



Business
School

Recognition of Prior Learning

Guide for Applicants



Australian
Institute of
Management

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1. Introduction

Recognition of prior learning, known as RPL, is the formal recognition of learning demonstrated through existing knowledge and skills. You could have achieved the knowledge and skills through:

- Previous formal or informal training/education (at an education institution, a training facility, or a place of work)
- Work experience (paid and unpaid)
- Voluntary work.

An applicant claims RPL by matching existing knowledge and skills with the learning outcomes of an AIM Business School (ABS) unit. The process involves the development of an RPL Portfolio which clearly identifies existing learning and provides evidence of it. At ABS, RPL is available for complete higher education units only; it is not offered for parts of units.

This guide outlines how to work out whether you might qualify for RPL (Section 2), how to put together an application (Section 3), how to submit the application (Section 4) and, finally, what happens after submission (Section 5). A copy of the RPL application form is provided in the Appendix 2. This is the form that you will need to submit via Student Support (absstudentsupport@aim.com.au) to claim RPL for up to 50% of the Qualification you are enrolled into¹. The RPL application form must be submitted for each individual unit for which you are claiming RPL.

If you have not already done so, please read the RPL FAQ carefully. The RPL process is provided in Appendix 1.

¹ For a Graduate Certificate 50% is 2 units; for a Graduate Diploma 50% is 4 units and for the MBA 50% is 6 units in total. Refer to Credit and RPL Policy and Procedure

2. Deciding whether to apply for RPL

You are in the best position to make the initial determination as to whether it is worthwhile to apply for RPL. You will need to compare your current knowledge or learning with ABS unit learning outcomes to identify whether they match. If your knowledge matches the learning outcomes of an ABS unit (and you have evidence to support it), then you are in a good position to make a clear case for RPL.

Self-assessment

These are the steps to help you determine whether to apply for RPL:

Step 1: Review the learning outcomes for relevant ABS units

You can find information (including learning outcomes) on all ABS units on the ABS website. The unit learning outcomes identify the knowledge and skills you need to have achieved on completion of the unit. The unit learning outcomes are accessible here:

<https://www.aimbusinessschool.edu.au/abs-courses/units-of-study>

Step 2: Make an honest assessment of your existing knowledge and skills

You need to work out whether you have the current knowledge and skills relevant to the primary learning outcomes for each unit you are considering seeking RPL. To do this you will need to:

1. Review your CV and current or recent job description(s).
2. Evaluate both the formal and informal training you have undertaken.
3. Consider any paid or unpaid work experience, volunteer roles and life experience you have had to see whether they show evidence of the relevant current knowledge and skills required for the unit.

Step 3: Match your learning with unit learning outcomes

An RPL claim requires you to demonstrate how your current knowledge and skills meet each of the content-related learning outcomes for any unit(s) for which you are seeking RPL. It is important to understand you must meet all learning outcomes in full. An RPL claim will not be successful if you only meet some of the learning outcomes or if you meet any of the learning outcomes in part only. In addition to demonstrating you have the current knowledge and skills relevant to the content for

each unit you are applying for RPL, you must also meet two general learning outcomes.

Step 4. Determine whether you have current and sufficient evidence

Just matching learning outcomes and claiming knowledge and skills is not enough to achieve RPL. For an RPL claim to be successful, you need to be able to back up your claim with evidence. In other words, you need to be able to present documentation (drawn from a wide range of documentary evidence – see section 3) clearly demonstrating your knowledge and skills are current and sufficient.

Making the decision

To have a good chance of success with an RPL application, you should have a positive answer for each of the following questions:

- a. Does my prior learning (clearly) match relevant unit learning outcomes?
- b. Do I have sufficient and robust evidence to support my claim? (refer to section 3)
- c. Am I willing to spend time and effort to develop an effective RPL application?
- d. Am I willing to pay the relevant fee?²
- e. Do I accept that a successful outcome of the RPL application is not guaranteed?

² The fee is \$500 per RPL unit which needs to be paid before the RPL application is processed. If RPL is not granted, the fee is not refunded.

