

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY AND PROCEDURE – INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

PURPOSE:

This policy applies to all international students enrolled, or seeking to enrol with Equinim College who would like to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (“**RPL**”).

1. Policy

1.1 Recognition of Prior Learning

- a) **(RPL)** RPL is the process that assesses the competency/s of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal or informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the relevant training package or VET accredited course.
- b) **(Formal learning)** Formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an Australian Qualifications Framework (“**AQF**”) qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree);
- c) **(Non-formal learning)** Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, in-house professional development programs conducted by a business); and
- d) **(Informal learning)** Informal learning refers to learning that is achieved through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities (for example the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through several years as a sales representative).

1.2 Grounds on which RPL may be rejected

Previous course credit may be deemed to be insufficient by the Equinim College Assessor, leading to a refusal to accept the application for prior recognition. Such situations may include the following (without limitation):

- a) **(Insufficient or different content)** The previous course/unit(s) of competency completed or stipulated experience did not have the same content as the unit(s) of competency which RPL is applied for or is otherwise not deemed by Equinim College at its discretion to be equivalent. Prior study or experience must be deemed to be equivalent to the course requirements for the relevant unit(s) in order to be considered;
- b) **(Validity)** Validity checks indicate that the documentation provided was inaccurate or invalid; or
- c) **(Fraud)** The official transcript or any aspect of the evidence supplied was or appears to have been fraudulently created or tampered with.

2 Factors that affect RPL

2.1 Student visa

- a) **(Impact on student visa)** If you are an international student, you must consider the impact of RPL on your overall course duration and the requirements of your student visa.

2.2 Industry requirements

- a) **(Will you meet industry requirements?)** Sometimes, industry imposes requirements on particular courses that mean that, if you achieve the course outcome through the RPL pathway, you will not satisfy those industry requirements. Enquire with Equinim College to check if there are any industry requirements in relation to your course that would not be satisfied if you completed RPL.

3 Consideration of your application

3.1 Equivalence

- a) **(RPL is only for equivalent study)** To be granted RPL, your previous study, employment or other experience must be deemed by an Assessor to be equivalent to the unit(s) of competency you are applying for RPL for.
- b) **(What factors are considered)** The Assessor will take the following into account:
 - a. Currency of knowledge and/or skills, as relevant
 - b. Relevance of your previous learning, taking into account training package and industry requirements
 - c. Learning outcomes
 - d. Volume of learning
 - e. Content of study
 - f. Learning and assessment approaches of your previous learning
 - g. Content, experience, responsibilities and other relevant factors of your previous employment or other experience

4 Broad process overview for application for RPL

The following applies:

- a) **(Application form)** An applicant for RPL must complete the Application for RPL form and RPL self-assessment kit, available from their Enrolment Officer, and provide this to their Enrolment Officer together with all required evidence of certification, documentation or evidence in relation to units of competency being applied for, for recognition.
- b) **(Evidence required)** Evidence required could include copies of a student's testamur, academic transcript (record of results) and/or statement of attainment, references from relevant personnel, evidence of workplace experience, and/or documents required in the self-assessment kit. Further details are given in section 5.1, below.

- c) **(Assessor review)** On submission, an Equinim College assessor (“**Assessor**”) will review the application, self-assessment and accompanying evidence and record their findings in internal Equinim College RPL documentation. Once all relevant information has been extracted from the self-assessment onto relevant Equinim College RPL documentation, the Assessor will arrange an interview with the applicant to address any gaps identified.
- d) **(Assessor interview)** During the interview, the Assessor will ask the applicant a series of questions to address any areas of required competencies for the unit(s) applied for that were not answered by the evidence provided in the application and self-assessment. The Assessor will make note of the applicant’s answers and record them in the RPL documentation they have established on file for the student in Equinim College’s system.
- e) **(Incomplete evidence)** If the evidence is incomplete or not compliant, the applicant will be so advised by the Assessor. The Assessor may ask the applicant for further information or documentation, and the applicant must supply all further evidence requested.
- f) **(Decision)** After receiving all required documentation and evidence, the Assessor will undertake final deliberations and make a decision accordingly. The Assessor shall communicate with the applicant as needed during this process.
- g) **(Complete evidence: Communication and recording of results)** Once a decision has been made, the Assessor will communicate the results to the applicant, record the results on the student’s file and in the RPL Register.
- h) **(Timing of notification)** The Assessor will generally notify the applicant of an outcome of their RPL application within 30 business days of receiving a fully completed application (including all required evidence and all required further evidence and/or information that may be requested by Equinim College). This timeframe can vary. See also section 5.2, below.
- i) **(Acceptance Agreement)** The applicant must sign the Equinim College RPL acceptance form, accepting the RPL or course credit for relevant units. Equinim College will file and retain a copy of this agreement on the student file in the Equinim College SMS for up to 2 years after the applicant ceases to be a student.

