

RTO

RTO Policy 11: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

BE HEARD.
BE RECOGNISED.



OWNERSHIP

This policy is the responsibility of CPA Australia’s Registered Training Organisation (**CPA Australia RTO**) working group (**CPA Australia RTO Working Group**).

Scope

CPA Australia Ltd (**CPA Australia**) has established this policy to support the Australian Skills Quality Authority (**ASQA**) *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO) 2015*. The policy has been developed and implemented by the CPA Australia RTO Working Group to support and provide clear instruction and guidance to program Candidates and CPA Australia RTO Personnel to define processes and parameters with regard to the offering and conduct of RPL.

Review and Maintenance

Maintenance and review of the CPA Australia RTO Recognition of Prior Learning (**RPL**) Policy is the responsibility of the CPA Australia RTO Working Group. The CPA Australia RTO Working Group will maintain ongoing records of the elements and application of this Policy. The CPA Australia RTO Working Group will provide ongoing reports to all relevant stakeholders.

Change Record

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|-------------|---------------------------------|
| Date | 31 March 2016 |
| Version | 8.0 |
| Description | Seventh Update |
| Author | CPA Australia RTO Working Group |
| Doc # | #2937855_8 |

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POLICY

Our commitment

CPA Australia RTO is committed to providing all Candidates and potential Candidates with a fair and accessible process for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The process acknowledges the skills, knowledge, performance outcomes and learning achieved prior to undertaking a program of study with CPA Australia RTO through either formal or informal learning pathways. Such prior learning may include formal learning such as employer provided training or learning and assessment pathways (Credit Transfer), or informal learning such as work or life experiences.

Through the collection and submission of a portfolio of evidence and discussion with CPA Australia assessors, Candidates may apply to have their existing knowledge and skills assessed against the endorsed units of competency contained in a program offered by CPA Australia RTO. The endorsed units of competency for each module of the program are listed in the course manual and the Candidate Handbook.

CPA Australia's RTO's RPL Process

The RPL process established by CPA Australia RTO is designed to be flexible to meet the needs of Candidates who need to be assessed formally against the units of competency contained within the RG 146 Compliance Solution program.

The availability of RPL is advertised through the Candidate Handbook; on program enrolment forms and CPA Australia RTO policies available from the CPA Australia website. The requirements for this process are outlined in this Policy. Sufficient information is provided to self-assess whether RPL assessment is an appropriate pathway.

Detailed information is provided in the **RPL Kit available on request from CPA Australia RTO**. This includes details of all the competencies required, suggestions for collecting evidence and some resources to help Candidates with evidence collection. It provides information and direction as to appropriate and adequate information in order to maximise opportunities for a successful assessment outcome. This includes information on qualifications, units of competence, evidence guidelines and sources of information.

What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

RPL involves the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge a Candidate has achieved outside the formal education and training system. The RPL process assesses this unrecognised learning against the requirements of a qualification or a unit of competence.

While RPL and Credit Transfer are related and can occur concurrently, they are seen as alternative (but complementary) pathways to a qualification and are defined by the way each process recognises a Candidate's learning, which may be achieved through formal education and training (Credit Transfer) or outside the formal education and training system, through work and life experience (RPL).

Recognition of Prior Learning

RPL is an assessment process that acknowledges the Candidate's non-formal and informal learning, such as work or life experiences. The process determines the extent to which that Candidate has achieved the required learning and performance outcomes for units of competency that are pre-requisites or that are required for partial or total completion of a qualification.

Credit Transfer

Credit Transfer assesses a Candidate's prior learning achieved through the formal education and training process. Credit Transfer seeks to match the learning outcomes of previous training to those of the current program for which Candidates are seeking recognition. This may include credit transfer based on formal learning that is outside the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Assessment Only

The RPL pathway is available to Candidates who apply to have previously unrecognised skills and knowledge (such as work experience) assessed instead of going through the standard training and assessment pathway. Candidates who apply for this option need to provide evidence that they are suitable for this RPL (examples of types of evidence are available under the 'How to Prepare an RPL Evidence Portfolio' section of this policy).

It is important to note ASIC have imposed additional requirements on the units of competency specific to RG 146 compliance (those that contain "ASIC" in their code); a Candidate must have **"five years relevant experience over the immediate past eight years in the areas in which they advise"**.

If a Candidate does not have this experience they cannot apply for Assessment only in the ASIC units of competency.

How RPL is Used and Assessed

Both Credit Transfer and RPL are recognition pathways that can be used for the award of credit in a program or qualification, leading to the partial or full completion of the requirements for that program or qualification.

