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Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

PURPOSE

Prior study, together with work and life experiences, may have provided an applicant for enrolment or a student with competence in the outcomes prescribed in an AQF endorsed Training Package or Qualification.

Atlantis College of Management (ACM) will ensure that all applicants for enrolment and all learners have access to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy and procedure.

Applications for RPL will be managed efficiently by appropriately qualified assessors, using a process which is valid, fair, sufficient, and authentic as per the *principles of assessment.*

An applicant for RPL is responsible for the provision of suitable evidence, *as per the rules of evidence,* with support and guidance available from delegated ACM employees.

Credit for units of competency will be provided if an applicant who applies for recognition of prior learning is able to demonstrate learning, skills and knowledge that meet the performance criteria, range statement, performance evidence and knowledge evidence (as per the Assessment Conditions) of the units of competency for which the candidate is applying for recognition of prior learning.

SCOPE

Applicants for enrolment or enrolled Atlantis College of Management (ACM) learners may apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL).

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DEFINITIONS

AQF	The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) specifies the standards for educational qualifications in Australia.
Certification Documentation	Certification documentation is the set of official documents that confirms that a qualification has been completed and awarded to an individual.
CoE	Confirmation of Enrolment
Credit Transfer (CT)	The granting of status or credit by an institution or training organisation to students for modules (subjects) or units of competency completed at the same or another institution or training organisation.
Credit for Prior Learning	An apprentice or trainee may gain 'credit' for relevant prior learning or experience. This prior learning or experience must be formally recognised and may mean the duration of the training contract can be changed.
Equivalency test	A test to measure the extent to which a person's existing knowledge or skills satisfy the requirements of an education or training program or a job.
Recognition of current competencies (RCC)	The assessment of a person's current capacity to perform; it applies if an individual has previously successfully completed the requirements for a unit of competency or a module and is now required to be reassessed to ensure that the competence is being maintained.
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. It can lead to a full qualification in the VET sector.
Statement of Attainment (SOA)	Formal certification in the vocational education and training sector by a registered training organisation that a person has achieved: (a) part of an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification; or (b) one or more units of competency from a nationally endorsed training package; or (c) all the units of competency or modules comprising an accredited short course.

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Qualification	Formal certification that is awarded by an accredited authority in recognition of the successful completion of an educational program.
Testamur	The AQF defines a Testamur as 'an official certification document that confirms that a qualification has been awarded to an individual'.
Transcript – Record of Results	A transcript is a certified record of a student throughout a course of study having full enrolment history at educational school including all courses attempted, grades earned, and awards conferred.
Unique Student Identifier (USI)	A national student identifier (or number) for vocational education and training (VET) students with the capability of being fully integrated with the entire education and training system and, potentially, also covering early childhood education.

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PROCEDURES

Provision of information to staff about the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process

All Employees are provided with information regarding the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process at induction.

Updates to Atlantis College of Management's (ACM) procedures relating to RPL are communicated via email by the RTO Manager and/or Compliance Manager and are further published in the Learning Management System (Moodle) Staff Portal Forums.

The RTO Manager and/or Compliance Manager are responsible for ensuring that all employees involved in the assessment of RPL applications are familiar with the processes and steps as listed below.

How Prior Learning is Recognised

Every unit of competency contains a set of performance criteria, a set of required skills, required knowledge evidence and required performance evidence that must be assessed as per the Assessment Conditions before a participant can be deemed competent.

The process involves mapping what applicants already know and can do with the performance evidence and knowledge evidence criteria of the unit of competency.

This recognition process enables applicants to focus on developing skills and knowledge in new areas, rather than re-learning what they already know and can do.

Eligibility to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

All applicants for admission to Atlantis College of Management (ACM), and all ACM learners, can apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL) if they can provide evidence to show that they are already competent according to the performance criteria and the required skills, required knowledge evidence and required performance evidence of the units of competency for which they are seeking RPL.

