



RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING CANDIDATE APPLICATION FORM

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What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

RPL is the acknowledgment of skills and knowledge obtained through learning achieved outside the formal education and training system and includes work and life experience including paid and volunteer work and skills attained through leisure pursuits such as musical, mechanical or linguistic abilities.

RPL recognises any prior knowledge and experience and measures it against the qualification in which students are enrolled. The individual may not need to complete all of a training program if he or she already possesses some of the competencies taught in the program.

Why you should apply for RPL

If you apply for RPL and your application is successful you could:

- reduce or eliminate the need for any training in skills and knowledge you already have
- save time by not needing to attend any or a reduced number of classes and completing unnecessary work
- save money because you will not have to buy textbooks and other learning material
- complete your qualification in a shorter time
- advance to a higher level qualification in a shorter time if desired.
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Some terms you need to understand

It is important that you understand the following terms to assist you with your RPL application.

Competence is the demonstration of skills and knowledge that you have gained through life and work experiences as well as any training that you have successfully completed that can be matched against a set of industry performance standards referred to as **units of competency**. These units are grouped together to form a specific industry qualification, within the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF).

Each unit of competency is divided into elements (a set of activities that lead to an overall achievement or demonstration of competence). Each of these elements is further broken down into a set of performance criteria which give a more detailed description of the skills and knowledge you need to be able to demonstrate.

Matching your evidence against each of the elements/performance criteria will help you to reach your qualification more quickly.

Interview Question Bank and Recording Sheets: The interview question bank is the second stage of the process, in which the Assessor and the candidate confirm the knowledge by discussing a series of questions. Each of these questions includes a series of **Key Points** which may assist the Assessor in guiding the discussions.

Practical Tasks and Observation Recording Sheets: These tools are designed to guide the Assessor and candidate through a workplace observation, proving the candidate's ability to conduct the specific tasks and skills required for recognition of competency in the particular area.

Candidate's Information and Self-Evaluation Forms: This document is for the candidate to assess their suitability for RPL process, by asking them to consider each of the points and assessing their ability against the task. It has been broken into smaller skill groups, clustering like activities together to enable ease of completion. It is then reinforced by the candidate's supervisor's comments, both against tasks and as a summary for each group. This serves as third party validation of the candidate's claims.

Third Party Report and Supporting Documentation: The third party verification report is provided for referees, for example the supervisor, to confirm the candidate's skills and experience in the qualification/occupation. This is particularly useful in addressing Employability Skill requirements. It is important to note that third party reports are not always available and that Assessors are recommended to use their professional judgement to determine if this is a requirement

The RPL Assessment Process

Initial Application	Candidate makes enquiry
	Assessor discusses RPL process with Candidate
	Candidate makes initial application
Initial interview	Meeting with Assessor
	Candidate completes self-evaluation form
	Candidate identifies Referees
	Assessor discusses sufficiency and validity of information and advises whether or not candidate can proceed, gap training may be required
Enrolment	Student receives part B of RPL toolkit
Evidence Gathering	Referees contacted and advised about collection of evidence
	Assessor advises students about interview, practical demonstration and collection of third party evidence
	Assessor reviews all aspects of evidence collected and advises student of outcome
Review and Validation	A secondary assessor reviews all evidence presented and validated evidence collected
Decision	Decision made and student advised

The Four Steps in the RPL Assessment Process

Once your training organisation has provided you with the information you need to apply for RPL, you need to follow these four steps in order to complete the process.

Step 1 – Self-Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Before you decide to apply for RPL you need to assess your current competence for one or several units of competency.Complete the candidate information form provided with as much information of your previous work experience as you can.The information you provide will allow for an initial review of your experience and a check to see whether you may be able to demonstrate the required skills and knowledge for the qualification or unit(s) for which you are applying for RPL. Please discuss any questions you may have at this stage with the appointed RPL Assessor.Note: <i>It is possible to gain RPL for an entire qualification.</i>
Step 2 interview with the Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">An interview with an Assessor who understands your industry will be organised for you. They will review – usually with you – the information and supporting documentation you have provided and match up your skills to the units/subjects in the qualification.It is at this point that you will be able to identify any previous work experience and discuss this with your Assessor.It is at this stage that a decision will be made whether you are able to proceed to the next step or whether you need to undergo gap training.
Enrolment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Assessor will advise you whether to enrol in nominated units or the full qualification, or to undertake training – as informed by your Self-Assessment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the RPL assessment process begins, you must be able to provide evidence against the relevant unit/s of competency. It is not enough to simply state that you possess the skills and knowledge required. You must be able to demonstrate competence. This is your opportunity to consider the proof you could provide of the variety of experience you have had. Be prepared to supply examples of your work history if you have any. Depending on the trade or industry you have worked in, you may or may not have documentary evidence available. This should not deter you from seeking RPL, as your Assessor will work with you throughout the RPL process. You will also need to supply the contact details of work referees who can confirm your skills in the industry. <p>Step 3 –RPL Process (Further Interview, Practical Demonstration, Gap Training)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will also be provided with a Portfolio of Evidence template, which is used to demonstrate that you are competent in a particular unit or units of competency. This template includes required evidence to be submitted and what the assessor needs to see you demonstrate. If you have other suitable evidence to support your claim for RPL then you are encouraged to share this with your Assessor. If you do not believe that you have any suitable evidence, then you should discuss your options with your Assessor. Once you have completed the self-assessment and made the decision that you would like to continue with the RPL process (with some Assessor advice), make an appointment for a further interview with your Assessor to finalise the units you wish to apply for RPL and to collect the Student RPL Evidence Kit. Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) It is possible to gain RPL for an entire qualification. (2) RPL is only granted for a full unit of competency, not part of a unit of competency.
Step 4 – Provision of further supporting evidence	<p>After the assessment, your Assessor will advise you of the units of competency you have successfully completed. You will also be advised whether you have gained the full qualification or if gaps have been identified during the recognition process. If you do have skill gaps, these may be addressed through additional training.</p>

