

Five Reasons To Get a Certificate in Hospitality - Complete Hospitality Training

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Details:

Hospitality is one of the few skilled industries you can enter without a formal qualification. So the honest question is not whether you can work without one — you can — but what a nationally recognised certificate actually changes. Five things, and they are more concrete than the usual arguments.

1. Some of it is not optional

Parts of hospitality are gated by law, not by preference.

Serving alcohol. Every Australian jurisdiction requires Responsible Service of Alcohol training, built on one national unit, SITHFAB021 Provide responsible service of alcohol . The unit is the same everywhere; what each of the eight jurisdictions does with it is not:

	Interstate certificate accepted?	Expiry
Queensland	Accepted where the evidence is a Statement of Attainment for the nationally accredited Provide Responsible Service of Alcohol course. An attendance certificate is insufficient.	Valid RSA training generally has no expiry; training completed before 2002 must be replaced.
Western Australia	Provide the RSA certificate showing completion of the nationally accredited course. An interstate RSA card alone is not accepted as evidence.	Keep the RSA certificate as training evidence; approved-manager cards have separate renewal requirements.
Victoria	Use a current Victorian RSA certificate. Eligible interstate holders can apply for free bridging: approved original training within three years, with the online-course residence condition. Specific exemptions apply at qualifying producer events.	Victorian RSA Refresher every three years.
New South Wales	Eligible temporary interstate workers can use approved interstate RSA. Permanent movers and security or RSA marshal roles must meet NSW training and competency-card	NSW competency card: five years. Interstate concessions have separate eligibility and certificate-age requirements.

	requirements; eligible holders can use bridging instead of the full NSW RSA course.	
South Australia	Check provider approval and training date. Training from 1 November 2020 must be through a Commissioner-approved RTO. Earlier RSA training need not be repeated solely because of that approval change.	No routine RSA renewal period stated in the cited CBS guidance; check applicable licence conditions.
Northern Territory	Certificates from an RTO registered to deliver RSA are accepted, including interstate certificates. Check certificate age and the NT refresher requirements.	NT guidance gives a three-year limit for interstate certificates and directs holders to a refresher; check current renewal guidance.
Australian Capital Territory	Valid interstate RSA certificates are recognised, subject to the ACT's three-year currency limit and ACT-approved refresher requirements.	Three years from course completion, then an ACT-approved refresher.
Tasmania	Interstate certificates can be accepted under the Commissioner's conditions. Requirements differ for employees and liquor licence holders; check the appropriate role.	No RSA expiry date in the regulator's FAQ; an employer may request updated training.

Current regulator guidance: NSW , VIC , SA , QLD , WA , NT , ACT , TAS .

For a new Victorian RSA course, use an LCV-approved provider for the delivery mode and complete the required LCV Learning Hub surveys and sexual harassment and assault module as well as the national unit. Victorian certificate holders must complete the free RSA Refresher every three years. In Victoria, an interstate RSA certificate generally cannot be used on its own. Eligible holders can apply for the free RSA Refresher bridging course to obtain a Victorian certificate. LCV requires approved original RSA training completed within the last three years and, for an online course, residence interstate or overseas at the time. Allow about ten working days for the application. LCV lists a specific exemption for interstate liquor producers at qualifying temporary or major events. Check the Victorian eligibility and event rules before relying on a certificate. Queensland and Western Australia accept suitable national RSA training evidence from an RTO. This is subject to the correct credential: Queensland requires a Statement of Attainment for the national RSA course, and WA requires the RSA certificate rather than an interstate card alone. Check the Queensland requirements and WA requirements .

Handling food. A category one or two food business must appoint a Food Safety Supervisor whose certificate was issued within the preceding five years , and must ensure each food handler who engages in a prescribed activity has completed training before starting it — or possesses skills and knowledge commensurate with that activity. Supervision by a trained colleague is not the stated alternative; that belongs to the separate supervisor obligation.

Gaming work requires responsible gambling training — in Victoria that is free approved training accessed through RSG Online and venue-arranged sessions.

