APPLYING for RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Thank you for showing an interest in RPL. This guide has been developed to assist you in the process of applying for the formal recognition of your knowledge and learning at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). This guide explains what RPL is and the rationale behind RPL in the South African context. You are provided with an overview of the process as it takes place at CPUT and a step-by-step guide in putting together a portfolio of evidence. The portfolio of evidence gives you the opportunity to present your knowledge, skills and achievements to the CPUT for purposes of access to a qualification or for credit for and/or exemption from parts of a qualification. Developing a portfolio is a process of self reflection and can assist you in planning your career.

What is RPL?

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), according to SAQA\(^1\), means “the comparison of previous learning and experience of a learner however obtained, against the learning outcomes required for a specific qualification, and the acceptance for purposes of qualification of that which meets the requirements’.

If you think you have developed knowledge, skills and abilities throughout your working life that are substantial and can meet the university’s entry requirements (at the various levels) or make up a number of subjects or a degree in higher education, you can apply for recognition.

The rationale for RPL

RPL supports the transformation of education in South Africa. It aims to remove barriers to access to education and act as a vehicle for life-long learning\(^2\). The rationale for RPL\(^3\) is part of the National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa, increasing the accessibility of the universities to individuals who wish to gain access to the institution for study purposes. In addition RPL will broaden the social base of higher education and increase the number of graduates in the country.

The CPUT defines RPL as: “the process of assessing and, where appropriate, accrediting the acquired knowledge, competences and capabilities of a person gained in formal, informal or non-formal learning. RPL is conducted with reference to outcomes in a formal qualification and/or levels in

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1 SGB Regulations, No. 18787, 28 March 1998
2 SAQA PRL Policy Document, September 2002
3 CPUT RPL policy
the (National Qualification Framework) NQF and, where relevant, particular workplace and social competences."

RPL is meant for external candidates (members of the general public), as well as internal candidates, in other words, staff. You can apply for access to a diploma; for example, if you want enter at the first-year level, you will be applying for access on Level 5 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), on the assumption that you have attained relevant competence at level 4. You may also want to apply for post graduate studies (Level 7 and higher of the NQF), in which case you’ll apply for the status associated with the relevant post-graduate entrance level. You may also apply for advanced standing within any qualification or learning programme. This involves exemption from or credit for parts of the qualification or learning programme.

Decide what level or degree you want recognition for. Check the CPUT website at www.cput.ac.za and browse through the qualifications offered. Once you know what subjects and degree you want access to, status for or advanced standing in, you can collect information against these subjects and present it as a portfolio of evidence to the CPUT. For example, if you are applying for advanced standing in Hospitality Management, you will collect evidence of work you have done regarding Management aspects such as Supervisory and Management Principles, Marketing, Recruitment, Industrial Relations, Human Resources Management etc.. Note that some learning programmes may require evidence of your competence in addition to or instead of a portfolio. For example, you may be asked to write a “challenge test” to prove that you have the required competence in Financial Management. You may be asked to present your portfolio to an interview panel.

The process for applying for RPL

If you want to apply for RPL, contact the RPL unit (021) 959 6611 (rpl@cput.ac.za). Once you have indicated which qualification you want to study, the RPL unit will give you an indication if you should go ahead with the RPL application or not. If positive, you have to apply to the University and the RPL Unit will notify the relevant department.

Submit an application form (downloadable from the CPUT website) and pay the application fee of R100 if you don’t have a student’s number. Also pay the RPL fee and include the proof of payment with your RPL Application;

<table>
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<tr>
<th>RPL fee for National Diploma</th>
<th>R - TBC</th>
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<tr>
<td>RPL fee for BTech, Mtech or MEd</td>
<td>R - TBC</td>
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</table>

Bank details:
- Account name: CPUT
- Bank: ABSA
- Account number: 011 625 10521
- Branch code: 632005
- Reference: RV01/52422
Once you have completed the application forms you must submit them to Ms. M. Hattingh at CPUT Granger Bay campus, Cape Town Hotel School / 021 440 5720/ hattinghm@cput.ac.za by latest end of May of each year.

The next step in the RPL Process requires you to submit a Portfolio of Evidence (POE) which will be explained to you during a personal interview with a representative of the Cape Town Hotel School - Ms. M. Hattingh at CPUT Granger Bay Campus, Cape Town Hotel School / 021 440 5720/ hattinghm@cput.ac.za by latest end of August of each year.