How to Prepare For Your RPL Assessment

In order for your skills to be formally recognised as part of a national qualification, Assessors must make sure that you (the candidate) have the required skills and knowledge to meet the industry standard as specified in the relevant Training Package.

The assessor will choose from the following assessment methods to collect evidence

ASSESSMENT TASK 1 - Demonstration of practical skills

ASSESSMENT TASK 2 - Interview questions

ASSESSMENT TASK 3 - Portfolio of Evidence

The Assessor will also arrange to get Third Party Reports, usually from your current or previous work supervisor/s to confirm your previous work experience.

You must be involved in the RPL process so that all the experience, skills and knowledge you have gained over time can be correctly identified and suitably demonstrated. This evidence is gathered and used in recognition of all or some of the units for the qualification you wish to gain.

All assessment requirements will be discussed with you in advance and you will be given the opportunity to ask questions and clarify requirements. Being prepared for the assessment process and knowing what you need to provide can save you valuable time and ensure that the RPL assessment is as simple and stress-free as possible.

Practical Demonstration of Tasks

Your Assessor will organise with you and your employer to conduct a practical skills test at your workplace (if appropriate) or other suitable location.

This is your opportunity to demonstrate your level of competence on a practical level. The assessment will focus on the skills required in the work activities that relate to the qualification in which you are applying for recognition.

Your Assessor will identify the skills they want you to demonstrate by asking you to complete certain tasks.

Your Assessor will provide you with the details of the tasks to be undertaken and the demonstration requirements.

The Assessor will provide you with an assessment tool related to the evidence to be provided for each unit of competency. This evidence would have been generated in your previous work or life experience. The Assessor will itemise the evidence required. A list of suggested documentation that could contribute to a Portfolio of Evidence is provided on the next page.

Formal Interview

Your Assessor will conduct a formal interview where you will be required to satisfactorily respond to a number of questions that will address the relevant units. These questions may also be related to the evidence provided in the Portfolio, Third Party reports or in your practical demonstration.

Portfolio of Evidence

Curriculum Vitae/Résumé	Minutes of meetings
Position Descriptions	Log books / Journals
Performance Appraisals	Membership of relevant professional associations
Qualifications / Certificates	References/letters from previous employers/supervisors
Evidence of training/results of assessment	Industry awards
Professional Development Certificates	Hobbies/interests/special skills outside work
Workplace documents	
Project reports	
Diaries/task sheets/job sheets/logbooks	
Samples of work undertaken	
Photographs of work undertaken	
Any licences or tickets held, e.g. forklift, crane	
Site training records	
	Any other documentation that may demonstrate your trade or industry experience or support your claim

Third Party report

Your Assessor will need to confirm your previous work experience with someone (such as your supervisor or employer) who can vouch for your skills over a period of time.

Your Assessor will contact the referees you provided as part of the student information.

Your Assessor will provide you with evidence form/s for completion by your selected workplace contacts or previous employers.

Discussion with the Assessor to finalise process

Your Assessor will advise you of the units of competency for which you have successfully demonstrated competence. You will also be advised whether you have gained the full qualification or if skill or knowledge gaps have been identified during the recognition process. If you do have skill or knowledge gaps, these may be addressed through additional training.

Note that RPL is recorded at unit of competency level – there is no partial RPL of a unit of competency.

If you have any questions during the RPL process, you should contact your Assessor.

Confidentiality issues

It is important that sensitive information is not included as part of your Supporting Documentation. You may need authorisation from your supervisor to use some of your evidence, so it is always best to check the privacy and confidentiality policies of the organisation. Client names should be deleted and financial figures or other personal details should be blacked out and made unidentifiable.

