

QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

SOP – D6.1

TITLE: SOP: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

COMPILED / REVIEWED BY	AUTHORISED BY
DR A.F. DU TOIT	PROF CJP NIEMANDT
Title: Consultant	Title: Rector
Date: 22 August 2024	Date: 5 September 2024
	
Signatures	

Revision Record

			Date
Previous Version Nr.	1	Last Review	21 June 2017
New Nr.	2	Approved for issue	5 September 2024

Index of Contents

Description	Page Nr
1. PRE-ASSESSMENT PHASE	3
1.1 Initial Evaluation	3
1.2 Assessment Plan Agreement	6
1.3 Referral to Alternative Paths	6
1.4 Services and Support.....	6
2. ASSESSMENT PHASE	7
2.1 Assessment Methods	7
3. EVALUATION PHASE	7
3.1 Evaluation Components.....	7
4. RELATED RPL ASPECTS	8
4.1 Policy and Procedures.....	8
4.2 Quality Management Systems	8
4.3 Fees for RPL Services.....	9
5. EVALUATION AND REVIEW	9

Standard Operating Procedure: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) at Hugenote Kollege

The merit of an RPL application is evaluated through a thorough review of the applicant's documentation, the development of a comprehensive learning portfolio, and an assessment plan that ensures all learning outcomes are met. The process includes verifying the authenticity and relevance of the evidence, conducting interviews, and providing feedback and support to the applicant. This structured approach ensures that the RPL process is fair, transparent, and rigorous, aligning with the quality assurance framework of Hugenate Kollege.

In terms of RPL, access to a qualification programme, or advanced standing (*exemption* from modules or courses constitutive of a particular qualification) may be granted. What follows applies to both processes, unless otherwise indicated.

I. PRE-ASSESSMENT PHASE

I.1 Initial Evaluation

1. Meeting with Applicant: A School-designated RPL facilitator/assessor must meet with the applicant to evaluate the merit of his/her RPL application, to understand his/her background, experiences, and motivations for applying for RPL. During this meeting the RPL process, the type of evidence required, and the assessment criteria must be explained and the candidate must be informed of the cost.

2. Evidence Gathering: Facilitate the gathering and evaluation of available evidence. Collect all relevant documentation from the applicant, including certificates, diplomas, testimonials, work records, and any other evidence of prior learning. Ensure the documentation covers formal, non-formal, and informal learning experiences.

3. Learning Portfolio Development: Assist the applicant in developing a comprehensive learning portfolio that includes: Portfolio of Evidence (PoE)

- A detailed resume or curriculum vitae.
- Descriptions of work experiences and roles.
- Summaries of non-formal and informal learning experiences.
- Reflective statements that explain how the learning outcomes were achieved.
- Copies of ID, certificates, diplomas, and other formal qualifications.
- Testimonials from employers, mentors, or colleagues.
- Samples of work or projects completed.

4. Personal Counselling: Provide personal counselling to guide the applicant through the process. Discuss what the applicant hopes to achieve through RPL and set realistic expectations regarding outcomes and timelines. Help the applicant align his/her RPL application with his/her

Rev. 2 – Aug '24	SOP– D6.I	QF
------------------	-----------	----

long-term educational and career goals. Work on building the applicant's confidence in his/her abilities and the value of his/her prior learning experiences.

5. Orientation to Assessment Instrumentation: Orient the applicant to the assessment tools and methods. Agree on an assessment plan that outlines the specific learning outcomes to be assessed, the types of evidence that will be used, the assessment methods and tools and a timeline for the assessment process.

6. Guidance for Demonstrating Learning: Provide guidance on how to demonstrate learning effectively by:

6.1. Understanding the Learning Outcomes

Familiarize with Learning Outcomes: Review the specific learning outcomes of the qualification, program, or module for which s/he seeks recognition. Ensure s/he understands what knowledge, skills, and competencies are required.

6.2. Collecting Relevant Evidence

Advise on what types of evidence to collect and how to document learning experiences effectively. This includes certificates, work samples, performance appraisals, and testimonials.