These are statutory requirements with penalties attached, and they sit inside the qualifications rather than alongside them. SITHFAB021 is a core unit in SIT30722 Certificate III in Hospitality (Restaurant Front of House) , as is SITXFSA005 for food safety — so that qualification embeds content you would otherwise buy separately.

2. The credential is permanently yours

Every nationally recognised qualification and Statement of Attainment issued to you is linked to your Unique Student Identifier and retrievable for life from your USI transcript.

That means it survives losing the paper, changing employers, changing states and leaving the country. An employer's internal training record does none of that. If you lose a certificate, you have not lost the record — retrieve the transcript at usi.gov.au and ask the RTO to reissue.

That reissue is an obligation rather than a favour. An RTO must be able to produce a copy of certification documentation on request , and it must retain records of all AQF certification documentation for thirty years . Thirty years outlasts most hospitality businesses and nearly every filing cabinet, which is the practical difference between a national credential and a venue's induction folder: one is still recoverable in 2050, the other disappeared when the venue changed hands.

There is a deadline at the front end too. An RTO must not issue AQF certification documentation until you have been assessed as meeting the training product requirements — and once you have been, it must issue within 30 calendar days of completion of the assessment , provided you completed the qualification, or the units you subsequently withdrew from, and paid all agreed fees. Thirty days is the outer limit, not a target, so it is a reasonable thing to ask about if results are sitting unissued.

For nationally recognised training, a Unique Student Identifier (USI) is generally required before a qualification or Statement of Attainment can be issued , unless an applicable exemption applies. See the official USI exemption guidance . A USI is free at usi.gov.au . If you already have one, recover it rather than creating another. Your USI must not be printed on your qualification or Statement of Attainment. We verify that it belongs to you before using it.

3. It credit-transfers, so nothing is wasted

Units are portable between qualifications. A skill set today counts toward a Certificate III later; a Certificate III counts toward a Certificate IV; a Diploma is commonly a basis for credit into a degree , though how much advanced standing you get is the university's decision.

This is why starting small is not a compromise. SITHFAB021 taken as a standalone RSA is the same unit that appears inside SIT30622 . SITXFSA005 taken as a food handling certificate is a core unit in SIT30722 , and one of only two options in the compulsory Group A elective group of SIT40422 Certificate IV in Hospitality — where choosing it also unlocks food and beverage electives that list it as a prerequisite.

What makes that portability work is the document itself. Credit transfer runs on a Statement of Attainment, and the contents of one are prescribed rather than left to the provider. A Statement of Attainment must carry the issuing organisation's name, registration code and logo; the full title and national code of each unit it relates to; the Nationally Recognised Training logo , used in accordance with the NRT Logo Conditions of Use; the signature of an authorised individual; the organisation's seal, corporate identifier or unique watermark; the statement that a VET statement of attainment is issued when an individual has completed one or more accredited units or modules; and, where the units form part of a larger qualification, a statement identifying it. A qualification testamur carries the same registration details plus the code and title of the qualification and a statement recognising it within the AQF.

That list is why a Statement of Attainment transfers and a certificate of completion does not. A receiving RTO reads the unit code, matches it, and credits it. It has nothing to read on a document that says only "Barista Skills". The NRT logo carries a negative rule that makes the test sharper still: it belongs on a qualification or a Statement of Attainment, and must not be used on other testamurs or on transcripts of results — so an NRT logo on a certificate of attendance is misuse, not reassurance.

The scale of what is available is larger than the course list suggests. We hold 17 current qualifications, 81 current skill sets and 579 current units on our scope of registration, every one at the extent "deliver and assess". A skill set is the middle option most people never hear about: smaller than a qualification, still nationally recognised, still recorded against your USI. SITSS00071 Responsible service of alcohol, SITSS00069 Food Safety Supervision, SITSS00080 Espresso Machine Operation, SITSS00075 Beverage Advice and SITSS00094 Sommelier are all on scope, and the units inside them credit-transfer into the full qualifications.