3. How to prepare an RPL claim

3.1 The RPL Portfolio

The RPL process at ABS requires you to create an RPL Portfolio. The RPL Portfolio comprises several standard items as well as documentation providing evidence to support your claim for RPL. Specifically, the RPL Portfolio consists of:

- ABS' RPL application form you have been provided separately (see the appendices for a copy of the form and a completed example)
- Curriculum Vitae (or resumé)
- Current and/or recent detailed job description where available
- Certified transcripts and certificates
- Documentary evidence to support the RPL claim(s)

The specific requirements are provided next.

3.2 Curriculum Vitae

An RPL Portfolio requires an appropriate and up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV) or resumé. Make sure you have a comprehensive and detailed CV. Your CV needs to present an overall picture of your work history. Use your existing CV as a starting point or if you have a LinkedIn profile, you can create an up-to-date CV instantly with four clicks. It is important your CV provides as full a picture as possible of your activities relevant to your RPL claim. Make sure the following items are included in your CV, starting with the most recent activity and working backwards:

Employment (this may include in-house training and staff development courses)

- List all relevant employment and major activities as sources of the learning. For each item of employment, provide a brief description of the job and achievements in the role.

Unpaid work (may include domestic as well as voluntary work)

- List all unpaid work that has relevance to the unit you are applying for RPL
- Education (post-secondary only)
- List any relevant post-secondary qualifications you have achieved including any research and/or publications in the broader field of management (provide full references)

3.3 Current job description

An RPL Portfolio requires the job description(s) for your current work. The term ‘position description’ literally means a ‘description’ of the work you do, whether it is paid or unpaid. The position description(s) you submit in the RPL Portfolio should present a clear picture of your current roles, responsibilities, and achievements. Your formal position description is a good starting point. Amend your job description so that it clearly describes your current work and emphasises the knowledge and skills you use to carry out the job. NB you will need to certify that the position description is correct by having your manager, or HR department sign and date the position description.

3.4 Transcripts and certificates

An RPL Portfolio may include relevant transcripts and certificates. Only include transcripts/certificates that may have relevance to the units you are applying for RPL. You must also include the unit guide/outline from the issuing institution.

Official transcripts relating to formally accredited study at higher education level.

You may already have done a relevant course which is formally accredited and recognised as being at higher education level. Only include official transcripts and certificates which meet all of the following requirements for your RPL application:

Relating to officially accredited study. Officially accredited study will have been formally assessed and you will have a certificate or transcript specifying the education level as well as the number of credit points (or amount of credit) completed.

At higher education level. Many courses entitled ‘diploma’ or ‘certificate’ are not at the higher education level and while they can be used to support your RPL application, they will not be sufficient for direct credit.

Completed within the last ten years. The certificate or transcript must show recent study since you want to demonstrate that you have current knowledge. If the study was completed a long time ago, the certificate is not relevant for the purpose of RPL assessment.

Other (non-accredited) training certificates. Certificates of attendance relating to structured workshops or in-house training in the workforce are not officially accredited qualifications. Such certificates do provide an indication that you have done learning in the subject area and may be useful in your RPL Portfolio. If you do include non-accredited certificates in your

RPL Portfolio, you will need to show how they are relevant to the learning outcomes for the unit(s) you are seeking RPL by providing appropriate commentary.

3.5 Detailed RPL claim for individual unit

The detailed RPL claim should be submitted using the formal RPL Application Form; a copy is provided in Appendix 2.

Identify the learning outcomes for the unit for which you want to claim RPL. For each learning outcome you want to claim RPL, you need to:

1. Demonstrate your learning; and
2. Provide evidence of your learning.

If you are applying for RPL for multiple units, the RPL application form needs to be completed for each unit. This is because each application will be going to a different ABS staff member for assessment purposes.

Write a commentary for each learning outcome.

For each learning outcome, you need to demonstrate you have the relevant learning (based on experience and accumulated knowledge). Write a short commentary (of no more than 150 words) for each learning outcome which shows you have the requisite learning identified in the learning outcome. Explain how your current knowledge and learning meets each learning outcome and clarify the context in which your learning occurred (e.g., workplace, professional association, voluntary work, individual study).

