Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure

Quality Area 1: Training and Assessment
Standards: 1.4, 1.6

1. Purpose

This policy ensures that VET students with relevant prior skills, knowledge, and competencies are supported to seek Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in accordance with Standard 1.6 of the Outcome Standards for RTOs 2025.

2. Rationale

RPL recognises learning achieved outside the formal education system and reduces unnecessary duplication of training. It supports students to progress efficiently through training products, while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

3. Policy Statement

GBC offers RPL to all domestic students and provides clear, timely, and accessible information about the process. All RPL decisions are based on valid, sufficient, current, and authentic evidence, and align with GBC's assessment system and the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

All domestic students are informed of recognition of prior learning opportunities at pre-enrolment, during orientation, and via the Student Handbook. Students may apply for recognition of prior learning at any time, however, they are requested in pre-enrolment information to apply before commencing training.

GBC only offers recognition of prior learning for units of competency or qualification(s) which are included on its scope of registration.

Recognition of prior learning may only be awarded for whole units of competency.

<u>Assessment Only Pathway</u>
An Assessment Only pathway is included in this Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure to provide a flexible and efficient option for students who already possess the required skills and knowledge for a unit or qualification but may not have formal documentation. It allows them to demonstrate their knowledge and skill by completing the assessment tasks set out in the Assessment Booklet without participating in any formal training or learning activities. Instead of being taught the required skills and knowledge, they are given the opportunity to demonstrate their existing competence, usually through a combination of:

- completing the same assessment tasks as other enrolled students,
- possibly providing workplace evidence (e.g. reports, portfolios, references), and
- possibly undertaking interviews or observations to confirm competence.

This process ensures that the student's skills and knowledge are assessed against the same benchmarks as those who complete the training, maintaining the integrity of the qualification while supporting recognition of prior learning.

This pathway is suitable for individuals who:

- Already possess the required competencies,
- Do not need further learning or gap training,
- Are able to demonstrate competence through valid, sufficient, current, and authentic assessment tasks.

This approach aligns with the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence under GBC's assessment system and must maintain the integrity of the qualification.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all prospective and enrolled students seeking to have their prior learning recognised toward a training product within GBC's scope of registration.

5. Definitions

Assessment: the process by which an NVR registered training organisation, or a third party delivering services on its behalf, collects evidence for the purposes of determining whether a VET student is competent to perform to the standard specified in the training product.
Assessment-Only Pathway: is a form of RPL in which the student does not undertake any structured training but is assessed against the requirements of one or more units of competency based solely on existing skills, knowledge, and experience.
Recognition of prior learning: an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning and experience (including skills and knowledge obtained through formal and informal learning) to determine the extent to which the individual meets requirements specified in the training product.
Training product: AQF qualification, skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course and module.

6. Responsibilities

GM: Ensures implementation and compliance.
Admin Staff: Provide access to RPL documentation and coordinate applications.
Assessors: Conduct assessments, provide feedback, and document decisions.

7. Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

Outcome Standards for RTOs 2025: Standard 1.6
Standard 1.6
Outcome Standard

(1) VET students with prior skills, knowledge and competencies are supported to seek recognition of prior learning to progress through the relevant training product.

Performance Indicators

(2) An NVR registered training organisation demonstrates:

(a) VET students are offered opportunities to seek recognition of prior learning and are made aware of the organisation's policies for seeking recognition of prior learning;

(b) decisions relating to recognition of prior learning are based on evidence of prior skills, learning and experience, and are undertaken in accordance with the organisation's assessment system; and

(c) decisions relating to recognition of prior learning are documented and decided in a way that is fair, transparent, consistent amongst VET students, and maintains the integrity of the training product.

- Standards for RTOs (Compliance Requirements) 2025
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education to Overseas Students (as applicable)

8. Procedure

All students are informed about the availability of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) at the pre-enrolment stage via the Student Handbook, website, and verbal communication during their orientation process. Students who wish to pursue RPL are encouraged to complete an optional self-assessment to identify their readiness and gather preliminary evidence of their prior learning.

To begin the formal process, students complete and submit the RPL Application Form along with any supporting documents such as portfolios, work samples, or references. An GBC assessor then conducts an RPL planning interview with the student to identify the units for which RPL may be applicable and discuss the types of evidence required.

