

RECOGNITION OF ACADEMIC CREDIT

Section	Teaching and Learning		
Approval Date	23.04.10	Approved by	Academic Board
Next Review	Nov 2010	Responsibility	Director of Teaching and Learning
Key Evaluation Question	6	ITPNZ Quality Standard	9

PURPOSE

To recognise relevant experience and qualifications as academic credit for courses and qualifications at NMIT.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Credit	The measure used to record an applicant’s academic achievement and to define a qualification.
Cross Credit (CC)	The granting of academic credit towards an NMIT qualification, of a course already completed as part of another approved qualification.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	<p>Granting completion of a course following formal appraisal of an applicant’s prior learning arising from <u>experience</u> (eg life experience, work experience, informal and/or formal education or training).</p> <p>For prior learning to be recognised as academic credit, it is important that it relates to an applicant’s <u>experience</u>, and that this experience should be <u>current</u>.</p> <p>RPL is also known as “Assessment of Prior Learning” and “Recognition of Current Competency.”</p>
Advanced Standing	Advanced Standing can be granted to recognise credit for a specific course(s), or to recognise block credit for part of an approved NMIT qualification, if the student has prior experience in the subject(s) at a level deemed appropriate for the NMIT programme.
Approved Qualification	For New Zealand qualifications, an “approved qualification” means any qualification listed on the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications (KiwiQuals). For overseas qualifications, an “approved qualification” means the academic committee has endorsed that the qualification and its courses meet the requirements for Cross Credit.
Course	Structured learning experience with specified learning outcomes; smallest recognisable structural component of a programme of study in which students can enrol.
General Elective	A course in an NMIT programme that allows a student to choose any course of equivalent credit value and at least the same level, from any approved qualification, to fulfil the completion requirements described in the Programme Regulations.

SCOPE

These procedures relate to applications for academic credit for approved NMIT courses and all the assessments, including unit standards, within those courses. Applications for academic credit of individual unit standard assessments, not within an approved NMIT course are not covered by these procedures.

In order to formalise the completion of an NMIT course onto a student's Academic Record, students must either,

Meet the completion requirements for the course as defined in the relevant Course Descriptor after following normal enrolment procedures;

Or,

Have academic credit for the course recognised through the NMIT procedure for cross credit or RPL described in this document.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Programme Leader shall ensure that the provisions for recognition of academic credit for each course or programme are defined in the programme regulations.

The Programme Leader should explain to applicants that their eligibility for loans and allowances may alter if academic credit is granted for courses.

The Academic Committee shall approve all academic credit for courses and unit standards consistent with its responsibility to approve all course results.

In considering recommendations for academic credit, the Academic Committee may request additional information including evidence that these procedures have been followed.

The Academic Committee's authority to approve course results is delegated from the NMIT Council and may not be further delegated.

POLICY

NMIT will ensure that the learning outcomes and completion requirements are identified in each Course Descriptor and that the associated assessment timetable and criteria are provided to students within the first two weeks of course commencement.

Each student's programme of study for the academic year, including proposals for recognition of academic credit, should be endorsed by the Programme Leader prior to commencement of classes and no later than two weeks after course commencement.

Recognition of academic credit is not available for a complete NMIT qualification. Programme regulations will stipulate the number of courses contributing to a qualification for which academic credit can be applied and courses for which credit recognition is not available.

A course may be recognised for academic credit from a partially completed or fully completed qualification and irrespective of the passing grade attained for the course.

The number of General Elective courses in a programme will be limited - generally to one of eight 15 credit courses or equivalent proportion. Inclusion of any General Elective courses will be consistent with the Graduate Profile for the NMIT programme and will be listed in the programme regulations.

Approval of schedules for cross credit and the procedures for recognising prior learning should ensure the validity, reliability, currency and fairness of any decisions made to recognise academic credit.

Academic credit awarded through cross credit or RPL, as for any academic completion, must be approved by the Academic Committee responsible for the programme.

CROSS CREDIT

Cross Credit is only available for complete courses.

