



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)



A guide for candidates

RTO Code 52790

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1. What is RPL?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process that recognises the knowledge and skills that individuals have gained through formal and informal learning through life and work experiences. RPL gives individuals the opportunity to have their knowledge and skills assessed against competencies in nationally recognised training programs to be deemed competent in either part or a full qualification or individual unit of competency.

Through a formal RPL process, eligible candidates are not required to participate in formal training in areas where they have been deemed competent.

2. RPL Process

South Regional TAFE (SRTAFE) has an RPL process which involves various steps, which are detailed in Diagram 1 below. Each step in this process is described in the diagram and it is the responsibility of prospective RPL candidates to familiarise themselves with each step and to seek clarification from SRTAFE in relation to their eligibility for RPL.

It is important to note that not all individuals are eligible to participate in an RPL process and this needs to be identified before any formal process commences.

On receipt of an RPL inquiry a SRTAFE, an RPL Administrator will be appointed to determine the eligibility of the prospective candidate and to facilitate the RPL process with both SRTAFE staff and the candidate to ensure the process is followed by both parties and an outcome is achieved within the agreed timeframes.

3. Eligibility for RPL

As stated earlier, not all individuals will be eligible for RPL. This is primarily due to verbal claims made relating to knowledge, skills and previous experience not being substantiated with supporting evidence.

A verbal claim about what experiences an individual may have is not sufficient. All claims must be supported with evidence relating to each claim. For example, an individual stating they have worked in a warehouse for five years picking orders must be supported with evidence from: (a) their employer (past or present) confirming this claim; (b) supervisor reports or testimonials; (c) copies of job descriptions; (d) photographs/videos, etc.

Another example is a claim that may relate to volunteering as a junior sports coach. A claim of this type would need to be supported with evidence that may be in the form of: (a) a letter from the club's CEO/Chair; (b) a written testimonial from the team coach; (c) an article that may have been published in a newsletter.

Similar would be claims of club memberships: evidence of membership and how being a member of such an organisation/club contributes to the competencies listed in the RPL application.

If this level of evidence cannot be provided for each competency for which RPL is being sought, then a candidate may not be considered eligible for RPL.

4. Evidence Portfolio

Once considered eligible for RPL, individuals will be required to compile an evidence portfolio to demonstrate:

- i. The knowledge, skills and experience claims
- ii. The currency of the competency claims being made
- iii. The relevance of the evidence to the competency areas of the claims

It is recommended individual candidates provide as much supporting evidence as possible while ensuring it is relevant to the competency areas of the RPL application. Adopt the policy of 'less is more' and it is about the quality and relevance of the supporting evidence rather than the quantity.

Evidence that individuals may include in their evidence portfolio may include, but is not limited to:

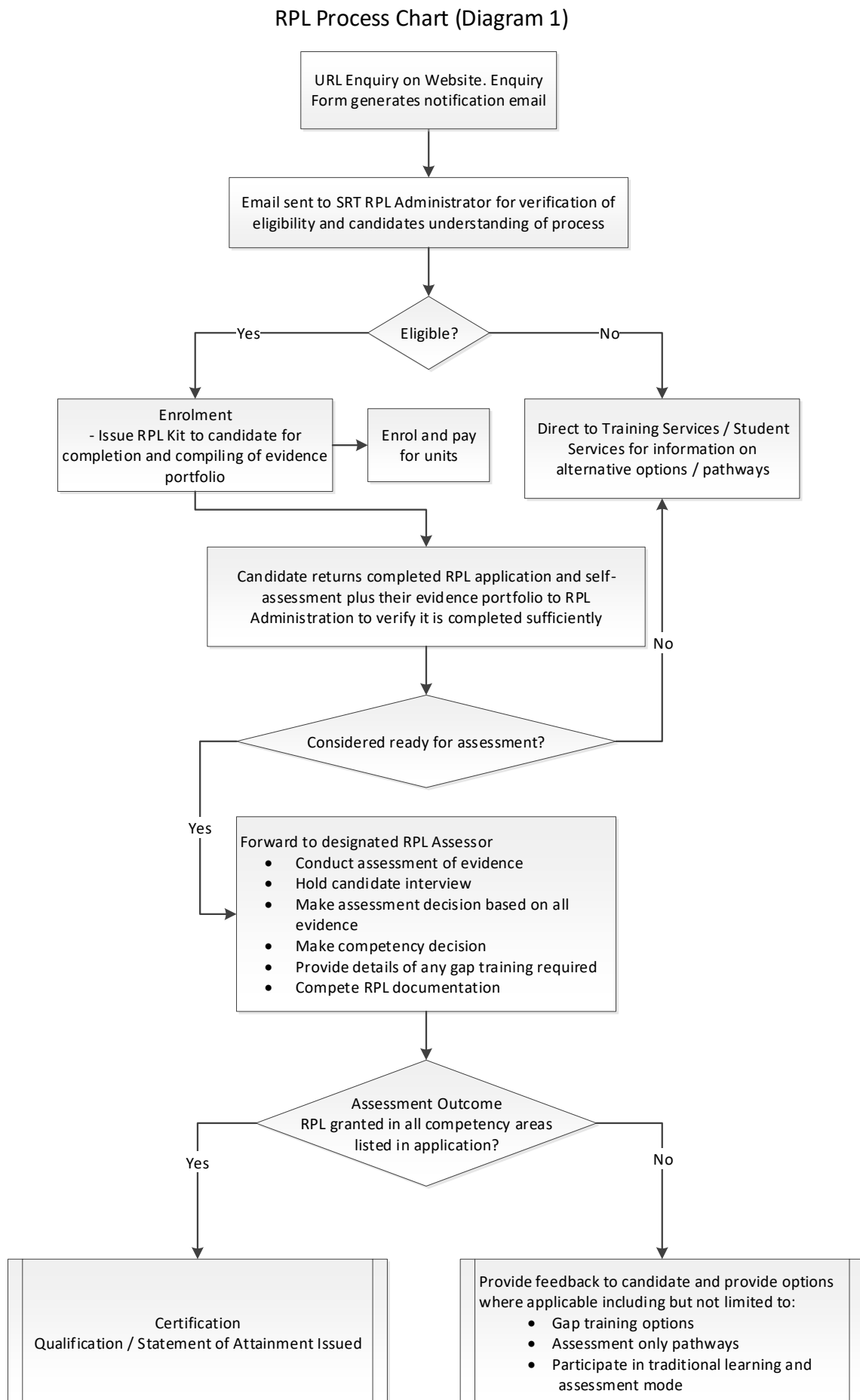
- Copies of any statements, references or articles about your employment or community involvement
- Documents individuals may have produced as part of a job/work role, community involvement, previous study that may include, but not be limited to:
 - Memos
 - Newsletters
 - Assignments
 - Completed work products
 - Minutes
 - Financial reports
- Details of any relevant qualifications which may have been completed
- Details of professional development activities and participation as relevant to the competencies listed in the RPL application
- Awards/ acknowledgements received - i.e. prizes, certificates, licences, company or industry training and/or acknowledgement certificates
- Letters of validation supporting individuals in their previous job and/or community roles
- Any other relevant information an individual believes supports the claims of experience being made.

IMPORTANT: Before submitting supporting evidence, please check it carefully to ensure it is:

- Complete
- Referenced to the relevant competency areas. Do not leave it to the Assessor to make assumptions as it may impact on the RPL outcome.
- Is presented in a logical way for the Assessor to follow.

Further support will be provided by the SRTAFE RPL Administrator on compiling an evidence portfolio, if required.

5. RPL Process Chart (Diagram 1)



6. The RPL Assessment

The purpose of the RPL assessment is for a qualified SRTAFE assessor to consider all of the evidence and make a judgment about the applicant's competence (or not) in the competency areas listed in the RPL application.

Assessment via an RPL process is no different than any other competency-based assessment pathway. It is essential that assessment via RPL meets the same level of rigor applied to any other formal assessment and is conducted in accordance with the Standards for RTOs 2015, Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

To ensure the RPL process is rigorous and conducted in accordance with RTO registration requirements, SRTAFE has a prescribed RPL Kit which is inclusive of both candidates' resources and assessors' recording tools.

