



Gymnastics
Australia

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY

Policy Name:	Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
Date of Approval:	February 1998
Policy Coverage:	Service - Education
Date of Review:	July 2006

1. INTRODUCTION

The world of Education and Training has seen many significant changes over the past two years, all with the ultimate objective of ensuring the provision of quality education and training for all.

As part of their new Education and Training framework Gymnastics Australia (GA) is committed to ensuring equity and fairness in the application of training, education and assessment principles. The following Policy has been developed to achieve this and provide a tool for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) ensuring that:

- GA has a structured process to determine RPL outcomes and that
- Applicants use an official process to apply for RPL

Through this RPL Policy, all applicants will have equal access to the process. Procedures will not create unnecessary barriers whilst at the same time are fair and verifiable.

This policy, for Recognition of Prior Learning, describes a step-by-step process for personnel applying for the recognition of competencies, which may be applicable to any of GA's:

- National Coaching Courses accredited with the Australian Sports Commission (ASC)
- National Judging Courses accredited with the National Officiating Program (NOP) of the ASC
- National Course Presenters Training & Accreditation Scheme

GA is committed to the provision of quality education and training for all and supports the initiatives that have been seen as part of the National Training Reform Agenda, including the Recognition of Prior Learning.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL is a process, which will enable applicants to be granted recognition of acquired competencies. Regardless of when, where or how obtained, through formal and/or informal training, work experience and/or life experience, these competencies will be assessed against current and relevant learning outcomes/competency standards through the approved GA RPL process.

2.2 Accreditation

This is the formal national recognition and acceptance of the educational standards of a course of study by an accrediting agency (ie: Australian Sports Commission)

2.3 Articulation

This is the provision of a pathway to provide access to courses at both vocational education and tertiary levels. It refers to credit transfer and may include skills and experience gained outside/within a formal course environment.

Articulation refers to credit transfer in the following situations:

- From one NCAS/NOAS course to another
- From a tertiary institution's course to a NCAS/NOAS course or the reverse
- From the course of one training provider to that of another

Credit transfer helps coaches, officials, and administrators to avoid unnecessary repetition and to minimise training time. Credit transfer requires documentation of competencies achieved so that they can be matched against the outcomes of a training program.

2.4 Assessment Criteria

These are the elements or measures that should be used to judge the worth of accumulated knowledge, skill and application.

2.5 Certified Copies

These are copies of original documents that are certified by a Justice Of The Peace(JP) or Solicitor as a true and correct copy of the original document..

2.6 Competency

This focuses on what is required of an employee in the workplace rather than on the learning process. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments. The National Training Board defines Competency as, "the knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill across industries or within an industry, to the standard of performance required in employment."

2.7 Competency Standards

These are statements, in outcome terms, which specify knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in employment.

2.8 Content Assessors

These are personnel, who are qualified and competent in their areas of expertise. Usually these content assessors will be accredited as a National Course Presenter and/or Assessor with GA

2.9 Learning Outcomes

These are statements that identify the skills, knowledge and application within training courses, and reflects the required competencies. In RPL terms, the Learning Outcomes are the benchmarks against which a person's prior learning and competencies are measured.

2.10 Life Experience

This is the experience a person accumulates through interacting within the prevailing social environment. It implies the development of skills; such as, occupational communication, problem solving, decision-making and social. In RPL terms, it is the application of skills, areas of knowledge, and attitudes, which can be translated into a direct relationship with vocational training.

2.11 Mentor

This is a person providing quality support, advice and counselling

2.12 National Competency Standards

These are those standards, which have been developed by the Sport and Recreation Industry Training Advisory Body and endorsed by the Australian National Training Authority. All national accredited gymnastic courses have been aligned to these national competency standards.

2.13 RPL Assessors

They are personnel, who hold either national presenters or assessors accreditation with GA, and who are appointed to manage GA's RPL process.

2.14 RPL Assessment Panels

These may comprise 2-4 members who **collectively** possess the following expertise:

- Competency to conduct an RPL process
- Content competency to assess the relevance of RPL to training content and Learning
- Content competency to assess the relevance of RPL to training content and Learning
- Outcomes/competency standards
- Competency in gymnastics coaching/officiating/administration and the related education
- Experienced in the areas of adult education, negotiation skills, standards enforcement and assessment methods

2.15 Review

This means a review of the original decision, which may include presentation of evidence of further training/assessment.

