Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

2015

Contents

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AET	Adult Education and Training
CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance
FET	Further Education and Training
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework
LLL	Lifelong learning
NoE	Naturally occurring evidence
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OQSF	Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority

1. Definition of RPL and Introduction

1.1. Definition

RPL is a mechanism for formally recognising and placing a value on what people have learned through daily life, work experience, informal (non-accredited) or formal learning, enabling them to gain access to further learning opportunities, better career prospects or academic credits. The official definition of RPL by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is as follows:

> *'Recognition of prior learning means the comparison of the previous learning and experience of a learner, howsoever obtained, against the learning outcomes required for a specified qualification, and the acceptance for purposes of qualification of that which meets the requirements'*
>
> [SAQA Act 58 of 1995]

This definition was replaced by SAQA in March 2013. (This new RPL Policy[1] replaces the original policy document *Recognition of Prior Learning in the context of the South African NQF* developed in 2002 by SAQA.) The "new" definition of RPL is:

> "Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)" means the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development."

1.2. Rationale

RPL is essential to human resource development and to building the economy of South Africa. RPL provides opportunities to capitalise on what people have learned already, by formally assessing skills and knowledge that were previously unrecognised, thus saving time and resources. It helps builds individuals' confidence and can motivate and encourage lifelong learning and personal development. It provides opportunities to address sector skills shortages and for developing the workforce, improving employment opportunities and industry outcomes.

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[1] National policy for the implementation of the recognition of prior learning, SAQA March 2013, sourced from : http://www.saqa.org.za/docs/pol/2013/natpol_irpl.pdf

1.3. Legislative environment

The *National Policy for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning* (SAQA, March 2013) replaces the 2002 national RPL policy[2] and is aligned with the NQF Act 67 of 2008, the Human Resources Development Strategy, the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training, the National Skills Development Strategy and the National Development Plan 2030. It is implemented with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the associated Acts for the three Quality Councils. The *Criteria and Guidelines for the Implementation of RPL* (SAQA, 2004) will be replaced by new guidelines and criteria after SAQA has consulted the Quality Councils.

The 2013 SAQA RPL policy provides both a philosophical underpinning and an operational strategy for RPL implementation.

The DHET is also working on an RPL policy (draft – January 2015) that aims to provide a strong enabling environment for the further development and implementation of RPL across the post school education and training system, and across all NQF levels. The DHET policy will ensure there is a firm national policy statement to ensure the objectives of the NQF Act are met. It will also ensure that SAQA and the QCs are held accountable to perform their duties in relation to RPL as stated in the NQF Act.

1.3.1. RPL and the NQF

RPL is integral to the NQF and the same objectives apply. These are:

- Create a single, integrated national framework for learning achievements;

- Facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths;

- Enhance the quality of education and training;

- Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities;

- Contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.

The NQF consists of three co-ordinated sub-frameworks, each overseen by its own Quality Council which is responsible for implementing RPL in its sector:

- The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF), overseen by the Council on Higher Education (CHE)

- The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF), overseen by Umalusi

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[2] Recognition of Prior Learning in the context of the South African NQF, SAQA 2002.

- The Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF), overseen by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations. Work-based qualifications and part qualifications offered by the BANKSETA fall within this sub-framework.

SAQA works with the Quality Councils to oversee the implementation of the NQF for the recognition of learning achievements and to quality assure South African qualifications and part-qualifications which are registered on the NQF. These qualifications and part-qualifications may be awarded whole or in part through RPL.

The DHET draft policy on RPL (January 2015) stresses that South Africa needs a national RPL policy to ensure greater impetus towards further development and implementation of RPL. The DHET expresses concern that RPL implementation has not yet been embedded within the national education and training system.

2. Scope of BANKSETA RPL Policy

The BANKSETA has been appointed by the QCTO to implement the QCTO's mandate within the banking sector. This includes the implementation and quality assurance of RPL for the so called legacy qualifications quality assured by the BANKSETA. At the time of drafting this RPL policy, the QCTO has no RPL policy that can be used as a basis for the BANKSETA's own policy (and even when it is released it is anticipated that it will not deal with the legacy qualifications as the QCTO is forward facing towards the new vocational qualification structure).

