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SOUTH AFRICAN NURSING COUNCIL

**RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES
AND
QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS**

DRAFT

PREPARED BY:

JOINT EDUCATION TRUST

SECTION 1: PURPOSE

PREAMBLE

Since 1994, a number of Acts have been passed to ensure a more integrated education and training system, and which foreground: access for previously disadvantaged learners to all levels of the education system, the redress of the inequities of the past, the development of quality education across the system, and the development of the full potential of all learners. The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is one of the central pillars of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and is seen as a mechanism for facilitating access to further learning, as well as accelerated progression through qualifications for adults who may have creditable learning developed in contexts outside of the formal education system.

In addition, legislation such as the Skills Development and Employment Equity Acts provides clear directives to employers that access, redress and training issues in the workplace are national priorities. The Skills Development Act has made provision for the establishment of Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to develop and implement sector appropriate education and training plans that are in line with the NQF, and that meet the needs of both economic and social development agendas. All SETAs will establish Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies that will accredit training providers and assessors, and monitor the quality of education and training provision within their sectors. All education and training providers, as well as ETQAs, are required by SAQA to develop RPL implementation and quality assurance guidelines that will help to ensure the attainment of South Africa's developmental goals.

What the current policy and legislative framework speaks to is an increasing focus on the education and training of the adult population – both those in formal and self-employment, as well as those who are unemployed and retrenched. By focusing more substantially on adults, both education institutions and workplaces need to revise their current education and training practices. The implementation of RPL requires a different type of learner support that distinguishes between adults and traditional-age school-leavers, it requires different assessment strategies and tools, and it requires a rethink of the curriculum.

THE ROLE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NURSING COUNCIL IN THE NEW EDUCATION AND TRAINING CONTEXT

> *It will be necessary to insert a piece here on SANC*
> *- its transformation agenda post-1994,*
> *- its brief for transforming the nursing sector (others?) and healthcare qualifications (name; etc),*
> *- its location in primarily (??) the HE sector*
> *- and its accreditation and role as an ETQA*

CHALLENGES FACING RPL IMPLEMENTATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The challenges facing the implementation of RPL in South Africa include:
- ✓ ensuring that equity, redress and an holistic approach are developed and practiced;
- ✓ ensuring that new forms of exclusion and discrimination of adult learners do not become the norm at our education institutions;
- ✓ ensuring that education providers become more "adult learner friendly" as they deal with increasingly diverse learner populations;

- ✓ juggling institutional autonomy versus consistency within and between institutions in the nursing sector; and
- ✓ ensuring the participation and collaboration of all stakeholders in the nursing sector.

PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING RPL IMPLEMENTATION IN THE NURSING SECTOR IN SOUTH AFRICA

There are a number of RPL pilot projects around South Africa that bear testimony to a group of dedicated educators serious about developing an RPL practice that holds equity and developmental principles as fundamental. However, we have also seen that it is possible to develop RPL practices that are very narrowly defined by one stakeholder, and that this narrowness can lead to practices that continue to discriminate against the very people that RPL is supposed to assist, both educationally and professionally. Experience shows that the principles underpinning the development of an RPL policy and implementation plan are crucial to the success rate of the RPL programme – a lack of clearly defined and consensually agreed-to principles will mean an implementation of RPL that will most directly undermine the intended beneficiaries of the policy.

The following principles form the basis of the South African Nursing Council's approach to RPL implementation:

1. Equity of access and opportunity:

This principle speaks to the fact that adult learners, particularly from historically disadvantaged communities, need to be treated quite differently to traditional school-leavers. These adult learners have quite different support and counselling needs, and their usual lack of familiarity with formal academic institutions can present barriers to successful learning.

In addition, institutions need to develop frameworks for admitting adult learners that do not rely on the Matric certificate – international and local evidence suggests that using a school-leaving certificate as the sole/most important indicator of success at HE level is inadequate. Alternatives to a school-leaving certificate need to be evidenced. If RPL is to set and maintain rigorous and defensible standards, while simultaneously promoting the principles of equity and redress in access to HE, then this is an issue that all new certification bodies and provider institutions will have to deal with progressively.

