Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure

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1.   Introduction

1.1   Purpose

This procedure aims to ensure that Mater Education (MEL) recognises the previous qualifications and experience of potential students. It also outlines the requirements and processes to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), being an assessment-only pathway of determining the competence of a person. MEL offers the opportunity for undertaking an assessment process through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

1.2   Scope and context

This procedure applies to all potential Vocational Education and Training (VET) students, Student Services Officers and Program Delivery trainers and assessors.

1.3   Governing policy

MPPL-01189   MEL Assessment System Procedure

2.   Procedure requirements

The following procedures are to be followed.

2.1   Applying for recognition of prior learning

RPL is an assessment process which must follow both the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

https://www.asqa.gov.au/course-accreditation/users-guide-standards-vet-accredited-courses/accredited-courses-guide-appendices/appendix-7-rules-evidence

The smallest denomination of recognition that a candidate can request RPL to be applied against will be a unit of competency.

Evidence considered inferring competence or meeting learning outcomes in an RPL assessment process must incorporate a component that determines the person is currently competent in the area being assessed.

A candidate expresses interest in RPL either from an unsuccessful Credit Transfer request, at the time of application for enrolment or through an enquiry to MEL.

RPL document for each qualification is located on Curriculum SharePoint under each qualification in the Admin folder / RPL kit.

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2.2   Assessing recognition of prior learning application

Recognition of certification issued by other RTOs solely is not RPL. RPL is a form of assessment of the competence of a person, while providing credit is recognising the equivalence of studies previously undertaken and completed successfully.

RPL is an assessment process which must follow both the principles of assessment and rules of evidence. The Curriculum Program Coordinator or their delegate will determine eligibility for RPL (understands the assessment and evidence requirements) or refers the applicant to a relevant assessor to commence the RPL process.

2.3   Currency and relevance

MEL recommends that the RPL applicant must have completed the experience or unit of competency outcome within the last 2 years and be current in the knowledge and skills where recognition is being sought.

MEL may require, where currency cannot be established, for the applicant to undertake skills training or update learning in order to ensure relevant skills as well as student and patient safety.

2.4   Requirements with recognition of prior learning outcomes

The assessor will notify students of RPL application outcomes, once completed.

If a student is granted RPL for a particular unit, although strongly encouraged to do so with a view to consolidating learning within the course context, he/she does not need to attend the classes for those units.

RPL will not be granted for units that form part of a cluster of units or qualification and the assessment items cannot be separated. The student is expected to complete all assessment requirements.

If the outcome of the application for RPL is not known by the unit commencement date, the student must attend classes and assessments until they are notified of the outcome.

If the outcome is that more evidence is required, the assessor will liaise with the applicant and determine if requirements are reasonably able to be met or if the unit of competency will not have RPL recognition given.

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2.5   Fees and charges

The applicant is advised by Student Services of fees for application and fees per unit in the initial application phase, where they have identified they may request RPL. If a student identifies they wish to proceed to a formal process of recognition, that is, they wish their evidence to be assessed in full, MEL will advise the applicant of the fees per unit that will apply.

A fee schedule for each program is available on MEL's website and provides the total cost of RPL for each unit should the applicant choose to proceed in enrolling in the RPL assessment process.

Should an applicant wish to seek access to VET Investment Funding or defer fees to a VET Student Loan they will need to meet the eligibility requirements for those programs.

2.6   Records

Applicants will be provided with a recognition of prior learning kit (RPL Kit) which will govern the RPL process. It will contain;

- critical aspects of evidence and the required skills and knowledge,
- a list of each piece of assessment evidence which was considered in the decision making and that links it to the relevant unit requirements,
- a documented competency conversation (actual questions and responses) between the applicant and the assessor and between the assessor and a recent employer,
- sufficient direct evidence of the applicant being able to demonstrate the requisite level of practical skills stipulated

Records are to be retained as required by MEL's Records Retention and Disposal Work Instruction

3.   Definitions

Term	Definition
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	The assessment of any previously unrecognised skills and knowledge that an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system. RPL is an assessment process (as distinct from a training process) that assesses the individual's non-formal and informal learning. This assessment determines the extent to which an individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of a qualification.
Formal Learning	Refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree)
Non-formal learning	Refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, in house professional development programs conducted by a business)
Informal learning	Refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities.

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4.   Related documents

Mater documents

- MPPL-01683   Risk Management Policy
- MPPL-02464   Records Management
- MPPL-01317   MEL Records Retention and Disposal Work Instruction
- MPPL-01360   Recognition of Prior Learning Work Instruction
- RPL Kit (dependant on qualification)

External documents

- Standards for RTOs 2015
- Australian Qualifications Framework
- Skills Assure Supplier Audit Evidence Requirements

5.   Document information

5.1   Earlier revisions

Revision #	Published date	Comment
1.	06 Jun 2019	First version (ID: PR-MEL-040049)
2.	24 Aug 2021	Content reviewed and transferred to new template
2.01	15 Feb 2022	Administrative update: metadata update; no changes to review cycle, next review due August 2024
3	30 May 2023	Content revised, key changes in section 2.5 and 2.6, transferred to new template

5.2   Key contacts

Author	Head of Quality and Compliance
Owner	Director of RTO Operations & Delivery
Key words	Recognition of prior learning, RPL, Mater Education Limited, MEL, education, credit
Committee	n/a

Affirmation

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