

Recognising your Competencies

Seychelles Qualifications Authority

National Policy for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning Unit

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1.0 Glossary of Terms

“Appeal” means the formal petitioning, by an appellant, to the Appeals Committee against a decision taken by the Authority.

“Authority” means the Seychelles Qualifications Authority established under section 3 of the SQA Act 2021.

“Board” means the Board of the Authority constituted under section 8 of the SQA Act 2021.

“Competence” means the knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal attributes combined with the underlying understanding to perform all or some of the functions of an occupation or a profession.

“Credit accumulation” means the process of acquiring credits for learning towards a qualification or part-qualification.

“Formal learning” means learning obtained through an organised education and training system from pre-school to a university and validated and recognised through the credit accumulation and transfer system.

“Informal learning” means learning obtained through experience, including at work in enterprises, informed sector employment, daily activities related to paid or unpaid work, family and community life, leisure and volunteering.

“learner” means a person who is acquiring or has acquired knowledge, skills, attitudes, personal attributes or competencies.

“Learning programme” means a structured and purposeful set of learning experiences that collectively leads to a targeted qualification.

“Lifelong learning” means learning that takes place in all contexts of life, formally, informally and non-formally.

“Micro-credentials” mean a record of focused learning achievement verifying what the learner knows, understands or can do and includes assessment based on clearly defined standards and is awarded by an accredited or recognised Provider.

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for education.

“Seychelles National Qualifications Framework” means a comprehensive system approved by the Minister for the development, classification, registration, publication, evaluation and articulation of quality-assured qualifications.

“Non-formal learning” means learning obtained through organised training that are not intended to lead to an award.

“Part qualification” means an assessed unit of learning that is registered by the Authority as part of a qualification, including a course and a unit standard.

“Provider” means an entity that intends to offer or is offering education and training in Seychelles, whether public or private, and registered as such by the ministry responsible for education or the Seychelles Qualifications Authority.

“Professional body” is a membership organisation of regulated experts or practitioners in an occupational field.

“Professional designation” means a title or status conferred by a professional body to recognise a person’s expertise and/or right to practice or operate in an occupational field.

“Qualification” means a registered national qualification.

“Quality assurance” means an ongoing process of evaluating and enhancing the quality of the education system, providers or programme, for ensuring that the required standards as determined by the Authority are maintained and enhanced.

“Recognition of Prior Learning” means 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.

“Resourcing of RPL” means the direct and indirect physical, infrastructural, human and financial capacity needed to build and maintain a mainstream and sustainable national RPL system.

“RPL practitioner” means a person that functions in one or more aspects of RPL provision, including policy development, advising, portfolio course design and facilitation, assessment, moderation, administration, monitoring and evaluation, research and development.

“SQA Act” means the Seychelles Qualifications Authority Act, 2021.

2.0 Acronyms

RPL: Recognition of Prior Learning

SNQF: Seychelles National Qualifications Framework

SQA: Seychelles Qualifications Authority

3.0 Introduction

3.1 The SQA's effectiveness in developing and implementing RPL has been rooted in its emphasis on transparent policies and guidelines, as well as its strong collaborations with a diverse array of stakeholders. Given the recent advancements in RPL both locally and globally, it has become essential to evaluate the existing National Policy for RPL 2017 to guarantee that the SQA, its partners and stakeholders, and especially the Seychellois population can gain from RPL, while also ensuring that the process stays relevant and up to date.

3.2 RPL has already gained prominence in the Seychelles since it was first implemented in July 2018 following approval of the Cabinet of Ministers for national implementation.

3.3 The Seychelles Qualifications Authority Act 2021 defines Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as 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.

3.4 RPL is viewed as the acknowledgment of a person's knowledge, skills, attitudes, personal attributes and competencies acquired during previous education and training, and work or life experience, through the granting of formal credits leading to a qualification, part qualification or Micro-credential for such learning regardless of where the learning was achieved.

3.5 RPL is established to provide access to any potential candidates wishing to seek certification of previous learning experiences.

3.6 Within the context of the SQA Act 2021 and the National Qualifications Framework Regulations 2025, the types of learning that shall be considered for Recognition of Prior Learning shall be namely:

- a) Formal learning obtained through formal education and training;
- b) Non-formal learning obtained through short training courses and workshops;
- c) Informal learning obtained through work experience, self-study, volunteer activities, leisure and life experiences or any other achievements.

