RPL

Developing Recognition of Prior Learning in VET courses

What is RPL ?

Recognition of Prior Learning is a process that evaluates and acknowledges students skills, knowledge, and competencies/experiences that someone has gained through work, life experiences, or formal education, even if these weren't acquired through traditional academic programs. A variety of documentation may be be used to apply RPL. This includes, but are not limited to records of completing the training, when transferring them to current training requirements.

The main points of RPL includes:

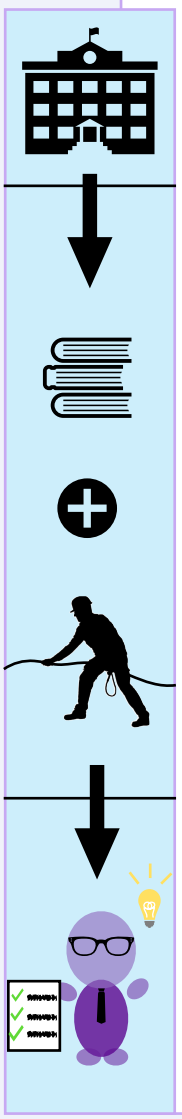
Assessment: Individuals learning outcomes are assessed on their existing knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal or formal learning. This can include interviews, practical demonstrations, exams, or reviewing portfolios of previous work.

Certification: If the assessment of the learning outcomes shows that the person meets the required standards, they can receive formal recognition, such as a certificate, diploma, or even partial credit toward a degree or qualification.

Time and cost-efficient: RPL save time and money by allowing individuals to bypass courses or training they don't need, as they've already mastered the material.

Access to further education: It provides a pathway to further education or career advancement by recognizing non-formal learning.

In summary, RPL is a way of validating and recognizing the value of what people have learned outside of traditional education, giving them formal credit for their existing knowledge and skills. Thus, the RPL focuses on making visible the outcome of learning processes and (in)formal training activities. Such process involve gathering evidence of prior learning, assessing that evidence against specific learning outcomes or skills and competences, and making a judgement about the level of credit or recognition that should be awarded.



«What's in it for various stakeholder groups» ?

As a provider of work-based VET:

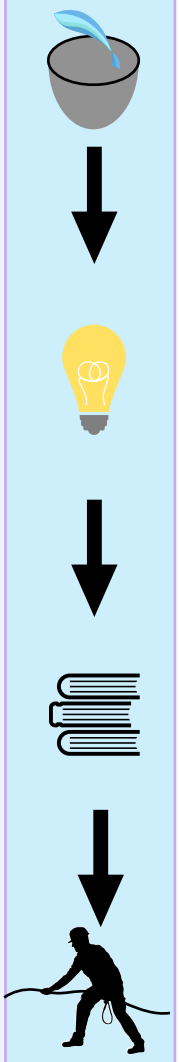
- Efficient and effective work-based learning system supported by learning and communication technologies.
- Cost-effective flexible delivery through assessment 'fast tracking' of experienced learners.

As VET-teachers and assessors:

- Discrete 'learning episodes' mapped to the National Qualification standards and multiple-choice question banks.
- Better targeting learning interventions informed by the RPL processes.
- Automation of knowledge, skills and competence assessment through the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) processes.

Production industry:

- The staff gets improved knowledge and skills in areas that are directly relevant for the production.
- Their staff may start earlier on the process to receive a national qualification.



Work-based learners:

- Learning tailored to specific needs as revealed by RPL.
- Ownership of the learning process through individual learning plans.
- Time efficient pathway to National Qualifications achievement as a result of RPL to inform individual learning plans.
- A fast track to NQ achievement for more experienced learners provided by APL.

Common challenges?

Some common challenges include:

- Do you have students who do not participate in class?
- Do the students really understand the goal of your course?
- How do you provide learning feedback to students so as to resolve misunderstandings and remove misconceptions?
- How to eliminate the duplication of learning, meaning that the students don't have to relearn things they already know.
- The fear of not having their skills recognized can deter many students from participating in the RPL process.
- RPL is an assessment process that requires students to provide evidence of what they have done. They typically need to answer questions, often through an interview, to demonstrate that the required knowledge, skills and competences.

Methodology - Individual follow up

Work-based learners with a wide range of experience need to demonstrate they have the underpinning knowledge, skills and competences specified within their micro courses. The teachers need to establish the learner's knowledge, skills and competence gaps to inform their individual learning and assessment plans.

1. Undertake multiple choice assessment to recognize the prior learning.
2. Gather evidence of prior learning satisfying the requirement for Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).
3. Define knowledge gaps to inform individual learning plans.
4. Targeted learning in preparation for summative assessment and the completion of their micro courses.

How is it done ?

Learners undertake multiple choice questions prior to the start of a new micro course with the associated Competence Unit (CU) or topic designed to establish the learner's knowledge, skills and competences in relation to the requirement. These questions can be presented via a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) or Student Response Systems (SRS) and accessed from a PC or smartphone under invigilated conditions.

The results of the multiple choice questions are gathered by the tutor as evidence of knowledge that can be submitted for accreditation. The learner's 'knowledge gaps' are determined, and individual learning and assessment plans formed that are compatible with the work demands and suit the pace set by the learner.

Discrete learning episodes related to the knowledge and skills gaps established through RPL are offered to the learner. This helps them to target their studies, supported by their mentors and/or tutors, thus preparing them for a summative assessment once they have addressed their specific knowledge gaps.

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