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Recognition of Prior Learning (Higher Education)	HEPOL006	3

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Higher Education Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

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1. Policy Statement

1.1. Activate Learning is committed to providing fair and transparent opportunities for students to have their prior learning and experience formally recognised. This policy outlines the process for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), ensuring that students can gain credit for previous learning that meets the required standards for their chosen programme of study.

1.2. This policy and associated procedure have been developed to provide you with clear information and guidance which meets the requirements of Activate Learning's awarding bodies and fulfils the principles and guidance of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education 2024 for recruiting, selecting and admitting students.

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear framework for the assessment and

recognition of prior learning, enabling students to progress in their studies without unnecessary repetition of learning they have already achieved

3. Scope

– This policy and associated procedure only apply to prospective students who are seeking to study a [1]higher education qualification, or standalone thereof, delivered by Activate Learning.

3.1. RPL is a student-centred voluntary process, and **you must notify Activate Learning in writing of your intention to apply for RPL prior to enrolment.**

4. Definitions

4.1. RPL can take various forms depending on the nature of the learning experiences and the specific requirements of the chosen programme. The two most common types of RPL are:

4.2. **Recognition of prior certificated learning** (RPCL): Recognition of learning gained through previous certified education (within the last 5 years), including formal qualifications such as diplomas, certificates, and degrees. This also includes individual credit bearing modules/units from other awarding bodies.

4.3. **Recognition of prior experiential learning** (RPEL): Recognition of uncertified learning gained through prior experiential experiences (normally within the last 5 years), such as work experience, volunteer work, professional development activities, or personal experiences.

5. Instances where RPL credit cannot be awarded

- RPL credit cannot be awarded for any module which comprises a dissertation or major project.
- RPL credit cannot be awarded for single registerable modules/units
- RPL credit cannot be awarded for partial modules/units
- RPL credit cannot be awarded for short courses e.g. courses which consist of modules/units from a recognised qualification that do not lead to a qualification.
- RPL cannot be awarded where professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB)

[1] Higher National Certificates, Higher National Diplomas, Foundation Degrees, Bachelor (top-up) degrees

requirements are not met e.g. requirements of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

6. Timing of RPL award

6.1. RPL can be awarded at various points in the student's journey, including prior to admission, or upon completion of specific modules or qualifications. The timing of RPL award will depend on the assessment and verification processes required for each individual case and according to the regulations and policies of awarding bodies and/or professional bodies.

6.2. You should be aware that this will take additional time, particularly in relation to claims for prior experiential learning, which you may need to factor into your decision making and application process. This will vary on a case-by-case basis and our Higher Education Learning Partnership team can provide further advice and guidance on this.

6.3. Once a complete application documenting the claim has been received, **you will normally receive the decision within 20 working days.**

7. Recognition of study at an external institution

7.1. Prior certificated study gained at an external institution may be considered for RPL subject to verification and alignment with the learning outcomes and assessment standards of the programme of study. Certified study by an external institution will be evaluated based on comparability, i.e. if the previous study is still current (within the last 5 years).

7.2. For more information regarding RPL, you should contact our Higher Education Learning Partnership team via email: AdminHE@activatelearning.ac.uk

8. Assessment of evidence

8.1. The assessment of evidence for RPL will normally be undertaken by the RPL Assessor, i.e. HE Programme Coordinator (or equivalent) in liaison with another appropriate member of the Higher Education Learning Partnerships (HELP) team e.g. Academic Registrar, Access and Participation Manager, or Director of Higher Education.

8.2. Evidence will be assessed against set criteria detailed in the RPL Procedure and must be made available for scrutiny by external examiners.

8.3. Depending on the nature of the prior learning, you may be required to participate in an interview to further assess your competencies. This could form part of the admissions interview if we are aware of your request prior to this being arranged.

9. Fees

9.1. In line with Activate Learning's aim to widen access and participation in higher education, there will be no charge for RPEL or RPCL claims for admission or RPCL claims for exemption of credit.

9.2. For RPEL claims for exemption of credit, **a fee of £50.00 will be charged upon application** due to the additional time required to assess RPEL claims. This is set out in Activate Learning's Tuition Fees Policy

10. Recording RPL on student's transcript

10.1. Students awarded exemption from aspects of a programme through RPCL or RPEL will be provided with information about how their final award classification will be calculated if it will differ from the standard calculation.

10.2. RPL awarded to a student will be clearly recorded on their official transcript, specifying the module/unit for which RPL was granted and the method of recognition (RPCL or RPEL). The transcript will accurately reflect the credits earned through RPL and provide transparency regarding the student's academic achievements.

11. RPL from a higher-level qualification

11.1. Learning from a higher-level qualification may be considered for RPL, provided it is deemed relevant and applicable to the lower-level modules or qualifications you wish to study on. The assessment of higher-level learning for RPL will consider the depth, breadth, and alignment of learning outcomes with the requirements of the lower-level modules or qualifications. The proportion of credit that can be used for each qualification will vary and may be subject to the academic regulations of the awarding organisation and/or requirements of professional bodies.

11.2. RPL can be claimed for up to two thirds of a full undergraduate bachelor's degree or 50% of a Foundation degree, Higher National Certificate, or Higher National Diploma.

- RPL can be claimed for level 4 and level 5 modules. However, recognition for prior learning (certified, experiential or uncertified) is **not** permitted at level 6 of a bachelor's degree, where students are expected to complete 120 credits in order to gain the award.

Award	Maximum credits which may be accredited via RPEL/RPCL	Minimum credits to be studied on qualification at institution	Total credits required for award
Bachelor's (top-up) Degree with Honours	None (entry only)	120 (at level 6)	120
Foundation Degree	120 (50%)	120 (including at least 60 at level 5)	240
Higher National Diploma	120 (50%)	120 (at level 5)	240
Higher National Certificate	60 (50%)	60 (at level 4)	120
Single Registerable Modules/Units	None (entry only)	As specified in module/unit descriptor	As specified in module/unit descriptor

12. Responsibilities

12.1. **Faculty Directors** are responsible for ensuring that elements of the RPL procedure requiring faculty support are fulfilled and that staff are appropriately trained to undertake their role and responsibilities.

12.2. **The RPL Assessor,** who is normally the relevant Higher Education Programme Coordinator (or member of academic staff), is responsible for the assessment of RPL applications and for corresponding with the applicant and confirming their decision to them.

12.3. **The Head of Advice and Admissions** is responsible for ensuring that elements of the RPL procedure requiring support from the advice and admissions team are fulfilled and that staff are appropriately trained to undertake their role and responsibilities.

13. Appeals

13.1. There is no right of appeal except on grounds of procedural irregularity. Where your application is rejected (in full or in part), correspondence on the outcome will include feedback from the HE Programme Coordinator or equivalent on the reasons for this decision and provide information and guidance on the options available, which may include further learning or development. The feedback should also highlight your right to make a complaint in accordance with Activate Learning's Customer Compliments Comments and

Complaints Policy

14. Data Protection

All information related to a Recognition of Prior Learning application will be held securely in line with our Data Protection-Procedures

15. References

Other policies and procedures associated with this policy:

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Procedure
- Admissions Policy
- Admissions Procedure - Higher Education
- Higher Education Terms and Conditions
- Access and Participation Plan
- Customer Compliments, Comments, and Complaints Policy
- Customer Compliments, Comments and Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection Policy

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact: complianceteam@activatelearning.ac.uk