The portfolio will be evaluated and feedback will be given to you. If more information is required, your will be asked to provide this and may be followed up with a personal interview. Your final POE will be evaluated by senior staff of the Cape Town Hotel School and then presented to the RPL Committee of the Faculty of Business for final consideration. If you application is successful, you will be fully entitled to study at CPUT after the Senate Exco has ratified the decision.

The closing date for RPL enquires is the 1st of August every year and the closing date for submission for the next year's enrollment is the 1st of September.

**Developing a portfolio of evidence as required for access to the BTech Hospitality Management.**

When applying for RPL, you have to convince the CPUT that the knowledge, skills and attributes you have gained during your working life meet the University’s requirements in relation to a particular qualification or learning programme. Your have to present what you have done and what you know in a logical manner to the University so that an assessment can be made.

A POE is a purposeful collection of work, exhibiting the person’s work, efforts and achievements. The work included in a portfolio of evidence should reveal a range of skills, knowledge and attributes, reflecting the progress you have made in your working life, resulting in achievements and highlights that can be authenticated.

The purpose of the POE within the RPL process is to create the space to allow a mature candidate (older than 30 years and/or 5 years work experience within the hospitality field) candidate who has missed the opportunity to do a diploma or degree to show their competence and knowledge acquired through taking short courses and by gaining experience in the workplace which is equivalent to a three year diploma at an NQF 6 level. It aims to assess the candidate’s abilities and experience and to establish their state of academic readiness.
Present evidence for RPL purposes

When applying for RPL, you as the applicant have to motivate or explain why you think you are a suitable RPL candidate. Put it together in a logical, clear and informative manner. Remember, your portfolio goes to an academic department, where no one knows you! The CPUT will treat all information submitted with the highest confidentiality.

Provide CPUT with a clearly marked file or ring binder that holds your submission. Put your name, contact details and the RPL you are applying for on the cover sheet. Include an executive summary of less than a page, introducing yourself and explaining why you applied for RPL. Explain briefly how the RPL process could advance your career. Attach the authenticity declaration here. A table of contents will make it easier for the reader to go through the portfolio. The table of contents should include a list of all the pieces of evidence you include in the portfolio.

The portfolio consists of two parts: Part 1 is the motivation for the RPL application and Part 2 is the supporting evidence.

Part 1: Motivation for a RPL application

In Part 1 you motivate why you should be considered for RPL. Include the following:

- **Goals and aspirations** for the next three to five years explaining your future plans and why RPL is an important aspect of these plans.
- **Reasons** for seeking recognition of prior learning in other words the motivation to apply for RPL.
- **Competencies** gained throughout your working life. A competency is a combination of what you know and can do. This can be in the form of a detailed CV, listing your competencies not only the duties you perform or have performed. You can also reflect on problems that you have solved and decisions you had to make that had major impact on your job or career. Explain your professional approach to your work, including your ethical standards. This section should be linked to part 2 of the Portfolio.
- **Formal and in-formal education received;** attach certified copies of qualifications and certificates of competence received relevant to the RPL application. (Certified copies of all qualifications to be included)
- Point out **relevance** of your competencies to your RPL application. Reflect critically on what you have achieved in your life and link it to the RPL you are applying for.
- **Gaps or shortcomings** in your life, that access to an Institution of Higher Education and a degree can address. (This point links to your goals, aspirations and career plans.)
- **Summary** reflecting on your experiences and what you learned from them. Link this to the qualification you are applying for.
Part 2: Present evidence and explain your competence.

This will be the bulk of the Portfolio. Put a collection of your work together that reflects your competencies. Evidence is proof that you can do what you say you can do and know what you say you know. This section should be able to establish a link between your competencies and the work covered as part of the ND Hospitality (Appendix 3). Evidence required for the BTech Hospitality Management should include the following:

- **Documents** generated in the course of work done within the Hospitality Industry. This should include areas within the Rooms Division Department, Food & Beverage Department and Financial Management department.
- **Job description**: Your job description or profile with verification such as an assessment or evaluation done of your work by colleagues or clients, to confirm that you have done the work on your job description.
- **Assessment** of work done by employers, assessors, auditors or performance management reports.
- **Testimonials**: Ask people you have worked with to confirm your competencies as well as the contribution you have made to the company or organisation. The testimonial should reflect the work you have done, your competencies not your personality. This could be from your supervisor, clients, colleagues or subordinate.