Once adult learners have accessed education institutions, their success is dependent on the support systems provided by these institutions. Too often, adult learners who have been out of formal learning contexts struggle with the academic discourse of the HE institution. Access is therefore not only physical, but also epistemological.

Equity of opportunity entails that institutions understand the different needs of adult learners, and provide support systems that address these different needs. For example, academic staff, both within and between institutions, are at varying developmental stages of knowledge of RPL and adult learning theory and practice, and hence their pedagogical approaches and curriculum frameworks sometimes need reworking.

2. Equity of standards

Institutions should ensure that the procedures relating to RPL treat RPL candidates in the same way as traditional/mainstream learners. For example, the standards of assessment outcomes must be the same, ie if a 50% grade for a particular course is required in order to pass, then RPL candidates must be required to demonstrate an equivalent level of understanding.

3. Redress

In part, RPL is a mechanism aimed at facilitating and increasing access to further learning opportunities for adults who have historically been denied such opportunities, particularly (but not exclusively) at the HE level. Institutions are therefore obligated to ensure that policies and procedures are put in place that will transform the demographics of the learner population in terms of the racial and gender composition. However, the principle of redress can only be realised if equitable access mechanisms are in place, and if a culture of providing equity of opportunity prevails at institutions.

4. Holistic approach

RPL in South Africa cannot be divorced from the social context of reconstruction and development, nor from South Africa's apartheid past. Educators and institutions have to recognise and understand that RPL applied in a narrowly technicist fashion will not deliver on its promise of redress, nor of professional and educational development of the individual, communities and society at large. An equitable and holistic RPL practice needs to work with the whole person, someone who may have experienced severe trauma in his/her life, in personal, educational and socially oppressive forms and contexts. In order to nurture successful, confident adult learners, it needs to be understood that there is inevitably a therapeutic component to the RPL process – RPL is not only about recognising knowledge and skills that have a market/qualification value, but should be about acknowledging the whole person.

Important too, in an holistic approach to RPL, is the acknowledgement, recognition and credit of indigenous knowledge, particularly in the healthcare field. Institutions in South Africa are modelled on Western conceptions of knowledge and curriculum frameworks, which tend to exclude other knowledge forms.

5. Developmental RPL versus a deficit model

A developmental approach to RPL should seek to recognise the learning that someone has achieved in various contexts, rather than to 'penalise' them for what they do not know. A developmental approach would entail recognition of demonstrable learning, together with sound educational planning that aims to fill the 'gaps' in learning, thereby tailoring a curriculum framework that meets the needs of both the individual and the institution/professional body.

PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended to provide a framework for the implementation of RPL in the nursing sector. This framework will guide the implementation of RPL at education institutions, and provide RPL candidates with a guide to what they can expect from institutions.

SANC's vision for RPL:
- Holistic, not technicist;
- Ensure consistency of RPL provision among and between accredited institutions;
- Ensure fair, reliable, valid and bias-free assessments;
- Ensure a learner-centred and learner-supportive implementation of RPL;
- Engage in consultative and participatory processes with all stakeholders, including SAQA, HEQC and the Health and Welfare SETA, in developing 'best practices' in RPL; and
- More flexibility for RPL in elective areas.

SECTION 2: DEFINITION AND SCOPE

DEFINING RPL AND RELATED TERMS

RPL – a policy definition

RPL refers to a process through which qualifications may be achieved in whole or in part through the recognition of prior learning, which concept includes learning outcomes achieved through formal, informal or non-formal learning (SAQA).

RPL process

The RPL process involves the identification, documentation, assessment and recognition of learning (knowledge, skills, competencies and values acquired formally, non-formally and informally), through the award of credit for that learning. Since prior learning cannot be recognised before it has been assessed and because not all prior experience leads to learning, it is important for educators to design instruments that will identify, assess and verify prior learning so that credit may be awarded (adapted from Khanyile 2000:1)

RPL and credit transfer

RPL is more than academic transfer between two institutions, the latter being about the determination of equivalency of formal courses and programmes. RPL includes giving credit for non-formal courses, as well as for experiential learning. It is possible that an RPL application could include requests for credit of experiential learning and non-formal courses, as well as academic transfer requests.

