
THE BCQ BUILDERS LICENCE PATHWAY GUIDE

What experienced Australian tradespeople need to know about qualifications, RPL and getting licence-ready.

By John Von Reuth · Founder, BCQ

50+ YEARS
Industry experience

5,400+
Candidates supported

Important: A qualification does not automatically result in a builder, contractor or trade licence. Licensing requirements vary by state, territory and licence class, and the relevant licensing authority independently determines eligibility and issues licences. BCQ helps candidates understand the qualification pathway and prepare evidence for formal RTO assessment.

01

THINKING ABOUT A BUILDERS LICENCE? START WITH THE PATHWAY.

If you have spent years in building or construction, the hardest part is often not the work itself. It is working out what qualification you need, whether your existing experience may count, what evidence you will need and how the qualification fits into the licence outcome you are pursuing.

That is where many experienced tradespeople lose time, starting with a course name, a form or a licensing application before anyone has properly mapped the pathway. A better place to start is with three questions:

01

What licence or professional outcome are you actually trying to achieve?

02

What qualification, if any, is relevant to that outcome in your state or territory?

03

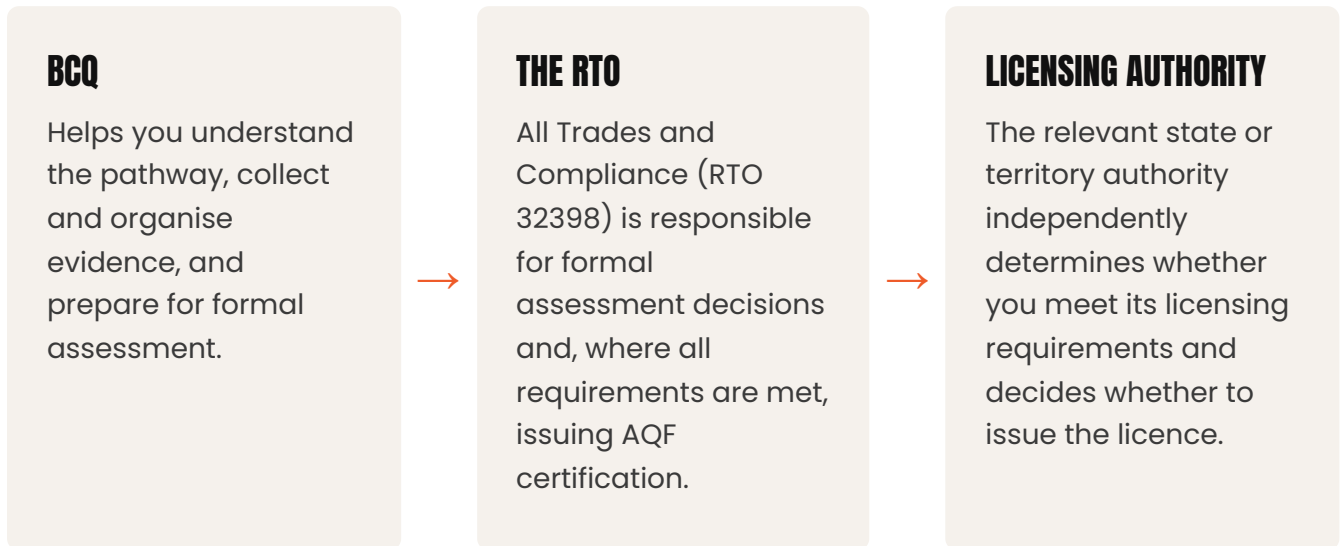
Could your existing skills and experience be assessed through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

BCQ helps experienced builders and tradespeople work through those questions before they commit to the wrong pathway.

[CHECK MY ELIGIBILITY](#)

QUALIFICATION, RPL AND LICENSING ARE THREE DIFFERENT THINGS.

One of the most important things to understand is that the qualification process and the licensing process are related, but they are not the same thing.



BCQ does not issue nationally recognised qualifications and does not issue builder, contractor or trade licences. Our role is to help make the pathway clearer and help you prepare the evidence required for formal assessment.

WHAT QUALIFICATION MIGHT YOU NEED?

There is no single qualification that applies to every builders licence in Australia. Requirements differ by jurisdiction, licence class and the type of work you intend to undertake. That is why BCQ starts with the outcome you are pursuing rather than assuming one qualification fits everyone.

CPC50220

Diploma of Building and Construction (Building)

Commonly considered by experienced building and construction professionals formalising higher-level building, project and management capability. Requirements additional to the qualification may apply.