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Skills Recognition Kit

Atlantis College of Management's (ACM) RPL Skills Recognition Kits, one per training product as per ACM's registered scope, comprise an application form to which the applicant is required to respond, a set of interview questions with an assessor, and interviews by the assessor with referees who can verify the provided evidence.

The applicant is required to provide examples of evidence and details of referees with the submission of the application form.

Examples of evidence that should be provided by the applicant

There are many ways that a candidate can show evidence of competencies held. Recognition of prior learning is granted based on current evidence.

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ACM considers that work that has been completed *within the last two (2) years* will provide examples of current evidence.

Following are examples of *primary evidence* and *secondary evidence* which can be provided.

Applicants are required to include a variety of these documents with their RPL application.

- Certified copies of certificates, qualifications and other documents from courses undertaken at other institutions, TAFE's, and universities.
- Statements outlining courses and or study undertaken and the learning outcomes and/or competencies from these.
- Details of positions held in the workforce
- Curriculum vitae (CV) of work experience (this may include reports from work colleagues)
- Certified copies of any statements, references or articles about a candidate's employment or community involvement
- Relevant samples of completed work tasks (e.g. Roster, Marketing Plan, SOP)
- Licences or Workplace Accreditation (e.g. White Card of Food Handler Certificate)
- Verifiable Photographs of work undertaken
- Diaries - Workplace Journals
- Task sheets - Position Descriptors
- Logbooks - Timesheets - Timecards
- Pay slips
- Membership of relevant professional or industry associations (e.g. Member of the Project Management Institute)
- Industry awards
- Performance Appraisals
- Industry involvement including completed projects
- Relevant work or other experiences
- Evidence of self-directed study, which may include a list of recent readings, synopsis of seminars attended, reports of own research or analysis undertaken.

It is important to note that the above is a partial list of examples of evidence which might be provided only and is to be used as a guide only.

Applicants for RPL assessment will be encouraged to discuss evidence requirements with the relevant ACM training and assessment employees.

Applicants should provide all the documentation they can which clearly shows evidence of the competencies they hold.

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Applying for Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL)

An applicant who considers that he or she has already acquired the knowledge and skills and can demonstrate the performance evidence required for any unit of competency or units of competency assessed by ACM may formally apply to have them recognised.

Applications for RPL will be accepted at any time.

Offshore and onshore applicants for enrolment and existing learners must apply for Recognition of Prior Learning using the "*Application for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)*" form.

The RPL application form provides applicants with advice on how to gather the necessary evidence and demonstrate competence. It is designed to ensure that RPL applicants provide the necessary evidence properly and sufficiently.

Applying for Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL)

Applications for RPL are submitted at the reception desk or by mail using the "*Application for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)*"

It is important to note that any application for RPL must be accompanied by all relevant supporting evidence.

All documents provided in support of an application for RPL must be originals or certified copies of originals.

Fee for an application for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

There will be a fee (please refer to the current fee schedule) for the processing of each RPL assessment.

The fee applies for each unit of competency for which an RPL assessment is being sought.

Payment of the fee must be made prior to, or with, the submission of the application for RPL.

Timeframe for processing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Applications

RPL applications will be assessed, and processed application forms available for collection *ten (10) working* days after submission of the application.

Offshore applicants for RPL will be advised of the outcome of their application by email or mail.

The Student Services Manager is responsible for ensuring that applicants for RPL are advised in a timely and effective manner of the outcome.

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Recording and Justifying the Outcome

The outcome of the RPL assessment will be recorded on the RPL application form, a copy of which will be returned to the applicant.

The applicant will have the outcome explained by the assessor who processed it, and then be asked to sign the form to formally indicate that he or she has been given advice regarding the outcome of their application for RPL.

Responsibility for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Process

The RTO Manager and/or Compliance Manager are responsible for the processes of recognition for prior learning and for the timely and effective assessment of all RPL applications.

