Accredited and Recognised Prior Learning Policy

Version v26.1

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Policy/Document Relates to	Awarding Provision
Policy/Document is for the use of	Recognised Centres, TQUK Employees, Third Parties, Learners
Should be read in conjunction with	Appeals Policy

Introduction

Accredited Prior Learning (APL) allows a Learner to demonstrate through their previous certificated achievements that they have already met the requirements of a unit and so do not need to be assessed against those units again.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that allows a Learner to demonstrate through their previous **non-certificated** achievements that they can meet the assessment requirements of a unit through the knowledge skills and understanding they already possess and so do not need to develop through a course of learning.

TQUK Internal Responsibility

The External Quality Assurance team is responsible for the maintenance of and compliance with this policy. If the EQA Manager is absent, the Responsible Officer will appoint another member of the Leadership Team to ensure all of TQUK's actions and activities are in line with the content of this policy.
The Managing Director has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy complies with our ethical and legal commitments and that all TQUK actions and activities are in line with the contents of this policy.

Review arrangements

We will review the policy annually as part of our self-evaluation process and revise it as and when necessary, in response to feedback or requests. We may also update this policy as part of good practice guidance issued by the regulatory authorities (e.g., to align with any recognition of prior learning processes established by the regulatory authorities such as Ofqual).

The annual review of this policy will be undertaken by the External Quality Assurance team approximately in line with TQUK's Statement of Compliance process. Any amendments or updates to this policy will be approved by TQUK's Leadership Team.

If you have any points or feedback regarding this policy, please contact us via the details provided at the start of this policy.

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Accredited Prior Learning Process

Accredited Prior Learning (APL) is possible in three circumstances:

- Learners who have previously achieved the same unit within another qualification are eligible for credit transfer.
- Learners who have a certificated achievement within the RQF/QCF can claim that completed units are of the equivalent value in content and demand to the units they wish to achieve and so are eligible for equivalence.
- Learners who have a certificated achievement outside of the RQF/QCF can claim an exemption from the requirements to achieve credits for designated units on the basis that they are of equal or higher value. This is only possible where specifically noted in the specification of a qualification, which will name the achievements eligible to be used as the basis of the exemption.

A Recognised Centre can make a request on behalf of a learner if they believe one of the above circumstances to be true and have evidence to support it.

The achievement intended for use as accredited prior learning may come from any Awarding Organisation or institution.

To be considered automatically for accredited prior learning, the accreditation must have been achieved within the last 6 years. If the accreditation was achieved more than 6 years previous, additional evidence must be provided to show the learner has maintained the skills evidenced by the qualification, such as a CV showing employment in a related field.

It is the centre's responsibility to make a request for APL upon registration of the Learner. Notifications on the outcome of a decision to grant a credit transfer, equivalence or exemption will be given within 2 working days of receiving the form from the Recognised Centre. A Recognised Centre may appeal the decision not to grant a request for APL, the process for doing so is outlined in the Appeals Policy.

If certificated achievement outside of the RQF/QCF is not listed on the specification, however, a Centre believes it would meet the requirements of unit within the qualification, they can request for an exemption to be added to a qualification specification. Notifications on the outcome of a decision to add an exemption for a unit to a qualification will be given within 10 working days of receiving the form from the Recognised Centre.

If a centre considers a learner to have completed prior work that would meet the requirements to provide an exemption, however, the awarding of prior work is in a language other than English, this can be presented to TQUK along with a translation of documentation to support a claim for the addition of an exemption to our qualification. Translation must be done by an official translator listed on the UK government site here. Notifications on the outcome of a decision to add an exemption for a unit to a qualification will be given within 10 working days of receiving the form from the Recognised Centre.

Recognised Prior Learning Process

TQUK recognises that Learners may possess skills, knowledge and understanding that is not represented by recognised certification.
Evidence obtained prior to a Learner taking a qualification may be assessed by a Recognised Centre as part of that qualification if it is relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification.
Evidence could be drawn from any aspect of a Learner's prior experience where the Learner did not receive formal recognition, including but not limited to:

- Voluntary activities
- Work activities
- Education and training.

If a Recognised Centre wishes to use RPL, it must have in place a suitable policy and the appropriate resources to undertake it.

TQUK will expect that evidence evaluated through an RPL process is assessed to the same standard of quality as evidence obtained through any other means. It is the role of the centre's assessors and quality assurers to ensure that the evidence is valid, authentic, current, reliable, and sufficient. The assessor must ensure that records of assessment are maintained in the usual way and the process must be subject to the same quality assurance requirements as any other assessment method. Evidence evaluated through the RPL process must be in the same language as what the qualification will be assessed in.

Validity

In order to be valid, the assessment process must be appropriate for the subject or qualification being assessed. The evidence produced by the learner must also be relevant and applicable to the assessment criteria.
The learner must be informed that assessment is taking place and assessment must place reasonable requirements on the learner. Assessment must not be phrased or structured in a way that prevents the learner from understanding what is being asked or required of them.

Authenticity

Authentic assessment means that all assessment evidence has been solely produced by a learner.

Currency

In order to be current the assessor needs to be satisfied that the learner retains the skills and knowledge being claimed at assessment and that the evidence reflects current sector legislation and processes.
Currency of evidence is of particular importance when assessing prior learning which may have been obtained some time ago.

Reliability

Reliability means that an assessment method will consistently produce similar results, over time, regardless of which learner or assessor is involved with the assessment. In order to be reliable, assessment must be applied in a way that is consistent and be genuinely representative of the learner's knowledge and skills.

Sufficiency

To be sufficient a learner's work must fully meet all the requirements of the assessment criteria and qualification specification. This can be achieved using mapping documentation.
Fairness and flexibility are also important requirements when choosing assessment methodology so that no learner is disadvantaged and each has an equal opportunity to achieve.

Granting recognition of prior learning does not exempt the Learner from any mandatory assessment requirements of a qualification such as mandatory exams, practical tests or assignments set by TQUK.

Funding and Recognised/Accredited Prior Learning

Recognition of or Accredited Prior Learning could have an impact on funding claims for a given learner. A Recognised Centre must consult guidance from the relevant funding body as to the impact of RPL or APL on their funding claim.