RPL

Recognition of Prior Learning

Application Brochure 2013
**Please do not** submit an RPL application before you have spoken to the relevant RPL coordinator and have been fully informed of the process.

You will be more fully advised regarding the RPL process for example:
- your eligibility for RPL
- modules for which there is no RPL
- latest banking details and RPL handling fee
- current timeframes and deadlines
- specific RPL requirements for individual qualifications or subjects
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1. Contact details

**College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences**
Ms M Snyman:  
Tel: 011 471 2838  
Fax: 086 581 0543  
E-mail: msnyman@unisa.ac.za

**College of Science, Engineering and Technology**
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Tel: 011 471 2838  
Fax: 086 581 0543  
E-mail: msnyman@unisa.ac.za

**Colleges of Economic & Management Sciences and Human Sciences**
Ms Joanne Brozio:  
Tel: 012 441 5431  
Fax 086 580 9252  
E-mail: jbrozio@unisa.ac.za

**College of Education**
Ms T Moroke:  
Tel: 012 441 5430  
Fax: 086 271 9202  
E-mail: morokvt@unisa.ac.za

**College of Law**
Ms M Lewis:  
Tel: 012 441 5598  
Fax: 086 231 5748  
E-mail: mlewis@unisa.ac.za

Our email address, [rpl@unisa.ac.za](mailto:rpl@unisa.ac.za) always has the most up-to-date list of contact details. Emails to this address will return an automatic reply directing you to re-send your enquiry to the relevant RPL coordinator.
2. Understanding RPL

a. What is RPL?

During your lifetime, you may have acquired various skills, competencies and experiences. This learning that may have taken place outside of formal education and training and regardless of where or when it was obtained, it is valuable. You may have acquired skills or knowledge from training conducted while at work, experience you gained in the workplace, short courses or from community work in a relevant field. RPL permits you to gain credit for or access to formal certificate, diploma and degree qualifications offered by Unisa based on the level and extent of your knowledge. Your prior learning will be measured against specified prescribed learning outcomes/syllabi.

b. Who can apply for RPL?

Persons who are 23 years of age or older with at least 3 years’ current, relevant working experience may apply for RPL. Prior learning should have been gained through one or more of the following means: formal study, workplace learning, informal study for recreational/personal interest purposes, company/industry based-training, working with experts or life experience.

You should apply for RPL if you feel that the prior learning which you have gained meets the prescribed requirements of the equivalent module which UNISA offers and could consequently earn you a module credit.

You will also need to comply with all the admission requirements for the qualification for which you wish to apply for RPL credit. Please refer to MyChoice@Unisa for the admission requirements.

c. What to study?

If you are not sure about which field of study to select, or which subject choices to make, you should do the following:
Consult the UNISA myRegistration brochures to find out more about the various qualifications offered (The brochures are available for each college on the Unisa website). If after consulting the brochures, you are still not sure what to study, you may consult a career counsellor at the Directorate for Counselling, Career & Academic Development. Please note: Not all regions have a resident counsellor, but regional staff can assist you with Unisa subject information or direct you to their closest counselling service. You can also gain further information from the Unisa Website: www.unisa.ac.za or Email: study-info@unisa.ac.za.

d. The difference between RPL and subject exemptions (credit transfer)

If you wish to apply for credit for modules completed at other universities, Universities of Technology, colleges and/or other accredited institutions of higher learning, do not follow the RPL process.

You should fill in an application for credit of modules form (DSAR04) which is available on the Unisa website. Submit this form directly to Unisa at the time of your registration. Attach the required documents.

REMEmber to keep a copy of the form and the documents as proof of application

You should apply for RPL if you feel that the prior learning which you have gained:
- in the workplace
- through on-the-job training
- in company and industry-based training
- through relevant training programmes
- in community work in a relevant field
- any relevant personal learning experiences

meets the preset or requirements of the modules which UNISA offers and could earn you a module credit.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE RPL APPLICATION FORM CONTAINED IN THIS BROCHURE
e. How long will it take?

You should allow yourself at least three months before your planned registration date. This will enable you to submit the necessary evidence of your prior learning to UNISA and allow the Unisa academic staff time to assess your evidence and provide any necessary feedback.

Consult the Unisa myREGISTRATION brochure, Unisa Website or contact your nearest UNISA office for the dates of the next registration period.

**NOTE 1:** All students should apply for a student number prior to registration. Please ensure that you also meet the admission requirements for your chosen qualification. See the myChoice@Unisa brochure for details.

