

RPL TOOLKIT GUIDE

FOR CANDIDATES



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WELCOME MESSAGE

The Human Services Skills Organisation (HSSO) is committed to providing a flexible and supportive process that enables workers, who have gained skills and knowledge gained from their work and life experience, such as paid and volunteer work and non-accredited training (for example: in house training conducted in the workplace such as inductions), recognised formally within the Certificate III in Individual Support.

This Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Toolkit Guide is designed for eligible workers who have current experience in providing support services within the aged care, disability and/ or the home care sectors and are supported by their Employers, to undertake the recognition process.

The HSSO has committed to providing a User Friendly, Candidate (Employee) Centred approach. This approach involves the support of your Employer, who has nominated you to participate in this program, and will assist by providing documents relevant to your work to support the recognition of the skills and knowledge you have. You will also be allocated a supportive mentor / assessor from a Registered Training Organisation to guide you through the process.

The HSSO welcomes your participation and involvement in this exciting project and looks forward to your achievements of recognition.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jodi Schmidt', is enclosed in a light blue rectangular box.

Jodi Schmidt
Chief Executive Officer

Human Services Skills
Organisation

Acknowledgments

The Human Services Skills Organisation is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment through the Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow program. We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work. We pay our respect to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders past, present and emerging.

The HSSO would like to thank all who have contributed to the development of this RPL Toolkit and for their generosity in sharing their industry expertise, skills and knowledge of the sector.

SECTION I: HSSO OVERVIEW

Our vision is for Australia's human services sector to be equipped with a skilled, diverse and adaptable workforce meeting its needs now and into the future.

The HSSO is uniquely positioned to collaborate with employers, registered training organisations and government to strengthen the workforce that cares for the nation's most vulnerable.

Our purpose is to improve the skills of the human services sector to deliver the best outcomes for Australians.

Our commitment is to improve how the sector identifies, develops and delivers workforce solutions, knowing it will result in better support and care for those who need it most.

The RPL Assessment Toolkit Project

The HSSO Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Assessment Toolkit is for the CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support (Aged Care, Disability, Home and Community). This project is piloting a model that supports existing workers in the aged care and disability support sectors to have their skills recognised.

The HSSO has an ongoing role in the pilot, working with Employers and RTOs to establish pilot sites where RPL assessment will be conducted using a group-based, employer supported approach.

The HSSO RPL process is candidate-centred and supports you, the Candidate (employee) to demonstrate your skills and knowledge under the observation of the Assessor in your day-to-day role within your workplace. The Assessor works between you and your Employer to collect relevant workplace evidence including observation of skills, third-party (employer/supervisor) verification of workplace skills, relevant workplace documentation (portfolio), discussions (questioning) and workplace scenarios.

This project is delivered to provide existing eligible workers (you) in the care and support sector with the opportunity to have your workplace skills assessed against the requirements of the CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support by undertaking the HSSO RPL process which is based on:

- Clustering of units of competency for efficient and holistic assessment;
- Supporting the Candidates (you) by using the candidate centred- approach in workplace RPL assessment;
- Supporting the Employer to identify relevant workplace support identified and access to relevant documentation.

What is the Certificate III in Individual Support?

This qualification reflects the role of workers in the community and/or residential settings, who follow individualised plans to provide person-centred services to people who may require support to participate in Activities of Daily Living and / or community activities due to ageing, disability or some other reason. This work involves using discretion and judgement in relation to the individual support being undertaken, as well as workers taking responsibility for the own work performance. Workers will have acquired skills and knowledge across a range of workplace practices and duties, as well as have the knowledge of the concepts and practices required to provide person-centred support

To successfully complete the qualification of Certificate III in Individual Support, a total of 13 units of competency are required to be undertaken. Seven of these units are what are known as "core" units i.e. compulsory – you must do them. The other 6 units are made up of electives. Some of the electives have been selected for you through industry consultation undertaken by the HSSO and embedded into Clusters 1, 2 & 3 according to the occupational sector (Residential, Home Care or Disability)

you are employed in, (see chart on the next page for details). Other electives you may chose for yourself.

There are a number Occupational Sector Elective units, where you can choose one or two of the electives listed (depending on which occupational sector you are in i.e Residential, Home Care or Disability) to make up the 13 units of competency required to gain the qualification.