Qualification sizes are worth knowing before you choose, because they differ far more than the names suggest:

Qualification	Units	Core
BSB30120 Certificate III in Business	13	6
SIT30622 Certificate III in Hospitality	15	6
SIT30722 Certificate III in Hospitality (Restaurant Front of House)	20	9
SIT40422 Certificate IV in Hospitality	21	9
SIT30821 Certificate III in Commercial Cookery	25	20
SIT50422 Diploma of Hospitality Management	28	11
SIT40521 Certificate IV in Kitchen Management	33	27

The reverse of credit transfer also applies: recognition of prior learning can shorten a course if you already have the experience. RTOs must offer it under Standard 1.6 of the Outcome Standards. It is a genuine assessment against the same evidence requirements rather than a waiver, and it is consistently under-used — raise it at the pre-training review before enrolment, which is itself required under Standard 2.2 of the Outcome Standards for RTOs. Name that instrument when you ask, because the National Code 2018 has a different Standard 2.2 about an overseas student's English and entry qualifications. The bigger the qualification, the more RPL is worth asking about: an experienced chef may already demonstrate a substantial share of Kitchen Management's 33 units.

RPL and credit transfer are different processes and it is worth using the right word when you ask. Credit transfer, under Standard 1.7, recognises a unit you have already completed at any Australian RTO — the evidence is your Statement of Attainment, there is no reassessment, and with us it attracts no student fee. RPL, under Standard 1.6, assesses prior skills, learning and experience, against the same performance evidence as the unit itself, and it is not available through government funding. Asking for "RPL" when you actually hold the unit already can send you into an assessment you did not need. We first verify the evidence and equivalence, check that the units fit your training product, and check for licensing or regulatory restrictions before granting credit. See ASQA's credit-transfer guidance.

4. It sets your classification, which sets your pay

Hospitality pay runs off award classification levels, and classification reflects the skills you can demonstrate. The most common source of underpayment in the industry is not a wrong hourly rate — it is being classified too low .

A nationally recognised qualification is evidence of the competencies a classification requires. Under MA000009 , a relevant AQF Certificate III or higher used at work sets a minimum classification of Level 4 . That is a floor, not a ceiling, and it is the clearest financial argument for finishing a qualification rather than collecting units.

Which award applies at all is decided by the premises, not your job title — and there are four , not two. Each covers its industry "to the exclusion of any other modern award", so exactly one applies to a given venue:

Award	Code	Premises
Hospitality Industry (General) Award 2020	MA000009	Hotels, pubs, taverns, motels, resorts, casinos, caterers, accommodation
Registered and Licensed Clubs Award 2020	MA000058	Registered not-for-profit clubs — RSL, bowls, golf, sporting, community
Restaurant Industry Award 2020	MA000119	Standalone restaurants, cafes, night clubs , reception centres, roadhouses
Fast Food Industry Award 2010	MA000003	Food sold mainly to be eaten away from the counter, food courts

The same chef doing the same work is covered by a different award depending on whether the kitchen sits inside a pub, an RSL club or a standalone restaurant. Two boundaries are easy to get wrong. Clubs are not covered by MA000009 — clause 4.4(d)(i) expressly excludes clubs registered or recognised under state or territory legislation, and clause 4.3 of MA000058 requires the club to be registered under a liquor, gaming, associations or corporations statute and to operate not-for-profit for its members. And a night club is not a "club" for this purpose, because it is commercial — it falls under MA000119.

The Level 4 floor above is the MA000009 position; each of the other three awards has its own Schedule A classification structure, so do not assume the same numbering. Award rates re-set every 1 July, so check the current figure with the Fair Work Ombudsman's Pay and Conditions Tool rather than any published rate. See working hours, rosters and public holidays and superannuation, tax and payslips .

5. It is the evidence a regulator recognises

When a council environmental health officer asks a business to substantiate that its food handlers are trained, a Statement of Attainment naming the unit code answers the question in one line. An induction log invites follow-up questions.