An evidence plan is developed collaboratively and may include:

- A competency conversation with a qualified assessor,
- A practical demonstration of skills,
- Third-party reports or employer verification of the students skills and experience.

Students are given sufficient time and guidance to compile their evidence, which may include documentation, third-party reports, competency conversations, or practical demonstrations. The assessor evaluates the evidence against unit requirements in accordance with GBC's assessment system, applying the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

If the evidence is sufficient, the assessor grants RPL. If gaps are identified, the assessor may recommend additional assessment or gap training. All decisions are documented, and students are advised in writing of the outcome, including their right to appeal.

Administrative staff update the student management system and store all documentation in the student's file. For international students, if RPL results in a shortened course duration, a new Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) is issued and PRISMS updated accordingly.

Limited Applicability of RPL for Short, Low-Cost Courses

While Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a fundamental component of an GBC's assessment system, there are circumstances where the practical value of RPL may be limited. This is particularly relevant for courses that are:

- Very short in duration (e.g., one-day or micro-credential programs), and
- Low in cost, such that the time and administrative resources required to process an RPL application would outweigh the benefit to the student.
- If overseas Third-party reports or employer verification of the students skills and experience cannot be verified

In such cases, GBC may determine that offering a full RPL process does not represent a reasonable or meaningful option for students. However, this determination must not be arbitrary.

GBC must:

- Clearly document the rationale for this position, including course duration, fee structure, historical RPL uptake, and any industry or stakeholder feedback; and
- Transparently communicate this information to prospective students prior to enrolment, through published course information, the student handbook, or pre-enrolment materials.

Affected students must still have the opportunity to enquire about RPL and receive an individual response. Where a case for RPL is made, GBC will consider the application on a case-by-case basis.

The decision not to routinely offer RPL for a specific course must be documented in the course delivery plan or academic decision records, and be available for review during internal or external audits.

The Assessment Only pathway is designed for students who can demonstrate existing competence without the need for formal training. Eligibility for this pathway is typically confirmed during the initial RPL application screening, through a competency conversation, or via an evidence review. In some cases, students may request this option directly.

For particularly short, one or two day courses, it is often more practical for students to complete the assessments in the Assessment Booklet than to undertake the time and effort required to prepare a full RPL evidence portfolio. In these instances, GBC offers the Assessment Only pathway to students who can demonstrate during the enrolment process substantial prior on-the-job experience or previous competence.

Students approved for this option are usually invited to attend assessment activities alongside a scheduled group course, where they participate in the assessment component only, without engaging in the training sessions.

The RPL process is structured to ensure students are fairly assessed on their existing skills, knowledge, and experience, in alignment with national competency standards. The procedure

includes ten clearly defined steps involving the student, assessor, and administrative staff. Each step is outlined below:

The table below outlines the step-by-step RPL process:

Step	Action	Responsible	Timeframe
1. Pre-enrolment Information	Provide pre-enrolment RPL information in the Student Handbook and enrolment interview. Inform prospective students about the availability of RPL, what it involves, and how it may affect their study duration and fees.	Student Support Officer	Ongoing; prior to or at enrolment
2. Self-Assessment	Student completes optional self-assessment to determine readiness for RPL. The self-assessment helps the student reflect on their skills and experience and decide whether they are likely to meet the RPL requirements	Student / Assessor	Prior to submitting RPL application
3. RPL Application Submission	Student submits RPL Application Form and supporting documents or portfolio. The application form allows the student to formally request RPL and provide any initial supporting documents or a draft portfolio for review.	Student	Within 5 business days of enrolment interview
4. Planning Interview and Evidence Plan Development	Conduct RPL planning interview, identify relevant units, and develop an evidence plan in collaboration with the student. During this meeting, the assessor and student review the student's background and select relevant units. An evidence plan is developed to guide the RPL process.	Assessor	Within 5 business days of application submission
5. Evidence Collection and Submission	Student gathers and submits evidence (e.g. work records, third-party reports, samples, references). The student collects and submits the agreed-upon forms of evidence in line with the evidence plan. This may include work documents, references, or third-party reports.	Student	Up to 20 business days (flexible)

