

KWALITEITSBESTUURSTELSEL / QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

D.6

**TITEL / TITLE: BELEID: ERKENNING VAN VORIGE LEER
POLICY: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING**

SAAMGESTEL / HERSIEN DEUR COMPILED / REVIEWED BY	GOEDGEKEUR DEUR / AUTHORISED BY
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Index of Contents

Description	Page Nr
1. Policy statement	3
2. Aim	3
3. Conceptualisation	3
4. Value	4
5. Principles	4
6. Core components of the RPL strategy	4
7. Procedures	5
8. Quality assurance	5
9. Appendix I	6



1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Hugenote Kollege acknowledges the value of RPL to increase the accessibility to higher education institutions in general and the programmes of Hugenote Kollege within a framework of quality assurance. Increased accessibility refers specifically to individuals who were previously deprived of opportunities to have access to formal learning environments.

2. AIM

The aim of the policy is to:

- establish guidelines, principles and criteria for the implementation of an institutional RPL strategy;
- offer a point of departure for the development of departmental operational strategies for RPL best suited to the needs and requirements of individual courses and training programmes within Hugenote Kollege;
- align RPL practice with the Tuition Policy, the Assessment Policy and the Access Policy of Hugenote Kollege.

3. CONCEPTUALISATION

Recognition of prior learning is described by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA, 1997) as the assessment of learning that has already taken place by an individual (student) (whether through prior formal studies, work and/or life experience). This learning is evaluated by experts as being valid and reliable when measured against the learning outcomes of a specific qualification, learning programme or module/learning unit for the purpose of access to or acknowledgement within a learning programme.

The assessment of prior learning at the Hugenote Kollege will acknowledge formal, non-formal and informal learning that took place, as proofed by sufficient evidence provided by the applicant. These forms of learning can be described as follows:

- Formal learning – This type of learning is intentional, organised and structured. This includes proof of accredited certificates/diplomas together with a summary of learning content.
- Non-formal learning – This type of learning may or may not be intentional or arranged by an institution, but is usually organised in some way. There are no formal credits granted in non-formal learning situations. In the context of the South African NQF, it is learning that has not been formally assessed against the criteria contained in a registered qualification or Unit Standard. Within this policy it refers to organised learning activities without any credit-bearing criteria. The learning should be related to the programme/qualification for which the candidate is applying.
- Informal learning – This type of learning is not organised. Rather than being guided by a rigid curriculum, it is often thought of experiential and spontaneous. This includes learning that happens through performing tasks in the workplace, home and community, through engaging in reading and with the mass media, through participation in informal discussions, and through taking constructive advice given by peers or superiors. Informal learning is usually non-sequential, non-course/module-based and not formally assessed. The applicant must produce

Rev. 3 –June'17	Policy D.6	QF
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evidence that s/he has taken part in such activities. Evidence may include testimonials, visual proof and other forms of proof of participation and/or involvement.

4. VALUE

Recognition of prior learning espouses values in the mission statement of Hugenote Kollege by contributing to the maintenance of a Christian ethos of human dignity, inclusivity, transparency and equity. It also affirms the historic principle of academic freedom, which is unnegotiable to the College.

The Hugenote Kollege accepts the responsibility to respond in fair, practical ways to the requests of individuals for recognition of prior learning that was acquired in formal, non-formal and informal ways. This recognition not only benefits the individuals who request it, but also contributes to the realisation of the College's vision of following Jesus Christ in pursuit of the comprehensive healing and development of society.

5. PRINCIPLES

Hugenote Kollege endorses the following principles for RPL:

- 5.1 Fairness and justice towards all applicants;
- 5.2 Validity and reliability of assessment instruments and procedures;
- 5.3 Feasibility (including cost effectiveness) of RPL processes and procedures;

The Hugenote Kollege undertakes to:

- 5.4 follow a student-centred approach;
- 5.5 provide holistic and flexible assessment;
- 5.6 recognise the diversity of knowledge and learning styles;
- 5.7 provide a rigorous and transparent assessment and moderation process to protect the integrity of academic standards;
- 5.8 acknowledge proven learning and not experience *per se*;
- 5.9 ensure that assessment of learning for RPL always meet standards that correspond (i.e. are not higher or lower) with normal learning assessment at Hugenote Kollege;
- 5.10 ensure that RPL processes and procedures always honour the integrity of standards, qualifications and programmes;
- 5.11 grant recognition of prior learning for a maximum of three years. If an applicant does not make use of the recognition granted by the College within three years, s/he must apply anew;
- 5.12 subscribe to a developmental and incremental approach in the implementation of RPL;

6. CORE COMPONENTS OF THE RPL STRATEGY

- 6.1 RPL has a social justice function by opening up access to formal Hugenote Kollege programmes.
- 6.2 RPL is more than a mere certificate-based credit transfer procedure.