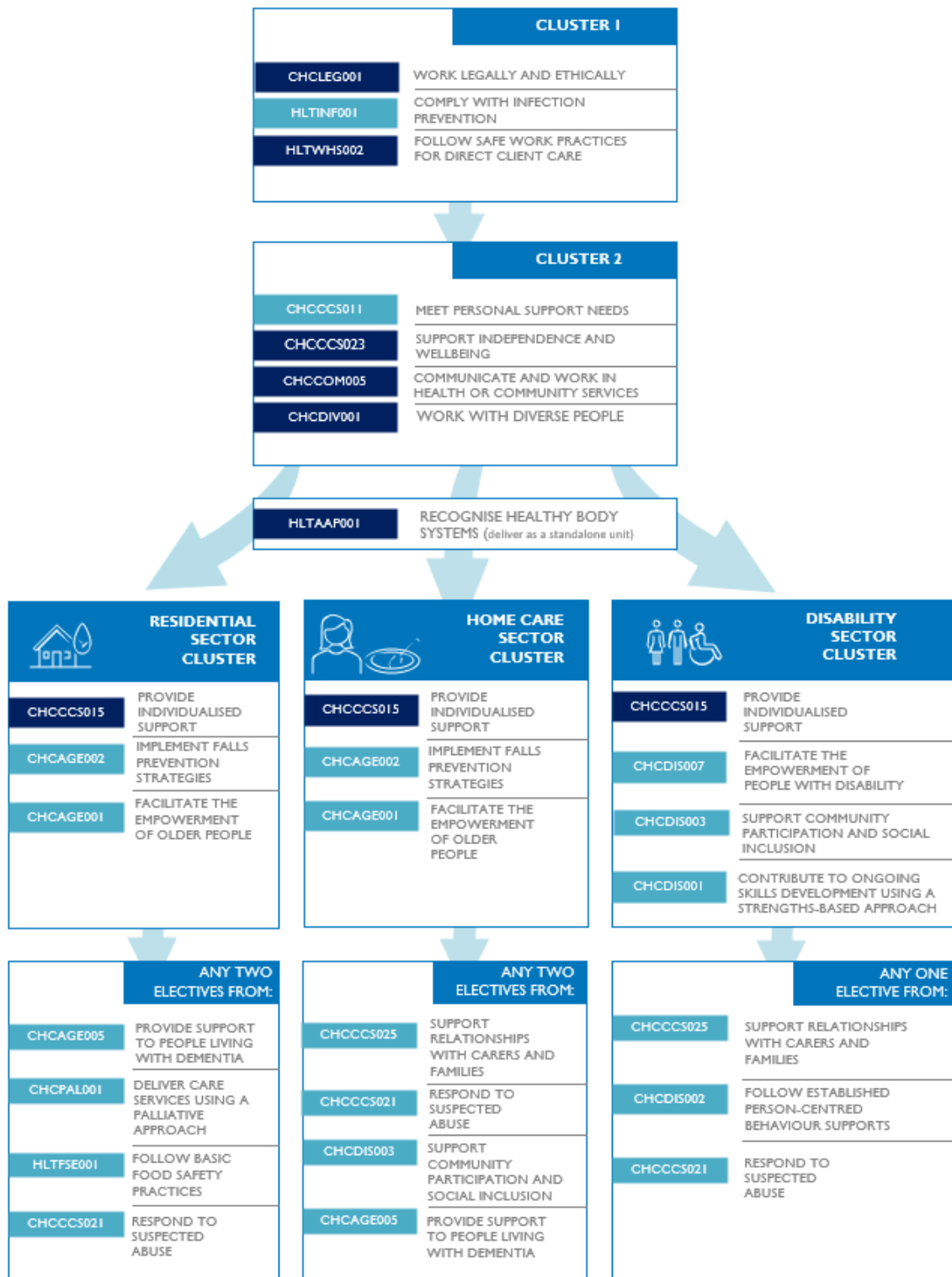
A summary of the contents of the Certificate III in Individual Support qualification that the HSSO RPL Project is providing is below:

- **Cluster 1:** Contains three units of competency covering safe work, infection control and legal and ethical responsibilities of workers, which all occupational sectors will undertake.
- **Cluster 2:** Contains four units of competency covering meeting needs, supporting independence and wellbeing, communication and diversity in the workplace, which all occupational sectors will undertake
- **Cluster 3:** Covers supporting needs by occupational sector
 - **Residential** - Covers three units of competency involving providing individual support, falls prevention and empowering older persons. This cluster is identical to the Home Care Occupation Sector Cluster 3 units, except they have been written for workers within the Residential Sector.
 - **Home Care** - Covers three units of competency involving providing individual support, falls prevention and empowering older persons. This cluster is identical to the Residential Occupation Sector Cluster 3 units, except they have been written for workers within the Home Care Sector.
 - **Disability** - Covers four units of competency involving providing individual support, empowering people with disabilities, supporting community and social participation and skills development using strengths-based approaches.
- **Single unit:** HLTAAP001 Recognise Healthy Body Systems. (core unit i.e it is compulsory for all sectors)
- **Occupational Sector Elective units:** Covers the information on the seven elective units that may be selected by you.

Your allocated assessor will go through the units in more detail with you in your first meeting.

CHC33015 Certificate III Individual Support: RPL Units

■ CORE UNITS FOR CHC33015 CERTIFICATE III IN INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT ■ ELECTIVES



Note: Credit transfer for First Aid certificate or other relevant unit of competency under import rules to replace any of final elective units.

What is Clustering?

Clustering involves delivering and assessing two or more similar / related units of competency together in as a group. The HSSO has used clustering within this project to eliminate the need for repetitive unit by unit assessment. The clustering allows for them to be more holistically (more represent what you do) assessed in a workplace environment and saving you time in participating in assessments for each unit.

In the chart/ diagram on the previous page you can see how the 13 units of competency contained in the CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support have been grouped/ clustered together for this qualification. These are the units that your skills and knowledge will be assessed against using a candidate-centred approach.

Additional information / detail will be provided to you about each cluster / unit by your assessor, who will provide you with a specific Candidate Guide for each of the Clusters / unit (s), that give you an overview what is in each unit (as a cluster or as an individual unit) and the assessment tasks associated with them.

The Candidate Assessment Guides will be provided to you by your assessor, as you progress through the clusters / units together with the relevant assessment tasks prior to you undertaking the cluster / unit, so that you can see what is required and discuss any assistance you may require from the assessor before commencing the cluster / unit.

What is a candidate - centred approach?

This approach is where in RPL candidates (in this case - you) are put in the centre of the RPL process (as opposed to the Registered Training Organisation dictating the process). The goal of candidate-centred RPL is for the assessor to build a supportive /mentoring relationship the with you, in order to achieve the following:

- A supportive process
- Minimize the collection of paperwork
- Use conversation and observations as the main means of collecting evidence
- Using your workplace not the classroom to observe or enhance your skills and knowledge
- An open and transparent assessment process, in which you are fully supported through by the assessor

The HSSO has developed a three-step process to guide the collection of evidence of your skill and knowledge which will then be compared to each unit of competency you are undertaking to determine if you meet all of the requirements.

At no stage through the process will you (the RPL Candidate) be asked to write answers to question, complete an “exam” type of assessment or collect massive amounts of documents.

The three-step process is summarised on the below.

STEP 1: SUPPLY	STEP 2: SHOW	STEP 3: SAY
<p>The assessor will assist your employer to identify and provide evidence of your skills and knowledge by allowing them access to relevant workplace records, policies and procedures, documents that you have completed, and information about the tasks you perform every day.</p> <p>The assessor will request that a Third-Party Report be completed. By a relevant person within the organisation who can attest that they have observed you undertake specific tasks or demonstrate knowledge (this could involve a supervisor, team leader or manager)</p>	<p>You will be observed carrying out tasks related to their work role. For example, you may be asked to show the assessor specific techniques or to follow workplace procedures.</p> <p>This may be done through Challenge Tests for very specific skills that may need to be observed or through a general Workplace Practical Observations where you will be “observed / shadowed” while conducting your routine duties/ tasks.</p>	<p>You will be asked oral questions to demonstrate your knowledge of the legislation, procedures, and expectations to perform your role. For example, you may be asked to explain why you do certain tasks in a particular way.</p> <p>In some cases, you will be presented with scenarios and ask describe your work practices related to those incidents.</p>

These steps are discussed in more detail over the next few pages

STEP 1: SUPPLY

Identifying and collecting your Employer's information / evidence about the skills and knowledge that you have developed in the workplace

The assessor will work with your employer, human resources personnel or other relevant organisational employee, to collect training records, workplace records and documents that you have completed, or use to carry out your current job role (such as policies and procedures) and that are relevant to your experience in providing support or care to clients.

