RPL PRACTITIONERS

TRAINING GUIDE

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT
FOR VOCATIONAL AND
TECHNICAL TRAINING

RPL PRACTITIONERS

TRAINING GUIDE

7/1/2021

RPL CAPACITY BUILDING SUBCOMMITTEE
KENYA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

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FOREWORD

Kenya, like other countries in Africa, has a large informal sector whose integration into the national development agenda has not been well articulated. The Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) seeks to bring into the national database numerous skills, knowledge and competencies that are currently contributing to national development but have not been understood, documented, recognised, assessed and certificated. In order to operationalize the RPL framework, a number of tools are required, the most important being the RPL Practitioners Training Guide in the sense that, the worth of the RPL certification will be determined to a great extent by the quality of the assessments by the RPL Practitioners. In addition, it is paramount that, the training of these RPL Practitioners is uniform across the country. It is for this reason that this Guide is extremely important to ensure reliability and validity of the RPL Process irrespective of who delivers the training or where the training for RPL Practitioners is carried out.

The RPL Training Guide is anchored on the RPL Policy Framework and Implementation Guidelines. In addition, a Training manual, RPL Tools and Guides have also been developed for use alongside the manual.

This Training Guide targets RPL Practitioners (RPLPs). It has been developed in a modular structure aligned to the key information that the RPLPs need to understand and internalize in order to enable them to run a credible assessment process. The Training Guide provides information, insights and learning through real-life examples benchmarked against best practices internationally. The assessors shall be drawn from experienced trainers and industrial players. With these two attributes, it is expected that the product of the RPL process shall be at par with the products drawn from the "best practices countries"

This Training Guide adopts an inclusive approach where attention is given to individuals with special needs, women and girls to mitigate barriers to education and employment experience by these sectors of society, especially when it comes to skills training, assessment and certification. Ultimately, the process seeks to address and overcome the obstacles and enhance inclusive employability and decent work for such persons, facilitate transition to formal sector employment, improve access to training and education, encourage life-long learning, and promote dignity and self-esteem by recognizing existing skills for such vulnerable sectors of society.

I am delighted to note that, the development of this Guide, opens the door to full roll-out the RPL process. It is my hope that all RPL players shall synergize their efforts to ensure the success of this noble process of prior learning, identification, assessment, recognition and certification. This shall be a major success towards "massification" of competencies which, shall eliminate all forms of skills discriminations thereby making invisible skills visible in both the formal and informal sector. It is anticipated that the adoption of RPL will change the economic fortunes of the Jua Kali sector, which is the most productive in the Kenyan economy but whose skills have hitherto, been invisible as a result of the non-recognition and certification.

Prof. George Magoha, CBS
Cabinet Secretary,
Ministry of Education, Kenya.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Across the world, countries are increasingly recognising the value of informal and non-formal learning, and many are establishing systems to acknowledge competencies gained through these modalities. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has emerged as an important policy area that has gained attention globally. Kenya is among the few countries in Africa that have taken the bold step of formally recognizing skills and experiences that are acquired informally and non-formally.

I would like to thank H. E Uhuru Kenyatta, the President of the Republic of Kenya for being a strong supporter of RPL. His rallying call to acknowledge the contribution of the informal sector to Kenya's economy has given great impetus towards preparation of an effective RPL System in the country. Special gratitude goes to the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Prof. George A. O. Magoha and the Principal Secretary, State Department of Vocational and Technical Training, Dr. Margaret Mwakima for the great support and putting in place mechanisms to ensure effective roll-out of RPL in the country.

This RPL Practitioners Guide is a result of great team effort, valuable contribution and input from various stakeholders. I wish to specifically thank individuals and institutions that participated in its development. Special mention goes to the Technical team whose representation was drawn from the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE), TVET-Curriculum Development Assessment and Certification (TVET-CDACC), National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) Kenya National Federation of Jua Kali Associations (KNFJA) and Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA).

Special thanks to the International Labour Organization (ILO) for the great support, providing expertise and facilitating several meetings that culminated in this important document.

I wish to call upon all stakeholders to continue supporting this worthy cause that is indeed a paradigm shift not just to the labour and education sectors but to the national economy at large. I therefore urge all stakeholders to embrace this endeavour and work together in ensuring effective roll-out of RPL in Kenya.

Dr. Juma Mukhwana, *PhD, HSC,*
Director General / Chief Executive Officer,
Kenya National Qualifications Authority.

ACRYONYMS

EOI	Expression of Interest
KNQF	Kenya National Qualifications Framework
NQA	National Qualifications Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
QAI	Qualifications Awarding Institution
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RPLP	Recognition of Prior Learning Practitioners
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

OUTLINE OF THE TRAINING GUIDE

Introduction to the course

The Training Guide on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has been developed with an aim of equipping RPL Practitioners (RPLPs) with knowledge, skills and attitudes they will require to carry out various RPL assessment processes. It provides information, insights and learning through real-life examples from developing and developed countries. The Guide is designed for use in a training of RPL Practitioners session. It assumes that the RPLP have limited understanding of RPL but are experienced trainers and assessors.

General outcomes of the course

It is expected that this Guide will facilitate building of capacities of RPL assessor to:

a) undertake the RPL assessment process; and
b) deal with any issues that may arise during the RPL assessment process.

Learning outcomes of the Training

The aim of the training on RPL is to ensure that participants:

a) appraise the concept of RPL;
b) manage the RPL process;
c) illustrate the benefits of RPL;
e) demonstrate skills to carry out RPL assessment and certification; and
f) demonstrate competencies of an effective RPL practitioner.

Structure of the Training Guide

The training program is divided into five learning units as follows.Introduction to RPL.

a) *The RPL Process:* identification.
b) *The RPL Process:* documentation.
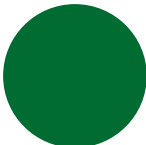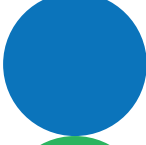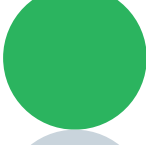
c) *The RPL Process:* assessment and certification.

d) Competencies of an RPL Practitioner.

