

CHARTERED SECRETARIES SOUTHERN AFRICA
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy 2016

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Commencement date: 1 January 2007
Review Date: November 2014
Next Review date: October 2019
Responsible Persons: CEO and Manager: Accreditation and Assessment

IMPORTANT ACRONYMS

CEO – Chief Executive Officer
CSSA – Chartered Secretaries Southern Africa
EXCO – The Executive Committee Chartered Secretaries Southern Africa
FASSET – SETA for Finance, Accounting, Management Consulting and Other Financial Services.
IBS – Institute of Business Studies
POE – Portfolio of Evidence
RPL – Recognition of Prior Learning
SETA – Sector Education and Training Authority.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) is a way of giving people an opportunity to receive recognition for their skills and knowledge, no matter how, when or where they were gained.

- RPL can be granted on the basis of **EXEMPTIONS** which are granted on the basis of formal studies completed in a related course. The module may differ but the outcomes are the same as those in the module for which the exemption is granted.
- RPL can be granted on the basis of **WORK AND LIFE EXPERIENCE**. Applicants are required to provide details on work experience (both paid and unpaid work) and life experiences (including hobbies, leisure and parenting etc). Relevant prior learning will be matched against the specified learning outcomes of the course.

MODULES – A module refers to a component of a qualification (traditionally known as subjects). In order to save costs to yourself, you should apply for RPL only at the highest level possible. For example, if you have completed Financial Accounting 3, you do not need to apply for RPL for Financial Accounting 1 and 2.

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may be approved:

- on the basis of prior studies at the IBS or the CSSA.
- on the basis of prior professional (work) or life experience.

1.1 Limitations of the extent of RPL

- RPL on the basis of prior studies at the IBS or the CSSA may be approved for an entire qualification or for specific modules (courses).
- RPL on the basis of prior professional (work) or life experience is only approved for specific modules and not for an entire qualification. A maximum of two-thirds of the credit value of a qualification may be approved on the basis of prior professional (work) or life experience.

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1.2 Portfolio of Evidence (POE).

All candidates applying for RPL are required to submit a POE as described in Appendix 2. This POE will be assessed to determine whether the candidate has achieved the correct level and has remained current in the field for which he/she is applying for RPL.

1.3 Exemptions

Candidates wishing for recognition of prior studies in other qualifications need to apply for exemptions through the exemption route and should not apply using this policy. See exemption application form on the website www.icsa.co.za

1.4 RPL may:

- provide a specified amount of credit towards completion of an IBS or CSSA qualification.
- exempt the student from the requirement to complete a particular module or modules that comprise part of an IBS/CSSA qualification.

2. APPROVAL OF RPL

- The authority to approve RPL for all qualifications or modules rests with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- The CEO may delegate authority to approve RPL to designated staff within the Education and Student Affairs Division.
- The CEO or delegate may only approve RPL in accordance with this policy.

3. PRINCIPLES FOR GRANTING RPL

- The criteria for assessing RPL must be applied consistently and equitably to all applications.
- Any RPL granted to a student must be academically defensible and take into account the student's assessed ability to successfully complete the requirements of the remainder of the qualification.
- RPL should not be granted where this is likely to result in the student experiencing difficulty in making satisfactory academic progress in the remainder of the qualification. The student's point of entry to the qualification and assessed competency to commence studies from that point must be taken into account.

4. FEES AND THE LIMITATIONS ON GRANTING RPL.

- RPL may not be granted where this would result in the student undertaking less than the prescribed minimum amount of study.
- RPL may not be granted for a module where there is a requirement that the module must be completed in order for a qualification to be awarded.
- A maximum of two-thirds of the credit value of a qualification may be granted on the basis of prior professional (work) or life experience.

Summary of fees and RPL Limitations.

Basis of RPL for IBS Qualifications	RPL Approved Maximum	Applicable Fees
Prior studies below NQF level 3	No RPL.	
Prior completion of the IBS Level NQF3 qualification	Whole qualification.	R670
Part completion of the IBS Level NQF3 qualification	Per module	R250
Prior completion of the IBS Level NQF4	Whole qualification.	R800

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qualification		
Part completion of the IBS Level NQF4 qualification	Per module	R380
Prior professional (work) or life experience	Any modules subject to a maximum of two-thirds of the credit value of the qualification.	R380 per module

Basis of RPL for CSSA Qualification	RPL Approved Maximum	Applicable Fees
Prior completion of CSSA Qualifications at NQF5, or NQF6 level	Whole qualification	R1 460
Part completion of the CSSA Qualifications at NQF5, or NQF6 level	Per module	R690
Prior professional (work) or life experience	Any modules subject to a maximum of two-thirds of the credit value of the qualification*.	R690 per module
Prior completion of CSSA Qualifications at NQF8 (Board Level)	Whole qualification	R1 590

* RPL may not be granted for a module where there is a requirement that the module must be completed in order for a qualification to be awarded.

