Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Policy

Recognition of prior learning is simply a form of assessment of a learner's competence. Recognition of prior learning uses evidence from formal, non-formal and informal learning (rather than from specific assessment activities directed by the training organisation). This evidence is often combined with assessment activities sometimes known as 'challenge testing'. As such, recognition of prior learning must be conducted with the same rigor as any other form of assessment.

This process allows competency to be determined without the student being required to complete formal assessment tasks. As a result of recognition gained for a unit, that particular unit will not be required to be included in the student's course of study.

JTI has a process that has been structured to minimise the time and cost to applicants and provide a supportive approach to students wishing to take up this option.

JTI has a comprehensive RPL process for all courses and units within its scope of registration. All students are provided with information on RPL prior to enrolment and offered the opportunity to take up this option during the enrolment process.

RPL can occur at any time during a course; however, it is best to commence the process at the start of a course to ensure appropriate arrangements are made for any training that is required and to avoid repetition. The RPL process used by JTI is designed to minimise the amount of paper-based evidence required and incorporate 'competency conversations' and verification from third parties to form the basis of the evidence used in the RPL process. This ensures the RPL process is an accessible option for candidates who are appropriately skilled and experienced.

Procedure

RPL Process at a Glance

The following steps need to be followed if a student wants to apply for RPL:

Step one:

A student may indicate they wish to apply for RPL at any stage during enquiry or enrolment process. The applicant is to receive information from the Career Consultant regarding RPL. The Career Consultant will complete a checklist with the applicant to determine if the applicant is eligible for RPL based on experience in industry and previous training, overseas qualifications etc. If eligible, a non-refundable registration fee will be charged which will be deducted from final fees for RPL or Training.

Students who express an interest in RPL based on their experience and qualifications, are not considered to likely be suitable for RPL may still go through the self-assessment process. The applicant will be given Book 1 – Self-Evaluation/Third Party booklet to complete.

Step two:

Once the applicant has decided on the units they wish to apply for RPL, they must complete Book 1 to demonstrate their skills and knowledge for each unit and return it to the JTI Career Consultant with all the evidence to support their application for review by the Training Manager.

Step Three

The evidence a student provides must be verifiable, with recent evidence of work experience, previous training and life experience. Evidence may include but is not limited to:

- Resume
- Position Descriptions
- Performance Reviews
- Job Applications
- Samples of work
- Photos
- Conversations
- Third Party Verification Report
- Informal training certificates
- Statements of attainment and Statements of Participation
- Letters of support from professional referees
- Any other information that may be relevant in demonstrating your competency

Step Four:

The Training Manager will decide if the information sent by the applicant qualifies them for Recognition of Prior Learning. If the Training Manager deems the applicant has enough evidence for RPL, he/she will allocate an assessor who will then contact the applicant to discuss an interview date, venue and time. The assessor may request further information from the student at this stage.

Step Five:

The Assessor will interview the applicant with regard to the self-evaluation documents submitted. This will take the form of a discussion of the documents presented and verification of authentication of copies of any qualifications, references, etc. The Assessor will then commence a 'competency conversation' with questions accessed from the RPL tool and take notes. The assessor will review the information supplied by the student for each unit of competency. During the interview the assessor assess the student's skills and knowledge against each unit.

During the interview the assessor and student will decide in which unit RPL should be continued and work out the plan for the next meeting. The student completes the enrolment form at this stage if the student continuing with RPL process.

Note: If applicant is unable to meet the standard of answers required and does not address the key points, the assessor is to ask secondary questions relating to the key points.

Step Six

Once the interview is completed the assessor will review the notes from the interview and make a final decision. A decision should be made on each section of each cluster whether or not a task needs to be undertaken in the work place or simulated at JTI premises.
If an assessment is required to be undertaken at the work place, the applicant must contact their workplace to schedule appropriate date and time.

If there are areas identified where the student is not eligible for RPL for, he/she can participate in training to close the skills gaps.

Assessing RPL

From the assessor's standpoint, when deciding whether a student may already be competent in a unit of competency, the following must be considered:

- Is the student's prior learning relevant to the course?

- Are the student's knowledge and skills current? Some fields of study change rapidly that a skill achieved in the past may no longer be relevant or acceptable.

- Is it transferable? A skill should be applicable to a number of settings and situations.

- Is it authentic? The student has to provide evidence, or demonstrate that they have the knowledge and skill.

- Are their knowledge and skills appropriate to the level of the unit of competency or course?

- Are the sources of evidence credible and verifiable?

JTI training and assessment staff will guide the student and assist them in identifying whether they have provided sufficient evidence for an RPL.

The professional referees are contacted to confirm the student's skills and work experience.

Further interviews are conducted with the student complete the RPL tool across each unit.

Practical assessments can be done in a workplace or in a simulated environment.

Arrangements for the gap training are made if required.

After the RPL Assessment students are obligated to pay the balance of the RPL tuition fees as specified before they receive their certificate.

Applicants who are unsuccessful in their RPL process have a right to formally appeal any RPL assessment decision through the JTI Appeals Process.

Record Keeping
All RPL documentation and assessment evidence must be stored in the student file along with evidence of participation in any Gap Training and completed assessments for subsequent results entry into VETtrak.

Responsibility
The Career Consultants and the Training Manager or equivalent and course specific Trainers/assessors are responsible for implementing this policy.