Each Learning unit is structured as follows.

a) **Introduction:** gives a brief description of the unit.
b) **Learning objectives:** guides the trainer / facilitator in implementing the learning unit to allow participants to attain a given level of knowledge.
c) **Unit outline:** provides an overview of the topics covered in the learning unit, training methods and allotted time as well as training materials required.
d) **Key questions:** guide the trainee on the main issues that they need to master by the end of the learning unit.
e) **Content:** includes descriptive text and tables and training/ resource materials for the session.

This Training Guide should be used together with the Training Manual, RPL Policy Framework and Implementation Guidelines, RPL Tools, Guides and Manuals.

Several colour-coded boxes are used for emphasis throughout the training manual as detailed below.

EXAMPLE
Practical applications of the strategies, steps and solutions discussed.

REFLECTIONS
Thought-provoking questions on issues related to RPL for brainstorming among participants.

FACTS ON FILE
A focus on specific issues that concretizes concepts learnt.

DISADVANTAGED GROUPS INITIATIVES
RPL initiatives for various disadvantaged

SUMMARY
Summary of key facts on the topic of discussion

Course requirements

The course targets subject experts who will be trained on the RPL assessment process. It is envisaged that the graduate of this course will play the role of an RPL assessor. To be enrolled for this course, one should be a trade specialist for a period of not less than three years. The participant shall undertake both theoretical and practical training for a duration of 40 hours in an accredited training institution. In addition, the trainee shall participate in two assessment cycles before certification.

Training methods

The manual proposes a combination of methods for delivery of the training including technical presentation, insights acquired through analysis, group work and discussion, peer-based development of content, reflecting on examples.

The facilitator shall use a training method based on group size, knowledge of the participants and individual preferences.

Inclusivity of persons with special needs and gender mainstreaming

This training takes cognizance of the need to eliminate any form of discrimination in the RPL process. The need for inclusion of individuals with special needs, PWDs and marginalized populations such as women and girls who face additional barriers to education and employment shall be emphasized in the entire RPL process.

Evaluation and certification

Participants are expected to attend all sessions to qualify to be assessed and be certified. The assessment shall include theory and practice in key competency areas. A certificate of competency will be awarded by the Qualification Awarding Institution (QAI) upon completion of the residential and practical sessions.

Familiarisation

Successful training should always begin with a focus on participants. It is important to create an enabling environment for all participants and common rules at the start of the training. This training manual begins with an introductory session which helps participants get to know each other and the facilitator by completing a PreKaT Assessment to determine the entry behaviour, as well as the overall agenda of the training.

'Familiarization' session training plan

Topic	Time: Min	Activities	Resources
Welcome and introduction – Familiarization	30	Welcome Presentation: interactions with and among participants	Projector, screen (wall), laptop, flipcharts, marker
Expectations and overview of the training	30	Expectations: visualization, discussion Agenda and outcomes, ground rules, introduction of the 'parking lot' PreKat Assessment	Flipcharts, marker, coloured cards, pin board or whiteboard, wall, pins Prepared agenda Test papers
Total duration	60 min (depending on number of participants)		

Learning unit summary table

Code	Learning Unit	Sub-unit	Time allocation in hours	
			Knowledge	Practical
1.0	Introduction to RPL	a. Meaning of RPL and other Key Terms. b. Guiding Principles of RPL c. Components the RPL Process. d. The Building Blocks of RPL. e. Roles and Qualities of RPL Practitioners. f. Benefits and Key Beneficiaries of RPL.		
2.0	The RPL Process: Identification Awareness Creation. Counselling and Facilitation. Purpose and Methods of Analysis of Evidence in the Identification Stage. Determining the suitability of the candidate for assessment and certification.			
3.0	The RPL Process: documentation	a. Meaning of documentation b. Purpose of documentation c. The Portfolio of Evidence analysis d. Skills gap identification e. Preparation and referral for final assessment of qualified applicants		

Code	Learning Unit	Sub-unit	Time allocation in hours	
			Knowledge	Practical
4.0	The RPL Process: assessment and certification	a. Meaning of assessment process		
		b. Principles of assessment process		
		c. Key components for assessment		
		d. Range of assessment methods		
		e. Final Assessment		
		f. Assessment plan		
		g. Certification and award of qualification process		
		h. Documentation		
5.0	RPL Practitioners competencies	a. National Values		
		b. RPL Practitioners' competencies		
		c. RPL Practitioners Code of Conduct		
		d. Case studies		
6.0	Practical assessment	Two assessment cycles		

Learning Unit 1

INTRODUCTION TO RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

1.0 Introduction

This learning unit is intended to equip the participants with basic knowledge on the RPL context.

1.2 Learning objectives

At the end of this learning unit, the participants should be able to do the following.

a) Explain the meaning of RPL and other related RPL terms.
b) Outline the guiding principles of RPL.
c) Describe the components of the RPL process.
d) Discuss the building blocks of RPL.
e) Differentiate the roles and qualities of RPL practitioners.
f) Explain the benefits and key beneficiaries of RPL.

1.3 Unit outline

Topic	Time: Mins.	Methods	Materials
What is RPL?	15 minutes	Question and Answer	Flip charts, marker pens, White Boards
Key terms; definitions and concepts	15 minutes	Introduction, buzz groups and discussions on RPL definitions, key ideas	Projector, screen, laptop, flipchart, marker
Importance of RPL	30 minutes	Brainstorming and discussions in plenary	Projector, screen, laptop, flipchart, marker

Topic	Time: Mins.	Methods	Materials
Key drivers of RPL	30 minutes	Presentation and discussion in plenary	Projector, screen, laptop, flipchart, marker
RPL Building Blocks	35 minutes	Discussion in plenary	Projector, screen, laptop, flipchart, marker
Who RPL is for	30 minutes	Brainstorming and discussions in plenary (alternative: group work)	Flipchart, marker or PPT
Benefits of RPL	20 minutes	Group work / presentations	Flip chart, marker, PPT, wall, cards, pins
RPL Process	45 minutes	Lecture and buzz groups	Projector, screen, laptop, flipchart, marker
RPL Practitioners	20 minutes	Brainstorming and discussions in plenary	Projector, screen, laptop, flipchart, marker
Total Duration	240 minutes		

