

# Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

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### Policy statement

The purpose of this policy is to set out the process and guidance for EAL centres. The process aims to provide accurate recognition and evidencing of knowledge, understanding and skills that have previously been achieved and/or certificated. The policy will support those who are directly involved with planning, advising and delivering learning.

Not all learners have access to formal learning. The main principles behind RPL are that an individual's prior achievements can be recognised and that a learner is not disadvantaged by unnecessarily having to repeat a course of learning.

### Regulatory Requirement

This policy is written in accordance with our regulatory requirements including,

- Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition June 2016 - Condition: E10
- Qualification Wales Standard Conditions of Recognition – Condition E10
- CCEA General Conditions of Recognition February 2016 – Condition E10
- SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles (2014) – Principle 10

### Definition of Recognition Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit or qualification through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.

The use of RPL has been developed over time, which has led to the use of a number of terms to describe the process. Among the most common are:

- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)
- Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
- Accreditation of Prior Learning and Achievement (APLA)

These terms broadly describe the same process; EAL uses the term Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be:

- Valid
- Reliable

RPL focuses on assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- a unit accumulated towards a full EAL qualification
- a full EAL qualification

### Process

The qualification manual will state whether the use of RPL is permitted as not all qualifications allow the use of RPL.

Where units are assessed using RPL, then all evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. In assessing a unit using RPL the assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcome and its related assessment criteria.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. It will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, knowledge and/or competence. Where there is an assessment strategy/plan for a qualification, this must be adhered to at all times.

If a centre wishes to use RPL, the following must be ensured:

- RPL processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible
- Achievement must be identified prior to taking a qualification
- Learners are registered as soon as they formally start to gather evidence
- All evidence of RPL is retained for the purpose of External Quality Assurance by EAL
- Certification and claims are made according to normal procedures
- All relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed
- Assessors must have the appropriate expertise in order to support the RPL process
- The process is not concerned with allowing for exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study
- The process of assessment for RPL is subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring standards as any other form of assessment.

## Examples of RPL Evidence

RPL evidence may not cover all requirements of a unit and further methods of assessment may be required such as professional discussion or observation. Assessors must ensure that any evidence presented is valid and authentic.

Examples include:

- Documentation
- Witness testimonies
- Job descriptions
- Professional discussion

## Appeals

The EAL Appeals Procedure applies to any assessment decision including RPL evidence. Please refer to EALs Appeals Policy.

## CONTACT US

Please contact our Customer Care Team on; 01923 652400, email: [customercare@eal.org.uk](mailto:customercare@eal.org.uk) or submit in writing to: Unit 2, The Orient Centre, Greycaine Road, Watford, Herts, WD24 7GP.