

## Recognition of Prior Learning Student Information

Do you feel that you already have the skills required under this qualification?

If so, review this information on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

If you are awarded RPL you will be awarded the relevant unit/s of competency. This recognizes that you already have the equivalent skills and knowledge and they are still up to date. This means you don't need to study that subject.

## WHAT IS RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING?

Recognition of Prior Learning, also known as RPL, is a form of assessment that matches the skills and knowledge that students already have to the requirements under the unit/s of competency.

These skills and knowledge could have been gained through:

- formal training conducted by industry or education institutions;
- work experience including volunteer roles; and
- life experience.

Students provide evidence of these skills and are granted the units of competency without further study.

### Step 1 – Review the application form & unit of competency requirements

The first step is that candidates should complete the Application for Recognition of Prior Learning Form.

The Form asks you to indicate the unit/s of competency that you feel you already have the skills and knowledge for.

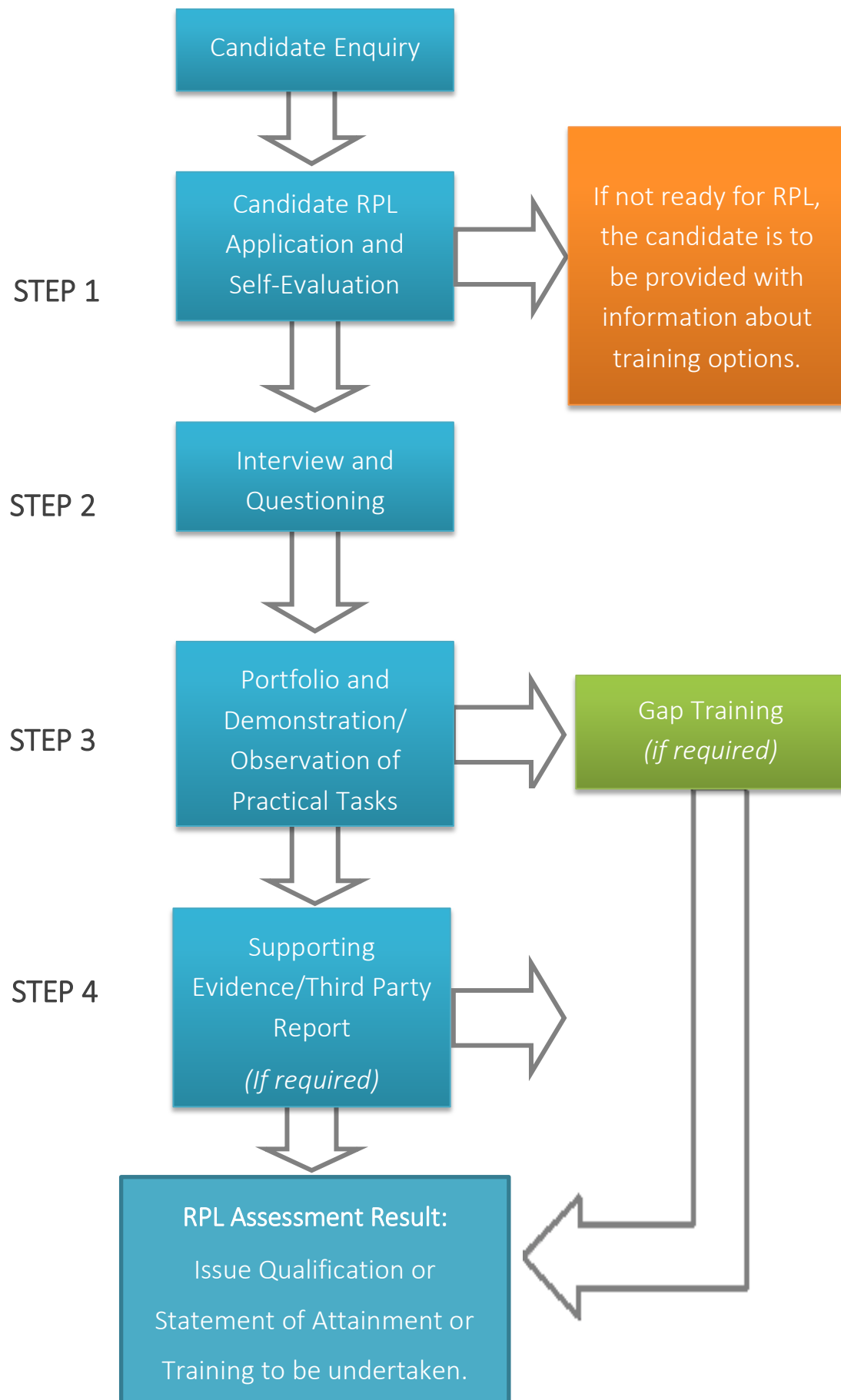
You are directed to look at the units under your college enrolment on Webclass. This shows you the details about the units of competency requirements for each subject.

