The Rhodes University Policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning

Policy Volume	Academic Faculty and Students
Policy Chapter	Teaching and Learning Policies
Responsible Committee/Unit/Division/Faculty	Teaching and Learning Committee
Responsible Chairperson/Director/Manager	DVC: Academic and Student Affairs
Dates of First and Subsequent Council Approvals	2007
Policy Approval Pathways (e.g. committee, Senex, Senate, Council)	Faculty Boards; T&L Committee; SENATE; Council
Revision History: Approved Reviews	2007, 2020
Review Cycle (e.g. every 2/5/7 years etc.)	Every 5 years
Next Review Date	2025

1.   POLICY PARTICULARS

1.1. Policy Title	**Recognition of Prior Learning**
1.2. Policy Statement (State in a single paragraph the policy mandate and how this relates to the University Mission and Vision)	The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) furthers the democratic, human rights and transformation goals of the University's Vision and Mission and is also a requirement in terms of national legislation and policy. RPL is a mechanism to redress past inequalities and contribute to social justice. Mindful of the complexities involved, the University commits itself to the careful and responsible use of RPL to improve access to higher education in ways that are responsive, enabling, valid, fair and transparent. RPL recognises the connections between academic knowledge and knowledge developed in the context of practice. Such knowledge can contribute to or be brought into contestation with disciplinary knowledge. Effective RPL practices and procedures are necessary to ensure the University's competitiveness as it aims to increase postgraduate student enrolments, particularly in capstone postgraduate diploma programmes, some of which specifically target working adults.
1.3. Reason for Policy (What this policy aims to achieve)	The White Paper 3 on Higher Education of 1997 promoted access to higher education, while the Higher Education Act (Act No. 101 of 1997) legislated the introduction of RPL in higher education. The implementation of RPL is a means of redressing past inequalities by providing an alternative access route to higher education and to support the principle of lifelong learning. This Policy was devised in alignment with the National Policy for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (SAQA, 2013) and the Council on Higher Education's Policies on the Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Accumulation and Transfer and Assessment (CHE, 2016). These policies outline the principles and procedures for the practice of RPL in South African higher education. The implementation of RPL is particularly complex in the field of higher education and relates to highly contested debates about the nature of knowledge and learning, pedagogy, assessment, institutional autonomy, institutional type and the type of higher learning and the education universities provide. The Policy provides a set of principles and guidelines that should underpin RPL processes at Rhodes University. The RPL policy at Rhodes University recognises the need to expand access to higher education in South Africa, and seeks to contribute to the national goals of extending access to, and achieving success for candidates who have the requisite knowledge and skills, but not the formal qualifications for admission.
1.4. Policy Objective/s (What are the measurable objectives of this policy)	The Policy provides guidelines for 1. the use of RPL as an alternative means of admission to undergraduate programmes, for credit towards qualifications or courses, and for postgraduate admission on an advanced standing, or *ad eundem gradum*, basis. 2. the implementation of RPL as an integral part of the mainstream admissions and assessment policies and procedures. 3. any extension of the use of RPL beyond the areas of current practice should be undertaken with sufficient planning and resources by suitably qualified staff to ensure credibility, effectiveness and sustainability. 4. ensuring that RPL processes and assessment procedures are transparent, valid and reliable and are undertaken in accordance with the principles outlined in the Rhodes University Policy on the Assessment of Student Learning.
1.5. People affected by this Policy (e.g. All units of the University)	All academic staff; Deans & HoDs, the Registrar's Division Prospective students
1.6. Who should read this Policy (People who need to heed this policy to fulfil their duties)	All academic staff; HoDs & Deans Staff working with the recruitment and admission of students Staff in divisions providing support for teaching and learning Staff in divisions providing other forms of academic development support Prospective students

1.7. Implementers of this Policy (Who will manage the implementation of this policy)	HoDs & Deans Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL) Registrar
1.8. Website address/link for this Policy	https://www.ru.ac.za/institutionalresearchplanningqualitypromotion/policies/

2. RELATED DOCUMENTS FORMS AND TOOLS

(University Policies, Protocols and Documents (such as rules/policies/protocols/guidelines related to this policy)