1.4 Content

1.4.1 Meaning of RPL and other related terms

a) **RPL** is the process of identifying, assessing and certifying learning that occurred outside formal learning Institutions (non-formal & informal contexts). RPL puts the focus on the outcomes of an applicant's learning and not on the way competencies were acquired.

b) **RPL Practitioner (RPLP)** is a person involved in the RPL assessment process.

c) **Portfolio of Evidence (PoE)** is a collection of documents or work-related samples that one is required to compile to show competence against a set of learning outcomes or standards or a performance criteria. The PoE helps a candidate to demonstrate that they can meet the requirements of the level applied for in a skill / trade area. The PoE enables the candidate to submit their evidence in a systematic manner.

d) **Skills audit** is the process aimed at identifying and analysing the knowledge,

skills and competences of an individual, including his or her aptitudes and motivations in order to define a career project and/or plan a professional reorientation or training project.

e) **Validation is the** process of confirmation by an authorized body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against prescribed standards and consists of the following three distinct phases: identification, documentation & assessment and certification.

f) **Qualification** is a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

FACTS ON FILE

Validation is the heart of the RPL process. It entails confirmation by an authorized body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against prescribed standards and consists of the following three distinct phases: identification, documentation and assessment & certification.

REFLECTIONS

What are the different ways in which individuals learn or strengthen their technical skills? How might a system work to recognise and certify learning that takes place outside the formal training and education system?

1.4.2 Guiding principles of RPL (also refer to QA Manual)

a) **Accessible:** Responsive to applicant queries; cost-efficient for both applicant and organization; timely in both frequency of assessment and gap filling options; adult learner centred, voluntary, available and inclusive of all abilities and differences.

b) **Consistent**: Decision makers (RPLPs) work together to ensure consistency in criteria, training, tools, procedures and outcomes. Definitions must be agreed across sectors to allow for transferability.

c) **Fair:** RPL processes are unbiased and recognise a wide range of ways people learn. Therefore, applicants are allowed optional ways to prove learning. An appeal mechanism is provided. Policies and procedures of the organization align with the RPL principles.

d) **Respectful:** Non-discriminatory, culturally appropriate and inclusive; valuing uniqueness of the individual; using plain language to ensure all communication is clear.

e) **Valid**: Assessment methods align with the expected measure of achievement (competencies or learning outcomes).

f) **Flexible:** Assessment methods are time and cost-efficient. A variety of effective assessment options are available.

g) **Rigorous:** RPL assessment methods reflect the purpose for the required

learning; have equivalent expectations to traditional assessment methods; are conducted by subject matter experts; meet requirements of work or performance criteria.

h) **Transparent:** Information uses explicit and plain language to be understood by all stakeholders. Policies, processes and criteria are complete, fully disclosed and accurate e.g. process steps are clear and simple to follow; reasons are given for any action needed to complete the process; methods of assessment and learning criteria are clearly stated; results of RPL assessment are provided, including gaps and achievements.

i) **Professionally supported:** All staff involved in RPL services receive initial and ongoing training for their RPL function (e.g. RPL Practitioners Training of Trainers TOT)

REFLECTIONS
Why is RPL Important?

1.4.3 Components of the RPL process

a) Awareness and publicity.
b) Benefits.
c) Process.
d) Costs.
e) Modalities of creating awareness.

FACTS ON FILE

Awareness creation is critical during RPL. The more the target beneficiaries know about RPL, the more they will be interested in taking part in the process.

Awareness creation will also help demystify some of the myths and fears about RPL.

1.4.4 Counselling and facilitation

a) Obtain detailed information and orientation.
b) Assess candidates' suitability for a specific qualification (full or part).
c) Provide the necessary information based on learning outcomes and competency standards required for the qualification and the nature of evidence required.
d) Provide an application form and documents detailing RPL process and its requirements.
e) Help a candidate in deciding whether to apply for assessment, qualification and level.

1.4.5 Assessment and certification

a) Advice the candidate on the nature of the final assessment.

b) If the RPL counsellor is not satisfied, tell the candidate of their shortcomings and advise them on how to overcome them.

1.4.6 Quality assurance of RPL

a) Establish common standards.

b) Ensuring the availability of competent RPL practitioners.

c) Collaborating with employers' and workers' organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

d) Developing assessment tools and methodologies.

e) Accrediting RPL assessment centres.

f) Inbuilt quality assurance mechanism in the RPL process.

g) Monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

h) Independent auditing of the entire RPL process.

i) Disseminating results.

1.4.7 Skills gap training

a) Identify the gaps between the competencies possessed by the RPL candidate and the desired competence standards and learning outcomes.

b) Skills can be identified at any stage of the RPL process – at expression of interest, application, analysis of portfolio or final assessment stages.

c) The threshold for referral for skills upgrading after identification of gaps in the candidates shall be set by the respective QAIs.

d) Candidate should, as much as possible, be assessed and certified for competencies they possess and awarded partial qualification or statement of attainment if the competencies they demonstrate are employable in the industry.

1.4.8 RPL appeal process

QAIs must prescribe an appeal process so that candidates can ask for a review of the decision(s) made at any stage of the RPL process.

REFLECTIONS

How can each of the RPL Practitioners make RPL a success?

1.4.9   Building blocks of RPL

Building blocks	Steps
Regulatory Framework	a) Based on a needs analysis, define which educational sectors the RPL system should cover (for instance, general education and/or TVET, specific occupations/ trades only, secondary and/or higher education). b) Frame RPL in the national employment policy, and make it a priority in education and training policy. c) Integrate RPL into existing qualifications frameworks, as well as in policies and strategies for recognition of skills and qualifications (such as credit systems). d) Explore what sectoral approaches would be relevant (for instance, consider allowing a sector to design its own RPL process). e) Integrate RPL into relevant sectoral, economic and development policy, including migration policy. f) Match occupational and qualification standards. g) Synchronize national regulation with regional and local regulation if needed.
Institutional framework	a) Define the institutions that are responsible for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all RPL processes, including awareness raising, guidance and counselling to applicants, and assessment. b) Assess the capacity of existing institutions in terms of the tasks that they are expected to perform to allow the RPL system to function effectively. c) Strengthen capacity if needed, or create new institutions if necessary, such as to provide counselling and facilitation to applicants. d) Build capacity of RPL Practitioners to ensure that they will be regularly retrained.
Stakeholder ownership and commitment	a) Identify all stakeholders, such as government institutions, education and training providers, employers' and workers' organizations, potential beneficiaries and make sure they are aware of the benefits of RPL and their role within an RPL system. b) Keep supporting social dialogue to ensure that RPL's potential benefits to employers and workers are fully exploited.