**NOTE 2:** Should there be any subject(s) for which you know you will NOT gain RPL credits, you should register for it/them while continuing with the RPL process. In this way, you will not waste academic time while your RPL application is being processed. Once you have had feedback about your RPL credits, you may register for further subjects during UNISA registration periods, subject to the Unisa Admission Policy.

RPL credits will only be granted after a rigorous academic assessment of your learner profile has been carried out in terms of the Unisa prescribed standards and criteria.

f. What can you expect from the RPL assessment?

Your knowledge, skills and competencies will be assessed by a RPL panel based on the relevant evidence you submit. This may take the form of a challenge exam, an interview, a work-related project, or a portfolio (which contains records of your experience, knowledge and skills). Further guidelines regarding each of the assessment options will be provided to you if your RPL application is successful.

If you are found ‘competent’, in that you meet the prescribed learning outcomes for the module, you will be notified by the university.

If you are found ‘not yet competent’ in a certain learning outcome, you may either be requested to do additional set work and be assessed at a later date, or you will be advised to follow the traditional route of study and register for the module.
g. Restriction on RPL registrations

A student may receive a maximum of 50% of credits towards a qualification. Alternatively a student may obtain access to a higher qualification via the RPL route.

Option 1

In the first instance: Where the RPL credits do not constitute a complete qualification, a maximum of 50% of the prescribed modules may be RPL credits and credit transfers. You must thereafter register and pass the remaining modules in the traditional manner before the qualification will be awarded.

Option 2

If you were granted access/ advanced placement to a higher qualification via RPL, you will not receive a certificate relevant to the lower qualification, but merely be allowed to register for a relevant higher qualification, should you wish to do so.
3. The RPL process – CHECK LIST

Step 1
Apply for admission to the university and for a student number or check current student number for validity via the Application Office

Step 2
Identify qualification and module/s for possible RPL credits

Step 3
Once you have a valid student number, contact RPL coordinator for support, complete RPL application and attach necessary supporting documents

Step 4
Submit documents and RPL application fee to the RPL Office at the address provided.

Step 5
Wait for feedback

Step 6
Act on feedback

[See next pages for a detailed explanation of each step]
Step 1: Check current student number for validity or apply for admission to Unisa

If you have studied at TSA or UNISA before – contact the University to ascertain whether a valid student number exists for you for formal studies. If not, apply to the University during the scheduled application period. **NO RPL APPLICATION WILL BE CONSIDERED UNTIL YOU HAVE A STUDENT NUMBER.** Once you have a valid student number you may proceed with the next step of the RPL process.

Step 2: Identify modules for RPL credit

In deciding on the appropriate qualification and module/s for RPL credit, take into account your previous work experience and your future academic requirements. Once you are clear on your course of study, you can proceed with the next step of the RPL process.

Step 3: Complete RPL application and provide supporting documents and proof of payment of application fee

Please refer to the checklist (Section 7), on page 22 of the application form, as you complete your documentation. Ensure that all the required documents are submitted as no incomplete application forms will be processed. Pay particular attention to your motivations as they form the core of your application. Ensure that the application fee is paid to the correct account and is properly referenced.

Step 4: Submit documents to the University

Submit pages 16-22 of the application brochure and supporting documentation.

Submit the documentation (including proof of payment) directly to the RPL office:

- You should fax or e-mail directly to the RPL coordinator. Updated contact details are available at rpl@unisa.ac.za
- You may also post your application to: RPL Office, UNISA, PO Box 392, Pretoria, 0003.

**Please do not hand your documents in at any other UNISA office.**
In all your dealings with UNISA:
  – Keep copies of all documents submitted, e.g. RPL application form
  – Keep records of all names of people you communicate with, personally, via e-mail and telephonically: the date, time and topics of discussion.

Step 5: Wait for feedback

You will receive initial confirmation of receipt of your application as soon as we have received all your documents and the payment of the prescribed fees. Thereafter, please allow approximately 2-3 weeks per credit claimed for the feedback on your application. Allow extra time if you have submitted your documents during the registration or examination periods.

Step 6: Act on feedback

Once you have received an RPL feedback letter and if you have been granted any assessment opportunities, please act on the feedback as soon as possible. If you decide to take up any assessment opportunity, please note that the university only accepts your written confirmation of intention to take up the assessment opportunity. For more details, see the page entitled “The RPL Assessment – Candidate’s Responsibility” (overleaf).

An appeals process is in place – see page 21 for further details.
4. The RPL assessment: candidate's responsibility

- If you decide to accept the assessment opportunity, you should confirm this intention **in writing** to the RPL coordinator. Your letter must indicate the relevant subject codes clearly. No other method of confirmation will be accepted. Proof of payment for the assessment must accompany the letter of intention.