2.1 Relevant Legislation (Legislation/Regulatory requirements/Organisational Reports – name these)
Higher Education Act (Act No 101 of 1997)
White Paper 3 on Higher Education of 1997
Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework of 2013
National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act 67 of 2008
2.2 Related Policies
Policies on the Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, and Assessment in Higher Education
Policy for the Credit Accumulation and Transfer within the National Qualifications Framework (SAQA)
Rhodes University Teaching and Learning Policy Volume
Rhodes University Admissions Policy
Rhodes University Higher Degrees Guide
Rhodes University Rules and Regulations (as in the Academic Calendar)
2.3 Related Protocols
Rhodes University Institutional Development Plan 2018 – 2022
Rhodes University Institutional Transformation Plan 2019 – 2022
2.4 Forms and Tools (documents to be completed in support of this policy implementation)
Ad Eundem Gradum - AEG Rule G 49 of the Academic Calendar
RPL Application Form

3. POLICY DEFINITIONS

(Technical or Conceptual terms used in the policy)

No	TERM	DEFINITION
3.1	Access	The opportunity to pursue education and training, including relevant qualifications and part-qualifications.
3.2	*Ad eundem gradum*	Normally the granting of the status of comparable achievement by the University of the academic credentials of a student transferring from another university or the granting of advanced standing to a student who does not meet the minimum entry requirement for a particular qualification - Refer to Rule G49 of the Academic Calendar.
3.3	Advanced standing	Advanced standing is the status or exemption granted to a candidate for admission to study at a higher level than the learner's prior formal studies would have allowed, including exemption where applicable. Advanced standing confers status, not a qualification. A candidate can be assessed for credit based on evidence of knowledge and skills acquired informally and non-formally.
3.4	Assessment	Assessment refers to the systematic evaluation of a student's ability to demonstrate the achievement of the learning goals intended in a curriculum.

3.5	Challenge examination	An examination that assesses a candidate's current knowledge rather than coming at the end of a taught course.
3.6	Credit	The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) requires credits as a measure of the volume of learning required for a qualification. The credit rating system rates 10 notional study hours as equivalent to one credit.
3.7	Credit accumulation	Credit accumulation refers to the totalling of credits towards the completion of a qualification.
3.8	Credit transfer	Credit transfer refers to the vertical, horizontal or diagonal relocation of credits towards a qualification. Credits can be transferred from one institution to another, or from one programme of study to another, in line with institutional rules, when the student registers to study towards a qualification.
3.9	Credit accumulation and transfer	Credit accumulation and transfer refers to the arrangement whereby the diverse features of both credit accumulation and credit transfer are considered, guided by institutional rules, to facilitate access to a programme of study.
3.10	Learning from experience	In the context of the University, RPL refers to learning acquired from work experience, in-service training, self-study or life experience such as voluntary or community work; all relevant learning, also by means of formal, non-formal or informal training and learning programmes.
3.11	Programme	A programme is a structured and purposeful set of learning experiences that lead to a qualification.
3.12	Qualification	Qualification refers to a registered national qualification, as recognised by the South African Qualifications Authority, consisting of a planned combination of learning outcomes which has a defined purpose, intended to provide qualifying students with applied competence and a basis for further learning and which has been assessed in terms of exit level outcomes, registered on the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) and certified and awarded by a CHE- accredited and DHET- recognised institution.
3.13	Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	RPL refers to the practice of awarding credit or granting educational access to students on the basis of prior learning acquired through a variety of formal, non-formal and informal means, including life and work experience. In South Africa the pursuit of a transformation agenda is of critical importance and RPL is seen as a necessary component in attaining an equitable educational system which will not only benefit young people but also redress inequalities by providing meaningful opportunities to those denied educational access in the past.
		RPL means the comparison of the previous learning and experience of a candidate however obtained against the learning outcomes required for a specified qualification, and the acceptance for purposes of a qualification of knowledge and skills that meet the requirements. Knowledge and skills can be obtained through work experience, informal and non-formal learning, and through short courses.
		"Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development". (SAQA, 2013, National Policy for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning, SAQA)
		RPL can facilitate *access* of students who do not meet the regular entry requirements of a programme of study, by recognising the disciplinary knowledge the prospective student has gained.

		RPL can enable *exemption* from courses or components of courses in cases where students have gained sufficient mastery of the content and skills of those areas of the curriculum.
		RPL can provide students with *advanced standing* in cases where the student demonstrates sufficient mastery of the content and skills to gain admission to postgraduate study.
		RPL can facilitate the *lateral movement* of students from one qualification to another by recognising the knowledge and skills developed in one area of study as relevant for entry to another.