Financing	a) Conduct cost-benefit analysis to define the scope of the RPL system in relation to the educational and labour market needs of a country.
	b) Determine and implement equitable cost-sharing arrangements (such as Government funding, training levy or other employer contribution, applicant fees).
	c) Ensure that funding is sustainable.
Quality Assurance Cross Cutting measures	a) Design assessment methodologies around profiles of applicants that are likely to use the system, including those from disadvantaged groups.
	b) Establish standardized RPL processes and methods at the sectoral level, including standards and quality codes.
	c) Ensure that information about RPL is available where applicants can easily access it, and that counselling and facilitation methods suit applicants' needs.

Questions on the RPL building blocks

a. Why do we need RPL?
b. Who do we need it for (which sectors of education and the economy)?
c. What do the stakeholders involved need? (workers, potential applicants, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, training institutions, chambers of commerce and professional associations)
d. Which stakeholders must be involved? (key stakeholders)
e. Which stakeholders would we like to involve in making the system work better?

1.4.10 Roles and qualities of RPL Practitioners

a) Roles of RPL Practitioners

i.   Policy makers
ii. RPL coordinators
iii. Quality assurers
iv. RPL counsellors
v.   PoE Assessors
vi. RPL Assessorsb)

b) Qualities of a good RPL practitioner

i.   **Integrity:** Intentionally directing one's conduct according to their understanding of what is right and wrong.
ii. **Analytical:** Considering information at length before making a big decision guided by evidence of relevant data.
iii. **Competent:** Has both the knowledge to recognise and the authority to correct.
iv. **Visionary:** Broad understanding of the trade area and its application in the industry at present and in the future.

1.4.11 Benefits and key beneficiaries of RPL

a) Overall benefits of RPL

b) Key beneficiaries of RPL

i.   Industry / employers
ii. Government/MDAs
iii. Potential candidates
iv. Regulators
v.   Professional bodies
vi   Refugees / asylum seekers / migrants
vii. Trade unions

DID YOU KNOW?

RPL is for any applicant who has acquired relevant competencies through work experience, informal or non-formal learning, but who does not have a related qualification/certificate. RPL can allow an applicant to:

a) progress within a company;

b) change jobs or sectors;

c) obtain a salary increase;

d) save resources (time and money) by having some units / credits recognised as part of a new qualification (including tertiary education); and

e) start working in a foreign country (recognition of foreign qualifications), among other things.

TARGETING THE DISADVANTAGED

a) Women: They often take on vital tasks outside the formal and paid economy, e.g. as home carers, taking care of children, the elderly and the sick, whereby they acquire and apply important competencies. RPL can provide an opportunity for such women to move more readily into the labour market after the situation at home has changed or compensate for time lost in education and training. Unfortunately, RPL is more common in male-dominated trades, notably in the construction sector, again disadvantaging women.

b) Older workers might not have acquired or needed a qualification earlier in their life but worked in the same job for a long time. They may be confronted with the need for qualification to continue working or find another job. RPL Counsellors can make older workers aware of RPL processes and guide them through the system.

c) Migrant workers: Given the magnitude of international migration, migrant workers are frequently victims of competencies underutilization or competencies waste, both in terms of lower employment rates and over qualification for the jobs they do. Even when migrant workers are employed, they are much more likely to be in occupations in which skills requirements are lower than their educational attainment and/or professional qualifications, compared with their national counterparts

d) Returning migrant workers have, in many instances, acquired additional competencies while abroad, which are not recognised in a corresponding qualification and thus impede their ability.

e) Special needs: Persons with handicaps ranging from mental to severe autism, deaf-blind to those with profound disabilities are always confined to one grade without promotion despite gaining very high competences in certain trade areas; in view of this, RPL will be a boon to recognition of these competences.

Key questions

a) What is RPL and why is it important?
b) What are the key RPL terms, concepts and underlying ideas?
c) Why is it important?
d) What are the key drivers of RPL?
e) What are the building blocks of RPL?
f) Who is RPL for?
g) What are the potential benefits, including for the different stakeholders?
h) What are the main steps of the RPL process?
i) What profiles of applicants may benefit from RPL?
j) How can I make the RPL process a success?
k) How can I be an effective RPL Practitioner?
l) How do I adapt to candidates from the disadvantaged groups?
m) How do I ensure the correct evidence is collected?
n) How do I ensure the evidence is effectively interpreted?
o) How do I guide the candidate effectively to help them achieve their goals?

Learning Unit 2

THE RPL PROCESS: IDENTIFICATION

2.1 Introduction

This learning unit is intended to equip the participants with knowledge and Skills on the RPL identification phase/process.

2.2 Learning objectives

By the end of the unit, the participant should be able to:

a) demonstrate competence in creating awareness on RPL;

b) demonstrate ability to counsel and facilitate an RPL candidate;

c) evaluate the appropriate method to use to analyse a candidate's competencies; and

d) evaluate the suitability of the candidate for assessment and certification.

2.3 Unit Outline

Topic	Time: Mins	Methods	Materials
Awareness creation about the RPL Process.		Presentation discussion plenary	Pamphlets, video, charts
Counselling and Facilitation of the applicant		Conversational interviewing	Policy documents, RPL tools and materials
Analysing candidates' competencies		Practical session Discussions Analysis of evidence	Sample PoE
Guiding the applicant on how to remedy the challenge of skills gap		Presentation	Plans for skilling

2.4   Content

2.4.1   Awareness creation

a) sensitisation of applicants on the Process

i) Types
ii) Formats and frequency

b) sharing of information

i) Verbal
ii) Written reports
iii) Oral feedback

REFLECTIONS

What kind of information do the candidates need to have to help them make informed decisions about RPL?

