

Why is Quality Important in RPL?

The recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a powerful tool to improve work and life opportunities. When individuals feel valued, when their skills have currency in the workplace, when their community contributions are recognized, everyone benefits: the individual, organizations, communities, and the country. Organizations fully committed to the principles of RPL are often more flexible, more client-centred, and respectful of learning regardless of how or when it was achieved.

Many people depend on the integrity of the RPL process and the validity of the outcomes: individual

learners, advisors, assessors and end-users such as employers, certifying bodies, education institutions and regulatory authorities. All need to have confidence that the assessment process is consistently fair, valid, reliable and in compliance with all professional and legislated standards for assessment.

It is therefore essential that each RPL system or program meet quality standards to ensure the integrity of each assessment decision and outcome. A diagram has been developed to describe each phase and how it fits together to form an integrated RPL process.



The manual provides important details which describe each of the six steps.

The elements of a quality RPL process help to ensure that an individual's knowledge, skills and abilities are acknowledged, valued, assessed, and recognized. In essence, RPL is a partnership between individual learners and the advisors and assessors who work with them. Depending on the context, individual learners may be referred to as:

- ▶ **Applicants** ▶ **Candidates** ▶ **Clients**
- ▶ **Employees** ▶ **Learners**

In the RPL partnership, individual learners are supported to showcase evidence or demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities in preparation for assessment. Advisors help learners to prepare for the assessment process. Assessors review and evaluate evidence and provide meaningful feedback to learners at the conclusion of the assessment process. The RPL process encourages all partners to work together to enable individual learners achieve their goals.

Get Started

Visit the CAPLA website at www.capla.ca, email us at info@capla.ca or call 877-731-1333 to purchase your copy of the RPL Quality Assurance manual.

Embedding quality RPL practices into your organization or institution will enable you to provide exciting new opportunities to individuals from all walks of life. You will give people the opportunity to build on what they already know and can do and help them to make important life, work and personal decisions. In so doing, you will strengthen your organization or institution by making effective use of limited resources, providing professional development opportunities for practitioners, and developing fair, equitable, and accessible systems.

If you have already begun assessing and recognizing prior learning, you can use the Self-Audit Checklists to review your current processes, identify gaps and develop a plan to develop or improve one or more aspects of your RPL service. If you are just starting to develop RPL in your organization, you will find important resources and examples of good practice which can serve as a guide to your future activities.

CAPLA welcomes your feedback and questions and stands ready to provide help and support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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