

1 POLICY STATEMENT

Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School Pty Limited ABN 91 004 004 317 (incorporating Australian International Hotel School (AIHS) and Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School (BMIHMS) to be known collectively as "the School") supports and encourages the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) for all AIHS/BMIHMS's courses. Articulation and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) are intrinsic to educational practice at the School. This framework provides access and creates opportunity for learners' advancement both at a domestic and international level. Procedures are in place to ensure fair, valid, reliable and consistent assessment of students' skills and knowledge. It is the policy of the School to recognise the AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by any other RTO.

2 PURPOSE

This procedure encourages applicants to continue upgrading their skills and knowledge through structured education and training towards formal qualifications and improved employment outcomes.

3 DEFINITIONS

Accredited Course: a course formally approved by the appropriate State or Territory Government authority.

Advanced Standing: (also called status or credit recognition) granted to a student on the basis of previous study (credit transfer) and/or experience (recognition of prior learning), exempting a student from a particular course, unit or module.

Articulation: the arrangements which facilitate the movement or progression of students from one course to another, or from one education and training sector to another. See also advanced standing, credit and recognition of prior learning.

Credit (also called status or advanced standing): means credit towards a statement of attainment or qualification granted to students on the basis of outcomes gained by a student through participation in courses or national training package qualifications with another Registered Training Provider.

Credit Transfer: granting of credit towards a course, on the basis of a course or unit(s) previously completed in a course with an Australian university, TAFE or a VET course, or equivalent. Credit transfer involves assessment of equivalence of the previous unit(s) with the unit(s) for which credit is being given from a recognised institution.

Mutual recognition: a feature of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) which allows qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any RTO to be accepted and recognised by all other RTOs, and training packages endorsed by the National Training Framework Committee to be delivered by all RTOs registered to do so. The School has the right to check the issuing organisation's registered status if desired.

Recognition of current competencies (or RCC): the acknowledgement of competencies currently held by a person, acquired through training, work or life experience. More commonly known as recognition of prior learning.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): 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, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification.

Registered Training Organisation (RTO): an organisation registered by a State or Territory recognition authority to deliver training and/or conduct assessments and issue nationally recognised qualifications in accordance with the Australian Recognition Framework, including TAFE institutes, adult and community education providers, private providers, community organisations, schools, higher education institutions, commercial and enterprise training providers, industry bodies and other organisations meeting the registration requirements.

Tertiary and Further Education Institution (TAFE): a publicly funded post-secondary organisation which provides a range of technical and vocational education and training courses and other programs, e.g. entry and bridging courses, language and literacy courses, adult basic education courses, Senior Secondary Certificate of Education courses, personal enrichment courses, and small business courses. Each State and Territory has its own TAFE system.

Vocational and Technical Education (VET): VET courses, taught by TAFEs and RTOs, lead to qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework and are accredited by State or Territory governments.

4 PROCEDURE

The School has a rigorous and comprehensive process for granting recognition of prior learning (RPL). Previous studies and/or practical workplace learning experiences will be assessed against the appropriate unit of competency, taking into account the critical aspects of assessment and suggested methods of assessment.

4.1 Principles

- Responsibility rests with the applicant for making a claim to have acquired knowledge and skills and for supporting the claim with appropriate evidence, although assistance may be given.
- The learning derived from experience must be identified in order to be assessed.
- The identification of prior learning comes through systematic reflection on experience, the writing of clear statements about what was actually learned and the collection and collation of evidence to support those statements.
- Evidence collection is the responsibility of the Student Services Director, who then consults an industry specialist or staff member for final approval
- Where it is proposed to allow entry with specific credit, the methods of assessment must ensure that Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Guidelines are adhered to and assessment validation is carried out.
- The academic function of assisting the applicant to prepare evidence of learning should be separated from that of assessing that learning.
- The student's academic record/statement will reflect RPL for any units that have been given RPL status.
- In the case of international students granted RPL which leads to a shortening of the student's course, the School should do one of the following:
 - If the RPL is granted before the student visa is granted, the School must indicate the actual net course duration (as reduced by the RPL) in the eCoE issued for that student for that course.
 - If the RPL is granted after the student visa is granted, the School must report the change of course duration via PRISMS under s19 of the ESOS Act 2000. In such cases the School must remind the student that it is a condition of their visa that they be enrolled in full-time study.

4.2 Objectives

The School's framework for granting RPL provides:

- an avenue for recognition of applicants' credentials and/or workplace learning experiences;
- clear advice on the process for the approval or non-approval of past credentials; and
- an analytical process for the granting of RPL.

