

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Concept & Guidelines

*A Draft discussion document
Final Draft 1*

Presented to; NSDA, EU India Skills development project

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1 Preamble

This Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Concept & Guidelines document is linked to the draft RPL policy document developed for the India-EU skills development project.

The governing legislation for RPL at this time is the India NSQF Notification No 8/6/2013-Inv. This notification states that *“RPL is the process of recognising previous learning, often experiential, towards gaining a qualification”*.

Globally, RPL plays a critical role in the skills development process, by establishing a system that can provide individuals access to recognition of their learning, not previously available.

RPL is supported through the India EU Skills Development Project by the following;

- *A Draft RPL Policy*
- *A Draft RPL Concept & Guidelines manual (this document)*

Both documents are in draft version for comment, & it is expected they will be amended in line with feedback following stakeholder consultation.

The RPL concept and guidelines proposed reflects current best practice of RPL and is a living model allowing for development and changes to the RPL concept and the supporting guidelines in the light of RPL experiences in India.

2 Background

India has set itself the target of skilling 500 million people by 2022. To this end, in 2009, the Government adopted the National Skills Development Policy (NSDP), which aims to guide the skills development strategies and initiatives of all stakeholders (MoLE, 2009).

The NSDP is central to the creation of the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF).

A unified NSQF has been developed by the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) over the course of 2012 and 2013. This has been done with the support & assistance of the India-EU Skills Development Project.

The overall objective of the project is to improve the quality and relevance of training provision and the number of certified skilled workers in various sectors of employment in India.

In this regard RPL plays a key role given the number of individuals working outside the formal sectors and plays a critical role in providing recognition for an individual’s learning and skills obtained during their life.

3 Purpose

The purpose of the RPL Concept & Guidelines is to provide the necessary foundation to support and guide all those involved with the delivery of quality RPL services, products and outcomes.

4 Scope

The scope of the RPL Concept & Guideline will cover the all the stages of the RPL process and will provide guidance for candidates, RPL practitioners, assessment providers and other stakeholders.

The RPL Concept & Guidelines and will reflect & support the *India EU Skills development project RPL Policy document*.

6 Management Responsibility

The RPL Concept & Guidelines is intended to support a cost effective, quality assured, client friendly RPL system. Those implementing and managing RPL are responsible for the development, auditing and maintenance of the RPL system and the supporting documents in partnership with all staff.

7 Quality System

The *RPL Policy and the RPL Concept & Guideline* are components of an overall Quality System which will be approved for use by the NSDA. The Quality System is intended to be;

- a) *Appropriate for use in India by the India EU skills development project, the NSDA and all appropriate stakeholders*
- b) *Supportive of their commitment to comply with its requirements and continually improve the RPL Policy and the RPL Concept & Guideline*
- c) *A framework for the establishment and review of RPL objectives*
- d) *Communicated and understood within the India EU skills development project the NSDA & the key project stakeholders.*
- e) *Continually reviewed for suitability*

8 RPL Concept & Stages

The Recognition of Prior Learning process (RPL) has been introduced and applied by many countries primarily to *facilitate the social inclusion and rapid uplifting of persons with learning and skills gained in the non-formal & informal environments.*

People in the non-formal & informal sector *comprise the majority of those working in India today*, yet they may have little or no recognition for the learning and skills they possess. Along with this, there are unemployed persons who may wish to get recognition for the learning they already have, but which is not recognised or certificated.

This lack of recognition excludes them from making a better living or entering the formal education process. RPL in the formal sector is applied mainly for access to learning opportunities, certification and for employment progression purposes as detailed below.

8.1 RPL for recognition of experiential learning

Many people have learning gained in a range of situations. These situations can include learning through, for example, community support activities, sport, and the workplace. Such learning may be not certificated as it occurred outside of a formal learning process.

Nevertheless, all learning has value and should be recognised no matter when where or how the learning was achieved.

8.2 RPL & employment

Employers use RPL in order that both they and their employees benefit from the process.

RPL is used in such cases to;

- *Advise employees on matching their skills and knowledge to existing qualifications and national occupational standards*
- *Facilitate employees in using their existing skills and knowledge for career development, progression and mobility*
- *Assist workers to identify existing skills they possess that may be relevant to new functions in their job role.*

This is achieved through the use of a range of processes to identify and match skills & learning to existing National/Sector/Job standards, including:-

- *Validating the scope and relevance of an individuals practical skills through the use of tests and interviews, mapping skills & learning to a National/Sector/Job standard, observing tasks, and structured discussion.*
- *Mapping prior learning, knowledge and skills against learning outcomes of NOS/units of qualifications for entry to employment*
- *Verification of evidence*

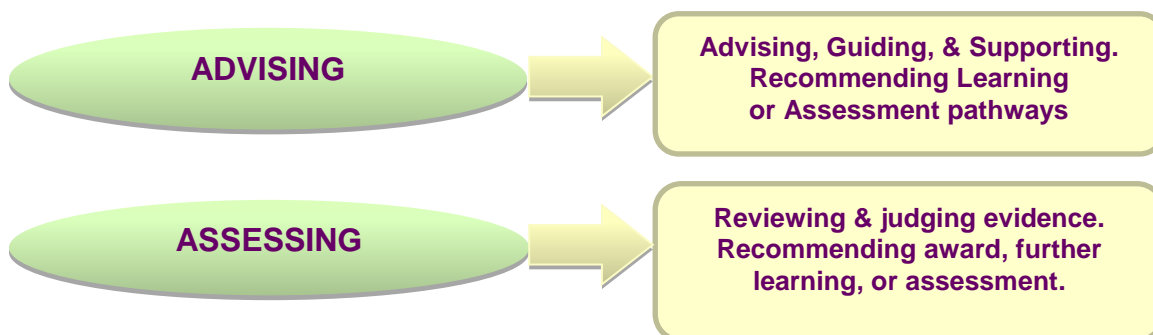
8.3. RPL & education

Individuals use the RPL process to gain recognition for the existing learning they have, in order that they may:-

- *Gain entry to formal education & training based on existing learning*
- *Obtain formal recognition Certificate/Award based on existing learning*

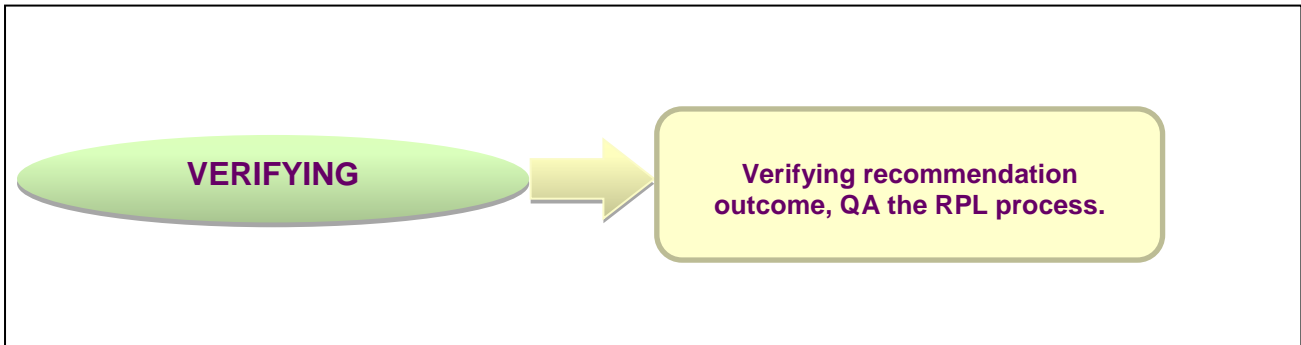
Figure 1 outlines the proposed stages of RPL stages proposed and requires qualified & competent practitioners (Advisor, Assessor & Verifier) to implement & manage them.

Figure 1 RPL Stages



Both Advising and Assessing are generally full time processes from the start of each process, whereas the verification process is carried out on a planned but random basis.

Verifying is a part of the Quality Assurance function role similar to that carried out by Education inspectors. It is proposed that the verification process is carried out on a percentage of advisor process and the advisors performance, along with assessment judgements and on the assessors performance leading to judgements.



