

## 1. Policy Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines the circumstances under which students are eligible for recognition of prior learning.

## 2. Policy Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to any prospective, commencing or returning students enrolling in any course/s at DNA Kingston Training.

## 3. Terms and Definitions

- 3.1 **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is an assessment process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for course credit.
- 3.2 **Formal Learning** is the learning that takes place through a structured program of learning delivered by a registered education provider, and which leads to the full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification.
- 3.3 **Informal Learning** is learning gained through work, social, family, hobby or leisure activities and experiences.
- 3.4 **Non-formal learning** refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of learning, but does not directly lead to full or partial achievement of an officially accredited qualification.
- 3.5 **Currency** relates to the applicant's ability to demonstrate current industry skills, knowledge and understanding, so the evidence provided should be from either the present or recent past.

## 4. Policy Content

- 4.1 The DNA Kingston Training applies a systematic institution-wide approach to the granting of course credit which does not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any existing or prospective student.
- 4.2 Students are not required to repeat learning activities, regardless of how or where the learning was acquired, providing that the learning is current and relevant to the competencies within a unit applicable to the qualification in which they are or seek to be enrolled. These learning experiences include the individual's relevant formal, informal and non-formal learning.
- 4.3 RPL applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in a timely manner to ensure that all candidates are able to make well-informed choices about study options, pathways and alternatives by taking into account the credit they can expect.
- 4.4 DNA Kingston Training provides a RPL assessment process for students and standard RPL fees will apply. DNA Kingston Training performs the Recognition of Prior Formal Learning function with a fee charge, with its enrolment service. Irrespective of outcome, a service fee applies to each subject within an application received on or after the day of commencement of the relevant unit.

- 4.5 Where the process relates to the Recognition of Prior Informal or Non-formal Learning, a service fee applies to each subject, irrespective of outcome or time of submission.
- 4.6 Candidates are required to complete the appropriate section of the RPL application form and provide supportive evidence appropriate to the type of prior learning. This evidence will be assessed and, if necessary, an interview held at which the candidate may provide additional evidence of the relevant competencies or demonstrate the relevant skills. For overseas applicants and those not living within reasonable travel distance to a College campus, this interview and/or demonstration may be conducted by telephone or on-campus after arrival.
- 4.7 DNA Kingston Training reserves the right not to recognise part or all of any previous experience if the assessor believes that the competencies or knowledge demonstrated and recorded fall significantly short of the industry standard as stated within the relevant National Training Package or accredited course. In such a case, the candidate will be required to complete further training in the unit.
- 4.8 There is no limit to the amount of RPL that can be granted to any one student. A full qualification can be attained in this way, and a special RPL fee would apply in such circumstances, based on 50% of the private standard course cost.

## 5. Whole qualification or unit

- 5.1 Applications for recognition of prior formal learning for an entire unit of competency will be processed with a fee. The student will not be required to participate in any of the lectures it is totally an assessment process.
- 5.2 However, a student may also apply for recognition of prior learning for a whole qualification. Once again this is an assessment process only. Any gaps in the assessment process, the student may require to attend lectures and receive learning material to become competent in the assessment process.

## 7. General process

- 7.1 Applications for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) are administered by the Admissions team during the enrolment process, and by the Manager of Studies if submitted after the commencement of the VET course of study. Candidates are encouraged to discuss any prior learning they may have with the Admissions Team and Manager of Studies or International Manager who can provide further guidance if needed in relation to the process shown below.
  - 7.1.1 Candidates should think carefully about what expertise has been acquired over time, in particular whether they have 'depth' of knowledge and/or strong skills in specific areas.
  - 7.1.2 If the candidate wishes to proceed with the application, he/she should obtain a relevant application form from International Manager at DNA Kingston Training.
  - 7.1.3 Candidates already on campus should consult with the Manager of Studies, who will provide the appropriate application form and additional guidance.
  - 7.1.4 Once the application form has been completed by the candidate, it should be submitted as part of the Application for Admission for prospective students or to the Manager of Studies for current students. It is expected that such applications would occur by the end of the first week of the relevant subject.
  - 7.1.5 Applications must be accompanied by original or certified copy documents (e.g.

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Awards, Statements of Attainment, subject descriptors from other education providers, work samples or letters on letterhead from current and/or previous employers.)