The RTO Manager will appoint an appropriately skilled and qualified assessor to assess each Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) application.

Steps in the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Application Process

Applying for RPL and having the evidence assessed is a systematic process which involves a number of clearly defined steps.

The steps in the process are explained below:

Step One – Initial request

Candidates who wish to apply for recognition for prior learning should contact the ACM Student Services Manager.

An appointment will be made so that applicants can be provided with an information package and given relevant advice.

Applicants will be provided with a hard copy of the unit guide(s) for the unit(s) of competency for which they are applying for RPL.

Applicants will be advised to visit the *National Register*, https://training.gov.au/, to obtain information about the performance criteria and the required knowledge and skills of the unit or units of competency for which they wish to apply for RPL.

Step Two - Self Assessment

Applicants will use the information they have been given to conduct a self-assessment against the performance criteria and the required skills and knowledge for the units of competency for which they are applying for recognition of prior learning (RPL).

Applicants will need to consider if and how they have the required knowledge and skills and if they can satisfy the performance criteria by submitting valid, sufficient, authentic and current evidence of competency (i.e. evidence which satisfies the rules of evidence).

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Step Three - Provide appropriate referees to Support Application

The candidate must provide contact details for at least three referees.

The referees should be able to support the claims that the applicant makes about skills and knowledge in the units of competency for which the applicant is claiming RPL.

They should be able to verify that the applicant has the skills and knowledge claimed.

The applicant is encouraged to contact the referees before listing them on this application form.

Step Four - Complete and return the application

Applicants will need to gather all relevant supporting documentation and complete the RPL application form with honest, clear, complete, and concise information.

The completed application form, with certified copies of supporting documentation, must then be submitted at the ACM reception desk.

The application and supporting evidence will be forwarded to the RTO Manager who will appoint a suitably qualified and experienced assessor to assess the application.

Requests for RPL should be supported with details of skill assessments conducted by *Trades Recognition of Australia (TRA)*,
https://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au/.

Step Five - Determination of completeness

On receipt of the application, the assessor delegated by the RTO Manager to process the RPL will determine the completeness and relevance of the documentation. The applicant will be advised of either:

- acceptance of the application, or
- deficiencies that must be rectified or addressed before the application can proceed.

The assessor processing the application should meet with the applicant to explain any deficiencies and to provide guidance about additional documentation that is necessary.

Step Six – Assessment

The assessor delegated by the RTO Manager will compare the evidence provided by the applicant with the performance criteria and required skills and knowledge for the unit.

The assessor will make a judgement about whether the applicant wholly or partially meets the requirements.

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The assessment involves consideration of the following:

Rules of Evidence

The assessor will ensure that the evidence submitted satisfies *the rules of evidence*, as follows:

- Valid

  - Is the evidence relevant?
  - Have the four dimensions of competency been met?

- Sufficient

  - Is there enough evidence?
  - Have the performance criteria and the evidence guide been addressed?
  - Has competency been demonstrated over a time?
  - Has competency been demonstrated in different contexts?

- Authentic

  - Does the evidence provide a true reflection of the candidate?
  - Can it be substantiated that the evidence is the candidate's own work?

- Current

  - Is the evidence recent?
  - Does it demonstrate that the candidate can apply the competency?
  - Was it obtained recently? (within the previous two years?)

Contacting referees

The processing assessor will contact the referees to confirm the skills and experience listed.

The interviews with the referees must be documented in records of interview.

Step Seven – Interview

The assessor will meet with the applicant at Stage 7 to conduct an interview.

The interview will provide the candidate and the assessor with the opportunity to have a professional conversation about the applicants required performance, knowledge and skills.

In the event of partial capability according to the performance criteria, the assessor will outline which performance criteria still need to be mapped, and what evidence is still required.

Note any applicant seeking recognition of overseas qualifications is to be assessed using the guidelines of the *National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR)* in conjunction with contemporary knowledge of conditions at institutions in other countries.