The BANKSETA will work with the QCTO in the implementation and furtherance of RPL in the banking sector – both for legacy qualifications and new-QCTO format curricula[3]. However, this policy focuses mainly on the legacy qualifications.

The two main forms of RPL which the BANKSETA RPL Policy addresses are:

1. RPL for access or for advanced standing;
2. RPL for credits for a full or partial qualification.

RPL for access provides an alternative access route into a learning programme when a candidate does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission. This applies to learning programmes that are offered by accredited institutions (including adult education and training centres) or by workplace-based training providers. Advanced standing is when a candidate is granted access to a formal learning programme at a higher level than her/his

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[3] The new QCTO format curricula encompass four components: theory, practical, workplace and fundamental. Potentially each component could be facilitated by a different provider and there is no formal assessment at the end of each component. Final assessment takes place through a QCTO appointed Quality Assessment Partner who will do an External Integrated Summative Assessment and the QCTO as stated previously that this cannot be RPL-ed. Unless this changes there will be little scope for RPL in the QCTO arena outside of the legacy qualifications.

previous formal learning would have allowed, and may include partial exemption of the learning towards the qualification on the basis of her/his prior learning.[4]

RPL for credit concerns formally awarding credits for or towards a qualification or part qualification that is registered on the NQF. This includes credits for unit standards, where the candidate is considered to have achieved the equivalent learning required outside of a formal learning programme. RPL will only be recognised for certification purposes if whole unit standards are assessed. Portions of knowledge, skill or experience will not be recognised in isolation of the total described in the unit standard.

In addition, RPL may be considered to prove job competence for promotion, or for job seeking purposes.

3. Principles guiding RPL Implementation

RPL is driven by an educational, social and economic transformation agenda, that seeks to include those traditionally and historically excluded from progressing in their chosen education and training path and from progressing in their careers.   RPL is fundamentally a holistic and developmental process.

The following principles shall inform RPL implementation:
- **Compliance with the objectives of the NQF:**   The RPL process will adhere to the objectives of the NQF.

- **National interest:** Besides the personal benefits to the candidate, RPL should further South Africa's national interests and that of the banking sector.

- **Quality and credibility:** RPL practices, processes and procedures will be rigorous and conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment prescribed by SAQA (fairness, validity, reliability, practicability, transparency). This is to ensure credibility in the RPL process and confidence in RPL decisions and outcomes. Qualifications awarded to RPL candidates need to be as respected as those earned through more traditional means; no distinction may be made on the learner's record. The RPL process must be open to public scrutiny, especially where credits have been awarded.

- **RPL is multi-contextual:** there is no 'one size fits all' approach. RPL will be implemented differently according to context as well as whether the purpose is for personal development, for further learning and workplace advancement, for credit or for access to a formal learning programme. The purposes and contexts will determine the practices and outcomes of RPL in each case.

- **Developmental approach:** The RPL process follows a developmental model (as opposed to a deficit model) of adult learning, building on knowledge and skills that

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[4] Most higher education institutions have a 'residency clause' which stipulates how much learning may be exempted in qualifications offered by them – usually a maximum of 50%. FET providers have no such restrictions.

adults have already acquired. RPL is, therefore, to be a motivating rather than a demotivating process.[5]

- **Voluntarism:** The RPL process is voluntary and, if the candidate is employed, this must be approved by both the employee and their manager. No employee can be forced to undertake an RPL assessment.

- **Contractually binding:** Those who embark upon the RPL process are obliged to see the process through to completion and an RPL assessment contract will be signed. Managers should be encouraged to assist employees to manage and plan their time so that they can cope with the RPL and their day-to-day work load.

- **Cost effectiveness:** The RPL process is to be kept as cost effective as possible. RPL in areas of identified scarce skills may provide maximum benefit on the budget invested.

