



# DSA Policy and Procedures

## Accreditation Process

### **ACC001.5: Recognition of Prior Learning**

## What constitutes appropriate Prior Learning?

Prior Learning is learning which occurred before a coaching/adjudicator course is undertaken and which results in a coach/adjudicator's acquisition of appropriate competencies for a particular standard (e.g., Level 0, 1, 2, and 3).

The *principal* reason for inclusion of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in the DSA Accreditation Program is to provide a pathway towards compliance with DSA rules for appropriately qualified / accredited coaches and / or Adjudicators relocating on a permanent basis to Australia from overseas. Australian residents who travel overseas for the purpose of obtaining accreditation will not be considered as suitable for RPL.

Australian residents who are registered with DSA may also apply for RPL where they have developed skills or training relevant to Dancesport Coaching or Adjudicating within Australia (e.g., recognised Dancing Society qualifications). The same measures of relevance and process of assessment will apply whether the RPL components were obtained overseas or within Australia. DSA will consider the relevance and background of relevant Societies, and the qualifications of Society examiners, as part of the RPL assessment.

Prior learning may be formal and ideally should be obtained within the previous 10 years. The key components for any Accreditation levels are:

1. A relevant, verifiable certificate deemed equivalent to the level of DSA Accreditation being applied for, ideally obtained by examination within Australia via a recognisable Society.
2. Any required DSA components for this level of Accreditation, including any activity or time interval requirements.
3. Any additional relevant verifiable experience that adds value to the application.

Components 1 and 2 above are non-negotiable criteria, while component 3 is optional.

To apply for RPL a person must be sixteen (16) years of age or over, be a Member of DSA, and has been resident in Australia for a cumulative period of not less than six months or is eligible for permanent residence in Australia.

## How might Prior Learning occur?

Coaches/Adjudicators may have recently completed a recognised relevant training program (in Australia or overseas). This would normally require evidence of successful completion of a relevant exam from a recognised International Dancesport body or a Dancing Society in Australia that is recognised by DSA. All documents need to be in English, or a certified translation from a foreign language document. DSA will also require details of the examining body (Australian or International Society) and details of the examiner.

Coaches/Adjudicators may have successfully completed a Combined Technical Exam with DSA and used the result to apply, via RPL, for a related accreditation [e.g., completing a Level 1 (Competition Adjudicator) Adjudicating exam in Standard, then applying via RPL for

Level 1 Coach, Standard accreditation]. RPL applications of this nature shall be dealt with by the Accreditation Chair as part of normal business. Note that in such a case all other required modules must also be completed. If all other modules have already been completed, then the related accreditation will be granted automatically (i.e., an RPL application will not be necessary).

Adjudicators who gained their accreditation after January 1, 2010, may apply via RPL for accreditation in the Coaching stream at the same level. Note that in such a case, all other required Coaching modules must also be completed.

## **Recognised Prior Learning Principles**

The process of RPL must be quality controlled and delivered by personnel with experience in the sport and in relevant Coach/Adjudicator education. These personnel are responsible for ensuring that:

- Procedures are fair and equitable; and
- Measuring techniques are valid and reliable

Those who manage the program must ensure that Coaches/Adjudicators seeking accreditation are aware of and can readily access the RPL process. Competencies should be identified, be available for public scrutiny and used consistently when assessing prior learning.

Assessment should consistently (reliability) and accurately (validity) reveal a coach/adjudicator's competency so that repeated assessments would report the same level of ability.

## **DanceSport Australia Environment**

The world of Education and Training has seen many significant changes over the past years, all with the ultimate objective of ensuring the provision of quality education and training and the pursuit of excellence for all. All details of these processes and procedures can be found on the DSA website, under the Academy Tab. Details are contained in the Accreditation Program document:

<https://dancesport.org.au/accreditation/acc.pdf>.

As part of this new Education and Training framework, DanceSport Australia (DSA) is committed to ensuring equity and fairness in the application of training, education, and assessment principles.