FACTS ON FILE

An RPL communication strategy has been developed to guide this process.

2.4.2   Counselling and facilitation

a) Purpose of counselling and facilitation.
b) Steps in counselling and facilitation.

2.4.3 Purpose and methods of analysis of evidence in the identification stage

a) Purpose of analysis
i) Placement.
ii) Advisory.
b) Methods of analysis
i) Skills audit.
ii) Structured interviews.
iii) Observation in simulated conditions.
iv) Theoretical tests or questionnaires.

2.4.4   Determining the suitability of the candidate for assessment and certification

a) Document identification.
b) Document analysis.
c) Interpretation of evidence and statements.
d) Feedback process.

2.5   Key questions

    a) How do you package the information to the candidate in a manner that ensures they get all the relevant information?

    b) How do you effectively guide the candidate to enable them lock in the skill and level to apply for?

    c) How do you perform a skills audit in a manner that ensures you get the right competency gaps?

Which interviewing techniques can you put to play to ensure you gather the correct and necessary information?

TARGETING DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

This identification phase of the RPL process provides an opportunity to address the challenges of disadvantaged groups – special needs people, persons living with disability. This could be done by ensuring the RPL counsellor is able to speak to the need at hand e.g. if dealing with a hearing-impaired person, the RPL counsellor can use sign language or if dealing with a person using a wheelchair, then ensure access to facilities is provided via ramps or other interventions.

Learning Unit 3

THE RPL PROCESS: DOCUMENTATION

3.1 Introduction

This learning unit is intended to equip the participants with knowledge and Skills on the RPL documentation Phase/ Process

3.2 Learning objectives

By the end of this learning unit, the participants should be able to do the following. Explain the meaning of documentation in the RPL context.

a) State the purpose of documentation stage.

b) Outline the importance of PoE.

c) Demonstrate ability to guide a candidate to prepare a PoE and compile the necessary documentation/evidence in a recommended format.

d) Evaluate the Portfolio of Evidence along the recommended parameters.

e) Prepare candidate for the final assessment.

f) Utilise the appropriate tools to document the RPL process.

3.3 Unit outline

Topic	Time: Mins.	Methods	Materials
Meaning and purpose of documentation stage			
Identification of required skills from learning outcomes			
Identification of the required evidence			
Advice on the required evidence			
Portfolio of Evidence preparation			

Topic	Time: Mins.	Methods	Materials
Portfolio of Evidence evaluation			
Referral for skills gap training			
Preparation for final assessment			
Assessment plan			
Documentation of the RPL process			
Total duration			

DID YOU KNOW?

Methodology used in documentation

Analysis of evidence and statements

Allows the candidate or counsellor to select the relevant evidence in a format that enables it to be presented to the assessment stage.

3.4   Content

3.4.1   Meaning of documentation

Documentation is the process of making visible the individual's experiences or gathering evidence proving the achievement of selected learning outcomes (certificates, documents attesting to completed internships, work samples, videos, recommendations and job descriptions). It is conducted with the support of a counsellor for purposes of producing an individual development plan and undertaking further learning. This is presented to a third party- the assessor.

3.4.2   Purpose of documentation stage

a) Gather evidence to prove that the candidate has achieved the required learning outcomes, including the knowledge, skills and competencies distinguished at the identification stage.

b) Preparation of evidence to be presented at the assessment stage (e.g. evaluated during assessment or presented to a potential employer in a portfolio).

c) Analyse evidence and statements prepared by the candidate to select those that:

> i) confirm the learning outcomes required for the qualification being sought by the candidate; and

> ii) meet the requirements regarding the form and criteria specified by the awarding body.

3.4.3 Preparation of a PoE

Rationale for documentation

3.4.4 Importance of PoE

3.4.5 Preparation of a PoE refer to POE guidelines / simulation / observation

a) Involves collection and collation of historical, indirect and direct evidence to justify their possession of skills for a given trade at a given level.

b) The nature and amount of evidence required is dependent on the level of assessment with the higher levels requiring more evidence.

c) The RPL counsellor interviews and guides the candidate on the specific evidence that they require for their level based on the candidate's declared experience and the PoE preparation and assessment guide

d) The candidate is guided on how to consolidate and present the evidence in a portfolio format.

e) The required evidence is documented in the required section of the candidate's RPL application form.

f) The RPL counsellor retains the original candidate's RPL application form while a duplicate copy should be issued to the candidate to guide preparation and consolidation of evidence.

g) The date and place of submission of the PoE should be agreed with the candidate.

h) The RPL counsellor advises the candidate in detail the parameters within which assessment of the PoE will be carried out including authenticity; sufficiency; validity and currency.

3.4.6 PoE assessment

a) Assessment parameters [1]

   i. Authenticity
   ii. Sufficiency
   iii. Validity
   iv. Currency

b) Skills gap Identification

   i. Identify of skills gap
   ii. Guidelines on thresh holds for upgrading/referrals

3.4.7 Preparation and referral for final assessment for qualified applicants

a) The exam booking and booking procedures for final assessment.
b) The date and place of final assessment.
c) The requirements for final assessment.
d) The methodologies procedure and processes for final assessment.
e) The expected outcomes from the assessment process (full certification, partial certification, statement of attainment or referral for skills gap training).
f) The expectations from the candidates, assessors and centre managers.
g) The RPL appeal process.
h) Quality Assurance and Preparation by the QAI.
i) Type of certification.
j) Levels of certification.

3.4.8 Tools for documenting an RPL process

a) Types of tools

   i. Assessment guide
   ii. Monitoring tools

b) Uses of the tools

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1 POE Preparation and Assessment Guide 9 / https://fortresslearning.com.au/cert-iv-content/assess/rules-of-evidence/

Key questions to be answered with the learning unit

a) What is a learning outcome?

b) How does the learning outcome inform the skills to be exhibited?

c) How does the learning outcome inform the evidence to be collected?

d) How do I prioritize the key evidence to be collected?

e) How do I guide the candidate compilation of the Portfolio of Evidence?

f) How do I evaluate the Portfolio of Evidence?

g) When do I refer the candidate for skills gap training?

h) How do I prepare the candidate for the RPL final assessment?

i) How do I document the RPL process for each assessment conducted?

