Recognition of Prior Learning

Information Pack
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Introduction

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the formal acknowledgement of skills, knowledge and competencies obtained through formal and informal training and education, work experience and life experience.

The process requires the applicant to collect and present evidence whereby a judgement can be made by an assessor panel, against the requirements of one or more units of competence or modules.

The judgement is made on evidence provided by the applicant of the skills and knowledge previously gained through work, study, life and other experiences.

It is important to note that to be eligible for RPL, the applicant must be able to produce evidence of current competence rather than just claim that they hold a current certificate or qualification.

It is essential you are able to demonstrate that the evidence submitted is your own work for the success of the RPL application. This may require you to obtain third party confirmation to authenticate your work.

Being competent means that:

• You can perform a job/task/activity to meet today’s industry standards, and
• You can do this in a consistent way, over time, and
• You have sufficient knowledge to enable you to perform it in a range of situations.

RPL can save time in getting a qualification and avoid unnecessary training. It can also benefit you in other areas of our life, for example:

• Improved job security
• Re-entry to the workforce
• Job promotion
• Career change or improvement
• Moving from volunteer work to paid employment
• Moving on from redundancy or unemployment
• Reduced study load
• Improved career development
• Entry to further education or training courses
• Better planning of future training

The information and templates contained in this document will assist you to gather and collate the evidence required for an RPL assessment. You will attain one of the following three (3) outcomes once your application and evidence are assessed:

• RPL is achieved, and/or
• Marginal or gap training is required, or
• Further significant learning is required.
Eligibility for RPL

An RPL assessment pathway is appropriate where your skills and knowledge is current and industry is relevant.

RPL only applies to an entire unit of competence/module in a course. If you cannot collect enough evidence for a complete unit/module, you can not apply for RPL for that particular unit of competence/module.

People with Special Needs

If you are seeking RPL and you have special needs, reasonable adjustments can be made in the assessment process. If you have a disability, experience difficulties with language or numeracy, or if you are from a non-English speaking background, please discuss your needs with TAFE Queensland North staff. You may also wish to bring a friend, colleague or supervisor to support you during any interview you may need to attend as part of the application process.

Costs

Fees of RPL will not exceed the amount paid by students undertaking a program of study of the same units/modules.

Support Person

It is possible for you to nominate a support person for the duration of the RPL process. The role of this person is to provide you with support throughout the process and help you to explain or provide evidence.

It is up to you whether you wish to nominate a support person and to determine who that person may be. This person could be a friend, family member, mentor or colleague. If you choose to have a support person you are required to notify the assessor and pay for any costs associated with the support person attending any assessments or interviews.
Assessment Process

The flow chart (Attachment 1) in this Information Pack, maps the process involved in RPL and is an overall guide for the applicant. Further detail is provided below.

Submit Application

Your application should include:
- Completed New Student - Personal Details Form
- OR Continuing Student - Personal Details Check Form
- Resume
- Supporting Documentation

Preliminary Interview

A preliminary interview is conducted to select the most suitable unit/s or module/s for the applicant. This will involve a discussion of your previous and current work history and any formal qualifications you already hold, as well as the level of qualification you wish to attain.

You will need to compare the skills you believe you have with the competency units in order to decide which units you can apply to receive RPL for. This may range from one (1) or two (2) competencies to a whole qualification depending on the extent of your existing skills, knowledge and experience.

It is recommended that you provide evidence at this interview that will give the assessor some idea of your needs. If the accessor believes RPL is an appropriate course of action for you, then the process continues. If the assessor does not believe you have a case for RPL, you may still apply for RPL, or seek advice from another assessor or an alternative Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

During the interview you will also discuss how your skills can be assessed. Assessments may involve further interviews, observation and questioning, formal trade tests, work samples or presenting other documentation. Ideally a combination of assessment types are used for an RPL assessment.