4. **PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THIS POLICY**

OVERVIEW

Under normal circumstances, admission to undergraduate and postgraduate study to higher education qualifications in South Africa happens through one of two routes, i.e. credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) and recognition of prior learning. CAT means that credits accumulated through studies within the same institution or another institution while studying towards a different qualification can be used towards another qualification at the same or a different institution. The aim of RPL is to assess the knowledge, skills and competencies developed through work experience, informal or non-formal learning and that are relevant for a programme to which the prospective student wishes to gain access.. Course coordinators should give consideration to providing access to RPL candidates to postgraduate programmes aimed at the professional development of students, such as postgraduate diplomas and certain master's-level programmes. The workplace and professional knowledge and experience of RPL candidates can enrich both the curriculum and the learning experiences of other students.

4.1 CAT provides for the admission of students currently registered at Rhodes University who wish to gain access to a different qualification where accumulated credits can be used towards the achievement of the new qualification, subject to the Institutional rules.

4.2 CAT provides for students from another institution who wish to gain access to Rhodes University for the same or another qualification may apply to have credits accumulated at that institution transferred to the qualification they wish to study towards at Rhodes University, subject to the Institutional rules.

4.3 RPL provides access to further study, by granting the applicant the status of a prerequisite qualification, but they are not awarded the qualification.

4.4 RPL is programme-specific as recognition is given to learning aligned to the learning outcomes of a specific programme or course.

4.5 RPL is granted for current knowledge and competence and for only a specific period determined by the department, school or faculty.

4.6 RPL decisions are subject to the rules and regulations of the University as contained in the Rhodes University Calendar and relevant policy documents.

4.7 RPL for purposes of access will focus on a candidate's capacity to succeed whereas RPL for credit will focus on the equivalence of the prior learning to the Rhodes University credits being sought.

4.8 CAT and RPL processes should be devised to assess candidates against the learning outcomes of the qualification or module to which access is sought. Learning outcomes assessed should relate to disciplinary skills and practices, not to specific disciplinary content.

4.9 Credit granted on the basis of RPL should not exceed 50% of the credits required for the qualification. Normally credits are not granted for a major subject.

4.10 Normally, no more than 10% of a cohort in a qualification may be admitted through RPL unless permission to do so has been granted by the CHE.

4.11 Rhodes University is not under any obligation to accept an RPL evaluation or decision made by another institution.

4.12 An appeal against the outcome of the RPL process may be directed to the Dean of the relevant Faculty or the Registrar.

4.13 All RPL and Credit transfer processes should be quality assured to ensure that appropriate processes are followed so as to protect the integrity of the Institution.

5. DIRECTIVES FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS POLICY

(Actions and processes by which the objectives of the policy will be achieved.)

In order to satisfy auditing and quality assurance requirements and build up a research base relating to the use of RPL at Rhodes University, it is important that current practices be recorded, documented and monitored. Accordingly,

5.1	When a prospective student applies for admission via the RPL route, academic departments will compile an "evidence portfolio" for approval by Faculty Boards. However, in the case of applications to masters and PhD programmes, once approved by the Faculty Board, the application (including the portfolio) is submitted to the Senate for final approval.
5.2	Access to a programme via RPL will take into account the specific entrance requirements of that programme, as set out in the faculty guidelines and university admission requirements. However, these entrance requirements may be bypassed in exceptional cases and considered by the Senate, if the candidate is deemed suitable based on the evidence provided.
5.3	Departments or Schools that aim to admit students via the RPL route should follow the process flowchart in Appendix A.
5.4	Some qualifications may be developed specifically with RPL candidates as the primary target group. Faculties or Departments which seek to introduce RPL as a mechanism for admitting more than 10% of candidates for a qualification will be required to obtain the approval of the Senate.
5.5	Departments that aim to admit students via the RPL route have to develop appropriate assessment instruments and criteria for the purposes of RPL. Assessment instruments should be specified in the RPL admissions criteria for the programme and should be appropriate for the context of the prospective candidate, the discipline and the programme. Assessment instruments can include challenge examinations, written and oral examinations, portfolios of evidence, interviews, simulations, observations, case studies, documentary evidence of prior learning and letters of recommendation.
5.6	Assessment of prior learning should take place in line with the principles of good assessment as outlined in the Rhodes University Policy on the Assessment of Student Learning.
5.7	It is the role of the academics responsible for the assessment of prior learning to mediate the process in cases where candidates do not have the requisite experience to demonstrate their learning in ways that are congruent with academic literacy practices.
5.8	In some cases students are required to take specific additional courses to ensure that they meet the entrance requirements of the programme they wish to study.
5.9	An HoD in collaboration with two other academics teaching in the same programme are responsible for producing a report detailing the decision and the grounds upon which it was made. The report must be submitted to the Dean of the Faculty. The report will be considered by the Faculty Board and, in the case of masters and PhD candidates, the Senate for approval.
5.10	Departments that use RPL to award credit will document the principles and procedures they apply in using RPL in their programmes for approval by the Faculty Board and the Senate.
5.11	The Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL) will work with Departments or lecturers to develop RPL assessment processes where necessary.
5.12	The Institutional Research, Planning, and Quality Promotion unit (IRPQP) will develop and implement processes to assure the quality, integrity and credibility of all RPL processes at Rhodes University. IRPQP will initiate research into the implementation of RPL processes and procedures at the Institution.
5.14	CHERTL and/or the IRPQP will conduct research into the effectiveness of their RPL processes in relation to student success.