WHO IS TARGETED BY THIS POLICY

- Providers: including advisors, assessors, course developers, registrars, administrators, internal and external verifiers
- Learners
- Labour organisations representing healthcare workers
- Employers
- Moderating bodies

THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

Providers
Rights
- Screen the RPL application and deny further access to RPL assessment, based on predetermined criteria that have been consensually designed by relevant stakeholders
- Expect verification of claims put forward by the candidate
- Request original documentation and contactable references
- Levy costs based on person hours/actual costs of process

Obligations
- Use consultative processes to determine standards for RPL, and to define the institution's credit policy
- Develop appropriate and adequate human resources
- Provide adequate learner support and counselling pre-, during and post RPL assessment; as well as during the RPL candidate's participation in the learning programme of her/his choice
- Develop a sound and fair appeals procedure

- Provide RPL programmes at times that will suit working adults
- Undertake assessments that are fair, unbiased, valid and reliable
- Ensure that RPL policy and procedures are aligned with national directives

Learners
Rights
- Access to adequate information regarding fees, the RPL process and its duration, educational planning, etc
- Access to competent and trained educators and assessors
- Pre-, during and post-assessment support, particularly in cases of 'failure'
- Support for educational planning and covering gaps in knowledge
- Fair and transparent procedures, including appeal and reassessment processes
- Knowledge of the standards and criteria used, and the outcomes to be met
- Give evidence in language of choice
- Confidentiality
- Participate in the process of choosing assessment methods and timing and venue of assessments
- Timeous and written feedback on assessment outcomes within 30 days of assessment
- Right to transfer credits awarded by means of the RPL assessment from institution to another
- Right to register with an institution that is registered with the South African Nursing Council

Obligations
- Identify his/her learning, and prove that s/he has learned what s/he claims to have learned, with assistance and support from RPL advisors
- Provide evidence and contactable references

Unions
Rights
- Participate in design of RPL assessment methods and portfolio development course
- Participate in evaluation and review of RPL related programmes and services
- Participate in redesign or modification of RPL related programmes and services
- Participate in review of assessments in an appeals process by appointing a subject expert to the appeals panel

Obligations
- Maintain a working knowledge of RPL policies and procedures of institutions in order to participate on behalf on workers

Employers
Rights
- Participate in design of RPL assessment methods and portfolio development course
- Participate in evaluation and review of RPL related programmes and services
- Participate in redesign or modification of RPL related programmes and services

Obligations
- Provide flexibility for workers who are undertaking RPL
- Where appropriate, recognise RPL achievements for promotion/grading purposes

SECTION 3: POLICY AND PROCEDURAL AREAS FOR RPL IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

The implementation and quality assurance of RPL should focus on the provision of quality in the whole process, and not just in the end-product (or assessment). Furthermore, the implementation of RPL should foreground the centrality of learners in the process and the protection of learners' rights.

The following represents all the facets of RPL implementation that education providers will need to put in place. These implementation areas will form the basis of the criteria against which providers will be quality assured in terms of RPL provisioning.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION AND DEVELOPMENT