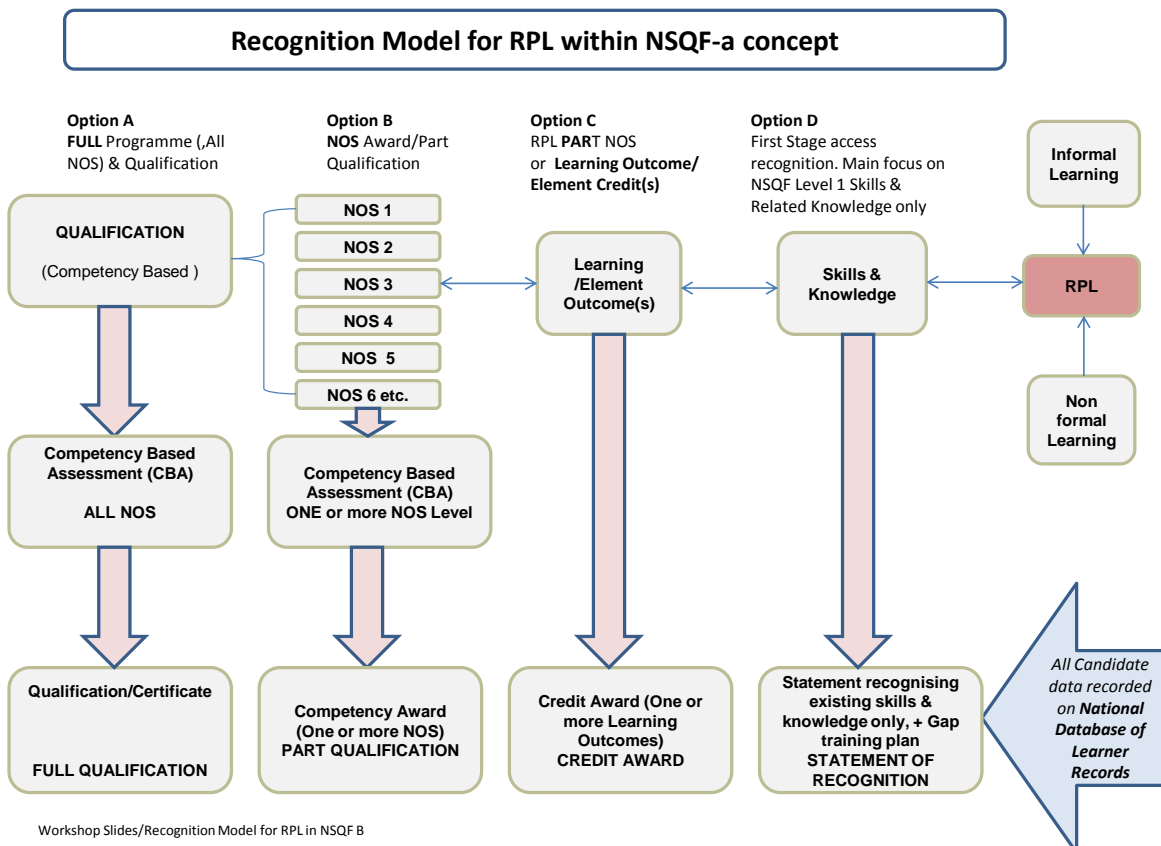
As a process RPL helps to meet the needs for skills development & social inclusion thereby uplifting many people and helping to improve the availability of skilled persons in India.

In short, RPL is a supported assessment process, implemented by qualified practitioners and is based on approved National qualifications and standards that result in the recognition of an individual’s learning.

The National Skills Qualification Framework of India (NSQF) “organises qualifications according to a series of levels of knowledge, skills and aptitude. These levels are defined in terms of learning outcomes which the learner must possess, regardless whether they were acquired through formal, non-formal or informal Learning.”

Figure 2 details an RPL concept for discussion, and based on the NSQF requirements.

Figure 2 RPL Concept model



Workshop Slides/Recognition Model for RPL in NSQF B

In proposing this RPL concept model, consideration is given to a number of issues, not least being the reality in the market place, whereby *workers in many sectors, particularly in the unorganised sector, may not comply with the full scope of the requirements of a National Occupation Standard (NOS), which are developed mainly for use in a formal learning environment.*

The bulk of those with non-formal and informal learning reside in the unorganised sector, and can be unemployed. *RPL will need to provide them with a model that enables them to progress.*

The RPL concept in *Figure 2* identifies *four options* ranging from recognition against a full qualification through to recognising a candidates skills and knowledge, obtained through non formal and informal learning.

Option D of the concept model details this approach, and proposes a model that can identify & recognise the existing/job skills and knowledge that such workers may possess.

Currently this option is targeted at workers aspiring to Level 1 NSQF recognition.

The approach proposed is to apply the RPL process, in the first instance, for judging skills and related knowledge only, that may be Level 1 compliant, and to record such attainment in the candidate's portfolio, for later recording on the **National Database of Learner Records (NDLR)**.

The RPL concept also allows that *Gap or Bridging* training needs are identified. If the primary focus is on Skills & Knowledge learning recognition in Option D, then the focus of the identified training may focus on the remaining components at Level 1.

This may be mainly but not exclusively focused on, writing, reading etc. as contained in the Core/Generic skill component at level 1 NSQF.

Care should be taken that RPL, while possibly identifying small elements of learning due to the limited experience of the RPL candidate (e.g. skills & knowledge only, as a part of a Learning outcome), *that gap or bridging training planned for should be at Module/NOS level for cost effectiveness.*

In summary, the draft RPL concept proposed, allows for learning recognition based on;

- **Skills & Knowledge** residing within a Learning Outcome of a NOS (**Option D**)
- **Learning Outcome(s)** recognition as contained within the relevant NOS (**Option C**)
- **NOS** recognition as contained within a full qualification (**Option B**)
- **Qualification** recognition (**Option A**)

The draft RPL Policy, Concept & Guidelines is intended for adaption for use in line with promulgated Laws/Regulations for TVET Assessment & Certification Policy in India, which supports the NSQF.

There are many definitions of RPL, including the definition in the NSQF notification referred to previously.

Below are some definitions from bodies responsible of Education & Training.

UNESCO, the United Nations Education Scientific & Cultural Organisation states that RPL is *“the formal acknowledgement of skills, knowledge, and competencies that are gained through work experience, informal training, and life experience”*

CEDEFOP, the European body responsible for Vocational Education & Training policy, states that RPL is *“The confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard. Validation typically leads to certification.”*

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, India through the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) states that;

“Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the formal assessment and recognition of the skills and knowledge a person has regardless of how or where the competencies may have been attained, that is, through formal or informal training or work experience (paid and unpaid) voluntary work and life experience”.

The **NSQF Notification No. 8/6/2013-Invt.** states that *“RPL is the process of recognising previous learning, often experiential, towards gaining a qualification”*

There are many more definitions of RPL, but what is clear is that **RPL as a concept is focussed in recognising that all learning has a value learning no matter when, where or how it has been acquired.**

The *RPL Policy, Concept & Guidelines* will support the development & implementation of RPL along with supporting manuals, guides and instruments approved for use.

Annex 1 of this concept & guideline details a generic RPL process and covers **Advising, Assessing, Verifying.**

9 RPL Guidelines

These RPL Guidelines have been developed to support users of RPL and form a component of the RPL Quality System. The draft guidelines are developed based on existing information and will be amended over time and are detailed within the following Sections in this document.

Section A.	Accreditation of Institution & Workplace Assessment sites
Section B	RPL Implementation & Practitioner Guidelines
Section C	Certification, Awards, Credits, and Statements of recognition
Section D	Development of RPL Materials & Instruments
Section E	Funding of RPL
Section F	National Database of Learner Records (NDLR)
Section G	Marketing & Advocacy

Section A Accreditation of Institution & Workplace Assessment sites

In supporting a sustainable RPL system, it is first required that all institutions providing RPL services are accredited to provide these services. This is in line with best practice Education & Training systems worldwide.

The RPL system proposed can take place in an assessment centre/institution, a training centre or in the workplace. Providers of RPL services will be accredited in line with the accreditation procedures agreed in the QA system. RPL Assessors and advisors employed in an accredited Assessment centre will be permitted to provide RPL services in the workplace.

Where assessment takes place in the workplace, the workplace will be registered as a provider of assessment services.

RPL sites should provide candidates with RPL options, based on their non-formal & informal learning/experiences.

These options include the following:-

- a) **Access** (to learning and employment)
- b) **Award** (credits, full or part qualification)
- c) **Progression** (within a programme of learning or within employment)

The purpose of accreditation is to ensure conformity on all aspects of quality pertaining to RPL and all assessment issues.

Accreditation instructions and guides should cover the following;

- *Capacity of the Institution or workplace to deliver RPL services with regard to the sufficiency and quality of its Human, Physical & Financial resources.*
- *Practitioners Qualified in line with National/Sector policy & Qualifications*
- *Performance of the institution or workplace over time in the provision and delivery of RPL services.*

Accreditation Policy will need to be developed and approved by all stakeholders.

The India EU Skills Development project will develop accreditation guidelines covering assessors and institutions.

Any Institution or entity providing RPL will be required to have sufficient RPL resources (physical, human, financial) necessary to provide a professional & Quality Assured RPL service.

Annex 2 of this RPL Concept & Guideline details a generic Accreditation Process

Section B RPL Implementation & Practitioner Guidelines

B.1. RPL Implementation issues

RPL implementation can occur in a range of *accredited* environments, including the workplace, through a provider of RPL services, or in a learning institution. In line with best practices, an RPL service provider will put in place a schedule of RPL services on offer in the RPL/Assessment Institution. Such a schedule will need to address the following;

- a) Scope of services (What sectors/jobs the RPL service will cover)*
- b) Marketing plan (Use of print, radio and other media to reach market)*
- c) RPL Fee structure*
- d) Timetable of RPL services*

It is important to plan RPL to be implemented on an managed individual basis when assessment is taking place. Clarification of evidence presented is best implemented on an individual basis.

This does not exclude the assessor from scheduling more than one person for assessment, providing that sufficient time is given to ensure that each candidate is assessed in line with the guidelines for assessment.

Parts of the advising process can be done with groups of candidates, where the candidates are claiming recognition that is job, or qualification related.

The RPL service provider will also need to have in place sufficient resources that enable the RPL assessment process to take place. These resources will cover the following at a minimum;

- a) *Portfolio of evidence materials (including candidate details etc. This and other recording means can be in paper or electronic form)*
- b) *Practitioner instruments per occupation/NOS/Learning Outcome or Element.*
- c) *Learning action planners, where gap or bridging training is required.*
- d) *Database of Learning providers.*
- e) *Sufficient human, financial & physical resources available to implement the planned RPL service*

The outcome of the RPL Implementation process can include one of the following recommendations;-

- *Access to a formal education & training programme*
- *Access to employment or progression within employment*
- *A Qualification award*
- *A Part qualification award*
- *A Record of credit against learning outcomes*
- *A Statement of Recognition*

For issue issues of cost effectiveness, it is recommended that the advising process takes place using groups of candidates during the briefing stage.

