

# Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

## - Application Guidelines for 2008

### What is recognition of prior learning?

RPL is an alternative, informal learning pathway towards a qualification under the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) (AQF). It is formal recognition of skills and knowledge that a person holds, regardless of how, when or where the learning occurred.

RPL involves a process of assessment of skills, knowledge and competencies that relate to the rangeland management program you wish to undertake, for the purposes of:

- gaining **entry** to the program (e.g., Graduate Certificate in Rangeland Management), or
- having that knowledge or skills assessed so it might count as **credit** towards completion of a course/s.

In general, credit would not be given if the equivalent units are more than seven years old, but this could count towards RPL for entry to a program.

The type of prior learning which may permit eligibility for Recognition of Prior Learning includes,

- previous studies at a post-secondary institution, such as TAFE, Agricultural/Pastoral College, or University, or
- specific skills or knowledge gained through a variety of ways, including work experience, industry or other provider short courses/workshops. It does not include learning at the secondary level.

You are encouraged to discuss any questions you have concerning recognition for prior learning, knowledge and skills with the Program Coordinator.

### How to apply for RPL

You will need to fill out an RPL Application Form, giving details of any skills or knowledge that you already have and support this with a portfolio of documentary evidence. Examples of types of evidence are detailed below.

Steps:

1. Discuss your Recognition of Prior Learning entitlement with the Rangelands Management Program Coordinator. Where possible, the Program Coordinator will advise if a formal application for Recognition of Prior Learning is required. Obtain an "Application for Recognition of Prior Learning" Application Form from Rangelands Australia (available at [www.rangelands-australia.com.au](http://www.rangelands-australia.com.au)). Please note that the 'boxes' in Sections 2, 4 and 6 of the Application Form will expand as you type in those spaces.

2. Assemble an RPL portfolio using the Guidelines set out in the next section. You must supply evidence of the skills and knowledge you have.
3. Identify at least two referees who can vouch for your skills and experience, and can comment on your capacity to undertake and complete postgraduate-level study by distance.
4. Return the completed Application Form and RPL portfolio and attachments to the Director, Rangelands Australia at the address indicated below.
5. Once the Application for RPL has been negotiated and approved, complete the University of Queensland 'Application for Postgraduate Coursework' form, available at
  - a. <http://www.uq.edu.au/study/forms/postgrad/ApplicPostgradCourse.pdf>; or
  - b. [www.rangelands-australia.com.au](http://www.rangelands-australia.com.au).

## Assembling your portfolio

Your portfolio must relate directly to aspects of rangeland or enterprise management and be relevant and recent, i.e., it is important to outline the learning experiences that relate to your intended program of study. In most cases, selecting a few complex experiences and analysing your learning is preferable to listing your every experience and learning event.

Your supporting evidence might include *some, or a combination of*, the following:

### 1. Evidence from yourself, such as:

- a. Formal training, for example:
  - i. Certificates from previous education and training.
  - ii. Certificates of course attendance (where no formal assessment took place).
  - iii. Professional development.
- b. Work related experiences, for example:
  - i. samples of completed work, such as copies of documents or reports
  - ii. employment related documents, such as copies of job descriptions, resumes, summaries of performance appraisals
  - iii. a statement outlining previous types of work, responsibilities and experience
  - iv. a reflective statement describing your work-related philosophy, strategies, objectives and methodologies
  - v. reading and research you have undertaken and how you have used that
  - vi. if self-employed in the past, evidence of running a successful business using the skills and knowledge being claimed.

To support your work experiences, some form of verification from a key person, such as a simple statement describing your role with respect to the evidence, is recommended.

- c. Personal reflections, for example:
  - i. reflective accounts of work and life experiences
  - ii. an analysis of training in relation to your work
  - iii. your professional goals for the next five years

### 2. Evidence from others, such as

- a. Reports based on observation of work or other activities.
- b. Testimonials from appropriate colleagues or line managers.

- c. Statements from colleagues who have observed or reviewed your work.
- d. Honours or other recognition for work performed or achievements.
- e. Nominations to industry, community or government committees, boards, etc.

## How your application will be assessed

The Program Coordinator will assess the RPL application for evidence of prior learning that would indicate a reasonable expectation of:

- success in fulfilling the learning outcomes of the Rangeland Management program, and
- achievement of the standard required for a postgraduate-level award.

Candidates should also demonstrate their potential for independent study and their potential to undertake work at the postgraduate level.

While assessment may include various techniques, you may be required to participate in a telephone interview to discuss the details of your application. This interview will be conducted to clarify how your current skills and/or knowledge is consistent with what would be learned and assessed in the program.

## When to apply for RPL

You will need to have prepared and submitted your RPL Application Form and Portfolio of 'documents in support' well in advance of the time of submitting your 'Application for Postgraduate Coursework' form.

In 2008, 'Application for Postgraduate Coursework' forms must be submitted by:

- Semester 1 – 31 January
- Semester 2 – 30 June

In 2009, key dates are:

- Semester 1 – 31 January
- Semester 2 – 30 June

**For further information, please contact:**



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