Be precise about why, though, because this argument is often overstated. For food handlers , Standard 3.2.2A does not require the training to be nationally accredited — a free, non-accredited course covering safe food handling, food contamination, cleaning and sanitising, and personal hygiene satisfies the law, and no refresher period is mandated. What the accredited unit buys is proof and portability , not permission.

For the Food Safety Supervisor it is the opposite: there the certificate must come from an RTO or a state-recognised body, and in New South Wales it must additionally be the state's own certificate from a provider approved by the NSW Food Authority under Food Act 2003 s 106H, kept on the premises under s 106G. See what food safety certificate do I need .

How it may help in a working career

Our original five-reasons article also speaks to the everyday career case: structured skills and knowledge, a clearer way to show interest to an employer, possible progression, more roles to consider and resilience when work changes. Those are useful possibilities, but the certificate is evidence of assessed competence rather than a hiring, pay or job-security guarantee. The five verifiable benefits above explain what the credential itself does; what an employer offers still depends on the position, award classification, experience and local demand. Use the qualification as one part of a job application, alongside specific examples of service, teamwork and safe practice.

What stands behind the certificate, and how to spot a lookalike

A credential is worth what the assessment behind it was worth, and that assessment is governed rather than left to the provider's discretion.

There are four Principles of Assessment :

Fairness — your needs are accommodated, reasonable adjustment is available, and reassessment is allowed where necessary. One attempt is not meant to be final.

Flexibility — assessment is appropriate to the context, the training product and you, and assesses your skills regardless of how or where you acquired them . This is the principle recognition of prior learning rests on, which is why ten years behind a bar is worth declaring.

Validity — assessment includes practical application components, so you demonstrate the skill in a practical setting. In hospitality that is the whole point.

Reliability — evidence is interpreted consistently, so the outcome is comparable irrespective of which assessor you get.

And four Rules of Evidence : evidence must be valid ; sufficient , meaning its quality, quantity and relevance enable the assessor to make an informed judgement; authentic , genuinely your own work, which is why a workplace supervisor signs a service log rather than you; and current , demonstrating skills and knowledge you hold now. Reasonable adjustment is a real entitlement, with one limit: it must not jeopardise the integrity of the training product or the industry standard.

Time is part of it too. The AQF sets a volume of learning for each level, independent of delivery mode — Certificate II 0.5 to 1 year , Certificate III 1 to 2 years , Certificate IV 0.5 to 2 years with the short end reserved for specialist qualifications building on prior knowledge, Diploma 1 to 2 years — and the volume must be sufficient for graduates to achieve the learning outcomes . That is the honest answer to a Certificate III advertised as a fortnight.

Which is why the marketing is regulated. All information an RTO or any third party acting for it gives you must be clear, accurate and current , and the regulator names the failures it sees: false or misleading marketing of a course, a qualification or the delivery and assessment itself; marketing unrealistically short courses that compromise the integrity of the product or leave students facing extension costs; promoting easier paths to a qualification through inappropriately short duration or inadequate RPL ; not remaining aware of all marketing material in circulation , including old material and agents' material; using images that do not accurately depict the facilities or resources actually used ; not clearly distinguishing Nationally Recognised Training from non-accredited training ; and failing to comply with Australian Consumer Law . A short checklist of red flags, written by the regulator, at no cost to you.

And if it goes wrong, there are two routes. Complaints sit under Standard 2.7 — procedural fairness, timeframes the RTO sets, publicly available procedures, and escalation avenues where a matter is unresolved, with informal complaints such as a verbal conversation with a trainer expressly required to be captured. Appeals against decisions, including assessment decisions, sit under Standard 2.8 and must provide independent review at no or low cost, with all avenues for independent review disclosed to you. Read a provider's policies before enrolling rather than after.

What it does not do

It does not guarantee a job. It does not substitute for experience — which is why practical placement matters, and why units with service-period requirements exist: SITHFAB027 needs five service periods including one peak, SITHFAB034 needs twelve with full menu advice in every one.