5 Detailed process for applying for RPL

5.1 How to prepare for your application

- a) **(Identify unit requirements)** Identify the unit of competency requirements in the Equinim College course you are seeking to apply for RPL for. These are listed both on our website, www.equinimcollege.com, as well as in the RPL self-assessment form for your particular course.
- b) **(Research and compare)** Research and compare the Equinim College course unit requirements (as listed on our website, www.equinimcollege.com) with the content and achievements of your previous study, employment and other relevant experience. Your research should be particular, as each competency needs to be proven to be satisfied.
- c) **(Complete the application)** Complete the RPL application form and self-assessment form.
- d) **(Gather evidence)** Gather evidence:

- a. Certified copies of official academic records (transcripts) and qualifications together with all documentary evidence that may support your application.
- b. If you are submitting prior study that had equivalent content, submit subject or module outlines including topics covered, to allow a comparison to be made by the Assessor.
- c. Also include subject or module class hours, type of assessment, textbooks used and the year in which you completed the relevant subjects or modules.
- d. A comparison table can be useful, spelling out how your previous study or work matches what is required under the Equinim College unit you are applying for RPL for.
 - i. For study:
 1. Match the previous study to Equinim College subject or unit learning objectives.
 2. Match previous study subject content to Equinim College subject or unit content and explain how they are similar/equivalent.
 3. Match relevant prior assessments to Equinim College assessments and show how they are similar/equivalent.
 - ii. For prior work, compare Equinim College learning objectives with the competencies you can prove you attained or demonstrated in your work. Demonstrate your understanding of Equinim College subject or unit content.
- e. If a portfolio was used, you could submit examples of that work.
- e) **(Documents not in English)** If documents are not in English:
 - a. You must have these officially translated into English.
 - b. Official translators include:
 - i. NAATI (National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters) accredited translators. (See <https://www.naati.com.au/>).
 - ii. An official translation from the institution that issued the document.
 - iii. If approved by us, a translator from a reputable translation company in your home country, where the translated documents carry an official translation seal and are signed by the translator.
 - c. In each case, for translated documents, you must submit a certified copy of the original plus a certified copy of the official English translation.
- f) **(Submit)** Submit the forms with all requisite evidence, to team@equinimcollege.com. All documents submitted become the property of Equinim College. You should keep a copy.

5.2 Timing of application

- a) **(Time of application)** Application for RPL must be made at the point of applying for enrolment into your chosen Equinim College course.
- b) **(Time of processing)** We will do our best to process your application for RPL prior to issuing your Letter of Offer, however this is not always possible, for instance where all evidence is not received in time for processing or where

the complexity or amount of evidence submitted means longer processing is required. Generally, we aim to take 6 weeks to process an RPL request, but this may vary. We will be in touch with you to let you know how your application is going and you may also enquire with us at any time.

- c) **(Processing after point of offer)** Where sufficient information or evidence has not been supplied (or been given sufficient time to be assessed) prior to the issue of a Letter of Offer by Equinim College, the application for recognition may be assessed after the offer is issued.
- d) **(No applications after first session of study)** No applications for RPL may be made after the first session of study, except in exceptional circumstances which must be supported by a written statement and evidence as to the requisite circumstances. The statement must also include disclosure of any previous applications for the same RPL (to Equinim College or any other educational institution) and reasons why a subsequent application should be considered.

5.3 Processing your application

- a) **(Academic rigour)** As required under the standards applicable to it as a Registered Training Organisation and CRICOS registered provider, Equinim College applies academic rigour in assessing RPL applications. The same rigour must be applied in the assessment of RPL, as in the case of a student undertaking the full course of study with Equinim College.

5.4 RPL decisions are final

- a) **(RPL decisions)** All decisions on RPL by Equinim College are final and cannot be appealed. RPL decisions are based on and form precedent which is applied by Equinim College in relation to future applications for RPL.
- b) **(If dissatisfied)** If you are dissatisfied with an outcome of the RPL process, you may submit a complaint under the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure. Equinim College will attempt to offer you a resolution to your concerns, if possible, but it will not be able to reverse the decision outcome. If you believe that Equinim College did not follow its process in reaching its decision you can submit this to the Student Ombudsman for review, which will examine whether Equinim College followed the rules, policies and procedures in a fair and proper manner.

6 Recording and Reporting

6.1 Procedure: CoE and reporting in PRISMS

- a) **(Pre-enrolment)** Where the duration of the course is altered due to RPL granted prior to enrolment, the student will be notified of the reduced course duration and the letter of offer will display the amended course duration as a result of the application. In order for the student visa to be issued accordingly, the amended duration of the course will be indicated on the CoE.
- b) **(Post-enrolment)** Where the duration of the course has been reduced due to RPL after course commencement, Equinim College will report the change of

course duration via PRISMS and issue a new CoE with the reduced course duration. International students are advised to contact the Australian Government Department responsible for immigration with their new CoE.

6.2 CoE and Reporting, on grant of RPL

- a) **(CoE)** If the length of the international student's course is shortened due to Equinim College granting RPL, Equinim College will do one of the following:
 - a. Where the RPL is granted before the visa grant, Equinim College will apply the net course duration (accounting for RPL) in the CoE issued to the student; or
 - b. Where the RPL is granted after the visa grant date, Equinim College will report the change in course duration via PRISMS.
- b) **(Course duration)** If Equinim College grants the international student RPL that reduces the overseas student's course length, Equinim College will report any change in course duration in PRISMS if RPL is granted after the international student's visa is granted.