Where Cross Credit is available for an NMIT programme, a Cross Credit schedule in the Programme Regulations will:

List specific courses (each with its qualification, course title, credit value and level) from other qualifications able to be Cross Credited to NMIT courses;

and/or

Describe the credit value and level of courses able to be Cross Credited to each NMIT **General Elective** course or courses.

The Cross Credit Schedule will indicate any requirement for courses to have been awarded to a student within a set period prior to an application for cross credit.

Applications for academic credit for any course not specified in a Cross Credit schedule in the Programme Regulations shall follow the RPL procedure.

RPL

RPL will only be considered for complete courses. If RPL is granted for a course, any unit standards within the course will also be awarded. The extent to which RPL is available will be specified in the relevant Programme Regulations.

Applications for RPL of individual unit standard assessments, not part of an approved NMIT course, are not covered by these procedures.

Applicants should submit applications for RPL prior to course commencement or within two weeks of course commencement, unless otherwise approved by the Programme Leader.

The decision following an application for RPL shall be provided to the applicant promptly and preferably within two weeks of the application being received.

The RPL application forms and approval process must be used to determine entry into a programme at an advanced level – see Advanced Standing below.

ADVANCED STANDING

Advanced Standing can be granted to recognise credit for a specific course(s), or to recognise block credit for part of an approved NMIT qualification.

Block advanced standing does not require exact course equivalence; rather it requires reasonable correspondence to the learning outcomes of the NMIT programme, thus maintaining the graduate profile.

Programme Regulations will clearly identify how Advanced Standing is determined, the processes to be used and the maximum amount of credit to be granted.

Advanced standing may include cross credits, however these will be separately indicated on Academic Records.

FEES

No fees apply to Cross Credit. A fee is charged for RPL (including Advanced Standing), please refer to *Domestic and International Student Fees, Charges and Refunds* policies.

PROCEDURE - CROSS CREDIT

Steps	Responsibility	Key Points/Evidence
Apply for cross credit	Student	Refer to CC Schedule in Programme Regulations Provide Academic Transcript, or other evidence of course(s) completed, to the Programme Co-ordinator
Seek advice from the PL on implications of gaining courses through CC.	Student	Eligibility for loans & allowances (consult Study Link or Information & Enrolment Centre). Entry on student's NMIT Academic Record will show "CC", not grades. Specific regulations for the NMIT programme e.g. eligibility for a "merit pass".
Assess Application against Programme Regulations.	Programme Leader (PL) or delegate	Cross Credit Schedule in the Programme Regulations Evidence from applicant
Record evidence and notes in student's file with copy to Programme Leader	Programme Leader (PL) or delegate	Student file
Recommend to the Academic Committee that the application is approved or declined.	Programme Leader (PL)	File notes.
Approve or decline application.	Academic Committee	Notes and recommendation from PL.
Advise decision to Programme Co-ordinator and School administration staff.	Programme Leader (PL)	Academic Committee minutes
Advise student of decision	Administrator	Letter to student; copy in student file.
If student is already enrolled in course(s) granted CC, initiate the Withdrawal procedure; OR, if not enrolled, create a "miscellaneous record" for each course and each unit standard within the course.	Administrator	Enclose withdrawal form - to initiate refund of course fees - with letter to student. Artena student management system
Enter results – Courses: "Cross Credit" Unit Stds: "Complete".	Administrator	Academic Record on Artena.

PROCEDURE – RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Steps	Responsibility	Notes	Key Points and Evidence
Complete sections ❶ & ❷ of the RPL Application Form and meet with Programme Leader.	Applicant/student	<i>Flowchart steps A, B</i>	Refer to relevant Programme Regulations, <i>Flowchart Overview</i> and “Guidelines for Applying for RPL”.
Identify the relevant learning outcomes and course completion requirements. Discuss scope and likely outcome of an application. Explain the RPL procedure.	Programme Leader (PL)	Discuss evidence likely to be relevant and required for an application to be successful. Include all unit standard assessments within the courses applied for. Refer to Note 1 below.	Course Descriptors. Applicant/student’s background and experience.
Advise applicant/student that an application for RPL is likely to be successful or not.	Programme Leader (PL)	<i>Flowchart step C.</i> Refer to Notes 1 & 2 below and Guidelines.	A recommendation from the PL is not binding on the applicant/student at this stage.
Explain implications of gaining courses by RPL.	Programme Leader (PL)	Note that the student’s NMIT Academic Record will show “Pass (RPL)”, not grades.	Specific regulations for the NMIT programme e.g. eligibility for a “merit pass”.
Advise applicant/student of the RPL Fee for each course.	Programme Leader (PL)	The RPL fee includes an application fee, and an hourly fee for work involved, to a maximum total fee.	Refer to <i>Domestic and International Fees, Charges and Refunds</i> policies for the current fees.
Advise student their eligibility for loans & allowances may alter if RPL is granted.	Programme Leader (PL)	Applicant/student should consult Study Link or Customer Relations.	Loan Eligibility Table (LET) in TEC Funding Guide.
Decide whether to proceed with an	Applicant/Student	<i>Flowchart step D</i>	Advice from PL.