And it does not, by itself, create a migration pathway. The occupation does that. Through Trades Recognition Australia only Chef (ANZSCO 351311) and Cook (351411) are assessable in this field, and Cafe or Restaurant Manager is not on the Core Skills Occupation List. A management qualification is valuable for the job and not a visa route. See skills assessment.

One more limit worth knowing if you are an international student: only three of our courses are CRICOS-registered — SIT40422 Certificate IV in Hospitality (116358F), SIT50322 Diploma of Event Management (118427D) and SIT50422 Diploma of Hospitality Management (115534C). Neither dedicated cookery qualification is.

Where to start

Need to work now	RSA, food handling
Building a career	SIT30622 Certificate III in Hospitality
Working a restaurant floor	SIT30722 Restaurant Front of House — RSA, food safety and cash handling are all core
Moving into supervision	SIT40422 Certificate IV in Hospitality
Already experienced	Ask about RPL at the pre-training review — see contact
Not sure	Your guide to selecting the right course

One practical constraint: our delivery footprint is not uniform. The business and general hospitality qualifications are available in all eight states and territories; commercial cookery is SA, TAS, VIC and WA; kitchen management is VIC and WA; both diplomas are Victoria only.

About us

We are Complete Hospitality Training, RTO 3722, CRICOS 04242E. Level 3, 28 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne VIC 3000, and 410 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010. Contact melbourne@cht.edu.au or +61 3 9654 1554.

See also all courses, skills assessment and the student toolkit.

We link to the relevant course and regulatory sources in this guide. Check those sources for current requirements, and confirm course availability, delivery, fees and entry requirements with us before enrolling.

Can I work in hospitality without a qualification?

In many roles yes — but not serving alcohol, and not as a Food Safety Supervisor.

Do food handlers legally need an accredited certificate?

No. Standard 3.2.2A accepts a non-accredited course covering the four required topics, or commensurate skills and knowledge. The accredited unit gives you proof and portability instead.

Can an untrained person handle food under supervision?

Not as the stated alternative. The standard offers completed training or commensurate skills and knowledge; supervision is a separate duty on the Food Safety Supervisor.

Is a short course enough?

For a specific licensing requirement, often. For a career, a qualification carries more — and the units you take now credit-transfer into it.

What is a skill set, and does it count?

A nationally recognised group of units, smaller than a qualification, recorded against your USI like any other result. We hold 81 current skill sets. The units inside one credit-transfer into the full qualification, so it is a genuine starting point rather than a consolation prize.

What exactly must be printed on a Statement of Attainment?

The issuing organisation's name, registration code and logo; the full title and national code of every unit; the NRT logo used in accordance with the NRT Logo Conditions of Use; an authorised signature; a seal, corporate identifier or unique watermark; the statement that a VET statement of attainment is issued when someone has completed one or more accredited units; and, where the units form part of a larger qualification, a statement identifying it. Your USI must not appear on it. That list is what makes the document transferable between RTOs.

How quickly should my certificate arrive?

Within 30 calendar days of completion of the assessment, once you have been assessed as meeting the training product requirements and have paid all agreed fees. An RTO must not issue it before that assessment, and should not be sitting on it long after.

I lost my certificate from years ago. Is it gone?

No. An RTO must produce a copy of certification documentation on request, and must retain records of all AQF certification documentation for thirty years. Your USI transcript holds the record as well. Ask the issuing RTO by its code rather than by whichever trading name was on the original.

Will it get me a pay rise?

It supports a higher award classification, which is where hospitality pay increases come from. A relevant AQF Certificate III or higher used at work sets a Level 4 minimum under MA000009.

Which award covers me?

The premises decides, not your title. There are four: MA000009 for hotels, pubs and casinos; MA000058 for registered not-for-profit clubs; MA000119 for standalone restaurants, cafes and night clubs; MA000003 for takeaway and food courts.

I work in an RSL club. Is that the hospitality award?