- 7.1.6 The RPL assessment will include the verification of the currency, equivalency, and authenticity of the documents submitted. Overseas and domestic academic qualifications presented for an application for course credit will be authenticated by:
- Original documents (i.e. award and transcript of results) being provided by the candidate to the authorised College representative; or
  - Copies of the original documents (i.e. award and transcript of results) being provided by the candidate which have been either:
    - Notarised by a Justice of the Peace or equivalent authority; or
    - Verified as a true and correct copy of the original documents by an authorised College representative.
- 7.1.7 Should the College representative suspect that the academic document presented has been altered or fraudulently created, contact will be made with the conferring institution to validate the claims of the candidate.
- 7.1.8 All claimed work experience must be relevant to the qualification, and should be within the last five years of the date of application. Candidates must provide Statements of Service on official company letterhead providing contact details of the employer. Past employers are contacted to verify work experience on a case-by-case basis.
- 7.1.9 This evidence will demonstrate they are able to commence the assessment only and assist with gathering additional evidence to demonstrate competency and currency.

- 7.1.10 After this assessment process, the Manager of Studies will provide a written notification explaining the units for which credit or RPL has been granted, and those which have been declined and why.
- 7.1.11 If the candidate is dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she has the option to appeal against the decision, but must do so within twenty (20) working days of the date nominated on the written notification.
- 7.1.12 If the candidate is currently enrolled, he/she must attend all scheduled classes until the written notification is received, and until he/she has signed and returned that to the Manager of Studies.

## 8. Procedure

- 8.1 This document outlines DNA Kingston Training policy and process for students to be granted recognition of prior learning if they have suitable prior training and/or experience.
- 8.2 According to the AQF National Principles and Operational Guidelines, RPL can be used in two ways:
  - 8.2.1 As an alternative mechanism for gaining access to a course or qualification. A candidate may gain entry to a course or qualification using RPL as an alternative to possessing the prerequisites for entry based on formal education and training. An example of this is a candidate who obtains a place in a diploma course using RPL (based on life or work experience) when they have not completed the relevant prerequisites; and/or
  - 8.2.2 For the award of unit/s of competency that form part of a qualification, leading to the partial or full completion of the requirements for that course or qualification.
- 8.3 RPL may use different assessment methods, but they should be no less and no more rigorous than conventional methods of assessing competence in the VET sector.
- 8.4 To recognise prior learning we ensure:
  - 8.4.1 That candidates know that RPL provides an alternative pathway to course attendance (through this policy provided on orientation day, web site, student handbook, acceptance contract and contacting the Manager of Studies or International Manager at our Head Office.
  - 8.4.2 In consultation with the candidate, the learning, skills and knowledge that the candidate is able to demonstrate against the learning outcomes or performance criteria of the course or qualification for which the candidate is seeking entry or the award of credit.
  - 8.4.3 Whether any further evidence is needed to support the claim of competence and arrange for appropriate additional learning experiences or gap training where appropriate.
  - 8.4.4 Conduct an assessment confirms competence. To make RPL a user-friendly assessment pathway, assessors need to adopt a flexible and interactive approach, and provide information, advice and feedback to RPL candidates in the same way that they provide support and assistance to all candidates seeking to have their skills developed and assessed.

- 8.5 It is particularly important when candidates are not engaged in a structured learning program that they receive advice about what is required of them and that they not be constricted by inappropriately applied paper-based or knowledge-based assessment methods.
- 8.6 The nature of the support provided may differ from that which is made available to other candidates but the level and quality of that support will influence outcomes for candidates seeking RPL in the same ways as it influences other candidates.
- 8.7 Process in summary
- 8.7.1 Applications for recognition of prior learning can be accepted if:
- the student is enrolled in an approved course of DNA Kingston Training, and
  - the appropriate fee has been paid.
- 8.8 To start the process
- 8.8.1 An application for Recognition of Prior Learning/Course Credit form is available from the Manager of Studies or International Manager, or Administration Staff [admin@dnakingston.com.au](mailto:admin@dnakingston.com.au).
- 8.10 It is intended that if an applicant thinks they may be eligible for RPL they complete the form and provided information regarding the assessment process which may be theory based, practical or both.
- 8.11 Preparation/information provision to candidate:
- 8.12 In planning for any assessment, assessors need to provide adequate information prior to, throughout and after a training and assessment experience. They need to be fully aware of the needs of the candidate, any relevant workplace personnel and the requirements of the Training Package unit of competency or qualification. Information is to be provided to the candidate about the assessment process. It will give particular advice regarding how the candidate can demonstrate their competence and any documentary evidence a candidate may wish to gather to support their application.
- 8.13 Each industry has unique documents that can provide evidence of experience and competence. However, the focus of the new streamlined holistic assessment process is to focus on demonstrated skills and knowledge and not to rely on documentary evidence as the main source of evidence.
- 8.14 Some examples of documentary evidence that can support the process include:
- Licenses
  - Brief CV or work history
  - Certificates/results of assessment
  - Tickets held eg forklift, crane etc
  - Photographs of work undertaken
  - Diaries
  - Task sheets/job sheets
  - Log books
  - Site training records