In order to recognise prior learning it is necessary to:

- compare the informal or non-formal learning the candidate has achieved against the performance and knowledge outcomes of the unit(s) of competence for which the candidate is seeking recognition; and
- determine appropriate evidence to support the claim of prior learning.

Evidence gathering methods used to assess RPL applications may take several (not mutually exclusive) forms, such as:

- undertaking exactly the same or modified versions of the assessment the candidate would be required to complete as part of the full course;
- assessment based on a portfolio of evidence;
- direct observation of demonstration of skill or competence, (supplemented by assessment of the knowledge underpinning such skills);
- reflective papers, journals or portfolios that relate past learning to the learning or competency outcomes of the current unit of competence;
- provision of examples of the candidate's work drawn from the workplace, social, community or other setting in which the candidate applies their learning, skill or competence;
- testimonials of learning, skill or competence; and
- a combination of any of the above.

Assessment Processes

RPL assessment processes and procedures may consist of the following stages:

- establishing the purpose of the assessment;
- identifying the evidence required;
- using appropriate evidence gathering methods;
- interpreting the evidence and making a judgement;

- recording the outcome; and,
- reporting to key stakeholders.

Assessment methods will accommodate the literacy levels, cultural and educational background and experiences of Candidates, whilst ensuring competency standards are met. Assessment methods will provide for a range of ways for Candidates to demonstrate that they have met the required outcomes.

Candidates will be provided with advice about the assessment processes, and the types of evidence that CPA Australia RTO will consider in assessing their RPL application. Candidates will be provided with sufficient information to enable them to prepare their evidence to the standard required for the RPL assessment process.

As with all assessments, RPL assessment will be undertaken by suitability qualified assessors having knowledge of the content or skills area, as well as knowledge of, and expertise in, RPL practices and procedures.

Forms of Credit

RPL may be used for access into a program when the specified prerequisites of a formal course of education have not been undertaken.

The award of credit in a program as the result of a successful RPL application may include:

- specified credit for designated units or competencies; or
- credit may be awarded on the basis of a combination of credit transfer plus an individual RPL assessment of work and life experience.

Support for Candidates

RPL will be offered prior to, or upon enrolment, but it can be sought at any time provided that training in a unit for which recognition is sought has not commenced. Support will be provided to Candidates in the form of clear guidelines and clear evidence requirements to support their application. CPA Australia RTO will supply to Candidates an RPL Kit for all programs offered, which outlines the processes and evidence requirements involved.

Information about the CPA Australia RTO RPL process will be made available in the Candidate Handbook and via this policy, available from the CPA Australia website.

Evidence

Evidence plays a crucial role in the RPL process as it provides proof that a Candidate has the skills and knowledge contained within the units of competency for which they wish to be recognised. The evidence will allow an assessor to determine whether to assess a Candidate as Competent or Not Yet Competent.

When selecting pieces of evidence to support an RPL application, it is important for the Candidate to follow the guidelines outlined in the Rules for Supplying Evidence section of this policy as set out below.

Rules for Supplying Evidence

Valid Evidence

Evidence of competency must cover the broad range of knowledge, skills and the application of such knowledge and skills specified in the Competency Standards. That is, when gathering evidence each piece of evidence must focus on the appropriate knowledge and skills specified against each element of a unit of competence for which recognition is sought.

Sufficient Evidence

Sufficient evidence relates to the amount of evidence that is needed to demonstrate a Candidate's competence in a particular unit of competency. Evidence must satisfy all elements of the unit of competency. To ensure that sufficient evidence to demonstrate competency is supplied, it might be necessary or desirable to use

supplementary sources of evidence such as verbal confirmation, written testimonials (employers and clients), previously completed appraisals, certificates, job descriptions or third party reports.

Authentic Evidence

Evidence needs to be checked for authenticity - that is, that it actually relates to the Candidate being assessed, and not that of another person. To determine authenticity (and validation) of the evidence it may be necessary for CPA Australia RTO Personnel to verify and contact the third parties that are listed within the RPL application.

By completing the RPL application and listed third parties to verify competencies, permission has been given to CPA Australia RTO to contact these individuals. Any information collected will be treated in accordance with CPA Australia's Privacy Policy.

Current Evidence

Currency of evidence supplied is of particular importance, as evidence must be relevant and up to date according to current industry standards (and current unit of competency requirements). For example, if a Candidate has evidence of mastering an area of knowledge or skill in the past, this can be supplemented by evidence of continuing professional development activities. For CPA Australia Members this may include a copy of the Member's record of continuing professional development activities maintained with the relevant items highlighted.

