Recognition Guide

In parts this document speaks in the first person, and has been authored by Beth O'Brien, Company Director.

Introduction

The recognition of prior skills and knowledge is a valuable way for a person to have acknowledged their skills that can be translated into a formal qualification.   Some people have been put off in the past from using this process as it has historically been a lengthy and sometimes cumbersome process of filling in grids and matching information to every dot point of criteria in every unit of competency. You may have heard the expression "it is easier to do the unit, than to do the RPL process", that simply is now not true.

Having met and trained many marriage celebrants nationally I know that there are people with expansive skills and knowledge from work, and from life. Some who have never had "a piece of paper" but are intelligent and vital people. This is an opportunity for their skills to be acknowledged in a formal way. For those of you who have not been near a classroom for a long time you need not be concerned about not being able to gradually work with the assessor until your successful completion. Even people who have degrees and special work skills will still navigate this process to allow the assessor to see that they have truly all the pre-requisite knowledge to gain the qualification.

Completing a Certificate IV in Celebrancy gives you a valuable qualification. At the end of this document you will find a table that explains the difference between a Certificate I, II, III, IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Vocational Graduate Certificate, and Vocational Graduate Diploma. The Certificate IV level is the first of the levels where a person is taken in their workplace role to hold responsibilities and be self directed. Vocational education and training comes under the control of the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Under their accreditation of nationally approved qualifications comes the Certificate IV in Celebrancy (CHC42608).

The qualification CHC42608 Certificate IV in Celebrancy appears on our webpage under the RPL heading and under the marriage celebrant training heading as a PDF file.

RPL is now more user-friendly

Thankfully the process is now far more user friendly than it has been previously. The process begins by the candidate reading over the units of competency that they seek to have granted in the RPL process. They then send their CV, some references, and any other material they believe to be suitable for the assessor to examine. Then the assessor reads this material and considers where there may be gaps (if any) in a person's knowledge or skills. The assessor then makes a time to interview the candidate and really get to know them better. This is called a competency conversation.   After this conversation the assessor then determines that you have met the requirements of the unit, or that you may need to show a demonstration of your skills, or that you need to do some further training to finish the qualification.

For instance in the new Certificate IV in Celebrancy qualification there are 9 units on celebrancy, and 4 elective units. The 4 electives can be taken from the funeral and small business elective units that are available. If you were an experienced marriage and funeral celebrant, then the RPL process would be more easily achieved, than perhaps if you were a new marriage celebrant with minimal experience.

Another example would be if you were an experienced marriage celebrant and worked in a business role, then again it would be more easily achieved, than a not so experienced marriage celebrant who may not have business skills personally.

Newly appointed marriage celebrants are not newly appointed adults, and I know that many of those people have a wealth of experience in skills from other parts of their life. As this is a vocational qualification they will need as all other candidates need the ability to show their skills and knowledge to prepare legal and delightful marriage ceremonies, over a variety of time frames.

The RPL Process

The Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) is the national set of standards which assures nationally consistent, high quality training and assessment services to all vocational education and training clients. AQTF 2007 is outcome focussed and "focuses on the quality of services and outcome being achieved for clients rather than the inputs used to get there. This means that registered training organisation have more flexibility in demonstrating how their individual approaches provide quality training outcomes for their clients. It is in this context that Recognition of prior learning and experience can be assessed.

Recognition = Credit Transfer and RPL

Credit transfer assesses the initial course or subject that an individual is using to claim access to, or the award of credit, in a destination course.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) uses the combined elements of work experience and life experience. This process assesses an individual's non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcome, competency outcomes, or standards for entre for total or partial completion of a qualification. RPL assessment is about gathering evidence in order to make a judgement regarding the competence of the candidate.

Usually, you will have developed and demonstrated your skills through a combination of your work, learning and life experiences. To have your prior learning recognised, you must be able to show that your skills are still current and meet today's industry standards.

You will need to produce recent evidence of your skills and knowledge. You will also need to provide contact details of people who can confirm your abilities. These people might be supervisors, or others in
your community, who have seen your skills in action.

Recognition of current competency **(RCC)** Recognition of current competency applies if a candidate has previously successfully completed the requirements for a unit of competency or module and is now required (for example, by a licensing authority) to be reassessed to ensure that the competence is being maintained. In this case no extra skill or competencies are nationally recognised. An unsuccessful recognition of current competency assessment does not invalidate the previous competent assessment outcome.

Why have your prior learning recognised?

There are a variety of reasons:

- minimise re-learning the skills you already have
- accelerate your acquisition of new skills.
- Personal achievement
- Have the same qualification as colleagues in the industry

By getting your prior learning and experience recognised, you may be able to get the required skills and qualifications sooner. The RPL process can be worth pursuing as you:

- May save time and get qualified faster
- Can avoid unnecessary training for skills you already have
- Can gain access to a course that would usually require formal qualifications as a Prerequisite.