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(Roles and responsibilities of Key personal/Divisions/Faculties/Departments)

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Academic Departments and Faculties	The Faculty will ensure that departmental RPL processes are in line with the Rhodes University RPL Policy and with the Rhodes University policy on Assessment of Student Learning and the Rhodes University Admissions Policy. Departments and Faculties are responsible for the quality of RPL processes and for following proper processes and channels for the approval of RPL applications, including ensuring that such applications serve at Faculty Board meetings. Departments and Faculties should ensure that administrative staff who deal with RPL candidates are aware of RPL processes.
HoDs	HoDs are responsible for the quality assurance of RPL processes. HoDs should evaluate recommendations for RPL by ensuring that the motivation for the recommendations are commensurate with the quality of the evidence provided.

Departments	Departments have the primary responsibility for ensuring that RPL processes are in line with the admission criteria for qualifications and for implementing such processes. They are also responsible for recommending students for admission to the Faculty.
The Registrar's Division	The Registrar's Division will ensure that admission through RPL is provided for, and clearly stipulated in the University Calendar, as a means of providing access. The Registrar's Division with the support of I&TS will maintain the RPL and CAT databases for record keeping and data management purposes.
	Once an RPL application has been approved by the Faculty Board and the Senate, the applicant's portfolio of evidence is submitted electronically to the Registrar (Academic Administration Section) for uploading to the student's profile as part of the Institution's records. The Registrar will communicate the outcome of the RPL process to applicants.
The Senate	Approve RPL applications of candidates for masters and doctoral candidates.
CHERTL	CHERTL will provide support to academics on RPL related assessment practices, in line with the University's assessment policy.
	CHERTL is responsible for the review of the RPL Policy, through the Teaching and Learning Committee
IRPQP	IRPQP is responsible for ensuring that RPL guidelines are adhered to during curriculum/programme review/audits/new programme applications.
	IRPQP is responsible for developing RPL information management systems.
Teaching and Learning Committee	The Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for promoting the RPL Policy and for reviewing RPL practices and policy.
Prospective Students	It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide evidence of prior learning when applying for RPL. Applicants are expected to adhere to the submission deadlines as stipulated in the faculty guidelines for RPL.
	International students should have their formal qualifications verified by SAQA when seeking RPL through CAT.

7   CONTACTS

Area of Concern	Division/Faculty/Department	Telephone	Email
Admission	Registrar		registrar@ru.ac.za
Academic staff development	CHERTL	8171	Chertl-admin@ru.ac.za
IPC approval processes	IRPQP	8060	R.Nnadozie@ru.ac.za

8   POLICY REVIEW PROCEDURE

(Actions and processes by which the policy will be reviewed)