How to Prepare an RPL Evidence Portfolio

When preparing a portfolio of evidence to support an application for RPL, Candidates must gather evidence to substantiate the assertion that they can apply the skills, knowledge and performance criteria outlined in the units of competency within the workplace. It is highly recommended that Candidates supply a range of different types of evidence to substantiate an RPL application. The evidence supplied to demonstrate a Candidate's skills, knowledge and abilities may cover a number of units of competency (or elements within these units). The RPL Kit will contain information on the specific units of competency that Candidates may seek RPL against. Each unit of competency will provide an outline of the suggested evidence that must be supplied.

Sample evidence may include (but is not limited to):

- Candidate's C.V. outlining specific job positions and how they relate to specific skills requirements;
- completed testimonials (from clients and employers);
- work samples — may include presentations to colleagues or clients to demonstrate knowledge;
- references;
- completed performance reviews;
- certificates or statements of attainment (including unit breakdowns);
- product documentation;
- disclosure documentation;
- company policies and procedures if these can be shown to be relevant to the unit of competency
- completed documentation utilised to capture and record client objectives and expectations;
- completed documentation utilised to capture and record the client's situation;
- completed documentation to capture and record client's special needs;
- information technology, and administrative systems, codes of practice if applicable to the unit;
- company policy guidelines (if applicable to the unit) may include: policies and procedures in relation to client service, advertising and marketing, product or service development;
- relevant legislation and codes of practice (if applicable to the unit) which may include: ASX business rules, SCH business rules, National Guarantee Fund Rules, Taxation Act, Consumer Credit Code, Privacy Act, Corporations Law, Contracts Law, Trade Practices, Trust Law, Consumer Affairs Act, Securities Laws, and Industry Codes of Practice;
- confidentiality evidence may include any requirements under legislation such as the Consumer Affairs Act, Privacy Act, Consumer Credit Code, Industry Codes of Practice as well as standards set out in company policies and procedures;

- completed documentation may include: meeting notes, records of telephone conversations, memos, brochures, bills, receipts, quotations, agreements, contract or policy statements, reports (research/statistical/ad hoc/transaction/other), official, general /other correspondence;
- completed documentation encompassing disclosure requirements: fees, charges, interest;
- documentation supporting ongoing reviews and services;
- samples of advertising/ marketing materials: newsletters, mail outs, emails, web sites, phone calls, seminars;
- samples of research materials;
- relevant assignments from the CPA Program;
- reports/records from the CPA Australia mentoring program;
- written reports of simulations, peer group training activities; and
- Testimonials of learning, skill or competence.

(Suggested evidence requirements for each specific unit of competency will be listed within the RPL Kit. The evidence suggestions listed above are examples only of what may be submitted by a Candidate for consideration by CPA Australia RTO).

Compiling the Portfolio

Candidates need to collect and supply evidence for each unit of competency against which recognition is being sought. Evidence must be placed behind the title page(s) for each unit of competency. Evidence should be clearly labelled and presented in a logical manner. Candidates only need to compile evidence against each competency ONCE. When applying for assessment in multiple units, evidence does not need to be duplicated but must be referenced accordingly.

Once the evidence has been gathered, the portfolio of evidence should be returned to CPA Australia RTO for assessment. CPA Australia RTO will assess the portfolio in accordance with its assessment policy and procedures.

Fees and Charges for RPL

The cost of RPL is based on the needs of the Candidate and the number of units of competency for which they are seeking recognition. As such, the cost will vary from application to application. As a guide, Candidates should anticipate a fee of a minimum of \$260 per unit of competency.

CPA Australia RTO Personnel will calculate the total cost payable for an RPL application and advise the Candidate before proceeding with the RPL assessment process.

