

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

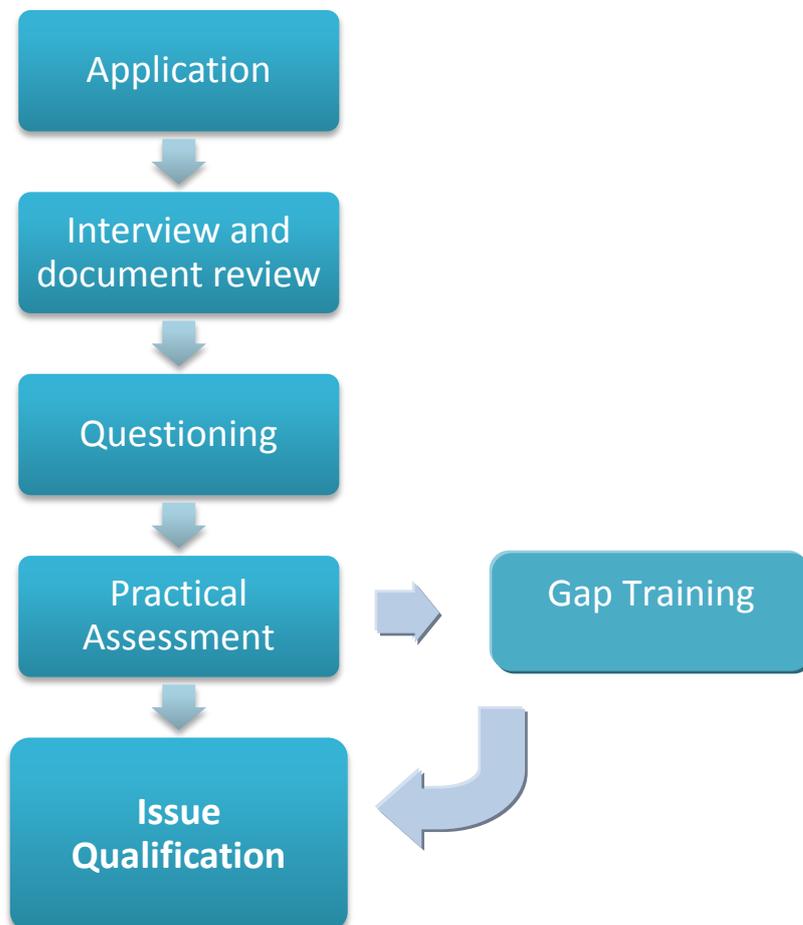
Information for Applicants



ENVIROTECH
Institute of Education

1. Overview of the RPL process	2
2. What is RPL?	3
3. Collecting the evidence	3
4. Initial interview	4
Support person	4
5. Assessment of evidence	4
Results of assessment	5
Appeals process	5
6. Alternative methods of obtaining competency other than RPL	5
Credit Transfer	5
7. FQS - Frequently asked questions	6
Glossary and terms	9

1. OVERVIEW OF THE RPL PROCESS



2. WHAT IS RPL?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is one way that you can have your current skills and knowledge assessed by a registered training organisation to see if they meet today's industry standards.

RPL could provide you with a full or part qualification. RPL is the process that lets you obtain formal recognition for your skills and knowledge, no matter how, when or where you learning occurred.

You may have gained the skills through:

- Previous training (at college or place of work)
- Education (at school, college or place of work)
- Work experience (paid and unpaid work)
- Life experience (leisure pursuits and voluntary work)

Gaining recognition for your skills benefits you by:

- Reducing duplication of training
- Completing studies in a shorter time
- Increasing career options and
- Providing pathways to higher qualifications

3. COLLECTING THE EVIDENCE

To have your skills formally recognised in the national system, assessors must make sure you have the skills and knowledge to meet the industry standard.

This means you must be involved in a careful and comprehensive process that covers the content of all unit/s or qualification/s you can be recognised for. If you wish to gain recognition for a unit of competency you need to provide appropriate evidence to demonstrate that you are currently competent against the requirements of that unit.