No — MA000058, the Registered and Licensed Clubs Award. MA000009 clause 4.4(d)(i) expressly excludes clubs registered or recognised under state or territory legislation. The club must be registered under a liquor, gaming, associations or corporations statute and operate not-for-profit for its members.

I have ten years experience and no certificate.

RPL is designed for exactly that, and RTOs must offer it under Standard 1.6. It rests on the flexibility principle: assessment must judge your skills regardless of how or where you acquired them. Raise it before enrolling, at the pre-training review under Standard 2.2 of the Outcome Standards for RTOs.

What is the difference between RPL and credit transfer?

Credit transfer, under Standard 1.7, recognises a unit you already completed at any Australian RTO — no reassessment, your Statement of Attainment is the evidence, and no student fee with us. RPL, under Standard 1.6, assesses prior skills, learning and experience against the unit's own evidence requirements, and is not available through government funding. We first verify the evidence and equivalence, check that the units fit your training product, and check for licensing or regulatory restrictions before granting credit.

How is my assessment supposed to be judged?

Against four Principles of Assessment — fairness, flexibility, validity, reliability — and four Rules of Evidence — validity, sufficiency, authenticity, currency. In practice: reasonable adjustment and reassessment must be available, your skills count regardless of how you got them, assessment must include a practical component, and the result should not depend on which assessor you drew.

How long should a qualification take?

Long enough to meet the AQF volume of learning for its level, regardless of delivery mode — 1 to 2 years for a Certificate III, 0.5 to 2 years for a Certificate IV, 1 to 2 years for a Diploma — with the volume required to be sufficient for graduates to achieve the learning outcomes. Shortening training without allowing time for skill development, and marketing unrealistically short courses, are both risks the regulator names.

What if I have a complaint, or disagree with a result?

Two different processes. Complaints under Standard 2.7 require procedural fairness, set timeframes, publicly available procedures and escalation avenues, and informal complaints including a conversation with a trainer must be captured. Appeals under Standard 2.8 cover decisions including assessment decisions and must provide independent review at no or low cost, with all avenues for independent review disclosed. See policies (/policies/).

Does my RSA work in every state?

An RSA Statement of Attainment is a national training record, but permission to serve alcohol depends on the destination's rules. NSW permits eligible temporary interstate workers; permanent movers and security or RSA marshal roles must meet NSW training and competency-card requirements, using bridging where eligible. Victoria offers bridging to eligible interstate holders. SA applies approved-provider rules to training from 1 November 2020, with earlier training not required to be repeated solely for that change. QLD and WA require suitable national RSA evidence. Tasmania distinguishes staff from licence holders; the ACT and NT have local currency and refresher requirements. Check the regulator before your first shift. See RSA recognition by jurisdiction ([/rsa/](#)), NSW's rules (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/liquor-and-gaming/training/rsa-bridging>) and SA's rules (<https://www.cbs.sa.gov.au/sections/LGL/RSA-approved-providers>).

Will a hospitality qualification get me a visa?

Not by itself. Only Chef and Cook are assessable through Trades Recognition Australia in this field, and Cafe or Restaurant Manager is not on the Core Skills Occupation List.

Can I study here on a student visa?

Only the three CRICOS-registered courses are open to you: SIT40422, SIT50322 and SIT50422.

Do I need a USI?

For nationally recognised training, a USI is generally required before your qualification or Statement of Attainment can be issued, unless an applicable exemption applies. We can explain the requirements for your enrolment. See the official USI exemption guidance (<https://www.usi.gov.au/students/create-your-usi/exemptions-usi>). Creating a USI is free; recover an existing one rather than creating another. Your USI must not be printed on your qualification or Statement of Attainment.

What if I only finish part of a qualification?

You receive a Statement of Attainment for the units completed, recorded against your USI, and it can support an application for credit transfer under Standard 1.7. Partial completion is not wasted. We first verify the evidence and equivalence, check that the units fit your training product, and check for licensing or regulatory restrictions before granting credit.