

# RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) POLICY AND PROCEDURE

## INTRODUCTION

As an RTO, Smartlink Training has an RPL policy in place to provide prospective students with an opportunity to gain recognition for any prior learning that they have already achieved through previous formal and or informal training, work and life experiences.

## DEFINITIONS

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means an assessment process that assesses the competency/s of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses.

- a) formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree);
- b) non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, in-house professional development programs conducted by a business); and
- c) informal learning refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities (for example the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through several years as a sales representative).

Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) means an assessment process that assesses the current competencies of an individual and their capability related to performing those skills at this point in time. It assists in reassessing and establishing and verifying that the individual has maintained the required skills and knowledge to demonstrate currency and are up to date at this point in time to perform those required tasks or duties.

## POLICY

Recognition of prior learning means recognition of competencies currently held, regardless of how, when or where the learning occurred. Competencies may be attained in a number of ways. This includes through any combination of formal or informal training and education, work experience or general life experience.

In order to grant RPL, the assessor must be confident that the candidate is currently competent against the endorsed industry or enterprise competency standards or outcomes specified in Australian Qualifications Framework accredited courses. The evidence may take a variety of forms and could include certification, references from past employers, testimonials from clients and work samples.

The assessor must ensure that the evidence is in accordance with the Principles of assessment (Fairness, Flexibility, Validity and Reliability. Please refer to table 1.8.1) and the Rules of evidence (Validity, Sufficiency, Authenticity, Currency. Please refer to table 1.8.2)

Recognition is a process whereby evidence is collected, and a judgement made by an assessor or assessment team against the requirements of one or more endorsed units of competency from a relevant industry Training Package.

## RELEVANT STANDARDS/CLAUSES

**Clauses 1.8 to 1.12** - Conduct effective assessment

**Clause 4.1** - Provide accurate and accessible information to prospective and current students

**Clause 5.1 to 5.3** - Prior to enrolment or the commencement of training and assessment, whichever comes first, the RTO provides advice to the prospective learner about the training product appropriate to meeting the learner's needs, taking into account the individual's existing skills and competencies.

**Clause 1.8** - The RTO implements an assessment system that ensures that assessment (including recognition of prior learning):

complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment contained in Table 1.8-1 and the Rules of Evidence contained in Table 1.8-2.

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**Table 1.8-1: Principles of assessment**

Fairness	<p>The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process.</p> <p>Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner's needs.</p> <p>The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.</p>
Flexibility	<p>Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reflecting the learner's needs</li> <li>assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired</li> <li>drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.</li> </ul>
Validity	<p>Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.</p> <p>Validity requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance</li> <li>assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application</li> <li>assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations</li> <li>judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.</li> </ul>
Reliability	<p>Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.</p>

**Table 1.8-2: Rules of evidence**

Validity	<p>The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.</p>
Sufficiency	<p>The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner's competency.</p>
Authenticity	<p>The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.</p>
Currency	<p>The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.</p>

### Clause 1.12

The RTO offers recognition of prior learning to individual learners.

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### PROCEDURE

- Smartlink Training will ensure to inform all prospective students about RPL by including this information in the pre-enrolment information for students.
- Prospective students who wish to apply for RPL process will need to contact Smartlink Training for further information.
- In the first instance Smartlink Training may conduct preliminary assessment to identify whether RPL is applicable
- Smartlink Training will provide the students with the relevant information in relation to applying for RPL in terms of cost involved, timeframe and what documents (RPL application form, RPL Kit and relevant evidence documents) they will need to complete and submit.
- Prospective students who wish to apply for RPL will then need to complete an RPL application form, the relevant RPL Kit (qualification/unit) and submit the required evidence to be presented, including certificates, statements of attainment, references and copies of any work done and pay the required RPL assessing fees.
- Each application will be dealt on a case by case basis.
- Smartlink Training will then nominate or appoint a relevant trainer/assessor who will review the application for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) who will assess the application as per the recognition process and the principles of assessment and assess the relevant evidence as per the rules of evidence to determine if there are any gaps which require gap training (additional fees may apply) and will advise the applicant of the final outcome, as applicable.
- Where required, the trainer/assessor is to arrange for the applicant to attend an interview (formal or informal discussion via phone, online or face to face) and or demonstrate through practical demonstration and/or oral questioning their knowledge and skills on the matter subject to verify their relevant skills and knowledge as per their RPL application.
- All applications for RPL will be responded to within 20 working days of the receipt of the written application and will formally informed of the outcome and notified via email.
- If RPL is granted then all relevant RPL documents are to be processed by administration team to record the RPL result in the student management system to issue the relevant certificate, record of results and or statement of attainment as applicable and all documents are to be filed in the students file to maintain accurate records for audit purposes.
- If application is unsuccessful, the applicant will be advised of the appeal / grievance process.
- If recognition not given, we will explain relevant and valid reasons of why the applicant has not gained recognition.

### EVIDENCE

RPL Application Form

RPL Kit (Qualification/Unit)

RPL Register

Forms of Evidence: could include but are not restricted to:

- Resume, work history, portfolio of work, diaries, task sheets, journals, logbooks, photos and videos. Work records; contracts, agreements, notes, emails, reports, articles, blogs, industry awards Records of workplace training; Assessments of skills and knowledge; Third party reports from supervisors / managers, clients, trainers; Previous qualifications; Volunteer experiences: Examples of work products; Statutory Declarations; Photographs /Videotapes of work produced; Previous position descriptions; Customer response forms or letters. Licenses and tickets, competency cards, professional memberships, hobbies, interests, community work and volunteering work. Records of completed training, assessment items, assessment records, declarations from a student's employer, and/or a copy of student records provided by ASQA.

### REFERENCES

ASQA Standards for RTOs 2015

AQF Handbook