The key requirement for step 1 is for you to realistically look at the unit of competence requirements and self-assess whether you have those skills and knowledge (and they are up to date). If you do not feel you meet these requirements – continue with your course – which will train you in these areas.

If you are confident that you do meet the requirements for one or many units – complete and lodge the Form, showing the basis of exemption i.e. exact unit of competency already completed\*, similar formal study undertaken, work / life experience, or other.

The following diagram shows the next steps in the process:

## THE RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING APPLICATION PROCESS



## Step 2 – Interview and Questioning

At this stage the relevant College Trainer and Assessment for those units of competency will contact you to arrange a phone interview to conduct an initial discussion about your application.

The goal of the initial discussion is to ascertain whether there will be sufficient available evidence that will support the Recognition of Prior Learning application. No matter how a unit of competency is awarded, it must only be done so after a qualified trainer/assessor has ascertained that the evidence is sufficient, valid, authentic and current i.e. up to date.

Rule	Evidence must...
Valid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fully address the requirements of the units of competency</li><li>- Reflect the skills, knowledge and context described in the unit of competency</li><li>- Demonstrate the skills and knowledge are applied in real or simulated workplace situations</li></ul>
Current	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Demonstrate the candidate's current skills and knowledge</li><li>- Comply with current standards of work practice relevant to that unit of competency</li><li>- Comply with current relevant legislation and technology</li></ul>
Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Demonstrate competence over a period of time</li><li>- Demonstrate competence that is able to be repeated and there is evidence of this</li><li>- Address specific sufficiency requirements in the unit of competency Assessment Conditions</li></ul>
Authentic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Be the work of the candidate</li><li>- Be able to be verified as genuine</li></ul>

## How to prepare for your RPL assessment Interview

The initial interview is an informal one. The College Trainer / Assessor will simply be asking questions to get a better understanding of your relevant background and experience related to the units of competency you are seeking recognition for.

They will ask you general questions about relevant employment and training. This will include the tasks you undertook and how regularly you did them. You will also be asked about the results of any workplace performance reviews i.e. what did your employers think about your skill level.

They will also ask specific questions that will help them (and you) gauge your level of current knowledge and skills for each specific unit. Remember, they are not deliberately trying to trip you up – they simply are using questions that a person who is sufficiently skilled in that area should be able to answer.

The College Trainer/Assessor will also brainstorm ideas with you about how you may collate evidence of your competence.

If you and they determine that you are unlikely to achieve RPL – you will then be assisted with how to progress your study. Fees are only charged if your application progresses beyond this point.

## Tips for the RPL Interview

Here are some tips to make the application process and interview easier for you.

1. Your Assessor will ask you to talk about relevant work roles and your employment history.
2. Look up your records for certificates from any training courses you have completed (regardless of who you did the course with). Be able to explain the courses and what you learnt from them; any assessment processes that they involve.
3. Answer specific skills questions honestly. Remember that after this interview you and the Assessor will be working out what proof / evidence there is to support your RPL – so it is pointless exaggerating your skills during the interview.

### Step 3 – Evidence of Skills and Knowledge and Currency

Your College Trainer/Assessor will have advised you whether it is realistic to proceed with the Application for RPL to this stage (at which point in time fees are charged).