Information below are samples of what will be collected and more specific information is detailed further in each of the Candidate Guides for Cluster 1, 2 & 3 and for each of the Individual Units.

YOUR RECORDS AND REPORTS

- Resume / CV
- Induction records
- Formal Training records / Statements / Certificates
- Informal Training records such as in house training conducted by your employer such as manual handling
- NDIS Workers Orientation Certificate
- Job Description / Contract
- Performance reviews

CLIENT RELATED DOCUMENTS YOU HAVE USED OR COMPLETED

- Individual Support plans
- Progress notes
- Client-based charts, notes and / or reports

WORKPLACE DOCUMENTS YOU HAVE USED OR COMPLETED

- Incident / accident report
- Risk / hazard assessment
- Work Health and Safety (WHS) audits
- Equipment hazards alert forms
- Maintenance request forms
- Minutes of staff and WHS meetings
- Emails on relevant issues

Your assessor will gather these documents from your employer and put them into your evidence folder. In some cases, you may be asked to provide additional documents which your employer does not hold, such as an updated Resume or training records for training done outside of your workplace

STEP 2: SHOW

Where you demonstrate the workplace skills and experience that you have gained over the years

Your Assessor in consultation with you and your Employer, will come to your workplace and watch you perform different work tasks that you would undertake regularly as part of your duties. This will give the Assessor the opportunity to observe how you use your skills and experience to support your clients, team, and workplace. The Assessor will use a checklist and ask oral questions of you. Both the checklist and questions will be provided to you prior to any assessment; allowing you to understand what the Assessor is going to watch you do and for you to ask any questions you may have prior to the observation being conducted.

A date and time for you to demonstrate to the Assessor your skills will be agreed to by you, your Employer, and the Assessor (either in person, on the phone or via video call).

The practical tasks you could be asked to perform include:

1. A Workplace Observation: also known as "Shadowing" where you will be observed by the Assessor undertaking your regularly performed workplace tasks at your workplace or client's premises (where relevant and they have given permission.) Your Assessor will also ask you oral questions about how you do things.

2. A Challenge Test in RPL is a practical demonstration / observation which is usually undertaken for a specific activity or task where it's unlikely that sufficient evidence can be collected. This often relates to situations that are unable to be observed in the course of a Workplace Observation (when shadowing) due to privacy, safety or irregularity of events / situations occurring, such as cleaning up a blood spill.

A Challenge Test may need to be conducted in some of the common clusters, that is those that every person does, across each of the occupational sectors i.e., Residential, Home Care and Disability. An example is where one of the occupational sectors such as residential may undertake the task frequently whilst in another occupational sectors such as disability, they may only do the task infrequently (not often). As such, if you worked in a sector that only performed the task infrequently, you may not have sufficient evidence without the Challenge Test to demonstrate you can do the task. Your assessor will indicate to you if a Challenge Test will be required after a discussion with you.

Challenge Tests also include oral questions around the skills you were asked to demonstrate.

Challenge Tests, where practical and with the Employer's consent, are conducted in the workplace. If this is not feasible or practical, they will be conducted in a suitably equipped and correctly arranged simulation area which may be located at the training provider's premises or other suitable premises. This will be done in negotiation with both you and your Employer.

STEP 3: SAY

Discuss with your assessor how you do particular tasks

Your Assessor will ask you questions about how you do certain things in your role. These questions will be oral questions and your answers/ responses will be recorded or written down by the assessor i.e you will not be required to write them down.