This stage will set the scene for the candidates, be non-qualification specific and used for clarification of what RPL is about.

This stage will also allow for the identification of issues such as individual candidates being suitable/unsuitable for progression through the advisory stage.

In many cases potential RPL candidates are unsure of the RPL process and do not conform to the requirements for RPL processing. The briefing stage addresses this and identifies those suitable for further processing through the Advisory stage and onto the Assessment stage if successful.

All RPL instruments will have been approved for use as a part of the accreditation process.

B.2. Practitioners

RPL implementation is dependent also on having in place *Qualified RPL practitioners*. This will be in line with the **accreditation requirements**.

RPL policy and guidelines will identify the Practitioners required.

These practitioners will be:

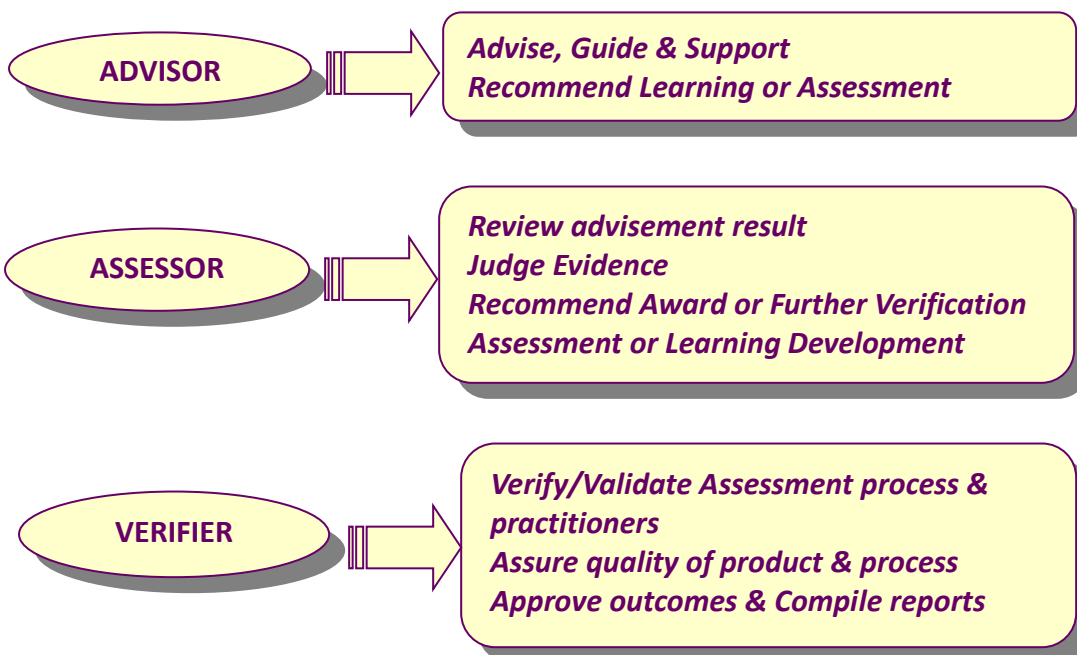
- *Occupation Qualified*
- *Practitioner Qualified (Advisor, Assessor, Verifier)*

Qualifications will need to be developed and approved for use for each of the agreed RPL practitioner functions.

There are three primary stages in the proposed RPL system, with each stage supported by a competent RPL practitioner as detailed in figure 3 below. As referred to earlier in Figure 1, the verification process is a planned but random process that supports assures the quality of the advisory and the assessment processes in line with existing practices in education.

- **Advise (Advisor)**
- **Assess (Assessor)**
- **Verify (Verifier)**

Figure 3 RPL Practitioners



Qualified Practitioners help to secure **the integrity, reliability and sustainability** of the RPL process.

The decision on whether to have in place the three Practitioners listed above is dependent on the National body responsible for RPL, and it is possible to conflate the roles of the Advisor and the Assessor.

In any event, the functions of Advising and Assessing an RPL candidate will still need to take place.

All RPL services are based on approved National Qualifications and/or National Occupation Standards.

All quality assured activities require proof or evidence of completion and the programme covered and the recommendations made.

Practitioners themselves may progress to the Award stage via the RPL process

Qualified practitioners will be required to develop and use instruments in carrying out their functions. Whether they are advisors, assessors or verifiers, *the instruments they use will need to be approved for use in line with guidelines relating to the development and application of such instruments.*

B. 2. 1. Advisor Guidelines

A primary and defining stage in RPL is the **advisory** stage, developed to provide support to candidates with non-formal and informal learning.

The advisor plays a key role as the **gatekeeper into the RPL Assessment process**. Advisors will need to make decisions concerning a person's claim and the evidence they provide.

Advisors are assisted in their functions through the use of standardised instruments/documents/records.

Advisor Instruments should be designed to reflect the outcomes of questions and decisions from the advisory process.

A list of typical supporting documents for the advisor is included in Table 1

Advisors will be Qualified against the Qualification/NOS for the Advisor & registered on the NDLR.

The role of the Advisor is to:

- *Assist candidates to understand the RPL process and its benefits*
- *Assist candidates to gather and compile their Portfolio of Evidence*
- *Critically Review the evidence being provided by the candidate to support their claims for recognition, through structured questioning*
- *Agree & record the next stage with the candidate using the instruments provided – remember, - the Advisor is NOT the Assessor.*
- *Assist and support the candidate through to the next stage of the RPL process – either Assessment or Further Learning.*

Compile a Portfolio of Evidence

Where there are no literacy issues, it may be useful to use the Portfolio process to gather and document the candidate's evidence. Otherwise evidence should be provided in visual form, for example by demonstration, use of pictures, drawings etc. In either process questioning will be used to support any physical evidence.

In any event it is required to gather the personal details of the RPL Candidate for record purposes

The purpose of the Portfolio is to gather & record candidate details & the evidence presented that is relevant to the claim for recognition being made by the candidate. The Portfolio can be in paper or electronic format. The advisor will use a range of instruments and approaches in order to gather the information and evidence to support the claim. The advisor will;

- *Record the candidate's personal details, education & training history including non-formal and informal learning and their employment history.*
- *Brief the candidate on the process and Benefits of RPL.*
- *Work with the candidate to extract the evidence required to support the claim*

Orientate the Candidate to the required NOS

The purpose of Orientation at the Advisory process is to clarify the candidate's comprehension of the required Standards against which they are making claims.

- *Review and discuss the appropriate registered Qualifications and Standards with the candidate*
- *Check the candidates knowledge and comprehension of the evidence criteria against which the candidate will be assessed*
- *Resolve any problems arising, so that the candidate is clear how the Advisory process works.*

Match Claims

The purpose of Matching Claims is to agree with the candidate the claims that the candidate is making, matched against the appropriate Qualification &/or Standard(s)

Matching is based on the information and evidence provided by the candidate.

- *Review the Portfolio details, in particular employment and Learning history to back up the claims the candidate has made. Support the candidate at all times through this process using a friendly inclusive manner.*
- *Question the detail of the claims. This questioning process should be applied using an open question style for clarification purposes and to assist the advisor make candidate progression decisions. The advisor is not determining the competence of the candidate – this is the role of the assessor, should the candidate progress to the assessment stage.*
- *Record all decisions made on the Match Claims form and sign off. This becomes evidence in the assessment stage.*

Plan Progression

The purpose of Planning Progression is to *close the advisory stage* of this process by **agreeing an action plan** that progresses the candidate to the next stage of the RPL process- whether this is to Assessment or to Learning development. The advisor will;

- *Summarise and check that there is agreement with the candidate on all the Planning outcomes*
- *Agree the progression of the candidate to either Assessment or Learning Development.*
- *Record this agreement on the Candidates Action Plan. Both the Advisor and the Candidate will sign and date the action plan.*
- *Progression to assessment requires selecting and recording the Competency Standards that the candidate will be assessed against.*
- *The candidate will be provided with an appointment for assessment indicating the time, date, venue and contact details.*
- *The dates agreed per group of candidates for assessment will be recorded on the Assessment Schedule-Group.*
- *Where gap or bridging training is required, this is agreed planned for & recorded in the candidate's record.*

The *Advisement Instruments* can include the Portfolio of Evidence, Matching Claims check-sheets, background occupational questions and sample answers are other inputs provided to assist the Advisor, to plan the progression of the candidate to either Assessment or to Further Learning.

Table 1 contains an indicative list of documents used by the advisor at each stage.

