Recognition of Prior Learning -

Assessor TOOLKIT

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# OVERVIEW OF THE RECOGNITION of prior learning PROCESS

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process that recognises the skills, knowledge and experience a student has gained through previous studies, work, volunteer positions and life in general.

The following diagram outlines the RPL process. Further information relating to each step appears below this.

**Steps in the RPL Process:**

**1. Student reads the Student Guide to Recognition at TAFE NSW, and identifies RPL as a potential pathway.**

The **Student Guide to Recognition at TAFE NSW** is freely available on the internet and gives the student an overview of recognition and the possible recognition pathways that may be available to them.

**2. Student and teacher have a discussion to clarify RPL requirements and determine student suitability.**

**3. Student completes and submits Student Toolkit – Recognition of Prior Learning (self-assessment).**

Student must also complete an [Enrolment Adjustment – Credit – Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)](https://www.tafensw.edu.au/documents/60140/76288/Credit-RPL.pdf/0e6e08c3-a5e0-5e2b-637f-cdfcb117c149) (with teacher assistance).

The **Student Toolkit – Recognition of Prior Learning** documentation gives the student more information about the RPL process and the steps required, including completing self-assessments for relevant units in the qualification they are studying, gathering appropriate evidence, and developing a portfolio for their RPL application

**4. Assessor allocated and receives completed Student Toolkit – Recognition of Prior Learning** documentation and supporting evidence.

**5. Assessor completes initial review of Student Toolkit – Recognition of Prior Learning documentation** and determines the appropriateness of evidence submitted for RPL by the student.

The Assessor determines if the student is suitable for RPL. As part of this process, initial RPL advice is provided to the student, including the process and timeframes. The Assessor must certify any transcripts submitted by the student in their RPL application and evaluate the evidence submitted by the student, in accordance with the *principles of assessment and rules of evidence*. The entire RPL process should be completed within three weeks.

Note: More detailed information regarding *principles of assessment and rules of evidence* is available in Chapter 4 – Training and assessment [Clauses 1.8 Conduct effective assessment](https://share.tafensw.edu.au/share/items/9199ef9a-0507-40b4-bfb5-8769a1ac5fb2/0/?.vi=file&attachment.uuid=8b877f66-a11d-46d0-a67a-90f6ea11ba59) (*https://www.asqa.gov.au/standards/chapter-4/clauses-1.8-1.12)* of the *Users’ Guide to the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015.*

**6. Assessor determines if other information or evidence is required which may include:**

* Conducting a professional conversation
* Requesting third party reports
* Arranging direct observations/challenge tests

Support documents are found within this kit and in the Learning Bank under [TAFE NSW Templates](https://share.tafensw.edu.au/share/access/searching.do?q=&sort=rank&type=standard&in=C53e8944e-5f29-4e1d-af0c-06f64257bfbe&dr=AFTER).

**7. Assessor reviews additional evidence provided by student.**

Once the student has provided all additional supporting evidence, the Assessor reviews it against the appropriate RPL Unit Evidence Summary form.

**8. Assessor determines outcome for all units.**

After a review of all submitted evidence is completed, the Assessor refers to the [Enrolment Adjustment – Credit – Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)](https://staff.tafensw.edu.au/documents/2017/11/credit-recognition-of-prior-learning-102-2018.pdf/) provided by the student and documents the outcome and reason for each unit of competency applied for in the application.

**9. Assessor follows Regional RTO procedures for processing RPL documentation.**

The Assessor retains a copy of all submitted evidence and forms in a designated storage location for easy retrieval.

The Assessor forwards the completed work to their designated delegate for final sign off and follows the regional RTO procedures for processing the student’s outcome. **Note**: Procedures will be consistent from January 2019.

# Components in this Kit

The information below is intended to give an Assessor an overview of each component in this kit and details how to use them when assessing evidence presented by a student in the **Student Toolkit – Recognition of Prior Learning**.

