



INSETA RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA

SOURCE DOCUMENT	Doc No.:	GL-ETQA-01
Ref. ETQA	Rev No.:	001
	Page No.:	Page 1 of 11
RPL POLICY	Date Compiled: 1 November 2010	Revision Date:
Compiled By:	Michelle van der Merwe - ETQA Specialist Consultant	
Authorised By:	Neesha Naidoo - ETQA Manager	

INDEX

1.	Overview and Introduction	3
2.	Legal Basis	3
3.	Purpose	3
4.	RPL Statement	3
5.	RPL Guidelines	4
6.	INSETA RPL Criteria	4
6.1	Entry Level Requirements	4
6.2	Training of Key Personnel and Registration of Assessors and Moderators	4
6.3	RPL Policy and Procedures	5
6.4	Quality Management System	5
6.5	Roles and Responsibilities	5
6.6	Assessment Methods and Processes	5
6.7	Learner Support	5
6.8	Fees	5
7.	ETQA Operational Principles	6
7.1	RPL Definitions	6
7.2	ETQA Verification	6
7.3	Processes & Procedure	6
8.	Provider Operational Principles	7
8.1	NQF Principles & Alignment	7
8.2	RPL Holistics & Developmental Approach	7
8.3	RPL Capacity: Provider Evidence Requirements	9
9.	US/Qualification Rules	10
10.	Appeals Procedure	10
11.	Guidelines on RPL Portfolio Tool	10
12.	Review of RPL Guideline Documents and Tools	11

1. OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) views Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as an initiative that is meant to support the transformation of the education and training system in South Africa through recognition of “informal” learning. This is a mechanism that will assist in the removal of both the visible and invisible barriers to learning and assessment. The notion of life long learning will be enhanced through the RPL assessment processes, thus ensuring that all learning irrespective of how, when and where such learning was obtained is recognised for credits through a structured assessment,. The assessment of such learning will be against nationally- registered Unit Standards and/or Qualifications.

INSETA ETQA has the responsibility to oversee and ensure that RPL assessments, which are an integral part of the Quality Management Systems used by Training Providers, have credibility and meet the stated principles of good and fair assessments, as laid down by SAQA .

The credibility of the RPL System, is to a large extent dependant on how well the principles of assessment are embedded within the Assessment Systems of the Training Providers

2. LEGAL BASIS

- SAQA Act
- ETQA Regulations
- SAQA: RPL Implementation Guide

3. PURPOSE

The Purpose of this document is to clearly articulate INSETAs’ requirements regarding the Recognition of Prior Learning and to provide clear guidelines to the Insurance Sector Stakeholders regarding the implementation of RPL Assessments and the recognition of learning based on RPL Assessments.

4. RPL STATEMENTS

All providers conducting RPL assessments to award credits and/or a certificate, must be accredited, and make use of INSETA registered assessors and INSETA approved assessment guides.

All RPL practice is to a large extent dependant on how well the principles of assessment are embedded within the Assessment Systems of the Training Providers. RPL assessment exempts the learner from attending training but must be assessed for credits towards INSETA unit standards, qualifications and/or skills programmes and must follow the broad, generic process of RPL, as described in the **SAQA Policy Document**:

5. RPL GUIDELINES

INSETAs' Guidelines make provision for an accredited training provider to recognise existing skills and knowledge irrespective of how such learning was obtained by a learner. Such learner achievements shall be recognised through a structured assessment process against NQF registered Unit Standards and/or Qualifications.

The assessment process will verify the achievement of all learning outcomes inclusive of the embedded knowledge required by the Unit Standards and/or Qualifications.

RPL Assessment is also recognised as a mechanism that will provide the learner with access to education and training opportunities which is based on the achievement of Prior Learning.

It is a pre-condition for Providers to have their RPL Policies and Procedures approved by INSETA ETQA prior to the implementation of RPL, which will include evaluation of assessor and moderator scope and capacity.

INSETA ETQA will recognise the achievement of Learning Outcomes against NQF Registered Unit Standards and/or qualifications and will award Learners credits for such achievements through the same verification criteria, and subject to the INSETA Moderation Policy and Procedures, as for other learning programmes.

Note: *Matric Certificate RPL is done in accordance with the INSETA Concession Guidelines.*

6. INSETA RPL CRITERIA

6.1 Entry Level Requirements

- a) A candidate wishing to be RPLed against a full qualification; needs a minimum of **five years** relevant working experience in the same field as the qualification being RPLed.
- b) A unit standard (US) being RPLed after a learner has achieved a similar unit standard with another SAQA ID number can be awarded by an INSETA registered assessor by completing a **equivalent map** to indicate that the previous training that has been achieved and meets the Assessment Criteria (AC) of the new unit standard;
 - 60% of the AC needs to be met to achieve the Specific Outcome (SO) and all SOs to be achieved to receive the US.