Enrolment

You need to enrol in each unit or module for both RPL and any identified gap training. Enrolment can be completed by phone, fax, mail or in person at any enrolment centre and must occur before a formal assessment can be undertaken.
Collect and Collate Evidence

You will need to complete and submit all documentation necessary to have your RPL application assessed including all evidence.

You will need to collect evidence for each of the performance criteria or learning outcomes. An Evidence Record Template (see Attachment 2) is provided in this information pack to help you organise this process. This will show the assessor that you are ready for initial assessment. It is important that you gather enough evidence to support your RPL claim. Consider what evidence you already have that demonstrates your skills and knowledge. Evidence is comprised of examples of work that best illustrates your achievements and learning that matches the selected units of competence or modules. Quality evidence is valid, reliable, sufficient, authentic and current. In addition, you must be able to show your skills meet industry standards.

An evidence portfolio should contain a range of examples. As a general guide, examples of evidence might include documents like:
- Administration documents and programs
- Examples of work or resources which you have produced
- Negotiation documents
- Budgets
- Position description
- Business documents/correspondence
- Qualifications/awards/formal statements of results
- Business Plans
- Reports
- Company policy documents and procedures
- Research documentation
- Diary entries
- Resume/Curriculum Vitae
- Log Books
- Details of informal training programs, seminars, conferences and workshops you have attended that are relevant to your RPL application
- Meetings, agendas, minutes
- References/Referees
- Third party confirmation/reports
- Performance reviews
- Certificates of participation/awards/achievements/letters of commendation
- Recordings and photographs of your work activities - photographs must be verified with the date taken and signed to say that you have produced the work outlined in the photograph.

This list is a guide only. You can add other examples to support your application.

Important: All copies of originals will need to be signed by either a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner of Declarations or a TAFE Queensland North staff member.

DO NOT SUBMIT ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.
**Tip for Applicants:** An easy way to complete your RPL application is to treat it as you would a job application. In a job application, you write against selection criteria and back up with evidence to substantiate your application. With RPL you write against performance criteria/learning outcomes and support your words with evidence.

Your application must be set out so that each unit of competence or module for which you are seeking RPL can be clearly identified, and the matching evidence should appear as an attachment/annex to that claim. If you use a holistic approach to your application, you should ensure that there is sufficient cross-referencing from your application to your supporting evidence. It must be quite clear which item of evidence relates to which performance criteria/learning outcome.

**Remember:** Your evidence must reflect that your skills and knowledge are current. Quality evidence, correctly presented and well documented in an Evidence Portfolio, is the key to a successful RPL application.

**Understanding how evidence is assessed**

There are a number of criteria that underpin decision-making in RPL or in undertaking an assessment of current competence. These criteria help the assessor in determining whether or not the skills you have can be matched to the competency/unit/s. They include:

- **Authenticity** - Do you actually have the skill? Do you have evidence to prove this?
- **Currency** - Do you still have the skills? Are these skills current? Is the evidence recent?
- **Quality** - Can you perform these skills to the right standard?
- **Relevance** - Are the skills you learned elsewhere relevant to your current workplace? Is evidence you are providing appropriate to the unit of competency being claimed?
- **Sufficient** - Is there sufficient evidence to prove you are competent?
- **Transferability** - Is the skill able to be transferred? Can the skill, which you have acquired, be applied in more than one situation?
- **Validity** - Can you demonstrate the skill required? Can you provide evidence that you have these skills?
Assessment Interview

The assessment interview will start by reviewing the Evidence Record Template. This step is to ensure you are ready for assessment.

The assessor will then review the individual performance criteria or learning outcomes against evidence. The assessor will advise what evidence is required to help you achieve this task.

At this point the assessor will tell you what you have achieved from the assessment interview:
• RPL is achieved and application will be made for the appropriate result, or
• Further evidence is required before a final assessment can be scheduled.

If there are any performance criteria or learning outcomes without suitable evidence, these will be noted and you will be given the chance to collect more evidence. The assessor will answer any questions you may have about the RPL process and set a date for the final assessment if appropriate.