The Advisor as a professional

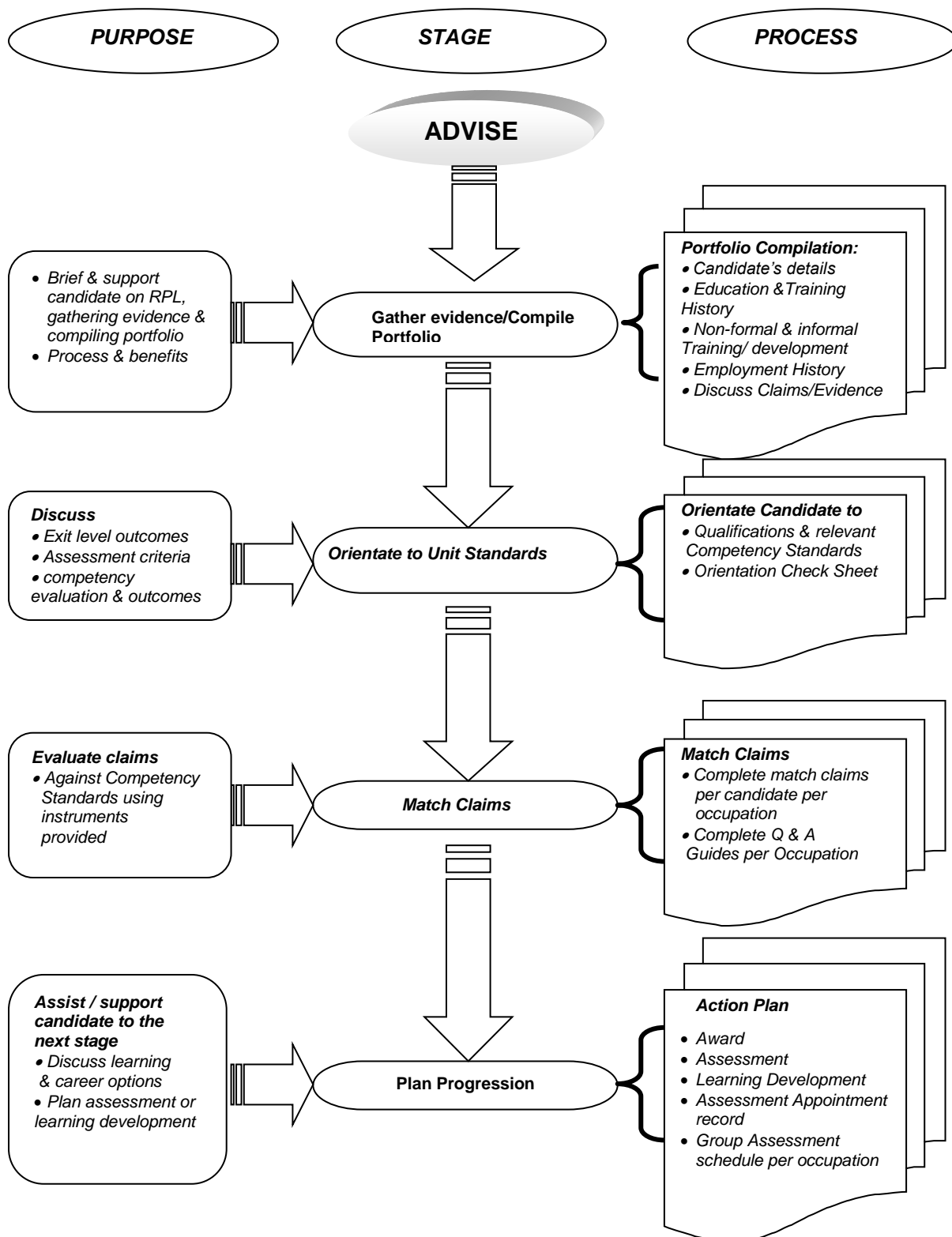
No matter what the situation Advisors are presented with, they must be professional, fair and impartial in all decisions. On the one hand the progress people will make is effected by the decisions you made by the Advisor-on the other hand, scheduling people for assessment that do not have the evidence to back up their claims is a waste of money and time, and does no favours to the people making the claims.

Advisement Outcomes

The outcomes of the Advisory process are either a recommendation to Assessment or to Further Learning.

Figure 4 summarises the Advisory Purpose, Stages and Process

Figure 4 RPL Advisory process



B. 2. 2. Assessor Guidelines

The Assessor is the *judge of the evidence provided* by a candidate as their claim for recognition, following the Advisory/Evidence gathering process. In the first instance the assessor will judge the Advisors recommendations.

Assessors are assisted in their functions by the use of standardised instruments/documents/ records.

A list of typical supporting documents is included as *Table 2*.

Assessors will be qualified against the Qualification/NOS for the Assessor & registered on the NDLR.

The Role of the Assessor

The Role of the Assessor is to:-

- *Prepare the candidate for the assessment*
- *Brief and advise and instruct candidates on the assessment process*
- *Orientate the candidate to the Qualification/National Occupation Standard requirements.*
- *Review/authenticate the evidence provided*
- *Plan for the assessment*
- *Select relevant assessment instruments*
- *Make assessment decisions*
- *Record assessment results*
- *Make recommendations*
- *Generate suitable action plans*
- *Provide inputs to any appeals*
- *Evaluate the way in which the assessment was conducted*

The assessment process covers a review of the evidence provided by the candidate to the Advisor. The assessor will brief the candidate on the assessment process they will follow. The assessment process chosen will depend on a range of factors including the scope and value of the evidence provided by the candidate. The qualified assessor is best suited to make this decision.

Review Evidence

The assessor will review the evidence presented, and accept or query the recommendations made by the advisor.

Where the Assessor *does not accept* the advisors recommendations, both the Advisor & Assessor must meet to clarify and agree the following:-

- *The completeness of the Portfolio of Evidence and/or*
- *The relevance and sufficiency of the evidence provided*
- *Other related issues*
- *A way forward*

The result of this meeting should be recorded and agreed by the Assessor and the Advisor. Where the verifier or other person is involved in managing this discussion, their name(s) should also be recorded.

Orientation

The assessor will conduct a comprehensive orientation to the Qualification/NOS or Learning Outcome against which the claim for recognition is being made. This will be a more technical Orientation than that conducted by the advisor.

- *The assessor will orientate the candidate to ensure the candidate is fully aware of the requirements relating to assessment criteria and quality judgements that will be made by the assessor*
- *The results of the orientation stage are recorded as and signed off by the candidate and the assessor.*
- *Maintain this **record as evidence***

Plan & Implement Assessment

It is critical that the candidate clearly understands the RPL assessment process, and their role in this process. The candidate should be provided with detailed Instructions, either written or verbal, and the assessor should ensure that sufficient resources are available to support the implementation & judgement process.

The candidate will be briefed regarding general and specific Instructions to assist the candidate understand what is required in the presentation of the evidence and its evaluation/ judgement

The form/type of evidence judgement /assessment to be used will be agreed by the candidate and the assessor.

In general, an assessment that verifies the claim by simulating the skills required in a job situation, backed up by supporting process knowledge, will provide the assessor with sufficient evidence upon which to make a judgement.

In this regard, it is critical that the assessor is occupation qualified and also qualified as an assessor.

When conducting an assessment against a claim made, it is preferable that standardised Assessment Instruments are used by the assessors. The use of the standardised instruments allows for the validation of assessment data and instruments.

Annex 3 to these guidelines provides an example of an Integrated Assessment Instrument.

Integrated Assessment instruments (IAI's) contain the tools and other judgement/assessment criteria used in evaluating the quality of the evidence provided. Each IAI will assist the assessor in the making of judgements in an integrated manner involving the skill, relevant/required knowledge and other components required for a comprehensive assessment.

The assessor will record where insufficient evidence is provided, and relate this to the appropriate Learning Outcome.

Each IAI will also contain guide questions and model or typical answers to assist in this process.

Assessors should compile their own bank of assessment instruments, necessary to provide a quality assured evidence judgement process.

IAI's will also contain details and materials to enable a further verification assessment to occur, where award judgements cannot be made due to non-complying evidence.

These further verification assessment assignments will contain some or all of the following -

- *Drawings/pictures/other visual media containing the detail of the assessment assignment*
- *Technical verification Question examples covering essential embedded knowledge*
- *Verification Question examples covering the required learning outcomes*

The RPL guides and instruments are based upon judging evidence of learning outcomes achieved against the requirements of the relevant National Occupation Standard. This can lead to a recognition decision.

*The instruments the assessor will use will assist in the judging of the evidence in an integrated manner. All judgements will be recorded and depending on the scope of the assessment, a record of **judgement decisions against each Learning Outcome** within each National Occupation Standard/Qualification.*

Evidence Review Record

An evidence review record provides the record of decisions leading to a judgement, and is also a record of such judgements. The Evidence review record is completed by the Assessor and the Candidate. The Assessor will:

- *Record the types of assessment used in judging the evidence*
- *Record against the evidence provided, if the evidence is Valid, Authentic, Sufficient and Current.*
- *Be a basis for a recommendation leading to **further verification assessment, learning development, or an award recommendation**. Assessors will make, record and sign off the recommendation, along with the candidate, in the **Candidates Action Plan***
- *Maintain the **Evidence Review Record as proof** of the Assessment decisions made.*

*This record is **proof of the judgement** or assessment of evidence, as recorded by the Assessor and agreed by the candidate.*

Evaluate Outcomes

The Assessor will finalise judgement decisions, agree this with the candidate and record this as the record of achievement on the candidates file.

*If, for example there are three Learning Outcomes that the candidate has provided sufficient evidence for, but one Learning Outcome where the evidence does **not meet the requirements**, the assessor can ask the candidate to complete a Further Verification Assessment.*

The outcome of this process is a recommendation by the assessor.

Record Recommendation

Where sufficient evidence is provided the assessor will make a recommendation leading to an award.

Where the evidence **does not meet the requirements** for award recommendation purposes the assessor can **recommend Gap training/Learning Development** and will need to record the Learning Development needs in the candidates **Action Plan**.

This plan needs to be agreed with the Candidate.

Appeal

Where candidates do not accept the recommendation, the candidate can appeal the recommendation, in writing to the awarding body. This should be done within one month of the recommendation being issued.

The appeal will be based on the evidence provided by the candidate during the assessment process, and the evidence review records signed by the candidate and the assessor.

The appeal judgement will be made in writing by the awarding body and will be final.