6.2 Training of Key Personnel and Registration of Assessors and Moderators

The functions of Evidence Facilitators are crucial within the process of RPL Assessments and Providers as well as Assessment Centres must ensure that their Evidence Facilitators are competent in the SAQA registered Unit Standard, for facilitating the preparation and presentation of assessment evidence by Candidates.

All Assessors and Moderators involved in RPL Assessments shall be registered in accordance with the INSETA Criteria for the Registration of Assessors and Moderators.

6.3 RPL Policy and Procedures

Provider RPL Policies and Procedures shall clearly articulate the following and be available for monitoring by INSETA :

- An explicit commitment to the principles of equity, redress and inclusion
- Planning and management in accordance with the relevant legislation and SAQA Policies
- The availability of information on assessment opportunities
- Learner advice and support services
- Available and sufficient resources
- The Assessment Process shall be clearly defined and communicated to learners and all role-players as applicable.

6.4 Quality Management Systems

The Provider's RPL Policies and Procedures should be an integral part of its Quality Management System. RPL Assessment should be built into the Provider's Assessment Policies and Procedures. Mechanisms for the monitoring and auditing of RPL assessment should be clearly defined within the Providers QMS.

6.5 Roles and Responsibilities

The Roles and Responsibilities of those involved in RPL Assessment shall be clearly defined and should include but not be limited to the following:

- ❖ Evidence Facilitator
- ❖ Assessor
- ❖ Moderator

6.6 Learner Support

Procedures for learner support will focus on defined processes such as pre-assessment advice and counselling as a crucial component in the RPL process. Assessment process includes preparation for the assessment, educational planning and post-assessment support. The identification and removal of barriers to the process is critical, and mechanisms on how these barriers will be addressed should be included within the Procedure for learner support.

6.7 Fees

The costs for RPL services and assessment shall not be more than a full time programme or the cost for education and training based on individual unit standards. Fees shall not be a barrier to RPL assessment and Providers/ Assessment Centres are requested to make available flexible payment options.

7 ETQA Operational Principles

7.1 RPL Definition

INSETA ETQA adopts the following policy definition of RPL, as referred to in the *NSB Regulations No. 18787*:

“RPL is the comparison of the previous learning and experience of a learner howsoever, obtained against the learning outcomes of a specific qualification, and the acceptance thereof, for purposes of certification”

The above definition holds the following implications:

- That a comparison of contextualized competence be done against the unit standard requirements in a holistic way,
- That recognition is done for learning and experience, not one or the other only, and
- That the process is focused on the learner and his/her current competence, and not historical evidence only.

7.2 ETQA Verification

In the verification of the provider’s RPL practice, particular emphasis will be placed on the following:

- ETD Staff competence and preparation
- RPL purpose and process of evidence gathering
- RPL evidence requirements and instruments
- Documented product & process evidence
- Samples of Learner portfolios

7.3 Process & Procedure

The following process of verifying and quality assurance of RPL will be followed within INSETA, as described in the SAQA Policy Implementation Guide:

Process	Procedure	Resource	Tools	Who
Application Process				
Prepare RPL Evidence Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Identify scope of RPL services❖ Document RPL Strategy❖ Complete RPL Self-Assessment Questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• INSETA RPL Policy Template• Self-Assessment	INSETA Website	Provider

Evaluation Process				
Evaluate RPL Portfolio of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Receive and process RPL Portfolio ❖ Check completeness of RPL Portfolio ❖ Provide feedback to learner on outstanding evidence and “gaps” in learning ❖ Collect additional evidence where required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checklist 	Self Assessment	Providers Facilitator/ Assessor
Process RPL Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Evaluate RPL Portfolio ❖ Assess Portfolio ❖ Consolidate RPL to accreditation scope ❖ Moderate Portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPL Matrix indicating evidence recorded against the SO and summative assessment mark achieved 	Provider Template	Assessor/ Moderator
Communicate RPL Portfolio Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Indicate Competency per US 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency Report 	Provider Template	Assessor

8 PROVIDER OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES

8.1 NQF Principles Alignment

The purpose of RPL as envisaged by INSETA within the provider environment is as follows:

- To provide access to further learning through the recognition of prior learning within the context of required learning
- To provide redress through the recognition of prior learning for certification and recognition purposes.

All principles of the NQF, as described, in the SAQA Act must be evident in the Provider’s RPL practices.

8.2 RPL Holistic & Developmental Approach

The INSETA ETQA maintains a *holistic and developmental* approach to RPL, with the following principles as the basis to this approach:

1. The emphasis in any provider RPL process, must be on the preparation and advising of the learner within;
 - the social context rather than unit standard context only,
 - with clear consideration of barriers,
 - informal learning background, and
 - wider expertise of the learner.