Note:

A Certificate IV in Marriage Celebrancy is not the same qualification. It is not equivalent in any way to the Certificate IV in Celebrancy and will not meet the new requirements for registration as a marriage celebrant.
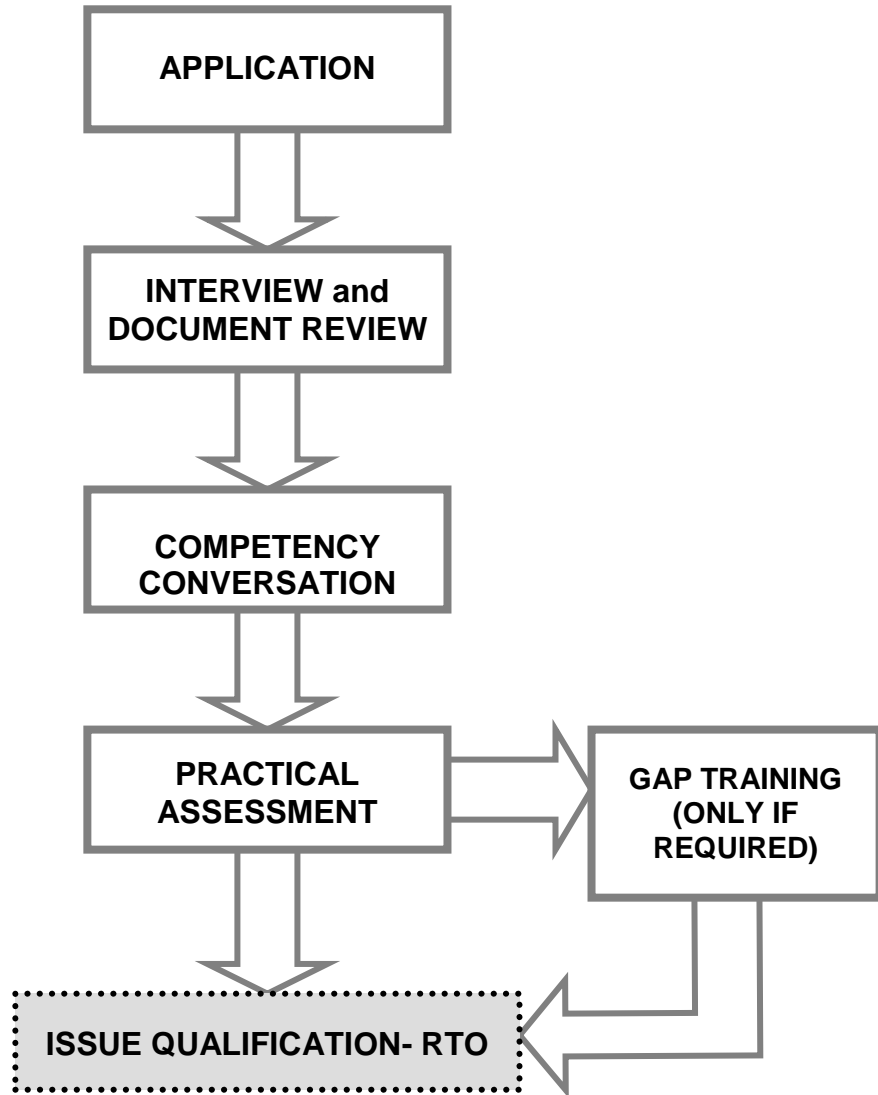
Special Note:

An authorised celebrant who has not completed and registered a marriage for a couple will be unable to fulfil all the requirements of the Certificate IV in Celebrancy in the RPL mode. Recognition is based on skills and knowledge. For units of the Certificate IV in Celebrancy that do not require that skill and knowledge to be shown, you are most welcome to apply for RPL in those units.

Before you enrol you will need to take into consideration that you must have already legally married 3 couples. You will be required to submit a video of an actual marriage ceremony (with permission from that couple), **or** submit three references from a selection of the couples you have married (the couple may not be related to you in anyway). You will also need to supply contact details of three couples you have married who can confirm your skills in preparing, designing and performing a marriage ceremony. You should seek permission from these 3 couples to have our assessor call them for these brief conversations.

If you are using the submission of DVD option, you will also be required to confirm on a statutory declaration that you have married a minimum of three couples.

OVERVIEW OF RECOGNITION PROCESS

This Recognition process has been developed to streamline the application for recognition of prior learning.

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Examples of Evidence Gathering Techniques

Evidence Gathering Technique	Advantages	Disadvantages
Practical workplace demonstration	• most authentic and likely to be valid as it is in an actual work situation • can be part of a routine workplace supervision and therefore opens up possibility of continuous assessment of other aspects of training program • minimal disruption to training process	• assessor needs to be available at the workplace at assessment times • candidate anxiousness may be increased. Assessor needs to avoid undue pressure
Simulated performance or product development	• close as possible to actual, workplace conditions • can be part of an integrated assessment that covers other aspects of training program	• a degree of artificiality • candidate may react and perform differently in real workplace setting • requires time to organise and coordinate effective simulation
Portfolio	• can apply to an extended training period • can include range of types of evidence such as text, photographs and workplace documents	• may be difficult to establish authenticity of items • content focus can be distracted with high level presentation skills
Roleplay	• contains a degree of spontaneity • may appeal to the learning style of candidates • can be a satisfying and enjoying assessment experience	• dramatic requirements may be intimidating for some candidates • a degree of unpredictability in evidence that is produced • Can be time consuming to set up
Essays	• good method to use when competence is related to abstract thinking and argument	• needs well developed criteria for assessment • favours candidates with high written communication skills

