



Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

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Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure

1.0 General Statement

- 1.1 As part of its recognition as a Centre for Accredited Training and as an accredited training provider, Children in Wales, has in place systems and procedures to actively work towards avoiding duplication of learning.
- 1.2 By providing opportunities to transfer and accumulate credits towards a qualification, Children in Wales actively works towards enabling the assessment and validation of learning achievements that have not been previously certificated or accredited.

2.0 Principles

- 2.1 This policy is designed to ensure equality for all learners who attend accredited training courses provided by Children in Wales. It reflects the needs of individual learners and also ensures that assessment continues to enable a valid, reliable and consistent judgement to be made about achievement of all learning outcomes against the stated assessment criteria of a course.

3.0 Scope of Policy

- 3.1 This Policy relates to:
- Assessors/Tutors/Trainers, including Associates of Children in Wales involved in delivering accredited training
 - Internal Verifiers
 - Learners
 - Quality Assurance Managers of awarding bodies
 - Staff of Children in Wales involved in accredited training provision
- 3.2 This policy and procedures accompanying it will apply to any accredited training course provided by Children in Wales or its Associates.

4.0 Related Policies

- 4.1 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:
- Children in Wales Accredited Training Policy Series

- Children in Wales Equality Policy

5.0 Guidance

5.1 The guidance, at Appendix 1, sets out:

- The principles which should be followed when making decisions about awarding credit for Recognition of Prior Learning
- The procedures that should be followed when making adjustments to assessment following Recognition of Prior Learning

6.0 Appendices

1. Guidance, Principles & Procedures to be followed in relation to Recognition of Prior Learning

Appendix 1

Guidance, Principles & Procedures to be followed in relation to Recognition of Prior Learning

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Children in Wales should encourage learners to avoid duplication of learning and assessment by the transfer of credit from within or outside the Qualification and Credit Framework and by the assessment and validation of achievements that have not been certificated/accredited.
- 1.2 Children in Wales has a duty to ensure that a procedure is in place to recognise prior learning that include the following elements:
 - raising awareness of the opportunities that recognition of prior learning offer
 - guidance on evidence gathering
 - assessment of evidence
 - awarding credit.

2. Definition of Recognition of Prior Learning

- 2.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is defined by Ofqual as ‘a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning’¹. In the context of RPL the role of an awarding organisation (AO) is to enable and validate this process.
- 2.2 Learners will be required to produce valid, current and reliable evidence of learning to support claims based on experience achieved within an agreed period, to support a claim for RPL.
- 2.3 A learner may claim RPL against a whole unit or several units. It is not possible to award part units, but where the RPL evidence does not fully meet the needs of a complete unit, the missing information may be provided via the same assessment processes that are undertaken by taught groups of learners.
- 2.4 If the learner partially meets the assessment criteria of a unit, evidence which meets the outstanding assessment criteria must be presented. Achievement of the unit will be demonstrated by the presentation of the completed body of evidence together with an authenticity statement relating to the RPL evidence,

¹ Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework, Ofqual_al/08/3726 in Guidance on the recognition of prior learning within the Qualifications and Credit Framework, QCA, 2008, p.6.

signed and dated by the learner and also signed by a witness (usually the tutor).

3. Making a claim for Recognition of Prior Learning

3.1 Children in Wales must make learners aware of the purpose and availability of RPL. Prospectuses, web-based marketing and advice and guidance sessions are good opportunities for doing so.

3.2 Once learners have decided to submit their learning via the RPL process they need to know:

- how to claim credit for RPL;
- how to access sources of professional support and guidance available to individuals and employers, including flexible access to learning resources to enable additional learning to take place;
- about the administrative processes for RPL applications;
- about time limits, appeals processes and any fees or subsidies;
- about the currency of existing credits, qualifications, experience, skills or competence i.e. whether the evidence relates to current learning; whether centres and/or professional, statutory or regulatory bodies have specific requirements and/or time limits for the currency of evidence, certification or demonstration of learning.

3.3 Learners must have support from staff with appropriate expertise (tutors, learning coaches, support staff) in order to submit a valid claim. The learner will also need appropriate guidance on collecting evidence and developing an assessment plan. Evidence presented for the award of credit must meet all the assessment criteria of the unit.

3.4 In order to protect the integrity of units and qualifications, all assessment decisions, including RPL, need to be consistent in interpreting standards. If evidence presented by the learner is less than convincing, appropriate learning and assessments to cover outstanding evidence must be arranged. Additional learning may be provided through individual tutorials, assignments, class instruction, or through open learning.

4. Achieving a Unit using Recognition of Prior Learning

4.1 In order to achieve a unit using RPL, two options are open to the learner:

- undertaking the same assessments as those followed in the formal course of learning and assessment that leads to the desired unit or

qualification. These assessments may be undertaken without attending taught sessions. If the latter is the case, either an authenticity statement, signed and dated by the learner and signed by a witness (usually the tutor) must be obtained or the tutor may observe the learner undertaking the assessment.

- submitting a portfolio of evidence based on previous learning, skills and/or competence cross-referenced to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the unit or units for which RPL is being sought, together with an authenticity statement, signed and dated by the learner and signed by a witness (usually the tutor).

4.2 In some circumstances there may be a limit to the proportion of a qualification that can be achieved by either credit transfer² or RPL. Within Access to Higher Education Diplomas, not more than 50% (i.e. 30 credits)³ may be achieved by either or both of these processes. Full details of the requirements to limit the proportion are identified in the rules of combination for any qualifications offered by Children in Wales.

4.3 Learners wishing to pursue RPL must follow the procedure with their centre. All centres which use Children in Wales to accredit learning must have relevant policies and staff with appropriate expertise in place. The centre may charge a fee to the learner for these services.

4.4 The learner must produce evidence mapped against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of all units/credits they wish to claim. As RPL learners require considerable encouragement, staff with appropriate expertise from the centre concerned should be available to give advice on the process. The learner wishing to make the claim may also require the support of their employer or other organisation (e.g. if they have worked as an unpaid volunteer) in order to be able to confirm achievement of assessment criteria for which there is no written evidence e.g. practical tasks.

4.5 Internal and external verifiers must confirm the process of RPL and the proposed award of credit.

5. Awarding credit for Recognition of Prior Learning

5.1 Children in Wales is responsible for the award of credit. The procedure is the same as for any other forms of assessment. Any claims for credit achieved

² Transfer of like-for-like accredited achievement from within or outside the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) to count towards another qualification: 'the process of using a credit or credits awarded in the context of one qualification towards the achievement requirements of another qualification', *Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework*, 2008.

³ www.accesstohe.ac.uk

through RPL are attributed to the learner's record of achievement and checked against rules of combination to ensure that the number of RPL credits for a qualifications are not exceeded. Credits/units achieved through RPL as opposed to normal assessment methods will be recorded on the claims for credit towards a full qualification. Certificates and/or credit transcripts are awarded by Children in Wales with RPL credits being identified as such.

- 5.2 After prior learning has been recognised the assessor will give feedback to the learner, outcomes are discussed and support and guidance on subsequent learning options explored, as necessary.

6. Appealing against decisions for Recognition of Prior Learning

- 6.1 If claimants wish to appeal against the decision made about their claims for credit through the RPL process, they need to follow the standard appeals procedure that exists within Children in Wales.

6.2 Monitoring the 'Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.'

- 6.3 Internal and external verifiers are required to verify assessment where RPL has been applied.

- 6.4 Data on the use of RPL must be made available as part of the annual quality review process.