Gather Formal Evidence: Include copies of certificates, diplomas, transcripts, and other formal qualifications. Ensure these documents are authenticated and up-to-date.

Non-Formal Learning: Collect evidence from workshops, seminars, training sessions, and any other organized learning activities. This can include attendance certificates, programs, or notes taken during these events.

Informal Learning: Document learning acquired through work experience, volunteer activities, and personal projects. Include job descriptions, letters of reference, performance appraisals, and samples of work.

6.3. Developing a Comprehensive Portfolio of Evidence

Structured Presentation: Organize the portfolio in a clear, logical manner. Use sections or tabs for different types of evidence and learning experiences.

Reflective Statements: Write reflective statements explaining how each piece of evidence meets specific learning outcomes. Describe the context of the learning, what was learned, and how this knowledge or skill will be applied.

Linking Evidence to Outcomes: Explicitly connect each piece of evidence to the relevant learning outcomes. Use headings or labels to make these connections clear.

6.4. Documenting Work Experience

Rev. 2 – Aug '24	SOP– D6.I	QF
------------------	-----------	----

Detailed Job Descriptions: Provide detailed descriptions of job roles and responsibilities. Highlight tasks that demonstrate relevant skills and knowledge.

Work Samples: Include samples of work such as reports, presentations, projects, or any other outputs that illustrate competence.

Performance Reviews: Attach copies of performance appraisals and any other evaluations that highlight achievements and skills.

6.5. Obtaining Testimonials and References

Employer Testimonials: Request letters from current or former employers that confirm skills, competencies, and achievements. These should be detailed and specific.

Colleague and Mentor References: Include references from colleagues, mentors, or supervisors who can validate informal and non-formal learning experiences.

6.6. Preparing for the Interview

Review Your Portfolio: Candidates must be thoroughly familiar with the content of their learning portfolio. They must be prepared to discuss any piece of evidence in detail.

Practice Articulation: Practice explaining learning experiences and how they meet the required learning outcomes. Focus on clear, concise communication.

Anticipate Questions: Candidates must think about potential questions the assessor might ask and prepare answers.

6.7. Using Reflective Practice

Reflect on Experiences: Regularly reflect on learning experiences and how they have contributed to development. Document these reflections in your portfolio.

Continuous Learning: Show evidence of continuous learning and professional development. Include any recent courses, workshops, or self-directed learning activities.

6.8. Following Assessment Plan Guidelines

Understand Assessment Criteria: Make sure the candidate understands the assessment criteria and standards. Tailor his/her evidence and portfolio to meet these criteria.

Adhere to Timelines: Follow the agreed-upon timeline for submitting your portfolio and other required documentation. Plan your work to avoid last-minute rushes.

6.9. Seeking Support and Feedback

RPL Facilitator/Assessor Guidance: Utilize the services of RPL advisors or mentors provided by the College. They can offer valuable guidance on preparing evidence and a portfolio.

Peer Feedback: Seek feedback from peers or colleagues who have undergone the RPL process or are familiar with the requirements.

6.10. Using Learning Portfolio Tools

Digital Portfolio Tools: Consider using digital tools to create and organize your learning portfolio. These tools can help present your evidence in a professional and accessible format.

1.2 Assessment Plan Agreement

The assessor and applicant agree on an assessment plan, including:

1. Standards and Requirements: Outline the standards and requirements for RPL. Ensure the candidate understands the criteria and how their evidence will be evaluated.
2. Types of Proof Required: Specify the types of proof needed for assessment. Guide him/her on preparing for tests, challenge examinations¹, and interviews.
3. Finalization of Assessment Tools: Finalize the assessment instruments to be used.
4. Assessment Schedule: Set dates and a schedule for the assessment process.

1.3 Referral to Alternative Paths

If the applicant lacks the necessary evidence for substantial recognition, refer them to alternative study routes and/or career paths. This may include additional courses, certifications, or training opportunities.

