



1. TITLE: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

- 1.1 Policy reference: CO-A-001-03
- 1.2 Category: Academic – Admission
- 1.3 Approval date: December 2024
- 1.4 Approved by: Chief Executive
- 1.5 Effective date: 1 January 2025
- 1.6 Review/Revision date: December 2027
- 1.7 Unit responsible: Learning Team

2. Policy declaration

Purpose

Registrars may apply to have some of their previous training, and/or postgraduate qualification/s recognised as credit towards requirements of the General Practice Education Programme ('GPEP' or 'the programme') at the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners ('the College').

3. Background

3.1 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Set out the principles that guide RPL gained prior to enrolment in the GPEP.
- Prescribe the credit that may be awarded via RPL against both the academic and experiential learning components of the GPEP.
- Outline the requirements and limitations of the RPL application and award processes.

3.2 Scope

This policy defines the RNZCGP principles for recognising prior learning, who may apply, the eligible categories of learning and possible application outcomes.

3.3 Out of scope

Registrars seeking recognition of learning completed while actively engaged in the GPEP and Rural Hospital Medicine (RHM) training programme.

4. Definitions

All definitions are available in the College's *Academic Regulatory Framework for Quality Assurance*.

5. General policy

5.1 RPL

RPL is the formal recognition of an individual's learning, and/or postgraduate qualification/s obtained prior to entry to the programme. The RPL process formally assesses previously completed structured experiential learning and/or qualifications and may result in award of credit and exemption from one or more clinical experience or education components of the programme. RPL is approved at the absolute discretion of the College. Applications are to be made at any time from starting in GPEP 1 through to within 3 months of entry to GPEP 2. Applications outside of this time frame will not be accepted. Applications must be made on the

relevant RPL Application form with payment of a non-refundable application fee. Applications will not be assessed until the fee has been received.

5.2 RPL may be awarded for:

- i. training completed as part of a previous admission to the programme completed within the five years immediately preceding application for (re)admission to the programme.
- ii. training completed and qualification(s) obtained under the supervision of another specialist medical college in Australia or New Zealand.
- iii. training completed and qualification(s) obtained under the supervision of an equivalent overseas specialist medical training provider / authority, if deemed comparable to the programme.
- iv. training completed and a qualification obtained under a non-general practice medical vocational training programme of sufficient relevance to general practice.
- v. experience undertaken as part of formal specialist general practice training, where:
 - the qualification is not considered comparable to the GPEP; or
 - the qualification has been deemed not equivalent to the GPEP by the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ), after their consideration of an application for provisional vocational registration.
- vi. a postgraduate certificate or diploma or higher qualification completed that is relevant to general practice.

6 RPL Process Principles

6.1 Reliability

The RPL processes must be academically sound, robust and reliable. Outcomes of RPL must be of a standard consistent with assessment in the GPEP.

6.2 Evidence-based

An applicant seeking credit via RPL must provide sufficient and relevant evidence of their learning experiences in order to:

- demonstrate that one or more of the GPEP Domains and / or courses have been achieved; and
- enable the assessor to judge the validity and equivalence of the experience.

7 Assessment of RPL Principles

7.1 Validity

The learning experience must be relevant to the training program. Validity of the learning experience is assessed for its alignment with the relevant RNZCGP curricula standards, with consideration of content, level of training and clinical / medical experience.

7.2 Currency

The learning experience must have been completed no more than five years prior to entry to the relevant RNZCGP training program to ensure currency.

7.3 Comparability

Credit may be awarded for learning experiences that are comparable with those of the GPEP in terms of content, breadth of experience, level of responsibility, rigour of learning requirements, assessment process, supervision and quality of the situation where the learning took place.

7.4 Sustained experience

Credit may be awarded for experience undertaken over a sustained time period of at least one continuous month, unless a minimum approvable training period is otherwise stipulated in the relevant training programme handbook.