## RPL Unit Evidence Summary

This document is used to map evidence submitted by the student against unit requirements. To confirm validity, the Assessor must ensure they cross reference all components of the unit with the evidence received. ***Note:*** One of these forms for each unit requested in the RPL submission must be completed.

## [Enrolment Adjustment – Credit Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)](https://staff.tafensw.edu.au/documents/2017/11/credit-recognition-of-prior-learning-102-2018.pdf/)

The student should submit this form to the Assessor as part of their RPL submission. It will list any units of competency for which RPL is being sought. Once the Assessor determines the outcome for each unit the decision and the reasoning for the decision must be documented on this form. To complete the section use the Assessor Instructions on the reverse side of the form. Once completed, this form and all RPL Unit Evidence Summary forms and student’s evidence is forwarded to an allocated delegate for final sign off. An Assessor can check with their Head Teacher if they are unsure who their delegate is.

These two documents are completed last, as they are a summary (and mapping evidence) of how the assessor has analysed and determined if the student is competent or otherwise. The Assessor’s decision is based on the evidence gathered and how it meets the requirements of the rules of evidence i.e. valid, current, sufficient and authentic.

## RPL Third Party Report

If the Assessor judges that a Third Party Report is required they will need to develop a list of specific activities relevant to the unit/s for which the student is seeking RPL and add these to the template prior to giving it to the student.

The student must then ask a referee (usually their supervisor or employer) to complete the third party report verifying the student’s experience, skills and knowledge as demonstrated during their work activity.

The report must address the student’s performance specifically in relation to relevant unit/s of competency. Third party reports must be signed and dated and should establish the writer’s working relationship with the student and provide examples of what the third party has observed.

## RPL Professional Conversation and Recording Sheets

The Assessor must be familiar with the unit/s of competency and be able to contextualise the professional conversation questions for the student. The Assessor examines what knowledge and skills are required and evidence (benchmark) that is being sought from the student. The questions are directly linked to the evidence/observation requirements.

*Please note:* SkillsPoints may have developed a bank of questions for use during a professional conversation. The questions relate to key points of the unit, provide a suggested range of responses and are mapped. If available the Question Bank will be contained in an appendix attached to the RPL Professional Conversation and Recording Sheets.

**Step 1:** The Assessor arranges a mutually convenient time to meet with the student. The Assessor ensures that the student’s supervisor has been informed (where applicable) and a quiet and confidential space has been arranged if the conversation is being held in person.

**Step 2:** The student may be nervous at the start of the conversation. To put the student at ease the Assessor should explain the professional conversation process i.e.:

* the conversation may/will be electronically recorded as evidence to meet audit requirements
* notes will be written down during the conversation
* each of the questions will be prefaced by placing the question in a context to provide structure for the student’s response

**Step 3:** Conduct the conversation remembering that the student’s responses may also be good evidence for other units of competency that the student is seeking. If the student goes ‘off track’ with their responses the Assessor should guide them back to the original question.

# Collecting Additional Evidence

# Direct Observation/Challenge Test

**Direct observation**

Direct observation or workplace observation can be used with the aim of proving the student’s ability to complete the specific tasks and skills required for recognition of competence in a particular area.

The Assessor should design an assessment task that evidences the required practical skills to challenge the student to demonstrate the key requirements of the unit. Elements of these may be demonstrated in the Professional Conversations and related documentary evidence. The Assessor will need to make provision for the student to undertake these assessment tasks either in their place of work or in a simulated environment at a mutually agreeable time.

**Challenge Test**

A challenge test can be a written, oral and/or practical test, an assignment or a project designed to evaluate the applicant's competencies.

The TAFE NSW assessment templates can be used to develop a suitable assessment task to meet specific requirements, remembering that the notes made by the Assessor during the observation of the practical demonstration are important evidence and should be retained as part of the student’s RPL assessment records.

Note: TAFE NSW [Assessment templates](https://share.tafensw.edu.au/share/access/searching.do?q=&sort=rank&type=standard&in=C53e8944e-5f29-4e1d-af0c-06f64257bfbe&dr=AFTER) are available from the Learning Bank