Table 2 is an indicative list of documents used by the assessor at each stage.

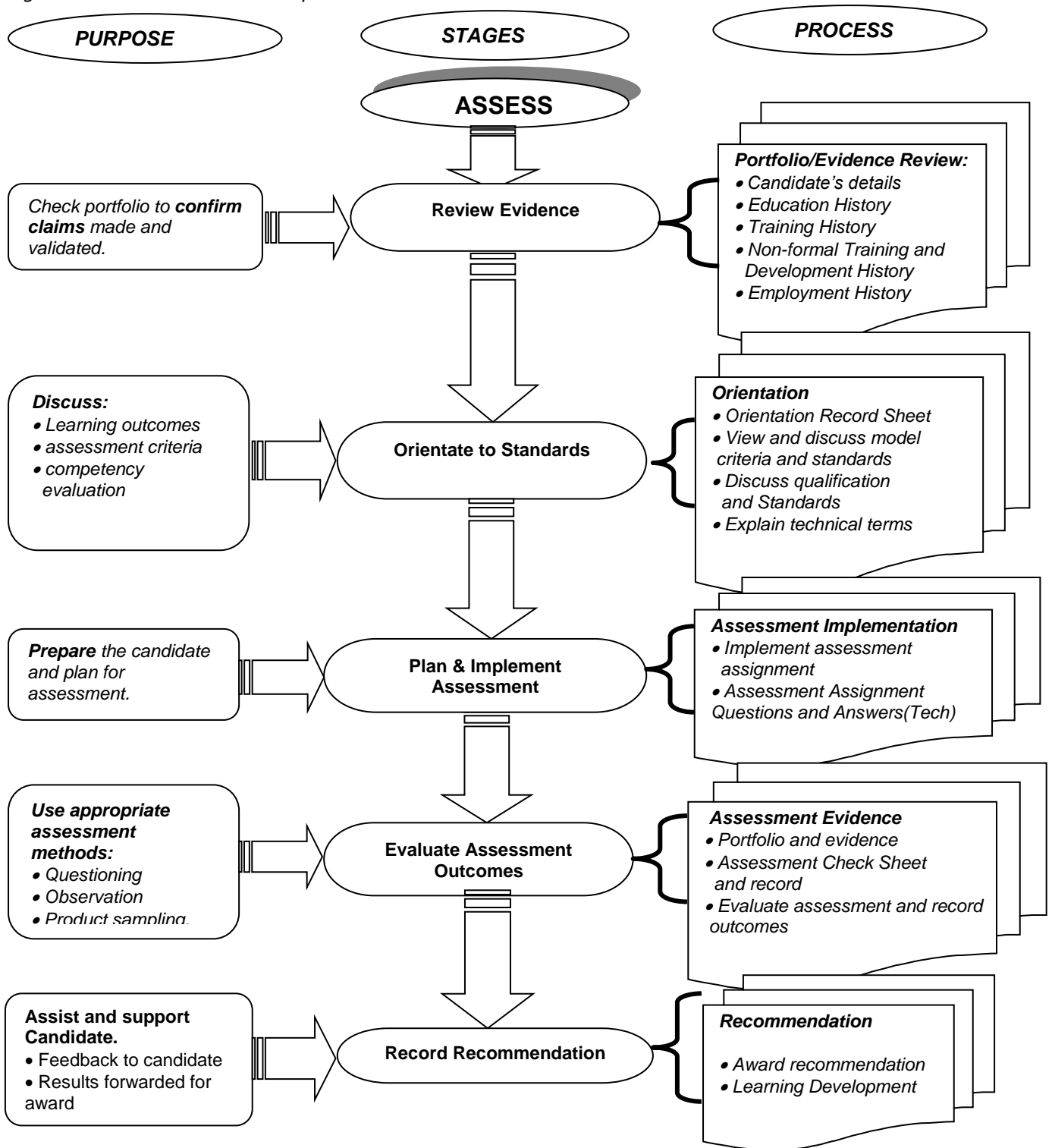
The Assessor as a professional

As a **qualified and registered Assessor**, the Assessor is expected to provide decisions that are *fair and impartial, and are agreed with the candidate*. The Assessor is also expected to do this in a professional manner, and in a way that is open to verification or query.

To achieve this, the Assessor will be qualified both as an Assessor and in the Occupation that the Assessor is making judgements on. The Assessor must ensure that the decisions taken regarding the acceptance or rejection of the sufficiency, validity, currency and authenticity of a candidate's evidence are recorded in the candidate's portfolio, or other approved RPL record.

Figure 5 summarises the RPL assessment purpose, stages and processes.

Figure 5 RPL Assessment process



B. 2. 3. Verifier Guidelines

The Verifier supports the RPL process through reviewing the overall RPL process in an independent manner. The Verifier underpins the credibility and relevance of the RPL process/result to the Quality Assurance body, Awarding body, the candidates, the provider, and to the broad community. The Verifier will need to put in place the operational systems of checks and balances that assure this process and its outcomes.

Verifiers are assisted in their functions by the use of standardised instruments/documents/ records.

A list of typical supporting documents is included as *Table 3*.

The Verifier can be an internal Verifier or a Verifier from outside the RPL institution.

Whether the Verifier is internal or external, they will be Qualified in line with the Verifier Qualification or Standard and be registered with the appropriate Quality Assurance body.

The role of the Verifier is to:

- *Assure the quality of the RPL process, the instruments used and outcomes recommended when RPL has been implemented within an enterprise or institution providing RPL services.*
- *Conducted the verification in line with the QA policy on assessment.*
- *Review the RPL process with candidates and the other RPL practitioners and obtain their feedback.*
- *Record and report on the RPL process*
- *Approve or put on hold recommendations made, prior to the issuing of certificates.*

(In line with standard practice, once a certificate has been issued, it may only be withdrawn on grounds of fraud)

Verifiers will liaise with **other practitioners** within their enterprise or institution that are involved with the qualification process and have regular **meetings** with them to plan and schedule the RPL verification process and to resolve outstanding issues including candidates with special needs.

The Verifier will gather & provide data on an agreed basis that verifies the quality of the results and the assessment process. Reports will be provided by Verifiers to the appropriate awarding body.

All Verification reports will contain data resulting from:-

- *Candidate feedback*
- *Advisors*
- *Assessors*
- *Awards data*
- *Instruments used*

- *Data capturing quality & integrity*
- *Further Verification Assessment assignments*
- *Learning Development progression plans*
- *RPL Process Observation*

The Verifier will;

- *Schedule the verification process by agreement with the RPL institution & practitioners*
- *Observe the RPL process at various stages*
- *Record & log non compliances*
- *Resolve non-compliance issues locally*
- *Record and report outcomes to resolve non compliances*
- *Collect, analyse, organise and evaluate information.*
- *Plan, prepare and conduct verification.*
- *Advise and support practitioners.*
- *Review verification systems and requirements.*
- *Prepare external verification requirements.*
- *Report according to procedures.*
- *Approve or amend RPL outcome recommendations*

Table 3 is an indicative list of documents used at each stage of the verification process.

The Verifier as a professional

As a member of the RPL practitioner team, Verifiers will carry out their duties in a quality assured manner that assists in supporting the other team members and results in candidates having a fair and comprehensive RPL service. The Verifier links to the Quality Assurance / Awarding body plays a key role in supporting the credibility and relevance of RPL.