- The provider must be accredited with SAQA, CHE and SANC and/or Health and Welfare SETA as a provider of nursing programmes and qualifications. This accreditation will automatically allow the provider to offer RPL programmes.
- All accredited providers in the nursing sector must develop an RPL policy that is based on progressive principles, and which sets out procedures and processes.
- Marketing and availability of information:
  - the institution must indicate in yearbooks, information brochures, website and other relevant media that RPL is available to certain specified groups of learners;
  - the institution must develop an RPL manual for learners that includes criteria/eligibility for RPL, fees, administrative process, available learner support services, pre-assessment preparation, assessment process and requirements, the appeals procedure, and so on.
  - the RPL policy and manual must be available to learners on request.
- Application forms and process: all prospective RPL candidates should receive an application form for registration as an RPL candidate. The application form should be written in simple language, easy to complete, and accompanied by explanatory notes (adapted from Khanyile 2000:10).
- Fees:
  - RPL candidates could pay for registration, counselling/advising and assessment;
  - Fees payable are determined by the service provided and not by the number of credits sought/awarded;
  - Fees charged should be less than the cost of the course/module;
  - Registration fees are partially or wholly refundable (adapted from Khanyile 2000: 10).
- Institutions must develop an external moderation plan, and indicate the process of ratification of RPL assessments
- Procedural:
  - The institution must develop a procedure and management system for RPL applications and the processing thereof.
  - All institutions will develop and implement an appeals procedure, that will entitle learners to union representation. In cases where the appeal is against the assessment outcome, the union will have the right to nominate a subject expert to sit on the appeals panel, and to have decision-making power.
  - Notification of results: will take place within one month of assessment; assessors will be required to write assessment reports and which are available to learners on request.

- Credit related:
  - All candidates from institutions accredited by SANC must be able to transfer such credits to any other SANC accredited institution;
  - The amount of credit to be awarded through RPL should comply with a residency requirement of fifty percent. However, exceptions may be made at Deans' discretion;
  - The success of an RPL application must adhere to the minimum requirements for passing a relevant course/module as specified for 'traditional' learners doing the course;
  - The grading policy for RPL credit is as close as possible to the grading system of the institution, in order not to disadvantage learners later in their academic careers;
  - Course titles for prior learning that is given credit should accurately reflect the learning area.
  - Procedures should be designed in such a way that it is learning, and not experience, which is assessed, ie credit should not be given/assumed on the basis of a certain number of years' experience in a related field; rather, an assessment of the learning should take place to appropriately identify the learning and the level at which it can be placed.
- Administrative: systems set up or existing systems expanded to process and track RPL applications and results.
- Admissions requirements: RPL should not only be used to provide access for non-matriculants, but where knowledge and skills can be demonstrated as being at a level equivalent to higher education, then credit should also be awarded.

ASSESSOR TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The importance of appropriately trained assessors and other categories of staff for the successful implementation of RPL cannot be over-emphasised. Adhering to national standards will promote consistency and credibility within and between institutions offering nursing programmes and will fulfil the NQF requirements of currency, portability and transferability of credits/credentials while instituting academic rigour and defensible practice.

While there will be a 'blanket' accreditation for nurse educators who are registered with SANC, as the requirements for such registration already meet prescribed assessor standards, it is still strongly recommended that nurse educators attend RPL-related workshops and training, as RPL has been under-developed in many assessor training courses.

Institutions must also develop and implement appropriate staff development and capacity building programmes, at all levels of management and administration. It is extremely important that all staff involved directly or indirectly in the RPL process have similar understandings of RPL and its implementation, from the level of DVC, to registrar, to Deans, to HODs, to support and faculty administrative staff, and to lecturers and tutors.

LEARNERS AND ELIGIBILITY

RPL is available to all individuals who aspire to become nurses, as well as to non-practising nurses. Where non-practising nurses have been struck off the roll by SANC, they will be allowed to enter RPL programmes, but will not be allowed to enter an accredited nursing programme until their disbarment period is over.

ADVISING SERVICES

Adequate learner support and advising services should be available in a range of areas, in order to set adult learners up for success, and not failure. Very often, their needs with regard to educational and career planning are very different to those of traditional-age school leavers, and institutions need to be encouraged to make these shifts. Many adults have negative experiences of formal learning, and RPL candidates therefore need to be supported in the RPL process. The rewards for setting RPL candidates for success has been shown in better participation and throughput rates for this group of learners, both locally and internationally.

As part of the preparation for assessment, a portfolio course (or RPL preparatory module) should be developed. Such a course, in the context of nursing education and programmes, serves a number of purposes:
- In a supportive environment, it allows the candidate to review her/his prior learning in relation to the overall programme, and to establish the areas of learning that may be creditable;
- Together with the RPL advisor and/or assessor, the candidate would be able to identify gaps in knowledge, so that an **educational plan** can be developed, both within the portfolio course, as well as within the main curriculum;
- The personal exploration and reflection that has come to characterise the portfolio course assists candidates in thinking "about their past and future through the lens of their own development as candidates, workers, family and community, and to see their knowledge in the broader context of a larger system of knowledge" (CTP Policy on RPL 2001:19).