Pay slips  
Membership of relevant professional associations  
References/letters/third party verification reports from previous employers/supervisors  
Industry awards  
Performance appraisals, Duty statements

- 8.15 These items may be used to support the candidate's claim to competency throughout the RPL process. However, they should not be seen as a sole or sufficient determinant of competence, which is more properly and effectively formerly assessed through interaction, dialogue and the practical demonstration of tasks.
- 8.16 First, it is necessary to extract from the Training Package the job tasks involved in the demonstration of competence, and then to group these job tasks into clusters or "skill sets". These will form the basis of the content of the assessment templates to be used throughout the different steps in the assessment process (as set out below).
- 8.17 It is usually appropriate to cluster competencies into more holistic assessment tasks, or task-based clusters, to generate accurate evidence. Competencies that are conceived as separate in the Training Package might, for some candidates, be intimately connected in practice, and thus not easy to separate out from one another. An approach that clusters units of competency where there is commonality in content prevents duplication of assessment, and can provide for a more realistic demonstration of competence. This requires looking at a whole picture of a particular job role as it happens in industry and assessing holistically.
- 8.18 This approach saves valuable time in the assessment process. After reviewing all the information, the candidate may still decide not to progress with the formal RPL assessment process by not applying for RPL.
- 8.19 Following this preparatory stage of providing information to the candidate about the assessment process, and determining the job tasks and any clustering of competencies appropriate for the candidate, four stages toward RPL assessment are to be followed:
- Stage 1: self evaluation completed by candidate, complete forms
  - Stage 2: interview with assessor preparing for assessments
  - Stage 3: demonstration, observation and completion of written formal assessments.
  - Stage 4: provision of further training and assessment if any gaps
- 8.42 If DNA Kingston grants the student course credit for RPL which leads to a shortening of the student's course before the student visa is granted, the eCoE will indicate the actual net course duration for the course. If the RPL/course credit granted will not affect the duration of the course, DNA Kingston Training records the RPL/course credit in the student's file but does not need to take any other action.
- 8.43 If the RPL/course credit granted will affect the duration of the course, the International Manager, records a change of course duration on PRISMS. To do this, the uses the Student Course Variation function, and indicates that the student has requested a change to the existing enrolment. The International Manager then chooses 'transfer student into same course' and then changes the end date of the course. This process will result in the creation of a new CoE (with the revised end date) and the cancellation of the original CoE. The International Manager will report the change of course duration to Department of Education via PRISMS within 14 days after the event as specified under Section 19 of the ESOS Act.

- 8.44 If RPL is granted, tuition fees to the value of that subject's worth will be deducted from the total course cost.
- 8.45 Recognition of prior learning (RPL) - and any course credit given as a result of the RPL process - are applicable only to the course in which the student is enrolled at the time of applying for RPL. If a student changes courses, any RPL/course credit granted will be reassessed to ensure that it still remains appropriate.

## 9. Fees for RPL process

- 9.1 It is anticipated that fees will vary as each RPL application will be unique. However, DNA Kingston will not charge more than the current stated tuition fee for the unit/(s) for which RPL is requested by an applicant.

## 10. Continuous Improvement

- 10.1 At the end of each semester, the Manager of Studies, CEO, Senior Lecturers and International Manager and any trainers who have been involved in applications for recognition of prior learning in the semester will meet to review the records of course credit granted along with general review of resources, delivery and assessment of programmes. They will review all programmes as well as the applications made and the level of course credits granted to applicants and ensure that fair and consistent levels of course credit has been granted. They will also ensure validation alongside samples of regular assessment processes, to ensure consistency and parity of assessment across all instances of assessment, whether undertaken at the end of a course of training, or as a result of RPL application.
- 10.2 A record of the review (and its outcomes) will be completed by the Manager of Studies and, where improvements to the RPL application process are identified, these will be implemented with immediate effect. The record of the review and implementation of improvements will be maintained by the Manager of Studies in a file in their office.

## 11. Administration

- 11.1 This policy and related documentation is accessible by students on the DNA Kingston Training website.
- 11.2 Staff will be advised of this policy and related procedures via email and staff information sessions.

<b>Document Name</b>		Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure
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