Rev. 3 –June'17	Policy D.6	QF
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- 6.3 During the RPL process, emphasis is placed on outcomes of learning and not on the place/site of learning. This reflects a shift in learning from a lecturer-centred approach to a student-centred approach which makes the RPL candidate a stakeholder in the RPL process.
- 6.4 RPL assumes that competencies, skills and knowledge learned in one sphere are transferable. Internationally this is described and understood as knowledge which can be utilised and applied in a number of different contexts.
- 6.5 RPL comprises the following components:
- An application process;
 - An initial screening process by the relevant academic employees;
 - Advisory services regarding evidence-gathering by RPL mentors/advisors;
 - Assessment by subject specialists trained as assessors;
 - Verification and ratification of the recommendations of assessors by organisational decision-makers;
 - Regular communication between the RPL assessor and the candidate;
 - Structured post-assessment feedback to the candidate;
 - Structured feedback to the candidate reflecting recommendations for top-up training;
 - Development of a fee structure.

7. PROCEDURES

The application of the RPL policy and the allocation of credits for proven prior learning are the responsibility of the Programme Coordinators. It is taken for granted that the departments will provide sufficient information on RPL to applicants and potential applicants by means of documentation such as marketing material for programmes and course/module information.

In addition it is expected of departments to have:

- mechanisms to support and provide feedback to applicants;
- reasonable and clear parameters relating to the costs of services provided in respect of RPL application, guidance and assessment procedures, to be determined annually;
- guidelines for applicants regarding the requirements of assessment instruments (for example the guidelines for learning portfolios, and ways in which tests, examinations, interviews and other department-specific instrumentation are dealt with);
- guidelines for the process according to which unsuccessful candidates lodge an appeal and in relation to alternative possibilities for study that could be used by unsuccessful applicants.

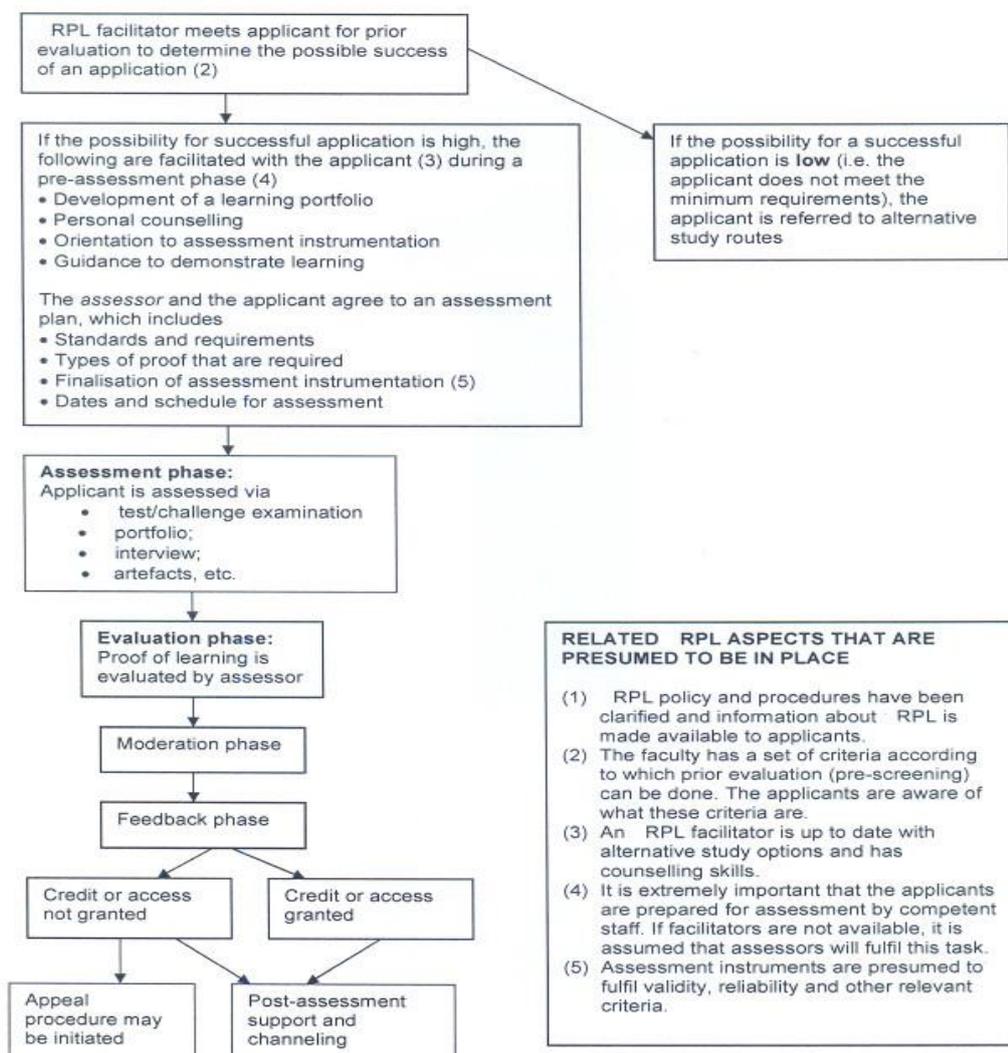
8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The quality assurance and continuous development of RPL at Hugonote Kollege is monitored by the Programme Coordinators and forms part of the continuous process of programme development. Final accountability of RPL at Hugonote Kollege resides in the Chief Executive Officer.



Appendix 1

An example of a generic RPL process (1)



(Also see the policy document of the NQF: "Criteria and guidelines for the implementation of recognition of prior learning", 13 August 2003. Please note that this is only an EXAMPLE and that faculties may simplify this process on the basis of their specific needs and limitations)