The RPL Kit

The SRTAFE RPL kit consists of five (5) sections:

- Section A - RPL Application
- Section B – Self-Assessment and Evidence Portfolio
- Section C – Recognition Interview
- Section D – Third Party
- Section E – Evidence Summary Assessment Outcomes

Section A: RPL Application

This section is completed and lodged by an RPL Candidate providing information about their work history, training activities and details of referees who can be contacted to verify claims made in other sections of the RPL kit.

Section B: Candidate Self-Assessment and Evidence Portfolio

In this section, RPL candidates are required to self-assess their own knowledge, skills and experience against the documented competency areas. The competency areas will be based on the units of competency detailed in the RPL application.

Candidate responses will guide not only the amount of experience individuals claim they have, but also inform the RTO Administrator on progressing the application to assessment or not. The claims made in the self-assessment will also guide the Assessor in the interview phase of the RPL process.

It is essential candidates respond to this self-assessment honestly and have evidence to support their claims in the evidence portfolio submitted with this completed self-assessment.

Refer to Item 4 Evidence Portfolio in these Guidelines.

Section C: Recognition Interview

A recognition interview will be performed after the assessor has reviewed all the candidate's RPL evidence. The recognition interview gives the assessor an opportunity to ask further questions where evidence may be unclear and discuss items which need clarification.

Section D: Third Party

Third party evidence is used to gather and verify information about an individual's experience, work knowledge and skills in a job role/s. A third party may also be asked to authenticate workplace documents or work samples provided by the candidate.

Any criteria to be verified by a third party must be detailed by the RPL Administrator and/or RPL Assessor in Section D of the RPL Kit.

Not all RPL applications will require third party evidence so Section D may be used at the discretion of the RPL Administrator and/or RPL Assessor.

Third party evidence could include:

Information from a supervisor or manager which outlines:

- How long they have supervised the individual
- What the candidate's responsibilities were (i.e. list of duties)
- What skills or competencies the candidate successfully performed while carrying out their duties
- Further contact details of the person providing the report (i.e. phone number or email address)
- Signature of the person providing the report
- Testimonial from a peer
- A letter from a peer authenticating an achievement (i.e. leading a team)
- Further contact details of the person providing the testimonial (i.e. phone number or email address)
- Signature of the person providing the testimonial

Section E: Evidence Summary/ Assessment Outcomes

This section is for 'Assessor Use Only' and is the record completed to summarise the RPL application outcomes.

These outcomes will be discussed with candidates during a feedback meeting with the RPL Assessor. If RPL is granted, candidates will be immediately given status for the units of competency which have been successful.

Additional Assessment Option

Subject to the outcomes of Sections B and C above, the SRTAFE Assessor may request additional evidence be sourced through the following process. This additional requirement will be discussed with, and the need explained to, the candidate following the Recognition Interview.

Direct Observation

Where an assessor determines there are gaps within a candidate's RPL evidence, they can discuss this - with the option of demonstrating their skills within those areas (often in areas where evidence is considered insufficient).

Direct observation could include:

- Arranging to observe a candidate on the job
- Simulating a realistic environment for the candidate to demonstrate knowledge and skills while completing agreed task/s.
- Challenge test where part of an assessment is undertaken and observed by the assessor in a controlled environment.

Enrolment/Fees and Charges

By completing the RPL Application form via the URL link emailed to you by the RPL Administrator, this is the first step in the enrolment process. Upon receipt of this, payment will be required.

Full Qualification: \$150 application fee plus \$65 per unit fee up to \$1000 per qualification.

Per Unit: \$65 application fee per unit, two units \$130, above two units \$150 application fee.

Appeals

If a candidate's application for RPL has been unsuccessful or partially unsuccessful the option is available to appeal the decision.

In circumstances where an application is unsuccessful, whether this be in part or in full, the candidate may decide to:

- Accept the decision; or
- Seek to have the decision reconsidered via lodging a formal appeal.

Information on the SRTAFE's appeals process is available via the website or by contacting the RPL Administrator.

If a candidate elects to appeal an assessment decision, the outcome of the re-assessment is final.

Version control

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Director Training Services	2	31/08/2021