The portfolio course should be credit-bearing, as the process of reflection, self-assessment and reviewing and articulation of prior learning produces new learning. By attaching credit to the course, it should be possible for institutions to qualify for a subsidy, possibly at the foundation/Year 0 level.

In addition to support and advising services before and during the RPL assessment, it is also extremely important to provide post-assessment advising and support, particularly where RPL candidates have 'failed' their assessment. Unless this stage is dealt with supportively, learners may be unlikely to return to formal learning, as they may feel that the education system has failed them yet again.

ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES AND METHODS

The assessment should also adhere to the principle of learner-centredness, by making provision for learner participation in decision-making at all important levels, such as in the choice of assessment method, etc.

Other principles that should guide assessment include:
- Validity
- Reliability
- Sufficiency
- Currency
- Authenticity
- Fair and bias-free
- Transparency

A range of assessment methods should be available for use, and more than one assessment method should be used per credit area being requested for RPL. This allows the assessor to cross-check information, also allows for internal validity. Possible assessment methods include, but are not restricted to:

- Standardised tests/challenge examinations
- Review of transcripts, licences and certificates
- Portfolio review
- Oral examinations/discussions
- Performance observation
- Skills demonstration/product assessment
- Programme/course/workshop or on-the-job-training review and evaluation
- Clinical case studies

A moderation process for both the RPL design and assessment procedure must be in place for all assessments.

EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Learners, staff and external stakeholders should form part of ongoing evaluation exercises. In particular, learners should be encouraged to provide feedback on the entire RPL process on completion of the personal RPL undertaking. Institutions need to monitor and adapt the RPL services and assessments in order to make the process more effective and efficient, and to ensure that the RPL process is in line with national standards and developmental objectives.

SECTION 4: HOW RPL WILL BE QUALITY ASSURED BY SANC

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The way in which quality assurance is seen has shifted from a more authoritarian and punitive model to one that is developmental. Prior to 1994, quality assurance in the education sector was implemented in a system that focused on content and checklisting, and that reinforced rote learning and a compliance mentality in order to avoid being penalised. Of course, the new quality assurance model being introduced is still concerned with quality, but in a developmental, not punitive, way.

In order to achieve the objectives of the NQF, the outcomes of the quality assurance system are to ensure the development of a quality culture that benefits learners and society. The new quality assurance system is one that has built in a series of checks and balances at all levels. All education providers will be quality assured by the relevant ETQA. Moderating bodies appointed by SAQA will ensure consistency and quality between ETQAs, and SAQA will assume overall responsibility for the quality assurance of education provision and assessment in order that the objectives of the NQF are met. In this context, a developmental approach to quality assurance is one that takes into account self- and peer evaluations, and that develops capacity in areas where improvements can be made.

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY OF ACCREDITED ETQAs

The following broad areas governing the responsibility and functioning of ETQAs have been set by SAQA:
1. *Promote quality amongst constituent providers*
2. *Accredit constituent providers for specific standards or qualifications registered on the NQF*
3. *Evaluate assessment and facilitation of moderation among constituent providers*
4. *Co-operate with relevant bodies appointed to moderate across ETQAs*
5. *Register constituent assessors for specified registered standards or qualifications in terms of the criteria established for this purpose*
6. *Monitor provision by constituent providers*
7. *Take responsibility for the certification of constituent learners*
8. *Maintain an acceptable database*
9. *Submit required reports to SAQA*
10. *Recommend new standards or qualifications to NSBs for consideration or modifications to existing standards or qualifications*

Within these broad areas, ETQAs also have a responsibility to ensure that RPL has been undertaken in line with the specifications of particular qualifications. It is important to note that SAQA is in the process of developing national guidelines and quality assurance standards for RPL, and these should be complete by end-January 2002.

