



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Definition

RPL recognises prior learning which originates from experience, formal, non-formal and informal contexts. Learners’ previous non-certified learning may be used as evidence that learner meets the assessment requirements for a qualification/unit through knowledge, understanding and/or skills they already possess and, therefore do not need to develop through a course of learning.

Purpose

The purpose of RPL is to recognise learners’ previous learning which can be used as evidence that a learner meets the assessment requirements for a qualification and or unit. Where a learner has evidence of prior learning in a subject, sector or skill-area, the learner may be able to undertake the summative assessment without further formal learning, or they may be able to use it as evidence of achievement of assessment criteria.

RPL cannot be used to accredit any qualification or part where the learner has not taken part in, and successfully met the requirements of, the assessment required by the current qualification against which RPL is being applied. RPL must also be current and relevant.

RPL does not mean that the particular element does not need to be included as assessment evidence, it means that the assessment criteria is achieved via alternative means. Therefore, where RPL is applied it must be evidenceable and subject to moderation/verification as per any other evidence which a learner may produce for the purposes of assessment.

Process

Stage	Action
1	Providers should have policies and procedure for the recognition of prior learning that are communicated and understood by learners and assessors.
2	Providers must consider the assessment strategy required by the qualification. The assessor needs to consider if the learner’s prior learning suitably prepares them for the assessment method required i.e. examination, practical demonstration, portfolio of evidence.
3	Providers must have a process in place to engage with the learner to determine their needs. The provider/learner partnership must identify any potential gaps in

	evidence of prior learning to ensure that all assessment criteria have been previously covered sufficiently to enable the learner the opportunity to succeed in the assessment.
4	<p>Providers must document proof of evidence used to recognise prior learning. Prior certification should be recorded on the learner's assessment record. Evidence that can be included in the portfolio should be recorded. Evidence that can be used for several assessment objectives the activity may only need to take place once and the assessment record should be annotated accordingly.</p> <p>Witness statements confirming prior achievement of assessment objectives may be accepted, where they can be supported with dates and confirmation of achievement rather than simple statements.</p>
5	RPL must never result in a learner avoiding any aspect of the summative assessment process required for the achievement of a qualification. For example, if the learner is entered for a qualification which requires an examination or practical test, these assessments must not be avoided by RPL.
6	Providers must maintain appropriate records of the end to end process. This should include the initial learner assessment and follow the process through to the formal decision awarded as a result of the learner undertaking the summative assessment.
7	Providers should plan for the use of RPL to be subject to the same internal and external quality assurance process as any other route through the qualification.