

# RECOGNITION OF PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

## Information for Candidates



**MANUKAU  
INSTITUTE OF  
TECHNOLOGY**  
*Te Whare Takiura o Manukau*



**Te Pūkenga**

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## What is Recognition of Prior Knowledge and Skills?

Recognition of Prior Knowledge and Skills (RPKS) includes Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Recognition and Transfer (RPL/CRT). These processes allow credit to be granted towards a formal qualification where ākonga already has and can demonstrate current relevant skills and/or knowledge. Rather than enrolling in a course and repeating learning already completed, RPL/CRT provides you with an alternative pathway to achieving a formal qualification.

Skills and knowledge can be gained in many ways, including through:

- other qualifications
- training courses and workshops
- informal learning and independent study
- Work or life experience.

The purpose of the RPKS assessment process is to determine whether you have current skills and/or knowledge to meet the learning outcomes and be granted credit for a course. For credit to be granted, you must provide valid, authentic and verifiable evidence of your skills and/or knowledge. Evidence must be relevant to and at the level of the course.

Depending on the nature of the evidence available, one of the following three processes may be used to assess an application for RPL/CRT credit. At Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT), we use RPL / CRT as an umbrella term which incorporates the following:

**Credit Transfer (CT):** The granting of credit for having successfully completed a course that is an exact match to the required course. This also must be current i.e. within the past 5 years.

**Cross Credit (CC):** Also known as Credit Recognition. The granting of credit for having successfully completed a similar course at a similar level and credit value, within the past 5 years. Determined through an equivalence mapping exercise from the academic transcript and learning outcomes already achieved. Stated as Cross Credit (CC) on the transcript.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):** The process involving formal assessment of your relevant and current knowledge and skills (which may have been obtained through formal training or on the job or life experience) to determine achievement of learning outcomes of a qualification for the purpose of awarding credit towards that qualification. Recognition of Prior Learning does not include credit transfer (CT) or cross credit (CC).

NOTE: If you are applying for several courses to be granted by RPL, you will need to confirm with [StudyLink](#) that you are still eligible to receive student loans and allowances.

### How much will RPL cost?

- Credit Transfer: free of charge
- Cross Credit: \$25.00 per credit
- RPL: \$36.00 per credit
- All charges are GST inclusive

### Expectations of NZQA:

The NZQA expects all Tertiary Education Organisations (TEO) to have clear, relevant and appropriate regulations for RPKS that place ākonga at the centre and focus on the learning you have obtained. It is MIT's responsibility to:

- integrate RPKS into our policy and practice
- maintain integrity with the assessment and approval process
- promote RPKS to our ākonga

- provide accessible academic advice and support to those who apply and
- ensure RPKS activities are timely, transparent, robust, consistent, defensible and for the maximum benefit of our ākonga.

If you are interested in applying for RPKS at MIT, you can access the relevant MIT website page which informs you of the types of RPKS you could apply for, the kinds of evidence you would need to present, the fee structure, and limitations on RPKS assessments. MIT's online enrolment process includes an opportunity to show interest in RPKS so we can get in touch with you early in your learning journey. Requirements for candidates wishing to apply for RPKS are set out in the MIT Ākonga Policy.

## Who's involved with RPKS at MIT?

RPKS involves several different groups of people at MIT. Each area's role is vital to the smooth running of the process so that you can progress your studies with confidence.

**Heads of School** make sure kaiako can undertake RPKS work and the associated moderation.

**A designated RPKS contact person** is appointed by and works with the Head of School, along with kaiako, AskMe!, Campus administrators and you, the candidate to facilitate the RPKS process.

**AskMe! Agents** are usually the first point of contact for your RPKS application during the enrolment process. When you have indicated your interest in RPKS, an AskMe! agent will forward this to the relevant School for more information.

**Kaiako** are subject matter experts who will guide you through the assessment process.

**Campus Administrators** attach you to the programme so you can be granted the credits once they are approved. They also work in conjunction with the RPL Lead and the Head of School to raise and send you the invoice/s and process your payment/s so the assessment can go ahead. Once the Programme Committee has approved the result, administrators will process that result by entering it into the SMS.