Being competent means that you:

- Can perform a job/task/activity to meet today's industry standards
- Can do it in a consistent way, over time
- Have sufficient knowledge to enable you to perform it in a range of situations

You need to provide sufficient evidence of your knowledge and skills by submitting relevant documents and/or materials with your application.

Your evidence could consist of any or all of the following:

- Brief CV or work history
- Position descriptions
- Certificates/results of assessment
- Details of in house courses, workshops, seminars, orientation or induction sessions
- References/letters from previous employers/supervisors
- Diaries/job sheets/log books
- Site training records
- Industry awards
- Emails or other correspondence
- Examples of work or resources which you have produced
- Performance appraisal reports
- Video tapes, tape recordings and/or photographs of your work activities

Depending on the industry you have worked in, you may not have documentary evidence available. This should not deter you from seeking RPL.

4. INITIAL INTERVIEW

The assessor will verify what unit or qualification you are seeking RPL for, and will review the information you have provided, usually with you, and begin to match your skills to the units in the qualification.

At this point you will have the opportunity to discuss your skills and knowledge with the assessor who will understand your industry experience. The assessor is there to provide you with support throughout the RPL process. The assessor will review your application and advise you about what to do next. You may have to:

- Provide more details of your previous experience
- Complete a practical skills test at your workplace to demonstrate your skills and knowledge
- Complete gap training to gain the whole qualification

Support person

It is possible for you to nominate a support person to accompany you to any assessment or interview conducted as part of the RPL process. The role of this person is to provide you:

- Support throughout the process
- Any language support necessary
- Assistance to explain or provide evidence

It is up to you whether you wish to nominate a support person and to determine who that person may be. This person could be a friend, family member, mentor, or colleague. However, they should be someone that you feel comfortable with, that is aware of your work in the workplace and that you feel has a good knowledge of the RPL process and your skills. If you choose to have a support person for any assessment or interview, you are required to notify the assessor.

5. ASSESSMENT OF EVIDENCE

There are a number of criteria that underpin decision-making in RPL or in undertaking an assessment of current competence. These criteria help the assessor in determining whether or not the skills you have can be matched to the competency unit/s. They include:

Authenticity – do you actually have the skill; do you have the evidence to prove this?

Currency – do you still have the skills; are these skills current; is the evidence recent?

Quality – can you perform these skills to the right standard?

Relevance – are the skills you learnt elsewhere relevant to your current workplace; is evidence you are providing appropriate to the unit of competency being claimed?

Sufficient – is there sufficient evidence to prove you are competent?

Transferability – can the skill which you have acquired be applied in more than one situation?

Validity – can you demonstrate the skill required; can you provide verified evidence that you have these skills?

Results of assessment

A result is issued to you following assessment. This result is identical to that issued to a student who completes the same unit of training in a traditional format. The result will be either Competent or Not Yet Competent. If the assessment is Not Yet Competent, the assessor will provide you with feedback. The assessor will also advise you of your options, which can be:

- Submit your evidence for re-evaluation
- Complete the unit through a formal study pathway (perhaps with the negotiation of Accelerated Progression)
- Formally appeal the result

Appeal process

Your assessor will provide you with post assessment guidance in the form of a written report or an interview. If you are not satisfied with the way that you are treated during the RPL process or feel that your assessment was not correct, you may appeal the process by contacting your assessor. The assessor will make sure you are aware of the re-evaluation and appeal process and of any fees that may be applicable. The assessor may also follow up any other options for review of the process.

Envirotech's complaint and appeal process is available at Envirotech Policies and Procedures Manual at the office and the Student Handbook attached to this kit.

6. ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF OBTAINING COMPETENCY OTHER THAN RPL

Credit Transfer

Credit Transfer - is available for applicants who have appropriate documented evidence of achievement in relevant courses and programs from other Registered Training Organisations (RTO). If you have successfully completed an identical unit of competency at another RTO, then you may be granted Credit Transfer towards your current studies. To apply for Credit Transfer you must be enrolled in the program for which Credit Transfer is sought. You will need to provide the original Statement of Attainment or certified copy to support your application. No fees apply.