3.7 There is universal consensus that language should not be a barrier in the implementation of RPL. Subsequently, the RPL process, including assessment, may be in English, French or Creole, depending on the nature and the level of the qualification.

3.8 RPL may be conducted with both Seychellois and non-Seychellois nationals.

3.9 Portfolios of RPL candidates will be kept by the Authority for at least one year following completion of the RPL process to make provision for appeal by the RPL candidate. These will then be returned to candidates.

4.0 Linkage with National Development Priorities

4.1 This Policy on RPL takes into consideration the need for skills development and employment requirements which are echoed in the following national documents:

- Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019-2033
- Seychelles Vision 2033
- National Employment Policy and Strategies 2014

4.2 All attest to the need for skilled workforce, quality and relevant education, creative workforce, dynamic education system, creation of employment opportunities and flexible learning pathways.

4.3 It is the national's strategy to create a knowledge-based society, promote life-long learning, and open access to all individuals so that they are given the opportunity to reach their full potential. The need to build the skills, knowledge and competencies levels of individuals to enhance employment opportunities is important, and an enabling RPL policy and guidelines will support this initiative.

5.0 Legal Mandate

5.1 The SQA has been mandated through the Seychelles Qualifications Authority Act 2021 (Act 57 of 2021) to: *'establish policy, criteria and procedures for, and monitor the process of evaluation and recognition of, competencies acquired formally, informally and non-formally*

through Recognition of Prior Learning;' (4. (2) (j)).

5.2 The National Qualifications Framework Regulations 2025 stipulates the following: *'The Authority shall — (a) take the overall responsibility for the recognition of prior learning in collaboration with relevant partners and stakeholders; and (b) develop and implement policy and guidelines for the recognition of prior learning.'* (62. 1 (a) and (b)).

6.0 Purposes of RPL

6.1 RPL in the context of Seychelles serves a number of purposes, namely for:

- a) achieving a qualification, part-qualification or Micro-credential;
- b) seeking acceptance into tertiary studies;
- c) job promotion;
- d) salary enhancement;
- e) better job prospects;
- f) meeting qualification requirements of present employment.

7.0 Objectives

7.1 The objectives of this national policy for the further development and implementation of RPL are to ensure the following:

- a) Facilitate access to further study and lifelong learning opportunities, transfer and award of credits leading to certification of qualifications, part qualification and Micro-credentials within the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF), in essence, promoting equity of access and fair chances to all learners.
- b) Provide further development, implementation and mainstreaming of RPL, including its resourcing, effective delivery and quality assurance.
- c) Develop a shared understanding that RPL is real in the Seychelles; it is already happening and can be used as needed to deal with human resource needs and scarce skills.
- d) Provide a credible way of validating and certifying knowledge, skills and competencies;
- e) Provide a basis for the SQA national RPL policy and guidelines document to be developed and reviewed.
- f) Create an enabling mechanism for potential candidates who may be lifelong learners, or potential job seekers to obtain qualifications and/or have their knowledge, skills and competencies validated as part of a qualification or as a Micro-credential.

- g) Promote lifelong learning by recognising all forms of learning outcomes and ensuring that they have value within the national Qualifications Framework.
- h) Ensure that the RPL process is fair, transparent and accessible to all. Providing clear guidelines and standards for implementation.

8.0 Scope of the policy

This policy applies to:

- All sectors of the education and training system and levels of the SNQF.
- SQA, education and training providers (public and private), professional bodies, RPL practitioners, RPL candidates, industry, ministries, private entities and the general public.
- Qualifications, part-qualifications and Micro-credentials registered on the SNQF and offered in the Seychelles.
- Formal, informal and non-formal learning.