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Step Eight - Notification and explanation

ACM's Student Services Manager will notify the applicant of the RPL decision and the reasons for the decision within *ten (10) working days* of receiving the application.

The applicant will be invited for an interview with the assessor who processed the application and provided with a detailed explanation of the processes which led to the outcome and the reasons for the outcome.

The applicant will be asked to sign the completed RPL processing form to indicate that an explanation has been provided.

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Application Form

The RPL application form provides the applicant with information about the process, and sources of information.

Introduction

The first part of the application form, headed *"Introduction",* describes the process to the applicant. It contains the following headings:

Information and Instructions

The applicant is provided with information about the RPL process. This includes the timeframe for processing and the fee.

Applicants are directed to the *Student Handbook* and website for information about units of competency offered by ACM.

They are directed to the *National Register*, https://training.gov.au/, for information about the performance criteria and required skills and knowledge for each unit of competency.

Applicants are informed that they make an appointment with the Student Services Manager to ask questions about the RPL process.

Steps in applying for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

This section describes the eight steps in the process of applying for an RPL are described.

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Evidence you will need to supply

The applicant is provided with examples of evidence that may be supplied are listed. Information requested from the applicant

There are eight (8) sections to the RPL application form which require responses by the applicant, as follows:

Section One
(Basis of application)

The applicant is to identify the basis upon which recognition of prior learning is claimed (e.g. previous study, work experience, life experience.

Section Two
(AQF Qualification)

The applicant is required to identify the AQF qualification offered by ACM for which recognition or prior learning is sought.

Section Three
(Units of Competency)

The applicant is required to complete a table identifying the units at ACM for which he/she is applying for recognition of prior learning and whether, for each, it is on the basis of previous study, work experience or life experience.

Section Four
(Skills and experience)

The applicant is asked to indicate skills and/or experience which he/she believes are relevant to the units of competency for which you wish to apply for recognition of prior learning.

Section Five
(Training)

The applicant is required to list any formal or informal study or training relevant to the application undertaken since having left school.

Section Six
(Documentation)

In this section of the RPL application form, the applicant is required to list all of the documents he/she is supplying in support of the application.

The applicant is required to cross reference the documents listed with the units for which he/she is applying for RPL (in Section Seven). That is, for every unit for which the applicant is applying for RPL, he/she is required to identify one or more of the documents listed in this section.

The applicant is requested to supply all of the listed documents in a folder and submit it with the application form.

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All documents must be either originals or certified copies of originals.

Section Seven
(Details of relevant study, training, or work or life experience)

For each unit of competency for which the applicant is applying for RPL, he/she is to provide details of relevant prior study, training, or work or life experience.

Section Eight
(Referees - References)

The applicant is required to provide details of at least three people who can support the application, identifying the reason for supplying each person as a referee.

Section Nine
(Signature upon completion)

The applicant is required to sign and date the application upon submission.

Notifying the Applicant of the Outcome

The final two (2) sections of the RPL application form notify the applicant of the outcome and seek the applicant's acknowledgement of the outcome.

Section Ten
(RPLs provided – to be completed by ACM)

This section lists the units of competency for which RPL has been provided.

It is signed and dated by the RTO Manager.

Section Eleven
(Acknowledgement)

The applicant is asked to sign and date the document to acknowledge that the receipt of advice about the outcome of the application and that the applicant understands and accepts the outcome of the application.

The applicant is required to sign this section only after the application has been processed and the applicant has received the notification.

The applicant is advised of the opportunity to appeal against the recognition of prior learning decision.