Steps	Responsibility	Notes	Key Points and Evidence
RPL application or not.			Further academic support is not generally available at this stage.
Complete section ③ of RPL Application Form, pay the RPL Fee and lodge with School Administrator.	Applicant/student	Flowchart step E	Pay RPL fees to Customer Relations. Attach supporting evidence to the RPL Application Form and the receipt for the RPL Fee.
Record the RPL Application. Ensure the RPL Fee has been paid. Send to PL.	Administrator		File copies
Assess RPL Application - appraise evidence provided against the learning outcomes of the course(s). Consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>currency</i> • <i>sufficiency</i> • <i>variety</i> of the evidence.	RPL assessor: Programme Leader (PL) or delegate.	Flowchart steps F, G. Notes 1 and 2 below. Flowchart, path G to J applies where evidence is largely sufficient but an additional assessment or “challenge” is warranted, step J.	Section ④ of RPL Application Form. Evidence from applicant/student; learning outcomes of the course(s); File notes. Separately assess any unit standards within the courses.
Review and confirm the RPL decision.	SASM or PASM other than the RPL assessor.		
Recommend to the Academic Committee that RPL is approved or declined.	Programme Leader	Refer to Note 3 below, particularly should RPL be declined.	Section ⑤ RPL Application Form. Ensure all notes and supporting evidence for the recommendation are attached.
Approve or decline RPL for specific course(s)	Academic Committee	Flowchart step H Flowchart step K	Evidence and notes from Programme Leader.
Complete RPL Process Record, section ⑥, of RPL Application Form.	Administrator	Flowchart step I	Academic Committee minutes.
Advise student and tutor group of Academic Committee decision.	Administrator	Appeal of the decision is available through: procedure: <i>Student</i>	File notes. Letter to applicant/student;

Steps	Responsibility	Notes	Key Points and Evidence
		<i>Academic Appeals.</i>	copy on applicant/student file.
If student is already enrolled in course(s) granted RPL, initiate the Withdrawal procedure; OR, if not enrolled, create a “miscellaneous record” for each course and each unit standard within the course.	Administrator		Enclose withdrawal form – to initiate refund of course fees – with letter to student. Artena student management system.
Enter results – Courses: “Pass (RPL)” Unit Stds: “Complete”	Administrator		Academic Record on Artena

FLOW CHART NOTE 1: FORMS OF EVIDENCE

Applicants will present a portfolio which contains a variety of evidence that shows how they meet each learning outcome. The evidence should be referenced to the appropriate learning outcomes and may take one or more of the following forms -

SUMMARY AND REFLECTION

Written statements by the applicant that links their work experience, achievements and practice to relevant learning outcomes.

ATTESTATION

Knowledgeable and authoritative persons who know of the applicants skills, knowledge and experience attest to these in writing or verbally. Attestors should hold a qualification related to the subject of the RPL application.

PREVIOUS QUALIFICATIONS

Note that these must be relevant and referred to the learning outcomes of the course or programme for which RPL is being applied. What matters for RPL is *current* skills, knowledge and experience.

OTHER APPROPRIATE MATERIAL.

This may be such things as written references, awards gained,

If the assessor determines that there is insufficient evidence for one or more learning outcomes, then they may set a challenge assessment in which the applicant will complete further work, examination, demonstration or interview.