Procedures: Actions and Responsibility

| Action | Responsibility |
|---|--|
| <p>Candidates wishing to apply for RPL should contact the CPA Australia RTO either by phone 1300 73 73 73, email at rto@cpaaustralia.com.au or post to request the RPL Kit and application form for completion;</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Request for RPL Kit RTO Manager CPA Australia GPO Box 2820 Melbourne, VIC 3001 Australia</p> <p>CPA Australia RTO Personnel will discuss with the Candidate to ensure that RPL is the correct option for them before supplying the necessary documentation, and a cost for the application will be advised.</p> <p>Candidates will have ongoing access to support from CPA Australia RTO Personnel and representatives throughout the RPL portfolio preparation and assessment process.</p> | <p>Candidates CPA Australia RTO Personnel</p> |
| <p>Preparation of the Portfolio</p> <p>Candidates must use the information in the RPL Kit to evaluate their own competency levels against the unit requirements and compile the RPL portfolio to support their application. Candidates will gather all the relevant supporting evidence and documentation to demonstrate their competency. Evidence should be displayed in a clear and concise manner within the portfolio. Candidates must ensure that application forms and evidence documents are completed accurately. (Incomplete applications may not be processed. CPA Australia RTO may request further information before beginning the assessment process). Candidates will forward their completed RPL portfolio and application form to the CPA Australia RTO Manager at:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">RPL Application RTO Manager CPA Australia GPO Box 2820 Melbourne, VIC 3001 Australia</p> <p>Documentation submitted will not be returned.</p> | <p>Candidates</p> |
| <p>Assessment of the Portfolio</p> <p>Upon receipt of an RPL portfolio, CPA Australia RTO Personnel will forward the portfolio to the nominated assessor for review and assessment of the portfolio submission against the relevant competency standards. The assessor may arrange an interview with the Candidate to confirm the skills and knowledge levels and/or to confirm the authenticity of particular evidence items (interviews may be conducted</p> | <p>CPA Australia RTO Personnel Assessors CPA Australia RTO Manager</p> |

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| <p>face to face or utilising appropriate technology).</p> <p>RPL applications will be assessed and completed within 24 working days from the date the application is sent to an assessor. The outcome will be communicated in writing within 7 working days of the completion of the assessment by the CPA Australia RTO Manager.</p> | |
| <p>Where the Participant is Assessed as ‘Competent’</p> <p>Where a Candidate is assessed as competent in all areas (i.e. the application for recognition of a full unit(s) of competency has been successful), they will be advised in writing and appropriate certification will be issued (please refer to the CPA Australia RTO Issuing Qualifications policy for more information). All units of competency successfully recognised as part of the application for RPL will be listed on the appropriate certification documentation.</p> <p>Recognition will only be granted for a complete unit of competency (recognition will not be granted where a Candidate has only satisfied of a unit of competency).</p> | <p>Assessor CPA Australia RTO Personnel</p> |
| <p>Where the Participant’s Portfolio Does Not Satisfy Competency Requirements</p> <p>Where there are gaps between evidence supplied in an RPL portfolio and competency requirements for which recognition is being sought, the assessor will notify the Candidate that the deficiencies must be addressed before the application can be processed any further. Candidates must supply further evidence within 28 days of this notification. If the Candidate does not have any further evidence to support their application, RPL may be denied.</p> <p>Depending on the extent of the gaps, the assessor may refer the Candidate to relevant further training.</p> <p>Assessors will inform CPA Australia RTO Personnel of ongoing communication with the Candidate should further evidence be required.</p> | <p>Assessors Candidates CPA Australia RTO Personnel</p> |
| <p>Once an assessor has made a final decision on an application for RPL, they will return all documentation including the Candidate’s RPL portfolio, along with notification of the outcome of the application, to CPA Australia RTO.</p> <p>CPA Australia RTO Personnel will record the outcome in the student management system (SMS) and arrange for formal notification of the outcome of the application to be sent to the Candidate.</p> | <p>Assessor CPA Australia RTO Personnel CPA Australia RTO Manager</p> |
| <p>Appeals Process</p> <p>Should the Candidate wish to appeal the outcome of an application for RPL they may do so only on procedural grounds. New or additional evidence submitted after the request date, is not grounds for appeal.</p> <p>An appeal may be based on one or more of the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that a procedural irregularity has occurred • that the case was not considered on its merits. <p>Candidates should complete the Complaints and Appeals form located on the CPA Australia website and submit the form to the CPA Australia RTO Manager at rto@cpaaustralia.com.au or by post to:</p> | <p>Candidates CPA Australia RTO Manager</p> |

Complaints and Appeals
RTO Manager
CPA Australia
GPO Box 2820
Melbourne, VIC 3001
Australia

Any appeal will be processed in accordance with the CPA Australia RTO Complaints and Appeals process. Full information on this process can be found in the CPA Australia RTO Complaints and Appeals policy located on the CPA Australia website.

Associated Documentation

- Candidate Handbook
- CPA Australia Policies and Procedures
- CPA Australia RTO Credit Transfer Policy
- CPA Australia RTO Fees, Charges and Cancellations Policy
- CPA Australia RTO Issuing Qualifications Policy
- Application for Credit Transfer Form
- Complaints and Appeals Form
- Complaints and Appeals Register
- Application for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Form