

ITC First

P19 Recognition of Prior Learning Policy [2.3]

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Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

1. Overview

1.1 This policy is to provide guidance for those involved in delivering ITC qualifications on the recognition of prior learning (RPL).

1.2 RPL is an assessment method that makes use of learning or skills that the learner already possesses. It means that the learner may not have to attend a training course or complete a programme of learning prior to assessment. RPL allows an individual to avoid unnecessary learning, it does not allow them to avoid the required qualification assessments. Thus they still have to produce assignments, perform tests or complete exams to the required standard.

1.3 Evidence obtained through RPL is assessed to the same standards as assessment evidence obtained by other methods. To achieve recognition the learner can:

- a) Complete the same assessments as those following the formal course of learning.
- b) Provide a portfolio based on previous learning, mapped (cross-referenced) to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the units/qualifications for which RPL is sought.

1.4 RPL evidence must be:

- a) Valid: Meet the requirements for the qualification/unit learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- b) Current: Has practice changed since the RPL evidence was generated?
- c) Authentic: All has been produced by the learner, not groupwork for instance.
- d) Sufficient: Must fully meet the requirements of the qualification/unit. If not additional evidence must be gained by other suitable method(s).
- e) Reliable: would another Assessor make the same decision?

1.5 This policy confirms that ITC will award qualifications in accordance with its regulatory conditions and directives.

2. What RPL is and is not

2.1 RPL

RPL is the voluntary process that allows a learner to demonstrate that they possess and can meet the assessment standards for the unit/qualification without having to attend a course of instruction. There is no requirement for learners to follow the RPL route.

RPL may not cover all the assessment criteria for a qualification/unit so that other evidence may have to be generated such as professional discussion records.

2.2 Exemptions

These are certificated qualifications obtained from outside the regulated framework (RQF, SCQF) but are of equivalent value. Unlike RPL these exemptions do not attract credits (as they will have previously been recognised).

2.3 Equivalentents

These are different units, e.g. on RQF, SCQF, that are equal to or greater than the content of the unit being assessed. The unit can be claimed as part of the new qualification. Again credit will not be attracted.

2.4 Credit Transfer

This is the transfer of units from a different qualification or different awarding organisation, as some units occur in a number of different qualifications supported by a number of different awarding organisations.

2.5 Legacy

Grandfather rights. Some qualifications on previous frameworks were superseded by newer qualifications; their equivalence still has to be demonstrated.

2.6 Predecessor qualification

A predecessor is a previous unit or qualification before the current qualification was launched, e.g. D32, A1, TAQA.

2.7 Shared Unit

Shared units are designed to encourage progression and promote credit transfer.

3. The RPL Process for Centres

3.1 RPL is unlikely to apply to the short vocational courses that many ITC Centres predominately offer.

3.2 The Process

The Centre needs to inform ITC of the request by a learner for RPL. ITC will reply either approving or denying the suitability of the request. If the request is deemed appropriate for the qualification ITC will determine by dialogue with the Centre when the evidence is to be assessed.

The following steps will then be followed:

Step 1:

If RPL is being considered Centres will need to provide learners with the following information:

- a) This policy.
- b) Guidance on how RPL applies to their circumstances – currency, skills, knowledge professional standards.
- c) The mapping process.
- d) Time deadlines, appeals and any fee reduction.

Step 2:

Learner evidence collection will need to occur with Centre/Assessor support.

Step 3:

Assessment of this evidence to the same standards as other assessment methods for the qualification by the Centre/Assessor.

Step 4:

Quality assurance of the evidence using normal procedures must occur. RPL evidence should be present at standardisation events.

Step 5:

Awarding. The Centre should identify RPL evidence to ITC and any certificates will have credit claimed recorded.

Step 6:

Feedback and Appeals: Feedback to learners and options available if the decision has been made not to award credit.

4. External Quality Assurance and Awarding

4.1 EQA staff will be required to:

- a) Scrutinise the RPL evidence.
- b) Review evidence of the Centre's RPL process.
- c) Review the standardisation and evaluation activities.
- d) Report to ITC on the RPL at the Centre

4.2 ITC:

- a) Requires identification of learning undertaken and/or attainment by a learner. This must be prior to the learner taking the qualification and must be relevant to the skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed as part of the qualification.
- b) Will award the qualification only when the identified RPL is assessed, quality assured and satisfies the learning for that qualification.

5. Guidance on Whether Evidence is "Current"

5.1 ITC has surveyed the qualifications/RPL landscape within the UK and there is huge variation in timescales for evidence to be current ranging from 3 years (catering and hospitality) to 16 years (Open University units¹) in different topic areas.

5.2 ITC believe that a Centre and its Assessors are best placed to determine the relevant currency of evidence, with reference to ITC if required.

5.3 ITC expect that an Assessor would provide guidance to a learner and explain that whilst they may present evidence of training, GLH cannot be awarded and hence undertaking an assessment without the suitable training is at the learner's own risk.

¹ RPL policy of Lincoln College, viewed online on 12 May 2021