



Skills Recognition Policy

Purpose

This policy establishes the principles and processes by which Mercer will recognise the experiences, knowledge, skills, abilities and previous qualifications students bring with them to gain entry into a Mercer VET course with regard for college rules and the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*.

Context

Under the Furnishing training package, competencies may be attained in a number of ways, including:

- formal or informal training and education
- work experience
- general life experience
- any combination of the above

What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process that assesses the competency/s of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non- formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package.

- a) formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree);
- b) 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
- c) informal learning refers to learning that results 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).

How does it work?

To issue a Certificate or Statement of Attainment (for any unit), Mercer will undertake to assess the competence of individuals who believe that they already have the skills and knowledge required to meet the learning outcomes of a unit or units of competence.

Students will have to present evidence that he or she is currently competent against the endorsed industry competency standards. Such evidence may take a variety of forms and could include certification, references from past employers, testimonials from clients and work samples such as audio or video recordings.

Whilst the evidence may take a variety of forms, the onus is on the individual to provide sufficient evidence of current competence. Mercer must be able to confirm that the evidence provided is:

- **Authentic** - must be own work
- **Valid** - must relate directly to the current competencies
- **Reliable** - must meet the standards consistently
- **Current** - must be student's current capacity
- **Sufficient** - must cover all aspects of the relevant competency, and cover the four dimensions of competency ie task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills and job/role environment skills.

This process may be directed by the candidate and verified by the assessor, such as in the compilation of portfolios; or directed by the assessor, such as through observation of workplace performance and skills application, and oral and/or written assessment. Where the outcomes of this process indicate that the candidate is competent, structured training is not required.

Skills Recognition Policy

- Mercer will ensure that all prospective learners are provided with a copy of the skills recognition assessment policy and procedure.
- Skills recognition assessment (including RPL) shall be available to all prospective candidates.
- Applications for skills recognition assessments will be managed and assessed efficiently by a person or persons with appropriate qualifications and expertise.
- Skills recognition assessment complies with the assessment requirements of the training package will be conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence as listed at Schedules 1 and 2 to this policy.
- Mercer will ensure that an individual's learning and skills are recognised, irrespective of how or where they have been acquired. Candidates may apply for recognition of their learning and skills by supplying evidence of:
 - previous recognised training undertaken
 - work and life experiences
 - non-formally recognised training undertaken.
- Skills recognition assessments and outcomes will be recorded and relevant qualifications (Statement of Attainment) will be issued where applicable.

Making Application for Skills Recognition

Information and advice on making application for skills recognition assessment can be obtained by contacting Mercer on Toll Free Telephone 1300 226 743 or emailing studentcare@mercero.edu.au

The following steps outline the procedure:

1. Applicant enquires about the process with the Future Student Advisor
2. Applicant will be provided an RPL Kit
3. Applicant will indicate the course/units for which they are applying for RPL
4. Applicant will pay an initial Assessment Fee for the units or full Certificate
5. Assessor will provide guidance to applicant to prepare a portfolio of evidence
6. Applicant will provide portfolio to assessor. (Schedule 3 Sample Evidence Matrix)
7. Assessment and verification of the application will be undertaken – allow up to two months.
8. Applicant will be notified of the assessment decision. Where applicable, exemptions or credits will be given and recorded, and Qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued.
9. If the application is complex and poorly presented (time consuming for assessor), a further fee will be required. Applicants will be notified of any additional cost prior to assessor beginning the process.
10. Applicant could be invited to participate in an interview by phone, face-to-face or Skype to discuss the application.
11. Further information or documentation may be requested.
12. Applicant may appeal a decision through the procedures detailed within the college Complaints and Appeals Policy which can be accessed on the School website.
13. For applicants that require further training, Mercer will advise applicants on the best way of achieving all the competencies required.



Principles of Assessment

Fairness:	<p>The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process.</p> <p>Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner's needs.</p> <p>The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.</p>
Flexibility:	<p>Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ reflecting the learner's needs;▪ assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and▪ drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.
Validity:	<p>Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.</p> <p>Validity requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance;▪ Assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application;▪ Assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and▪ Judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Reliability:	<p>Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.</p>



Rules of Evidence

Validity:	The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Sufficiency:	The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner's competency.
Authenticity:	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.
Currency:	The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

Assessment Matrix



Qualification:	Certificate IV in Interior Decoration	Unit of Competency:	CUAACD301 Produce Drawings To Communicate Ideas
Elements & Performance Criteria	How have you done this?	Evidence to Support This	Location of the Evidence
<p>1.1 Identify drawing requirements from reference material and confirm with appropriate people if required</p> <p>1.2 Identify factors, including contractual, legal and ethical factors, that may impact on how drawing work is undertaken</p> <p>1.3 Gather information about drawing techniques, materials and equipment from a range of sources and determine how they may be used to communicate ideas</p> <p>1.4 Evaluate information for its application to specific drawing briefs</p>	<p>Regular and ongoing professional development (give examples)</p> <p>Current job role</p>	<p>Portfolio of work</p> <p>Non Accredited training certificates</p> <p>Position Description of required skills in current employment</p> <p>3rd party testimonials</p>	<p>Drop box - CUAACD301</p>