**Programme Committee** reviews and where appropriate, approves decisions made by an RPL / CRT assessor. This usually occurs at a results meeting. The awarded course result gets published on the SMS through the administrative process.

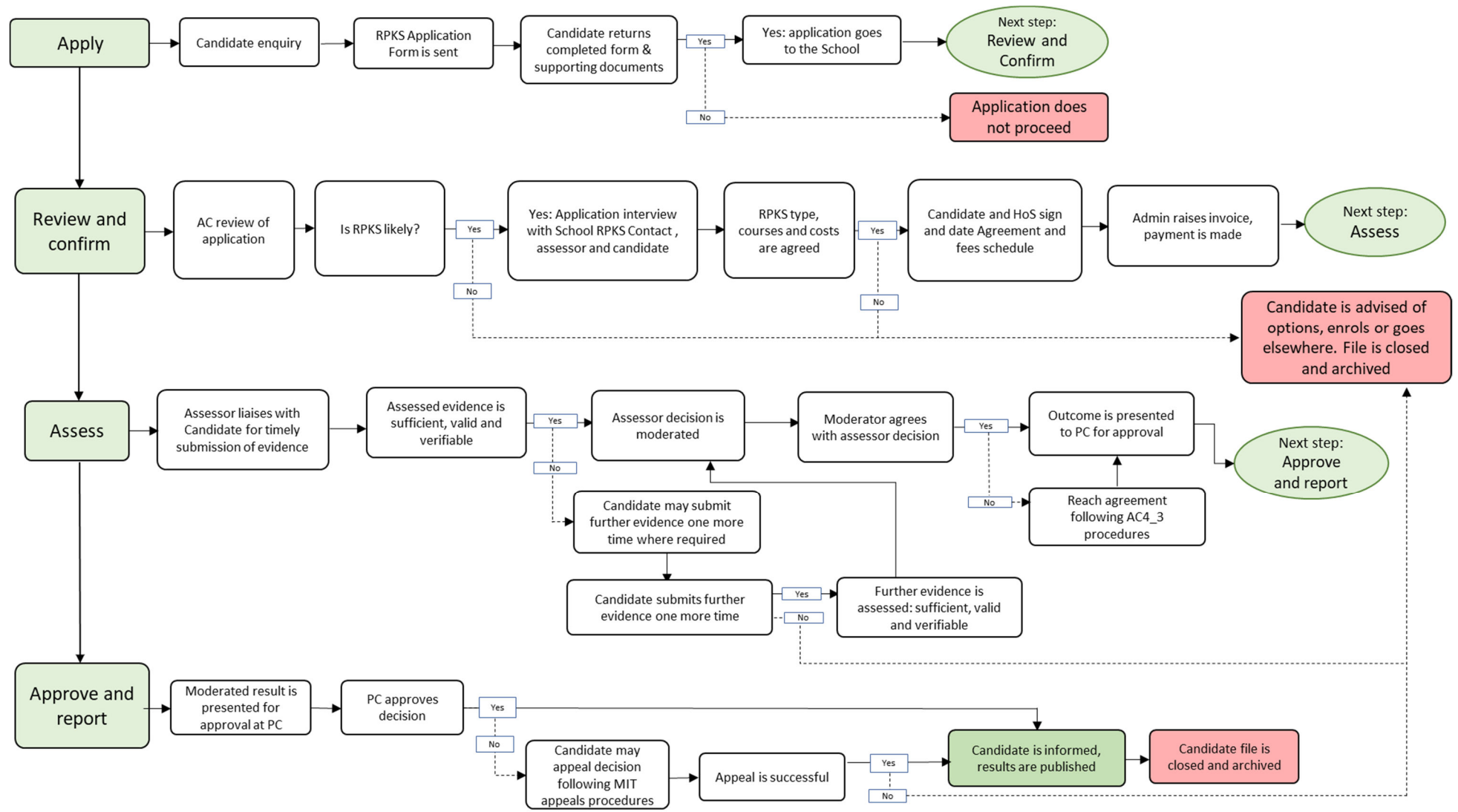
## How does RPKS work at MIT?