- If you are offered an opportunity to write a challenge exam, it is your responsibility to contact the academic staff for examination guidelines, tutorial letters or the names of prescribed or recommended books.

- You may not write exams in more than 10 subjects per year or 5 modules per semester. This includes RPL challenge exams.
5. Recognition of prior learning: The application process

General

- It is essential that you have a valid Unisa student number before you complete your RPL application.
- Your application form appears at the end of this brochure. It is also available on the Unisa website. www.unisa.ac.za.
- It is always advisable to contact your RPL coordinator BEFORE you compile and submit your RPL application as RPL may not be available for some of your subjects.
- If you wish to apply for RPL on any one of the following qualifications, you must first contact the relevant RPL academic co-ordinator (see page 1) since these applications have specific requirements:
  - National Diploma: Correctional Services Management (College of Law)
  - B-Tech: Forensic Investigation (College of Law)
  - National Diploma: Engineering (College of Science, Engineering and Technology)
6. Completing the RPL application form

Section 1
- Please complete your personal data as fully as possible

Section 2
- Enter the particulars of your chosen qualification, the college by which it is offered and the subjects/modules and module codes for which you wish to apply for RPL

Section 3
- Kindly enter the particulars of all certificates, diplomas etc. which you have received for attending short courses, in-service training courses and other similar activities.
- Remember to attach original certified copies of all these certificates as evidence. You may also submit your application electronically. Unisa reserves the right to request the original document at any stage in the process.
- It is also helpful to include, where possible, the syllabi of any courses completed.

Section 4
- This information should provide an outline of your knowledge, skills and competencies.
- You should attach an extended CV and a signed job description on a company letterhead to provide an overview of yourself, as well as your academic and employment history.

Section 5
- Write a motivation paragraph (200-300 words) for each module for which an RPL credit is requested. In your motivation, you should indicate how and why you believe that you have met the learning outcomes of the specific module. Consult the Unisa myMODULES Brochure which will provide you with the description of every module offered at Unisa.
- If applicable, also state how your current job-related responsibilities address the learning outcomes.
- Your motivation should clearly prove your claimed skills and competencies in the specific module.
- Also indicate years of exposure in the specific module.
- The motivation for each module must be attached to your application form.
- This information should provide an outline of your knowledge, skills and competencies.

Section 6
- Ensure that you sign the Declaration of Understanding.
The following additional documentation is required:

- **Letter of introduction**

  Using not more than one page, introduce yourself to the academic/s who evaluate and assess your experience. In this introductory message, set out your motivation for applying for RPL, your competencies, and your communication skills. This background information will help put your knowledge and experience into perspective for the members of the evaluation panel.

  Summarise your prior learning in a few sentences and explain which skills, knowledge and attitudes you have developed.

  State your goals clearly and relate them to your reasons for seeking credit for your prior learning. Provide sufficient information about your life so that the assessor has a proper sense of who you are and your plan for the future. Keep personal details short and to the point.

- **Certified copy of ID** (or passport for non-SA Residents)

- **Certified copy of school leaving certificate**

- **Proof of deposit of the handling fee**. Refer to the current “Estimated Current Costs Payable” for the necessary banking details. NB: Always confirm the latest prices with the RPL office or from the website.

- **You may include any additional information that may affect your application**, e.g. factors which may affect your assessment, confidentiality of evidence, learning disabilities, language barriers)

- **Keep copies of all documents submitted.**
7. Fees – RPL Candidates

Stage 1 – Handling Fee

Handling fee: R220-00
This is an RPL Administration fee and proof of payment must accompany your RPL application.
Banking Details: Standard Bank
Account Number: 096R
Reference: Your 8-digit student number, followed by a single space, followed by 3498315245
Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student number</th>
<th>space</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 9 9 9 9 9 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 4 9 8 3 1 5 2 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: If your student number only has 7 digits, you must insert a LEADING zero (i.e. 0 in front of the number). Please fill in the reference carefully & correctly!

Stage 2 – Assessment Fee
Assessment fees are only payable if you are awarded an RPL assessment opportunity. These fees are payable once you have been advised in writing by the RPL staff at UNISA that you have an assessment opportunity. The fees are payable BEFORE assessment, regardless of the outcome of the assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment cost per Module to be assessed</th>
<th>R330,00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment for Access to BTech or Honours</td>
<td>R2 475,00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment for Access to MTech or Masters</td>
<td>R3 000,00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment for Access to Doctorate</td>
<td>R3 300,00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student number</th>
<th>space</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 9 9 9 9 9 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 4 0 0 3 7 4 7 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Banking details as above – please note DIFFERENT reference number for assessment!
RPL Application form

Section 1: Personal Information

STUDENT NO*
*If you do not have a UNISA student number, please apply through UNISA’s application process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Maiden Name or previous surname</th>
<th>First names</th>
<th>ID No – SA Passport non SA</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Postal Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential Address</td>
<td>Work Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact Details
(If the number is not your own number, please give the name of a contact person at this number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Cell/Mobile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td></td>
<td>Email Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 2: Application for subjects credits/advanced placement

Please consult the UNISA calendar before completing this section.

