Policy Name	**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**		
Policy #	**C.03**	Category	**Academic**
Approving Jurisdiction	**Board of Governors**	Replaces	**New**
Administrative Responsibility	**VP, Education and Training**	Version	**2025-01-16**
Procedures Approved by	**The President**	Next Review Date	***See Policy Review Date or as needed***

See the related POLICY (Link to be added when posted.)

DEFINITIONS

Formal Learning: Learning that takes place in education and training institutions, is recognized by relevant authorities, and leads to credentials and qualifications. Formal learning is structured according to educational arrangements such as curricula, qualifications, and teaching-learning requirements.

Informal (experiential) Learning: Learning that occurs in daily life, in the family, in the workplace, in communities and through interests and activities of individuals. Through the recognition of prior learning process, competencies gained in informal learning can be made visible, and can contribute to qualifications and other recognitions. In some cases, the term experiential learning is used to refer to informal learning that focuses on learning from experience.

Non-formal Learning: Learning acquired in addition or alternatively to formal learning. In some cases, it is also structured according to educational and training arrangements, but more flexible. It usually takes place in community-based settings, the workplace and through the activities of non-government organisations. Through the recognition of prior learning process, non-formal learning can also lead to qualifications and other recognitions.

RPL Candidate: A student who has applied for credit or exemption under the RPL process.

Subject Matter Expert (SME): An individual, external or staff member of Aurora College, knowledgeable about the subject matter and/or RPL assessments.

PROCEDURES

Aurora College may grant credit that cannot be recognized through a formal transfer credit procedure for knowledge and skills gained through work or life experience, including Indigenous Knowledge.

This Informal and Non-formal Learning Procedure outlines:

- Eligibility, limitations, and the process for requesting and granting credit (including specified, unspecified and reduced program duration credit), up to a specified limit, towards completion of a coursework or program;
- The process for granting exemption from completing a course specified for a coursework program, where there is no reduction to the units required to satisfy the program requirements and another Aurora College course is completed in place of the exempted course; and
- The roles and responsibilities of the student/RPL candidate, instructional staff, non-instructional staff, and the Office of the Registrar.

1.0 Eligibility

1.1. Aurora College students (newly admitted and current/continuing students) may apply for credit prior learning recognition in accordance with the requirements of this procedure.

1.2. Assessment of prior learning and the granting of credit will be consistent with the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

2.0 Limitations

2.1. Credit is granted for current knowledge, skills and abilities demonstrated to have arisen from non-formal and informal learning. Currency will depend on the nature of the program and course for which credit is being sought. Where a student is applying for credit based on work experience, a minimum of one year full-time, or equivalent, relevant work experience is required to be considered for credit recognition.

2.2. Individuals applying for Recognition of Prior Learning must first be formally admitted to Aurora College.

2.3. Some courses offered by Aurora College may be ineligible for RPL credits based on program outlines and requirements.

3.0 Application and Assessment of Informal and Non-Formal Learning

3.1. RPL Applications for credit for non-formal or informal learning may be submitted at any time once a student is admitted into a program or at any time before the midpoint of the course for which the student is seeking credit. However, if the student is registered in the course for which credit is being sought and wishes to receive a tuition refund if granted credit, the student must apply for the credit before the end of the add/drop period for that course.

3.2. The Program Head/School Chair will review the application and assign a lead Subject Matter Expert (SME) to facilitate the RPL assessment in consultation with the Office of the Registrar.

3.3. The assigned lead SME will initiate contact with the RPL candidate to develop an RPL plan outlining how the candidate will be assessed and evaluated.

3.4. A documented copy of the RPL plan will be shared with the RPL candidate.

3.5. RPL candidates will prepare for and participate in the assessment, which may include submitting or demonstrating evidence of equivalent or experiential learning within four (4) months of an application or within the deadline established by the assigned SME.

3.6. The assigned lead SME will coordinate an RPL assessment panel, which will schedule, prepare for, and complete the assessment of the candidate's prior learning to verify the learning is relevant, sufficient, authentic, and current and can be measured reliably against course learning outcomes for the awarding of college credit.