9.0 Benefits of RPL

9.1 Benefits to Candidates:

- Allow individuals to be awarded with a full qualification, part-qualification or Micro-credential.
- Avoid duplication of learning.
- Formally recognise the experience and competencies that individuals have gained in a particular field

9.2 Benefits to Education and Training Provider:

- Allow individuals who have gained experience and developed competencies in a particular field to be given the opportunity to become formally qualified.
- Improve flexibility in education and training by providing for alternative learning pathways.
- Establish clear and credible quality assurance guidelines and mechanisms.
- Recognise and validate prior learning, experience, knowledge, skills and competencies acquired in work or life experiences, previous non-formal training and workshop environments.
- Grant formal credit for learning regardless of where the learning was achieved.

9.3 Benefits to Employer:

- Identify and document employee skills, knowledge, abilities and training needs.
- Recognise that different kinds of RPL processes, different purposes for RPL and different RPL assessment models exist.
- Promote employability and increasingly decent jobs.
- Encourage lifelong learning in order to create a competent and skilled workforce.
- Retain employees by recognising their existing skills and experience.

9.4 Benefits to Society:

- Aid in building a qualified and productive society.
- Support efforts towards the provision of equal learning and employment opportunities for all.

9.5 Benefits to the SQA:

- Allow for life- long learning and skills recognition.
- Aid in increasing the number of qualified workforces.

10.0 Guiding Principles for RPL in Seychelles

10.1 The following principles are important elements of a holistic approach to RPL:

- RPL is a credible way of validating and certifying competence. Worldwide it is already accepted as such.
- The core of the RPL process involves mentoring and facilitation, the preparation of evidence through portfolios, assessment and certification. These are supported by mechanisms such as quality assurance, appeals and skills gap training.
- RPL offers an alternative access route into an accredited programme of learning being offered by an educational and training institution in Seychelles.
- Where credit is awarded, it must be based on the assessed evidence of the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired informally and non-formally.
- Information regarding an RPL candidate shall not be divulged to unauthorised personnel.
- There shall be equal and fair treatment of all RPL applicants.
- The focus of RPL is on what has been learned and not on the status of the institution, organisation or place where the learning was obtained.

- Credit is awarded for knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through experience and/or practice. Years of experience and/or practice are not equal to credits or a qualification, part-qualification or Micro-credential registered on the SNQF.
- A certificate awarded through RPL shall be issued by the Provider offering the programme leading to the award and where assessment of the candidate has taken place.
- There shall be no distinction between a certificate obtained through RPL and that of other modes of learning.

11.0 Policy Priorities for Recognition of Prior Learning

11.1 Resourcing of RPL

- a) Resourcing of RPL denotes the direct and indirect physical, infrastructural, human and financial capacity needed to build and sustain RPL programmes and services within the national learning system.
- b) Resources and opportunities must be provided for equitable access to RPL programmes and services in a manner that is consistent with the Government's commitment to redress imbalances that still exist in society and specifically in the labour market.
- c) Government subsidisation and other forms of subsidisation, such as sharing of RPL costs and resources across providers and workplaces shall be identified by the SQA to ensure the sustainable implementation of RPL programmes and services.
- d) The SQA shall develop guidelines for consistent and fair costing of RPL programmes and services in both the private and public sectors. While it may not be necessary (or desirable) to recover the whole cost of the RPL exercise from the applicant, the setting of fees shall be informed by the actual cost.
- e) The SQA shall investigate and promote ways to incentivise the sharing of facilities, staff and expertise across the RPL system and education and training institutions through a mix of strategies.

11.2 Effective delivery of RPL

- a) RPL shall constitute the following-
 - i. application;
 - ii. portfolio development and assessment; and
 - iii. assessment of candidates based on portfolio evidence.

- b) The assessment tools and methods shall be valid and relevant, reliable and consistent, transparent, equitable and flexible, manageable and achievable.
- c) Evidence gathering shall comply with the rules of evidence which require it to be valid, sufficient, current and authentic.

11.3 Quality Assurance of RPL

- a) Quality assurance of RPL is manifested by the adherence to the National policy on RPL and the related guidelines, processes and quality assurance requirements contained in the National Guidelines for the Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning.
- b) The concept of quality in RPL shall adhere to generally agreed quality assurance principles, including qualified personnel, fitness for purpose, transparency, and fair outcomes.
- c) During the second phase of the RPL process, SQA shall quality assure the assessment procedure.
- d) Quality assurance of RPL shall be undertaken with the explicit intention to protect the integrity of the processes and outcomes concerned.