Provide evidence to support the commentary.

For each learning outcome you must include evidence which supports your commentary, and which demonstrates the knowledge and skills for which you are claiming RPL. Make sure the evidence is clearly linked to the learning outcome in the commentary.

What can be used as evidence?

There are many types of evidence that you can potentially provide to substantiate your claim for RPL against specific learning outcomes. Common forms of evidence are:

- *Documents or items you have produced yourself.* You can include samples of work such as business plans, financial forecasts, proposals, reports, speeches, presentations, and manuals. This needs to be verifiable evidence by a third party such as your previous or current line manager. If neither are available you will need a third party to verify. ABS follows the practice of the Australian Government: Services

Australia. Head to their website to see who you can use.

<https://www.servicessaustralia.gov.au/how-to-get-certified-copies-documents?context=22591>

- *Documents from others highlighting your achievements.* You can include statements by your employer regarding your work performance; performance review reports; correspondence you have received from colleagues or customers or clients.
- *Discussion.* You can outline (in writing) how you have demonstrated or applied learning, first obtained from a course, to your work or other activities. Certificates of achievement from courses may be used to supplement such discussion.

You will need to provide a minimum of two documents for each learning outcome. It is often possible to find a piece of evidence demonstrating several skills or that can be used for more than one learning outcome. If you do, make sure you cross reference accordingly between learning outcomes.

Ethical considerations when using evidence.

Your work roles and information generated through your work are likely to be useful sources of evidence. It is possible that you may wish to use sensitive information originally gathered for a different purpose as evidence. Where this is the case, it is essential that you comply with the professional, legal, and/or ethical standards appropriate to the nature of the information used. It is your responsibility to find out what these standards are from appropriate sources. You should always seek to protect any person or organisation named in your evidence by keeping them anonymous, unless you get written permission to use the names of individuals or organisations.

4. How to submit the RPL Portfolio

Once you have completed your RPL application and checked all of the information and evidence to submit, as well as paid the fee, then email your application to absstudentsupport@aim.com.au

5. What happens after your submission?

Portfolios are assessed individually by an academic in the relevant unit area.

5.1 Assessment of the RPL Portfolio

This assessment of your RPL application will be done within five (5) working days. A member of the ABS Student Support team will then contact you to advise you of the outcome.

5.2 The outcome of assessment of the RPL Portfolio

The outcome of the RPL assessment is normally one of the following:

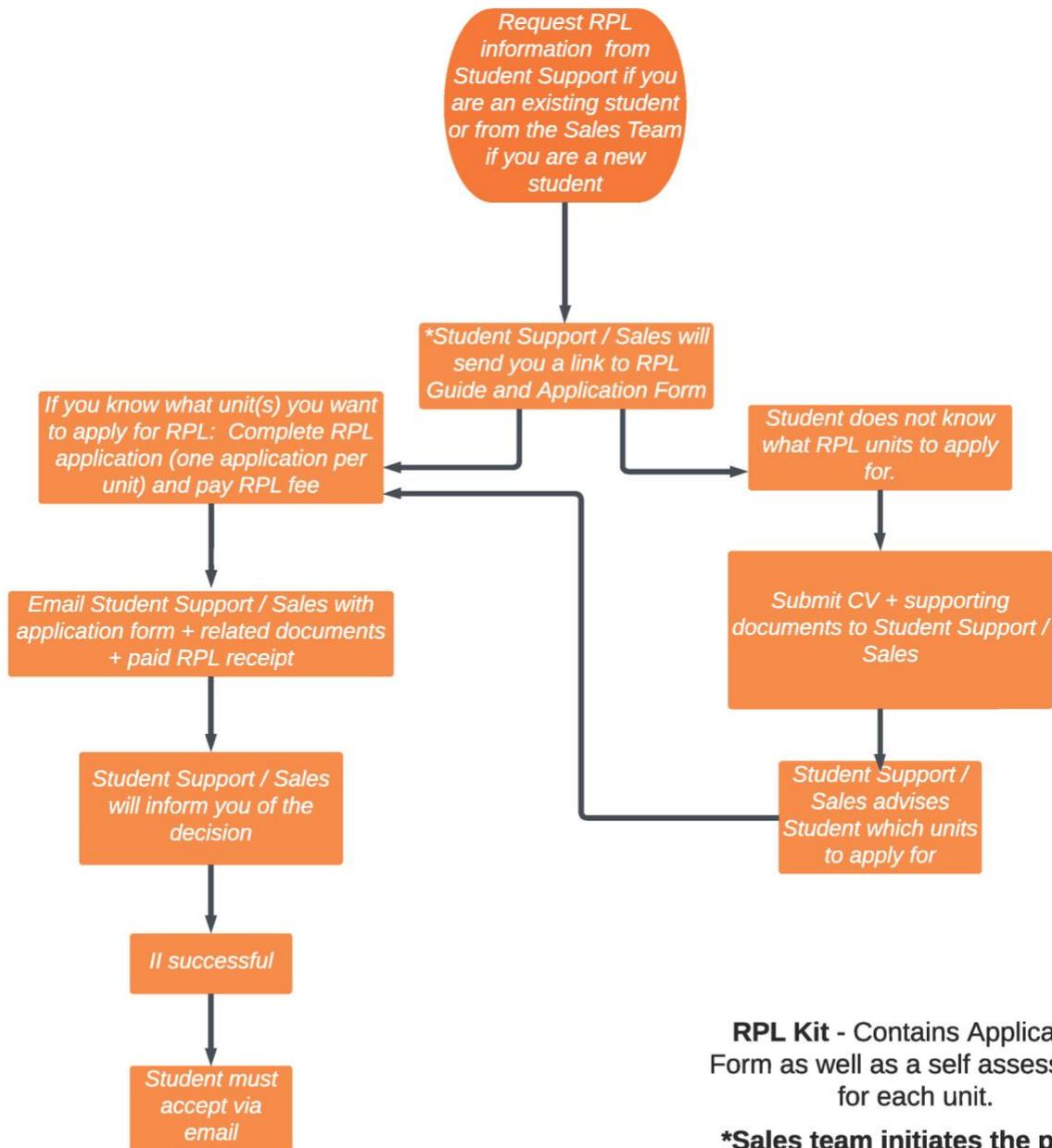
- RPL granted;
- Request for further information; or
- RPL not granted.

RPL granted. Where RPL is granted, the RPL assessment is recorded, and you can progress with your studies in the knowledge that you do not need to enrol in the particular unit(s) you have been granted RPL.

Request for further information. A request for further information implies that the RPL Portfolio is assessed as incomplete and that the existing RPL Portfolio did not enable the RPL assessor to formally make an assessment. A request for further information normally specifies what needs to be done to improve the RPL Portfolio to enable one reassessment only. A re-submission does not incur additional fees.

RPL not granted. Where RPL is not granted, the assessor has determined you do not have the requisite experience and evidence to be granted RPL. NB You do have the right to ask for a reassessment of the RPL. However, if there is no change in the outcome you can re-apply for RPL, with new evidence provided but it will be treated as a new application and incur the same fee.

Appendix 1



RPL Kit - Contains Application Form as well as a self assessment for each unit.

***Sales team initiates the process for prospective students.**

Student support initiates the process for existing students.

Appendix 2

RPL Application Form

(example only – please use the template you have been sent along with this guide. A completed example is provided below)

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING APPLICATION FORM

PART 1 – Applicant information

Applicant Name	
Applicant Email Address	
Applicant Date of Birth	
Phone/mobile	
Prior Qualification	

I hereby certify that the information provided, and the documentation attached is true and correct.

Signed:

Date:

PART 2 – Recognition of Prior Learning Claim

This part must be completed for each unit that you wish to claim RPL.

Applicant Name	
Student ID³	
Unit code	
Unit name	

RPL claim against unit learning outcomes (ULOs)

List each of the unit learning outcomes. Then, present your claim in writing against each of the learning outcomes AND list the documents you are submitting as evidence for each of the learning outcomes. See example in appendix 2.

