



POL018 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Purpose

This policy and procedure sets out Shafston's expectations and requirements under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 to ensure that students have access to recognition assessment pathways through Recognition of Prior Learning arrangements. Recognition of Prior Learning (referred to in this policy as RPL) is an assessment process that assesses the competency/s of a student that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a:

- process and framework for the provision of RPL
- service which is consistent with the AQF
- fair and equitable means of recognising a student's education, skills and experience
- process to ensure academic integrity and standards are safeguarded.

Scope

This policy and procedure will apply to the following stakeholders:

- VET Coordinator
- Compliance Officer
- Academic Manager
- Trainer and Assessor
- Student

Legislative Context

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015

- Clauses 1.8 – 1.12
- Clause 3.5
- Clause 5.1 – 5.3

Australian Qualification Framework (AQF)

Policy Statement

RPL assesses unrecognised learning against the requirements of a unit of competency, in respect of both entry requirements and outcomes to be achieved. By removing the need for duplication of learning, RPL encourages a student to continue upgrading their skills and knowledge through structured education and training towards formal qualifications and improved employment outcomes.

Any student is entitled to apply for RPL in a course or qualification in which they are currently enrolled. However, students may not apply for RPL for units of competency or qualification which are not included in Shafston's scope of registration.

While students may apply for RPL at any time, they are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program or qualification. This will reduce unnecessary training and guide the student down a more efficient path to achieving qualification competence. Students who are currently enrolled in a training program are eligible to apply for RPL but



additional fees and charges may apply. RPL may only be awarded for whole units of competency.

Assessment via RPL applies the **Principles of Assessment**:

- **Fairness:** The individual student's needs will be considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by Shafston and consider the individual student's needs. Shafston will inform the student of the assessment process and provide the student with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.
- **Flexibility:** Assessment will be flexible will reflect the student's needs; assessing competencies held by the student no matter how or where those competencies have been acquired. Assessment will draw from a range of methods, using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
- **Validity:** Any assessment decision will be justified based on the evidence provided. Assessment will be mapped against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements and will cover the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance. Assessment of knowledge and skills will be integrated with practical application. Assessment will be based on evidence confirming a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations.
- **Reliability:** Evidence presented for assessment is interpreted consistently and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment. This is supported by internal moderation and validation practices.

In evaluating assessment evidence, Shafston applies the **Rules of Evidence**:

- **Validity:** Assessors must be assured that the student has the skills, knowledge, and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements. If there are doubts based on the evidence presented by the student, a second trainer/assessor may be involved in the RPL process to ensure fairness in the assessment process.
- **Sufficiency:** Assessor must be assured that the quality, quantity, and relevance of the assessment evidence enable a judgement to be made of a student's competency. Students will be given guidance on the types and quantity of evidence required to meet this assessment criteria within relevant RPL assessment tools.
- **Authenticity:** Assessor must be assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the student's own work. This may be verified with both the student at the time of evidence submission as well as via third party evidence.
- **Currency:** Assessor must be assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past. For Shafston, currency is considered evidence that has been developed within 12 months from date of RPL application.

Forms of evidence toward recognition may include:

- Work records.
- Records of workplace training.
- Records of previous qualifications.
- Assessments of current skills and knowledge.
- Third party reports from current and previous supervisors or managers.



- Evidence of relevant unpaid or volunteer experience.
- Examples of work products.
- Observation by an assessor in the workplace.
- Performance appraisal.
- Duty statements and resumes.

Where a candidate provides evidence against a superseded unit of competency, this does not mean the unit is not valid for recognition through RPL assessment pathways. Shafston trainer and assessors will ensure there is sufficient evidence of the candidate's competence at the time they make the assessment decision. When combined with several evidence items, the candidate will start to provide a strong case for competency.

Shafston reserves the right to require candidates to undertake a practical assessment of activities to assess their skills and knowledge to determine the candidate's current competence.

Shafston cannot guarantee that, by participating in this RPL process, candidates will receive a Competent outcome for any of the units that are assessed. If the student is not satisfied with the outcomes of their RPL application, they may appeal the outcome like other assessment decisions. Further information on the Shafston appeals process, is outlined in the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure available on our website.

Supporting Documents

RPL Request Form
POL013 Validation and Moderation Policy (VET)
POL012 Complaints and Appeals Policy
Complaints and Appeals Form
FRM009 Validation Form
FRM010 Validation Mapping Document

Actions

The following action list has been developed to ensure that Shafston meets intent of this policy, the required outcomes, and its compliance obligations. The action itself, relevant staff members, and a breakdown of steps have been included for clarity and specificity.

Staff are expected to adhere to these actions as directed by the Academic Manager or delegate.

#	Action	Responsible	Steps
1	Request for RPL	Student Trainer/Assessor Compliance officer	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The student will be informed of the RPL process at enrolment and have the opportunity to apply.2. If the student wishes to pursue RPL they will need to complete the necessary paperwork (Recognition of Prior Learning Request Form) to indicate that they wish to undertake RPL assessment.3. The trainer will schedule a call/ appointment with the student requesting RPL and explain the RPL process and provide an overview of the evidence requirements.
2	Provision of RPL Documentation	Student Trainer/Assessor	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The onus is on the student to gather all relevant information that will act as evidence for their RPL.



		Compliance officer	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Students must compare the learning outcomes of the competency/s with proof of their experience/knowledge, where they gained this experience/knowledge and when they gained it. Every learning outcome in the competency/s must be addressed.The trainer will provide the appropriate RPL kits and information to the student.The student is to complete the RPL kits along with supporting documentation and submit this to the trainer/assessor for assessment.
3	Competency Conversation and Assessment	Trainer/Assessor Compliance officer	<ol style="list-style-type: none">After initial assessment of the supplementary evidence, students will undertake Competency Conversation and, if relevant, a Practical Tasks Assessment. This will be organised and facilitated by the trainer/assessor.The trainer/assessor will review all the evidence provided and determine any additional assessment requirements. As detailed in this policy, this may take the form of an examination of all supporting documents/materials of proof, or it may be an actual testing of the skills the student wishes to have recognised.
4	RPL Decisions	Trainer/Assessor Compliance officer	<ol style="list-style-type: none">After the assessment by the Trainer/Assessor, a decision will be made as to whether RPL will be granted.There will be a post-assessment interview to advise the student of the outcome and a written rationale will be provided if RPL has not been granted. The student will be provided with certification for any skills, competencies or courses for which RPL has been granted, or they will be provided with information about further action they may take if the result is not to their satisfaction.Should students wish to take further action, they are able to discuss the RPL results with the Academic Manager and pursue internal appeals processes.

Implementation

The Academic Manager and delegated compliance officer are jointly responsible for the implementation of this policy through publication on the Work Platform (Sharepoint) and the conducting of training for relevant stakeholders.

Version History

Date	Summary of Modifications Made	Version
17/02/2023	Version 1 finalised	1.0
19/03/2024	Version 2 finalised (changes made to structure and wording)	2.0

Date of next review

Date	Type	Responsible
30/06/24	Annual	General Manager