



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy

Introduction

The purpose of this Policy is to provide information to our clients, candidates, Assessors and IQA's on what Lucelly Consultancy Ltd policy is with regarding assessing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), based upon guidance from Awarding Bodies (AB).

Awarding Bodies recognise the importance of RPL of candidates, and candidates should not have to repeat their learning or duplicate assessments, if evidence is obtained by the centre to demonstrate RPL.

The scope of the policy is to provide:

- Definition of RPL and examples of when RPL can be used
- Examples of the RPL process and evidencing this.
- Process for monitoring and reviewing RPL as part of the Internal Quality Assurance Procedures.
- Appeals procedure

Definition of RPL

RPL (or may also be known as accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), is about using a candidate's evidence of earlier learning or attainment and assessments leading towards the award if credit/ part of a qualification, that considers whether candidates can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, skills and understanding they already possess and so may not need to develop these through a course of learning.

Assessors should review whether the evidence is enough to showcase that a candidate has met the assessment requirements for a current qualification. The candidate needs to showcase that through knowledge, understanding or skills they already have, they do not need to repeat the course or complete extra assessment activities.

If there is evidence that the candidate has previously shown the knowledge, skills or understanding required by part of a qualification, this may be used towards achieving that qualification. The evidence must be (VARCS):

- Valid
- Authentic
- Reliable
- Current
- Sufficient
- **And** free from unfair barriers or discrimination

RPL is not normally used to provide evidence against achievement for an entire qualification as this would be called an exemption and is usually used where a candidate must gain a specified qualification for a particular purpose (for example, as an entry requirement for further study, employment, or qualification registration).

If an assessor, centre or candidate thinks that they are entitled to an exemption, we will refer to the organisation which has specified the original qualification requirement to obtain more information.

If a particular qualification is specified as an entry requirement to a qualification offered by the Awarding Body this must be considered, as well as any exemptions specified.

Applications for RPL must be carried out by assessors and centre staff who are competent to consider and make decisions about RPL.

When RPL can be used

We recognise that candidates gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal and informal learning. This is defined as:

- Formal learning is learning certificated by a recognised Awarding Organisation or professional body
- Informal learning includes candidates such as employers' in-house training courses, which may or may not be assessed and/or certificated

RPL can be used when a candidate has already achieved a qualification which is applicable to the qualification they are working towards. If the qualification is not work-based then it should, only be used towards knowledge.

Examples of how RPL can be used and evidencing this.

The recognition of prior learning may be used as evidence against the assessment criteria within complete or partial qualification units.

We recommend the following process:

1. **Pre-assessment call (before registration of an NVQ):** The candidate during the pre-assessment should discuss with the assessor if RPL is appropriate. The assessor should record any prior learning discussed on the candidate registration form. This form will be uploaded by the centre, to the candidates account on Quals Direct as part of the registration and RPL process.

Please note: Any prior learning evidence must be within the last 3 years. However, where a qualification is still valid and still a live qualification. **E.g.** an awarding body has reviewed the standards and deemed suitable, therefore the qualification may be up to 5 years old), then the assessor must provide evidence to the centre, who can discuss this with the Awarding Body to showcase/evidence and rationale that the criteria can be reviewed and is still relevant. Another example may be a qualification is not currently live, however the standards are still available to the assessor/centre so that the criteria can be reviewed to see if any units are still current with a live qualification.

Assessors must bring this to the attention of the centre, before any assessments take place.

Please note: The 3-year RPL starts from the date candidate registers for the qualification/unit they wish to complete.

Candidates must not be registered onto a qualification for which they do not meet the stated entry requirements.

2. **Induction/Initial assessment plan-** The assessor during the induction process should discuss the evidence for RPL. The assessor should initiate an assessment plan with the candidate to provide evidence of RPL. **E.g.** request copies of certificate/s
3. **Candidate evidence collection:** As guided by their assessor, the candidate will need to provide evidence of their prior formal/informal learning and provides the assessor

with a copy of the original certificate/s as evidence. **E.g.** digital copy/photo of paper copy), or previous portfolio of evidence if within the last 2 years.

The candidate must ensure any certificates to demonstrate prior learning are evidence of the candidate undertaking this learning. Considering the increased use of Artificial Intelligence, any investigation of misconduct concerning the validity of any certificate may lead to disqualification as a candidate for their qualification.

4. **Assessment:** The assessor evaluates the evidence against the qualification requirements to ascertain which units and or criteria this relates to. If there are any gaps or where evidence of prior learning only partially meets the evidence requirements of a unit, the assessor and candidate should find other methods of assessment to complete the outstanding requirements with all evidence types.

Please note: A qualification should normally only be used if less than 3 years old to ensure currency. However, if the candidate has constantly used these skills, the assessor may carry out and record an observation to testify as to current competency.

Some candidates may claim to have carried out tasks appropriate to their qualifications in previous work roles, the same time frame applies and if the candidate no longer carries out these tasks, the certificate must be less than 3 years old in most cases. Where previous work is agreed as an appropriate evidence source, a witness testimony should be sought from the previous employer.

Please also note: Lucelly Consultancy requires all assessors to request for a witness testimony from their current employer as part of the candidate's portfolio of evidence as standard practice.

In all instances, the Assessor must be occupationally competent to make the decision.

If an assessor has little or no experience with regards to RPL they should consult with a qualified RPL advisor or an IQA.

5. **Upload evidence:** The evidence provided by the candidate and reviewed by the assessor should be uploaded by the assessor to Quals Direct to demonstrate RPL evidence **BEFORE** any assessment takes place. **E.g.** Certificates

Process for monitoring and reviewing RPL as part of the Internal Quality Assurance Procedures.

- **IQA review:** The recognition of prior learning must be reviewed by IQA's, to ensure all RPL decisions are internally quality assured. Where the RPL comes into question, this must first be discussed with the assessor to ascertain their process and methodology for applying RPL. The outcome of this discussion should be documented as part of their IQA report on Quas Direct.
- **EQA review:** The Awarding Body may review evidence to ensure RPL internal quality assurance processes have been followed.

Appeals procedure

As with any assessment decision on procedural grounds, if a candidate wishes to appeal against a decision made about their assessment, they need to follow the Lucelly Consultancy "Appeals and Grievance/Complaints Policy" to take this forward.

Review and Amendment

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its ongoing compliance with Awarding Bodies, legislation and industry best practices. Changes will be made as necessary.

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