



## **Recognition of Prior Learning RPL**

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is the formal acknowledgement of a person's skills and knowledge acquired through previous training, work or life experience and which may be used to grant status or credit in a qualification or part of a qualification.

### *What Is The 'Recognition' Process?*

The process of Recognition involves us working together collecting evidence that verifies your competence, from a range of sources. This evidence can include any combination of formal and/or informal training and education, work history and/or general life experience.

### *How Do I Enrol or Seek More Information?*

The generic term 'Recognition' covers recognition of prior learning and skills recognition and encompasses the recognition of competencies currently held, regardless of how, when, or where the learning or skill acquisition occurred. Recognition is an integral component of the vocational education and training (VET) system. When commencing or re-commencing a qualification, you may be able to apply for credit for previous service as an apprentice or trainee, or for relevant work experience. Any credit given should reduce the duration of your course.

## **Step by Step RPL Process**

If you believe you have significant experience in some areas of a qualification and may be able to be recognised in these areas, then this option is available to you through Work Skills.

It is an 8 step process that the Student will need to go through for each unit that they are being recognised in. The process below demonstrates the steps that are outlined to the Student:

### *Step 1: Choose the right qualification for you*

This first step is about ensuring you choose the right qualification for you. Not only choosing the right title but also the right units within your qualification. Often qualifications have "core" units that must be completed as well as "electives" that you can select from a range that best suit your experience.

Work Skills will help you with this. They will go through the qualifications available to you and assist you in choosing the right subjects. This first step is completed over the phone, via email or face to face.

### *Step 2: Service Level Agreement*

If you are interested in enrolling in a qualification and completing it through RPL or Training and Assessment or a combination of both, a Service Level Agreement will be written and sent to you for signing. This outlines all the costs and procedures for you.

Once signed, an invoice will be sent to you for an enrolment fee. An enrolment fee of no more than \$500 is applicable at the commencement of the RPL. Upon payment of this invoice, the RPL will be booked and will commence.

A refund of the enrolment fee will only be payable if Work Skills does not complete the enrolment process. In that case all enrolment fees paid will be refunded except a \$30.00 Administration fee. All other fees are collected after all training and assessments have been completed.

### *Step 3: Collecting Your Evidence*

After you have selected your units, it is important that you take an opportunity to understand what will be addressed in each of the units. The Work Skills Assessor will be guiding you through the RPL process. They will provide you with a list of each of the subjects you have chosen (training plan). It is important for you to look through each of the subjects (units) to see if you have any evidence that can help to support your competence.

Ask yourself: Do I judge myself as competent? If so, what evidence do I have to support this?

The evidence may consist of:

- Work records, including documents that demonstrate tasks you perform, e.g. position descriptions and work profiles
- Signed and dated references
- Records of workplace training.
- Résumé (with verification).
- Assessment of current skills by a qualified RTO Assessor.
- Third party reports from current and previous Supervisors, Trainers, Managers and Colleagues
- Certified copies of qualifications
- Confirmation of relevant unpaid work or volunteer experience (verified).
- Examples of work products, e.g. forms you have developed, letters you have written etc. (verified).
- Diaries or journal entries demonstrating daily tasks or events (verified).
- Photos of work completed
- Visual evidence such as videos, photos, reports of activities in which you have been strongly involved (verified).
- Awards or recognition you have received.

The same piece of evidence may relate to one or more of the competencies, elements, and performance criteria. Therefore, you may be able to use the same piece of evidence when applying for Recognition for a number of unit(s) of competency.

### *Step 4: Meet with the Work Skills Assessor*

The Work Skills Assessor will work through the subjects that still require evidence and will ask relevant questions to identify competence. It is important that time is set aside away from your work station to do this step so you can concentrate on the information you are providing.

One of the best ways to collect evidence is to record you talking about your skills, experience and knowledge. Work Skills can do this through using an audio digital recorder. This option will be discussed with you before this occurs and you will be given the right to decline. This option can be used in both over the phone and face to face situations.

The Work Skills Assessor will also have a digital camera handy when meeting face to face as there might be some evidence that can be photographed to help support your competence.