3.7. RPL assessments must be completed and grades assigned within ten (10) working days of receipt of a complete package from the RPL candidate.

3.8. The assigned lead SME may initiate a learning plan if the RPL assessment indicates that additional evidence of learning is necessary. Approval of the Program Head is required.

4.0 RPL Assessment Methods

Aurora College recognizes the following methods of assessment for RPL. Programs will determine, out of the selection below, which assessment methods are applicable:

4.1. Examinations
- Challenge exams – A test or exam (written or oral) designed to validate the knowledge of the candidate as it relates to course requirements. A challenge exam may be the same test or exam given to students who formally attend the course. It is limited to questions directly related to the learning objectives/outcomes of the course.

- Standardized tests – Similar to a challenge exam; however, this test or exam is usually developed by someone other than the assigned RPL assessor. It focusses on widely recognized standards (as set by a department or professional/sectoral organization) that are equivalent to the course objectives.

4.2. Competency Based Assessments
- Portfolios – Documents or objects produced by the candidate that demonstrate tangible proof of accomplishment. These may include, but are not limited to,

reports, videos, illustrations, prototype models, or an artist's portfolio. Students may be asked to demonstrate abilities or answer questions about the portfolio by the assigned RPL assessor.

- Demonstration – Simulation or actual presentation of candidate's abilities, which may be live or recorded. The demonstration may include, but is not limited to, such activities as presenting a speech, role-playing a situation, creating a document on computer, giving a musical performance, performing a lab experiment, interviewing a client, operating equipment, or completing a skill or procedure.

- Interview – The RPL interview focusses on course objectives and may include techniques such as open-ended questions and case studies. The interview is used to clarify areas of learning and may be used in parallel with other methods of assessment.

- Worksite/Workplace Assessment – The candidate is observed performing tasks as a part of normal work routine, or as specifically assigned, in the place of work. Assessment is normally made by instructional staff assigned to a candidate but may also be made by a work supervisor or field expert. If performed by an external assessor, it may be followed up by a self-assessment and/or interview with a RPL assessor.

  o Industry-Based Evaluation – Credit may be awarded through recognition of pre-assessed training based on established agreements with select employers, training organizations, continuing studies programs, or Red Seal certifications.

  o External Evaluation – Assessment provided by an expert other than Aurora College instructional staff or a member of the College RPL Committee. Assessment method may include, but is not limited to, performance evaluation, letter of validation, or worksite assessment, and may require follow-up by instructional staff.

  o Self-assessment – Assessment performed by the candidate, usually with the aid of an established form or questionnaire. Normally requires a parallel assessment by a field expert and/or RPL subject matter expert.

5.0 RPL Evaluation Results/ Official Transcripts and Academic Records

College credit will be granted when the Registrar or designee reviews and approves the application and the awarded credit.

1) Reporting RPL assessment results
    i.   the assigned lead SME/instructional staff provides the results of the assessment to the Program Head/Academic Chair for review.

  ii. the Program Head/Academic Chair sends the results of the assessment (credit decision) to the Registrar for final review and approval.

2) Recording RPL results on Transcripts
  i. The Registrar or designee reviews the RPL documentation to ensure that the learning is equivalent to the standards and criteria for the level required by the course in which the credit is sought is achieved.

  ii. Successful RPL assessments are recorded on Official Transcripts with a 'PL'.

  iii. Unsuccessful attempts are recorded on a student's Official Transcript as US (unsuccessful).

  iv. Incomplete attempts are recorded as IN on a student's official transcript until such a time that the requirement is met. At the end of the academic year, any IN entry is changed to (US) unsuccessful RPL attempt.

6.0 Disputing an RPL Decision

1) All disputes of an RPL decision will follow the informal resolution process:
  i. The student must first meet with the assigned SME who made the initial decision to informally resolve the situation, within three (3) working days of being advised that they are unsuccessful in obtaining credit.

  ii. If the situation is not resolved, the student may raise the issue within two (2) working days of that meeting by way of a letter to the School Chair responsible for the course.

