


Recognition of Prior Learning Policy Madzivhandila College of Agriculture

Ref: S.6/P

2017 Reviewed Edition

Date of approval: 11 September 2017

Recommended by:


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Head of Department

(Maisela, RJ)

2017-09-07
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Date

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Hon MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development

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11/9/2017
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1. Acronyms and abbreviations

DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
HOD	Head of Department
LDARD	Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
MEC	Member of Executive Council
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority

2. Executive summary

This Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy recognises the value of prior learning and establish the way of addressing prior learning. The Policy document sets the purpose of the Policy out in clear terms and links it to the steps necessary for achieving the intended objectives.

The different forms of RPL are described and the criteria to be used during assessment is discussed in detail.

3. Introduction

Historically higher education institutions gave access to an elite flow of students, focussing mainly on school leavers with good matric results (which acquired exemption). In light of the access and admission policy guidelines as laid down by South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), having a matriculation pass may only be used as guideline and not as reason for refusal of admission into a learning programme. Hence, the need arises for the recognition of prior learning as a tool for access into the College of Agriculture.

Due to the national directive that Colleges of Agriculture should take the approved Norms and Standards for Agricultural Training Institutes into consideration when developing Policies, alignment to these Norms and Standards has been applied to this Policy.

4. Purpose and objectives

Although access (to be accepted into the College) is the primary objective for the RPL Policy, the following objectives are important:

- 1) To assess the competencies (skills and knowledge) that the candidate may have in place which will enable him/her to enter the higher education sector – despite not meeting the formal entrance requirements of the College.
- 2) To assess the competencies (skills and knowledge) that the candidate may have in place which will enable him/her to enter into a learning programme at a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level higher than the qualification already obtained by the candidate (I. e: Diploma in Agriculture)
- 3) To assess the competencies (skills and knowledge) that the candidate may have in place which will enable him/her to obtain course exemption for credits obtained from another institution.
- 4) To assess the competencies (skills and knowledge) that the candidate may have in place so that he/she may be awarded credits for any part of a learning programme that he/she is to enter at the College.

5. Authority

This RPL Policy for Madzivhandila College of Agriculture, is issued under the custodianship of the Hon Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Agriculture and Rural Development in Limpopo and the Head of Department (HOD) as Accounting Officer of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (LDARD).

6. Legal framework

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- Green Paper on Agricultural Training Institutes
- Admission Policy of the College

7. Scope of application

This RPL Policy applies to all students and farmers (learners on skills programmes) who registers at Madzivhandila College of Agriculture for higher education qualifications and need to qualify in terms of the criteria set for the recognition of prior learning. Therefore: Students and those who are on learnership programmes.

8. Definitions

College:	Refer to Madzivhandila College of Agriculture
Staff members:	Refer to all persons who are employed at the College
Students:	Refer to all persons registered for higher education qualifications at the College
Learnership:	Refer to a short course
Candidate:	Refer to the person applying for RPL (prospective student)
Normal learning process:	Refer to training/learning other than that obtained through the prior learning experience
College of Agriculture:	For the purpose of this policy, College of Agriculture (to replace Agricultural Training Institute) will be used until such time when the approved Norms and Standards document for Agricultural Training Institutes is fully implemented.

9. Policy Pronouncements

9.1 Provisions of the RPL Policy

In order to achieve the objectives of this RPL Policy, procedures for the objective appraisal of students who do RPL submissions, need to be implemented.

The followings steps direct the procedure:

- 1) A written request for RPL must be submitted (in writing) to the Head of Academic Affairs. (I. e: Vice Principal: Academic Affairs)
- 2) A meeting with relevant staff and the Head of Academic Affairs will be arranged to assess the potential for a successful RPL application.
- 3) If the possibility for success is high, an assessment plan is agreed on in collaboration with the candidate (I. e: forms of assessment as well as proposed date and venue for assessment.)
- 4) The request will be submitted to the Agricultural Tertiary Institutions RPL Committee who will appoint assessors.
- 5) The competencies of candidates will be assessed according to the following criteria:
 - a) Relevance: Relevance (or applicability) of learning experiences to objectives of the College's programme.
 - b) Validity: Is there a sound relationship between the prior learning and the requirements of the College's programme? Is the claimed prior learning still valid and applicable?
 - c) Quality: Is the prior learning at an acceptable level and does it conform to the outcomes of the College's programme?
 - d) Transferability: Can the learner/applicant interpret what he/she has learnt and also transfer and apply it to other situations.
 - e) Verification: Can the claimed prior learning be verified by authentic and relevant documentation and evidence (portfolio)?
- 6) Further evidence may be required by the assessors and must be provided by the candidate at request.
- 7) If the RPL process is unsuccessful, the candidate may appeal to the Principal of the College who will forward it to an independent assessor as appointed by the College.

Forms of RPL include:

The following forms of RPL may be used (but the list is not exhausted):

- a) Assessment Instruments (Challenge examination)

- b) Portfolio of Evidence
- c) Interview (oral)
- d) Recognition of formal learning at another institution

9.2 Principles/Rules

The following principles/rules apply:

- a) To obtain course exemption, 80% of the syllabus or curriculum will have to be covered.
- b) To obtain a College qualification, at least 50% of credits have to be obtained at the College through the normal learning process.
- c) Credits awarded, are only valid 5 years (after which the credits will be forfeited if the candidate has not completed at least another 120 credits towards the qualification through the normal learning process.)
- d) Nay credits obtained through the RPL process, may not be acknowledged at another College/Institution.
- e) Colleges will not issue qualifications on RPL alone, but may give access to the qualification (e.g. a person may gain direct access into the Diploma in Agriculture, but the candidate will not be issued with a Higher Certificate in Agriculture.
- f) The acceptable fee must be paid prior to any assessment being conducted.

9.3 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation as well as advocacy of this RPL Policy will be conducted by Madzivhandila College of Agriculture itself.

9.4 Dispute resolution

Any disputes in relation to this Policy, its application and implementation shall be managed in line with the College's dispute resolution and grievance mechanisms.

10.Default

No deviation from this RPL Policy will be allowed.

Should there be a need to deviate from the prescripts of this Policy, it will only be allowed after:

- i) Written motivation for the request to deviate has been submitted to the HOD of the LDARD

- ii) Written permission for the deviation has been provided by the HOD of the LDARD

11. Inception date

The inception date of this Recognition of Prior Learning Policy is the date of approval – as indicated on the cover page of this Policy document.

12. Termination and review

This Policy will be reviewed every three years (or as and when a need arise) and may be replaced by a transversal Policy presented by Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) at any time.

Should the Policy still be in the review process by the time it lapses, an extension period is applicable and the approved Policy remain valid until the reviewed version is approved.

13. Enquiries and reporting

All enquiries regarding this Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, should be directed towards: Madzivhandila College of Agriculture at 015 962 7200.

The specific College of Agriculture is responsible for the timeous review, circulation, advocacy, availability and feed-back regarding this policy document. The specific College of Agriculture is responsible for reporting towards oversight bodies in the event of enquiries with regards to this Policy document.

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