2.16 Work Experience

This relates to work competencies gained in a workplace where the acquisition of skills, knowledge, application and attitudes is related to tasks, processes and the work environment. It may also include informal self-initiated industry training courses.

3. WHAT CONSTITUTES APPROPRIATE PRIOR LEARNING?

Prior learning is learning which occurs before a coaching/judging/administration course is undertaken and which results in a coach/judge/administrator's acquisition of appropriate competencies for a particular standard or level (e.g.: NCAS Level 1,2,3).

A major reason for including the Recognition of Prior Learning within GA's Education and Training program is to avoid the problem of participants having to unnecessarily repeat learning experiences.

Prior learning may be formal (e.g.: courses) or informal (e.g.: a range of life experiences) and can occur in any of the following ways:

- As a gymnast who has been coached by an appropriately accredited coach
- As an assistant to an appropriately accredited coach/judge/administrator
- Completion of a recognised training program (in Australia or overseas)
- Through learning from 'experience on the job'
- Through formal and informal self-education by reading relevant material, observing other coaches/officials/administrators, discussing methods with other educators, watching education video programs and talking with gymnasts.

4. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING PRINCIPLES

GA's RPL Policy is based on the following principles:

4.1 Commitment

GA is committed to RPL as being fundamental to equity and fairness in the application of training, education and assessment principles. This commitment will be ensured through the application of best practice throughout the RPL process.

4.2 Access

Through the RPL Policy all applicants will have equal access to the process.

4.3 Fairness

The RPL process will be credible, fair and verifiable. All applicants will have confidence that the process and its outcomes are fair, equitable and objective.

4.4 Openness

All RPL decisions will be governed by openness. Applicants will have the right to request a review of an unfavourable decision. This review will be negotiated to a resolution.

4.5 Support

Appropriate support will be available to the following personnel as required:

- RPL applicants
- RPL assessors
- Content Assessors

4.6 Confidentiality

All personal information disclosed by the applicants as a result of their RPL application or subsequent assessment interviews will be treated with total confidentiality by all parties involved in the assessment process

5. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING PROCESS

The following sequential process, also depicted in the flow chart provided as Appendix 1, as been established by GA as the procedure to be followed by an applicant who wishes to obtain credit of prior learning/competencies through RPL.

5.1 Step 1 – Request

5.1.1 Applicants who consider applying for RPL will contact GA who will forward the relevant information with regards to the RPL process to the applicant and be available for further advice and/or assistance if required. This initial contact can be coordinated through their State Gymnastic Office.

5.1.2 Applicants will conduct a self-assessment, utilising information from the Information Pack provided by GA. Applicants will then decide whether to proceed.

5.1.3 The completed application form with supporting documentation, and any relevant fees applying, will then be forwarded to GA who will coordinate the application through a RPL Assessment panel.

5.1.4 On receipt of an application a RPL Assessor, who will be selected by GA, will review the application to determine the completeness and relevance of the documentation. GA will advise the applicant accordingly:

- Of a date for assessment by the RPL panel,
- Of deficiencies that must be rectified or addressed before the application can proceed

At this time the relevant State Association will also be notified of the application including details of the accreditation sought.

5.2 Step 2 – Assessment

5.2.1 The RPL Assessment Panel will assess the application, utilising whatever assessment mode/s that are appropriate and which could include:

- Desk audit or
- Interview assessment and/or
- Test - written/oral and/or
- Practical demonstrations/simulations

5.2.2 The Panel will make a decision resulting in one of four (4) possible outcomes:

- Grant recognition
- Deny recognition
- Require further supporting documentation/evidence
- Require further training/assessment

5.2.3 GA will notify the applicant of the decision and any recommendations made by the panel. At this time the relevant State Association will also be advised of the outcome.

5.2.4 The applicant will forward further documentation, if required to GA. If further training is required the applicant will be put in contact with an approved State training provider. If the application is successful the relevant Accreditation papers, and associated fees, will be forwarded by the applicant to GA via their State Association.

