

STADIO



POLICY ON THE RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING


Reference Number:	ACAD 018
Body responsible for Final Approval:	The Board
Management Approval:	CEO Signature 
Date of Final Approval:	2020
Date of Implementation:	1 January 2021
Revision Date:	13 August 2021
Previous Revisions:	n/a
Policy Owner:	Chief Academic Officer
Institutional functionary responsible:	Dean: Teaching, Learning & Student Success

TABLE OF CONTENTS

POLICY ON THE RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING	1
Table of contents	2
RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)	3
1. PURPOSE	3
2. SCOPE FOR RPL	3
3. DEFINITIONS	3
4. PRINCIPLES OF RPL	4
5. RPL SCHOOL NORMS AND STANDARDS	6
6. PROCEDURES	7
7. REFERENCES	8

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy governs the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) at STADIO, aligned to its academic promise and organisational strategy.
- 1.2 The implementation and management of RPL at STADIO will embrace the values and strategic objectives as stated in STADIO's mission.

2. SCOPE FOR RPL

- 2.1 The policy applies to all higher education qualifications offered at STADIO.
- 2.2 At STADIO RPL may be used to grant access to programmes, or exemption from modules that contribute towards a particular qualification. In higher education, exemption from modules does not translate to credits being awarded for those modules.
- 2.3 RPL can include any type of prior learning (non-formal, informal and formal) across all ten levels of the NQF.

3. DEFINITIONS

Credit	Credit means the volume of learning required for a qualification or part-qualification, quantified as the number of notional study hours required for achieving the learning outcomes specified for the qualification or part-qualification. One credit is equated to ten (10) notional hours of learning.
Formal Learning	means learning that occurs in an organised and structured education and training environment, and that is explicitly designated as such.
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
Informal Learning	Learning that results from daily activities related to paid or unpaid work, family or community life, or leisure.

Non-formal Learning	means planned learning activities not explicitly designated as learning towards the achievement of a qualification or part-qualification; it is often associated with learning that results in improved workplace practice.
RPL for Access	To provide an alternative access route into a programme of learning, professional designation, employment and career progression. For RPL to be applied, the prospective student must demonstrate enough relevant experience and knowledge acquired after the completion of the last qualification.
RPL for Credit Exemption	To provide for the awarding of module exemptions for, or towards, a qualification or part-qualification registered on the NQF, in line with the CHE's Policy on RPL, 2016.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Means the 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.

4. PRINCIPLES OF RPL

- 4.1 The principles should be implemented and adhered to in conjunction with the principles as set out in the SAQA National Policy and Criteria for Implementation of RPL (amended in March 2019).
- 4.2 The concept of quality in RPL must adhere to generally agreed quality assurance principles, including qualified personnel, fitness for purpose, transparency and fair outcomes.
- 4.3 Quality assurance of RPL must be undertaken with the explicit intention to protect the integrity of the processes and outcomes concerned.
- 4.4 Where a module exemption is granted, it must be based on the assessed evidence of the knowledge and skills acquired informally and non-formally. This assessment is facilitated against module outcomes.

- 4.5 In instances where students receive exemption for modules as a result of the institutional RPL process, the Academic Transcript will indicate 'exemption'. That particular student will complete the qualification in question with a total number of credits that are less than the prescribed minimum required number of credits for the qualification. However, Certificates awarded for qualifications completed at STADIO will not make any reference to modules in the programmes that may have been exempted through RPL.
- 4.6 The RPL process is multi-dimensional. It is a process through which non-formal, informal and formal learning can be measured and mediated against learning outcomes for recognition within and across different contexts. It is conducted using a variety of specialised learning interventions and/or assessment approaches through which the knowledge, skills and values of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed.
- 4.7 The focus is on what has been learned, and not on the status of the institution or place where the learning was obtained.
- 4.8 Assessment is an integral feature of all forms of RPL and exists in combination with a range of other strategies that allow for different sources of knowledge and forms of learning to be compared and judged.
- 4.9 RPL assessments must adhere to fair, valid and reliable practices and should be moderated.
- 4.10 All communication, reporting, information systems and quality assurance requirements as per non-RPL registrations are applicable.
- 4.11 RPL policy and procedures should reflect academic integrity and quality through a consistent, reliable, appropriate and systematic approach that establishes that the assessment criteria have been met and that performance with the required standard has been measured.
- 4.12 RPL candidates should be:

- a) advised regarding potential RPL routes and be guided and supported to prepare evidence of relevant prior learning;
- b) assisted with their preparation for assessment;
- c) provided with feedback after assessment; and
- d) advised, guided and supported to fill gaps where the RPL assessment shows gaps in candidates' knowledge and skills.

5. RPL SCHOOL NORMS AND STANDARDS

- 5.1 Schools may introduce contextual considerations in the application of the Policy, provided there is adherence to the principles of the Policy.
- 5.2 Approval of contextual considerations must be obtained by the Senate Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee prior to implementation and noted by Senate on condition:
 - 5.2.1 School Standards recognise the importance of RPL to the institutional mission to enhance access, articulation, mobility and certification.
 - 5.2.2 All Schools will adhere to the Council on Higher Education policy guideline as follows:
 - a) A maximum of 10% of a cohort of students in any of STADIO's programmes will be admitted through an RPL process¹.
 - b) Qualifications at STADIO will not be awarded solely on the basis of RPL.
 - c) Exemption based on RPL will be limited to not more than 50% of the modules of the qualification programme in question. This means that no student will be exempted from more than 50% of the modules required for any particular higher education qualification. In no instance will module exemption be granted for more than 50% of the total credit value of the qualification.

¹ This provision is subject to the CHE Policy (2016) that makes provision for an application for consideration of a higher percentage of RPL for access, to be made to the HEQSF.

5.2.3 Aligned to STADIO's mission of widening access, each School will actively strive to achieve the 10% norm set by the CHE and will report on it annually to the Senate via the Senate Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee.

6. PROCEDURES

- 6.1 STADIO will set a clear standard operating procedure, that includes the appeal process, to support the Policy.
- 6.2 Assessment should be undertaken within the School and not by a central RPL Office, as the disciplinary expertise of academic staff plays a crucial role in assessing the learning achieved by RPL.
- 6.3 Proper screening of applications and candidates is fundamental to the integrity of the RPL process. All RPL applications will be approved by the relevant Head of School or equivalent person.
- 6.4 The performance of all RPL students will be tracked and documented for monitoring, supporting and reporting purposes.
- 6.5 On an annual basis, an RPL report, provided via the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee, will be ratified by the Senate.
- 6.6 Upon submission of all documentation to the satisfaction of the Institution, the evaluation and assessment of information provided must be finalised within one month of receipt.
- 6.7 Fees charged for RPL will be fair and equitable.

7. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

CHE. 2016. Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, and Assessment in higher education.

DHET. 2016. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) coordination policy. *Government Gazette* 381.

SAQA. 2019. National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (Amended in March 2019)