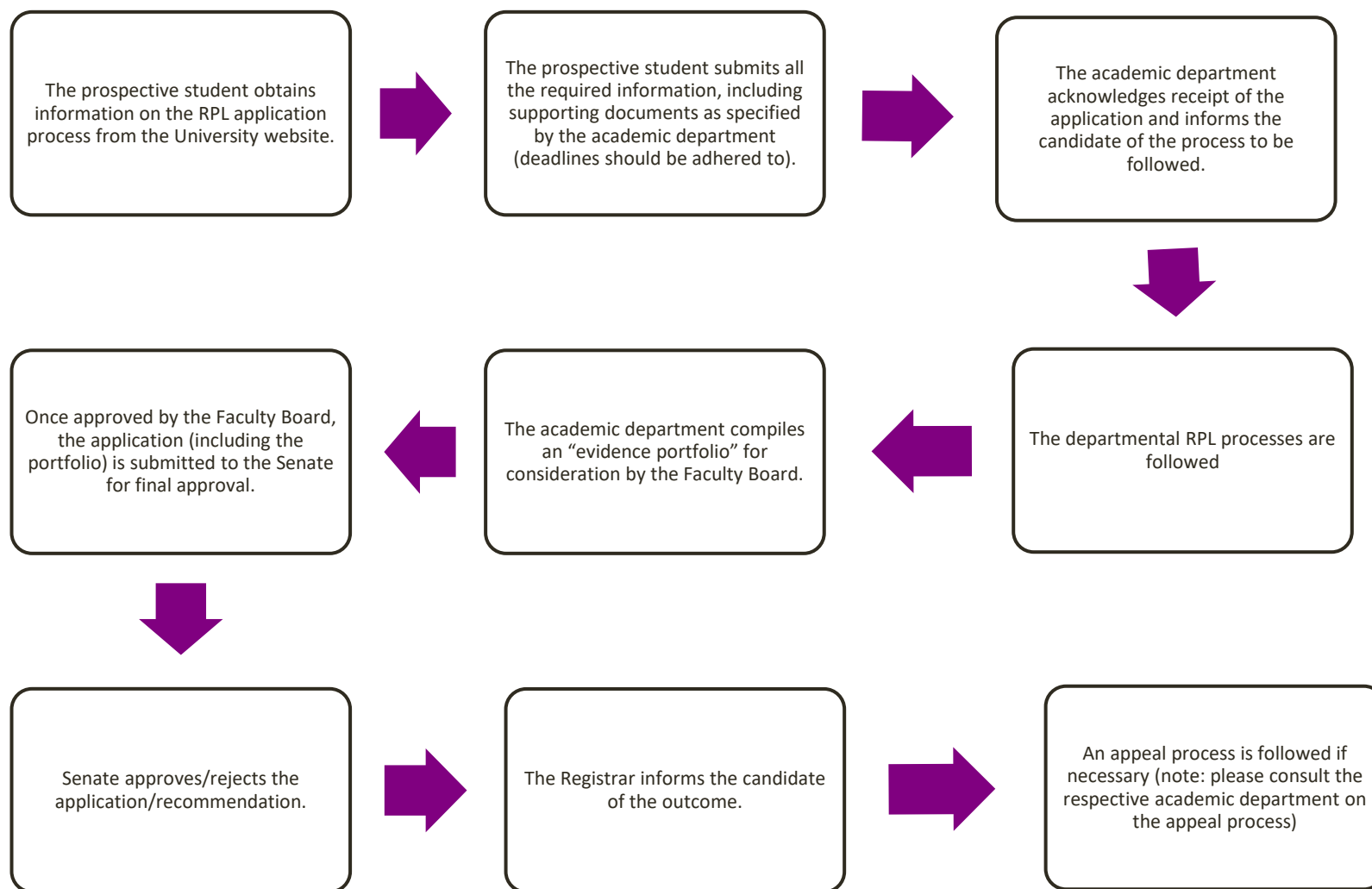| |
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| The Teaching and Learning Committee shall review the policy every five years, by June of the relevant year. |
| Any proposed changes to the policy need to be referred by the Teaching and Learning Committee to the Faculty Boards for comment and then to the Senate and Council for approval. |
| As and when the policy is revised the examinations manual and the Higher Degrees Guide will be updated. |
| **Communication of the review process** |
| Persons responsible for the revision of the Policy are notified automatically using the RU protea system when a policy is due for review. The RPL policy will be reviewed every five years unless a recommendation is made for the Policy to be amended earlier. IRPQP will communicate review processes, including sending reminders if necessary. |

9   POLICY CONTEXT: RELEVANT DOCUMENTS CITED/CONSULTED/ADOPTED

1	Policies on the Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, and Assessment in Higher Education (CHE, 2016)
2	Rhodes University Policy on the Assessment of Student Learning

3	Rhodes University Policy on Curriculum Development and Review
4	National Policy for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (SAQA 2013)
5	National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of recognition of Prior Learning (Amended in March 2019)
6	Recognition of Prior Learning Policy of the Universities of Stellenbosch, Cape Town, Johannesburg and South Africa

Appendix 1

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) PROCESS FLOWCHART

The prospective student obtains information on the RPL application process from the University website.