If further evidence is required

If the evidence is inadequate for any particular performance criteria or learning outcome, you will be given the opportunity to gather further evidence. The assessor will give you some direction at the assessment interview about suitable evidence you will need.

You should also update your Evidence Record Template before attending the final assessment interview (if applicable).

Final Assessment Interview

The Final Assessment Interview will start by reviewing the Evidence Record Template. This step will ensure you are ready for final assessment.

The assessor will review the individual performance criteria or learning outcomes that did not achieve RPL at the first assessment interview.

It is important to note that you will be required to hand in your evidence portfolio and its content at this assessment interview.

The assessor will clearly indicate your final outcome and what is needed to complete the process.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome you can appeal the decision of the RPL assessor in accordance with the TAFE Queensland Student Rules. If you wish to appeal a decision, please discuss this with the assessor who will advise you on what steps you need to take.
Partial qualification achieved or RPL is not achieved

Your assessor can develop an individual learning plan for you where:
• Partial qualification is achieved through an RPL pathway and you wish to continue with gap training to achieve a full qualification, or
• Your RPL was not achieved and you wish to undertake further learning.

All additional training can be arranged through one of TAFE Queensland North’s Customer Service Centres on completion of pre-enrolment requirements and payment of fees.

Appeals process

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the RPL you may appeal the process by contacting your assessor. The assessor will advise you of the re-evaluation and appeals process including any fees that may be applicable. The assessor may also follow up any other options for review of the process.

THIS NOW COMPLETES THE RPL PROCESS

Alternatives to RPL

Accelerated progression or fast track: RPL only applies to an entire unit of competence/module in a course. If you cannot collect enough evidence for a complete unit/module do not apply for RPL. Instead you should negotiate accelerated progression (early completion of the unit/module) directly with your assessor. In this case the assessor will consider the evidence you provide and negotiate training and assessment to “fill the gaps”.

Accelerated progression requirements:
• Documentary evidence for previous qualification and verified work history
• The completion of relevant assessment which have been negotiated between the delivery staff and the student

Normal enrolment fees apply. All activities shall be recorded as part of the standard operation of the class and the final result processed at the completion of the assessment.

Credit Transfer

The process whereby formal verified documented study equivalent to that of the proposed study is recognised (no fees apply).
Attachment 1 - RPL Process Flow Chart

- Submit application for RPL
- Includes a completed New Student - Personal Details or Continuing Student Form - Personal Details Check Form, Resume and supporting documents.
- Participate in preliminary interview and request an RPL kit
- The RPL kit can be mailed or emailed to you or you can collect it in person.
- Enrol
- The assessor will provide you with an Enrolment Selection Form that details the RPL units and gap training units (if required) for enrolment purposes.
- Collect and collate evidence
- The assessor will determine if your RPL will be granted or whether further evidence is required.
- Participate in an assessment interview
- This provides an opportunity for you to gather more evidence to support your RPL application if required.
- Collect, collate and submit additional evidence
- A final Assessment Interview may be scheduled at this time. The assessor will determine if RPL will be granted or not.
- RPL granted
- Sufficient evidence
- If further training is required you will need to enrol in those units or modules that have not been approved for RPL.
- Further training or experience required
- The result will be mailed to the applicant.

RPL granted

More evidence required

Collect, collate and submit additional evidence

Sufficient evidence

RPL granted

Further training or experience required

NO

NO
## Attachment 2 - Evidence Record Template

**Name of Applicant:**

**Qualification Code and Name:**

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<th>Evidence</th>
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Disclaimer: TAFE Queensland North is collecting information on this form for Recognition of Prior Learning purposes. If required for audit purposes, your details may be forwarded to technical experts/advisors. Only the authorised officers have access to this information. If you are under the age of 18 years your personal information, attendance detail and results may be disclosed to your parent/guardian. Your personal information will not be disclosed to any other third party without your consent, unless authorised or required.