- **Commitment to the principles of equity, redress and inclusion:** It is understood that the RPL process has the potential for social transformation if implemented correctly. RPL will never become a gate-keeping tool or a way to exclude unfairly anybody from advancing at work or in their learning[6]. Diversity of RPL candidates and their assessment needs are assumed and every effort will be made to accommodate candidates that have special needs in the assessment process. The RPL process allows access to all individuals regardless of gender, race or disability.

4. RPL Challenges/Barriers

The BANKSETA RPL Policy recognises that there are challenges and barriers to RPL and will remove these where possible. Some of these challenges/barriers may be:

- The language in which RPL processes and assessment are conducted;
- Literacy levels of candidates;
- Empowering candidates to 'translate' their learning being assessed in terms of the qualification or part-qualification outcomes and assessment criteria, and in providing relevant evidence;
- Insufficient trained RPL practitioners, especially assessors;
- Recognising that not all workplace or experiential learning is automatically of a sufficiently high standard;
- Resourcing of RPL;
- The effect of residency clauses of higher education institutions on access and articulation;
- Accommodating candidates with disabilities.

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[5] This view of RPL as a pedagogy is drawn from the SAQA 2013 policy for implementation. It also draws on the research and unpublished book of Ralphs, Cooper, Deller and Moodley (due to be published in 2015)

5. Quality Assurance

Quality assurance of RPL practices, processes and procedures is essential for achieving the objectives of RPL within the context of the NQF. The intention of quality assurance is to protect the integrity of the processes and outcomes of RPL. The following are essential elements of RPL quality assurance.

- Develop and maintain an information management system that is compatible with the National Learner Record Database (NLRD) and ensure that all learner achievements are recorded on this system.

- Ensure that no distinction, other than for data analysis, is made between credits and qualifications awarded through formal learning programmes and through RPL routes.

- Standardisation of practices can take place, but only in similar instances of RPL. Encourage standard practices to grow rather than to impose top-down standardisation.

- Ensure sufficient, effectively trained RPL facilitators, assessors, moderators and RPL administration officials.

- Ensure all evidence presented for RPL assessment meets the SAQA criteria of being current, authentic, sufficient, relevant, direct and integrated with the world of work as much as possible.

- Ensure that RPL assessment practices, processes and procedures meet the SAQA criteria of
  o **Appropriateness** to the learning that is being assessed;
  o **Fairness** – the method of assessment must not present any barriers to achievements which are not related to the evidence;
  o **Manageability**, i.e. in terms of assessment arrangements, resources and costs for RPL candidates, providers and workplaces;
  o **Validity** – the RPL assessment and process must be fit for purpose;
  o **Openness -** learners must contribute to the planning and gathering of evidence and they must fully understand the process and the criteria;
  o **Consistency -** the assessment must be such that the same assessor would make the same judgment again under similar circumstances. The judgment made must be similar to the judgment that would be made by other assessors;
  o **Reliability** – the RPL assessment must be such that the candidate would be able to repeat the assessment over time and achieve a similar result.

- External moderation structures, processes and procedures must be in place and RPL assessments and decisions will be moderated in the same way as for all other education and training assessments.

- Regular monitoring and evaluation of RPL providers, their RPL services and RPL delivery models will take place, in line with criteria established for this purpose and with BANKSETA education and training policies.

- Regular verification of provider RPL strategies will be carried out.

6. Accreditation[7]

All BANKSETA RPL providers will be accredited with the ETQA and all its RPL practitioners will be registered. Providers include workplaces that offer RPL assessment services; RPL practitioners include RPL administrators, advisors, facilitators, assessors, moderators and verifiers. Following from this, BANKSETA will actively provide support for and promote the training of RPL practitioners and their continuing professional development.

The registration of assessors and moderators will expire every three (3) years. During this period the RPL assessors and moderators must conduct the minimum specified number of interventions to maintain registration or proof that he/she is still active.