Application fees must be submitted with the application form. See Appendix 1.

Special note:

Zimbabwe citizens should also note the following:

- In order to practise as an Accounting Officer in South Africa, you are required to write examinations in Taxation, Corporate Law and all four Board modules.
- Zimbabwean members applying for RPL must simultaneously transfer their membership to the Southern African Division.

5. Documentation Requirements

- All applicants must complete the application form (Appendix 1 page 7).
- All RPL approvals must be supported by adequate documentation and properly recorded. (see Appendix 2, page 9: RPL Documentation Requirements).
- Documentation should clearly show that the applicant has achieved and maintained the competencies and/or knowledge and/or skills inherent in the qualification being recognised.
- It is particularly important that any RPL that is granted on the basis of prior professional (work) or life experience is properly documented with a full description of the competencies on which the RPL is being granted.

6. Application for RPL

The Manager: Education and Student Affairs will publish application procedures. All applications must be received by the published deadlines and be on the approved application form.

The application form is attached as Appendix 1 page 7.

7. Applicants may be required to undertake Additional Assessment

An applicant for RPL may be required to undertake further assessment to support his/her application. This may take the form of an examination, interview or other means of evaluation. If appropriate, a fee may be charged for this assessment.

8. Assessment of Applications for RPL

- Staff involved in the assessment and granting of RPL must have appropriate experience and/or be provided with appropriate training and support to enable them to properly assess RPL applications.
- It is the responsibility of the CEO (or delegate) to identify training needs and ensure that these are met.

9. RPL Does Not Guarantee Eligibility for Entry

- The granting of RPL within a qualification does not in itself constitute eligibility for entry.
- The student must still meet the prescribed entry requirements.

10. RPL Does Not Guarantee Student Will Meet Requirements to Graduate from Course

The granting of RPL within a qualification does not in any way constitute a guarantee that the applicant will meet the requirements to achieve the qualification.

11. Timetable Clashes and Other Consequences

Where the granting of RPL causes issues in terms of timetable clashes or unacceptable study combinations, the Institute is under no obligation to make individual arrangements for the student.

12. Provision of False or Misleading Information

If an applicant for RPL provides any information that is false or misleading in relation to the application, the CEO may:

- refuse an application for RPL, or if already granted, revoke the approval of RPL
- refuse admission to the qualification or if already offered, revoke the offer of admission.

13. Appeals

If your application is not successful, you may appeal the decision. You will have to submit the grounds for your appeal in writing and provide additional, verifiable evidence to support your appeal.

14. Articulation Agreements

General

- An Articulation Agreement is a formal agreement between the Institute and another educational institution or professional body to provide admission and a specified amount of RPL to students who have completed prior studies at the other institution.
- All Articulation Agreements must comply with the full provisions of the Recognition of Prior Learning policy, including limits on the amount of RPL that may be granted.
- All Articulation Agreements with South African educational institutions must be approved by the CEO. This authority may not be delegated.

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- All Articulation Agreements with overseas educational institutions must be approved by both the CEO and EXCO. This authority may not be delegated.
- EXCO publishes procedures for obtaining approval of Articulation Agreements with overseas educational institutions on the Institute website where these are applicable.

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APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS GENERAL RPL APPLICATION FORM AND RETURN IT TO THE MANAGER: STUDENT AFFAIRS AND EDUCATION. (See address details at the end of the form).

Submissions cannot be done online or via fax. Hard copies of all evidence (certified) must be supplied. You must register or courier your application for tracing and tracking purposes. You must advise the Institute of the tracking number by way of email to leonora@icsa.co.za or Attention Leonora: Fax: 011 551 4028. The Institute cannot be held responsible for any applications that are not received.

A certified copy of your ID document must accompany your application otherwise it will not be processed.

Title:	Mr Mrs Ms		Surname	
Given Names:				
Student ID:				Date of Birth:
Nationality				
Student Number				
Address:				
Postcode:				
Telephone	Home: ()		Business: ()	Cell
	Fax:		Email:	

Note: For prior completion of examinations with other examining bodies, please apply for Exemptions. Contact exemptions@icsa.co.za.

If you are applying for RPL for a **whole qualification** then please tick the relevant qualification below.