Figure 6 Verification process

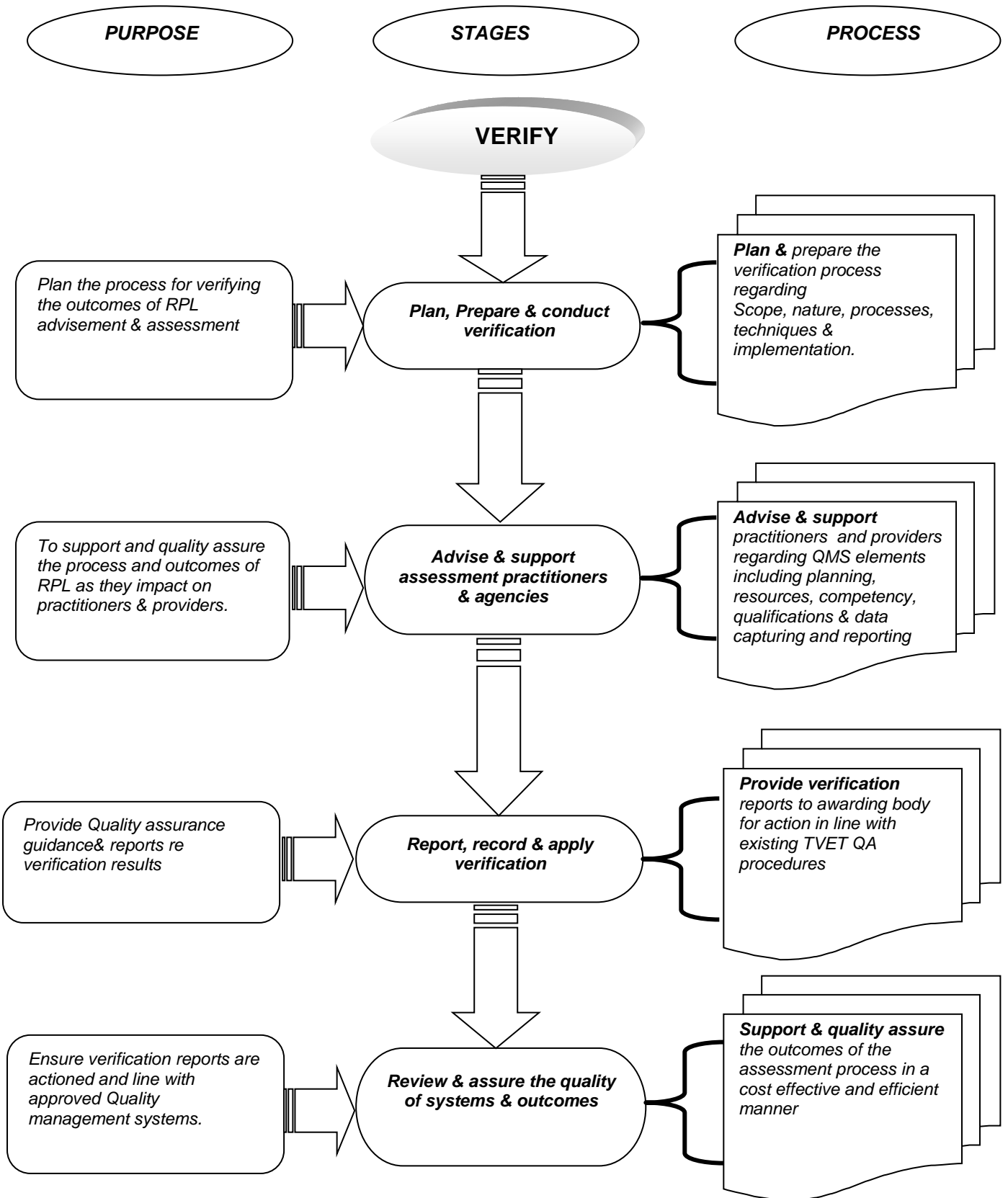


Table 1 Advisor-process & documents log

Advisory Stage	Portfolio of Evidence	Requirements	Forward to & use by
Compile Portfolio >>	Candidates Details	Complete & Signed	The completed Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) document will be forwarded to the assessment centre administrator. The administrator provides the PoE to the assessor when progression to assessment is recommended, or it is filed until Learning Development is Implemented. The Administrator logs the data onto the RPL Database provided.
	Education History	Complete with evidence & signed	
	Training History	Complete with evidence & signed	
	Non-formal informal Training & Development	Complete with evidence & signed	
	Employment History	Complete with evidence & signed	
	Evidence Attachments	Checked & Attached	
	Additional Evidence Log	Checked & Attached	
	Evidence Summary Record	Checked & Attached	
	Contact Log	Complete & Signed	
Orientate to Standards>>	Orientation Check Sheet- Advisory Stage	Complete & Signed	
	Qualification & Standards	Clarify & Signed	
Match Claims>>	Match Claims Sheet per Occupation	Clarify & Signed	
	Claims Validation-QA Guides per Occupation	Clarify & Signed	
Plan Progression >>	Scheduling Time-Table for Assessment	Agree, record & signed	
	Assessment appointment slip	Agree, record & signed	
	Action Plan per Candidate per Occupation	Agree, record & signed	

Table 2 Assessor-process & documents log

Assessment Stage	Evidence Judgement	Requirements	Forward to & use by
Review Portfolio of Evidence >>	Candidates Details	Complete & Signed	The completed Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) document, including the evidence provided, the judgements recorded on the Evidence Review Records and the Action plan will be forwarded to the administrator for verification scheduling The administrator/verifier will provide the awarding body with the NDLR data requirements The Verifier logs the assessment data onto the RPL Database provided.
	Education History	Evidence checked, judged & signed	
	Training History	Evidence checked/judged & signed	
	Non-formal informal Training & Development	Evidence checked/judged & signed	
	Employment History	Evidence checked/judged & signed	
	Evidence Attachments	Evidence checked/judged & signed	
	Additional Evidence Log	Checked & Attached	
	Evidence Summary Record	Checked & Attached	
	Contact Log	Complete & Signed	
Orientate to Standards>>	Integrated Orientation to technical requirements	Complete & Signed	
	Qualification & Standards assessment criteria	Clarify & Signed	
Plan & Implement Assessment>>	Match Claims Sheet per Occupation	Assess, record & Signed	
	Claims Validation-QA Guides per Occupation	Assess, record & Signed	
	Evidence provided	Assess, record & signed	
Evaluate/Judge Assessment outcomes >>	Evidence provided	Judgements feedback, recorded & signed	
	Assessment Instruments	Judgements feedback, recorded & signed	
	Evidence Review Records	Judgements, feedback, recorded & signed	
Recommendation>>	Action Plan per Candidate per Occupation	Agree, record & signed	
	Candidate Records	Input to RPL Database	Administrator/Verifier

Table 3 Verifier-process & documents log

Verification Stage	Verification	Requirements	Forward to & use by
Plan, prepare & conduct verification >	Plan & prepare the sufficiency, manageability & relevance of a verification regarding Scope, nature, processes, techniques & implementation.	Plans are approved and in line with the QA policy on assessment	All plans to be forwarded to the provider administrator and copied to the appropriate QA body
Advise & support assessment practitioners & agencies	Advise & support practitioners and providers regarding QMS elements including planning, resources, competency, qualifications & data capturing and reporting	Plans detailing the advice and support schedules and content are agreed and in line with QA policy in assessment	All plans to be forwarded to the provider administrator and copied to the appropriate QA body.
Report, record & administer verification	Provide verification findings to responsible role players for action in line with existing QA procedures	Reports regarding verification and RPL quality assurance should be developed in line with QA policy on assessment.	All reports to be forwarded to the provider administrator and copied to the appropriate QA body.
Review & assure the quality of systems & outcomes	Support & quality assure the outcomes of the assessment process in a cost effective and efficient manner	Ensure verification reports are actioned and in line with approved Quality Management Systems.	Verification recommendation compliance records are maintained by the provider and copied to the appropriate QA body.

Section C Credit Transfer, Certification, Awards, Credits, Statements of recognition

C. 1. Credit Transfer

“Credit transfer is the process of recognising prior learning that has been credit rated by the assessment & certification bodies to do so. The transfer of credit points from one qualification or learning programme into another helps to minimise duplication of learning.”

(NSQF notification No. 8/6/2013-Invt)

The importance of credit transfer in supporting RPL is critical. Being able to accumulate credit for learning through the RPL process provides the basis for progression by the learner.

This is true whether the learning forms the whole or a part of a NOS or a Learning Outcome/Element, the recognition and recording of the assessment outcome is critical.

The NSQF notification (9 i) supports the transferring of accumulated credits. Credits or credit points can have a particular reference to the notional hours allocated to learning and learning attainment. Where sufficient required credits are accumulated, this may lead to certification or an award.

There may be a need to consider what process best suits the supporting the allocation of credits to all qualifications, NOS and Learning Outcomes/Elements within NOS, particularly when applying RPL using option C or D.

A Credit points system will allow for the accumulation of credits, progression to an award as detailed in Option B.

Such a system will need to be incorporated into the National Assessment & Certification system legislation, for future use during the RPL process.

C. 2. Statement of recognition

A statement of recognition is one that is provided to an RPL candidate, where skills and knowledge are judged as insufficient for an award, but identify skills, knowledge and learning by the candidate within one or more learning outcomes.

Section D Development of RPL Materials

D.1 Types of RPL Materials

RPL materials consist of those instruments and records used by RPL Practitioners during the RPL process. These materials are taken from the databank of assessment materials developed over time by the practitioners, and referenced to specific qualifications.

As a part of their practitioner qualification, RPL practitioners are required to be competent in the development of such materials.

RPL materials will be developed and referenced to each NOS & stored in a safe secure environment in line with existing QA procedures.

These materials can include;-

- *RPL marketing materials*
- *Candidate Portfolio (paper or electronic)*
- *Advisor Instruments per NOS by Learning Outcome/Element*
- *Assessor Instruments per NOS by Learning Outcome/Element*
- *Verifier Instruments*

D.2. Maintaining the RPL databank.

The source of the RPL materials will be the databank. This databank will be referenced to the NSQF Qualifications register. The databank will be developed to include a range of questions and related media including drawings, pictures etc. organised by type and qualification for use in the development of standardised RPL instruments.

The databank will be continually updated to provide a reliable & secure source of assessment materials for use in the RPL process.

Maintaining the RPL databank will be done in line with the QA procedures governing the National Assessment & Certification system.

Section E Funding of RPL

With RPL primarily targeted at the unorganised sector in India, the issue of funding for RPL is critical. The issue of cost payment by candidates will impact on the throughput of numbers looking to enter the RPL process.

Funding provided through sector bodies for RPL services can assist with opening up the opportunity for potential candidates that may otherwise not be available to them. This also allows the sector bodies to manage the numbers coming through the RPL systems and existing with award recommendations.

The draft RPL Policy states that RPL resources should “include the provision of sufficient Physical, Human & Financial resources”

It may be necessary that separate regulations are needed in support of providing sufficient resources. Such regulations can address these issues as a separate, but critical matter.

Section F National Database of Learner Records (NDLR)

It is planned to establish and maintain a Qualifications register, which will be “the official national public record of all qualifications aligned to NSQF levels, qualification pathways and accrediting authorities” NSQF Notification No.8/6/2013-Inv.

It may be useful to link the planned register to a National Database of Learner Records, thereby establishing formal links between qualification and records and for learners to access for use in planning progression activities.

In developing the model & the detailed guidelines for an NDLR, there will be a need to take account of all learner achievements, whether achieved through the formal learning system or through RPL.

The NDLR can sit within the LMIS.