MIT's RPKS process is supported by documentation developed for each stage of the process. The stages are:

- apply
- review and confirm application
- assess
- approve and report outcomes

The flowchart on the next page shows the steps of the process for an RPKS application at MIT.

## RPL / CRT process steps



## **Apply**

- You enquire about the programme of study through MIT website enrolment form, or in person
- You receive an email acknowledging receipt of your interest in RPKS requesting you to confirm your interest
- When you have confirmed your interest, you will receive an application form for the programme you are interested in
- You return your completed Application to MIT for review

If you realise during class that you may be eligible for RPKS, you need to ask your kaiako to put you in touch with the School's RPKS contact who will advise you. In order to fully inform you, the RPKS Application form includes the Terms of Service and a Fee Payment Schedule, which are to be completed once the application has been accepted by MIT. You are required to provide relevant supporting documentation with your application. The documents expected along with the application form are usually:

For Cross Credit and Credit Transfer:

- a CV relevant to the courses that you are applying for
- learning outcomes for the courses from another study that you think are relevant
- academic transcripts from within the past 5 years
- qualification from within the past 5 years

For Recognition of Prior Learning:

all the above can be submitted, but you also need to provide also an indication of the evidence you could supply to support your current skills, knowledge and practices. You do not have to supply all this evidence when you apply, as it can be presented during the assessment phase, but you should be confident you can collect:

- evidence of relevant work experience, projects, photos, job reports, work diaries etc, where you feel you have demonstrated the skills related to the course.
- Letters of attestation from employers / supervisors / managers

## **Review and confirm application**

- RPKS contact reviews the completed application form
  - confirms the assessor and moderator. For many returning ākonga, CC and CT is applied at the time of re-enrolment by Campus Admin after confirming eligibility with the RPKS contact or Head of School.
- RPKS contact notifies you of the outcome of the review and
  - completes Service Agreement and Fees Schedule sections in Application form for Head of School to sign and date
  - arranges application interview with you and your assessor to confirm next steps, cost and indicative assessment time frames.
  - A 30 - 60-minute Application Interview between you, the Schools' RPKS contact and the assessor is often the best way for the School to establish if your RPKS application should be accepted. During the interview, the RPKS contact will base the conversation on the reviewed application form and discuss:
    - the kinds of evidence and documentation you would need to provide
    - confirm the courses and the type of RPKS to be conducted
    - probable cost
    - timeframe to complete the RPKS assessment will also be discussed

- likelihood of site visits and interviews / professional conversations / challenge assessment
- You sign and date the completed Application form and return it to the RPKS contact
- RPKS contact asks the Campus Administrator to raise the invoice who sends it to you for payment

MIT will encourage you to enrol onto the course if your RPKS is not likely to be successful.

Once MIT has accepted your application, the courses to be assessed and fees are confirmed. The Service Agreement and Fee Schedule sections in the Application Form are completed by both you and the Head of School. The Campus administrator attaches you to the programme for the purposes of reporting. They also raise the invoice and sends it to you for payment. The Assessment Detail form will be also be completed by the RPKS contact for the RPKS assessor. Once your payment has been received by MIT, the Campus Administrator informs the RPKS contact and Head of School that the assessment process can begin.

### **Assess**

Assessment can only commence once the courses to be assessed are agreed and signed off between the School and you, and any fees have been paid. See the section on Evidence for details about evidence that is appropriate for specific RPKS types.

- You and your Assessor work together until assessment of prior learning process is complete
  - Once you indicate that you are ready for the evidence to be confirmed as sufficient to meet Learning Outcomes, the Assessor completes the Outcomes section of the Assessment Details form
  - More evidence may be requested ONCE to meet all course requirements
  - Assessor ensures the outcome is moderated and presents the signed and dated RPKS PC Outcome form to Programme Committee for approval

### **Approve and report outcomes**

- Programme Committee meets to approve moderated RPKS results in the PC Outcome Form
- If PC declines the result, you must be informed in writing
- Campus Administrator publishes approved RPKS results in the SMS as CT, CC or RPL
- You are guided by Academic Lead Student Journey to enrol and complete the programme
- Registry reports Results through to NZQA along with the rest of the programme results
- Your folder closed and archived by School's RPKS contact

Any declined applications must be sent to you writing stating the reasons and include the Appeals process.