2. RPL practices must be learner-centred and developmental – the learner must be credited for what they do know, not penalized for what they do not know.
3. RPL will have a clear workplace focus, and will serve as an entry point to further learning, and shall not be intended as an end result only.
4. RPL will only be recognized for certification purposes if whole unit standards are assessed. Portions of experience will not be recognized, in isolation of the total skill described in the unit standard.

RPL Process

Stage	Activity	Resources Required
Candidate Application	Candidate identifies competence areas for RPL Purposes	Provider RPL Application Form
Pre-Assessment Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence facilitator meets candidate to establish purpose and viability of assessment • Assessor identifies unit standards for assessment • Candidate performs self- assessment against unit standards 	Pre-Assessments briefing document Unit Standards Self Assessment Records
Assessment Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish evidence requirements • Establish assessment approach, tools & mechanisms. • Set dates & times assessment 	Unit Standards Assessment Plan
Learner Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify types and sources of evidence • Provide guidance to learner in assessment & evidence principles 	Assessment Guide Portfolio Guide
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate submits portfolio and/or • Undergoes assessment activities • Close book summative assessment • All SOs to be covered in the various assessments 	Assessment Guide Instruments
Judgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessor makes judgement on evidence, and/or • Request additional evidence and • Make a competence & developmental needs judgement 	Assessment Guide Competency Report
Moderation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator moderates assessment • Provide feedback to assessor 	Moderator Report
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessor provides feedback to learners 	Competency Report

Post -Assessment Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request Verification • Submit results to ETQA • Identify and channel learner into development / training path <p>Advise learner where learning needs to be undertaken to “fill in competency gaps” to achieve credits</p>	Verification Request Form NLRD Template Development Plan
--------------------------	---	--

8.3 RPL Capacity: Provider Evidence Requirements

The INSETA ETQA will require evidence that the provider Quality Management System and Operational Practices supports RPL in the following areas:

- Policy and Environment
- Process and Methods
- Staff Training
- Registration
- Learner Support

Provider Policy and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information regarding RPL policy and practises is available, is communicated, and promoted accurately. • Admission is accessible and unbiased, and administration pre-requisites are transparent and accessible. • Learner support is provided. • Administrative control measures for recording and reporting purposes are established.
Processes and Methods maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPL purposes and processes of assessment, and appeal are clearly defined. • Assessment plan and evidence required are clearly outlined. • Form and quality of support clarified. • Further development options are clearly communicated. • Instruments must be validated and approved. • Moderation intervention must be specified.
RPL support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPL assessors and moderators must be trained and registered with the INSETA against the scope being assessed and moderated. • Assessors and moderators roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined.
Learner Support	<p>RPL process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner Preparation • Evidence Facilitation • Further Development Access

9. US/QUALIFICATION RULES

Unit Standards and/or Qualifications must be eligible for RPL.

There are US that cannot be considered for RPL and will need to be trained and assessed as per the formal training process. e.g. US 120019 - It is intended that this Unit Standard should be based on events as they happen and the Unit Standard is therefore not intended for the application of RPL.

10. APPEALS PROCEDURE

The Appeals Policy is applicable to any disputes arising out of:

1. Accreditation of providers
2. Registration of assessors and/or moderators
3. Evaluation of learning programmes
4. Monitoring and auditing of providers
5. Monitoring & Auditing of Employers
6. Certification of learners
7. Provision of accredited providers
8. Use of the INSETA Logo
9. Standard setting & review

For further details of appeal within the context of RPL, please refer to the Appeals Policy.

11. GUIDANCE ON THE RPL PORTFOLIO TOOL FOR ASSESSORS AND MODERATORS

Introduction pages: Complete the Training Provider Name, Assessor Name, Contact details and Dates in the spaces provided.

Section A: Assessor to check the information provided by the candidate.

Section B: Facilitator/Assessor to go through this document at the face-to-face- RPL briefing session.

Section C: Facilitator/Assessor to include completed learner information form and certified ID copy in this section.

Section D: Facilitator/Assessor ensures that learner provides CV.

Section E: Facilitator/Assessor ensures that learner provides certified copies of relevant qualifications, diplomas and/or courses.

Section F: Training Provider to generate relevant questions per specific outcome, which will be completed by the learner, assessed and moderated by an INSETA registered subject-matter expert assessor and moderator.

- Section G: Facilitator/Assessor to check that the declaration is signed by the relevant parties.
- Section H: Facilitator/Assessor to check that the certificate of authenticity is signed by the relevant parties. Assessor needs to randomly contact supervisor/manager to check authenticity and make a note on the page of this call/email.
- Section I: Assessor to double check inclusion of documents checked by applicant.
- Section J: Assessor to include the relevant closed book summative assessment needs in this section for assessing moderation and verification.
- Section K: Samples of documents that can be used by the provider to comply with the minimum feedback requirements.

12. REVIEW OF DOCUMENT AND TOOLS

This document will be reviewed annually.