#### *Step 5: Third Party Feedback*

As part of your RPL third party feedback may need to be completed if:

A) the Assessor requires more evidence

B) your workplace supervisor (past or present) can give strong evidence for some subject areas which require a workplace perspective

This step can be completed face to face or over the phone and will involve the Work Skills Assessor making contact with your Supervisor. The information provided in step 3 and 4 will be used as a basis for verification with your supervisor.

#### *Step 6: Outcome and Feedback Report*

Once your Work Skills Assessor has collected all your evidence, completed the interview with you (step 4) and the discussions with your workplace Supervisor (step 5) they can complete the RPL assessment. The Assessor will map all the information to the qualification. Their role is to ensure they are confident that you are competent in the all elements of your qualification and that there is enough evidence to support this.

You will be given feedback from your Assessor within 21 days of receiving all evidence. He/She will outline whether you have achieved competence or not yet competent. If not yet competent the Assessor will outline what needs to occur to achieve competence.

If the Assessor believes there are some areas where gap training may be required, he/she will outline all the details for this to be achieved.

In this feedback you will also be given pathway options for you to access higher levels of training, e.g. Certificate IV or Diploma, where applicable. All RTOs are required to have an appeal process, so if you believe you have reasonable grounds for disagreeing with the decision, you can contact a Work Skills Access and Equity Manager for information regarding the process.

#### *Step 7: Action Plan*

Step 7 is only required if you are deemed not yet competent in any units of competency in your qualification. An action plan will be put in place with you to achieve competence. This action may be gap training or gathering some specific evidence to demonstrate competence. This action will include dates and timeframes so that all parties understand what needs to be done.

Once step 7 is completed and the gap training or required evidence is gathered, the Work Skills Assessor will evaluate new evidence and once again provide you with outcomes and feedback.

#### *Step 8: Statement of results and/or qualification issued*

On successful completion of your qualification a certificate will be issued to you within 21 days of sign off.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

What happens if I apply for RPL and I don't have enough evidence?

If you do not have enough evidence, we identify with you how we can either a) find ways to locate evidence or b) put an action plan in place for some gap training in the areas you are short of evidence. Ways we can collect evidence are:

- \* Have your Supervisor complete a report stating that you have sufficient experience and application in the areas we require more evidence
- \* A Work Skills assessor comes out to your workplace and observe you undertaking some of your work functions
- \* Work Skills develops some gap questions that require written answers to demonstrate competence.
- \* Work Skills organises to deliver some training in the gap areas of your RPL

## **How long does RPL take?**

The time frame depends on you. There is an initial interview with Work Skills, (by phone or face to face) and then once the qualification is determined Work Skills will send you a list of your units of competency (subjects) in your qualification. You will then be expected to collect as much evidence as possible. Once you have completed this an interview will be arranged. Depending on your level of experience the interview can be completed in one session (2-4 hours) or over several sessions.

Work Skills will assess within 21 working days and have feedback sent to you to say either you have enough valid evidence or that we may require more. Some applicants have completed the RPL in a few weeks and others have taken a few months.

## **What qualification can I be RPL in?**

Work Skills have a range of qualifications across a number of industries such as Hospitality, Automotive, Retail and Business. To identify the qualification and level that best suits your needs, talk to a Work Skills Consultant.

## **Can I get credit transfers for units of competency I have already achieved?**

Yes, if it relates to the qualification you are applying for RPL on. Evidence will need to be provided to support this.

## **How much does it cost?**

The costs vary according to the level of qualification and how much gap (additional) training you might need to complete the qualification. In general terms of costs however, Work Skills RPL fees are normally 60% of the fees for completing a qualification through training and assessment. In

addition there are opportunities for Government funding and incentives with some qualifications at different levels. To find out if you are eligible for Government assistance in the RPL costs, call Work Skills and we will be able to quickly advise you of your best options.

**How do I enroll or seek more information?**

Simply contact us on 1300 360 567. RPL is a fast track way to get your skills and experience recognised to result in a qualification that you can use to either expand your career opportunities or just hang on your wall to show you've earned it.