Learning Unit 4

THE RPL PROCESS: ASSESSMENT & CERTIFICATION

4.1   Introduction

This learning unit is intended to equip the participant with knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable him/her to carry out RPL assessment and facilitate certification and award of qualification.

4.2   Learning objectives

At the end of this learning unit, the participants should be able to do the following. Explain the meaning of assessment process.

a) Explain the meaning of assessment process.
b) Identify the objectives of assessment.
c) Outline the principles of assessment.
d) Explain the key components of assessment.
e) Determine the range of assessment methods.
f) Conduct final assessment.
g) Develop an assessment plan.
h) Describe the RPL certification and award of qualification process.
i) Document the assessment and certification process accordingly

4.3 Unit Outline

Topic	Time: Mins.	Methods	Materials
Introduction	10 minutes	Interactive presentation	Projector, screen (wall), laptop, flipcharts, marker
Assessment process	180 minutes	Presentation Discussions	Projector, screen (wall), laptop, flipcharts, marker, coloured cards, pin board or whiteboard, wall, pins
Assessment plan	30 minutes	Presentation Discussions	Projector, screen (wall), laptop, flipcharts, marker, coloured cards, pin board or whiteboard, wall, pins
Certification process	10 minutes	Presentation Discussions	Projector, screen (wall), laptop, flipcharts, marker, coloured cards, pin board or whiteboard, wall, pins
Award of qualification	10 minutes	Presentation Discussions	Projector, screen (wall), laptop, flipcharts, marker, coloured cards, pin board or whiteboard, wall, pins

4.4   Content

4.4.1   Meaning of assessment process

It is a process of collecting evidence and judging it to decide on whether a candidate possess knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform work activities to the standard expected in the workplace in line with the learning outcomes and as per the KNQF level descriptors.

4.1.2 Objectives of assessment

a) Award a qualification.
b) Advise or to steer the candidates' personal and professional progress.
c) Provide the applicant with the tools to bridge the identified gaps.

4.4.3 Key components for assessment

a) **Evidence:** presented in a form prescribed in the assessment guide. The individual will have to demonstrate evidence of the learning outcomes or competencies acquired.

b) **Competent RPL practitioners:** to inform the applicant and guide the compilation of evidence.

c) **Accessible services:** counselling and facilitation that can adapt to cater for the diverse needs of applicants, including disadvantaged groups.

d) **The actual competencies of the applicant:** and how they are documented.

DID YOU KNOW?

RPL should be:

a) Transparent

b) Valid

c) Reliable

d) Flexible

e) Fair

EXAMPLE

Norway recommends the use of clearly defined and described steps and stages that can be recognised by all stakeholders as this is important for building confidence in the system, including:

i. Counselling and facilitation

ii. Description / mapping of competencies – including documentation from formal and informal learning, from practical work experience

iii. Assessment or validation

iv. Recognition of competencies

4.4.4 Range of assessment methods

a) The **analysis of written or e-portfolio of evidence and statements. This** involves examining the documents and products of a candidate in terms of how the candidate provides the evidence of achievement of selected learning outcomes.

b) **Presentation: T**he method consists of preparing, presenting and discussing a specific learning outcome/s in front of a panel of assessors.

c) **Debate. This** offers the candidate an opportunity to demonstrate their depth of knowledge as well as their communication skills.

> **i. Structured debate** is an organised and moderated (directed) discussion of a group of candidates who exchange arguments on a selected learning outcome/s.

> **ii. An unstructured debate** takes place in a group and the participants have great latitude in their participation because they are not assigned specific functions, nor are they required to present their positions in a specific manner.

d) **Interviews are** used to clarify issues raised in documentary evidence presented and/or to review scope and depth of learning.

> **i. Structured interview** consists of asking a series of standardized closed-ended questions and analysing the answers.

> **ii. Unstructured interview** is an exchange of questions and answers in a free-flowing conversation between an assessor and the candidate seeking recognition of competencies.

e) **Theoretical tests**.

> i. Written tests require written statements from candidates.

> ii. Oral tests require spoken responses from candidates.

f) **Simulation and evidence extracted from work:** Applicants are placed in a situation that fulfils all the criteria of the real-life scenario.

g) **Observation in real-life conditions**: Assessment of candidates in actual conditions of doing the tasks specified in the description of a qualification.

h) **Declarative methods**: Candidates' personal identification and recording of their competencies and verification of the self-assessment third party.

4.4.5 Final assessment

As per the procedures of the QAI.

4.4.6 Assessment plan – as per QAI

a) Types
b) Purpose

4.4.7 Certification and award of qualification process

a) Certification
b) Award of qualification

4.4.8 Documentation of the assessment and certification process

      a) Stages of documentation

      b) Types of documentation

Key questions

      a) What are the key components for assessment of prior learning outcomes?

      b) What assessment methods exist and might be applicable?

      c) What is portfolio method?

      d) What are the main challenges related to the portfolio method?

Learning Unit 5

RPLP POST-SUPPORT (ADOPTED FROM MOOC)

Support provided to candidates, employers, institutions and RPL Practitioners.

Learning objectives

Candidates

Support provided to candidates leads to better, improved decent work opportunities and enables the RPL candidates realize their full potential.

Employers

The workplace is one of the best environments an RPL candidate can hope for. However, it could provide challenges for the assessor as well as managers involved in the process.

Institutions

At the institution level, feedback can be provided to the RPL coordinator either by the candidate or the RPLP.

RPL practitioners

RPL assessment is unpackaged differently from the traditional assessment that RPL practitioners may be used to. Hence, there is need to provide continuous feedback to ensure that the RPLP continuously improve on their services to the RPL process.

Learning Unit 6

RPL PRACTITIONERS' COMPETENCIES

6.1 Introduction

The Unit focuses on assessors' competencies at the identification, documentation and assessment stages. The unit is intended to equip the trainee with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will enable them to undertake the assessment process.

6.2 Learning objectives

By the end of this learning unit, the participants should be able to:

a) identify national values applicable to the RPL process;
b) identify the competencies of an RPL assessor;
c) apply the code of conduct of the RPLP during the assessment process; and
d) evaluate competencies using a case study.

