# RUTH PROWSE
## SCHOOL OF ART

# POLICY ON RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

**PRINCIPLES**

'Recognition of prior learning' (RPL) is defined as an assessment process whereby an individual is allowed to apply for access into a program without the formal education qualification relative to the NQF level. The applicant may not apply for RPL for more than 50% of the qualification. A person must be over the age of 23 and be able to show evidence of learning which supports entry into the qualification. Such learning must indicate the student's potential to enter the qualification with the essential foundation which will make the qualification possible to achieve.

The RPL is a policy that evaluates and acknowledges the skills and body of knowledge that a prospective student has gained other than through formal study and thus enable them to gain access to higher education even if they do not fulfil the normal entrance requirements. This includes knowledge gained as a result of non-formal study, paid and unpaid work experience, community and organisational involvement and individual research and inquiry.

RPL is the method whereby diverse students can gain access to higher learning, build on knowledge and skills, redress educational imbalances of the past and thereby contribute to the human body of knowledge.

RPL for the purposes of access recognises that prior learning has prepared a student for successful formal study.

RPL for the purposes of exemption recognises that a student has successfully mastered a section or subject of the proposed area of study through prior formal or informal learning and will therefore exempt those sections or subjects to a maximum of 50%.

RPL for lateral movement recognises that many forms of academic knowledge and skill can serve as entry into a different field of study.

**ASSESSMENT**

The Executive Head, and the Course Co-Ordinator constitute a Committee that are mandated by the Board of Directors to be responsible for the assessment of all RPL applications and the evaluation of prior learning to gain access to a particular field of study and will ensure that RPL students have a reasonable chance of succeeding in their studies.
In addition, the evaluation of past learning by the Committee should be appropriate to the outcomes of the course of study and recognize the content knowledge that the student has gained in the proposed field of study.

The Portfolio of Evidence can include but is not limited to practical portfolios, written letters of motivation, a detailed Curriculum Vitae, a written motivation, written and practical exams, letters of recommendation and documentation of successful past learning, industry experience and an interview. Practical portfolios are assessed based on the same principles as for first year applicants. In addition, consideration is given to students over the age of 23 years who have the maturity to embrace the challenges of higher study.

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The Executive Head will make the final decision to admit a RPL candidate to the school and ensure that further formal studies should build on the knowledge and skills that adults have already acquired.

The Board of Directors will ensure that RPL practices are feasible, transparent, and fair and that the evaluation by the Committee was valid and fair. The Executive Head will provide when requested, explicit detailing of the reasons for any negative RPL outcome.

In the absence of a practical portfolio, students can register as part-time students in the prospective field to acquire and generate the practical portfolio for the purposes of assessment.

Cognizance is given to the fact that RPL applicants come from diverse backgrounds and a variety of educational, organisational, and professional backgrounds that have prepared them for academic work or there may be a gap in the content knowledge and the ability to express and utilize that knowledge in academic terms. Students will be assisted to apply their prior learning and orientated to academic practice.

**APPENDIX**

The School's RPL policy is based on the governmental policy on Higher Education as outlined in the White Paper on higher education (1997):

> "promote equity of access and fair chances of success to all those seeking to realize their potential through higher education, while eradicating all forms of unfair discrimination and advancing redress for past inequalities" (pg 7)

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**Assessment of RPL admission requirements**

The admission requirements for RPL are:
- Practical portfolio or Body of Evidence
- Curriculum vitae
- Identity document or Passport (certified copy)
- Written motivation
- Essay
- 3 Letters of reference
- Interview

**Practical portfolio**

The practical portfolio is assessed based on 3 aspects, namely the presentation, standard and content. All submissions must be original and originating from the applicant. Any submission which is found to be plagiarised will result in the admission being rejected.

The portfolio must be presented in an A4 Flipfile with each work clearly identified by the project name such "**Self Portrait**"
Additional artworks, as support material, must be submitted as photographs or on a CD

Presentation
Original art work should be well presented with evidence of an understanding of professional presentation requirements. Where applicable and financially possible, work should be mounted and presented in a portfolio bag or well-made basic folder, with the work clearly labelled identifying the name of the artist, title, production date and medium. It is expected in a professional portfolio submission that the physical condition of work should be of a good standard thus indicating a professional caring and respectful relationship to the work.