In some circumstances the portfolio method may not be appropriate for the subject, task or situation, in which case the assessor and the applicant may decide on an alternative. The Programme Leader or delegate can advise on suitable ways of doing this.

FLOWCHART NOTE 2: SUFFICIENCY OF EVIDENCE

Deciding whether the evidence presented is sufficient to award RPL for the course is somewhat problematic. Here, as a guide are some suggestions for the flowchart steps of:

Approve	If evidence is sufficient to reasonably meet all the learning outcomes with a few gaps, then the remainder can be inferred and RPL granted;
Challenge	If there are a few significant gaps in the evidence, then a challenge test may be set (typically this is an examination or assignment from the course), and RPL is granted on successful completion of the test;
Not approved	If there are significant and more numerous gaps, if there is insufficient evidence for one or more learning outcomes, or if the challenge assessment is not achieved, then RPL is not granted and the applicant will need to enrol in and complete the course.

FLOWCHART NOTE 3:

Once enrolled in the course, the student may then negotiate with the course tutor about not attending some classes or activities for which they have previous experience. This is at the tutor's discretion, although all assessments must be completed.

REFERENCES

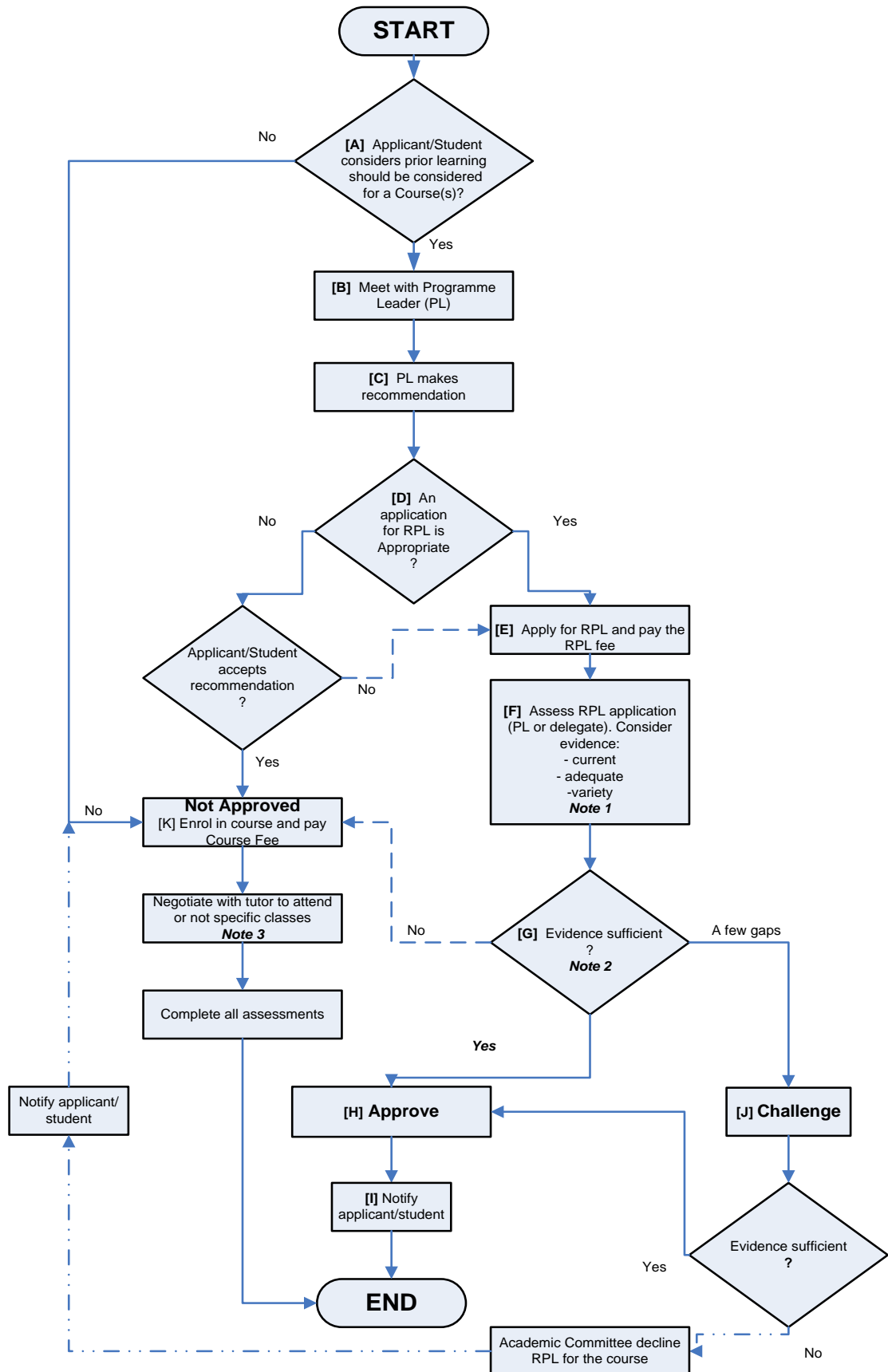
INTERNAL

Guidelines for Programme Design and Approval
NMIT Academic Statute, 7.0 Withdrawal Process
Academic Board Terms of Reference,
Recording Results and Issue of Awards
Student Academic Appeals
Moderation of Assessment
Programme Regulations
Domestic and International Student Fees, Charges and Refunds policies
Student fees as set and approved annually

EXTERNAL

NZQA "The Recognition of Prior Learning"

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) AN OVERVIEW



GUIDELINES

FOR

APPLYING FOR RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL):

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INTRODUCTION - A NOTE ON EXPERIENCE

A characteristic of an education course is that it is designed in consultation with practitioners and others who are involved in the activity, industry, or practice that is the subject of the course. Consequently, courses usually lead a student into aspects of the subject that they might be unaware of, or that they might not think important, but are regarded as critical by those who know the subject area well.

Another characteristic of an education course is that learners on the course are led to become aware of *how* they know, understand or do something, rather than just coming to know it.

In thinking about RPL, therefore, it is important that rather than just describing *that* you have done something, you should also describe something of your understanding of the thing you can do – your ideas and thoughts about it. So, your experience is one thing, but your knowing about that experience is important for RPL.