2) The School Chair reviews the documentation presented by the student and the SME to confirm and/or render a different decision.
  i. This decision can be made by way of document review and/or a formal face to-face meeting with the student.

  ii. If a formal face-to-face meeting is required, the student is entitled to bring a staff support person of their choice to the meeting.

3) The School Chair must render a decision within seven (7) working days of receiving the student's written request and must advise the student in writing of the decision.

4) The decision of the School Chair is final and binding.

7.0 Fees

    1) Aurora College does RPL assessments on a cost-recovery basis. The cost of RPL will be based on the services performed in the assessment process and the number of credits requested.

    2) Fees payable for a non-formal or informal learning credit application are specified in Aurora College's Fee Schedule, as per policy J.02 Fees. Fees are non-refundable and must be paid at the time the student applies for the credit.

8.0 Roles and Responsibilities

    1) The **RPL Candidate/Student** is responsible for providing evidence showing the equivalency of their prior non-formal or informal learning to the courses for which they are seeking credit to the assigned SME within stipulated timelines. This evidence must meet the requirements as defined by Aurora College. In addition,

        i. The RPL Candidate/student should register in, continue attending, and not drop or withdraw from the course until they have been advised on the success of the credit application or challenge exams.

        ii. A student who receives credit for a course in which they are currently registered and who is eligible to drop or withdraw from the course is responsible for ensuring that they have been dropped from the course or they have withdrawn from the course.

    2) The **Lead/Assigned SME** works with the RPL Committee and the Office of the Registrar to provide current and potential students with information and advice on RPL processes and practices. The Lead SME coordinates an RPL assessment panel, which will schedule, prepare for, and complete the assessment of the candidate's prior learning to verify the learning is relevant, sufficient, authentic, and current and can be measured reliably against course learning outcomes for the awarding of college credit.

    3) The **RPL Assessment Panel** is an *ad hoc* panel whose role is to verify successful achievement of all outcomes from the relevant assessment with the applicant. If the panel cannot verify specific components of the required outcomes from the evidence presented by the applicant, these outcomes may be verified through other assessment methods.

    4) The **RPL Committee**, constituted in accordance with its Terms of Reference, acts in an advisory capacity to the Office of the Registrar and academic departments regarding recognition of prior learning processes, resources, and issues. The RPL Committee regularly monitors, reviews, evaluates, and revises RPL policy to reflect changing needs and improvements in the assessment process and changes in the College's mission and goals. At a minimum, this review will be completed every five years. The RPL Committee, in consultation with Chairs/Program Heads and the

Registrar or designee, develops and updates assessment procedures and such other procedures and manuals, as it deems necessary.

5) The **Registrar** is also responsible for ensuring Programs are aware of the RPL policies and liaising with College staff to ensure consistent application and delivery across the range of College courses/programs.

6) Upon recommendation of an approved RPL eligible course(s) by the Program Head/School Chair, the Registrar will review and grant approval as appropriate.

7) The Registrar is responsible for ensuring quality RPL practice and may grant requests for RPL credit that exceeds 50% course credit in a program.

8) The Registrar or designee is responsible for maintaining/updating the list of RPL eligible courses and the master list of "External Courses Approved for College Credit" in the College's Transfer Credit database.

9) **School Chairs** or designees, in consultation with the Office of the Registrar will determine their system for implementing recognition of prior learning in accordance with College policy and available resources. The system may include assessment of formal learning (e.g. educational documents) assessment of informal learning (e.g. evidence or portfolios, assessment of challenge processes) and assessment of non-formal learning (e.g. external courses/programs for College credit). School Chairs or designees will identify which courses have RPL processes available.

10) **Instructional Staff**, to whom responsibility is given to develop and conduct assessments of prior learning, will be identified by their Chair or designee. Instructional staff will participate in RPL training for the development and implementation of quality RPL practices. In compliance with College policy, instructors will identify opportunities for RPL when they create their course outlines.

RELATED DOCUMENTS
J.02 Fees
RPL Committee Terms of Reference