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The prospective student submits all the required information, including supporting documents as specified by the academic department (deadlines should be adhered to).

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The academic department acknowledges receipt of the application and informs the candidate of the process to be followed.

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Once approved by the Faculty Board, the application (including the portfolio) is submitted to the Senate for final approval.

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The academic department compiles an "evidence portfolio" for consideration by the Faculty Board.

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The departmental RPL processes are followed

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Senate approves/rejects the application/recommendation.

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The Registrar informs the candidate of the outcome.

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An appeal process is followed if necessary (note: please consult the respective academic department on the appeal process)

Appendix 2 is an example of a template used by the Rhodes University Business School to document the knowledge and competences of candidates applying for admission to a masters-level qualification in the School via the RPL route. The first column shows the knowledge and competences achieved by candidates who have completed an honours-level qualification as outlined on the HEQSF. The second column relates these generic requirements to the knowledge and competence expected of candidates requiring admission to a masters-level qualification in the Business School. The third column is used to document the nature of the evidence provided by the prospective student seeking entrance via RPL.

A completed template will be submitted to facilitate the decision-making for admission of a candidate to a programme of study via the RPL route.

Appendix 3 below offers guidelines for criteria at different levels of the HEQSF.

Section 1: Details of Degree applied for

Degree	
NQF Level	
Admission Requirements	

Section 2: Details of Applicant's Qualifications

Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees and NQF Level	
Other Qualifications	

Section 3: NQF Level 7 Descriptors, Requirements and Evidence

Descriptor and detail	As required for admission	Evidence
1. Scope of knowledge (able to demonstrate: integrated knowledge of the main areas of one or more fields, disciplines or practices, including an understanding of and an ability to apply and evaluate the key terms, concepts, facts, principles, rules and theories of that field, discipline or practice; and detailed knowledge of an area or areas of specialisation and how that knowledge relates to other fields, disciplines or practices)	Practical and conceptual / theoretical integrated knowledge spanning enterprise management topics – for example knowledge in some or all of the following: project management, office and program administration, people (team) management, operations management, marketing management and financial management	
2. Knowledge literacy (able to demonstrate an understanding of knowledge as contested and an ability to evaluate types of knowledge and explanations typical within the area of study or practice)	Ability to write project reports and discuss projects that demonstrates that there are multiple ways of approaching a subject in an enterprise (e.g. Own business, SME, medium size business, corporate, public institution, Govt department etc.)	

3. Method and procedure (able to demonstrate: an understanding of a range of methods of enquiry in a field, discipline or practice, and their suitability to specific investigations; and an ability to apply a range of methods to resolve problems or introduce change within a practice)	Ability to use a variety of methods for data collection (e.g. interviews, surveys, data mining, report reviews, financials, etc.) and different approaches to representing the findings (e.g. Reports, Presentations, Web casts, Podcasts, Video etc.). Ability to use a variety of sources to gather data on issues (e.g. online sources, print media, interviews and meetings etc.) Ability to deal with technicalities / complexities in their specific field and manage them.	
4. Problem solving (able to demonstrate an ability to identify, analyse, critically reflect on and address complex problems, applying evidence-based solutions and theory-driven arguments)	Apply relevant enterprise related frameworks, concepts and theories to improve / enhance enterprise (e.g. Own business, SME, medium size business, corporate, public institution, Govt department etc.) practices.	
5. Ethics and professional practice (able to demonstrate an ability to take decisions and act ethically and professionally, and the ability to justify those decisions and actions drawing on appropriate ethical values and approaches, within a supported environment)	Ability to consider ethical, equity, economy and ecology challenges in conducting business (For self, others and the enterprise).	
6. Accessing, processing and managing information (able to demonstrate: an ability to develop appropriate processes of information gathering for a given context or use; and an ability to independently validate the sources of information, and evaluate and manage the information)	Ability to use a variety of sources (e.g. Internet, intranet, print media, journals, organizational reports, meeting minutes, financials etc.) to enhance business (e.g. Own business, SME, medium size business, corporate, public institution, Govt department etc.) practice.	
7. Producing and communicating information (able to demonstrate an ability to develop and communicate his or her ideas and opinions in well-formed arguments,	Ability to present their own ideas, concepts, research and reasoning in written reports, presentations, workshops, meetings, conferences, budgets etc.	