NOTE: Declined RPKS outcomes are not added to your Record of Learning because you are not an enrolled student. Once you are attached to the programme you are time bound to complete within the time allowed for programme completion as per the Programme Approval Document.

Some regulatory bodies, such as the Nursing Council have specific requirements regarding the processing and acceptance of RPKS. These will be stated in the RPKS application for the programme, so you are fully aware of these requirements.

### **How long will the RPKS process take?**

The time it takes to complete the process depends on the amount and quality of the evidence of prior knowledge and skills you can provide to your assessor, and how quickly you can collect your evidence. This could be a matter of weeks, but it could be longer. You should be advised on the most appropriate time to

have your assessment phase completed so that your results can be presented to Programme Committee in time for you to enrol onto the remainder of the programme to complete the qualification.

## Evidence

Evidence of prior learning is required for all RPKS applications and assessments. All evidence must be assessed for: validity, level, currency and authenticity of all learning outcomes for the course being assessed. If gaps are identified for which you cannot provide evidence, you must enrol onto the course.

The evidence to be assessed should be systematically presented by you i.e., each item should be clearly linked to one or more of the course LOs. Clearly labelled evidence is more likely to show relevance and allow the assessor to make a sound decision. The assessor may require more evidence during this process, which should be requested before it is formally assessed against the course LOs. After the formal assessment stage is started, you have one more opportunity to present more evidence. If this is not possible the RPKS application must be declined, and you will be counselled to enrol onto the course.

### **Evidence for Cross Credit and / or Credit Transfer**

Evidence of formal learning for CC and CT includes originals or verified copies containing the name and/or logo of the organisation that issued the award. The course outcomes will be mapped against the MIT outcomes to determine your equivalence. An exact match of the course outcomes will result in a Credit Transfer while a close match will mean Cross Credit may be awarded. Evidence may include:

- formal awarded qualification
- academic transcripts
- course Learning Outcomes
- international NZQA/Qualification Recognition document

### **Evidence for Recognition of Prior Learning**

Evidence from the above list can be provided for an RPL assessment presented in a portfolio, however, an RPL assessment must also include evidence sufficiently demonstrating your skills, knowledge and attributes relevant to the course requirements.

Other evidence can include

On the job training:

- Certificates of attendance
- Certificates of professional development
- Learning hours from incomplete courses
- Curriculum from overseas courses
- Verified translated international document with signature and translator number

Related skills and knowledge demonstrated by

- Relevant CV
- Letters of attestation from verified sources
- Video/audio interviews
- Professional conversations
- Demonstration of specific skills, knowledge and attributes
- Other sources to be agreed upon during meeting

The information for RPL assessment supplied must be verifiable evidence that you have the skills, knowledge and attributes relevant to the course requirements. This might become a portfolio of evidence (more about Portfolios in the next section).

Typical evidence for RPL applications may include:

- a CV relevant to the course
- transcripts
- course information showing the learning outcomes from other education
- training certificates
- photos
- letters of attestation from employers
- job descriptions
- examples of work carried out

Evidence collected during the assessment phase could include some or all of the following:

- your performance while being observed by the assessor during a challenge assessment
- professional conversations
- projects or work-based assignments
- personal reports
- prior qualifications which relate directly to the courses
- product evidence e.g. examples, samples, photographs
- your responses to oral or written questions
- video or authenticated audio tapes
- site visits to view your work and / or speak to employers
- witness testimonies from people within or outside your organisation
- achievement in related areas
- attendance on courses/training activities relevant to the learning outcomes of the qualification
- membership of related committees or outside organisations

You will be expected to provide diverse types of verifiable evidence to support your demonstration of competence. The list above is not exhaustive and you may find other appropriate forms of evidence depending on which qualification you are undertaking. The assessor will need to advise you on the most appropriate forms of evidence for your application.