- i) An NDLR can provide learners with access to their achievements, including via RPL, based on National Qualifications
- ii) Learners can download proof of their achievements for use when seeking employment or access to further learning
- iii) Data can provide source material for use by government in skills development planning and prioritising resource allocations.

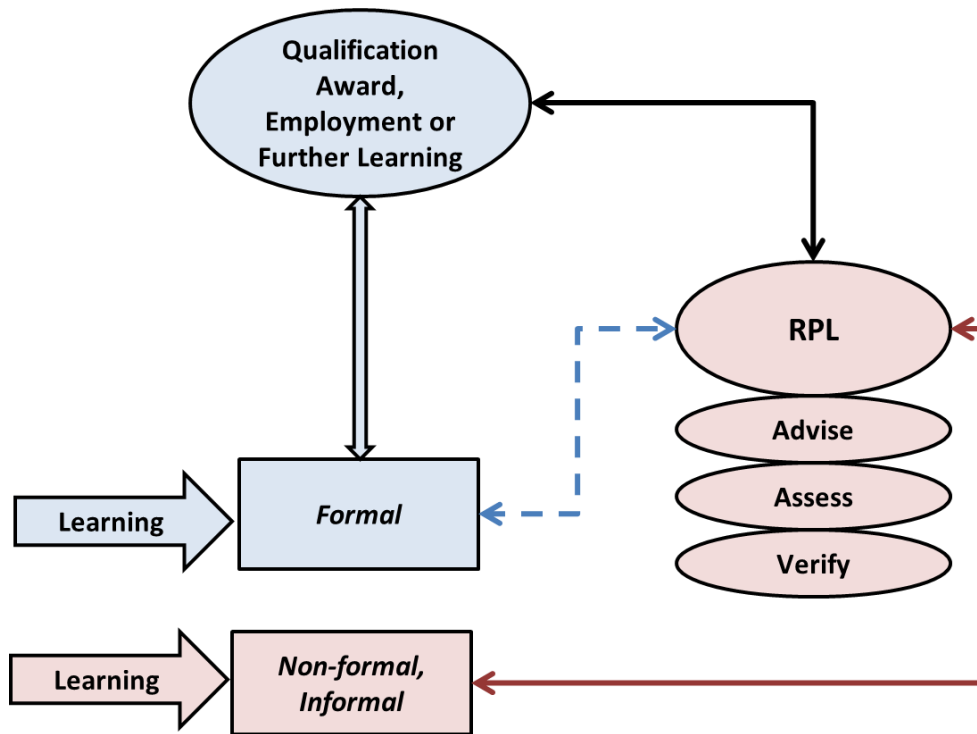
Section G Marketing & Advocacy

For RPL to reach those that are unemployed, it will be necessary to fund and implement a marketing and advocacy strategy. The strategy will be developed to work on a number of levels and through a range of media to sell the benefits provided through RPL. The support available to candidates should also be detailed.

1. Decide on the overall objective of the marketing & advocacy strategy and plan. This should be done at National & State level and should involve all stakeholders

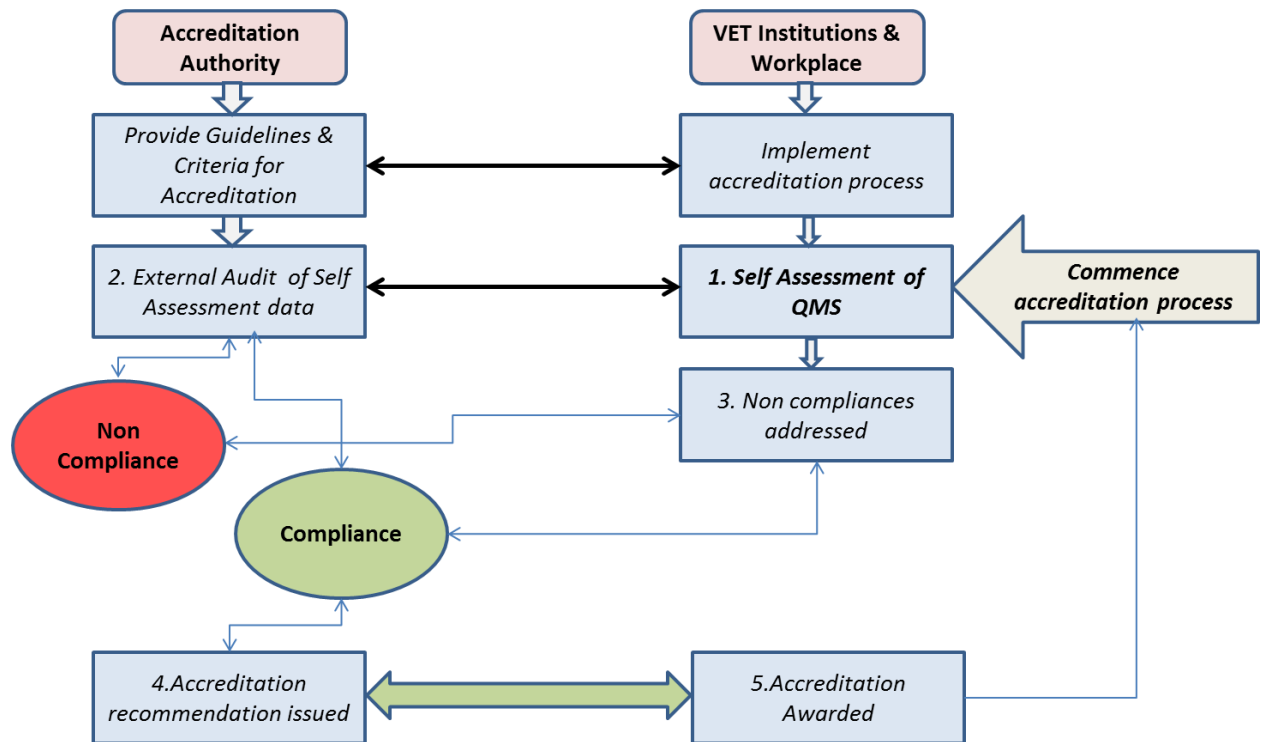
2. Agree a timeframe and a budget and roll out plan for marketing RPL
3. Train & certify sufficient persons to market and advocate RPL.
4. Develop the marketing and advocacy materials at a range of levels and in the required languages.
5. Implement and manage the marketing & advocacy strategy with all target groups using a media mix with a focus on verbal/radio presentations, illustrations and where appropriate the print and visual media

Annex 1 RPL Model



Annex 2

Accreditation model



Integrated Assessment Instrument

BRICKLAYER

Level 3

Lay Brick & Block Structures

Draft 1-Generic Instrument

***Contains, Assessment instructions, Drawings, Resources,
Specifications, Records & Templates***

*For use in determining competency levels in
persons undertaking the RPL process or for use
in applying summative assessment*

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1 Introduction

Integrated Assessment packages are produced to provide a single source of Assessment materials for use in evaluating a learners competency related to a Learning Outcome. These instruments may be used for RPL or summative assessment purposes.

The materials provided are for use by the Candidate and The Assessor, and are the primary source of information and record for this Outcomes or Outcomes or Competency Based Assessment (CBA)

2 Quality Assurance

- a. This Integrated Assessment package is developed in line with the QAP covering development of Integrated Assessment packages used in the Lao PDR Outcomes or Competency Based Assessment process.
- b. All Integrated Assessment packages will be developed by Assessors qualified to the Competency Standard-*Design & Develop Assessment Instruments* (No.XXXXX)
- c. On completion of each assessment, the assessor should record any proposed amendments. This should be recorded on the **QA record sheet** included in this package.

3 Package contents & use

This package contains documents, templates and supporting information for use by the *CANDIDATE* and the *ASSESSOR*. These are further supported by guides and instruments used in the RPL process and contained in the RPL SYSTEM MANUAL.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Section</i>
• <i>Test & Outcome</i>	4
• <i>Candidate test Instructions, including time allocated.</i>	5
• <i>Assessor test instructions, including time allocated</i>	6
• <i>Assessment drawings/instructions/resource requirements (Practical component)</i>	7, 8
• <i>Assessor Performance log of outcomes & recommendation</i>	9
• <i>Assessment question papers, for use orally or in writing</i>	10 a ,b
• <i>Evidence record & recommendation</i>	11

4 Test & Outcome

Build a right angle return brick wall between columns or profiles in line with drawing/criteria/specifications provided.

