Empowering Futures

# Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure

## Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and structured approach to recognising learners’ prior achievements, experience, or qualifications that are relevant to their current learning aims. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) allows learners to avoid unnecessary duplication of learning, gain credit for what they already know or can do, and progress more efficiently through their qualification.

## Scope:

This policy applies to all learners at Empowering Futures undertaking regulated qualifications or non-regulated programmes where RPL may be used. It applies across all subject areas including adult education, vocational training, alternative provision, and teacher training programmes.

## Policy Statement:

Empowering Futures recognises the value of previous learning, whether gained through formal education, work experience, volunteering, or informal life experience. RPL supports inclusion and progression by enabling learners to demonstrate competence through previously acquired knowledge or skills.

## Objectives:

- To provide a fair, transparent, and consistent process for RPL.  
- To ensure RPL decisions are valid, authentic, sufficient, and current.  
- To support learners in achieving qualifications by acknowledging prior achievement.  
- To comply with awarding body and regulatory requirements regarding RPL.

## What Can Be Recognised Through RPL?

- Qualifications achieved through other providers (e.g., NVQs, Diplomas, AET, CPD).  
- Informal or non-accredited learning relevant to the current course.  
- Work-based learning or voluntary sector experience.  
- Skills developed through family responsibilities, hobbies, or personal development.

## RPL Principles:

- RPL should be accessible to all learners and promoted during enrolment and induction.  
- Evidence must meet the assessment criteria and learning outcomes of the current programme.  
- RPL must not compromise the integrity of the qualification.  
- All decisions must be internally verified and subject to awarding body approval (where required).

## Procedures:

1. 1. Learner Identification and Advice:

- During the application or enrolment process, learners are asked to disclose any prior experience, previous qualifications, or achievements.  
- Tutors or programme leads will assess whether a learner is eligible for RPL and explain the process.

1. 2. Evidence Collection:

- Learners are supported to gather evidence which may include:  
 - Certificates or transcripts of prior learning.  
 - Job descriptions, references, or records of work experience.  
 - Reflective statements or portfolios.  
 - Photographs, case studies, or videos demonstrating skills.  
- Evidence must be current (normally within the past 5 years), relevant, and aligned to the qualification criteria.

1. 3. Assessment and Mapping:

- The assessor maps the evidence to the specific learning outcomes or assessment criteria.  
- The assessor must judge the sufficiency, authenticity, and relevance of the evidence.  
- If gaps exist, the learner may be asked to complete top-up tasks or partial assessment.

1. 4. Internal Quality Assurance:

- All RPL claims are internally verified by the IQA team to ensure consistency and fairness.  
- Records of decisions and supporting evidence are maintained in the learner’s portfolio.  
- For qualifications requiring awarding body approval, RPL decisions are submitted for external verification.

1. 5. Learner Feedback and Certification:

- Learners are provided with clear feedback regarding the outcome of their RPL claim.  
- Successful claims are recorded against the learner’s qualification.  
- Where appropriate, certification or exemption is granted for specific units.

## Roles and Responsibilities:

- Learners: Disclose prior experience and work with staff to provide evidence.  
- Tutors/Assessors: Provide guidance, assess evidence, and ensure accurate mapping.  
- Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs): Review RPL decisions for fairness and compliance.  
- Quality Lead: Oversee policy implementation and communication with awarding bodies.

## Monitoring and Review:

- All RPL activity is reviewed termly by the Quality Lead.  
- Feedback from learners and assessors is gathered and analysed to improve practice.  
- This policy is reviewed annually or in line with awarding body updates.

## Approval and Review:

Date of Implementation: April 2025  
Next Review Date: March 2026  
Approved by: Rhean White - Director