### **Suitability of evidence for RPKS**

The RPKS assessor will need to be satisfied that your evidence meets the criteria below

- sufficient
- authentic
- relevant
- current
- verifiable

### **What is sufficient?**

Evidence provided for RPKS assessment must cover all aspects of the learning outcome you are looking to achieve. Some qualifications require specific evidence, and you should work with your assessor to establish what is required. 'Sufficient' does not mean a mass of evidence. It means collecting enough evidence to

demonstrate that you have the knowledge / competence to fulfil the learning outcome(s) your evidence relates to.

### **What is authentic?**

You must be able to explain and confirm the evidence that you submit. It is important that you only submit evidence relating to your own performance. At the end of the application and assessment forms there is a declaration that you must complete which is your acknowledgement that the evidence provided is authentic to you and your skills, knowledge and experience.

### **What is relevant?**

Any evidence must relate clearly to the qualification you want to achieve. An RPKS assessor is only interested in evidence directly related to the requirements of the qualification. That is, evidence which clearly links your performance with specific areas of your chosen qualification. The submission should avoid the inclusion of reference documents, training materials and other evidence that does not demonstrate your knowledge / competence.

### **What is current?**

'Current' means evidence relating to skills, attitudes and knowledge you can currently demonstrate. The RPKS assessor will be assessing your current level of competence so the submission must show a clear relationship between the evidence and activities and areas of work that you could perform if required to do so. ~~It is expected that evidence is no older than 5 years.~~

### **What is verifiable?**

'Verifiable' means that any item submitted could be checked out by the assessor to confirm that it comes from where you say it comes from, and that anyone who has supported your submission is authentic too. For example, a site visit for a project that you have completed may be required to verify your work. The RPKS assessor can help you to determine what is sufficient, authentic, relevant, current and verifiable.

All documentation that comes from an official source e.g. identification, training certificates, TEO course information including level, credits and learning outcomes, as well as academic qualifications and transcripts, must be verified as being authentic.

## Portfolio for Recognition of Prior Learning assessment

A recommended method of submission for RPL assessment is the portfolio, which in this context is a systematic collection showing your evidence for your work experience and knowledge. It is compiled as part of an application for Recognition of Prior Learning. It becomes important when you enrol onto a programme of study and you realise that you can meet the requirements of a course (or courses) without having to study for that course. It is not required for Cross Credit or Credit Transfer applications which rely on Academic Transcripts and the Course Learning Outcomes that you have achieved within the past 5 years.

Your RPL Portfolio should contain the following information, all showing how your evidence relates to the courses applied for:

- Table of contents
- Personal information including a CV and work experiences relevant to the RPL you seek
- A summary of the evidence for each course being evidenced
- Cross-references to relevant employment, education, training, work experience and learning
- Where relevant, copies of certificates / assessments / feedback
- Letters of attestation

A systematically compiled RPL Portfolio shows clearly how each item presented relates to the course and the Learning Outcomes it evidences. One item of evidence might be relevant for more than one course or Learning Outcome. If that's the case, then you need to make that clear in the submission. This is easily done when making a list of the attachments for each course being applied for. A C.V., job description and letter of attestation might be relevant for multiple Learning Outcomes.

You might have a large volume of physical evidence, videos and photos, and other digital documentation, so systematic collation is important to support the assessment phase. Alternatively, you might want to use a digital portfolio to submit your evidence.

Whilst an RPL portfolio will take effort and time to complete, it is also a means of focusing and demonstrating to others, your particular strengths and achievements.

Once the RPL assessment is completed, you can use your portfolio to showcase your knowledge and achievements as it is a living document. It could develop further along with your achievements and take on a dynamic role as a record of continuing professional development because it can be used as

- a full record of achievements to date
- proof of your competence and knowledge
- a full resource bank of your abilities
- a reference tool for staff appraisal
- a basis for career development

**In summary, a portfolio for RPL provides a:**

- clear demonstration of competence and knowledge
- focus for the RPL assessment
- means to bring together evidence for more than one course
- focus for the identification of training/learning needs
- useful reference tool for your future career.

## Assessment of RPKS applications

At MIT, we want to ensure that you will be granted an academically sound outcome without being disadvantaged. Normally, during study, your skills would be assessed using Direct Evidence during class through observation and evaluating your ability to do certain things under prescribed circumstances. The RPL assessor evaluates your evidence, output of a challenge assessment / professional conversation related to the Learning Outcomes (LOs) for the course.