11.4 National Co-ordination of RPL

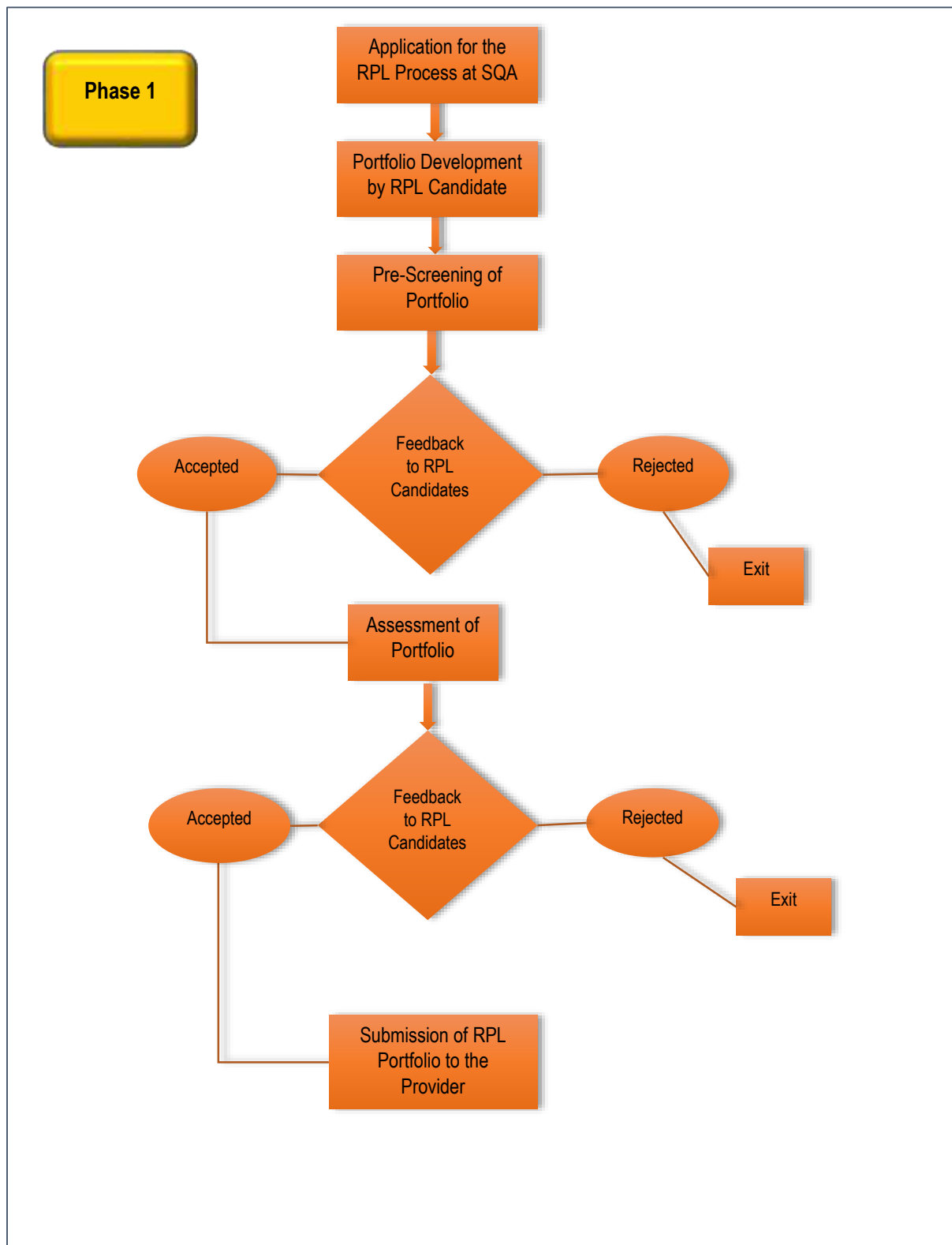
- a) National co-ordination of RPL in the Seychelles is situated in the SQA. If at least 25% of the qualification is sufficiently supported by the sources of the learning in the portfolio, the RPL candidate is referred to the relevant education and training provider for the second phase of the process.
- b) In keeping with global trends, the SQA shall co-ordinate RPL in the following areas:
 - i. Research: Encourage, co-ordinate and disseminate RPL-related research.
 - ii. Professionalisation: Initiate and encourage the training and continuing professional development of RPL practitioners and guide and support the professionalisation of RPL practices within the education and training system.
 - iii. Support and advice: Provide support and advice to partners, stakeholders and RPL candidates and disseminate best RPL practice including successful models and guidelines.
 - iv. Monitoring and evaluation: Conduct monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the RPL policy.
 - v. Advocacy and marketing: Co-ordinate communication mechanisms for sharing RPL praxis with Government, professional bodies, partners and other stakeholders.