8 Eligibility criteria

8.1 RPL will not be considered for clinical experience undertaken:

- I. during a period of 'on hold' in the programme.
- II. within Australia and New Zealand prior to completion of all requirements for general registration, or registration in a general scope of practice, with the relevant regulators from the respective jurisdictions.

8.2 All general practice registrars who receive a reduction in required clinical experience as a result of RPL must still meet the minimum four-tenths clinical time requirement of the programme for all years while enrolled in the programme.

9 Outcomes

9.1 RPL may entitle the applicant to one or more of the following:

- I. reductions or exemptions in the GPEP Year 2 requirements relating to clinical time requirements
- II. exemptions in requirements relating to the academic component.

9.2 The maximum amount of credit awarded from RPL will not normally exceed 12 months equivalent of full-time training undertaken over a maximum 24-month period.

10 Reconsideration, Review and Appeals

10.1 Rights of appeal and procedures on appeal can be found in the Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy (CO-A-002-06).

11. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required in the event of legislative changes or requirements. The policy may also be changed because of other amendments.

12. Procedure

Registrar responsibility with college support (if required)	
Step	Recommended Timeframes
1. Reads and is familiar with the Recognition of Prior Learning and/or Cross Credit Policy to first determine suitability.	Upon confirmation of enrolment in the programme.
2. May seek initial advice and guidance from the College.	If required, advice should be sought as soon as confirmation of enrolment on the programme is received.
3. Determines the specific scope of the programme the RPL is being applied for. This may include reductions or exemptions in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPEP year 2 and 3 clinical experience requirements • Written and/or clinical examinations • The academic component 	On commencement of the programme.
4. Gathers relevant, valid and sufficient evidence to support the application. This may include curriculum vitae, certified ¹ copies of medical qualifications, academic transcripts, training details, programme syllabus, references.	On commencement of the programme.
5. Formally applies to the College for consideration of RPL. This includes completion of the Recognition of Prior Learning/ Cross Credit Application Form and provision of all supporting documentation. Application is to be accompanied by the prescribed fee.	On commencement of the programme and at least within 3 months of commencement in GPEP 2.

¹ Copies must be certified by a Fellow of the College, or a Justice of the Peace

College responsibility – Assessment of RPL Application	
Step	Timeframes
1. The College acknowledges receipt of the RPL application form and supporting evidence.	Within five (5) working days of receiving the application form.
2. An initial assessment of the application is undertaken by relevant College staff to check that it is complete, including all relevant documentation. The registrar may be contacted for additional information and documentation.	Within ten (10) working days of receiving the application.
3. Once the application has been checked for completeness, it is sent to the College Academic Assurance Team and Clinical Lead for evaluation.	Within ten (10) working days of receiving the complete application.
4. The Academic Assurance Team, and the Clinical Lead completes an evaluation of the application and evidence to determine an equivalent match against components of the programme.	Within twenty (20) working days of receiving the application from the College.
5. If required, following the evaluation the College may need to contact the registrar for additional information and documentation.	As appropriate.
6. The College Academic Assurance Team and the Clinical Lead recommend an outcome to the Manager Academic Assurance. The outcome will result in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit/exemption of specified programme requirements • No credit/no exemption of programme requirements 	Within ten (10) working days after completing the evaluation.
7. The Manager Academic Assurance reviews the recommended outcome for moderation purposes and approves the final recommendation.	Within ten (10) working days after receiving the recommended outcome from the Academic Assurance Team, and the Clinical Lead.
8. The registrar is formally notified in writing of the outcome decision.	Within ten (10) working days after completing the peer review process.

College responsibility – Assessment of RPL Application	
Step	Timeframes
9. The outcome decision is recorded on the College database.	Immediately following the formal notification of the outcome decision to the registrar.
10. If the registrar is not satisfied with the outcome, they may formally appeal the decision. The Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Process applies.	Within ten (10) working days of receiving the formal outcome decision from the College.

Note: All correspondence relating to RPL applications, including the application form and associated documentation must be saved by the College into the registrar's file