5 Candidates Instructions

- a. *You will attempt this test with the approval of the assessor only*
- b. *Ensure that you have been briefed by the assessor on the time, resources available, and safety aspects of this test.*
- c. *Complete the test in the time specified. No additional time will be allocated outside the time agreed.*
- d. *Ensure that all the resources are available as detailed in the resources list*
- e. *The test is a combination of a Practical component & a Knowledge component.*
- f. *The knowledge component can be administered as a separate process or incorporated into the Practical component.*

6 Assessor Instructions

- a. *Provide the candidate(s) with the drawing(s) and the supporting instructions*
- b. *Brief the candidate on the safety requirements of the test to be completed*
- c. *Brief the candidate on the test to be completed, including the Practical & Knowledge components, the time & resources allocations and how the assessment will be completed.*
- d. *Check that the site is secure and that all the resources are available before the commencement of the test.*

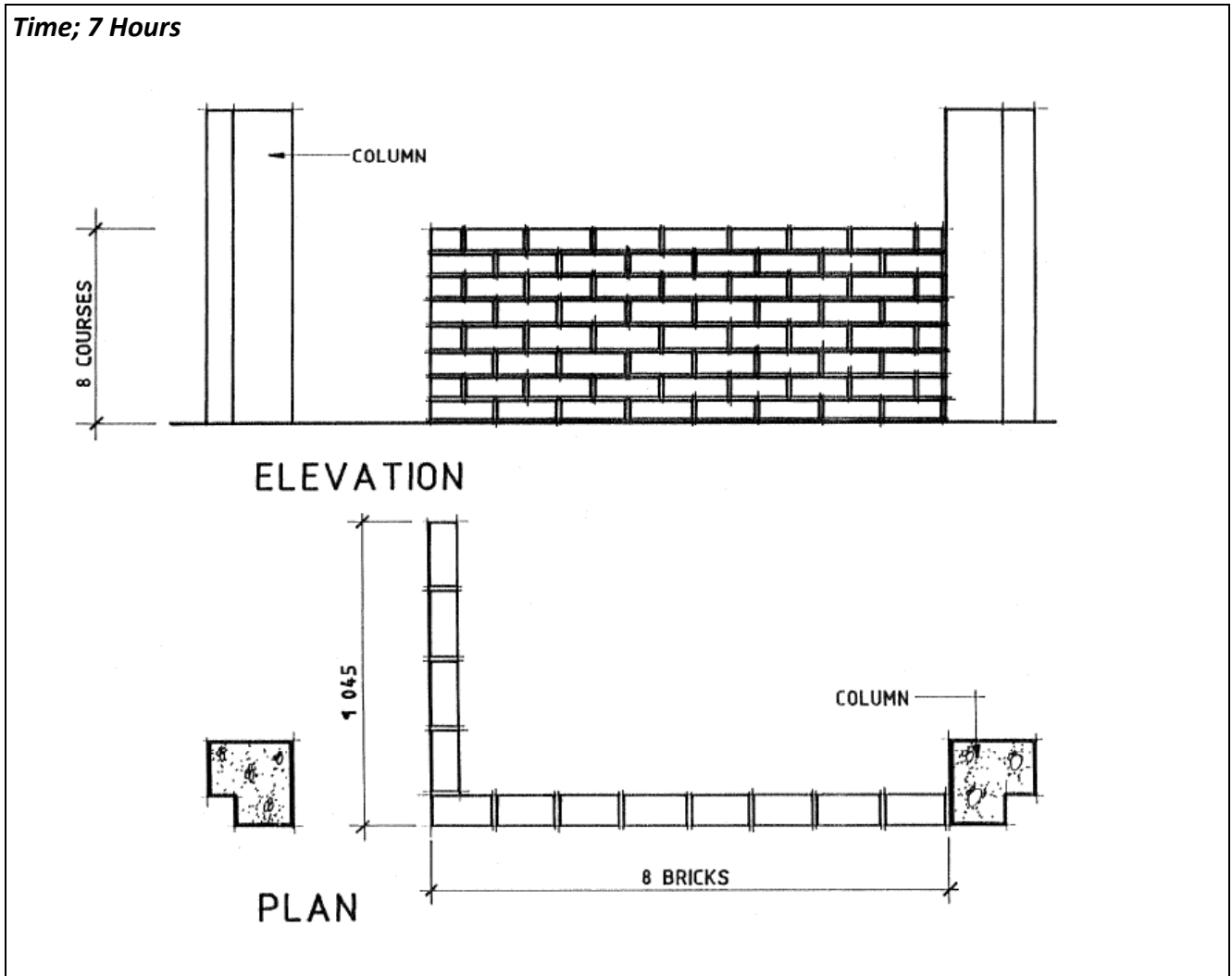
7 Practical Component

- a. *Build a right angle return brick wall between columns or profiles in line with **Drawing 1 below & within 7 hours***
- b. *Plaster bricks to be used*
- c. *10 mm perp joints*
- d. *Joints to be flush*
- e. *Stretcher bond to be used*
- f. *Return to be raked back from the first course of bricks*

8 Practical Assessment & Resources

Drawing 1 Build a right angle return brick wall

Time; 7 Hours



Instructions;

Lay a right angled return brick wall between columns/profiles using the drawing & resources provided within a 7 hour timeframe

Resources

Equipment	Tools	Materials
Straight edge	Brick trowel	Mortar
Gauge rod	Spirit level	Bricks/Blocks
	Measuring Tape	
	Masons line/Plumb	
	Line blocks	
	Club hammer	
	Bolster chisel	
	Brick hammer	
	Joint finisher	

9a. Performance/Evidence Evaluation Log PLANNING

No	Assessment Criteria <i>(Note to Assessor-These criteria relate to the PLANNING element of the Assessment.</i>	Quality points Tolerances	To Standard (Y)	Not to Standard (N)
1	Was the work area prepared	Y or N		
2	Was the wall accurately set out	Y or N		
3	Was the return angle marked off	Y or N		
4	Was the first brick bedded correctly	Y or N		
5	Were the bricks for the return correctly laid & checked by the candidate	Y or N		
6	Was the corner brick for the second	Y or N		

9b. Performance/Evidence Evaluation Log IMPLEMENTATION

No	Assessment Criteria (Note to Assessor-These criteria relate to the Implementation element of the Assessment.)	Quality points Tolerances	To Standard (Y)	Not to Standard (N)
1	Front wall 8 bricks long	Y or N		
2	Front wall level	+/-2mm		
3	Return wall 1,045m long	+/-5mm		
4	Corner square	+/-2mm		
5	Corner plumb	+/-2mm		
6	Stretcher bond used throughout	Y or N		
7	All joints full & flush	Y or N		
8	Plaster bricks used throughout	Y or N		
9	Return raked back as specified	Y or N		
10	Raked back bricks in alignment	+/-2mm		
11	Return courses level	+/-2mm		
12	Within time	Y or N		
13	Tools/equipment and work area left as provided	Y or N		

10a. Knowledge Assessment

The knowledge component of the competency can be assessed either during the Practical component or separately. Either way, the scope and content of the Knowledge Assessment will be based on a Knowledge Assessment Specification (KAS), upon which the Questioning is based.

The type and number of questions is set by the assessor in line with the requirements of the competency being assessed.

An example of a KAS is detailed below.

10b. Knowledge Assessment Specification (KAS)

Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D
<i>Planning activity, site, safety Preparation (site etc)</i>	<i>Material composition, handling, mixing Process assembly Reading & interpretation</i>	<i>Materials processing/Laying. Process operations/functions/uses</i>	<i>Finishing & Quality Assurance</i>
Decisions on the number of question will be taken by the assessor.			
Category A			
	Questions	Typical Answer content (Answers required can be expanded on by the assessor and included here)	
	<i>Explain the importance of site safety?</i>	<i>Cost to self, employer.</i>	
	<i>Explain why it is necessary to set out/prepare a site?</i>	<i>Impact on safety (above) and required to be able to start & finish site layouts before work commences. Need to have resources to hand (time & cost issue)</i>	
Category B			
	<i>Why are there different mortar mixes?</i>	<i>Uses in building, foundations, reinforcing, plastering etc</i>	
	<i>What is an ideal mix when laying bricks?</i>	<i>Ratios of materials to water (local specifications are relative here)</i>	
	<i>Why are bricks dry packed when laying out a wall?</i>	<i>Checking layout, alignment, fit</i>	
	<i>What is the purpose of foundations?</i>	<i>They supply a base upon which the construction is made. Without foundations buildings/walls will collapse.</i>	
Category C			
	<i>Name the three key stages in laying bricks (Note-this can also be judged by observation)</i>	<i>After laying mortar, picking up and buttering the brick-HOLD RELEASE PUSHDOWN. (Note; There are many ways to ask and answer this question-it can also be divided into separate questions)</i>	
	<i>What does "raking back" mean?</i>	<i>Refers to the steps left in the brickwork when building up corners</i>	
	<i>What is the Lap in a course of bricks?</i>	<i>The distance the bricks of one course overlaps with the bricks of another</i>	

		<i>course</i>
	<i>Why is it important to have overlapping brick courses?</i>	<i>Strength of bond /wall</i>
	<i>What are bed joints?</i>	<i>The horizontal joints between the bricks</i>
	<i>What is a gauge rod?</i>	<i>The gauge rod is used to mark out and transfer dimensions</i>
	<i>What is an average mortar thickness used horizontally & vertically in brick courses</i>	<i>+/-10mm</i>
Category D		
	<i>How do you keep a wall plumb</i>	<i>Plumb bob/line etc (get information on how the plumb works)</i>
	<i>How do you keep corners square</i>	<i>Try/angle square</i>
	<i>Explain how levels are transferred</i>	<i>Gauge rod etc</i>

11. Evidence record & recommendation

Occupation Standard	Level	Code	Assessment Result Record				
Title, Type Learning Element/ Outcome 1	Indicate Assessment Criteria standard achieved (Y) or (N)	Method of Assessment (Observation, Demonstration, Questioning, Report by third part, Portfolio)	ASSESSOR				
			First Name	Surname	I.D Number	Signature	Date
			Assessment Result; I have assessed the candidates evidence/performance against the criteria and declare the evidence to be VALID, CURRENT, AUTHENTIC, SUFFICIENT. Based on this, I declare the candidate detailed below as follows;				
			Learning Outcomes			Competent (C)	Not yet Competent (NYC)
			O	D	Q	R	P
CANDIDATE							
First Name	Surname	I.D Number	Signature	Date			
VERIFIER							
First Name	Surname	I.D Number	Signature	Date			
Assessor Recommendation (Example); Award the candidate the Learning Outcomes contained in the Unit(s) of Competency as recorded here.							