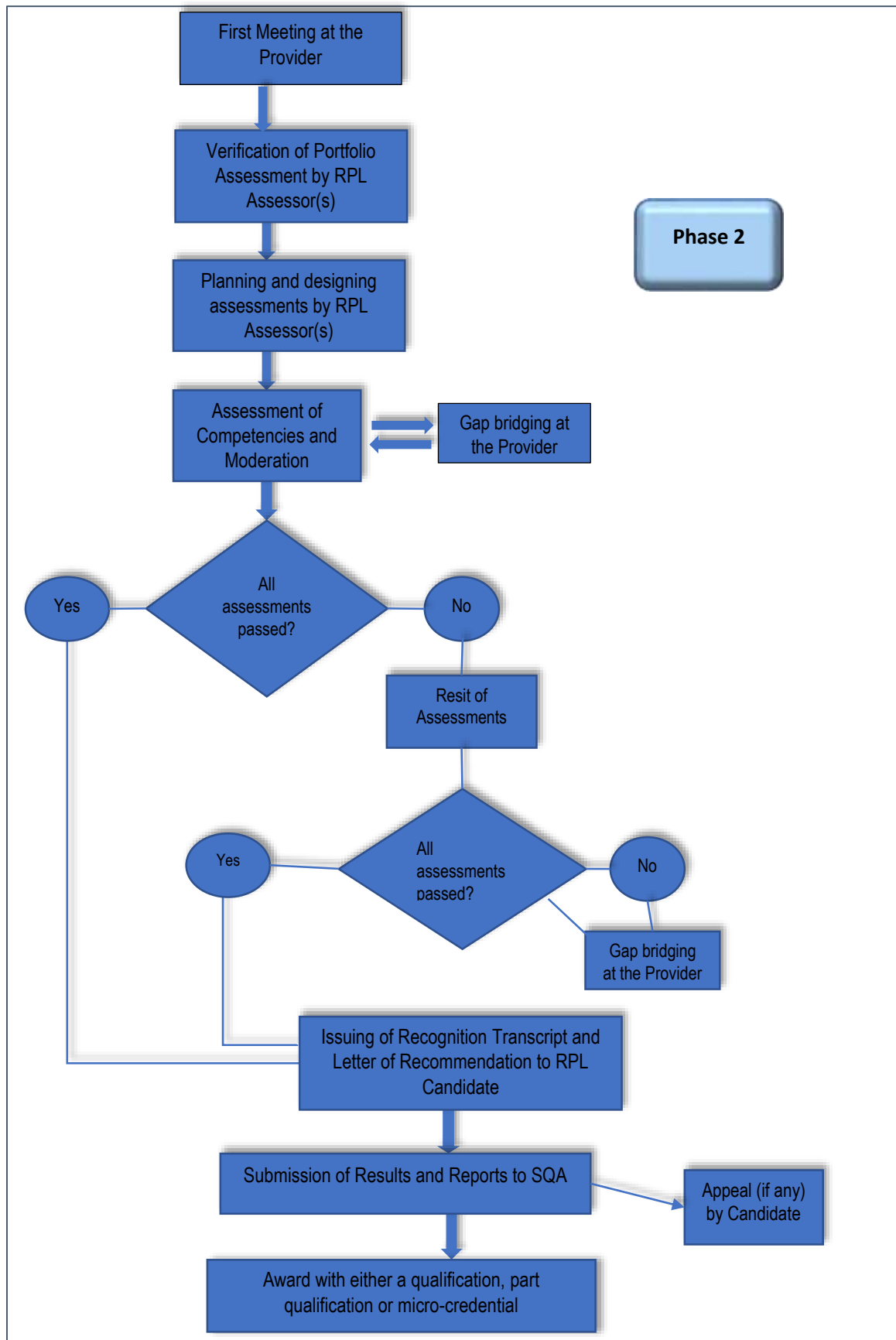
12.0 Types of Assessments

12.1 The types of assessments may vary. Assessments can include, but are not limited to:

- Practical demonstration
- Oral questioning
- Written examinations
- Research
- Case studies
- Assignment
- Role Plays
- Simulation