The oral questions can be asked at any of the following assessment points:

- After you have participated in the Challenge Test
- After your workplace observation
- In Cluster 3 Disability sector, HLTAAP001 Recognise Healthy Body Systems and in most of the Occupational Sector Elective units, no Challenge Test is required, instead you will be asked to discuss a series of scenarios and questions around your workplace processes, that will form the basis of a conversation between yourself and the Assessor. You will be provided the scenarios and questions prior to any discussion being conducted.

This is your opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge you have gained through your work experiences. The questions and scenarios will be provided to you prior to any conversation/ discussion taking place to enable you to think and possibly research on your responses prior to any discussion

A date/time for this interview will be agreed to by you, your Employer; and the Assessor (either in person, on the phone or via video call).

On the next page is a range of the types of assessment tasks you may be asked to undertake for each cluster / unit of competency.

Please note this does not mean that in every cluster or unit that you will undertake all of these tasks. The list is an example i.e. in some clusters / units you may be required to participate in two or three tasks; remembering that the Evidence Portfolio and Third Party are done / completed by the assessor and or your employer.

Evidence Portfolio

The Evidence Portfolio list is provided by the assessor to your Employer, which identifies the types of evidence / documents they can gather / supply for the assessor, to support your RPL journey.

The Assessor's role will include supporting your Employer to identify documents, forms and reports etc. which will assist them to identify the your workplace skills against each unit or cluster of units. .

The Assessor will provide you with a copy of the Evidence Portfolio list given to your Employer so that you can understand what documents etc. they are collecting.

If you feel that you may have other evidence such as from courses or recent experiences done outside your employer have a discussion with your assessor as these may be able to be added to your evidence.

Challenge Tests

A Challenge Test is a practical demonstration / observation which is usually undertaken for a specific activity or tasks where it's unlikely sufficient evidence can be collected during a Workplace Practical Observation.

This Observation Checklist and Oral Questions (where required), will be provided to you prior to the assessment, so that you can see what is required and discuss any assistance you may require from the assessor before commencing the Challenge Test

This assessment task often relates to situations that are unable to be observed due to privacy, safety or irregularity of events / situations occurring; for example: cleaning up a body fluid spill.

Challenge Tests will need to be conducted in Cluster 1, 2 (all occupational sectors) and for Residential and Home Care sectors in Cluster 3. Depending on the occupational sector your work in i.e residential, Home Care or Disability you may undertake the skills required by the Challenge Test task on a frequent basis, while in other occupational sectors this may only be undertaken infrequently if at all. As such, if you one of those who does not undertake the Challenge Test task frequently, it might be that you will not have sufficient evidence to demonstrate the required skill and knowledge without undertaking the Challenge Test.

Where the assessor is able to collect from your employer that you have sufficient evidence in relation to the Challenge Test task from the workplace, you will not need to undertake the Challenge Test. The Assessor will decide if you do not need to undertake the Challenge Test.

Challenge Tests, where practical and with the Employer's consent, are to be conducted in the workplace. If this is not feasible or practical, they must be conducted in a suitably equipped and correctly arranged simulation area which may be located at the RTO or other suitable premises. This is undertaken in negotiation with both you and your Employer.

Note: The Assessor will document your verbal answers to any Oral Questions, you are not required to write them.

Workplace Practical/ Observation Checklist

The Workplace Practical is an opportunity for the assessor to discreetly observe you, while you perform your usual workplace routine and activities. It is confirmation that you are able to undertake your work duties in line with the skills and knowledge required within each unit of competency.

The Workplace Practical Observation Checklist and Oral Questions (where required), will be provided to you prior to the assessment, so that you can see what is required and discuss any assistance you may require from the assessor before commencing the Workplace Practical.

Note: The Assessor will document your verbal answers to any Oral Questions, you are not required to write them.

Scenarios / Oral Questions

Scenarios / Oral Questions are used to demonstrate evidence of knowledge of workplace situations where it is not appropriate to demonstrate these during observations, or the criteria may not relate to a regular workplace situation and where this evidence is unable to be captured during workplace observations.

The Scenarios and Oral Questions (where required), will be provided to you prior to the assessment, so that you can see what is required and discuss any assistance you may require from the assessor before commencing them.

Note: The Assessor will document your verbal answers, you are not required to write them.

Third Party Reports

Third Party Reports involve the verification of workplace skills and activities by your Employer, to be completed by a relevant workplace supervisor, team leader etc., and may be collected at any stage of the RPL assessment process.