**EXPLORE THE
DIPLOMA PATHWAY**

CPC40120

Certificate IV in Building and Construction

Commonly relevant to builders, supervisors, site managers and experienced tradespeople moving into broader responsibilities. Licensing requirements still vary by jurisdiction and licence class.

**EXPLORE
CERTIFICATE IV**

CPC30220

Certificate III in Carpentry & other trade qualifications

For candidates whose immediate objective is formal recognition of an existing trade. May be able to have relevant existing competence assessed through RPL.

**EXPLORE RPL &
TRADE QUALIFICATIONS**

Not sure which qualification applies? Do not guess based on what a colleague needed in another state or for another licence class. Start with your intended outcome and current circumstances.

BOOK A CALL WITH BCQ

WHAT IS RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)?

Recognition of Prior Learning, usually called RPL, is an assessment process that considers relevant skills and knowledge you have already gained through work, previous training and other formal, informal or non-formal learning.

For an experienced tradesperson, that matters because the assessment can consider what you already know and can demonstrate. It does not mean experience automatically becomes a qualification. The RTO must assess the available evidence against the requirements of the relevant qualification.

RPL may be relevant if you have:

- Substantial hands-on experience in your trade or building role
- Existing Statements of Attainment, licences or previous training
- Skills and knowledge that align with the competency requirements of the qualification you are pursuing
- Worked across a range of projects and responsibilities
- Workplace records, project evidence or people who can verify your experience

If the evidence does not cover every requirement, the RTO may require additional evidence, further assessment or learning before a competency decision can be made.

WHAT EVIDENCE MIGHT YOU NEED?

The quality of your evidence matters. A long work history is useful context, but RPL decisions are based on evidence that demonstrates relevant competence. Depending on the qualification and your circumstances, evidence may include:

Resume and employment history

Project photographs or videos

Plans, drawings, scopes, schedules or job records

Quotes, contracts, site documentation

Previous qualifications or Statements of Attainment

Position descriptions or responsibility records

Referee verification from people who observed your work

Competency conversations or practical evidence

Other material requested by the RTO

Not every applicant needs every item on this list; the evidence you need depends on the qualification and your circumstances.

BCQ evidence support

BCQ helps candidates understand what evidence may be relevant and organise it for formal RTO assessment. The RTO remains responsible for determining whether the evidence is sufficient, authentic, current and relevant to the competency requirements.

CERTIFICATE IV OR DIPLOMA: WHICH ONE IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

This is one of the most common questions BCQ receives. The answer depends on your intended outcome, experience and the current licensing requirements that apply to your state, territory and licence class.

	Certificate IV	Diploma
Typical discussion point	Often considered by experienced tradespeople moving into broader building, supervision or site-management responsibilities.	Often considered by experienced building professionals formalising higher-level building, project and management capability.
Licence relevance	May be relevant to some licensing pathways. Not a universal licence requirement.	May be relevant to some licensing pathways. Not a universal licence requirement.
RPL potential	Existing competence may be considered where evidence aligns with requirements.	Existing competence may be considered where evidence aligns with requirements.
What decides the pathway?	Your intended outcome, existing competence, qualification requirements and current licensing rules.	Your intended outcome, existing competence, qualification requirements and current licensing rules.

The safest approach is to confirm the outcome first, then work backwards to the qualification pathway rather than choosing a qualification based only on what someone else completed.

CHECK WHICH PATHWAY MAY APPLY TO ME

YOUR STATE OR TERRITORY MATTERS.

Builder and trade licensing is not nationally uniform. The qualification or experience requirement for one licence class in Queensland may not be the same as the requirement for a different class in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia or another jurisdiction.

BCQ currently supports candidates across Australia excluding South Australia. For every licence pathway, the current requirements should be checked against the relevant state or territory licensing authority before a qualification is represented as leading to that regulated outcome.

Queensland candidates should confirm the current QBCC requirements for the specific licence class they are pursuing.

Candidates in other serviced states and territories should confirm the current requirements of the relevant licensing authority for their intended licence class.

A qualification may be only one part of the licensing criteria. Experience, financial, technical, fit-and-proper-person or other requirements may also apply depending on the jurisdiction and licence class. BCQ can help you understand the qualification side of the pathway, but the licensing authority makes the final licensing decision.

SPEAK WITH BCQ ABOUT MY STATE AND PATHWAY

WHAT DOES THE RPL PATHWAY USUALLY LOOK LIKE?