13.0 The RPL Process Pathway (Schematic)





14.0 Responsibilities for the Implementation of RPL

14.1 Responsibilities of RPL Candidates

The RPL Candidates shall:

- meet the criteria set by SQA to be enrolled in an RPL process.
- develop a portfolio under the guidance of an RPL Co-ordinator, trained and registered with the SQA.
- submit the portfolio to the Initiator on the agreed deadline for submission.
- accept responsibility as an equal partner in the RPL process.
- respect the processes and procedures of assessment of provider institutions and workplaces.
- accept responsibility to attend any preparatory session and gap bridging organised by the Provider.
- appeal to the SQA in writing if aggrieved by an element of the RPL process undergone not later than thirty working days after completion of the process.

14.2 Responsibilities of the SQA

The SQA shall:

- co-ordinate, monitor and quality assure the implementation of the RPL process.
- advertise the process of RPL to potential candidates, in consultation with education and training providers, through the use of various media to raise awareness of possibilities offered by RPL to the populace.
- be responsible for registration of applicants for the RPL process and shall keep records of applicants.
- be responsible to identify, train and register RPL Practitioners for the RPL process.
- maintain a database of information and records of RPL candidates.
- provide advice, counselling and support services to assist RPL candidates throughout the process.
- undertake a programme of sensitisation to advocate the principles and processes of RPL.
- maintain a database of registered RPL practitioners.
- recognise qualifications, part-qualifications and Micro-credentials obtained through the RPL process.
- develop guidelines on fees and allowances for RPL.

14.3 Responsibilities of Education and Training Providers

The Education and Training Providers shall:

- be responsible to implement the second phase of the RPL process.
- evaluate the RPL candidates following assessment of their portfolios.
- be responsible to conduct assessment, ensuring that resources and facilities required for the assessment are available.
- develop their institutional RPL policies and procedures in accordance with this policy and National Guidelines on the Implementation of RPL.
- ensure that they have the necessary staff capacity to deliver quality RPL services and programmes.
- organise gap bridging for the RPL candidates.
- progressively develop and enhance their capacity to undertake RPL process.
- foster close working relationships with Ministries, work organisations and professional bodies where appropriate, to facilitate RPL.
- provide advice, counselling and support services to assist RPL candidates
- ensure an equitable fee structure for RPL processes, programmes and services in accordance with the SQA policy on fees for RPL.

14.4 Responsibilities of RPL Practitioners

RPL practitioners are the Initiators, Co-ordinators, Assessors and Moderators who have been trained and registered with the SQA.

RPL practitioners shall:

- be required to adhere to the requirements as set out in this policy on RPL.
- meet professional requirements, including the participation in continuing professional development activities initiated or organised by the SQA or the community of RPL practitioners.

14.5 Responsibilities of the Initiator

The Initiator is the Officer of the SQA responsible for RPL.

The Initiator shall:

- provide potential RPL applicants with explanation on the RPL process and application procedures.

- assist the individual with registration and enrolment formalities.
- identify RPL Co-ordinators to assist the RPL candidates with portfolio development and lead the process of portfolio assessment.
- organise the first meeting between the RPL Co-ordinator and the RPL candidate
- organise visit to RPL candidates during the compilation of portfolios.
- pre-screen the portfolio in collaboration with the RPL Co-ordinator and make recommendations to the SQA Chief Executive Officer for the acceptance or rejection of the candidate.
- inform the RPL candidate on the results of the portfolio pre-screening.
- compile the list of portfolios for assessment, identify Assessors for portfolio assessment and oversee the portfolio assessment process.
- forward accepted list of RPL candidates to the relevant Provider institution for the next phase of the RPL process.
- attend the first meeting organised by the Provider for the second phase of the process.
- monitor and quality assure the second phase of the RPL process at the educational and training provider.