This Accreditation Policy Procedure has been developed to provide a tool for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) ensuring that DanceSport Australia employs a structured process to determine RPL outcomes, and that applicants use a structured process to apply for recognition of their Prior Learning

Through this DSA RPL Policy, all applicants will have equal access to the Accreditation process. Accreditation procedures are aimed at being just and verifiable, and without unnecessary barriers and delay to applicants. This Policy for the Recognition of Prior

Learning describes a step-by- step process for people applying for the recognition of competencies in relation to DanceSport Australia's:

- National Accreditation Coaching Courses,
- National Accreditation Adjudicating Courses, and
- National Course Presenters Training & Accreditation Scheme.

DanceSport Australia is committed to the provision of quality education and training for all of its members and supports the initiatives that have been seen as part of DSA's National Training Reform Agenda, which includes as one of its important elements, the Recognition of Prior Learning.

For further information or assistance concerning this Policy Procedure please contact the Chair, DSA Academy, DanceSport Australia.

## **Definitions**

Throughout this policy:

### **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

Is the process, which will enable applicants to be granted recognition of previously acquired relevant competencies obtained through formal and/or informal training and work experience. These competencies will be assessed against current and relevant learning outcomes/competency standards through the approved DSA RPL process.

### **Accreditation**

Is the formal National recognition and acceptance of the educational standards of a course of study by an accrediting agency (i.e., Australian Coaching Council)

### **Assessment Criteria**

These are the elements or measures that should be used to judge the worth of accumulated knowledge, skill and application.

### **Certified Copies**

Certified copies are copies of original documents that are certified by a Justice of The Peace, Solicitor or Member of Police Force as a true and correct copy of the original document. The signature of the actuary must be original.

### **Competency**

Focuses on what is required of adjudicator/coach in the working environment, rather than on the learning process. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments. The National Training Board defines Competency as, "the knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill across industries or within an industry, to the standard of performance required in employment."

## **Competency Standards**

Are statements, in outcome terms, which specify knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required for the function to be performed.

## **Content Assessors**

Are personnel who are qualified and competent in their areas of expertise. Usually the Accreditation Commission, having the responsibility as the Assessor for Coach/Adjudicator assessments within DanceSport Australia, will accredit these content assessors.

## **Learning Outcomes**

Are statements that identify the skills, knowledge, and applications within training courses, and reflect the required competencies. In RPL terms, the Learning Outcomes are the benchmarks against which a person's prior learning and competencies are measured.

## **Mentor**

The duly qualified person responsible for providing quality support, advice, counselling, and monitoring of standards for trainee coaches/adjudicators.

## **National Competency Standards**

The standards which have been developed by the Sport and Recreation Industry Training Advisory Body and endorsed by the Australian National Training Authority.

## **RPL Assessors**

Are the personnel who are appointed to manage the DSA's RPL process.

## **RPL Assessment Panels**

RPL assessment panels shall comprise members of the DSA National Council plus any further qualified State Board representatives that may be required. The assessment panel shall collectively possess the following expertise:

- Competency to conduct an RPL process,
- Content competency to assess the relevance of RPL to training content and Learning Outcomes/competency standards,
- Competency in DanceSport Australia's Coaching, Officiating, Administration and the related education.

The current DSA CEO shall head the Assessment Panel, unless a conflict of interest arises, in which case the Head shall be nominated by the Council Members.

All RPL applications shall be forwarded to the RPL Assessment Panel for review. Where applications are straightforward the Chair of the Academy may perform the assessment but will forward to the RPL Assessment Panel for ratification before any Accreditations can be granted.

## **Review**

Means, a review of the original decision, which may include presentation of evidence of further training/assessment.

## **Work Experience**

Relates to work competencies gained in a workplace where the acquisition of skills, knowledge, application, and attitudes is related to tasks, processes and the work environment. It may also include informal self-initiated industry training courses.

## **Recognition of Prior Learning Principles**

DanceSport Australia's RPL Policy is based on the following principles:

- **Commitment**

DSA is committed to RPL as being fundamental to equity and fairness in the application of training, education and assessment principles. This commitment will be ensured through the application of best practice throughout the RPL process.

- **Access**

Through this RPL Policy all applicants will have equal access to the process.

- **Fairness**

The RPL process will be credible, just and verifiable. All applicants will have confidence that the process and its outcomes are fair, equitable and objective.

