Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap

Key Issues in RPL from the QA View

Patrick Leushuis
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science –
The Netherlands

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Overview

- RPL Assessment Standards
- RPL Assessment Instruments
- Counselors
- Assessors
- Reporting RPL Results
- Quality Assurance
- Accountability

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- Non-formal and informal learning =>
  - Is just as valuable as formal learning
  - Leads to learning outcomes equivalent to learning outcomes of formal educational programs

- Challenge: acceptance of RPL assessment results as equivalent

- Key: high quality RPL procedures, transparancy and accountability

1. RPL Assessment Standards

- Competence indicators / assessment criteria should be:
  - ➤ Formulated in terms of learning outcomes (tangible, observable, measurable)
  - ➤ Leaving room for different types of evidence, from a variety of possible contexts
  - ➤ Independent from specific curriculum requirements
- But … should also make clear matches with specific curriculum requirements possible

⇒ Development of RPL assessment standards in cooperation with:
  - ➤ Experts professional practice
  - ➤ Authorities responsible for decisions on giving exemptions, awarding credits and degrees

2. RPL Assessment Instruments

- Validity:
  - Fit for purpose: assess what needs to be assessed (content and level)
- Reliability:
  - Objective, independent
  - Same result when repeated, or assessed by someone else

Issues:

- Assessment of theoretical and conceptual knowledge, transfer skills
  - START-method
- Key behavioural competences: practical assessment methods (video, assessment centre, job observation etc.)

3. Counselors

Main tasks:
- Clarify RPL procedure and instruments
- Assist in relating evidence from practical experience to competences, indicators and assessment criteria, and in selecting and presenting relevant evidence in a structured way

Specific requirements counselors:
- Expertise on RPL and on procedure and instruments used
- Expertise on broad relevant (professional) practice
- Expertise on all assessment criteria used
- Capability to use a variety of counseling and techniques

$\Rightarrow$ Develop counselor profile (tasks, competences)
$\Rightarrow$ Training and selection, maintenance of expertise, certification

4. Assessors

Main tasks:
- Assess evidence in portfolio according to criteria
- Assess (possible) practical demonstration of competences
- Conduct assessment interview
- Report results
- Cooperate with co-assessor

Specific requirements assessors:
- Independence (including: not being the counselor of the RPL-participant)
- Expertise on RPL, assessment instruments and standard / criteria
- Expertise on broad relevant (professional) practice
- Capability to use a variety of assessment and interviewing techniques
- Capability to report and substantiate RPL assessment results

$\Rightarrow$ Develop assessor profile (tasks, competences)
$\Rightarrow$ Training and selection, maintenance of expertise, certification

5. Reporting of Results

Reports should at least include:
- Which assessment standard and instruments are used
- Mastering of which competences is fully or partially proven
- Per competence:
  - What evidence proved full or partial mastering?
  - What (in that evidence and/or assessment interview) convincingly showed mastering of relevant indicators / criteria?

$\Rightarrow$ Reports should be tranferable to 'third parties'
$\Rightarrow$ Reporting requires specific training
$\Rightarrow$ Tools: guidelines, good practices
$\Rightarrow$ Use 'external' quality check

6. RPL Quality Assurance

- RPL QA coordination:
  - ➢ Establishment of RPL standards / assessment criteria
  - ➢ Choice of RPL assessment instruments
  - ➢ Check RPL procedures, including rights of participants (complaints, second opinion etc.)
  - ➢ Check provision of information to (potential) RPL participants
  - ➢ Tips, tools and guidelines for counselors and assessors
  - ➢ Quality check on reports of results RPL participant

- Training, selection and certification of counselors and assessors

- Evaluation of RPL procedures with participants, employers, counselors, assessors and authorities responsible for giving exemptions and awarding degrees.
- Follow up: improvement actions

7. Accountability

Authorities responsible for:

> Giving exemptions
> Setting learning pathways for individuals
> Awarding degrees

➢ Transparancy: documentation on decisions taken =>
  - substantiation and justification
  - relations between RPL assessment results and curriculum requirements

Key issue in QA of flexible higher education

Key success factor

Provide flexible, tailor made learning pathways!