Standard
The assessment of the practical portfolio is based on the applicant's ability to communicate their understanding of visual language and show evidence of the majority of the formal principles that are applicable to the proposed program. These formal principles include- visual communication, composition, surface quality, tone, form and colour, space and volume, line and mark-making.

Content
The body of work is required to visually communicate an idea. The ideas explored can be diverse from media engagement, to the autobiographical, to the socio-political, to the figurative or non-figurative, to the commercial or to the industrial. The body of work should engage the viewer and clearly show the exploration of individual ideas and interests.

**Curriculum vitae**
The submission of a curriculum vita is intended to give the panel an understanding of the applicants' history regarding experience and learning within the field of applied arts. The applicant is encouraged to create a footprint of their informal learning in order to develop a sense of experience and life-long learning.

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As the RPL applicant does not has formal qualifications as entry into the program, evidence of informal learning must be indicated through the curriculum vita.

**Written Motivation**
A word document is required to assess the student's ability to self-promote, their degree of self-awareness and to reveal if careful consideration has been given to the proposed career path and outcome of the program.

**Essay**
A word 12 point single spaced typed document (where technologically possible- hand written if the applicant does not have access to PC resources) is to assess the student's level of conceptual and interpretive skills in relation to the proposed program. In addition, the successful responses to the specific questions will re-affirm the careful consideration that has been given to the proposed career path and outcome of the program.

**Letters of reference**
The letters of reference will provide for affirmation of skills, learning, experience, information of note that would support the application and of good standing in the community.

**Interview**
The interview is scheduled after the portfolio and written components have been assessed. A panel comprising of the Course Co-ordinator and the Executive Head of the institution review the submissions and are present for the interview.

Punctuality
The purpose of this aspect is that the punctual arrival for the interview indicates time management skills and the commitment of the potential student.

Presentation
The student is assessed on their ability to orally self-promote and express their interests and self vision. This is the verbal correlative aspect similar to the written motivation.

Communication
Students are assessed by their ability to understand questions from the interview panel about their proposed work ethic, their intended degree of attention to a successful outcome of the study program, their long term career goals and their knowledge about the area of proposed study (this is a verbal expansion on some issues raised in the essay component) and by answering the questions specifically and to the point, reveal their degree of comprehension skills. In addition, their ability to verbally communicate in English which is the medium of tuition at the School is noted.

Readiness
The applicant is assessed on their readiness to study the specific qualification
The interaction between the panel and the applicant is reviewed in the context of inter-personal dynamics and the induction of the prospective student into the group dynamic of the School.

**Questions to be asked at the interview by the panel**

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1.      Why are you applying for this programme at this point in your life?
       - To ascertain if thought has been applied to the proposed career path

2.      What do you see yourself doing in five years?
       - To ascertain if the outcome of the proposed career path has been considered and to see if the outcome of the programme is in alignment with this future goal

3.      What are you currently doing or producing that falls in the applied arts industry?
       - To ascertain the degree on interest and existing production levels

4.      Describe your favourite artist/ designer/ creative person
       -To ascertain if the applicant has done any visual research and to indicate their style preferences

5.      Describe your work ethic?
       -To ascertain the study commitments of the applicant

6.      How well do you work with others?
       -To ascertain if the applicant is able to work with others in close proximity in a studio and engage in group projects

7.      How will your studies be financially supported?
       -To ascertain if the student requires financial assistance and to make information of Scholarships and material funds that may be applied for
       -To ascertain if the student will be engaging in part-time employment to support their studies
       -To ascertain the degree of academic support that the student will have in the context of tuition fees, materials, transport and subsistence

8.      Is there anything that we should know that may negatively impact on your studies?
       -Students may confidentially impart information about health or learning disabilities that would require understanding and/or support

9.      Why do you wish to study at the Ruth Prowse School of Art?
       -To ascertain why this environment and programme has been selected.

10.     Do you have any questions for the panel?
       -To clarify anything for the applicant