Recognition of Prior Learning

What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a form of assessment that acknowledges your formal and informal learning gained through:
→ Previous training and education
→ Past and current work experience
→ Life experience

The RPL process will involve validation of your existing skills and knowledge. Through this recognition process you will be able to obtain credits in a nationally accredited course and in some cases a full qualification.

The assessment can take place by viewing existing academic records, proof of training course/workshop attendance, written support by previous employers and by viewing procedures and process undertaken in your workplace.

What are the advantages of RPL?
1. You can obtain/complete a formal qualification in a shorter period of time and at less cost.
2. You are recognised for your existing skills and knowledge, thus eliminating the need to repeat the learning that you have already undertaken.
3. It can increase your career and education options through recognised skills and knowledge.
4. It can assist you in gaining entry into higher levels of study and training.

Is RPL for me?
Yes! The RPL process is open to all members of the public as the process recognises existing skills and knowledge to specific competencies within an accredited course.

Typically a successful applicant is someone who has a reasonable amount of experience in the area their course covers i.e. the experience gained from their previous and current employment. Skills gained through an individuals life experience can also be taken into consideration, however, these will be assessed in terms of relevance to the specific course.

How much does it cost to apply for RPL?
The cost involved for the RPL process will depend on which one of the two categories (listed below) that you currently satisfy:

→ If you are already enrolled in a course at West Coast Institute of Training there will be no additional cost associated with the RPL process.

or

→ If you are not enrolled in a course at West Coast Institute of Training you will be required to enrol in the selected course and pay the relevant tuition fee. Course fees are available upon request.

Your RPL Assessor will be able to provide you with more detailed information regarding the associated RPL costs.
Testimonials

» **Michele O’Day**  
HR Support Officer - Baptistcare

» How long have you been working in the industry for?  
over 20 years

» How did you learn about Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?  
Through speaking with a colleague

» What are the benefits to you having your skills formally recognised?  
For me personally a sense of achievement and I guess validation for the work I have done for so many years with a ‘formal qualification’ so to speak. It also provides evidence to my employer that I have the skills required to perform the role I am working in.

» Was it difficult to gain a qualification while still working?  
The bulk of the information I had to provide was the easiest part as I had been diligent over the years in keeping samples of projects and assignments I had worked on so it was just a matter of presenting the relevant evidence to be assessed. I was very fortunate to have support from my employer to complete some assignments during working hours and my line manager was able to assist me and gave me some valuable feedback about my assignments prior to submitting them.

» What qualification did you obtain?  
Diploma of Business Management and Diploma of Human Resources Management

» **Deb Caruana**  
Manager Employee Services - Baptistcare

» Why is the recognition of your workforce’s existing skills important to your organisation?  
At Baptistcare we are committed to providing opportunities for staff to develop, learn and take on new responsibilities. This enables the organisation to put in place accession plans, that ensure the sustainability of our workforce into the future.

» As an employer what benefits will you gain from your staff going through the recognition of prior learning process?  
The recognition of an individual’s skills that they have attained from numerous years of experience provides them with an increased confidence in performing their day-to-day duties.

As a result, Baptistcare then has access to staff that are more confident, willing to take on more responsibilities and therefore achieve more with greater productivity. We also benefit from staff who remain loyal to the organisation as we have encouraged and allowed them to integrate their studies into their work.

» Why did Baptist Care partner with the West Coast?  
There was no interruption to Michele’s daily work as the assignments and projects that she worked on were very relevant to her duties at Baptistcare.
How long have you been working in the industry for?
20 years

How did you learn about Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?
Through the Housing Industry Association.

What are the benefits to you having your skills formally recognised?
I’ve been there and done it all as far as bricklaying goes and now I want to step things up a notch and get into builder supervising or lecturing, both of which are now possible since my skills and experience have been formally recognised.

Was it difficult to gain a qualification while still working?
It was really straightforward and pretty cheap. For two hundred odd dollars, I would definitely recommend that other trades people get certified, it’s a great feeling after all this time to get recognised for all your hard work and experience.

What qualification did you obtain?
Certificate III in Bricklaying/Blocklaying.

Why is the recognition of your workforce’s existing skills important to your industry?
At The Housing Industry Association, we want trades people to have formal qualifications ‘the norm’ because it lifts the credibility of our industry and our skill base.

What benefits will your workforce gain from obtaining a formal qualification?
Gaining a formal qualification will provide our members with a greater opportunities to learn wider scopes of their specific trade and enable them to become involved in areas such as business management, building supervision and provide a more formal training pathway.

Why did the HIA partner with the West Coast?
They understood what we were trying to achieve and took a holistic approach to skill assessment. By utilising a variety of assessment methods such as viewing site plans, photographs; speaking with previous employers for skills verification and by utilising industry experts to ask him a series of questions to assess his capabilities, the Institute was able to maintain the integrity and validity of the process. In short, instead of making a skilled worker bend to fit their requirements they took a partnered approach which provided a desirable outcome for all involved.
Applying for RPL

Step 1
Contact our RPL Coordinator via:
» Phone: (08) 9233 1067
» Email: rpl@wcit.wa.edu.au
» In Person: Student Admin, Building A (East)
  West Coast Institute of Training, 35 Kendrew Cres, Joondalup

Our RPL Coordinator will obtain some background information from you in order to connect you with an RPL assessor best suited to your needs.

Step 2
Discuss (phone or in person) with your RPL Assessor your skills and experience. During this discussion they will be able to work out a training plan that will assist you in gaining your qualification.

Consider what evidence you already have that demonstrates your skills and knowledge. You must be able to show your skills are current and meet industry standards. Examples of evidence could include:
→ work samples
→ practical demonstrations in the workplace
→ assessment interviews
→ references and support from your supervisors or others in the community
→ a variety of materials including training certificates, photos of work examples, a resume, performance reviews.

Step 3
You will be required to enrol in the prescribed course as detailed in the training plan developed by your assessor before applying for recognition of prior learning against the appropriate units. Enrolment assistance can be provided by your RPL Assessor or via the institute’s Student Centro support centre.

Step 4
Submit your RPL application form (this will be completed when you meet with your RPL Assessor) to Student Administration along with any documentation your assessor has advised that you need.

Step 5
Your RPL Assessor will review your application and will notify you within 48 hours if your application has been successful or if they require any further information.

Step 6
If your application is successful you will be deemed to have demonstrated competency in your selected units or for the entire course, and as such awarded the full qualification.

call (08) 9233 1067 or email rpl@wcit.wa.edu.au for more information