RPL QUALITY ASSURANCE BY SANC

SANC's approach to RPL will be phased, developmental and consultative. It is acknowledged that not all providers will be able to have the necessary systems in place within a short period of time, but will need to demonstrate evidence that these systems are being developed and put in place. In this regard, SANC acknowledges that it also has a capacity development role to play by assisting institutions to develop the necessary capacity to implement RPL in an equitable, fair and quality-driven way.

RPL is a critical area for quality assurance, and must form part of the overall quality assurance system. There are a number of RPL related areas that institutions need to include in their quality assurance system. These are:
- Curriculum design, qualifications and standards
- Training and registration of assessors and other key staff
- Methods and processes of assessment
- Orientation and services to learners
- Monitoring, evaluation and moderation
- Learner records and reports to ETQAs

CRITERIA FOR RPL QUALITY ASSURANCE[1]

1. GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL ORIENTATION TOWARDS ADULT LEARNERS[2]

There is a shared commitment to the adult learner, which results in close cooperation between administration, lecturers, professional organisations, employers/trade unions and communities (Flint et al 1999:48).

- The mission of the institution is clearly articulated and influences curriculum development, instructional practice, support services, organizational structure, policy and places a high value on providing education in the adult years.
- There is a clear commitment to equity, redress and inclusion.
- Policy statements and methods of implementing them are recorded, readily available, and fully understood by members of staff.
- Equal opportunities are ensured for all learners, staff and other clients.
- Admission process is inclusive of adults with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

2. CURRICULUM DESIGN, QUALIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS

The curriculum is well researched and designed to help learners meet their learning goals. The institution uses multiple methods of instruction and delivery including experiential and problem-based methods, in order to connect curriculae to meet the diverse cultural and linguistic needs of adult learners.

- The design of learning programmes should indicate how learners' prior learning has been taken into account
- The curriculum should be flexible enough to accommodate learners' prior learning, as well as their individualised educational plans and goals
- The curriculum should incorporate indigenous and other knowledge in order to reflect the diversity of needs and goals of the learner population
- Learners are provided with flexible entry and exit points, to enhance convenient access to education and to achieve their learning/career goals as efficiently and conveniently as possible

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[1] These criteria have been adapted from the JET questionnaire sent to all SETA/ETQA and Learnership managers in September 2001, as part of the process of assisting SAQA in the development of national RPL guidelines and quality assurance standards.

[2] This sub-section has been derived from the criteria developed by JET for best practices in adult learner focused programmes in South Africa.

- Trends emerging from RPL assessments, where such trends have implications for the modification and redesign of unit standards/qualifications, must be forwarded to NSBs and ETQAs with recommendations

3. *REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION OF ASSESSORS AND OTHER KEY STAFF, SUCH AS SUPPORT STAFF, ADVISORS AND VERIFIERS, WHO WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE RPL PROCESS (EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY)*

Training of assessors and other directly and indirectly involved in RPL is a key element in ensuring the quality of assessments and in the provision of assessment services to learners. Training enables all personnel involved in the advising and assessment process, including assessors, verifiers and advisors to develop progressive, learner-centred practices that are in keeping with the objectives of the NQF and its policy imperatives.

- Assessors and verifiers have been deemed competent against the registered unit standards, and registered with the appropriate ETQA
- Generic assessor training courses need to include substantial sections on RPL, bias and sensitivity
- Institutions should design and deliver training and orientation programmes for all categories of personnel involved in the RPL process, including the fostering of mentoring relationships between staff with and those without RPL expertise
- The registers/databases of assessors should include the nature and scope of RPL experience, eg workplace-based assessment, higher education expertise
- Verifiers of RPL assessments need experience in RPL assessment

4. *ORIENTATION AND SERVICES TO LEARNERS*

The institution uses RPL to enable adult learners to achieve their personal, educational and career goals by building on their strengths and unique capabilities through the provision of ongoing quality counselling and support services.

