

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy & Procedure

Introduction

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

Exemption is the facility for a learner to claim exemption from some of the achievement requirements a QCF qualification, using evidence of certified, non QCF achievement deemed to be of equivalent value.

Equivalent units are units from a different qualification or submitted by another recognised organisation that is/are deemed to be of equivalent value and so can count towards a qualification in place of designated mandatory or optional units from it.

RPL is a method used to recognise prior learning that may not have been accredited through formal qualifications. It may be applicable for:

- Learners who are already employed and have no formal qualifications to prove their skill set
- Learners returning to work
- Those preparing to start employment or looking to move to another area of employment that may require some / all of the same skill set

RPL will enable learners to have their prior learning formally recognised and part of / or all of their qualification pathway accredited. RPL is usually only used to show evidence against individual units, it is rare that RPL will be used for a full qualification, however, each case will be judged on its own merits and procedures as detailed below will be implemented.

Creative Alliance encourages the use of RPL where it is of value to the learners in facilitating assessment. All RPL procedures and decisions will be robust, transparent, fair and accessible to all concerned. All RPL evidence submitted must be valid and current. By current, we usually mean that it is prior learning used by the learner within the last 3 years.

RPL Values

- RPL is a method for learners to claim credit for units, irrespective of how their learning took place. There is no difference between the achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit through prior learning or through a formal programme of study.
- It is centred around the learner and the assessor will offer the same support and guidance to ensure that all evidence submitted meets the learning outcomes of the unit / qualification. If validity, currency or reliability of evidence is in doubt the Development Coach will ask questions to check knowledge and competency.

- The assessment process for RPL is subject to the same criteria as all other assessed evidence. Units achieved through RPL will not be identified / shown differently from all other accredited units.
- Assessment methods will be fair, transparent, robust, valid and accessible to all and meet the same quality assurance standard of all assessments.
- RPL can also be used by learners who are transferring across learning programmes and do not have relevant credits or certificates.

Procedure

We will follow / adhere to the relevant Awarding Body / Sector skills council and Ofqual, processes and procedures in order to claim RPL. Creative Alliance has the following procedure in place to check and identify RPL:

- When completing individual learning plans (ILP) with learners, we will ascertain prior qualifications, knowledge and skills information. This will be recorded on the ILP and original evidence may be asked for if applicable.
- Following completion of the learning plan, all learners are given access to the portal which has details of the qualification they will be following. They are asked to look at their chosen qualification pathway and reflect upon their prior learning and to identify any areas they believe they may already have prior learning, understanding or knowledge of.
- Qualified Development Coaches will be appointed to the learners.
- At the first visit with a development coach, learners will discuss and complete the Eportfolio skills scan (where appropriate) and the development coach will gather evidence and information relating to prior learning.
- The Development Coach will work with the learner to analyse existing skills gaps and how the apprenticeship will address these.
- The Development coach will ensure that the full occupational profile, and the need for learning all of the skills, knowledge and behaviours required, is discussed and understood by the learner.
- If the Development Coach finds that there is a case for RPL to be implemented the Development Coach will implement the necessary assessment procedures and notify the internal Quality Assurance lead and other appropriate staff.
- Thorough assessment of the evidence will take place to ensure that it meets the unit / qualification requirements. The Development Coach must be satisfied that evidence meets standard of the qualification. The Development Coach can ask questions of the learner to underpin any of the evidence provided.
- From this notification, the relevant awarding body procedures will be implemented.

RPL does not allow for the recognitions of any units assessed by external assessment. RPL is another route to achievement, it is not a shortcut. Evidence produced for RPL will be subjected to the same robust and rigorous assessment and quality assurance processes as those applied to any evidence produced as part of the learning.

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Policy to be Reviewed: April 2020 (or earlier if there are changes in relevant legislation or in response to any significant incidents or changes in circumstances)