If an applicant wishes to appeal, he/she must do so in writing, within *twenty (20) working days* of the date entered on the form. The date will allow time for the applicant to receive the application

The applicant is notified that information about the complaints and appeals process is available in the student handbook. The applicant, if not a student, is advised that he/she may request a copy of the student handbook and that it will be provided *free of charge.*

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Changes to course duration upon granting of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

If a credit transfer exemption is granted as an outcome of an application for recognition of prior learning (RPL) to an offshore applicant for enrolment, and that applicant has, or intends applying for, a student visa, the course duration (which will be reduced from the usual course duration) is indicated in the CoE subsequently issued for that student.

Should a credit transfer (CT) exemption be granted as an outcome of an application for recognition of prior an RPL to a student onshore, and that student has a student visa, the change in course duration is reported via the *Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).*

An RPL *does not under any circumstances* lead to an overseas student on a student visa carrying any less than a full-time load of study. For an existing onshore student, a note is made in the student management system, *Wisenet*, of the change in course duration for the student.

Appealing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Outcomes

Applicants for RPL who are unsuccessful may apply to have their RPL assessment reviewed.

All appeals regarding RPL assessments must be in writing and lodged at the reception counter within *twenty (20) working days* of the RPL assessment outcome being made available to the applicant.

The RTO Manager, in consultation with appropriately qualified staff, will determine the outcome of an appeal against an RPL application outcome.

If an appeal against an RPL outcome is allowed, the RTO Manager will inform the applicant of the reasons and provide advice regarding any additional information which may be required for re-processing of the application and what additional tasks, if any, need to be undertaken.

The RTO Manager will appoint a suitably qualified assessor to reassess the application for RPL.

In the case of an appeal, the assessor who is appointed will review all of the material available and make a decision with one of two (2) possible outcomes:

- grant recognition for prior learning
- deny recognition for prior learning

Timeframe for processing RPL applications

Processed applications will be available for collection *ten (10) working days* after submission of the application.

Offshore applicants for RPL will be advised of the outcome of their application by email.

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Appealing a Disputed Decision

Applicants for RPL who wish to appeal the disputed decision can invoke the ACM complaints and appeals procedure. Should an Applicant be appealing a decision regarding an appeal, they will need to acquire new or additional evidence.

A suggested approach learner may take is to contact the relevant *Australian Industry Skills Council (AISC),* https://www.employment.gov.au/AISC, for an independent opinion.

The original RPL application form, together with the completed Skills Recognition Kit, and all supporting materials and documents, assessor notes, and records of interview will be maintained in the hard file of the student by the Student Services Manager.

All documents relating to applications for RPL will be placed in the files of learners who have applied.

Documents to be filed following an RPL application

The Student Services Manager is responsible for ensuring that the following documents are filed in the applicant's file:

- Application for RPL
- Completed Skills Recognition Kit
- The portfolio of certified documents supplied in support of the application
- RPL Application Appeal (if relevant)

If the RPL applicant is a student, these documents will be retained for a period of *one (1) year* following the student's cessation of study at ACM.

If the RPL applicant is not an enrolled student, the documents will be retained for a period of:

- one (1) year following the date of the application, or, if the applicant appealed the outcome of the RPL assessment,
- one (1) year following the date the appeal outcome was provided to the applicant

Refer further the following policy and procedures *Records (Management)* and *Records (Retention).*

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RESPONSIBILITIES

a) The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for the development and maintenance of this policy and for communicating this policy to all employees and students.

b) The RTO Manager, Compliance Manager and Student Services Manager are responsible for ensuring that ACM adheres to the above requirements, mechanisms, guidelines, and protocols in relation to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

c) The Assessor is responsible for:

- Assists and prepares the applicant for the evidence-gathering process
- Collects and verifies the evidence following the rules of evidence (sufficiency, validity, authenticity, and currency)
- Verifies referees and references
- will meet with the applicant at Stage 7 to conduct the RPL interview
- Making the final Assessment Judgement and RPL Decision as per the principles of assessment.
- Records and reports all Academic outcomes related to the RPL process

d) Applicants are responsible for submitting a completed Application, Skills Recognition Kit and all evidence as directed by their nominated Assessor.