

Student Information

What is it?

RPL involves the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system. RPL is an assessment process which assesses the individual's non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes or competency standards.

RPL assessment enables individuals to forego training and move directly to having their competencies assessed, thus avoiding the need for unnecessary training that brings with it additional cost, time and effort.

Although it is not necessarily a quick or simple process, RPL aims to provide students who do not require formal learning with a flexible and faster way of having their skills and knowledge assessed against the competencies stipulated in training packages and vocationally accredited courses.

Mature-age jobseekers or existing workers with accumulated life and work experiences are seen as primary candidates for RPL. RPL can be used in two ways:

- As an alternative mechanism for gaining access to a course or qualification. A student may gain entry to a course or qualification using RPL as an alternative to possessing the prerequisites for entry based on formal education and training (for example, students who obtain places in a Diploma course using RPL based on life or work experience when they have not completed the relevant prerequisites); and/or
- For the award of unit(s) of competency that form part of a qualification, leading to the partial or full completion of the requirements for that course or qualification.

How it Works

The first step is to contact the course coordinator, Jan Green, to discuss the whole process and what it means to you as an individual.

If you decide to apply for RPL Jan will support you through the process until you are deemed competent by an assessor.

You will need to complete a background information form outlining the specific knowledge, skills and workplace competence that you already have.

There are different ways of achieving RPL:

- Complete the assessment related to the unit

This is the same assessment that those attending the regular training undertake and is a reasonably quick way of completing the requirements.

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Jan will show you a sample assessment so that you can make an informed decision about this method.

- Compile a portfolio of evidence

This could be the most time consuming method. There is matrix which helps to make it a holistic process, which Jan will show you. You may also be required to attend a gap interview with the assessor and provide contact information for a referee. Gap interviews are voice recorded for ease of transcription.

You will also be required provide access to an informed Third Party who can confirm level of your performance to demonstrate your skills and knowledge. You will be required to attend an interview with an assessor.

- Combination of the above

Most applicants take advantage of a mixture of the different methods of RPL assessment. You may choose to compile a portfolio of evidence of what you currently do. Following the assessment of this information you may then complete assessment tasks related to units or parts of units where gaps exist.

With the RPL process it is the student's responsibility to provide the evidence to demonstrate competency.

What is Evidence?

Evidence is sufficient proof that demonstrates your competence in the Unit of Competency (UOC). It can include work reports, work samples, photographic evidence, testimonials, and documentation relating to courses attended, just to name a few. Evidence can also be obtained through oral or written questioning, assignments, observation and demonstration.

Please Note: You will be required to provide at least two examples of evidence to meet each element of each UOC. You will be given guidance about this by the course coordinator and/or assessor. This generally takes the form of evidence which confirms your knowledge and evidence that confirms your skills and associated work performance. This is very important in the Children's Services Sector especially as you must show you can "do the work" to be deemed competent.

Questions you should ask yourself when collecting evidence include:

- What experience have I gained that is relevant to the elements in the UOC?
- How can I prove that I have that experience?
- What evidence can I present?

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Rules of Evidence

When collecting your evidence, you need to make sure that it meets the following "rules of evidence". The assessor will determine your competence based on these.

Valid	Evidence must relate to the competency standards specifically. Evidence must include all four dimensions of competency and reflect the appropriate workplace level.
Authentic	Evidence must be the students own work.
Consistent	Evidence must be demonstrated over a period of time suggesting sustained performance.
Sufficient	The student must provide enough evidence to show actual competence. Two pieces of evidence is a minimum.
Current	Evidence must relate to the demonstration of recent competence. Evidence is only allowed from within the last two years, unless the student can also demonstrate that skills and knowledge are still being used.

What is the timeframe for RPL?

RPL is not a quick fix and can take almost as long as completing the qualification through regular methodologies but remember you will not attend training and all your experience and built skills and knowledge will be recognised and valued. RPL is an assessment process and as such requires the same rigour in its approach if the outcomes are to be accepted and valued by industry.

What is the cost for RPL?

The cost of RPL is full price of unit of competency. RPL is also available in some funded programs.

What to do if you have an appeal or grievance regarding the RPL process?

Recognition First has policies and procedures in place for the management of grievances and appeals. Specific information regarding these can be found on the website: http://www.recognitionfirst.edu.au/images/Appeals_Policy_V5.pdf. This information is also available from the Course Coordinator.

Stages to RPL Process