On completion of this unit the participants should be able to:

First learning outcome: <..copy here the first learning outcome of the unit..>

My claim:

Evidence supplied:

Repeat this for each of the learning outcomes.

³ If applying for admission, please leave blank

List of Evidence

Number	Evidence
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	

Add more rows as needed.

Appendix 3

Part 1 Example Applicant information

Applicant Name	
Applicant Email Address	
Applicant Date of Birth	
Phone/mobile	
Prior Qualification	

I hereby certify that the information provided, and the documentation attached is true and correct.

Signed:

Date: 2 April 2023

Part 2 Example RPL Claim for Unit GSB002

Applicant Name	
Student ID	
Unit code	
Unit name	

RPL claim against unit learning outcomes (ULOs)

On completion of this unit the participants should be able to:

First learning outcome:

Analyse characteristics of contemporary leadership and compare and contrast these insights with academic and managerial approaches to enhancing performance.

My claim:

I have completed the Diploma of Leadership and Management which contained 12 units focused on various aspects of leadership and management (Evidence 5). Of particular note was the review of relevant leadership theories including transformational, authentic and servant leadership. In addition, I studied the six leadership styles (Goleman 2000). In considering each of these I have been able to draw on elements of transformational leadership in setting and communicating the vision in our team planning and development day (Evidence 7 & 12). In addition, I have developed a broader skill set in my coaching style (Evidence 4, 5, 10).

Evidence supplied:

Evidence 4, 5, 7, 10, 12

Second learning outcome: Evaluate a range of approaches to engage and motivate employees as part of a contemporary performance management culture designed to enhance sustained productivity improvement in the face of increasing global disruption.

My claim:

As part of my regular coaching session with team members (Evidence 10, 12), I have followed Pink's (2011) motivational approach using Autonomy, Mastery and Purpose. I have worked to engage and motivate employees by clarifying the alignment between their KPIs and achievement of organisational strategic goals (Purpose). I have reviewed position descriptions (Evidence 14) to ensure more authority and delegation opportunities (Autonomy) and have supported mastery of skills by encouraging participation in learning

development opportunities and the team development day (Evidence 4 & 7). Lastly, I have a vastly increased knowledge of the disruptive nature of the environment in which we work through my attendance at a workshop on VUCA (Evidence 11). This has helped me lead my staff with a greater understanding of the impact on their work and emotional state (Evidence 6 and 11).

Evidence supplied:

Evidence 4, 6, 7, 10, 11,12,14

Third learning outcome:

Critically appraise and reflect on one's performance as an ethical and socially responsible leader, manager and developer of self and others, identify strengths and prioritise development opportunities.

My claim:

As part of my annual performance reviews over the last 10-year period, I was tasked with reviewing my performance as a leader and manager (Evidence 2 & 3) I have used the feedback and coaching from my manager to grow in the areas of leading people. Together with my Genos assessment and development plan (Evidence 6), I have improved my capacity to listen empathetically to individuals in my team, particularly in relations to their issues during the pandemic lock down period (Evidence 2 & 12). In addition, I have initiated an annual team development day (Evidence 7) and worked with People and Culture to develop a learning and development programme for my staff (Evidence 4). As well I conduct regular coaching sessions with all team member (Evidence 10).

Evidence supplied:

Evidence 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12

Then continue with the other learning outcomes:

1. Employ group dynamic concepts as a means of developing superior performance through effective leadership of real, virtual, and diverse teams.
2. Develop a high order of skill in analysis, critical thinking, and professional application.
3. Demonstrate creativity and flexibility in the application of knowledge and skills to new situations, to resolve problems and to think rigorously and independently.

List of Evidence Example

Number	Evidence
1	Curriculum Vitae
2	Manager Reference
3	Performance Review
4	Learning and Development Record (past 3 years)
5	Diploma of Leadership and Management (AIM)
6	Genos Emotional Intelligence Assessment and one day course (AIM)
7	Team planning and development day Agenda and Materials (September 202X)
8	Team assessment
9	DISC advanced Profile
10	Coaching Sessions with subordinates (202X)
11	One day course: Understanding the VUCA world
12	Team testimonials
13	Updated position descriptions
14	Etc.
15	
16	