

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING PILOT PROJECT

26 April 2012

Purpose

- **Briefing Community Development Sector re upcoming Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) pilot project**
- **Obtain buy-in & support for successful implementation of the pilot project**

RPL Conceptualization

- RPL can be obtained in informal & formal manner:
at the workplace, family, community and/or
personal reading
- RPL could have the following purposes:
 - **Access** to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths;
 - Accelerate **redress** of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities. **Social justice in terms of equity**
 - **Pedagogy** involves teaching element
 - **Credit accumulation**

RPL Contexts

- RPL intention: Ensure Integrated Learning & improve & standardize knowledge, skills & attributes of persons in the sector
- RPL recognizes: Learning gained through life, work & other activities. This includes knowledge & skills gained:
 1. Outside of formal learning situations
 2. Through informal learning and training in the workplace, the community and/or the voluntary sector
 3. From continuing professional development activities
 4. From independent learning
- RPL is needed for workers/employees to meet legislative requirements of becoming professionals

RPL Process

1. **Pre-Screening** of RPL candidates involves explorations for the reasons why the candidate wants to go through RPL followed by the knowledge the candidate has acquired.
2. **Portfolio development** process- Linking the experience with theory.
3. **Provision of Exit Level Outcome**
4. **Development** of the Portfolio of Evidence (**POE**).
5. **Assessment** of the **POE**
6. **Certification** in case of full qualifications or achievements of necessary credits that enables the candidate to enter into a qualification to study.

Advantages of RPL

1. *Access* – evaluation of candidates to assess whether they meet the necessary entry requirements.
2. *Personal development* and/or certification of current skills without progression into formal learning
3. *Progression* within a learning programme, using RPL to fast-track progression through the learning programme (placement within a programme)
4. *Promotion, career or job change*
5. *Other e.g. complying with new legislation; pathways*

Why Community Development RPL Pilot Project?

- 2009 – 2011 developed community development qualifications frameworks provide for a:
*standardized & professional career path
mainstreaming of persons currently
working in community development*
- This needs a *generic scientific validated RPL model for community development* to measure the impact of career path standardization and professionalization

Purpose of the RPL Pilot Project

1. Develop reliable and valid generic RPL model for community development
2. Assist training institutions, public-private sector, NGOs and policy makers with standardization & professionalization of community development
3. Develop useful and effective RPL tools
4. Shape RPL processes by using a matrix of all relevant qualifications

RPL Pilot Project – Evaluation

Main Evaluation Objective

- To determine whether the Community Development RPL pilot project can in fact provide an integrated learning RPL model towards achieving formal qualifications in the new professional community development career path

Sub-Objectives

1. To assess the need & feasibility for the RPL project
2. To evaluate the RPL project planning & design.
3. To evaluate the implementation of the RPL project
4. To provide conclusions and/or recommendations for adjustment and/or improvement of the RPL project

Principles of the RPL Pilot Project

- RPL should integrate learning from various disciplines into a single career path.
- Integrated Learning would provide individuals from different disciplines to move towards a common purpose of community development professionalisation.
- Therefore, integrated learning would necessitate RPL towards a single career path in community development.
- To achieve this end an inductive approach will be followed
- RPL should create further development options for workers/practitioners i.e. no RPL candidate should reach a **glass ceiling** with no further development possibilities

RPL Pilot Project Research Questions

1. Does the Pilot project provide an integrated learning RPL model towards achieving formal qualifications?
2. Is there a need for the RPL project and is it feasible?
3. Was the RPL pilot project planned and designed appropriately? (for its intended purpose)
4. Were the outcomes met?

RPL Pilot Project - Methodology

- Will be conducted over a three year period
- All nine provinces
- Samples from various sectors (1800 candidates); 80% employed and 20% unemployed
 - (200 candidates per province consisting of min. 50 candidates per participating public sector departments)
- Sample candidates will be selected from each of the qualification levels (*staggered project implementation process*)
 - No Formal qualification: based on years of experience
 - NQF Levels 4, 5 & 8 : from a qualification in another relevant field

RPL Field Based Process

- RPL pilot project process of candidates will involve be “*field based*”
- This necessitates:
 - selection, appointment and training of:
 - mentors, supervisors and managers to support candidates during RPL field work

Ethical Considerations

- Permission to conduct the study will be sought from participants and candidates
- Purpose and nature of the study will be made available
- Signed written consent will be sought from participants
- Participants will remain anonymous and information will be handled confidentially

Ethical Considerations (Cont.)

- Participants would be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with their employees.
- Participants would be treated with dignity and respect.
- No perceived psychological risks are expected
- Study findings will be made available.

RPL Pilot Project Implementation Plan

- Review the Proposal by April 2012
- Stakeholder buy-in by June 2012
- Develop Qualification Matrix for NQF Level 4 and 5 by July 2012.
- Task Team (HEIs, SAQA etc) develop RPL Suggested Model by July 2012
- Stakeholders Consultations by October 2012
- Submit application to SETAs by November 2012

RPL Pilot Project Expected Outputs

1. Mid-evaluation reports on progress/ achievement of each objective
2. Final evaluation
3. Informing policy development
4. Presentations to government and at conferences
5. Publication of results
6. Conference

THANK YOU