7. FQS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q How much does it cost?

A Fees do not exceed the amount payable by students undertaking study in the same program. Note that materials fees do not apply
Costs will vary for each qualification. An accurate cost will be provided upon enrolment.

Q How do I apply for RPL?

A Contact Envirotech Institute of Education on 07 5535 3766

- Enrolment pre-assessment will be arranged with an RPL assessor/ content specialist to discuss your ability to enrol in RPL
- Complete the enrolment kit and pay fees

Q When I am ready to enrol in my RPL program – what do I need?

A You will receive all the necessary documentation in the mail or as a soft copy via email once your training and assessment plan has been completed with the assessor. Your RPL will be progressed to the next step when you are enrolled. Once you are enrolled, you will need to arrange a time with an RPL assessor to discuss your evidence gathering, third party validations and, if required a workplace visit (observation) and/ or gap training.

Q Do I need to have good literacy skills to participate in the RPL process?

A The level of literacy that you need will depend on the competency unit that you believe you can prove you have the skills for. If literacy skills are not necessary to undertake the skill then you do not need to have particular literacy level.

Q I want someone to help me with my English at the RPL interview. Who should I choose for this?

A It needs to be someone who you feel comfortable with, is able to assist with any translation needs, and is aware of your skills and knowledge

Q Is there an age limit to applying for RPL?

A There is no age limit for RPL or to undertake further training opportunities. You are never too old to take up training or education opportunities. However, you will need to demonstrate that you have skills and knowledge (work experience) in the area you are seeking your RPL.

Q I have been working for the same organisation for over 10 years is this sufficient evidence to gain RPL?

A No. The length of time in a workplace is not by itself sufficient evidence – you must be able to demonstrate that you can undertake the skills required to the standard required. Some people may work for many years in one place but still need to develop new skills

Q How is it possible to gain a qualification if I have not attended any formal training? Will it be as good as one gained through Envirotech?

A The training system recognises skills and knowledge irrespective of where you learn those skills. You do not have to attend formal training in order to get these skills recognised. The qualification will be the same as any gained through Envirotech Institute of Education

Q I do not believe that I have received a fair assessment, what can I do about this?

A All assessments are subject to appeal and you should have received a copy of the RPL appeal process when your application was accepted. If you contact your RPL Assessors, they will assist you to apply for a review of the assessment.

Q If my employer offers to pay the fees for my RPL how is this arranged?

A Please inform Envirotech in the enrolment process and provide the employer details to enable Envirotech to invoice your workplace for the fees

Q Do I have to be employed to undertake an RPL?

A If you have current or recent skills and knowledge, but are not employed, you can apply for RPL, however if a workplace observation/visit is required this may occur at agreed location which is suitable for the purpose of the assessment. This will be negotiating with your RPL assessor.

Q Do I have to live close to Envirotech campus to do my RPL?

A Envirotech regularly works with RPL clients via various mediums eg videoconference, phone, mail, email etc. If gap training is required to complete your qualification, Envirotech will work with you in providing the best option to suit your requirement.

Q Can I RPL a whole qualification?

A Yes, as long as you have the required evidence. Some candidates achieve partial qualifications or one or two units of competency to suit their employment/career goals.

Q What if I enrol as an RPL student and cannot satisfy the requirements of the RPL process?

A If you cannot satisfy the requirement of the RPL process due to insufficient evidence, you will be resulted and you will need to re-enrol and pay any applicable fees to achieve the qualification or unit of competency through a training pathway instead of RPL.

Q What is the difference between RPL and Credit Transfer?

A RPL is the formal recognition of the skills and knowledge a person has regardless of how or where they have been attained, that is, through informal or non-formal training, work experience, (paid and unpaid) voluntary work and life experience.

Credit Transfer recognises the learning outcomes of past formal study. The focus is on the documented evidence of the past study and how it relates to the learning outcomes of the target units or qualification. The content of the unit previously studied must have equivalence to that of the unit being applied for. A qualification may be attained entirely through RPL.