14.6 Responsibilities of the RPL Co-ordinators

The RPL Co-ordinators shall:

- assist the RPL candidates with the portfolio development.
- provide guidance to the candidate and ensure that relevant information and documents are collected as evidences that can be matched against the unit standards/learning outcomes making up the qualification, part-qualification or Micro-Credentials.
- organise a maximum of six (6) meetings with the RPL candidates, which will include site visits.
- assist the Initiator with the pre-screening of the RPL Portfolio.

14.7 Responsibilities of the Focal persons

The Focal persons shall:

- liaise with SQA for any communication in regards to RPL.
- provide updates to the SQA on RPL candidates during the second phase of the process.
- contact the RPL candidate and sets a date for a first meeting at the Provider.

- nominate a group of two to four RPL Assessors to assess the competencies of the RPL candidate.
- appoint person to take on the role of the main Assessor.
- conduct the first meeting with the candidate and the Assessors.
- monitor the assessment process.
- distribute the Recognition Transcript, Letter of Recommendation, Letter of Reference to the RPL candidate.

14.8 Responsibilities of the Assessors

Assessment of portfolio

The Assessors shall:

- assess the portfolio for a candidate.

At Institutional Level

The Assessors shall:

- inform the RPL candidate about the assessment requirements in terms of the units/competencies to be assessed.
- provide the candidate with the necessary materials to prepare for the assessment(s).
- support and guide the candidate in producing and compiling additional/supportive evidence.
- help the candidate to plan and prepare for the assessment(s).
- inform the candidate about the timing of assessment(s).
- plan the assessment(s) and make decisions about the assessment methods, instruments, evidence required, etc.
- design the assessment(s).
- prepare the RPL candidate in accordance with laid-down policies and procedures.
- conduct assessment(s) in all fairness.
- make assessment judgements against the criteria of the unit standards/learning outcomes/qualification.
- confirm the outcome(s) of the assessment(s).
- provide feedback to the RPL candidate with regard to assessment outcomes.
- record results and complete the administrative requirements as established by the institution and the SQA.
- evaluate the assessment process by:

- ✓ the use of specially-designed evaluation instruments to invite feedback from the RPL candidate and other role-players.
- ✓ reviewing the entire process with other Assessors.
- ✓ making appropriate changes which could include recommending changes to the unit standard or qualification.
- ✓ using assessment results to evaluate the learning programme and strategies used.

14.9 Responsibilities of the Moderators

The Moderators shall:

- ensure that assessment practices are conducted according to laid down codes of conduct and promotes the quality of learning.
- verify that assessments are conducted according to the principles of good assessment practice i.e. that they are fair, valid, reliable, practicable and credible, and aligned to the principles of outcomes-based learning and registered unit standards/learning outcomes/qualifications.
- evaluate the design of assessments and assessment instruments, and recommending reviews as necessary, both prior to, and after the assessment.
- identify and investigate inconsistencies, irregularities or appeals in the delivery and assessment of learning.
- evaluate the performance of Assessors and ensuring that practices and judgements are consistent, reliable and credible.

14.10 Responsibilities of the Government

The Government shall:

- provide funding and resources for the implementation of RPL.
- promote and support the RPL process.

14.11 Responsibilities of Industry

The Industry shall:

- provide resources and facilities for the assessment of the RPL candidates particularly in the case of specialised materials and equipment. The industry may be reimbursed for this service by the provider institution subject to prior agreement.

- request RPL for its employees. In such a case, the industry is responsible for chargeable fees.

14.12 Responsibilities of Professional Bodies

Professional Bodies shall:

- develop their internal RPL policies. Where professional bodies are not in a position to perform this function, they may request developmental support from the SQA.
- include a RPL route as an integral requirement for attainments of their professional designations.
- collaborate with the SQA, relevant government departments and the providers to incentivise and advance quality RPL provisioning in the country.
- progressively develop and enhance their capacity to initiate and support RPL provision in accordance with this policy.

15.0 Effective Date of Implementation

15.1 This National Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) 2025 comes into effect on the date of its approval by the Board of the SQA.