I wish to apply for RPL credits in the following UNISA qualification:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offered by the College of:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. Human Sciences)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification name (e.g. B Comm. Informatics)</th>
<th>Qualification code (e.g. 02011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject/module name and level (e.g. Marketing I)</th>
<th>Subject/module code (e.g. MAR111Y)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applicant’s signature:  Date:

Received by:  Date:
## Section 3: Learning Profile

### Training

In the space below, please enter particulars of certificates, diplomas etc which you have received for attending short courses, in-service training courses and other similar activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Certificate/Diploma</th>
<th>Awarding Institution</th>
<th>Year &amp; Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Negotiating Skills</td>
<td>Council for Interpersonal Skills</td>
<td>01/02/2007 – 30/06/2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Attach certified copies of your Certificates*
## Section 4: Experience Profile

### Curriculum Vitae

In the block below, please enter particulars of your experience in the field in which you are applying for Recognition of Prior Learning. Also attach an extended CV and a signed job description – see page 22 for information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Security Manager</td>
<td>Unisa</td>
<td>2007 – 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attach your CV and detailed job description

Attach your Letter of Introduction
**Section 5: Motivation for subject credit claim/advanced placement**

Complete one form per module according to the template below:

_This is your original – you should copy it and submit one for each credit claim_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student number</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**My motivation for credit:**

**Copies of relevant certificates and syllabi attached to support my claim:**

1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  

---

UNISA | RPL Application Brochure
Section 6: Declaration of Understanding

This agreement comprises TWO sections:

1. Financial undertaking

I agree that: This document binds me to pay the RPL related costs and this amount should be paid in full before the proposed RPL assessment (e.g. challenge examination) can be arranged.

- The RPL assessment costs will be calculated on the number of modules assessed and not on the number of credits awarded.
- Payment must be made in full before I will receive an official Unisa: RPL Assessment Feedback letter.

2. RPL assessment

I understand:
- My rights and responsibilities as an RPL candidate
- The process to be followed in applying for RPL
- The duration of the RPL process
- That I may write a maximum of 10 exams per year, 5 per semester. This includes RPL challenge exams.
- That I may not be granted credit for more than 50% of my qualification, whether by RPL or credit transfer.
- That I may not apply for RPL for any subject which I have attempted unsuccessfully in the last 5 years.
- If I should appeal against the findings of the assessment panel, I may only do this in writing and if I submit additional, relevant evidence to the RPL coordinator.

Name and surname
(Please print)

Signature

ID Number

Date
Section 7: Final check list

Use this list to ensure that you have included all documents required for the processing of your RPL application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please ensure that you enclose all of the following:</th>
<th>Tick</th>
<th>RPL office use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A completed RPL Application Form (available from the website and RPL office).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of introduction explaining your background and your future goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified copies of your highest school-leaving certificate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified copies of all relevant certificates/diplomas and copies of syllabi of relevant courses.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended curriculum vitae (CV). This information should describe your knowledge, skills and competencies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed current job description on a company letterhead, signed off by a line manager with his/her contact details.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A credit motivation for each subject/module in which you clearly address the learning outcomes by referring to your relevant work-related prior learning. Learning outcomes are available from the relevant academic departments or in the My Modules brochure.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should you apply for RPL for access to a higher qualification, you should submit only one credit motivation. However, this document should comprehensively motivate why you consider yourself to have a level of proficiency to enable you to cope with an advanced level of study.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A certified copy of your ID or passport. (You must be 23 years and older to qualify for the RPL process)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A signed Declaration of Understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proof of payment of the application fee. (You need a student number before you can make the deposit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Please note that if any of the above documents are not attached/enclosed as requested, we will not be able to process your application.
- Submit your application to the RPL office directly to the relevant RPL coordinator.
- We recommend that you keep a copy of this application and of all your supporting documentation.
- If you need an electronic format of the forms, please send an e-mail request to the RPL Academic co-ordinator for your college. See list of contact details on page 3.

The RPL Application Form is also available on the UNISA website: [www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za).