

1. Purpose

This policy relates to students enrolled by the divisions of Niche Education Group Pty Ltd (Niche) and by its Training Partner Organisations (TPOs), including:

- Australasian Academy of Cosmetic Dermal Science (AACDS),
- Australian College of Beauty Therapy (ACBT),
- Australian College of Specialist Make-Up (ACSM),
- Australasian College of Massage & Myotherapy (ACMM), and
- all current TPOs who advertise, market deliver and assess on behalf of Niche Education in relation to Niche's Scope of Registration.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that Niche, its divisions and Training Partner Organisations (TPOs) take a consistent and fair approach to recognising learner prior qualifications, skills and competencies, in accordance with registration and contractual obligations, in particular the *Standards for Registered Organisations (RTOs) 2015*.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this document the following applies:

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process that involves the assessment of an individual's prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning, work or life experience) to determine the extent to which that individual's previous learning is equivalent to the learning outcomes of the components of another qualification, as well as assessing a person's skills and competencies to determine whether these are current.

Formal Learning is the learning that a student has previously completed as part of a structured learning program by a VET registered education provider, and which leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification.

Informal Learning is the learning that a student has previously gained through work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences.

Non-formal learning takes place through a structured program of learning, but does not directly lead to full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification e.g. business in-house training programmes.

Principles of Assessment are the principles applied to assessment, which relate to the 'fairness', 'flexibility', 'validity' and 'reliability' of assessment - as per clause 1.8 (1) of the Standards for RTOs 2015.

Rules of Evidence are the rules that apply to assessment evidence, which relate to the 'validity', 'sufficiency', 'authenticity' and 'currency' of assessment evidence - as per clause 1.8 (2) of the Standards for RTOs 2015.

Training Partner Organisations - any organisation that provides services on behalf of Niche Education Group Pty Limited, including training, assessment, related educational and support services, and/or any activities related to the recruitment of prospective domestic Students. As the lead Registered Training Organisation (RTO) under such arrangements, Niche Education Group Pty Limited (Niche) is responsible for ensuring all such services provided are in accordance with statutory obligations.

RTO - Registered Training Organisation

Niche - Niche Education Group Pty Ltd, ABN 29 166 420 369

Student - refers to a person enrolled or seeking to enrol in any course or unit of study at Niche or at one of its TPOs. A student or a potential student can be either a domestic or overseas student. For the purpose of VET Fee Help / VET Student Loans, the term 'student/s' refers to all persons enrolled or seeking to enrol in a unit of study that meets the course requirements under subclause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act who are, or would be entitled to VET FEE-HELP

assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act or who have gained enrolment into a Niche course whether delivered directly or through a Training Partner Organisation.

VET - Vocational Education and Training

3. Overview

- Niche is committed to providing all students with information about the RPL process and all associated fees and charges, prior to the student's enrolment in a course.
- Applications for RPL will be considered in a timely manner and on a case-by-case basis.
- Students will not be required to repeat learning or assessment activities for units of competency where RPL has been granted.
- Students whose application for RPL is unsuccessful will be provided with a summary of reasons why their application was not approved.

4. Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for implementation of this policy and procedure and ensuring the staff of Niche and its TPOs are fully trained in its operation and this policy is made readily available to Students enrolled directly through the divisions of Niche, and with its TPOs.

The Trainer Coordinator of each division is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and monitoring of RPL Assessment undertaken by both Niche and its TPOs.

5. Policy

Niche, through all its divisions and TPOs is committed to providing students with the opportunity to apply for recognition of their prior learning. Information regarding the process for applying, reviewing, granting or rejecting applications for RPL, will be made available to all prospective and current students through the Niche website, during student pre-enrolment interview and available from reception and upon request. The RPL process will also be part of the student's orientation.

6. Procedures

This policy and procedure applies to all students enrolling in a course with Niche, as follows:

Making an application for RPL

Students enrolled directly with Niche who wish to apply for RPL, should:

- **Visit** Niche's website for information relating to the RPL process, prior to submitting a RPL application.
- **Be enrolled** into a qualification and relevant unit/s of competency prior to making an application for RPL.
- **Complete the RPL application form** provided on Niche's website or through Niche reception.
- **Gather and collate** original or certified copies of qualifications and/or statements of attainment issued from their previous education provider(s).

If qualification documents gathered are in a student's previous name, students must supply either a statutory declaration or certified copies of documentary evidence confirming their change of name.

Where certificate documents are in a language other than English, the student must provide a translation by an accredited translator.

- **Gather and collate** other authentic evidence from previous learning experiences including evidence from formal, informal, and/or non-formal learning that are relevant to the outcomes of the unit/s of competency in which RPL is being sought.

Evidence may include, but is not limited to' portfolios of work; third party reports; project materials; papers, and testimonials.

If evidence gathered is in a students' previous name, students must supply certified copies of documentary evidence of their change of name.

Where evidence is in a language other than English, the student must provide a translation by an accredited translator.

- **Submit the completed RPL application form** and evidence gathered to Student Administration/Support staff.

Students enrolled with one of Niche's Training Partner Organisations who wish to apply for RPL, should:

- **Visit** the TPO's website for information relating to the RPL process for students enrolled with Niche through one of its TPOs, prior to submitting a RPL application.
- **Be enrolled** into a qualification and relevant unit/s of competency prior to making an application for RPL.
- **Complete the RPL application form** provided on the relevant TPO's website or through the relevant TPO's reception.

- **Gather and collate** original or certified copies of qualifications and/or statements of attainment issued from their previous education provider(s).

If qualification documents gathered are in a student's previous name, students must supply either a statutory declaration or certified copies of documentary evidence confirming their change of name.

Where certificate documents are in a language other than English, the student must provide a translation by an accredited translator.