Board	60654	CSSA Professional Post Graduate Qualification: Corporate Secretaryship and Governance Administration	
CSSA 3	60655	CSSA Professional Advanced Qualification: Governance and Administration	
CSSA 2	60653	CSSA Professional Qualification: Governance and Administration	
CSSA 1	60651	CSSA Professional Qualification: Management and Administration	
IBS	60152	IBS Professional Qualification: Management and Administration	
	60150	IBS Professional Qualification: Business Administration	

For RPL of Modules via life/work experience, please tick the relevant modules below

IBS Qualifications		
3-IBE	Introduction to Business English	
3-IMB	Introduction to Business Mathematics	
3-IAC	Introduction to Accounting	
3-IGO	Introduction to Governance	
3-IOAI	Introduction to Office Administration and Information	
3-IBPHR	Introduction to Business Principles and Human Resources	
4-FBE	Fundamentals of Business English	
4-FBM	Fundamentals of Business Mathematics	
4-FOA	Fundamentals of Accounting	
4-FOG	Fundamentals of Governance	
4-FENT	Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship	
4-FOO	Fundamentals of Office Administration	

CSSA Qualifications		
CSSA101	Fundamentals of Law	
CSSA102	Principles of Commercial Law	
CSSA103	Communication	

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CSSA104	Financial Accounting I	
CSSA105	Economics	
CSSA201	Managing Information Systems	
CSSA202	Management Principles	
CSSA203	Taxation	
CSSA204	Financial Accounting II	
CSSA301	Corporate Law	
CSSA302	Strategic and Operations Management / Auditing	
CSSA303	Management Accounting	
CSSA304	Financial Accounting III	
BE-1	Corporate Administration	No RPL
BE-2	Corporate Secretaryship	
BE-3	Corporate Governance	
BE-4	Corporate Financial Management	

THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED BY THOSE WHO HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED WITH THE INSTITUTE

EDUCATION AND TRAINING DETAILS

Please attach **certified copies** of any documentation that can be used to verify the details supplied. (Not required for those who have already completed a whole qualification with the Institute.)

What is the highest level of formal schooling achieved?	
When?	
Where?	
Additional studies which you have undertaken since leaving school:	
Have you been involved in any other courses? (e.g. Staff development programmes, CPD programmes)	
Are you currently enrolled, or participating in, any other course? Please give details.	

WORK EXPERIENCE

Please give details. (A full CV with references should be supplied).

List any other things that have helped you to gain skills. For example, being a parent, involvement in school committees, organising a family business, accounts, involvement in any hobby groups, team, society, association or community organisations. Briefly describe your involvement including official positions.

Before any services will be rendered in this regard, payment must be made to:

Account Name: CSSA
Bank: Nedbank
Branch: Melrose Arch
Branch Code: 19 87 65
Account Number: 1968 298 991

Declaration: I have read the Institute's RPL policy, and agree to comply with the rules contained therein. I acknowledge that any non-compliance will result in forfeiture of rights that would normally be due to me.

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT:	DATE:
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OFFICE USE ONLY FEE PAID: R	RECEIPT NO.:	RECEIPT DATE:
DATE LETTER SENT:	DATE RESULT ENTERED:	DATE NOTIFIED OF RESULT:

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COMPLETED APPLICATIONS ARE TO BE SENT TO: THE MANAGER; EDUCATION AND STUDENT AFFAIRS,
CHARTERED SECRETARIES – SOUTHERN AFRICA

Postal Address

Street Address (for courier parcels)

P.O. BOX 3146, HOUGHTON, 2041

Block C Riviera Road Office Park, 6 – 10 Riviera Road, Killarney, 2193

For assistance with completing this form or for any queries in relation to RPL, please contact The Accreditation and Assessments Manager via email at accreditation@chartsec.co.za

APPENDIX 2

RPL DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE

- Appropriate documentation includes, but is not limited to:
 - the completion of the relevant RPL application form
 - certified copy of identity document, passport or any other identification document.
 - official academic transcripts
 - evidence of attendance at Continuing Professional Development seminars
 - award certificates
 - a CV or resume outlining relevant work history
 - statements from employers or other organisations outlining how previous experience relates to demonstration of the required competencies
 - results of any relevant examinations or tests which identify that the required competencies have been met
 - a record of any relevant interview that responsible staff have held with the applicant regarding required competencies.

Note: The Institute reserves the right to request further evidence after an initial examination of the portfolio has been done.

- Transcripts and award certificates must be properly certified as true copies.
- The Institute reserves the right to interrogate and verify all documentation supplied in support of an RPL application.
- An application for RPL must be accompanied by the relevant fees. Proof of deposit is required. Fees are not refundable under any circumstances. RPL evaluation will not begin before the fees are paid in full.
- The Institute will inform the student in writing of the outcome of his/her RPL application after the necessary verification processes have been completed by FASSET.
- No RPL information, confirmation, policies, etc will be provided telephonically.
- RPL will only be valid if confirmed in writing by the Institute.
- If the student is dissatisfied by a negative RPL evaluation, he/she may register an appeal against the decision which will then follow the normal examinations/assessment appeals procedure of the Institute.