7. Development and Training of RPL Staff

The professionalisation of RPL as a practice is to be achieved through thorough and effective training of RPL practitioners and through their registration as RPL practitioners. It is noted that the DHET has proposed (in its draft policy) that a National RPL Institute be established to:
- Drive professionalism of RPL practitioners;
- Manage RPL information and its dissemination;
- Conduct research;
- Develop policies;
- Engage in advocacy and communication;
- Refer learners to providers who are accredited;
- Moderate RPL provision;
- Enhance collaboration.

When the National RPL Institute is established the BANKSETA will participate in full with its activities.

8. The RPL Process
8.1. Principles
The following principles inform the RPL process:
- The focus of the RPL process is on what has been learned, not on the status of the institution, the type of organisation or the place where learning was obtained.

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[7] See BANKSETA Accreditation Policy

- RPL is learner-centred and developmental; the candidate must not be penalised for what s/he does not know or can do. RPL recognises gaps in learning and makes recommendations or offers remediation to address these gaps.

- Credit is awarded on the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through experience and not for experience alone.

- The relevant knowledge, skills and competencies obtained through experience must be made visible through the RPL process, through appropriate assessment or other methods.

- Mentoring is an essential aspect of the RPL process. The candidate must be provided with the appropriate advice, guidance and support at all stages of the process which should recognise the diversity of learners and their experience: at the initial enquiry stage; for and during the preparation of evidence; for further learning that may be necessary to fill any knowledge or skills gaps; and when advising the learner of the outcomes of the process.
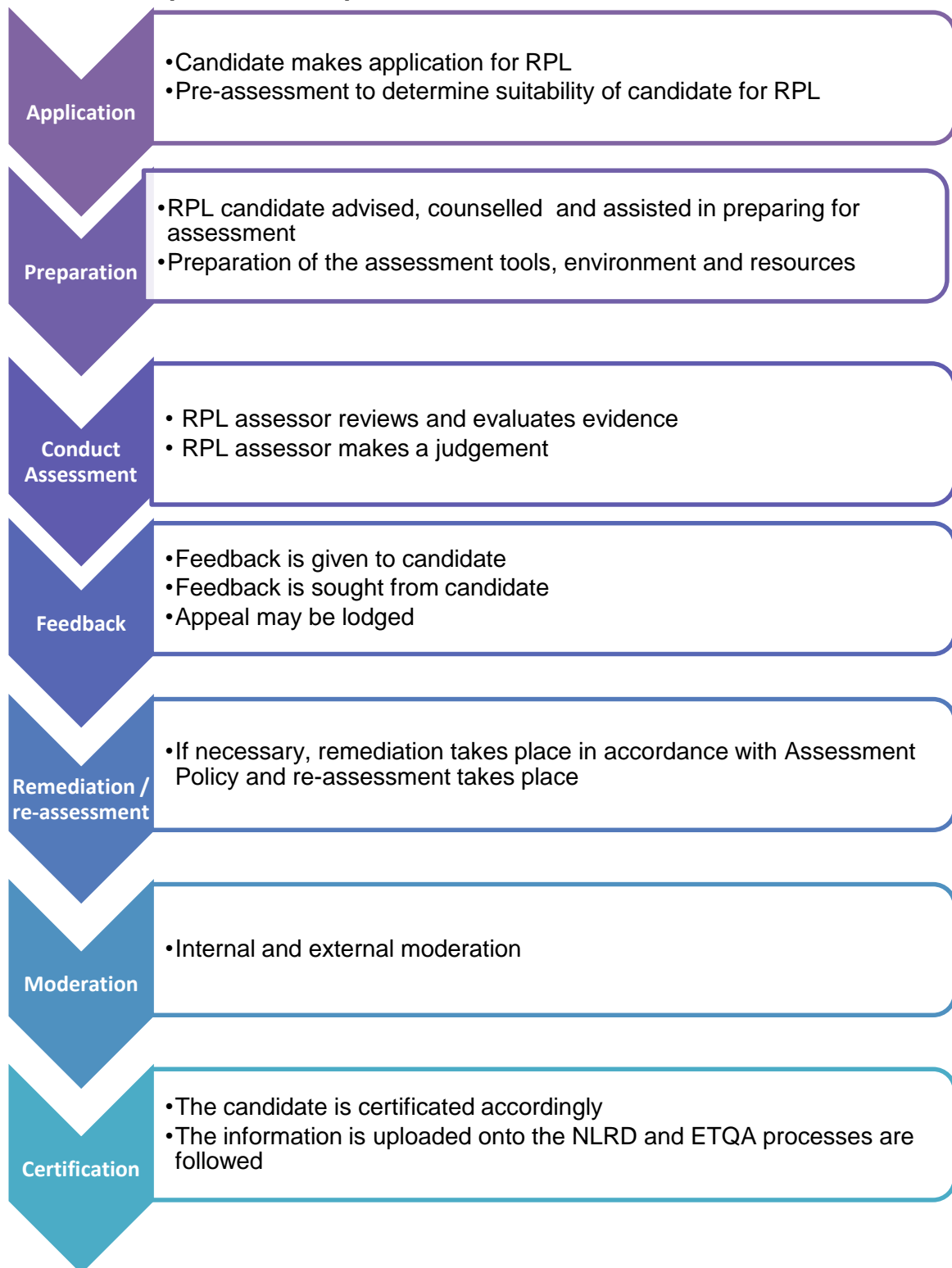
8.2. Steps in the RPL process

