



Policy No.:	P013
Name of Policy	Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
Date of issue:	October 2022
Status:	Approved
Responsibility for policy:	Administration
Responsibility for implementation:	Office Manager

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide prospective students, staff and partner organisations with a guide to the Admission of Students members at IEU. The policy has been drawn up aligned to the requirements of OTHM policies as a base level and in recognition of global best practise, though it should be noted that IEU RPL policy must adhere to each specific interinstitutional agreement made & that specific agreements take precedent over this policy for matters relating the relevant institution only.

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a way of assessing whether a learner is able to demonstrate the knowledge, understanding and skills to meet assessment requirements for a Unit or qualification.

1.2 By recognising prior learning IEU aims to:

- Assist learners/candidates to meet their personal objectives
- Ease the access of all mature learners into education and training
- Give credit to learners in areas in which they have prior experience
- Consolidate our reputation as a center for advice, education and training
- Promote lifelong learning

1.3 RPL is of particular value to learners without formal qualifications who may be in employment and preparing to enter formal studies.

Learners are asked to compile a portfolio of evidence that matches the current qualification assessment requirements. The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills would vary from sector to sector. RPL is most often used for Units; this is because it would be unusual for learners to be able to demonstrate prior

achievement to match every aspect of a qualification's assessment requirements.

For any RPL request the assessor still needs to examine the candidate's evidence with the same rigor that would be applied to the work of any candidate taking the program of study and judge whether they meet the assessment criteria and the standards established by the examining body.

All RPL requests are processed by a person with appropriate expertise to support and assure the RPL process. RPL is not concerned with the exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study. RPL does not allow the recognition of any unit or qualification assessed by external assessment only.

2. Procedure

The process for RPL is outlined below, with common steps and actions outlined. The actual evidence required will depend upon the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria of the award.

Stage 1 – Awareness, information and guidance

Ahead of enrolling a potential learner, the possibility that they may be able to claim credit for some of their previous learning should be raised with them. If the learner is interested in this, they will need to know the:

- Process of claiming achievement by using RPL
- Sources of support and guidance available to them
- Timelines
- Appeals processes

Stage 2 – Pre-assessment/gathering evidence and giving information

At this stage the learner will carry out the process of collecting evidence against the requirements of the relevant Unit(s). In some cases the development of an assessment plan and tracking document or similar may be required to support the learner through the process. The evidence gathered will need to meet the standards of the Unit, or part of Unit, that the evidence is being used for.

Stage 3 – Assessment/documentation of evidence

Assessment as part of RPL is a structured process for gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgments about a learners' prior learning and experience in relation to Unit standards. The assessor may be looking at work experience records, validated by managers; previous portfolios of evidence put together by the learner or essays and reports validated as being the learner's own unaided work. Assessment must be valid and reliable to ensure the integrity of the award of credit and, as above, the evidence gathered needs to meet the standards of the Unit, or part of the Unit, that the evidence is being used for.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge will vary from sector to sector. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, and ask for a demonstration of skills to check competence.

The assessment process will be subject to the usual quality assurance procedures of the Center, for example internal standardisation and internal verification as well as the awarding bodies' quality assurance procedures.

Stage 4 – Claiming certification

Once the internal and external quality assurance procedures have been successfully completed, certification claims can be made by the Center. Assessment and internal verification records, along with any additional RPL records completed, should be retained for the standard three-year period following certification.

Stage 5 – Appeal

A learner wishing to appeal against a decision made about their assessment will need to refer to IEU's Assessment Policy.



In conducting any assessment (whether RPL or not) you can only accredit a whole Unit. The assessor will examine the candidate's evidence and judge whether the candidate has demonstrated that they meet the assessment criteria. They may conclude that some of a Unit's assessment criteria are met by the evidence, but that some criteria are not. At this point they will give feedback to the candidate about what has been met and what evidence is still needed.

RPL should not be confused with Unit credit and exemptions. If the candidate already has a Unit accredited to them and it is part of the qualification they are pursuing, then they do not have to repeat it. The candidate may not have achieved the actual Unit but may have another qualification which is recognised as providing exemption. In either of these cases the process is not RPL but Unit accreditation or exemption.

RPL does not allow the recognition of any unit or qualification assessed by external assessment only.

NB: The term 'recognition of prior learning' (RPL) has been used in connection with the QCF and NQF. Similar terms include 'accreditation of prior learning' (APL), 'accreditation of prior experiential learning' (APEL), 'accreditation of prior achievement' (APA), 'accreditation of prior learning and achievement' (APLA) and Advanced Standing.

Approved October 4, 2022


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Office of the President