- **Openness**

All RPL decisions will be governed by openness. Applicants will have the right to request a review of an unfavourable decision, in which case the National Council will appoint an independent review panel. This review will be negotiated to a resolution.

- **Support**

Appropriate support will be available to the following personnel as required:

- RPL Applicants
- RPL Assessors
- Content Assessors

- **Confidentiality**

All personal information disclosed by the applicants as a result of their RPL application and all parties involved in the assessment process will treat subsequent assessment interviews with total confidentiality.

## **Recognition of Prior Learning Process**

The following sequential process has been established by DSA as the procedure to be

followed by an applicant who wishes to obtain credit of prior learning/competencies through RPL.

### **1. Request**

Applicants applying for RPL do so by applying online via their DSA account. (This application is forwarded to the Chair of the Accreditation Commission.) Any documents or necessary supporting evidence shall be forwarded to the Chair, Accreditation Commission (accreditation@dancesport.org.au), citing the Application Number.

On receipt of an application, the Accreditation Commission will review the application to determine the completeness and relevance of the documentation. The Accreditation Commission will advise the applicant of any deficiencies or omissions that must be rectified or addressed before the application can proceed.

The Accreditation Commission Chair will coordinate the process and forward the application to the RPL Assessment panel.

### **2. Assessment**

The RPL Assessment Panel will assess the completed application; this may require additional interview or support evidence.

The RPL Assessment Panel after making a full assessment of the application will either:

- Grant recognition
- Require further supporting documentation/evidence
- Require further training/assessment; or
- If unsatisfied with the evidence available deny recognition

The RPL Assessment Panel will notify the applicant of the Assessment decision and any recommendations made by the panel. At this time the relevant State Board will also be advised of the outcome.

All advice on the outcome of the decision will be the responsibility of the Chair Accreditation Commission.

### **3. Review**

DSA will initiate a review of the Assessment Panel decision where the applicant has decided to appeal the decision of the Assessment Panel, or where the Assessment Panel requires the applicant to complete further training/assessment.

The Review Panel will be formed by the National Council and headed by the National Sports Director. A maximum of three independent panel members (not members of the National Council) shall be appointed by National Council.

The Panel will review all previous assessment methods undertaken by the Assessment

Panel. The Review Panel will make a decision from one of two (2) possible outcomes:

- Grant recognition
- Deny recognition

The decision of the Panel conducting the review will be final.

The applicant will be notified of the review decision, and any recommendations of the review panel.

## **Recognition of Prior Learning Process - General Information**

RPL will be granted when all the stated Learning Outcomes of the relevant Course (Module/Unit) have been met.

DanceSport Australia will be responsible for the management of the total RPL process.

A national register of accredited RPL Assessors will be established and maintained by the Accreditation Commission of DanceSport Australia.

## **Roles and Responsibilities – Summary**

### **1. Chair Accreditation Commission**

- Receiving, coordinating and processing applications.
- Act as the liaison between the Accreditation Commission and Assessment panel.
- Providing guidelines for content assessors
- Inform the relevant State Board with regards to applications received from their State
- Recording the results of all RPL applications
- Advising applicants regarding the RPL process.
- Providing reports on the outcomes of the submission to the applicant and State Board.
- Best Practice management of the RPL process in respect of the following principles:
  - Commitment
  - Access
  - Fairness
  - Openness
  - Support
  - Confidentiality

### **2. Assessment Panel Members**

- Assessing RPL applications against training content, learning outcomes/competency standards.
- Best Practice management of the RPL process in respect of the following principles:
  - Commitment
  - Access



- Fairness
- Openness
- Support
- Confidentiality

### **3. Applicants**

- Conducting self-assessment to determine the relevancy and correctness of their application.
- Gathering all relevant supporting documentation to validate the information provided in their application.
- Completing an RPL application with honest, clear, complete and concise information.
- Forwarding Application to the State Board Executive Officer and payment of any fees set for administration of the RPL process.
- Responding positively to assessment feedback from the DSA Accreditation Commission.

#### **Applications via RPL**

All applications for RPL must be completed online, in the applicant's DSA account. Any documents or necessary supporting evidence shall be forwarded to the Chair, Academy ([accreditation@dancesport.org.au](mailto:accreditation@dancesport.org.au)), citing the online Application Number.