using appropriate academic, professional, or occupational discourse)		
8. Context and systems (able to demonstrate an ability to manage processes in unfamiliar and variable contexts, recognising that problem solving is context- and system-bound, and does not occur in isolation)	Ability to apply current business knowledge (in some or all of the following: project management, office and program administration, people (team) management, operations management, marketing management and financial management) to new environments, teams, business units, locations etc.	
9. Management of learning (able to demonstrate an ability to identify, evaluate and address accurately his or her learning needs in a self-directed manner, and to facilitate collaborative learning processes)	Ability to learn in various enterprise (e.g. Own business, SME, medium size business, corporate, public institution, Govt department etc.) situations. Ability to recognize self-learning / development areas and enhance learning through a variety of methods. (Self-help courses, formal training programs etc.) Ability to bring learning back into the enterprise and develop others as a result.	
10. Accountability (able to demonstrate an ability to take full responsibility for his or her work, decision-making and use of resources, and limited accountability for the decisions and actions of others in varied or ill-defined contexts)	Ability to work in projects and/or teams with multiple role-players / stakeholders and take responsibility for their own role and/or help to clarify others' roles, and/or assist others to do the same.	

Section 4: Portfolio of Evidence

A supporting portfolio of evidence must be submitted as an appendix. This can include:

- Letter of motivation – Indicating why the candidate should be allowed to skip a(n) NQF level/s
- CV
- A minimum of three reference letters
- Examples of work done (that is referred to in the Evidence section above)
- Electronic copies of short courses completed (work and non-work related)
- Electronic copies of any work-related evidence (e.g. performance appraisals, testimonials, job descriptions etc.)
- Electronic copies of personal achievements (e.g. awards, etc.)
- Copies of academic transcripts, certificates, diplomas, degrees etc
- Examples of creative outputs, e.g. publications, artwork, etc.

Appendix 3

SAQA Level Descriptors for levels 5 to 7 of the HEQSF. Level descriptors are indicators against which to judge a candidate's academic competencies.

Level Descriptions				
Category	**Level 5**	**Level 6**	**Level 7**	**Level 8**
Scope of knowledge	able to demonstrate knowledge of the main areas of one or more fields, disciplines or practices, including an understanding of the key terms, concepts, facts, principles, rules and theories of that field, discipline or practice	able to demonstrate: detailed knowledge of the main areas of one or more fields, disciplines or practices, including an understanding of and an ability to apply the key terms, concepts, facts, principles, rules and theories of that field, discipline or practice; and knowledge of an area or areas of specialisation and how that knowledge relates to other fields, disciplines or practices	a learner is able to demonstrate: integrated knowledge of the main areas of one or more fields, disciplines or practices, including an understanding of and an ability to apply and evaluate the key terms, concepts, facts, principles, rules and theories of that field, discipline or practice; and detailed knowledge of an area or areas of specialisation and how that knowledge relates to other fields, disciplines or practices	able to demonstrate: knowledge of and engagement in an area at the forefront of a field, discipline or practice; an understanding of the theories, research methodologies, methods and techniques relevant to the field, discipline or practice; and an understanding of how to apply such knowledge in a particular context
Knowledge literacy	able to demonstrate an awareness of how knowledge or a knowledge system develops and evolves within the area of study or operation	able to demonstrate an understanding of different forms of knowledge, schools of thought and forms of explanation typical within the area of study or operation, and an awareness of knowledge production processes	able to demonstrate an understanding of knowledge as contested and an ability to evaluate types of knowledge and explanations typical within the area of study or practice	able to demonstrate an ability to interrogate multiple sources of knowledge in an area of specialisation and to evaluate knowledge and processes of knowledge production
Method and procedure	able to demonstrate an ability to select and apply standard methods, procedures or techniques within the field, discipline or practice, and	able to demonstrate an ability to evaluate, select and apply appropriate methods, procedures or	able to demonstrate: an understanding of a range of methods of enquiry in a	able to demonstrate an understanding of the complexities and uncertainties of