1.4 Services and Support

Provide pre-assessment advice and counselling, including:

1. Preparation for Assessment: Help the applicant prepare for the assessment.

¹ A challenge examination is a type of assessment used in the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process to evaluate a candidate's knowledge and skills in a specific subject or field. This examination allows candidates to demonstrate their competencies and proficiency in a structured manner, typically through a formal test or exam.

2. Educational Planning: Assist in educational planning.

3. Post-Assessment Support: Offer post-assessment support as needed. Help the candidate understand the feedback from the assessment. Discuss areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. Guide the next steps, whether it involve additional evidence submission, further study, or career planning.

2. ASSESSMENT PHASE

2.1 Assessment Methods

Applicants will be assessed using one or more of the following methods:

1. Test Examination: Administer a test or challenge examination. Challenge examinations can take various formats, including written tests, practical exams, oral exams, or a combination of these. The content of the exam must be aligned with the learning outcomes and standards of the specific qualification, learning program, or module for which the candidate is seeking recognition. The length of the exam may vary depending on the subject matter and the depth of knowledge being assessed. Oral exams may consist of verbal questioning where candidates are required to explain concepts, discuss their experiences, or solve problems in real-time, as well as requests to elaborate on certain topics. It must be administered under controlled conditions to maintain fairness and integrity. This could be in a traditional examination setting, online, or in a practical environment depending on the nature of the skills being assessed.

2. Portfolio Assessment: Evaluate the applicant's portfolio. Portfolios are evaluated to establish the relevance, sufficiency, and authenticity of the evidence and are assessed against specific criteria and learning outcomes established by the institution. Feedback on the portfolio must highlight areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Candidates may be asked to provide additional evidence or clarification if needed. Assessors may contact references or conduct interviews to verify the authenticity of the evidence. In some cases, a practical assessment or demonstration may be required to supplement the portfolio.

3. EVALUATION PHASE

3.1 Evaluation Components

Include the following in the evaluation phase:

1. Proof of Learning: Assess the proof of learning provided by the applicant. Based on the evidence and the assessment plan, make an informed decision on the merit of the RPL application.

2. Moderation: Moderate the assessment process to ensure fairness and accuracy. For exemption applications, this consist of two phases, which together constitute the final decision of the Hugonote Kollege RPL Committee, which reports to the Academic Committee

- i) Moderation within the academic department or School by a qualified academic
- ii) Moderation by the chairperson of the Academic Committee.

3. Feedback: Provide structured feedback to the applicant on the outcome of the evaluation.

4. Credit or Access Decision: Decide on granting credit or access based on the assessment. If the evidence is sufficient and meets the learning outcomes, recommend the granting of credit or access to the desired program or qualification. If the evidence is insufficient, provide the applicant with feedback and guidance on how to address the gaps or suggest alternative study routes.

5. Post-Assessment Support: Offer support and guidance after the assessment including recommendations for additional training or study if necessary.

6. Appeal Procedure: Allow applicants to initiate an appeal procedure if necessary.

4. RELATED RPL ASPECTS

4.1 Policy and Procedures

1. Clarification of RPL Policy: Ensure the RPL policy and procedures are clear and accessible to applicants.
2. Applicant Preparation: Ensure applicants are prepared for assessment by competent staff or assessors.
3. Assessment Instrument Criteria: Ensure assessment instruments meet validity, reliability, and other relevant criteria.

4.2 Quality Management Systems

Integrate RPL into the College's assessment practices, ensuring:

1. Moderation, Management, and Reporting: Include RPL in the College's quality management systems.
2. Integrity and Credibility: Maintain the integrity and credibility of the assessment system.
3. Secure Record Handling: Ensure secure production, storage, and distribution of relevant records and data.

4.3 Fees for RPL Services

Ensure RPL services and assessments are cost-effective and do not exceed the costs of full-time residential learning programs.

5. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Evaluate the RPL policy regularly and conduct reviews, using:

1. Candidate Feedback: Gather evaluations from RPL assessment candidates.
2. Assessor and Moderator Feedback: Incorporate feedback from assessors and moderators.
3. Policy Review: Use feedback to review and improve the RPL policy and procedures.