Your experience must be current. Just how recent this should be is difficult to specify because it depends on a number of things, such as what your experience is, how frequent it has been, the subject at hand, and other aspects of the context. As a guideline though, the last two years is good.

EQUIVALENCE...

Equivalence is quite a separate thing from RPL and cannot lead to academic credit being awarded.

Generally, equivalence applies to a whole qualification (certificate, diploma or degree) and is usually granted for the purposes of entering into a programme of learning at a higher level, or for some other specific purpose. You cannot claim to hold another qualification deemed equivalent to a qualification which you have been awarded.

BEFORE YOU START...

Now we are getting more specific. Below are some points to consider in thinking about and developing your RPL application.

RPL applies to *courses*, not programmes or parts of courses. It is a formal process that must be done before you enrol in the course. The outcome of an RPL application may be that you are:

1. granted full RPL for the course(s),
2. granted RPL providing some specified extra work is done to meet the requirements, or
3. not granted RPL, in which case you will need enrol and complete the course as a regular student.
4. RPL is a rigorous process. You must provide evidence that you have met the learning objectives (outcomes) for the course(s), and this evidence must be sufficient, relevant, and current. It takes some time to put an RPL application together, and it often takes some time for the application to be assessed.
5. RPL evidence must be linked to the course learning outcomes and the NZQA level of the course, as these describe the content and standard of the course.
6. A fee is charged to process an RPL application. Please refer to the RPL Application form and the *Domestic and International Fees, Charges and Refunds* policies. The clearer your application is, especially in making links between your evidence and the learning outcomes, the quicker the assessment will be and the sooner you will know if the application is successful.
7. Programme regulations may specify that RPL is not available for some courses, or for a maximum number of courses within a programme. Similarly, for some courses RPL may not be relevant. A course that

consists of a student project, for example, where you are required to demonstrate your process for doing something, may not be suitable.

METHODS FOR RPL

An RPL application consists of an ordered collection of evidence that shows that you have met the learning outcomes. Most often this evidence is collected in a portfolio, and the process of assembling a portfolio is often a useful learning experience in itself because it requires you to think in a structured way about the prior knowledge and experience you have.