The objective of this stage is to gather the evidence that can be used to support your RPL. This may be done in a number of ways with the most common being a Portfolio of Documents; and/or Demonstration/ Observation of Practical skills.

At this stage an RPL Portfolio / Observation Kit will be issued for you to complete.

Some points to be aware of about this Kit:

- supporting evidence needs to be able to be proven as authentic
- the portfolio needs to be properly presented – with it being clear how each provided evidence items supports your application (i.e. don't just send us every document you have)
- if the evidence is not recent evidence – consideration needs to occur about whether this work skill or task has since changed i.e. are your skills and knowledge still up to date
- there needs to be sufficient evidence to show that you can demonstrate all the required skills and knowledge reliably

The College Trainer/ Assessor will formally consider all evidence provided and compare them to the requirements of the unit/s of competence. From this stage they will identify what documents and conversations are required under the next step.

They may already identify gaps i.e. aspects of the unit/s of competency that you do not meet.

They may advise you that you can address this gap by undertaking a component of the training. A common approach is to address currency by asking candidates to undertake gap training of quizzes about the most recent legislation related to that unit, for example.

## Step 4 - Supporting Evidence/Third Party Report

The purpose of this stage is to assist with the authenticity aspect and to address any gaps identified in the evidence provided. It also supports proving workplace competence vs theoretical knowledge about the subject.

You will be advised of the activities needed in this stage. They may include:

- Requests for written “references” from past workplace supervisors
- Phone “reference checking” by contact past employers and verifying information provided in your portfolio

In some instances the Trainer/Assessor may simply ask you to explain again certain information. For example they may ask you in depth about a provided item of evidence as a way of testing that you were the author of that document as claimed.

After this stage is completed successfully the recognition results will be made. It is normal that the final decision be confirmed after a College Director has reviewed the RPL application and evidence and agrees that they support the Assessors judgment and decision.

### What Result Will I Be Awarded?

Recognition of Prior Learning will be awarded for units that are fully achieved under a Recognition Application. These will show as Exemption on your Webclass result and be officially lodged under your USI as Recognition of Priors Learning Granted.

If however you are asked to undertake gap training; and that gap training is more than a currency test; you will be awarded a Partial Exemption on Webclass and advised what sections of the training and assessment for that subject that you do not have to do, To successfully be awarded these unit/s you must complete the remaining parts. Once you have completed these your result will be Competent – recognizing that you did not fully achieve RPL but have now shown competence.

### Appealing RPL Results

You may appeal the final RPL result in the same way that you can appeal any assessment result.

You may also appeal the decision of the assessor if they stop your RPL Application progressing to Stage 3 (or further).

You will be given details about the appeals process at that time, but otherwise can review the policy on the website.

## The Role of the College Assessor

The College Assessor assigned to your RPL application will be an assessor experienced and qualified in that field. They will be responsible for both guiding you on how to identify and provide evidence in support of your application and making a recommendation about the final result to a College Director.

## Involvement of Workplace Supervisors

You may nominate past and present workplace supervisors as third parties who can provide supplementary evidence in support of your application.

They will not be contacted until you have provided written consent.

Please note that RPL will not proceed on the basis of workplace supervisors reports alone. They are regarded as only supporting evidence that can address minor requirements. Primary evidence of competence is required.

## The Rules about RPL Evidence

We have already mentioned that evidence must be provided and it must be: valid, authentic, current and there must be sufficient evidence.

Some general guidelines about what that means:

- An independent person looking at the evidence must see the its relevance to the skills and knowledge being assessed
- Units of competency assess skills – so the evidence must reflect that the skills (rather than just knowledge) were demonstrated
- If something in the industry has changed – this affects currency of past training. For example if the laws have changed or the technology has changed this will affect RPL applications
- A CV is not evidence. You write your own cv and in any case it describes what you did – it does not evidence the quality of your work activities
- Referees are often subjective and rarely are fully skilled with competency based assessment and the specific unit of competency requirements, and so as such have only supporting value

Your College Assessor will guide you through the evidence gathering process. This may include you undertaking role plays and simulations with them.

Talk to us today  
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