Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Bangladesh

International Labour Organization

European Union

CONCEPT OVERVIEW

Recognition of Prior Learning gives credit for competencies gained through previous learning, other training, work or life experience as part of skill assessment. It formally recognizes the skills and knowledge that a person already possesses against competencies in the National Training and Vocational Qualifications Framework (NTVQF). There are three pathways to assessment in the National Competency Assessment and Certification System (CACS) and RPL is involved in two of them:

1. Training and assessment pathway (participating in an accredited training course delivered by a Registered Training Organization)

2. **Assessment-only pathway (RPL)**

3. **Combination pathway (Training and assessment for some units of competency and RPL for other units of competency)**

The result of an RPL process can be credit for all the competencies in a qualification or just some of them. Credit given can allow for entry into a qualification and/or provide credit towards achieving the qualification, thereby possibly reducing the training time required for a learner to achieve a qualification. Assessment can only be conducted by Registered Assessors who have completed training on RPL, familiarisation with common types of evidence and assessment plans.

For example, Amin is a skilled welder working in the informal sector that wants to get a job in the formal sector but needs a Level 2 National Certificate in Welding. He has no paperwork to prove his skills and has trouble reading. He comes into the BTEB, gets an application form and submits it with photos of him welding and a letter from his employer. He is asked to do a skill test and is given credit for all units except for two specific literacy units, which he completes through a night class. He is given his Level 2 Certificate.

TYPES OF EVIDENCE

As many of the applicants for RPL assessment will be from non-formal pathways and may not have documented evidence, be illiterate or come from marginalized groups, it is important that there are fair alternatives to meet the needs of different groups. BTEB

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an initiative of the TVET Reform Project, implemented by the Government of Bangladesh with the support of the ILO and funded by the European Union. The project is working towards reforming technical and vocational education and training in Bangladesh.

will consult with industry groups and other relevant ministries to agree on the most useful methods to provide evidence of skills in any given situation.

The primary means of evidence will be practical-based, through hands-on skills testing. This can be supported by secondary means of evidence such as work simulation and/or verbal questioning.

Portfolios can also be submitted as secondary evidence, highlighting the applicant's prior learning, achievements and experience. Examples of portfolio items could include work samples, photographs or videos of work, records of practical 'on the job' assessment by previous supervisors, skills log books or letters from employers.
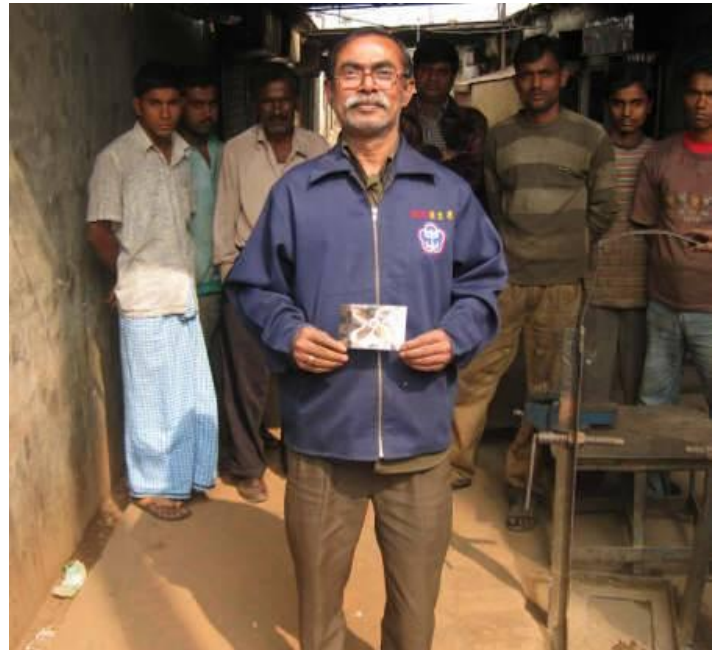
RPL PROCESS

1   Applicant (or sponsor) pays necessary RPL fee.
2   Applicant completes the RPL application form/self-assessment form available from an Accredited Assessment Centre (AAC).
3   The AAC advises the applicant on the types of evidence that could be used to support their application.
4   The applicant collects copies of evidence and a declaration of their authenticity from the document provider.
5   Each piece of evidence should be clearly marked so that the Registered Competency Assessor can quickly understand which part of the self assessment that it supports. One document can be referred to on as many occasions as are relevant. Add the relevant number to the document each time.
6   Once all the evidence is collected, the application form and evidence is delivered to the assessor.
7   Once the application form and the evidence have been reviewed by the assessor the applicant will be interviewed and/or asked to undertake skills testing by the assessor to verify the legitimacy of the applicant's claims.
8   The assessor will then make a decision on whether the applicant is competent against the units of competency they have applied for, and inform the applicant of the outcome.
9   If the applicant is deemed as not yet competent or wishes to gain competency in additional units, they can do so through the normal pathways of institutional or workplace training and assessment.

ASSESSMENT DESIGN

RPL assessment design processes must be consistent with the national assessment design process outlined in NQSAS Manual 4: Accreditation of Assessment Centres.

NEXT STEPS

- Fifteen courses in high-demand occupations (ready-made garments, mobile phone servicing, jute and paper bag maker, tailoring, plumbing, beauty therapy, etc) will be accredited by BTEB under the NTVQF.
- One instructor/teacher and one industry representative for each of the fifteen occupations in each of the six divisional headquarters (180 in total) will be trained as Registered Competency Assessors and accredited by BTBEB under the NTVQF.
- Accredited Assessment Centres across the six divisional areas will be identified; these will operate both as stand-alone centres and as attachments to institutions. All AACs will be registered with BTEB.
- Approximately 10,000 candidates will be assessed through the RPL process.

FURTHER INFORMATION

To get involved in skills development in Bangladesh and find out how you can become qualified, contact the TVET Reform Project at ILO Dhaka via email using tvetreform@ilo.org or visit us on the web: ilo.org/tvet