4.3 Process for RPL/Credit Transfer

There are five stages in this process, namely:

- Stage 1: Information
- Stage 2: Establishing the purpose of the assessment
- Stage 3: Application
- Stage 4: Interpreting the evidence and making a judgement
- Stage 5: Post-Assessment

Stage 1: Information

Applicants who can demonstrate that they have completed equivalent courses and/or subjects at a recognised university or college may apply to have these studies recognised by the School. If successful, the applicant will receive exemption from the subject(s) based on advanced standing. This is different from Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) in that it only considers previous formal studies.

RPL is the granting of subject exemptions as a result of evidence provided by a student showing their competence attained through formal training, work experience and/or life experience.

It is the applicant's responsibility to lodge all requests for advanced standing to the Admissions Department, ensuring the application includes the following:

- Certified academic transcripts (where applicable).
- Official copies of unit outlines (where applicable) showing the description of each subject, the duration of tuition for each subject in hours, credit weighting for each subject including grading system.
- Employer statements on official letterhead detailing number of hours employed and an overview of the position in which the applicant was employed.

Stage 2: Establishing the purpose of the assessment

- If necessary, the Student Services Director (or designate) will arrange a date and time for an information/briefing session after the initial inquiry. There is no charge for this service.
- Possible sources of appropriate evidence gathering methods to substantiate the application will be examined.
- Clarification will be given in the use of documentation, which will assist in determining whether RPL should be sought.

Stage 3: Application

- If RPL is to be sought a *Credit Transfer/RPL/Advanced Standing Application Form* may be obtained from the Student Services Director.
- If you require assistance in completing the form, please contact the Student Services Director.
- On completion of the application form, submit the form together with all supporting documentation to the Student Services Director.

- Where RPL has not been assessed prior to enrolment in the course, individual students must apply for RPL for previous learning by the end of the first week of their first term of study so that, if RPL is granted, their commencing enrolment can be adjusted accordingly.
- Upon receipt of the *RPL/Advanced Standing Application Form*, students will be interviewed and the application reviewed. If sufficient evidence to support the RPL application has not been received the student will be advised of further requirements.
- When applying for RPL of units in the next term, application must be made in week 5 of the preceding term.

RPL Applications

- Application for RPL lodged through school representatives (this could be Laureate personnel including: Area Managers, Regional Admission Directors (RADs) or Educational Counsellors (ECs) and/or outside Agents) should be forwarded to the School's Admissions Department.
- Admissions send a provisional letter of offer granting provisional RPL with the following conditions clearly stated:
 - The student's application for RPL is under consideration.
 - Verified transcripts, work placement references, third party samples of evidence and samples of work will be required before status can be granted.
 - Advice on the granting of the requested RPL status will be made in writing to the student
 - Whether English Language conditions are met.
- The Student Services Director (or designate) will advise if any further evidence is required. It is the responsibility of the school representative to advise the applicant as to the necessary evidence required.

Stage 4: Interpreting the evidence and making a judgement

- Applicants requesting RPL may be required to test out their skills and knowledge and must be able to demonstrate their ability to:
 - study at the nominated level;
 - appraise information pertaining to the vocational area of hospitality and tourism;
 - develop, evaluate and provide practical and theoretical solutions; and
 - demonstrate the research and analytical skills to complete independent study.
- Evidence submitted will be reviewed by the Student Services Director (or designate) together with an industry specialist or staff member who has the expertise in the subject, content or skills area, as well as knowledge of and expertise in RPL requirements for the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) 2007.
- A minimum of 50% of the course curriculum must be completed to be eligible for an award.
- All 300-level units must be completed.
- Applications will be processed within fourteen (14) days of lodgement.

Stage 5: Post-Assessment

- Applicants discuss the outcome of the RPL process with the Student Services Director (or designate) at a predetermined time.
- An applicant, who disagrees with the outcome of the RPL application, will be issued with a copy of the School's *Academic Complaints & Grievances Policy & Procedure*.
- If RPL is granted, the results of the recognition application will be recorded in accordance with the School's procedures.
- A letter will be sent to the applicant by the BMIHMS Student Services Director (or designate) recording whether or not the RPL application has been successful. A copy of this letter will be placed on the students file both in electronic and paper format.

5 DOCUMENTATION

Academic Complaints & Grievances Policy & Procedure
Credit Transfer/RPL/Advanced Standing Application Form