Application
- Candidate makes application for RPL
- Pre-assessment to determine suitability of candidate for RPL

Preparation
- RPL candidate advised, counselled and assisted in preparing for assessment
- Preparation of the assessment tools, environment and resources

Conduct Assessment
- RPL assessor reviews and evaluates evidence
- RPL assessor makes a judgement

Feedback
- Feedback is given to candidate
- Feedback is sought from candidate
- Appeal may be lodged

Remediation / re-assessment
- If necessary, remediation takes place in accordance with Assessment Policy and re-assessment takes place

Moderation
- Internal and external moderation

Certification
- The candidate is certificated accordingly
- The information is uploaded onto the NLRD and ETQA processes are followed

Figure 1: Steps in the RPL process

High touch RPL[8]

The candidate is advised during the preparation for RPL session when the assessments will take place. This is noted on the individual candidate assessment plan. Any amendments to the assessment schedule/plan are indicated on the assessment schedule/plan and initialled by the candidate and the RPL advisor/assessor.

The high touch RPL session is a mediated session, designed to mediate the world of the workplace, with its unique terminology and practices and the world of the academy, with its unit standards and generic terminology. This session can be one day or a few days and it should be structured to suit the content and current levels of understanding of the group.

> It is important to note that the unit standards are what is unpacked. NOT the assessment tools. And the more familiar the assessor or RPL advisor is with the actual workplace and its terminology, the better this process unfolds. The RPL advisor is the one who mediates between the world of the academy and the practical workplace – they translate, contextualise and guide through the academic world while constantly referring back to workplace practice.

With high touch RPL, the evidence could be a portfolio of evidence with:

- Knowledge answers (could be oral recording or written);
- Practical evidence, which is most likely to be video-ed evidence of the candidate performing set activities and recorded discussion with questions and answers;
- There may be written assignments or projects but only where the unit standards require and only if the candidates can write these;
- Oral or written reflections;
- Witness testimonies.

The RPL process in this high touch model could be conducted by an RPL advisor who simply helps the candidate to collect all the evidence. Once it is all collected (video, observation checklists, etc.) the RPL advisor hands it over to the assessor to assess. Alternatively, the RPL advisor could also be an assessor. If this is the case the assessor must take care to **focus on evidence collection**. The assessment decisions should happen afterwards.

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[8] This is not an official SAQA term. It is simply a descriptor to help us differentiate level of RPL advisor involvement

Note RPL advisor involved in evidence collection must take care not to lead evidence by asking leading questions or using body language to guide a candidate. Your role here is to collect the evidence. Not judge it. This is why we caution that you are not assessing now – only collecting evidence.

