



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Training**  
and **Workforce Development**

**TRADE SKILLS RECOGNITION POLICY**  
**(RPL FOR CLASS A AND CLASS B QUALIFICATIONS)**

EFFECTIVE: 11 JUNE 2013

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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The purpose of this policy is to provide advice to training providers and individuals seeking Trade Skills Recognition under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (VET Act) for all Class A qualifications and for those Class B qualifications with a condition that the qualification can only be obtained by fulfilling the obligations of an apprentice under a training contract.

The qualification's classification is identified in the *Public Register of Prescribed Vocational Education and Training Qualifications*.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to candidates seeking formal acknowledgment of their skills and knowledge through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Trade Skills Recognition applies to:

- All Class A qualifications; and
- Class B qualifications with training type of 'apprentice' or 'trainee' with the condition that the qualification can only be obtained by fulfilling the obligations of an apprentice under a training contract as stipulated on the *Public Register of Prescribed Vocational Education and Training Qualifications*.

Under section 60I of the VET Act, training providers may confer a prescribed VET qualification on a competent person who:

- has not entered into a training contract in respect of the qualification (applies to both Class A and Class B qualifications); or
- has entered into a training contract **but has only partly fulfilled** the apprentice's obligations (applies to both Class A and Class B qualifications).

This policy **does not** apply to:

- apprentices or trainees with a current registered training contract;
- students who have attained a Class A or Class B qualification with a training type 'apprentice' through institutional delivery;
- international students; and
- Class B qualifications with training type 'apprentice' or 'trainee' which may be obtained without a training contract.

## **PRINCIPLES**

This policy will not undermine the integrity of the Western Australian apprenticeship system.

Training providers' compliance with the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) is a fundamental requirement of all RPL processes outlined in this policy.

## **BACKGROUND**

RPL is an assessment process aimed at confirming and recognising the competencies a candidate has obtained outside the formal education and training environment. These competencies may have been gained through informal or non-formal training or through life or work experience.<sup>1</sup>

The AQTF sets out the broad parameters within which RPL should be implemented to ensure that the quality of RPL assessment matches the quality of other assessment procedures.<sup>2</sup>

## **DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS**

Refer to Glossary at Appendix 1

## **PROCEDURES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the AQTF requirements for RPL processes, the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) and the relevant Training Package.

## **TRAINING PROVIDERS OFFERING TRADE SKILLS RECOGNITION**

Training providers offering Trade Skills Recognition must:

- have the AQF qualification listed on their scope of registration; and
- have processes in place to offer the RPL service for qualifications in accordance with the AQTF.

## **CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for consideration for Trade Skills Recognition a candidate must:

- have significant industry experience;
- be prepared to provide evidence, as specified by the training provider, to support their claim for Trade Skills Recognition;
- **not** be currently registered as an apprentice or trainee;
- **have not** attained the qualification through institutional delivery;
- **not** previously been awarded the qualification.

## **CANDIDATES WITH PRIOR APPRENTICESHIP OR TRAINEESHIP EXPERIENCE**

Candidates who have previously been an apprentice/trainee but did not successfully complete and are seeking Trade Skills Recognition must be able to satisfy the training provider that they have gained sufficient additional industry skills and knowledge to meet the relevant training package guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Training and Workforce Development (2012) Recognition of prior learning: An assessment resource for VET practitioners (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

## **CONFERRING COMPETENCE**

Under section 60I of the VET Act, a training provider may confer a Class A or Class B qualification where the training provider is satisfied that the person has the skills and competency required for the qualification.

Achievement of the qualification through Trade Skills Recognition should be certified in accordance with the *Australian Qualification Framework (AQF)*. The AQF certification is silent on the pathway when the qualification is achieved through Trade Skills Recognition.

In accordance with the *AQF*, where a qualification is not granted the candidate must receive a Statement of Attainment for units that have been achieved.

