

# Recognition of Prior Learning Policy & Process

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## 1. Introduction

Workskills International partners with MTTEC who is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO # 41365) and as such is required to ensure individuals have the opportunity to have their prior skills and knowledge assessed and formally recognised.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the formal acknowledgment of competencies (skills, knowledge and attitudes) held because of formal or informal training, work experience and/or life skills. As a result, no individual / participant should be required to undertake a unit of study in a course for which they are able to demonstrate satisfactory achievement of the required competency standard or learning outcome for entry into, and/or partial or total completion of a qualification. RPL is awarded for a total unit of study (no partial RPL of a unit of study will be awarded).

Workskills International accepts that individuals may have gained competencies from many sources including:

- Courses/training programs undertaken in Australia
- Courses/training programs undertaken overseas
- Paid or unpaid work experience
- Community voluntary work and
- Life experience (e.g. travel, hobbies, home duties and caring duties)
- Previous employment roles from different career focus

RPL is only awarded if the Workskills International approved Assessor is confident that the individual currently holds competencies. However, an individual may submit any evidence (generally, evidence must be within the last three years) to the assessment process, and it will be the responsibility of the Assessor to make a judgment as to the currency of the applicant's competencies when making the assessment decision.

Assessment is conducted by a qualified assessor who has successfully completed Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40110/16 or TAE Skill Set), along with either the unit they are assessing the participant's competency against, or a higher qualification in the same field.

This RPL policy only applies to those units of competency from nationally accredited Training Packages and Accredited Courses that relate to MTTEC "Scope of Registration" as a Registered Training Organisation.

Information is supplied to clients to advise of the RPL service and help them decide whether to seek recognition. Clients are informed concerning courses and units for which RPL may be granted, what is involved, advice and support available, costs and fees and the normal time frame for recognition.

## **2. Initial Information and Support**

All prospective and enrolling individuals must be informed in either print or electronic form (such as through the Workskills International website, brochures, workshop information) of the opportunity to apply for RPL.

Individuals are encouraged to apply for RPL prior to or immediately after formal enrolment but prior to the facilitated delivery of units to ensure that they do not miss any class/workshop opportunities offered should they be unsuccessful in the RPL process.

The information provided to students will include that:

- RPL can be granted to an individual who has demonstrated evidence of prior knowledge and experience in life and work relating to the unit of competency for which recognition is applied
- RPL is awarded for a total unit of competency (no partial RPL of a unit will be awarded)

## **3. RPL Application**

- If a student wishes to apply for RPL they must complete the 'RPL self-assessment Application' document with the required information (such as detailed records of their experience, employment, training, etc., which may be relevant).
- The 'RPL Self-Assessment Application form' will specify the units to be completed and students will be required to identify how they address the elements, performance criteria and required skills and knowledge of each unit included in the RPL application.
- Once the RPL application form for the qualification is completed, they are required to submit this with associated evidence to Workskills International. This evidence may take a number of forms and might include: certification, references from past employers, testimonials from clients, photograph, CDs/DVDs, audio recordings and work samples. The candidates are counselled with regards to the type and volume of documentation to be submitted. This is to avoid the candidate being discouraged by having to gather and submit an excess and unnecessary amount of documentation.

## **4. Evaluation of the Application**

- The RPL application and evidence is to be assessed by an Assessor to identify links between any documents and the relevant competency units. The Assessor may need to contact third party to verify any documents provided.
- At this stage, Workskills International may arrange an interview to discuss the RPL Application and review documents submitted. Areas where further evidence may be required to fill gaps will be identified and general feedback provided.
- During the evaluation of the application, evidence supplied and any interviews conducted, the Assessor is to identify any key questions for the competency conversation and suitable techniques of evidence gathering for each competency or cluster of competencies.
- Once the Assessor has reviewed the application and the evidence against the relevant units of competency, he/she will make a judgement about whether the candidate can proceed with the RPL process. The student will be notified of the outcome and whether they can proceed with the RPL process. If the application is successful, they will be provided with an enrolment form and invoice for RPL.

- Applicants must then complete the enrolment form and make payment all documents will need to be submitted to the Assessor for review and signatures. Once completed the process for certification will be 20 days. This period may be longer during the holiday breaks and at peak enrolment times.

## 5. The Competency Conversation

- After payment has been received Workskills International will arrange a competency interview will be held with the candidate, which may be face-to-face, by phone or videoconference.
- The conversation is led by the assessor and is guided by the key questions prepared beforehand.
- The conversation is intended to help the candidate recall examples of their knowledge and skills demonstrated in their work environment. The assessor will probe further when required to gather enough evidence to enable a judgment to be made. It is not necessary to record every word of the conversation. The assessor will take note of critical information from the conversation to aid them in making a judgement about the competence or otherwise of the candidate.

## 6. Practical Assessment

- Certain competencies may have been identified in the application review stage as best demonstrated practically, either by observation in the workplace, or by setting practical tasks for the candidate to complete to justify judgements about particular skills.
- Any gaps in the evidence or doubts raised during the competency conversation are to be further explored through demonstration of practical skills in the workplace or in a simulated environment.
- The assessor will select a practical activity or number of activities that are mapped to the competency unit/s that are to be assessed by demonstration of practical skills. •  
Authenticated work samples can also fulfil this role in the case of some units.
- All practical assessments will be documented and the judgments recorded as per Workskills International assessment procedures.

## 7. The Assessment Decision

- In judging the evidence, the assessor must ensure that the evidence is:
  - authentic (the candidates own work)
  - valid (directly related to the current version of the endorsed unit of competency)
  - reliable (shows that the candidate consistently meets the endorsed unit(s) of competency)
  - current (reflects the candidate's current capacity to perform the aspect of the work covered by the unit(s) of competency) and
  - sufficient (covers the full range of elements in the relevant unit of competency and addresses the four dimensions of competency, namely task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills, and job/role environment skills).
- The assessor should decide which units the candidate should be awarded and if necessary

provide feedback and advice to the candidate regarding units where they did not meet the competency requirements. The candidate will then have a clear understanding of the skill/ knowledge gaps that they need to cover and gain advice on possibilities for gap training for the

outstanding units or other pathways through which the candidate can obtain the complete qualification.

- If the candidate has been deemed competent in the units applied for, a Workskills International Assessment evidence Report file must be completed and passed to the Manager VET programs for the issuing of relevant certificates, academic transcripts and/or statements of attainment, depending on what has been awarded.

## **8. Appeals**

- Where the outcome of an RPL is not granted and the participant disagrees with the outcome, they should first try to resolve the matter informally with the Assessor.
- Where the outcome remains unresolved following informal discussions the individual may appeal by
  - using the methods outlined in the 'Appeals and Complaints Policy.' This policy and procedure can be gained from the Handbook supplied by Workskills International on behalf of the RTO.
  - The request for an appeal must be lodged in writing no later than 10 business days from notification of the outcome of the application.

## **9. Timeframe for RPL application:**

- Applicants will receive confirmation of eligibility for RPL within 21 days of application of the self- assessment documents submission. This period may be longer during the holiday breaks and at peak enrolment times.
- The timeframe for completion of the RPL process is dependent upon the number of units RPL is applied for, however, maximum time for completion is expected to be 5 months.