fair treatment and reasonable adjustments where needed
- privacy and confidentiality in how your information is handled
- an outcome decision based on evidence
- access to an appeal/complaints process if you disagree with the decision

19. Your responsibilities

You are responsible for:

- providing truthful and accurate information
- submitting evidence that is your own and relevant
- obtaining permission to use workplace materials where required
- de-identifying private information
- responding to assessor requests for clarification or additional evidence
- completing gap tasks if required

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Good examples (3)

1. **Honest disclosure:** Student clearly states what they have done independently versus assisted with, helping accurate assessment.
2. **Appeal used appropriately:** Student requests a review and provides additional evidence/clarification rather than arguing without evidence.
3. **Privacy respected:** Student takes care to de-identify documents and follows workplace permission requirements.

Bad/issue examples (3)

1. **Misrepresentation:** Student claims competence in tasks they have not performed; discovered during interview → integrity issue.
2. **Breach of confidentiality:** Student shares private data; AACI must remove and request corrections.
3. **Refuses verification:** Student refuses third-party verification and declines interview; assessor cannot meet authenticity requirements.

Part E: Quick checklist for a strong RPL submission

Use this checklist before you submit:

Validity

- Each evidence item relates to tasks/knowledge in the unit
- Evidence shows what *you* did (not just workplace information)

Sufficiency

- Evidence covers the whole unit (not just one task)
- Evidence shows repeated performance or range of situations where relevant

Authenticity

- Candidate declaration signed
- Third-party report completed by a supervisor/manager
- You can explain your evidence in an interview

Currency

- Evidence is recent OR you can show continued practice
- Resume reflects current role/tasks

Organisation

- Evidence labelled (E1, E2, E3...)
- Files are readable and complete
- Confidential info removed/de-identified

Final notes for students

RPL can be a great option if you have strong, relevant experience. The best outcomes happen when you provide evidence that is:

- clearly relevant to the unit
- sufficient across all requirements
- authentic and verifiable
- current
- well organised and clearly labelled

If you are unsure what evidence is suitable, contact AACI early. A short conversation can save a lot of time later.
