RECOGNIZING PRIOR LEARNING

Recognizing Prior Learning (RPL) is a broad umbrella concept which values all learning that people have gained in their lives (at home, at school, at work and in the community). This learning could be:

- **Formal Learning** – structured, intentional, and achieved through credit-based programs/courses;
- **Non-Formal Learning** – intentional and gained through participation in non-credit courses; workplace-based training, or workshops.
- **Informal Learning** – incidental and gained through life experience, workplace-based tasks, volunteer activities, self study, hobbies, family responsibilities, etc;
- **Experiential Learning** - either intentional or incidental and encompasses the concepts of non-formal and informal learning.

RPL consists of three key processes for recognizing the forms of learning mentioned above. To recognize a person's formal and/or experiential learning, any or all of the following processes could apply:

- **Qualification Recognition (QR) -** seeking recognition for a completed degree, certificate, or diploma;
- **Credit Transfer (CT) -** requesting credit at one educational institution for courses or programs that were completed at another recognized institution; and
- **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition** (**PLAR) -** assessing what a person knows and can do in relation to a certain goal.

VISIT RPL ONLINE

For further information, resources, and web links, visit the Saskatchewan Learning RPL web site at: **http://www.sasklearning.gov.sk.ca/**. Click Post-Secondary/RPL.

RECOGNIZING PRIOR LEARNING IN SASKATCHEWAN:

VISION STATEMENT

Saskatchewan's education and training sector, professional/trade associations, regulatory bodies, government, industry (business and labour), and communities work collaboratively to promote and support the recognition of *all* learning, contributing to the development of a skilled, flexible, and responsive labour force, making Saskatchewan an ideal place to live and work.

All learning is valued because it contributes to the social and economic well being and growth of individuals and our communities.

PROVINCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

The *Recognizing Prior Learning in Saskatchewan: Provincial Policy Framework* outlines the vision, guiding principles, role of stakeholders, and a comprehensive action plan. The action plan has proven to be instrumental in guiding the province's strategic planning as we work collaboratively to improve the learning recognition system in Saskatchewan. The policy framework is available on the RPL web site.

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Saskatchewan Learning

Recognizing Prior Learning

You live. You learn. It _all_ counts.

PATHWAYS

FOR

LEARNING RECOGNITION

Saskatchewan Centennial 2005

SEEKING CREDIT FOR YOUR PRIOR LEARNING?

Explore your options using Saskatchewan Learning's *RPL Referral Guide,* available on the RPL web site.

The *RPL Referral Guide* explains the different types of prior learning that can be assessed and recognized. The guide includes:

- Contact information for institutions;
- An outline of the referral process, including a checklist and flowchart for advisors/counsellors;
- Brief explanations of institutional policies and practices for RPL; and
- Key terms and relevant resources in the field of RPL.

A JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY: FACILITATOR'S GUIDE TO REFLECTION AND PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

This online guide has been developed to support facilitators as they lead learners through a process of thinking about what they know and can do (reflection). Through involvement in these activities, learners identify the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they have developed, and create evidence of their learning. These general activities are intended to be adapted by facilitators to meet the needs of any group. This guide is available on the RPL web site.

PORTFOLIOS IN LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION RE-DESIGN

In Adult Basic Education and Literacy programs, portfolios are used:

- To assist in placing learners in appropriate program levels;
- To assess learning (demonstrate achievement of required standards or expectations),
- As a personal development tool (identify one's gifts, and build self-esteem and self-confidence);
- To assist learners in career planning (goal setting and action plans); and
- To support job search activities (identifying jobs to apply for, writing résumés, speaking to strengths in interviews, etc).

ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIOS (E-PORTFOLIOS)

Development and use of portfolios and electronic portfolios is increasing in Saskatchewan. Portfolio development can support a variety of purposes, including:

- Educational credit;
- Career exploration and job search;
- Self-awareness and self-confidence building; and
- Recording personal development and learning.

You can view several presentations on e-portfolios online at: http://www.campussaskatchewan.ca. Click Resources for Institutional Partners/Learning Objects and Electronic Portfolios. Scroll to the bottom.

RPL AT WORK

RPL processes help people manage multiple life/work transitions that have become increasingly common in today's labour market. RPL comprises programs and services that support people experiencing transitions, including:

- Youth moving from school to work;
- People changing jobs or career paths; and
- Workers moving to Saskatchewan with qualifications from other provinces or abroad.

The Job Start/Future Skills Sector Partnerships Program is working with various sectors to explore how RPL can support training and career laddering to address their human resource needs.

EDUCATION/TRAINING PROVIDERS' REFLECTIONS ON INTRODUCING PLAR

If you are considering using PLAR to address learning recognition needs, please review both the progress and final reports of the *Saskatchewan Learning PLAR Enhancement Funding Initiative*. These reports are available on the RPL web site.

The reports present a synopsis of 11 PLAR projects undertaken at various post-secondary institutions; project coordinators share their stories, challenges encountered, and achievements. The reports include an executive summary outlining lessons learned and best practices. The findings provide insight, from the perspective of education/training providers, on how to effectively implement PLAR processes.