Evidence Gathering Technique	Advantages	Disadvantages
Case studies	• good way of providing evidence of procedural knowledge and problem solving • good substitute in the absence of access to real situations	• ultimately not 'real' and therefore candidate may react differently to actual circumstances • passive response rather than active as in the case of workplace demonstration or role play
Tests	• useful in providing evidence of facts, comprehension and recall • cost effective and time efficient • most reliable in achieving authenticity	• limited in providing evidence where skills of evaluation, synthesis and analysis are required • candidate anxiousness may be increased
Projects, assignments and reports	• allows for extended and thorough investigation of issues • familiar assessment method to candidates • can be used for individual or group assessment	• assumes level of skill to conduct research • authenticity is more difficult to establish • content focus can be distracted with high level presentation skills
Oral questioning	• provides immediate feedback on candidate competence • questions can be spontaneously adapted to 'test' out candidate • an appropriate alternative for candidates with poor literacy skills	• candidate performance is somewhat determined by assessor questioning technique • may not be robust enough to make decision about competence
Third party reports	• useful when extensive demonstration is unfeasible • can be simple e.g. Checklist	• authenticity and currency must be assured.

Distinguishing Features of Learning Outcomes

(Source: [AQF Implementation 2007, p11-12](#).)

Certificate I	Certificate II	Certificate III	Certificate IV
Do the competencies enable an individual with this qualification to:	**Do the competencies enable an individual with this qualification to:**	**Do the competencies enable an individual with this qualification to:**	**Do the competencies enable an individual with this qualification to:**
demonstrate knowledge by recall in a narrow range of areas	demonstrate basic operational knowledge in a moderate range of areas	demonstrate some relevant theoretical knowledge	demonstrate understanding of a broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts
demonstrate basic practical skills such as the use of relevant tools	apply a defined range of skills	apply a range of well developed skills	
	apply known solutions to a limited range of predictable problems	apply known solutions to a variety of predictable problems	apply solutions to a defined range of unpredictable problems
perform a sequence of routine tasks given clear direction	perform a range of tasks where choice between a limited range of options is required	perform processes that require a range of well developed skills where some discretion and judgement is required	identify and apply skill and knowledge areas to a wide variety of contexts with depth in some areas
receive and pass on messages/information	assess and record information from varied sources	interpret available information, using discretion and judgement	identify, analyse and evaluate information from a variety of sources
	take limited responsibility for own outputs in work and learning	take responsibility for own outputs in work and learning	take responsibility for own outputs in relation to specified quality standards
		take limited responsibility for the output of others	take limited responsibility for the quantity and quality of the output of others

Diploma	Advanced Diploma	Vocational Graduate Certificate	Vocational Graduate Diploma
Do the competencies or learning outcomes enable an individual with this qualification to:	**Do the competencies or learning outcomes enable an individual with this qualification to:**	**Do the competencies or learning outcomes enable an individual with this qualification to:**	**Do the competencies or learning outcomes enable an individual with this qualification to:**
demonstrate understanding of a broad knowledge base incorporating theoretical concepts, with substantial depth in some areas	demonstrate understanding of specialised knowledge with depth in some areas	demonstrate the self-directed development and achievement of broad and/or specialised areas of knowledge and skills building on prior knowledge and skills	demonstrate the self-directed development and achievement of broad and/or highly specialised areas of knowledge and skills building on prior knowledge and skills
analyse and plan approaches to technical problems or management requirements	analyse, diagnose, design and execute judgements across a broad range of technical or management functions	initiate, analyse, design, plan, execute and evaluate major, broad and/or highly specialised technical and/or management functions in highly varied and/or highly specialised contexts	initiate, analyse, design, plan, execute and evaluate major functions either broad and/or highly specialised within highly varied and/or highly specialised contexts
transfer and apply theoretical concepts and/or technical or creative skills to a range of situations	demonstrate a command of wide-ranging, highly specialised technical, creative or conceptual skills	generate and evaluate ideas through the analysis of information and concepts at an abstract level	generate and evaluate complex ideas through the analysis of information and concepts at an abstract level
evaluate information using it to forecast for planning or research purposes	generate ideas through the analysis of information and concepts at an abstract level	demonstrate a command of wide-ranging highly specialised technical, creative or conceptual skills in complex contexts	demonstrate an expert command of wide-ranging, highly specialised technical, creative or conceptual skills in complex and/or highly specialised or varied contexts
take responsibility for own outputs in relation to broad quantity and quality parameters	demonstrate accountability for personal outputs within broad parameters	demonstrate responsibility and broad-ranging accountability for personal outputs	demonstrate full responsibility and accountability for personal outputs
take limited responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes	demonstrate accountability for group outcomes within broad parameters	demonstrate responsibility and broad-ranging accountability for the structure, management and output of work of others and/or functions	demonstrate full responsibility and accountability for all aspects of work of others and functions including planning, budgeting and strategy