Low touch RPL

This is more typical with higher level qualifications and candidates who are literate, self-motivated, able to source workplace evidence and structured. The RPL advisor will take them through the preparatory session, agree an assessment plan, and then the candidate is on their own to complete a portfolio of evidence. The RPL advisor will check progress with the candidates from time to time as agreed, but the process is largely candidate-directed. The assessment tool is mostly an integrated portfolio of evidence with:

- Knowledge answers;
- Naturally occurring workplace evidence;
- Simulated projects and assignments;
- Video evidence oral evidence;
- Oral or written reflections;
- Witness testimony;

The candidate will hand the portfolio in at the end and an assessor will assess it. (In the case of high touch RPL with observations the RPL advisor/assessor may help the candidate collate their evidence and submit it the assessor.)

Assessment of the evidence presented is conducted by an assessor registered with BANKSETA for the qualification or skills programme. The assessor reviews all the evidence submitted and may call the candidate to clarify particular points or check authenticity. The assessor then reaches a decision on the competence of the candidate for each unit standard assessed. The decision could be:

- Competent for the unit standard;
- Not-yet-competent for the unit standard.

8.2.1. Feedback

Stakeholders who may need to be informed of the assessment outcome include:

- The learner;

- The employer (but only if the company is paying for the assessment – if the learner is self-funding then providers do not usually have an obligation to report results to the employer);
- The internal moderator (usually as a schedule that forms part of the assessment report);
- The provider's administration department (so that the results are captured as per the provider's QMS).

Assessors must take care to protect the confidentiality of the learner's results. Assessors should not tell other learners or unauthorised role-players what the outcome of the assessment is without permission from the learner.

Learner feedback will be one of the following, where the learner:

- Meets all the criteria in relation to a unit standard (i.e. they are fully competent); OR
- Clearly does not meet the criteria in a unit standard (i.e. they are fully not-yet-competent); OR
- Meets some, but not all criteria and more evidence is required before a final judgement is possible.

Occasionally, feedback may be given verbally by the assessor directly to the learner. If this is done the assessor must follow the provider's QMS procedure for the delivery of verbal feedback. This will usually include collecting evidence that the learner received and understood from the feedback (usually this is done by getting the learner to sign a feedback acknowledgement form).

8.2.2. Remediation

Usually a provider will have a ruling on remediation and the number of times a learner or candidate can remediate using the same assessment activities and tools. At BANKSETA we allow the first assessment and two remedial assessments before assessment tools must be changed. Candidates who need additional remediation should possibly be encouraged to attend training to bridge their gaps.

With remediation, the candidate is given feedback (see section above) and asked if they wish to remediate. Where gaps are large, it may be advisable to rather suggest they attend training as further not-yet-competent results may affect their self-esteem. But where gaps are small, remediation may be an option. The assessor will check when the candidate would like to re-submit and make a note on the assessment plan.

Remember: the RPL candidate should not be subjected to a more onerous assessment practice than a learner attending training for the same unit standards. If your training 'pass mark' is 50%, then your RPL candidate cannot be required to get more than this.

8.2.3. RPL moderation process

Moderation is a process of reviewing the assessment process. Moderation happens on two levels:

- Internal moderation, conducted by the provider;
- External moderation, conducted by the SETA.

Internal moderation

Is conducted by a moderator who is registered with BANKSETA for the qualification or skills programme being assessed. The process is:

When a batch of assessments are ready for moderation, the moderator will plan the moderation by compiling a moderation plan. This will involve:

- Meeting with the assessor;
- Reviewing the assessment plans;
- Setting a date to conduct moderation;
- Selecting a sample to moderate (25%).

Once the moderation has been completed a moderation plan will be compiled.

Note that moderation may also be concurrent with the assessment. This involves the moderator watching and moderating while an assessor is assessing a candidate. The advantages of this are that moderation happens at the same time as assessment so the results that are given to candidates are not subject to moderation upholding the results. But this practice ca be time consuming. It is useful for new assessors though.

Moderators may elect to:

- Uphold the results because the process was sound and the assessment principles were adhered to OR
- Not uphold pending some action on the part of the assessors.

