**AIM Business School**

**Recognition for Prior Learning**

**Guide for Applicants**

1 

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## 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 out-comes of an 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 1), how to

put together an application (in Section 2), how to submit the application (Section 3) and, finally, what happens after submission (Section 4). A copy of the RPL application form is provided in the Appendix. 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 Qualification you are enrolled into.[[1]](#footnote-1) The RPL application form must be submitted for each individual unit for which you are claiming RPL.

# Deciding whether to apply for RPL

You are in the best position to determine whether it is worthwhile to put in for an RPL claim. You will need to compare your current knowledge / 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 an effective case for RPL.

ABS Admissions Team will be able to advise you about the RPL process. They can help you in your thinking process but will not be able to make the final decision whether or not you should apply for RPL.

## Self-assessment

The steps to work out whether to apply for RPL include:

**Step 1**. **Identify the unit learning outcomes of ABS unit**

You can find information about all ABS units in the ABS Unit Guide available on the ABS website. The unit learning outcomes identify the knowledge/skills you need to have achieved on completion of the unit. A list of the Units and their learning outcomes is available in Appendix 2.

**Step 2. Make an honest assessment of your existing knowledge / 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’ll need to:

1. Review your CV and current/recent job description(s)
2. Evaluate both the formal and informal training you’ve undertaken
3. Consider any paid or unpaid work experience, volunteer roles and life experience you’ve 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) 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:

* Demonstrate a high order of skill in critical research/analysis, review/evaluation, critical thinking, communication, and professional application.
* Demonstrate creativity and flexibility in the application of knowledge and skills to new situations, to resolving problems and to think rigorously and independently.

**Step 4. Determine whether you have current and sufficient evidence**

Just matching learning outcomes and claiming knowledge / skills is not sufficient to achieve RPL. For an RPL claim to be successful you need to be able to back up your claim with evidence. You need to be able to present documentation (drawn from a wide range of documentary evidence - see step 2) and which clearly demonstrates your learning, knowledge, and skills are current and sufficient.

## Making the decision

There are two parts to help you make the decision to advance to an RPL application.

### Submit your CV to Student support with a request to confirm an application for RPL is reasonable. This is a simple process, and you will have a response generally within 48 hours. The response will include the suggested units for which you can then formally apply.

### The fee will be $500 per RPL unit which needs to be paid before the RPL application is processed. If RPL is not granted, there will be no refund of the fee.

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

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

If you can confidently answer ‘Yes’ to the above questions, then you are in a good position to progress with an RPL application for each of the suggested units.

# How to prepare an RPL claim: the RPL portfolio

## The RPL Portfolio

The RPL process at ABS requires you to put together 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’s RPL Application Form Part 1 (cover sheet) and Part 2 (actual RPL claim) See appendix 1
* Curriculum Vitae (or resumé)
* Current and/or recent detailed job descriptions where available
* Certified transcripts and certificates
* Documentary evidence to support the RPL claim(s)
* The specific requirements are detailed in the following sections.

## Curriculum Vitae

An RPL Portfolio requires an appropriate and up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV) or resumé. An example CV is provided in the appendix. 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 4 clicks. It is important your CV provides as full a picture as possible of activities relevant to your RPL claim. Make sure the following items are included on your CV, starting with the most recent activity, and working backwards:

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

* List all relevant employment and other major activities as sources of the learning. For each item of employment, give 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 but only include this item if it is relevant to the unit for which you seek RPL. For each item of unpaid work, give a brief description of the activity highlighting the relevance to the RPL claim.

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 (give full references).

## You can use a template CV such as the one provided by LinkedIn <https://resume.io/app/resumes/24798879/edit>

## 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 have to use in order 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.

## Transcripts and certificates

An RPL Portfolio may include relevant transcripts and certificates. Only include transcripts / certificates that are relevant 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 five 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.

## 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 of the learning outcomes you want to claim RPL for, you need to:

1. demonstrate your learning and
2. provide evidence of your learning.

If you are applying for RPL for multiple units, you can complete the claim using the one form.

### Writing 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).

### Providing evidence to support the commentary

For each learning outcome you must include evidence which supports your commentary, and which demonstrates the knowledge / 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 / 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.
			* 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/clients.
			* Discussion. You can outline (in writing) how you have demonstrated / 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.

*NB 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 this, make sure you cross reference accordingly between the 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.

# How to submit the RPL portfolio

Once you have completed your RPL application and checked all of the information and evidence to submit:

* if you are applying for admission then email your application to absadmissions@aim.com.au
* if you are an enrolled student then email your application to absstudentsupport@aim.com.au.

 **4. What happens after submission**

# What happens after your submission?

An Admissions or Student Support Officer then forwards your RPL Portfolio to ABS Admissions who coordinate assessment.

## Assessment of the RPL Portfolio

Assessment involves individual assessment of the RPL Portfolio by an academic in the relevant unit area. This assessment of your RPL application will be done within five (5) working days, period. An admissions or student support officer will then contact you to advise you of the outcome.

## The outcome of assessment of the RPL Portfolio

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

* RPL granted
* Request for further information
* 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 enroll 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. You can re-apply for RPL, but it will be treated as a new application and incur the same fee.

# Appendix 1 – Application form

**RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING**

**Application Form**

## PART 1 –Applicant Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Applicant Name  |  |
| **Applicant Email Address** |  |
| **Applicant Date of Birth**  | DD/MM/YY |
| **Phone/mobile** |  |
| **ABS Qualification** |  |

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

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## PART 2 – Recognition for Prior Learning Claim

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Applicant Name  |  |
| Student ID# |  |
| **Unit code** |  |
| **Unit name** |  |

 # if applying for admission please leave blank

**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.*

**# *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.*

## List of Evidence

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Number**  | **Evidence** |
| 1 |  |
| 2 |  |
| 3 |  |
| 4 |  |
| 5 |  |
| 6 |  |
| 7 |  |
| 8 |  |
| 9 |  |
| 10 |  |
| 11 |  |
| 12 |  |
| 13 |  |
| 14 |  |
| 15 |  |
| 16 |  |
| 17 |  |
| 18 |  |
| 19 |  |
| 20 |  |

Add more rows as needed

## Example RPL Claim for Unit

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Applicant Name  |  |
| **Unit code** | **GSB002** |
| **Unit name** | Leading, Managing and Developing People |

**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 a 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 5-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 four learning outcomes:**

4. Employ group dynamic concepts as a means of developing superior performance through effective leadership of real, virtual, and diverse teams.

5. Demonstrate the application of intellectual rigour and scholarship to be ethical and socially responsible leaders and managers of people.

6. Demonstrate a high order of skill in analysis, critical thinking, and professional application.

7. Demonstrate creativity and flexibility in the application of knowledge and skills to new situations, to resolve problems and to think rigorously and independently

**Example List of Evidence**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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 2021)  |
| 8 | Team assessment |
| 9 | DISC advanced Profile |
| 10 | Coaching Sessions with subordinates (2022) |
| 11 | One day course: Understanding the VUCA world |
| 12 | Team testimonials |
| 13 | Up dated position descriptions |
| 14 | Etc. |
| 15 |  |
| 16 |  |
| 17 |  |
| 18 |  |
| 19 |  |
| 20 |  |

## Appendix 2: All Units Learning Outcomes

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

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. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)