Because RPKS is a summative assessment process, there must be clear and relevant criteria for the assessor and you to work towards. The following rubric has been developed to support the criteria described in the evidence section of this guide.

Criteria for RPKS Assessment	Criteria	Outcome
Sufficient	The breadth and depth of evidence demonstrates achievement of the Learning Outcomes (LO) by you	Achieved / Not Achieved
Authentic	The evidence presented is your own	Achieved / Not Achieved
Relevant	The evidence addresses the key competencies / employability skills of the LOs it is linked to	Achieved / Not Achieved
Current	The evidence demonstrates that you can apply the LO requirements to current work (within the past 5 years)	Achieved / Not Achieved
Verifiable	The documents (including qualifications, references and licences) presented by you are verifiable	Achieved / Not Achieved

If the evidence meets these criteria, then the evidence that supports your claim will be sufficient to award the course by RPKS. If the evidence does not meet some or all these criteria then further evidence to support the application will be required, which may be requested once after the assessment phase has begun. The assessor is judging the evidence presented to support your claim that you can meet the course requirements. If you can't supply further supporting evidence to meet the learning outcomes where required, then the assessor can't grant credit for the course, and you must enrol onto the course to gain those credits.

The MIT RPKS Assessment Detail form shows the courses and LOs for each course in a programme. It has been developed to help you pull everything together and streamline the RPKS assessment process. The completed RPL Assessment Detail Form and portfolio of evidence that goes with it, will show how your evidence fits the LOs in each course so the assessor can make an informed decision based on your systematically prepared application.

The RPKS assessment process takes place as follows (this might be while you are enrolled in study if agreed with the School):

1. Arrange for any challenge assessments.
2. Assessor meets regularly with you to follow up on progress. Next date for updates / progress are agreed on to maintain momentum so you can work to the end date
3. Assessor assesses application and completes the Outcomes Form
4. Outcome is approved
5. You enrol to complete your study
6. Qualification is awarded

## RPKS Assessment process steps

RPKS Process step	Clarifying notes
1. Arrange for any challenge assessments where required	Where identified, a challenge assessment will need to be developed to address the identified gaps in the evidence for any RPL Applicant. The assessment criteria will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect the requirements of the Learning Outcomes it addresses</li> <li>• be sufficient, authentic, relevant, current and verifiable</li> </ul> If the reviewer and / or assessor identifies gaps in your skills and knowledge that cannot be filled through the RPL process, then you must enrol into the course to meet the criteria if you want to be awarded the course.
2. Assessor meets regularly with you to follow up on progress	What evidence are you submitting – is it enough, is it verifiable, is a site visit required to verify skills / employer attestations? What gaps are there? Is a challenge assessment the best way to close the gaps? Most likely to be a practical demonstration of a set of skills that is time bound and at the appropriate level of competency
3. Assessor assesses application and completes the Outcomes Form	Assessor determines whether evidence is valid, sufficient, current, authentic, and addresses learning outcomes of the courses (See Appendix One), resulting in one of the following outcomes:  <b>Approved</b> - you can be awarded the course <b>More evidence required</b> – you may be required to provide further evidence to complete the RPKS. If this is not possible the outcome will be declined. <b>Declined</b> – if evidence supplied is this is not appropriate or supplied after more has been sought, then RPKS is declined. You must enrol and complete the course requirements in order to be awarded the course.
4. Outcome is approved	Approved outcome is processed by Registry and entered onto the student's SMS records.
5. You enrol to complete your study	You are informed of the outcome Academic Lead Student should work with you to ensure you enrol on to the right courses to complete your programme of study.
6. Qualification is awarded	Results are approved by PC and published with the rest of the results for that term. You are sent the transcript and award. RPL Lead closes and archives your case

## Reporting and storage of results

RPKS results are reported to Programme Committee in the same manner as other course results. Your result is tabled at the next appropriate meeting after completion of the process and discussed by the Committee. Once the result is approved the usual reporting process for course results takes place. If you wish to appeal the decision, you are subject to the appeals processes as outlined in the section 16.4 of the Ākonga Policy.