You may nominate a person to complete the Third-Party Report, although it is the role of the Assessor to determine if the nominated person meets the level of accreditation, workplace skills and history to decide the suitability of your workplace skills and knowledge. This can be negotiated with your assessor.

The Third-Party Report clearly specifies the requirements as to who would be considered a relevant Referee. The Third-Party Report identifies the exact skills or knowledge the person completing the Third-Party Report are to have witnessed.

A blank copy of the Third-Party Report will be given to you by the assessor so you have an understanding of what questions will be asked. Your assessor is to allow you to view the completed Third-Party Report prior to them putting it into your Evidence Portfolio

Professional Discussions (Occupational Sector Individual Units and HLTAAP001 Recognise Healthy Body Systems)

A Professional Conversation between the you and your Assessor is based on a series of structured questions relating to your workplace experiences and using the workplace evidence provided in the Evidence Portfolio by your employer based on case progress notes etc.

Note: The Assessor will document your verbal answers, you are not required to write them.

Your Questions Answered:

Does undertaking RPL mean I have to do assignments?

No there is no written requirements. The only written documents are the ones that are collected from your workplace, such as forms and workplace documents that you completed when undertaking your daily tasks such as client progress notes.

Do I have to go to class in my own time?

No – this is a work-based assessment

What if I have one of units listed in the qualification already?

If you have a unit that is in the Chart of Units on page 6 of this document, then you will be given Credit Transfer (providing it has the same Unit Code - not just the same name) by the Assessor. You will need to provide the Statement of Attainment from the training provider who gave you the unit. If this is the case you will not be required to be assessed for the unit.

What if I have other units do I have to do those listed?

If you have a unit not listed on the Chart of Units on page 6, but it is relevant to your work, this should be discussed with your Assessor. The qualification allows for you to “import” (use another unit) that you may already have that was not included in the units provided; such as Provide First Aid, Transport Individuals or Assist Clients with Medication, that you may have undertaken previously. This means you can use that unit and not do an assessment for another unit that is listed in the Occupational Sector Electives.

Note: This only applies for the Occupational Sector electives units i.e. you MUST do all units contained in Cluster 1, 2 and unless you already have the exact unit.

Where you have an exact unit and it has the same unit code and description as a unit listed on page 6 in Cluster 1, 2 or 3 and you have the Statement of Attainment from the Registered Training Organisation that gave you the unit, then you can be given a “Credit transfer”.

Note: the assessor must be able to verify either through USI or the training provider that the Statement of Attainment is correct.

If I have been doing the job for years, why do I need to be observed and questioned?

An Assessor is required by law before issuing qualifications or accredited units, to collect evidence from a range of sources to ensure that your experience meets the requirements as specified in each unit of competency. Because of these reasons, evidence needs to be provided / collected in both documented and / or observed forms.

What happens if my Employer doesn't have all the documents asked for, but I have others?

Recognition applications often succeed even though your employer may not have been able to supply every item specified. This is because the Assessor will be able to look at other evidence you may have and this evidence may be able to be included instead, if it is relevant.

In other cases, where a minor gap of evidence is indicated, the Assessor may ask your Employer to provide you with some different duties for a small period of time so you can experience skills that you may not have, to fill your skill gap or may give you a video to watch to increase your knowledge in a specific area and then ask questions.

What if I don't achieve all of the units by the end of the assessment process?

Once the Assessor has reviewed all of your evidence that they have collected, the Assessor will provide feedback to you about which units you obtained. A Statement of Attainment will be given to you for ALL of the units you successfully gained RPL for.

If there are major gaps in evidence which cannot be addressed without undertaking such things as watching videos or supplemented work experiences then your RPL journey will be completed.

The Assessor will discuss other options with you regarding the completion of the qualification, if you wish to complete it, and how that can be done i.e. undertaking study on line, remotely, in class - depending on your personal circumstances / needs.

What are the costs for RPL?

There are no costs for you to participate in HSSO RPL project. The training provider will receive funding from the relevant State or Territory government.

If you require major Gap training i.e. the undertaking of studies for a unit, you should talk to your assessor as funding contracts vary from state to state