**HSC SVQ4 The purpose of the RPL Guidance and how it can be used**

**Guidance for Assessors**

**Introduction**

The RPL guidance enables you to support candidates undertaking HSC SVQ4 through the process of gaining recognition of prior learning. This learning may have been gained through prior experience of the candidate in the not too distant past, and should be applied to current practice. Candidates working at this level are likely to have considerable previous experience of operating in a position of managerial and/or professional responsibility and to have gained prior learning in a number of different ways. This can be used to advantage in the SVQ assessment. Before beginning the RPL process it is useful to work with candidates to familiarise them with the core and optional SVQ4 units that they will be undertaking.

**What is my role in supporting the candidate?**

Your support to candidates is vital in enabling candidates to optimise their use of RPL. Different candidates will need different levels of support. Whatever the situation, it is likely that you will need to provide some guidance to candidates to enable them to apply their prior learning and experience to their current practice through a process of:

* Examination of prior experience using Profiling Tool
* Identification of the learning and skills gained from this experience using Profiling Tool and Reflective Exercise 1
* Application of the learning and skills from this experience to their current work using Reflective Exercise 2
* Production of a reflective account on their SQA evidence gathering form which demonstrates how prior learning and skills enable them to meet relevant performance criteria and/or knowledge points in their current work

The RPL guidance which follows takes candidates step by step through this process with straightforward charts to complete, enabling them to produce the final reflective account through a process of logical steps. It is possible for them to claim several performance criteria and/or knowledge points across more than one SVQ Unit in one reflective account. You will need to discuss with the candidate any evidence they should produce relating to their prior learning, though you may also satisfy yourself of the level of this learning through reflective professional discussion and the account itself. Your comments and feedback on the candidate’s use of the RPL process and on the reflective account on their SVQ evidence gathering form present an opportunity to build on the candidate’s strengths and confidence, and enhance their use of RPL in the future.

**What are the advantages to candidates and the organisations of using RPL**

Although candidates may need significant initial support to feel confident enough to use this process and to apply it to their practice, this can have several advantages for them and the organisation. The RPL process can:

* Enable candidates to feel that their past learning and experience are valued
* Enable candidates to identify skills and strengths and apply these to their work
* Help to raise candidates’ confidence in the skills and knowledge they already have; this can raise their confidence in their workplace practice and motivate them to continue learning
* Save time and money on training that the candidate doesn’t need
* Speed up the process of undertaking an SVQ
* Develop analytical and reflective practice and the transfer of learning from one situation to another
* Give candidates experience of matching learning with the evidence requirements for SVQ

**What are the characteristics of learning at SVQ4?**

For HSC SVQ4 the kind of experience a candidate can draw on needs to demonstrate some or all of the SCQF level 9 characteristics which are summarised as follows:

* A broad and integrated knowledge and understanding of the scope, main areas and boundaries relevant to the SVQ4 assessment
* The ability to use a selection of the principal skills, techniques and practices and to practise these in a range of contexts that include a degree of unpredictability
* The ability to undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts etc. and draw on a range of sources in making judgements
* The use of a range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills in communication/ICT/numeracy
* The ability to exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level and take some responsibility for the work of others

For full descriptions of SCQF level 9 characteristics go to: [www.SCQF.org.uk](http://www.SCQF.org.uk)

 **What kinds of experience can be used for RPL?**

Almost any experience from which the candidate has gained learning that is relevant to their current practice may be used for RPL. The two examples provided illustrate the RPL process in relation to undertaking a counselling skills night class, and standing in for a unit manager whilst she was on holiday. Other examples may include: previous experience of preparing inspection reports; facilitating a discussion group to encourage use of the Continuous Learning Framework (CLF) in a team; using experience from a previous job in IT to develop improved planning. This is by no means an exhaustive list and candidates may well have different examples of their own. It is useful to encourage candidates to make a list of prior experiences that they may wish to draw upon for RPL.

Now you are ready to support candidates at this level.

Next.....

Detailed RPL Guidance is available at <http://ewd.sssc.uk.com/ewd/pages-for/education-and-training-providers.html>