Further information can be obtained by referring to the *NSSC Policy: Application of the Australian Qualifications Framework Issuance Policy within the VET sector (V1, March 2013)*.

### **Please note:**

Information relating to successful candidates:

- Candidates wishing to receive a Trade Certificate from the Department should comply with the *Trade Certificate Policy*.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS**

*Apprenticeship Policy*

*Australian Qualifications Framework*

*Delivery and Performance Agreement*

*NSSC Policy: Application of the Australian Qualifications Framework Issuance Policy within the VET sector (V1, March 2013)*

*Public Register of Prescribed Vocational Education and Training Qualifications*

*Trade Certificate Policy*

*Recognition of prior learning: An assessment resource for VET practitioners (4<sup>th</sup> edition)*

*User Choice in Western Australia Policy*

*User Choice Performance Agreement*

*VET Fees and Charges Policy*

## **RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

*Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*

*Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009*

*Vocational Education and Training (Colleges) Regulations 1996*

*Australian Qualifications Framework*

*Australian Quality Training Framework 2010*

## **REVIEW DATE**

June 2014

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Specific queries relating to this policy should be referred to:

Policy, Planning and Research Branch  
Department of Training and Workforce Development  
Optima Centre, Building B, 16 Parkland Road, Osborne Park WA 6017  
T: (08) 6551 5501

## **APPENDIX - GLOSSARY**

*Apprentice* a person aged 15 years or more who is undertaking an approved apprenticeship, traineeship, cadetship or internship that leads to a nationally recognised qualification under a training contract. This term refers to apprentices, trainees, cadets and interns, unless specified otherwise.

*Apprenticeship* a structured employment based training program that leads to apprentices gaining a nationally recognised qualification. Apprenticeships (including apprenticeships, traineeships, cadetships and internships) may be full time, part time or school based.

*Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) qualification* is a nationally recognised complete program of learning that leads to formal certification that a graduate has achieved learning outcomes as described in the AQF.

*Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)* the national set of standards which assure nationally consistent, high quality training and assessment services for the clients of Australia's vocational education and training systems. Training providers must meet and maintain the standards within the AQTF.

*Candidate* (for the purpose of this policy) is an individual seeking formal recognition of skills and knowledge that have been achieved outside of the formal education and training system. The candidate is required to commit to the process and provide evidence that is valid, sufficient, current and authentic and meets the RPL requirements of the selected RTP.

*Class A qualification* means a qualification that can only be obtained by fulfilling the obligations of an apprentice under a training contract or demonstrating competence under Part 7, Division 3 of the VET Act.

*Class B qualification* means a qualification that can be obtained by fulfilling the obligations of an apprentice under a training contract; through an institutional learning pathway or by demonstrating competence under Part 7, Division 3 of the VET Act.

*Department* refers to the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

*Recognition of Prior Learning* involves the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge that an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system. RPL is an assessment process that assesses the individual's non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes or competency standards.

*Statement of Attainment* issued by the registered training organisation and confirms that one or more nationally recognised units of competency have been achieved.

*Trade Skills Recognition* (for the purpose of this policy) is RPL for all Class A or for Class B qualifications with training type 'apprentice' or 'trainee' with a condition that the qualification can only be obtained by fulfilling the obligations of an apprentice under a training contract.

The qualification's classification is identified in the *Public Register of Prescribed Vocational Education and Training Qualifications*.

*Training contract* is a legally binding agreement between an employer, an apprentice and their legal guardian, where required, to undertake an apprenticeship. The contract contains information such as the qualification, employer details, apprentice personal details, training provider, employment arrangements, nominal term and specifies employer and apprentice obligations and responsibilities.

## ACRONYMS

AQF – Australian Qualification Framework

AQTF – Australian Quality Training Framework

RPL – Recognition of Prior Learning

RTP – Registered Training Provider

TSR – Trade Skills Recognition

VET – Vocational Education and Training