01

Clarify the outcome

Start with what you are trying to achieve: a qualification, a licensing pathway, formal trade recognition, or clarity on the next step.

02

Map your experience

BCQ helps you explain your work history, existing qualifications and experience so the relevant pathway can be identified.

03

Collect & organise evidence

You gather documents, project evidence and third-party information. BCQ helps you organise it for submission.

04

Formal RTO assessment

The RTO assesses the evidence against the relevant competency requirements; additional evidence or gap activity may be requested.

05

Certification where met

Where the RTO determines all requirements are satisfied, the RTO issues the relevant AQF certification documentation.

06

Continue licensing separately

If your objective is a licence, you continue the application with the relevant licensing authority, which independently determines the outcome.

HOW LONG DOES RPL TAKE?

There is no responsible fixed timeframe that can be promised for every RPL candidate. The time required depends on the qualification, the evidence you already have, how quickly you can provide requested information, whether further assessment or gap activity is required, and the RTO assessment process.

Candidates who are well prepared can make the process more efficient by gathering evidence early and responding promptly to requests. But RPL is still an assessment process: the outcome and timing must reflect the actual evidence and competency requirements.

Avoid "fast-track" promises

BCQ will help you understand what is required and keep the process moving, but neither BCQ nor the RTO should promise a qualification in a fixed number of days or imply that experience automatically guarantees RPL.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE QUALIFICATION?

For some people, the qualification itself is the objective. For others, it is one step towards a licence, a new role, a contracting pathway or the next stage of a building business. If you are pursuing a licence, the next step is to work through the relevant licensing authority requirements. The authority may require more than a qualification, so check the current criteria for your licence class.

And once the qualification and licensing pieces are in place, another question often appears: how do you turn the capability you have built on site into a business that is easier to find, easier to trust and easier to grow? BCQ now also helps suitable business owners identify practical gaps in their visibility, customer journey and growth infrastructure.

EXPLORE BUSINESS GROWTH

COMMON QUESTIONS

Can my work experience count towards a qualification?

Potentially. RPL is designed to assess relevant prior learning and experience against qualification requirements. The RTO determines the assessment outcome based on the evidence provided.

Does RPL mean I do not have to do any assessment?

No. RPL is an assessment pathway. The RTO must still determine whether you meet the relevant competency requirements, and additional evidence or assessment may be required.

Does a qualification guarantee my builders licence?

No. Licensing authorities independently determine eligibility. A qualification may form part of a licensing pathway, but other requirements can apply.

Which is better: Certificate IV or Diploma?

Neither is automatically "better". The right pathway depends on your objective, experience and the current requirements that apply to the licence or role you are pursuing.

Can BCQ tell me what evidence I need?

BCQ can help you understand and organise the types of evidence that may be relevant. The RTO decides what evidence is sufficient for formal assessment.

Who issues the qualification?

Where nationally recognised training and assessment is advertised through BCQ, formal assessment and certification are undertaken by All Trades and Compliance (RTO 32398), where applicable. BCQ does not issue the qualification.

Does BCQ service every Australian state?

BCQ currently supports candidates across Australia excluding South Australia.

FIND YOUR PATHWAY.

If you have the experience but are not sure what qualification you need, whether RPL may apply or how the qualification fits into your licensing objective, start by telling BCQ where you are and what you are trying to achieve.

You do not need to have the pathway worked out before you contact us.

Check my eligibility

Complete the short BCQ eligibility form and tell us the qualification you are looking for. If you are not sure, choose "Not Sure".

Qualification you're looking for:
Diploma / Certificate IV / Carpentry /
Other Trade Qualification / Not Sure

CHECK MY ELIGIBILITY

BOOK A CALL WITH BCQ

CALL BCQ · 0489 265 085



ABOUT BCQ

For more than five decades, John Von Reuth has worked across the building, construction and training environment. BCQ has supported more than 5,400 candidates across qualification, RPL and pathway enquiries, helping experienced tradespeople understand how their existing skills may connect with recognised qualification and licensing pathways.

John is a qualified trainer and assessor. Under BCQ's current operating model, BCQ provides pathway guidance and evidence support, while formal assessment and certification sit with the RTO.

ABOUT JOHN & BCQ

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURE

Building & Construction Qualifications (BCQ) provides RPL facilitation, evidence support and qualification pathway assistance. Nationally recognised training and assessment services advertised through BCQ are provided by All Trades and Compliance (RTO 32398), where applicable. Assessment decisions and certification are the responsibility of the RTO. Licensing decisions are made independently by the relevant state or territory licensing authority.