Tips for Making RPL Process Easier

1. Your Assessor will ask you to talk about your work roles and your employment history.
Bring a copy of your résumé. You might like to write down any work you have done in the past (paid or unpaid) and where this took place.
2. If you have certificates from any training courses you have completed, bring along either certified copies or the originals to the interview with the Assessor and they can make a copy of them.
3. Bring along any other documentation that you think would support your claim that you have done this work over time.

The following is a list of some of the documents you can provide as examples of your work history:

- brief CV
- certificates/results of assessment
- any licences
- tickets held, eg forklift, crane
- photographs of work undertaken
- diaries/task sheets/job sheets/logbooks
- site training records
- site competencies held record
- membership of relevant professional associations
- hobbies/interests/special skills outside work
- references/letters from previous employers/supervisors
- industry awards
- any other documentation that may demonstrate your trade or industry experience or support your claim.

Depending on where you have worked and what the work may have included, you may or may not have documentary evidence. Do not be put off if you do not have documentary evidence, as the Assessor will work with you during the assessment process.

4. Think about who you would consider to be your workplace contact or referee.

Is your employer happy to support your aim to become qualified?

Would you feel comfortable if the Assessor contacted your current workplace or previous workplace/s to validate your skills and spoke to your supervisor/s or employer/s?

5. You will need to supply the contact details of work referees who can confirm your skills in the industry.

Think about who the best person to confirm your skill level would be.

Think about current or recent supervisors or employers who have observed your work and who would be able to confirm your previous work skills and experience. The Assessor will need to contact them.

6. You can speak with your Assessor about other ways you can show your skills for the trade or industry in which you are seeking recognition.

These could include letters from employers, records of any training courses or professional development sessions attended, employers or clients in related industries or government agencies, acknowledgements, workplace forms (as long as there are no confidentiality issues – see below) or any other relevant documents.

7. You must be able to provide evidence against the elements/performance criteria for the relevant unit/s of competency.
8. It is not enough to simply state that you possess the skills and knowledge required. You must be able to **demonstrate** competence.
9. This is your opportunity to provide as much proof as you can of the variety of experience you have had. You should supply examples of your work history if you have any.
10. Depending on the trade or industry you have worked in, you may or may not have documentary evidence available. This should not deter you from seeking RPL, as your Assessor will work with you throughout the RPL process.
11. You will also need to supply the contact details of work referees who can confirm your skills in the industry.
12. You will also be provided with a list of suggested evidence that you could use to demonstrate that you are competent in a particular unit or units of competency. This list is a guide only. If you have other suitable evidence to support your claim for RPL then you are encouraged to share this with your Assessor.

If you do not believe that you have any suitable evidence, then you should discuss your options with your Assessor.

Candidate's Information Form – Pre Enrolment

(You may find it easier to provide the information for the following by attaching a résumé.)

Personal details		
Surname		
First name/s		
Any other name/s used		
Home address		
Postal address <i>(if different from above)</i>		
Telephone numbers	Home:	Work:
	Mobile:	Fax:
Email address		
Are you a permanent resident of Australia?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you need an interpreter to help you with an interview?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a disability which we should be aware of?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Will you need special aids if you are required to undertake a practical assessment?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide details of special needs so that we can assist you if required.		
Current employment		
Are you currently employed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If 'yes', in which occupation are you currently employed?		
What is your current job title?		
Who is your current employer?		
How long have you worked in this job approximately?	year/s	month/s
Is this occupation in the same industry as the industry in which you are applying for recognition?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If 'no', go to the next page.

If 'yes', list some of the main tasks you perform as part of your work that you think are relevant to your RPL application.

If you have further recent industry experience relevant to your application, please attach another sheet or your current résumé.

Rate your knowledge and skills **against the qualification/industry relevant to your RPL application.**

Industry area:	Yes	No	Possibly
I think my experience is of a high level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think I am skilled to do this job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know how to do the work tasks really well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can explain my experience and provide documentary evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have undertaken much of this work without supervision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Further training

I have attended training courses in this area of work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If 'yes', what training did you undertake? Include date training completed (month, year).			

Is there any further information you wish to give in support of your application?

Professional referees (relevant to work situation if not already listed on your résumé)	
Name	
Position	
Organisation	
Address of organisation	
Phone number	
Mobile number	
Email address	
Name	

Professional referees (relevant to work situation if not already listed on your résumé)	
Position	
Organisation	
Address of organisation	
Phone number	
Mobile number	
Email address	
Candidate's Employment History Form	

(You may attach a current résumé in place of completing this section.)

Name, address and phone number of employers	Period of employment (DD/MM/YYYY)		Position/s held	Full-time Part-time Casual	Description of major duties
	From	To			
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

Attach additional sheet if required.

Declaration

I declare that the information contained in this application is true and correct and that all documents are genuine.

Candidate's signature		Date	
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Qualification/Industry in which you are seeking recognition

No. of units	List of unit of competencies being assessed	
	Unit code and name	Core/ Elective
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		
16.		
17.		
18.		
19.		
20.		

Candidate's name:

Date:

required documentary evidence	Document number
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
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16.	

