

Tips and Hints to help you prepare for Recognition of Prior Learning

To have 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.

Assessment happens in a variety of ways. Being prepared can save you valuable time and hassle and make the recognition process stress-free for you.

Here are some tips and hints for you:

1. Be prepared to talk about your job roles and your work history. Prepare a resume or jot down a few points about where you have worked, either paid or unpaid, and what you did there.
2. Bring your position description and any performance appraisals you have from any enterprises or facilities you have worked in.
3. Consider the possibilities for workplace contact. Are you in a workplace that is supporting your goal to get qualified? Would you feel comfortable to have the assessor contact your workplace or previous workplaces so your skills can be validated?
4. Think about who can confirm your skill level. Think about current or recent supervisors who have seen you work in the past 18 months and will be able to confirm your skills. The assessor will need to contact them. You may also have community contacts or even clients themselves who can vouch for your skill level.
5. Collect any certificates from in-house training or formal training you have done in the past.
6. You can speak with your training organisation about other ways you can show your skills. These could be letters from employers, records of your professional development sessions, employers or clients in related industries or government agencies, acknowledgements, workplace forms (as long as they don't show client details) or other relevant documents.

Steps in the RPL Process

Step 1 – Provide information of your skills and experience

Contact OIC Admissions that you would like to apply for RPL and request an RPL Application Kit. Complete the forms and provide as much information of your previous experience as you can. This is your first opportunity (and not the last) to provide proof of your variety of experience in the industry. Here you can supply examples of your work history which could include:

- any licences
- General Safety Induction
- brief CV or work history
- certificates/results of assessment
- indentures/trade papers
- certificates/results of assessment – interstate/overseas
- certificates/results of assessment – universities
- results/statement of attendance/certificates – vendor training courses
- results/statement of attendance/ certificates – in house courses, workshops, seminars, symposiums
- results/statements of attendance/ certificates – club courses e.g. first aid, officials, surf lifesaving, etc.

- tickets held e.g. forklift, crane, etc.
- photographs/DVD's/Videos of work undertaken
- work diaries/ task sheets /job sheets/ log books
- site training records
- site competencies held record
- membership of relevant professional associations
- hobbies/interests/special skills outside work
- references/letters from previous employers/supervisors
- industry awards
- site inductions
- any other documentation that may demonstrate industry experience

Depending on the industry you have worked in, you may or may not have documentary evidence available. This should not deter you from seeking RPL as the Assessor will work with you during the RPL process.

You will also need to supply contact details of one or two work referees who can confirm your skills in the industry.

Step 2 – Conversation with Assessor

An assessor will review the information you have provided (usually with you) and begin to match up your skills to the units/subjects in the qualification. At this point, you will have the opportunity to discuss and identify your previous experience with the assessor who will understand your industry experience and conduct a competency conversation with you. You will be required to answer industry related questions to identify your current skills.

Step 3 – Practical demonstration of your skills

The assessor will conduct a practical skills test at your workplace (if appropriate) or at another suitable venue. This, again, is an opportunity to demonstrate your level of competence. This assessment will be focussed on skills that are required in the qualification. Your assessor will identify the skills that he/she will want you to demonstrate.

Further steps

After the assessment, your assessor will give you information about the skills that have been recognised. If you do have skill gaps, these may be addressed through flexible training.