- **Gather and collate** other authentic evidence from previous learning experiences including evidence from formal, informal, and/or non-formal learning that are relevant to the outcomes of the unit/s of competency in which RPL is being sought.

Evidence may include, but is not limited to' portfolios of work; third party reports; project materials; papers, and testimonials.

If evidence gathered is in a students' previous name, students must supply certified copies of documentary evidence of their change of name.

Where evidence is in a language other than English, the student must provide a translation by an accredited translator.

- **Submit the completed RPL application form** and evidence gathered to Student Administration/Support staff of the relevant TPO.

Fees

- **Students enrolled directly with Niche**

Where RPL has been granted for a unit, the student's fee for the RPL of the respective unit is half of the stated unit price in accordance with Niche Fees and Charges Policy. This will be disclosed to the student

in writing, before the student makes an application for RPL. RPL Fees are non-refundable once the RPL has been assessed and granted. Where RPL has been granted for a unit the student must study the respective unit in its entirety and pay the stated unit price in accordance with Niche Fees and Charges Policy.

- **Students enrolled with one of Niche’s Training Partner Organisations**

Where RPL has been granted for a unit, the student’s fee for the RPL of the respective unit is half of the stated unit price in accordance with Niche Fees and Charges Policy. This will be disclosed to the student in writing, before the student makes an application for RPL. RPL Fees are non-refundable once the RPL has been assessed and granted. Where RPL has been granted for a unit the student must study the respective unit in its entirety and pay the stated unit price in accordance with Niche Fees and Charges Policy.

RPL Limit

There is no limit on the amount of RPL a student can apply for and a full qualification can be attained by RPL, except where a student is an Overseas student.

Processing an application for RPL

Processing of a student’s RPL application includes:

- Student Administration/Support staff will pass the completed RPL application form to the relevant assessor who has the responsibility of assessing RPL applications. This assessor must be an academic member of staff for the qualification/unit of competency and have expertise in RPL.

The assessor who has the responsibility of processing RPL applications will:

- Check the student’s application form is correct and complete. If the form is incorrect and/or incomplete, the staff member is to contact to student to assist in gaining a correct and complete application form.
- Ensure the student’s evidence is current and is authentic. If the evidence is not current, that is older than 5 years, or not authentic the staff member will contact the student to advise them of evidence requirements to demonstrate currency.
- Undertake an assessment of the evidence provided by the student and collect further evidence from the student if necessary. Further evidence may include, but not limited to questioning (oral or written); observations in the workplace; participation in assessment activities the student would normally be required to undertake if they were studying the unit/s of competency.
- The staff member undertaking the assessment will evaluate the evidence considering the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence as per the *Standards for Registered Training Organisation (RTOs) 2015*.
- The assessor reserves the right not to recognise part, or all of any previous learning if the assessor believes that skills or knowledge demonstrated and recorded falls significantly short of industry standards as stated within the Training Product.
- Determine an assessment outcome of the RPL application, as either ‘RPL Granted’ or ‘RPL Not Granted’, based on whether, or not the evidence submitted meets the requirements of the relevant unit/s of competency.
- Inform the student, in writing, advising of the RPL application outcome.
- Record the assessment outcome in respective student management and learning management systems
- Inform Student Administration/Services staff of the judgement in order for Student Support/Services to maintain internal records related to the RPL.

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- All evidence relating to the RPL must be stored in the student's file in the RTO student management or learning management system.
 - If RPL is approved Niche academic staff will advise the student of the adjustment to the students study plan to meet the individual student's needs.

Timeline of processing application for RPL

Niche will endeavor to process all RPL applications within fifteen (15) working days, providing all necessary documents have been submitted by the student

Appealing an Assessment Outcome

If a student is dissatisfied with the assessment outcome, he/she has the opportunity to appeal the outcome. Students wishing to appeal an assessment outcome must do so within twenty (20) working days of the date the written notification being issued.

Statement of Attainment and Statement of Results

Unless specifically requested by the student, Niche will not issue a statement of attainment, or a statement of results after the RPL is processed.

Statements of attainment, statements of results and certificates will be issued to the student on completion or withdrawal from their studies.

7. Overseas Students

Overseas students are entitled to apply for recognition of prior learning or qualifications issued for completed study in another country, provided that evidence and certificate documents meet the criteria mentioned above.

Applications for RPL will only be accepted if:

- the student is enrolled in an approved course of Niche and
- the appropriate fee has been paid, and
- the application is made at enrolment.

The maximum number of RPL granted in any course for any international student, is to be no more than twenty five percent (25%) of that course. If RPL is granted, tuition fees in proportion to the RPL granted (capped at 25%) of the course fees, will be deducted from the total course cost.

Where Niche grants the student course credit/RPL, which leads to a shortening of the student's course before the student visa is granted, the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will indicate the actual net course duration for the course.

If the course credit/RPL is granted after the student visa is granted, the change of course duration will be reported to the Department of Education & Training (DET) via PRISMS within 14 days after the event as specified under Section 19 of the ESOS Act.

8. Statutory and Regulatory Compliance

Standards for Registered Organisations (RTOs) 2015

- Clause 1.8
- Clause 3.5
- Clause 4.1
- Clause 5.1

National Code

- Standards 12.1 & 12.2

9. Related Policies and Procedures

- Training and Assessment policy
- Trainer Assessor policy and procedure
- Fees, Charges and Refunds policy and procedure
- Advertising Marketing and website policy and procedure

10. Related Documents

- RPL Application Form
- RPL Kit
- Appeal of RPL Outcome Form
- Template letter – RPL Approved
- Template Letter – RPL Rejected

11. Publication

This *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure* will be made available to Students through publication on the website www.nicheducation.com.au and will also be available in the student handbook and from the Niche reception.

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