	to plan and manage an implementation process within a supported environment	techniques in processes of investigation or application within a defined context	field, discipline or practice, and their suitability to specific investigations; and an ability to apply a range of methods to resolve problems or introduce change within a practice	selecting, applying or transferring appropriate standard procedures, processes or techniques to unfamiliar problems in a specialised field, discipline or practice
Problem solving	able to demonstrate an ability to identify, evaluate and solve defined, routine and new problems within a familiar context, and to apply solutions based on relevant evidence and procedures or other forms of explanation appropriate to the field, discipline or practice	able to demonstrate an ability to identify, evaluate and solve problems in unfamiliar contexts, gathering evidence and applying solutions based on evidence and procedures appropriate to the field, discipline or practice	able to demonstrate an ability to identify, analyse, critically reflect on and address complex problems, applying evidence-based solutions and theory-driven arguments	able to demonstrate an ability to use a range of specialised skills to identify, analyse and address complex or abstract problems drawing systematically on the body of knowledge and methods appropriate to a field, discipline or practice
Ethics and professional practice	able to demonstrate an ability to take account of, and act in accordance with prescribed organisational and professional ethical codes of conduct, values and practices and to seek guidance on ethical and professional issues where necessary	to demonstrate an understanding of the ethical implications of decisions and actions, within an organisational or professional context, based on an awareness of the complexity of ethical dilemmas	able to demonstrate an ability to take decisions and act ethically and professionally, and the ability to justify those decisions and actions drawing on appropriate ethical values and approaches, within a supported environment	able to demonstrate an ability to identify and address ethical issues based on critical reflection on the suitability of different ethical value systems to specific contexts
Accessing, processing and managing information	able to demonstrate an ability to gather information from a range of sources, including oral, written or symbolic texts, to select information appropriate to the task, and to apply basic processes of analysis, synthesis and evaluation on that information	able to demonstrate an ability to evaluate different sources of information, to select information appropriate to the task, and to apply well-developed processes of analysis, synthesis and evaluation on that information	able to demonstrate: an ability to develop appropriate processes of information gathering for a given context or use; and an ability to independently validate the sources of information, and evaluate and manage the information	able to demonstrate an ability to critically review information gathering, evaluation and management processes in specialised contexts in order to develop creative responses to problems and issues
Producing and communicating information	able to demonstrate an ability to communicate information reliably, accurately and coherently, using conventions appropriate to the	able to demonstrate an ability to present and communicate complex information reliably and coherently using appropriate	able to demonstrate an ability to develop and communicate his or her ideas and opinions in well-formed arguments, using	able to demonstrate an ability to present and communicate academic, professional or occupational ideas and texts

	context, either in writing, verbally or in practical demonstration, including an understanding of and respect for conventions around intellectual property, copyright and plagiarism	academic and professional or occupational conventions, formats and technologies for a given context	appropriate academic, professional, or occupational discourse	effectively to a range of audiences, offering creative insights, rigorous interpretations and solutions to problems and issues appropriate to the context
Context and systems	able to demonstrate an ability to operate in a range of familiar and new contexts, demonstrating an understanding of different kinds of systems, their constituent parts and the relationships between these parts, and to understand how actions in one area impact on other areas within the same system	able to demonstrate an ability to make decisions and act appropriately in familiar and new contexts, demonstrating an understanding of the relationships between systems, and of how actions, ideas or developments in one system impact on other systems	able to demonstrate an ability to manage processes in unfamiliar and variable contexts, recognising that problem solving is context- and system-bound, and does not occur in isolation	able to demonstrate an ability to operate effectively within a system, or manage a system based on an understanding of the roles and relationships between elements within the system
Management of learning	able to demonstrate an ability to: assess his or her performance or the performance of others and to take appropriate action where necessary; and take responsibility for his or her learning within a structured learning process and to promote the learning of others	able to demonstrate an ability to evaluate performance against given criteria, and accurately identify and address his or her task-specific learning needs in a given context, and to support the learning needs of others	able to demonstrate an ability to identify, evaluate and address accurately his or her learning needs in a self-directed manner, and to facilitate collaborative learning processes	able to demonstrate an ability to apply, in a self-critical manner, learning strategies which effectively address his or her professional and ongoing learning needs and the professional and ongoing learning needs of others
Accountability	able to demonstrate an ability to account for his or her actions, to work effectively with and respect others, and, in a defined context, to take supervisory responsibility for others and for the responsible use of resources where appropriate	able to demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team or group, and to take responsibility for his or her decisions and actions and the decisions and actions of others within well-defined contexts, including the responsibility for the use of resources where appropriate	able to demonstrate an ability to take full responsibility for his or her work, decision-making and use of resources, and limited accountability for the decisions and actions of others in varied or ill-defined contexts	able to demonstrate an ability to take full responsibility for his or her work, decision-making and use of resources, and full accountability for the decisions and actions of others where appropriate