- The institution must demonstrate quality learner support services appropriate for diverse groups of adult learners seeking RPL
- Pre- and post-RPL assessment support and counselling should be available
- The institution must provide preparation for assessment, such as a portfolio development course
- Formal course materials and learning outcomes for RPL courses must be developed by providers, in accordance with ETQA guidelines
- Instructional delivery, including post RPL assessment, is designed to remove time and place barriers, so that working adult learners can achieve their learning goals within a reasonable amount of time

5. *METHODS AND PROCESSES OF ASSESSMENT*

Assessment is a systematic, flexible, collaborative and transparent process involving the learner and assessor.

- Assessors and learners should develop an assessment plan that identifies the form and amount of evidence to be collected as part of the assessment process, eg performance evidence, knowledge evidence, etc
- Assessment plans should indicate that a variety of assessment tools are available to validate diverse types of learning, and this should include self-assessments

- The learner should be an active participant in all aspects of the assessment process, such as identifying and collecting evidence, determining location and time of assessment, providing additional evidence if necessary, etc
- The assessment process should include the development of a plan to identify gaps in skills/knowledge, a process for addressing the gap, and an opportunity for reassessment
- Assessors are required to complete assessment reports that indicate: the assessment plan, the assessment outcome as well as gaps identification and solutions
- Learners should be informed of the outcome of the assessment, by receiving a copy of the assessment report, as soon as possible after the assessment has occurred

6. *FEES AND FUNDING FOR RPL SERVICES*

Fees and funding arrangements related to the delivery and administration of RPL services should not create barriers for adult learners.

- The fees per module/course for RPL assessments should be less than the cost of taking the module/ course on a full-time basis
- Institutions should design credit-bearing portfolio development courses to assist adult learners in preparation of assessment materials and to qualify for available government subsidies
- Institutions should provide flexible payment options, which reflect the individual needs of the learner
- Institutions should provide information to adult learners regarding flexible payment options
- Institutions collaborate with employers, unions and learners to develop strategies to identify external funding sources to assist with RPL and associated costs

7. *MONITORING, EVALUATION AND VERIFICATION*

Monitoring, evaluation and verification are important elements in the ongoing development of the RPL process in relation to the quality of assessment and the level of service provided to the adult learner. This process is ongoing, and monitoring the quality of the entire RPL process is as important as monitoring the outcomes of the RPL assessment.

- The evaluation of the RPL process should include all those having a stake in the RPL process, including representatives from the learner community
- The evaluation process should be both formative and summative
- The evaluation process should be used to inform the ongoing refinement, and development of RPL policy, procedures, programmes and services at all levels to reflect changes in demographics, assessment techniques, etc
- The QMS system should focus on internal and external assessment processes and outcomes, preparation of learners for assessment, counselling and support services
- *SANC will develop review and corrective measures in order to ensure that providers' RPL policies and practices are internally consistent, and meet the minimum requirements as set out in SANC's RPL policy*

8. *LEARNER RECORDS AND REPORTS TO THE APPROPRIATE ETQA AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS*

Reporting and record-keeping related to RPL should be designed to meet NQF goals which include portability and transferability of credits, learner mobility, etc.

- Providers must provide information on learners in accordance with the elements of SAQA's National Learners' Records Database
- RPL credits should be recorded in the normal transcription mode of the provider, ie RPL credit should 'look like' other credits
- Information on RPL outcomes for all candidates, including unsuccessful and successful applications, must be provided
- Reports of the progress of RPL candidates post RPL assessment should be available
- Standards and qualifications against which candidates are requesting RPL should be available
- Providers should include an RPL section in their reports to SANC
- *SANC will use this same format to report to SAQA*

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND FORMATS FOR PROVIDERS

These criteria will form the basis of provider reports to SANC on RPL. The self-assessment/peer review tool which is attached as Appendix A will assist in developing sources of verification and other resource documents.

APPENDICES A AND B

SELF AUDIT/PEER REVIEW TOOLS FOR PROVIDERS AND SANC RESPECTIVELY

(THESE CAN BE DEVELOPED ONCE THE POLICY DOCUMENT AND CRITERIA HAVE BEEN FINALISED)

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