5.3 Step 3 - Review

5.3.1 The applicant will initiate a review in one of the following instances:

- Where the applicant has decided to appeal the decision of the panel.
- Where the Assessment Panel requires the applicant to complete further training/assessment.

5.3.2 The Review Panel will consist of the following personnel:

- One of the original RPL Panel Assessors
- A new RPL Assessor
- A new Content Assessor

5.3.3 The Review Panel will review all previous assessment methods.

5.3.4 The Review Panel will make a decision with one of two (2) possible outcomes:

- Grant recognition
- Deny recognition

5.3.5 The applicant will be notified of the review decision, and any recommendations of the Review Panel.

5.3.6 The decision of the Review Panel conducting the review will be final.

5.3.7 Should the applicant wish to appeal further, GA and/or Applicant, in the event of conflict in an RPL assessment, may seek advice from the ASC. GA will not be responsible for any costs associated with a further appeal instigated by the Applicant.

6. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING PROCESS – GENERAL INFORMATION

- 6.1 RPL will be granted when all the stated Learning Outcomes of the relevant Course (module/unit) have been met.
- 6.2 GA will be responsible for the management of the total RPL process

7. RPL ASSESSORS

- 7.1 A national register of accredited RPL Assessors will be established and maintained by GA.
- 7.2 Assessors may be located anywhere throughout the nation to facilitate the RPL process.
- 7.3 Assessors Accreditation can be achieved through successful completion of the training and accreditation process detailed within the “Course Presenters Training & Accreditation Program” .

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES - SUMMARY

8.1 Gymnastics Australia

- 8.1.1 Receiving, coordinating and processing applications
- 8.1.2 Selecting a RPL Assessor, for each application, who will act as the Chair of the RPL Assessment Panel and be the liaison between GA and Assessment panel.
- 8.1.3 Coordinating the formation of assessment panels
- 8.1.4 Providing guidelines for content assessors
- 8.1.5 Keeping the relevant State Association up-to-date with regards to applications received from their State, and the associated outcomes
- 8.1.6 Recording the results of all RPL applicants
- 8.1.7 Advising applicants regarding the RPL process, providing reports on the outcomes of the submission.
- 8.1.8 Best Practice management of the RPL process in respect of the following principles:
- Commitment
 - Access
 - Fairness
 - Openness
 - Support
 - Confidentiality

8.2 RPL Assessor

8.2.1 Chair the RPL Assessment Panel

- Coordinate Assessing of RPL applications against training content, learning outcomes/competency standards

8.2.2 Report all decisions of the RPL Assessment Panel to GA who in turn are responsible for advising all relevant parties (ie: Applicant, State Association)

8.2.3 Monitoring the quality and consistency of the RPL application processes

8.2.4 Best Practice management of the RPL process in respect of the following principles:

Commitment	Access
Fairness	Openness
Support	Confidentiality

8.3 Content Assessors and Assessment Panels

8.3.1 Assessing RPL applications against training content, learning outcomes/competency standards.

8.3.2 Best Practice management of the RPL process in respect of the following principles:

Commitment	Access
Fairness	Openness
Support	Confidentiality

8.4 Applicants

8.4.1 Conducting self-assessment to determine the relevancy and correctness of their application.

8.4.2 Gathering all relevant supporting documentation to validate the information provided in their application.

8.4.3 Completing an RPL application with honest, clear, complete and concise information

8.4.5 Forwarding Application to GA and payment of any fees set for administration of the RPL process.

8.4.6 Responding positively to assessment feedback from RPL Assessors and/or GA.

9. APPEALS AND GRIEVANCE

All members have the opportunity to appeal and/or lodge a grievance to the relevant management levels. Further details are contained in the GA Grievance and Appeals policy document.

10. CHANGES TO THE POLICY

Changes to this policy may be submitted by GA Board, State Associations and National Sports Management Committees for review and approval by the GA Board. Once a change has been approved, the policy will be updated in the official GA policy register and on the Intranet and circulated to GA Board, State Associations and relevant SMC.

In addition, Gymnastics Australia is committed to ensuring all policies are up-to-date and reflect current practices. The latest review date is recorded at the beginning of each policy.

Appendix 1

GA and/or applicant may call upon the ASC in the event of conflict in an RPL assessment.

**GYMNASTICS AUSTRALIA
RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING PROCESS**