PORTFOLIO

This contains the evidence that shows how you have met the learning outcomes. A good way to document this is to cross reference your evidence to the learning outcomes each bit applies to. Another way is to use the learning outcomes as headings in the portfolio. This evidence should be from a number of sources (this makes it more reliable), and may take the following forms –

SUMMARY AND REFLECTION

These are your written statements that link your work experience, achievements and practice to relevant learning outcomes. Read "A Note on Experience" above for some thoughts on how to do this.

ATTESTATION

Knowledgeable and authoritative persons who know of your skills, knowledge and experience attest to these in writing or verbally. Attestors should hold a qualification related to the subject of the RPL application.

PREVIOUS QUALIFICATIONS OR COMPLETED COURSES

You can use as evidence course work and experience from another course of study you have completed. Note that these must be relevant and referred to the learning outcomes of the course for which you are applying for RPL. What matters for RPL is *current* skills, knowledge and experience.

OTHER APPROPRIATE MATERIAL.

This may be such things as written references, awards gained, or documents of various forms.

OTHER METHODS

Sometimes a portfolio may not be the best way to present evidence, or it may be backed up by other processes. This may take the form of an interview with the applicant or with attestors to verify or complete the evidence.

Another approach may be that of the professional conversation. This method is quite specific, and the assessor needs training in it, and is used in some subject areas.

If the assessor determines that there is insufficient evidence for one or more learning outcomes, then they may set a challenge assessment in which the applicant will complete further work, examination, demonstration or interview. A successful RPL application though, will contain evidence for at least 90% of the course content.

RPL AND UNIT STANDARDS

If the course for which you are applying for RPL contains unit standards, then you must provide evidence that you have met each unit standard in addition to the course learning outcomes. You must refer to the unit standard(s) concerned and use the elements, performance criteria and range statements as a guide.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Complete Sections ❶, ❷ and ❸ of the RPL application form (on next page).

The NMIT Policy document *Recognition of Academic Credit* is the source from which these guidelines are developed. It describes in more detail the process for applying for RPL.

RPL APPLICATION FORM

Attach
receipt

Complete steps ❶ and ❷ before your initial meeting with the Programme Leader (PL).
Include this form with your portfolio of evidence when you forward it to the PL.
A Fee is charged for RPL, please refer to *Domestic and International Student Fees, Charges and Refunds* policies.

❶	Application Details		
	Name		
	Address		
	Phone Number:		
	E-mail address		
	Name of programme or course for which you are seeking RPL:		
❷	Summary of Application Please name the course(s) for which you are seeking RPL . Note that you must apply for RPL for a full course(s) only.		
	Course Title (code and name)		
	Applicant signature		
Date			
❸	RPL Fee Go to Information & Enrolment Centre and pay the RPL fee. Attach the receipt to this application.		
		Amount	Paid (receipt attached)
	RPL Fee		

4	RPL Assessment Record			(RPL assessor, PL or delegate, to complete)
	Course Title (code and name)** Unit Standard (no. and name)	Credit granted (Full, Provisional*, None)	Comment	Time
	ARTENA #			
	ARTENA #			
	ARTENA #			
	ARTENA #			
	ARTENA #			
	If provisional* – note requirements & return to applicant:			(Assessor)
5	Recommendation to Approve RPL			
		Name	Signature	Date
	Requirements in 4 completed	(RPL Assessor)		
	Assessment confirmed:	(SASM or PASM)		
Recommendation to Academic Committee:	(PL)			
6	RPL Process Record			(Administrator to complete)
		Date	Signature	
	Academic Committee minuted		(Administrator)	
	Written notification to applicant		(Administrator)	
	Tutors advised		(Administrator)	

	<p>For each course with “Full” RPL - refer section 4 ** -</p> <p>If applicant is already enrolled, initiate the withdrawal procedure,</p> <p>OR if not enrolled, create a “miscellaneous record” for each course and for each unit standard.</p>		(Administrator)
	<p>Enter results –</p> <p>Courses: “Pass (RPL)”</p> <p>Unit Standards: “Complete”</p>		(Administrator)