6.3 Unit outline

Topic	Time: Mins.	Methods	Materials
Introduction			
National Values		Presentation and discussion	Constitution
RPL practitioners competencies		Case studies Presentation discussion	Hand out
RPL practitioners Code of Conduct		Discussion	Code of Conduct

6.4 Content

6.4.1 National Values

a. Meaning of National Values

Standards that guide an individual on how to respond or behave in a given circumstance.

b. National Values

i. Responsibility.
ii. Respect.
iii. Excellence.
iv. Care and Compassion.
v. Understanding and tolerance.
vi. Honesty and trustworthiness.
vii. Being ethical.

REFLECTIONS

What are National Values are as stated in the Constitution of Kenya 2010?

What are the implications of not observing values during the RPL process?

6.4.2 RPL Practitioners' Competencies

a) Effective communication

Minimizes potential misunderstanding and overcomes any barriers that may hinder or compromise the assessment process.

i. Language

Use of common and simple language to ensure that the candidates are not disadvantaged at any stage of assessment process.

ii. Interviewing techniques

When to use interview.
Planning for the interview.
Conducting the interview.
Conducting post-interview analysis.
Techniques of interviewing.

State the activities that should be undertaken at each of the three stages of the interview process.

i. What competencies should an RPL assessor possess to conduct effective interviews.

ii. Did you know that the following techniques can be used to enhance the quality of an interview process?

iii. Use of conversational tone of questioning that enable a candidate to be at ease for them to be able to freely communicate their competencies.

iv. Use of open-ended questions that elicit discussions that expounds on candidate experience in line with the occupation.

v. Use of probing questions to enable the assessor to contextualize or reformulate questions that fit a particular role of a candidate work.

b) Counselling skills

   i. Target group
   ii. Types
   iii. Purpose of counselling
   iv. Conditions of counselling
   v. Empathy.Unconditional positive regard.Congruence.

An RPL counsellor should possess certain skills. Discuss the skills that would make counselling session effective.

What competencies should an RPL counsellor possess to conduct effective Counselling?

c) Analytical skills

Enables the assessor to identify, collect, investigate and synthesize information leading to decision making. It involves:
   i. analysing information;
   ii. assessing;
   iii. synthesising;
   iv. evaluating alternatives;
   v. creating or generating ideas based on the analysis;
   vii. reflecting;
   viii. reaching a solution based on analysis; and
   giving feedback.

d) Assessment skills

i. Relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes in line with the occupation and Qualification Awarding Institution Standards.
ii. Flexibility.
iii. Test development skills.
iv. Analysis.
 v. Application.
vii. Provide feedback on the assessment process.

e) Coordination skills

This is about seeing the big picture before it is formed and finding ways to realize it, your ability to see many moving pieces and making a plan for all the pieces to come together. These skills are key in keeping the workplace running smoothly by preventing miscommunications, disorganisation and confusion.

There are five coordination skills that make it easier to be effective at what you do.

f) Time management

i. Awareness of deadlines and how to enforce them effectively.
ii. Knowledge of your team's individual and collective strengths and how to best leverage on them.

g) Communication

i. Effective communication to minimize information loss or misunderstanding.
ii. Creates an avenue for information flow in all directions thus being aware of what is happening.
iii. Enhanced personal interactions.

h) Adaptability

i. Easily adaptable to situations as they arise without interfering with project program.
ii. Applies creative thinking in problem solving and decision making.
iii. Adjusts plans and responses based on how circumstances present themselves.

iv. Ability to explain the situation to team members / colleagues and encourage / motivate them to respond appropriately.

i) Organisation

i. Keeping track of the moving pieces that need to be kept track of.
ii. Managing the pieces in a way that they do not become overwhelming.
iii. Disseminating information in the most efficient way possible – ensures everyone remains in the loop and nothing gets lost in the chain of communication.

j) Team work

i. Effective delegation of work to team members.
ii. Easily motivates team members to provide their best.
iii. Demonstrates what is required instead of giving orders.
iv. Genuinely cares about the progress of their team members.
v. Encourages team members on interconnectedness thus promoting a working together environment that enhances productivity and job satisfaction.

k) Equity and inclusion skills

i. Each candidate receives what he / she needs to carry out the assessment to the best of their ability. Thus, as an RPL Practitioner, one ensures the following.
ii. High outcomes for all participants undertaking the assessment.
iii. Removes the predictability of success or failure that correlates with any social, economic or cultural factor.
iv. Interrupts inequitable practices, examines biases and creates inclusive, multicultural assessment environment for candidates.
v. Discovers and encourages the unique gifts, talents and interests that the candidates may possess.

REFLECTIONS

Imagine you hand out the application form to the candidates – what assumptions might you make? Every candidate has a pen, can read and write, understands the language of instruction, Equal, right?
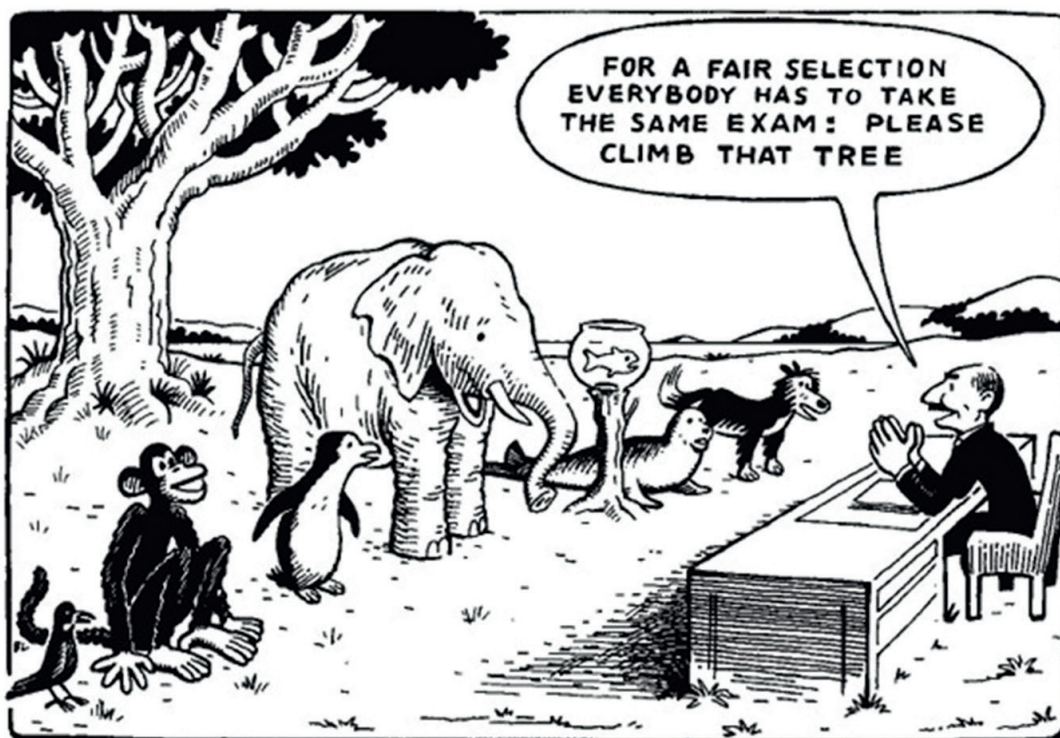
l) Strategies to promote equity