When selecting evidence keep the following principles in mind:

- **The evidence should be relevant**, it should be link to the degree and field that you want recognition for.
- **Authenticity**: The evidence should be your own work or the authenticated work of reputable others who have evaluated your work. You have to sign off the portfolio indicating that this is your work using the statement in Appendix 1.
- **Currency** needs to be kept in mind. The more recent the work has been done the better.
- **Validity** means that the evidence should be of relevant to the claims you make.
Appendix 1: Authenticity Declaration

Include a declaration of Authenticity in your portfolio of Evidence. The CPUT has to be confident that your work which you submit as part of your portfolio is indeed yours. Please include a statement such as the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authenticity Declaration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I,…………………………………, am applying for Recognition of Prior Learning against the ND Hospitality Management at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I herewith declare and confirm that the work attributed to me in this Portfolio of Evidence is my own work and was performed by me. If I had assistance from anyone, this is indicated on the document or evidence itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: ____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature: _________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date: ___________</td>
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Appendix 2:
Outline of a Portfolio of Evidence

- Cover page
- Contents page
- Authenticity Declaration
- Candidate details
- Receipt of payment of RPL fee /proof of payment
- Part 1 - Motivation for applying for RPL
- Part 2 - List of competencies with evidence
- Computer skills
- List certificates and diplomas included
- Letters of references and testimonials
Appendix 3:

Subjects covered as part of the ND Hospitality Management
(To be used as a guide when reflecting on your work experience competencies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workplace competence</th>
<th>RPL Evidence requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Predict the kind of knowledge and learning that could have taken place in the workplace.</td>
<td>• Identify possible evidence that can be submitted from the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• List the activities that are performed and the skills required to perform the task</td>
<td>• List knowledge that has to be tested or discussed during an interview/demonstration or test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Include relevant short courses</td>
<td>• List knowledge that could be included in an assignment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1ST YEAR

- Food & Beverage Studies Theory 1
- Food & Beverage Studies Practical 1
- Bar Course
- Preliminary Wine Course
- Life Skills
- Culinary & Nutrition Theory 1
- Culinary Practical 1
- Health & Safety
- First Aid
- Accommodation Management 1
- Service Excellence
- Hospitality Management 1
- Financial Management 1
- Communication 1
- Information Systems 1

2ND YEAR

- Food & Beverage Studies Theory 2
- Food & Beverage Studies Practical 2
- Wines of the World
- Culinary & Nutrition Theory 2
- Culinary Practical 2
- Accommodation Management 2 or Food & Beverage Operations 2
- Hospitality Management 2
- Financial Management 2
- Communication 2
- Hospitality Information Systems 2
- Hospitality Law 1

3rd YEAR (Rooms Division Candidate)

- Events Management 1
- Accommodation Management 3
- Hospitality Management 2
- Financial Management 2
- Hospitality Information Systems 1
- Hospitality Law 2

3rd YEAR (Food & Beverage Candidate)

- Culinary & Nutrition Theory 3
- Culinary Practical 3
- Food & Beverage Operations 3
- Hospitality Management 3
- Financial Management 3
- Hospitality Management Information Systems 1
- Hospitality Law 2
### Appendix 4:
**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Process at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)**

1. Applicant makes an initial inquiry and has an exploratory discussion with the RPL unit

2. Applicant completes admission form and pays application fee and RPL Fee

3. Applicant submits receipt to RPL unit and is referred to the Academic department. Information on the development of a portfolio of evidence is provided to the applicant by RPL unit

4. Applicant meets with academic department. The person is advised:
   - RPL Process and requirements
   - Applicant indicates acceptance of the process and requirements
   - Staff member is allocated to the candidate

5. Portfolio of Evidence is developed (if portfolio development is recommended process)
   - Applicant consults academic staff member
   - Applicant gets support from PRL Unit if required

6. Assessment of the Portfolio of Evidence and other evidence presented
   - At least two academic staff members assess the Portfolio of Evidence
   - Academic staff member compiles an assessor report with recommendations
   - Academic staff member compiles a summary of the Portfolio of Evidence
   - Assessor report and summary is sent to RPL unit

7. Department
   - RPL unit submits Assessor reports with recommendation and Portfolio summary to the Head of Department (HoD)
   - HoD makes submission to the RPL Committee or Dean with the recommendation

8. Faculty Management
   - RPL Committee or Dean reviews documentation

9. Executive of Senate
   - Reviews documentation and makes decision

10. Academic Programme
    - Applicant informed of decision
    - Applicant enters relevant programme
    - RPL Unit follows up with applicant to monitor progress