6. Assessment of Evidence	Assessor reviews evidence, conducts competency conversation or arranges to assess a skills demonstration if required.. The assessor reviews all submitted evidence and conducts any required discussions or demonstrations to validate the student's competence	Assessor	Within 10 business days of evidence submission
7. Competency Decision and Gap Identification	Assess evidence against unit requirements. Identify gaps and offer gap training where needed.. The assessor compares the evidence against the unit's performance criteria and determines whether additional training is required to fill gaps.	Assessor	Within 5 business days of final evidence review
8. Outcome Notification and Right to Appeal	Document outcome and notify student in writing. Provide appeal information. All RPL outcomes are formally recorded, and students are informed of the result. Appeal rights and feedback opportunities are provided	Assessor / Admin	Within 5 business days of assessment decision
9. Determine and document when RPL is not routinely offered	Where RPL is deemed to have limited value for a short or low-cost course, document the rationale using the RPL Applicability Statement, ensure this is approved, and transparently communicate this to students prior to enrolment.	RTO or Compliance Manager	At course development or annual review
10. Record-keeping and Administration	Record outcome in SMS. Store evidence and decisions securely. Outcomes are entered into the Student Management System (SMS), and all records are retained securely for audit and validation purposes.	Admin	Within 5 business days of outcome notification

Assessment Only Pathway

Step	Description	Responsible
1. Identify Assessment Only Suitability	Determine if the student's skills and experience meet requirements to proceed via assessment only, based on initial evidence and discussion with student.	RPL Assessor

2. Issue Assessment Booklet	Provide the student with the standard assessment tasks for the unit(s) of competency.	RPL Coordinator
3. Evidence Submission	Student completes assessment tasks and submits any requested supplementary workplace evidence.	Student
4. Assessment and Validation	Assessor reviews all submitted evidence and conducts any required observations or interviews to validate competence.	RPL Assessor
5. Record and Report Outcomes	Assessment outcomes are recorded and reported in accordance with standard assessment procedures.	RTO Administration / Assessor

9. Policy Implementation

The RPL Policy is published on the GBC website, included in the Student Handbook, and provided during enrolment. All trainers and assessors are trained to support students through the RPL process.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

This Policy and Procedure will undergo an annual review, or sooner if required, to ensure it remains relevant and effective in guiding the operations and strategies or as needed to reflect any changes in the regulatory environment or operational practices.
RPL outcomes are reviewed for consistency and integrity through moderation, internal audits, and student feedback. GBC maintains records for analysis and continuous improvement

Feedback will be collated and analysed and discussed at the monthly management meetings, for noting or action with any necessary changes documented in a Continuous Improvement Form and in the Continuous Improvement Register.

Document Control

Version:	**1.0**
Approval Date:	29 June 2025
Approved By:	Director
Review Date:	30 June 2026
Standard(s):	SRTO.1.4, SRTO. 1.6 Indirectly supports **Standard 2.1** (student information is clear and accessible) **Standard 2.2** (advising students on training suitability) **Standard 4.4** (monitoring and evaluation, via structured assessor notes and admin tracking)

Associated Documents:
- RPL Application Form
- RPL Kit
- Student Handbook
- Assessment Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Continuous Improvement Register

CRICOS Addendum – RPL and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure

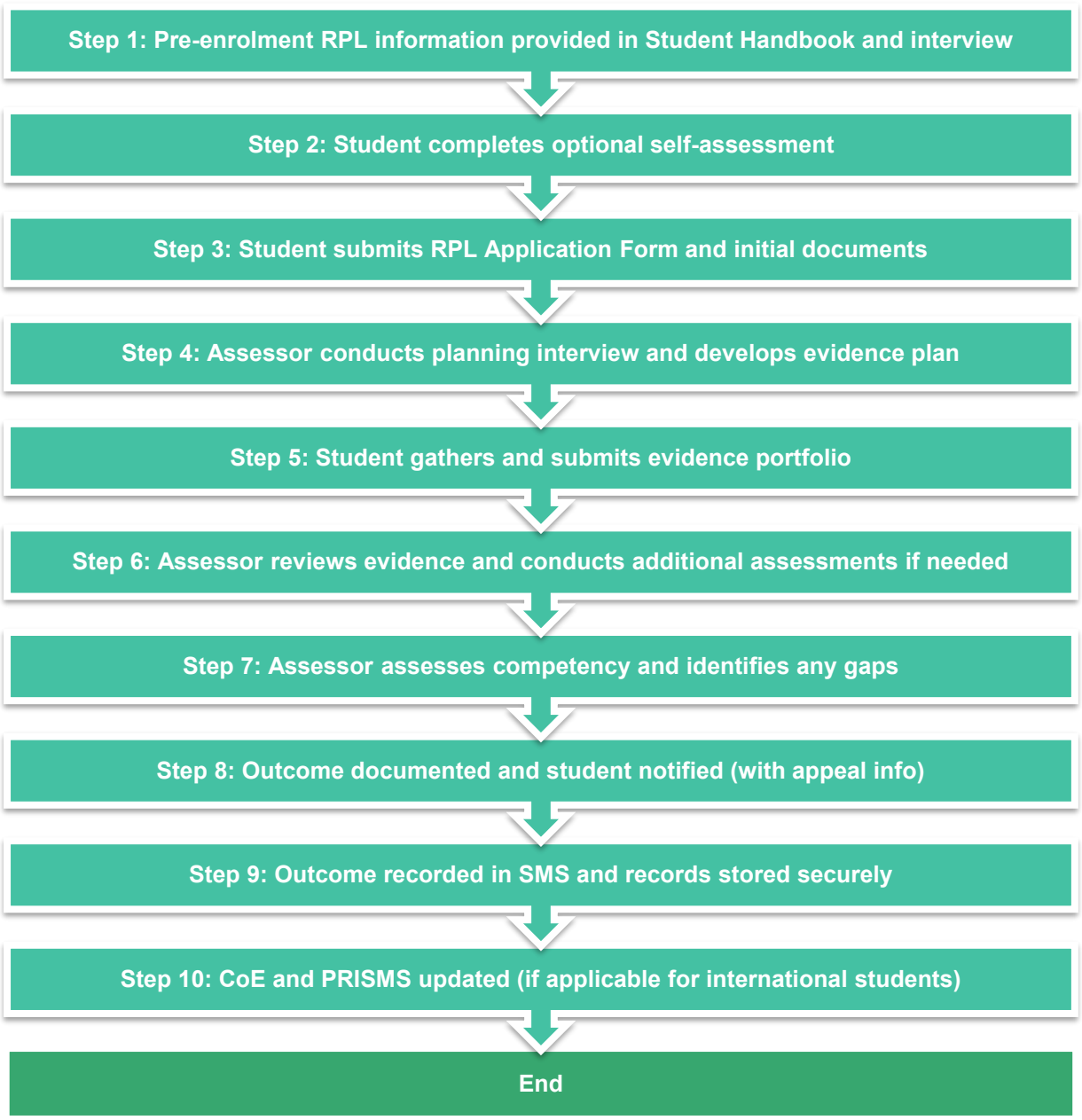
1. Purpose of the Addendum
This addendum outlines CRICOS-specific considerations related to the granting of recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credit transfer for overseas students, as required by Standard 2.3 of the National Code 2018. These considerations ensure academic integrity, transparency, and visa compliance.

2. Applicable National Code Standard(s)
Standard 2.3 – Grant and record course credit
"Where the registered provider grants course credit that reduces the overseas student's course length, the provider must:
a) inform the student of the outcome in writing, and
b) ensure the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) is adjusted in PRISMS."

3. CRICOS-Specific Obligations
In addition to compliance with the Standards for RTOs 2025, GBC must**:**
- Ensure RPL or credit transfer applications submitted before enrolment result in a revised CoE being issued (if course duration is reduced).
- Ensure RPL or credit transfer granted after enrolment is still reported and CoE updated accordingly.
- Provide written confirmation of the outcome to the student.
- Ensure students are aware of the visa implications of a reduced course duration.

4. Recordkeeping Requirements
GBC must retain the following for all overseas students**:**
- Completed RPL and Credit Transfer Applications
- Written outcomes and student acknowledgement
- CoE variation and PRISMS records
- Mapping of prior credit and units granted

5. Reference to CRICOS Policy Suite
For detailed procedures including timelines, PRISMS updates, and visa considerations, refer to the CRICOS Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

RPL Process Flowchart

This flowchart outlines the key steps in the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process.