Remedial action will be detailed in the moderation report.

External moderation

Assuming the internal moderator upholds the results, BANKSETA is informed and a sample of assessments are selected for external moderation the external moderator will also review assessment plans and reports and internal moderation plans and reports.

Internal and external moderation of the assessment process are there to quality assure that the assessment decisions are concluded in line with the BANKSETA principles and policy on assessment.

8.2.4. Certification Process

Candidates successfully RPL-ed against the relevant qualification/unit standards must be certificated according to the BANKSETA Certification Policy. The information is uploaded on to the National Learner Record Database (NLRD).

> The certificate issued for an RPL candidate will be identical to that issued to a learner who attended classes for the same skills programme or qualification. There will be no mention of RPL on the certificate. But the provider must indicate on the NLRD upload that the qualification / skills programme was earned through RPL. This is for statistical tracking only.

8.2.5. Appeals process

An appeal made by an RPL candidate will adhere to the BANKSETA Assessment Appeals Policy. A candidate may appeal against the RPL process or decisions on the grounds of unfairness or discrimination.

9. Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)

> Note: BANKSETA has a separate CAT policy.

RPL is to be implemented together with credit accumulation and transfer (CAT)[9] to allow for mobility and progression within the NQF. The purpose of CAT is to facilitate lifelong learning and access to the workplace and to reduce the wastage of time and resources that occurs when learning has to be repeated in different learning or working contexts.

Credit accumulation is the process of totalling credits for learning over time, obtained through a formal learning programme or through RPL, towards a part qualification or the completion of a full qualification. Credit transfer can allow these credits to be used towards another

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[9] Refer to National Policy and Criteria for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (2014) for further details. See also National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa (Notice 1036 of 2013, Draft for public comment, 15 October 2013)

qualification or part qualification on the same or different sub-framework of the NQF, or recognition within the same discipline but in another occupation, or the recognition of part qualifications from another institution or workplace-based provider.

CAT can occur within a single institution of learning, between two or more institutions, or nationally – across all institutions. CAT can take place by means of systemic articulation routes or by specific articulation agreements between institutions.

Policy priorities for CAT are:

- Effective delivery and design of articulation routes
  This requires the structure and content of qualifications to be intentionally designed to facilitate progress and mobility within and across the NQF and to the world of work. It requires collaboration between providers to facilitate CAT and for guidelines to be developed to guide collaboration, including multilateral agreements at a systemic level. Models of good practice relating to CAT must be made available and used to develop CAT further. Workplaces need to engage with education and training providers regarding CAT, to actively promote the recognition of workplace experience and to provide for CAT in collaboration with the QCTO.

- Credible quality assurance and standards setting arrangements
  This must form the basis for CAT across all sectors. The standards setting systems developed and overseen by the QCTO must provide an enabling framework within which appropriate arrangements for CAT can be created. The recognition of workplace experience for CAT must be actively promoted in collaboration with the QCTO and workplaces. Particular attention must be given to creating diverse options for CAT between the NQF levels 5 and 6 of the OQSF and HEQSF.

- Adequate resourcing
  National funding and planning arrangements must facilitate and support CAT. Funding for collaborative partnerships to facilitate CAT must be sourced and made available. The sustainability of CAT within and between institutions must be based on mutual agreements.

10. RPL Targets

BANKSETA will set targets in relation to RPL and quality in its service level agreements with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). RPL has been taken to scale in the BANKSETA and this growth of quality RPL practices must be encouraged to continue.

BANKSETA subscribes to and supports the target laid down in the DHET draft RPL policy (January 2015) that at least 5% of all students enrolled at every accredited institution should have gained access via the RPL route.

11. Effective Delivery Models for RPL

RPL is characterised by diversity across different contexts, sectors and levels in the learning system so that a standard delivery model is undesirable and inappropriate.

BANKSETA encourages a special RPL focus on a return to learning for unemployed youth and adults to be resourced in collaboration with relevant stakeholders in the labour market and the education and training system. RPL in the further education and training (FET) and adult education and training (AET) sectors especially must be addressed.

