# What is Recognition of Prior Learning?

Recognition of Prior Learning is a process which recognises the prior experiences, skills and knowledge of individuals within a given context and against a standard.

The ATDP course and its associated Units of Competency have been accredited by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). As such, training delivered to the standard, and assessment of competence against a Unit of Competency, must comply with all the requirements of Australian Vocational Education and Training standards. Accredited courses can only be delivered by (or under the auspices of) a Registered Training Organisation which has the course and Units of Competency recorded against its Scope of Registration. Additionally, the assessment instruments used by the RTO, whether to assess at the conclusion of training or by RPL must be developed in a manner which complies with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations.

The ATDP course in Military Advocacy has six elective Units of Competency, some of which are pre-requisite for other Units of Competency. Units of Competency describe exactly how a particular job or role is performed and how assessment against the Unit of Competency can be demonstrated. The Units of Competency form the standard by which everyone must be assessed.

All training materials and assessment tools must be regularly subjected to internal audit and records kept stating when such audits were carried out, to ensure they comply with the requirements for assessment. RTOs are also subject to audit by ASQA on a regular basis and risk losing their registration if non-compliance is indicated. ATDP takes its obligations to our partner RTO seriously and will do nothing to prejudice their registration.

The RPL process used by ATDP was developed by advocates in conjunction with the RTO to ensure "industry standards" could be demonstrated by a trainee. The process was rigorous and after development trialled on two occasions to ensure it met all requirements. RPL involves the collection of evidence which would indicate a person has all the skills required by the Unit of Competency. In many cases the collection of that evidence may not be cost nor time effective, such as visiting a trainee's workplace and observing them perform all aspects of the role described in the Unit of Competency. This may take many visits before sufficient evidence could be collected.

The ATDP method with people trained under the former Training and Information Program, or with those holding industry relevant qualifications is to have them enrol in and complete a program where they undertake a written quiz to demonstrate the knowledge evidence required. Trainees also undertake an interview with a qualified assessor where they are able to present suitable evidence or answer a number of questions which relate to the skills evidence necessary.

Trainees wishing to undertake RPL should familiarise themselves with the particular Unit of Competency against which they seek to be assessed. They should consider all aspects of performance, knowledge and foundation skills evidence that they should be able to demonstrate during the RPL process. In other words, a trainee must "self-assess" prior to undertaking RPL. Traineess who have gaps in the evidence they produce will be judged to be not-yet-competent. If

this occurs the trainee is given information as to how the missing evidence may be demonstrated or a tailored remedial training program developed which brings the trainee to the required standard. Such a program would also include suitable workplace experiences which would require observation by a mentor.

Any trainee looking to undertake the RPL pathway should contact their local ex-services organisation (ESO) to discuss training options available, and to commence the enrolment process.