

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

In the past, APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) has been used as a term to assess a student's prior learning. This has now been replaced by RPL.

RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) is a generic term and covers the following

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)
- Recognition of Prior Achievement (RPA)
- Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement (RPLA)

These terms broadly describe the same process but because of its wide acceptance the term Recognition of Prior Learning will be used throughout.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

This is a process whereby learners can be exempt from some parts of their chosen programme of academic study by recognition of their learning from previous experiences or achievements.

It is important to note that RPL does not apply for external assessment, set exams or set assignments.

Applications for RPL must be carried out by centre staff who are competent to consider and make decisions about RPL and have a working knowledge of the qualification(s) involved.

RPL is an assessment process which enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable to accrediting part of a unit, unit(s) or a qualification. Evidence submitted for RPL must be

- Authentic
- Current
- Relevant
- Sufficient
- Valid

Introduction

RPL is a process which recognises that learning is continuous – at work, home and at leisure, as well as in the classroom. RPL provides a route for the recognition of the achievements resulting from continuous learning.

Guidance on RPL

- RPL enables learners to put forward evidence of prior learning (such as certificate(s) or assessed work) which may count to the following
 - A part of a unit or unit(s) accumulated towards a full qualification
 - Unit or units recognised by an Awarding Body Certificate of Achievement
 - A full qualification
 - Prior Experiential learning
- Criteria achieved must clearly match current criteria
- All assessment strategies must be adhered to
- For all BTEC/OCR/vocational qualifications, the requirements of each grading criterion must be met in full
- It would be unusual for a RPL learner to be able to offer prior achievement that completely matches every aspect of the qualification's assessment requirements
- All RPL activities and decisions to be recorded on appropriate paperwork and stored in the learner file
- The college's assessment and internal quality assurance procedures will be undertaken in full and recorded on the appropriate paperwork. The guidelines are contained in the Assessment Policy and Internal Quality Assurance Handbook

It is important to note that Awarding Bodies reserve the right to require samples should a significant number of learners be claiming RPL. This does not apply to AIM Counselling learners (all levels) who need to have approval from AIM before the start of the qualification

This policy is consistently implemented across the college. Each Curriculum Area will implement this in the most sensible and appropriate way to meet the industry standards of their individual vocations. These will have been agreed in advance with the Head of Curriculum and the Assistant Principal Learning and Quality.

RPL procedures will be monitored by the Head of Curriculum, Assistant Principal Curriculum and the Assistant Principal Learning and Quality on an on-going basis, for example, the Vocational Groups and the annual Curriculum Quality Reviews.

From the start of the application and recruitment process, all learners will be encouraged to present any relevant evidence for RPL consideration (where appropriate and applicable). NOTE: RPL cannot be used for external assessment, set examinations, or any element of the mandatory assessment requirements of a qualification. Each application will be treated individually. Apprentices can apply for RPL at any time during their programme for work, courses and/or any other training that they have completed as part of their employment. The college appeals procedure will be implemented should it be needed at any stage whilst the learner is at

Brockenhurst College. All other relevant college policies will apply as appropriate. It should be noted that the College has the right to refuse an RPL request, taking into account affordability and sustainability, after a full discussion with the learner, relevant assessors and the line manager. All refusals must be reported to the Assistant Principal Learning and Quality. who, if required, will follow the complaints/appeals procedure.

Process for the application for RPL – To be completed prior to registration as usual practice unless on an Apprenticeship when RPL

- Learner completes form RPL1
- Completed form is submitted to HoC via interviewer if appropriate at the time of their college application
- HoC meets with relevant assessor and reviews the submission and evidence within 5 working days
- A mapping exercise is undertaken by a competent member of staff identified by the relevant HoC. This exercise is between the specification/criteria and evidence supplied and will be carried out without prejudice. The outcome of this exercise is at the College's discretion and we will determine if the evidence supplied meets the qualification specification/criteria required before the application is submitted to the awarding body for approval
- Application and evidence is then submitted to the awarding body for their approval and comment
- Applicant informed of progress throughout the process
- Outcome shared with the applicant upon notification from the awarding body

Applicant is informed of the College's appeal process if they are not satisfied with the outcome at any stage of the process.

Reference to the RPL Policy will be included in all Learner Handbooks and the policy will be available on the college intranet.

All staff involved in the RPL process must demonstrate a good understanding and ensure that their competence is kept up to date through CPD activities. This could include Awarding Body training on a regular basis and will depend on the requirements of individual AOs, if required. Standardisation activities will be set up through the cross college Vocational Groups to ensure consistency across all departments.

HE Policy on RP(E)L

Staff should refer to their specific HE Awarding Body guidelines. In the case of the college this will be the University of Chichester.