The following strategies should help you better manage equity while interacting with candidates.

i. Self-awareness.
ii. Model equity for your candidates.
iii. Flexibility.Addressing inappropriate remarks.
iv. Creating an equitable environment.

This is an environment that addresses the possible challenges that your candidates may experience e.g. ramps for persons using wheel chairs.

You can also:

i. set and post assessment center rules;
ii. be flexible in assessment approaches e.g. language used, reading for the candidate in case they are illiterate;
iii. explain more of the why the process is being carried out; and
iv. respect all religious holidays when planning for assessments.

m) Inclusion

The paradox of inclusion – a world more connected than ever seems more divided than ever. Indeed, pointing out this pervasive division and exclusion nears a cliché. But if exclusion is such a defining issue, so too is inclusion: the lack of it, the need for it.

Diversity features in RPL could include language, culture, gender, disability, age, socio-economic background, literacy levels, personality and much more. RPL Practitioners are expected to value the aspect of what makes each candidate unique.

An RPL Practitioner can enhance inclusivity by;

i) Learning about the candidates' cultural backgrounds and what makes them unique and in so doing discover their perspective on matters that may affect the assessment. The RPLP can establish a tone of inclusion by emphasizing that all perspectives are valuable.
ii) Creating a culturally responsive assessment environment: this promotes respect and understanding of cultures different from the candidates. This promotes a willingness to listen respectfully to different viewpoints.

Equity and inclusion are the most important of the cross-cutting themes. Attention to equity and inclusion is woven through every domain, in both competencies and indicators. The competencies noted with the equity and inclusion help to:

i) achieve high outcomes for all participants undertaking the assessment;
ii) remove the predictability of success or failure that correlates with any social, economic or cultural factors;
iii) interrupt inequitable practices, examine biases and create inclusive, multicultural assessment environment for candidates; and
iv) discover and encourage the unique gifts, talents and interests that the candidates may possess.

6.4.3 Code of Conduct

An RPL practitioner shall be expected to adhere to the tenets of article 10 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 RPL practitioner's Code of Conduct, regulator's standards, Qualification Awarding Institutions Rules and Regulations.

6.4.4 Case studies

6.4.4.1 Case study 1

Zawadi is a candidate who has come for RPL assessment in a registered assessment centre. She is received at the reception and directed to the RPL desk. She is then received by the counsellor who provides a seat and proceeds to have a conversation with her on work experience and work expertise.

Counsellor: Good morning Zawadi?

Zawadi: Good morning.

Counsellor: How can we help you?

Zawadi: Am here for the RPL assessment.

Counsellor: Can you hand in your evidence for assessment?

Zawadi: What is evidence?

Counsellor: You should have known about the evidence before coming to the assessment center. Can you come back tomorrow with the full Portfolio of Evidence to enable us assess you?

Zawadi: Okay. Is there no other way to assist me to gather the portfolio of evidence?

Counsellor: *"'ongea vizuri"* (Talk nicely) We can arrange for that.

Zawadi does not return to the assessment centre after the above conversation.

Consider the following questions about the case study

a) In your opinion, what could be the reason why the candidate never showed up in the assessment centre as requested?
b) Which skills are demonstrated through the above case study?
c) What gaps are linked to the skills identified?
d) If you were the counsellor, how would you have handled Zawadi?

6.4.4.2 Case study 2

A beauty parlour employs 50 attendants in the areas of barbering, hairdressing and beauty therapy. Most of them are allocated roles based on their technical expertise or success in operational roles, but they do not have formal qualifications or training. The beauty parlour manager is aware of the need to focus attention on the importance of developing and recognising competencies. He contacted and en-

gaged an assessment centre to assess the attendants with a view of recognizing and certifying competencies that they possess. After initial consultation, it was agreed that the attendants would be advised to submit expression of interest form for RPL assessment to the centre. Thirty out of the 50 attendants submitted the EOI.

The process included:

a) Counselling and information sessions for staff to decide if they wanted to apply.
b) Informative tools that define qualification information and explain the recognition assessment process, including required engagement and potential outcomes.
c) Presentation of the Portfolio of Evidence by the candidate and verification of the PoE by the counsellors.
d) The counsellors found that 20 attendants had good evidence of workplace practice that matched the results of the competence units. Ten were advised to gain more workplace experience.
e) The 20 attendants were assessed in English language by three panels of assessors each comprising three assessors -- one from the training centre and one from the industry and one from the Qualification Awarding Institution. Three of the 20 attendants had hearing impairment.
f) However, five lacked knowledge or worker behaviour to support their practice.
g) The panels faced a dilemma on whether the five attendants should be awarded certificate, as they lacked knowledge and worker behaviour, despite the seemingly competent performance.

Consider the following questions about the case study.
h) In your opinion, what might have been the reason that made the 20 attendants not to express interest?
i) What might have informed the counsellors' decision to refer the 10 attendants to gain more workplace experience?
j) In your opinion, were the principles of assessment adhered to? Explain your answer.
k) How would you guide the five attendants who were declared not yet competent?

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