Developing a shared language and understanding of RPL principles and teaching-learning and assessment processes, which allow for a diversity of purposes and practices in and across different contexts and learning pathways, is important to effective delivery. BANKSETA will develop enabling agreements to enhance effective progression and articulation of RPL practices and services in and across different learning and qualification pathways.

Effective administrative and logistical systems and the staff capacity to deliver quality RPL to scale will be addressed as this is essential to effective delivery.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring of RPL providers will take place according to BANKSETA ETQA education and training policies and the BANKSETA ETQA Monitoring Policy. In addition, the entire RPL process and provider delivery models will be regularly monitored and evaluated in line with criteria established for this purpose. Quality indicators will include fairness, transparency, and fitness for purpose.

13. Funding of RPL

BANKSETA will develop a streamlined funding model which will facilitate the implementation of RPL. Sources of funding may include state funding mechanisms, such as the National Skills Fund, forms of subsidisation from the public and private sectors, and employer funding.

Thorough costing of all functions, including 'hidden' functions such as counselling, guidance, moderation, quality assurance etc. will need to be undertaken. RPL practitioner training, as well as quality assurance, will need to be properly resourced, with both sufficient time and funds provided for taking RPL to scale. In order to make for cost-effective RPL processes and services, sharing of facilities, staff and expertise is recommended, through a mix of strategies, across the RPL system, the workplace and education and training institutions.

BANKSETA will develop recommended fee structures for RPL with reference to SAQA guidelines for consistent and fair costing of RPL programmes and services. The following should be taken into account in developing RPL fee structures:

- RPL costs to candidates should be minimised so as to be affordable to those whom it is meant to serve.

- RPL fees should be less than the cost of the learning programme or module.

- Fees charged for RPL should be based on the services performed in the process and not on the number of credits awarded.

- Fee structures must encourage participation in RPL, not create barriers for or exclude potential candidates.

- Flexible payment options should be provided and bursaries should be made available for deserving candidates.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- "Advanced standing" means the status granted to a learner for admission to studies at a higher level than the learner's prior formal studies would have allowed, including exemption where applicable.

- "Credit accumulation" means the totalling of credits required to complete a qualification or a part qualification.

- "Credit transfer" means the vertical, horizontal or diagonal relocation of credits towards a qualification or part qualification on the same or different level, usually between different programmes, departments or institutions.

- "Credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) system" means an arrangement whereby the diverse features of both credit accumulation and credit transfer are combined to facilitate lifelong learning and access to the workplace.

- "Formal learning" means learning that occurs in an organised and structured education and training environment and that is explicitly designated as such. Formal learning leads to the awarding of a qualification or part qualification registered on the NQF.

- "Informal learning" means learning that results from daily activities related to paid or unpaid work, family or community life, or leisure, including incidental learning.

- "Learning programme" means a purposeful and structured set of learning experiences that leads to a qualification.

- "Lifelong learning" means learning that takes place in all contexts in life from a life-wide, life-deep and lifelong perspective. It includes learning behaviours and obtaining knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and competences for personal growth, social and economic well-being, democratic citizenship, cultural identity and employability.

- "National Qualifications Framework (NQF)" means a comprehensive system approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality-assured national qualifications.

- "NQF Act" means the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act No. 67 of 2008.

- "Non-formal learning" means planned educational interventions that are not intended to lead to awarding of qualifications or part qualifications.

- "Part qualification" means an assessed unit of learning that is registered as part of a qualification.

- "Provider" means an entity that offers any learning programme that leads to a qualification or part qualification registered on the NQF.

- "Qualification" means a registered national qualification.

- "Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)" means the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for

the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development.

- "Resourcing of RPL" means the direct and indirect physical, infrastructural, human and financial capacity needed to build and maintain a mainstream and sustainable national RPL system.

- "RPL practitioner" means a person that functions in one or more aspects of RPL provision, including policy development, advising, portfolio course design and facilitation, assessment and moderation, administration, monitoring and evaluation, research and development.