Q How do I apply for Credit Transfer?

A Credit Transfer applications are handled through the Faculty Administration where you are completing your studies. You can obtain an application form there. To lodge an application you must be enrolled in at least one unit of study and you will need to supply a certified copy of your Statement of Results from your previous studies.

Q Can I RPL if I am applying for study under VET FEE HELP and what is the cost?

A You can apply for RPL if you are using the VET FEE HELP option. The cost is the same as if undertaking a full fee study option however if your RPL is successful you will not be required to attend classes or complete assessment. If applying for RPL under VET FEE HELP your application and enrolment will need to be submitted/completed on or before the census date.

Q How is it possible to gain a qualification if I have not attended any formal training? Will it be as good as one gained through study at Envirotech Education Institute?

A The Australian Qualifications Framework recognises skills and knowledge irrespective of where you learn those skills. You do not have to attend formal training in order to get these skills recognised. The qualification will be the same as any gained through Envirotech Education Institute.

Q What sort of evidence will I need to gain the qualification?

A Evidence will vary depending on the qualification being applied for and what you may have collected during your working career. Evidence could include: resume, references, position descriptions, certificates from formal or informal training, work examples, photographs, etc, as well as a competency conversation/interview with the Assessor. An Assessor may also require a workplace observation or skills test.

Q Will my University qualifications give me credits towards a Vocational program?

A It is possible to use University qualifications towards a Vocational program however you will need to supply the course outline plus an authorised Academic History for the units you are using as evidence. VET FEE HELP your application and enrolment will need to be submitted/completed on or before the census date.

Q Will my International qualification give me credits towards a Vocational program?

A It is possible to use your international qualification for a RPL application however you will need to supply the course outline plus an authorised Academic History for the units you are using as evidence. If the evidence being submitted is not written in English, an authorised translation will have to accompany your application.

Q Do I need to be an apprentice to RPL through a trade qualification?

A No you do not need to be apprenticed to an employer to RPL through a trade qualification. You may have been working for an employer in the same capacity as that of a qualified person but never undertaken any formal training. You may have developed the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to RPL through a full or partial trade qualification from workplace experience over a period of time.

GLOSSARY AND TERMS

Assessment	The process of collecting evidence and making a decision on whether the outcomes have been met.
Certificate/ Statement of Attainment	Training Certificate/Statement of Attainment issued by a training institution that will demonstrate relevant knowledge and skills for some elements/performance criteria for some units of competency.
Competency	The ability to perform tasks and duties to the standard expected in employment.
Competency standard	An industry-determined specification of performance that sets out the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to operate effectively in employment. Competency standards are made up of units of competency, which are themselves made up of elements of competency, together with performance criteria, a range of variables and an evidence guide. Competency standards are an endorsed component of a training package.
Elements	Any of the basic building blocks of a unit of competency which describe the key activities or elements of the work covered by the unit in the training package.
Formal Training	Includes courses, study or training undertaken at a recognised training organisation in Australia or overseas.
Industry Standard	A reference point for determining a person's skills, knowledge and abilities in a defined area.
Informal Training	Includes in-service and other informal training not undertaken through a recognised training organisation.
Life Experience	Includes skills gained through everyday life, recreational pursuits, running a household, caring for family members or voluntary activities.
Performance Criteria	How to evaluate whether someone has the skill described in the element as part of the training package.
Recognition of prior Learning (RPL)	The acknowledgement of a person's skills and knowledge acquired through previous training, work or life experience, which may be used to grant status or credit in a subject or module.
Registered Training Organisation (RTO)	An organisation registered by a State/Territory training authority as nationally recognised to deliver a range of training programs and services.
Self- Assessment	Making a judgement yourself, whether you meet the prescribed outcomes.
Training Package	A training package is a set of nationally endorsed standards and qualifications for recognising and assessing people's skills in a specific industry sector or enterprise. Training Packages describe the skills and knowledge that individuals need to perform effectively in the workplace.
Work Experience	Includes both paid and unpaid work (eg. helping in a family business). It means the things that you have done at work, either here or overseas.