2023

# KLP 017 Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPL)

**GroupHorizon**
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**Policies and Procedures**

# RPL Policy
(Recognition of Prior Learning)

**Introduction**

This policy sets out the principles and process for the use of RPL for learners to achieve qualifications. GHL will ensure that the process of assessment for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring standards as any other form of assessment.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment [leading to the award of credit] that considers whether learners 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 (Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework Ofqual/08/3726).

**Definition of RPL**

RPL is a method of assessment that uses evidence of a learner's previous work experience, learning or achievements to demonstrate competence in, or achievement against the learning outcomes within units of other qualifications, and which may lead to the award of those units. It is also known as the Recognition of Prior Achievement (RPA) and Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). The qualifications regulators in England, Wales and Northern Ireland define RPL as the:

a) identification by an awarding organisation of any learning undertaken, and/or attainment, by a learner

I. prior to that learner taking a qualification which, the awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available, and

II. which is relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification, and

b) recognition by an awarding organisation of that learning and/or attainment through amendment to the requirements which a learner must have satisfied before the learner will be assessed or that qualification will be awarded.

**Type & Suitability of Evidence**

Examples of the types of evidence which may be submitted for RPL assessment include:

- workplace documents
- witness testimonies
- personal statements
- professional discussion
- assessor observation records
- record of voluntary activities
- certificates issued following an informal or formal course of learning*.

*For certificated achievement, a detailed specification of the learning/qualification gained will be required in order to make the mapping process possible.

All evidence submitted for RPL assessment must be:

- valid – it should relate to the assessment criteria
- authentic – it must be the learner's own work
- current – it should normally be no more than 24 months old, except for areas where:
    - o change is rapid, and the 24 months guideline would be too long
    - o candidates can prove evidence is still valid
- sufficient – it must meet all of the assessment criteria

**RPL Process**

The process must be fair, neither advantage nor disadvantage any learner, and cover all of the 10 stages detailed below.

**Stage 1:** Initial assessment

The possibility of RPL as an assessment method should be discussed with the Learner during initial assessment, at the start of the course.

**Stage 2**: Advice and guidance

The assessor should encourage the Learner to identify any prior learning that could be used as evidence. It should then become clear whether the Learner will be able to present sufficient evidence for the unit(s).

**Stage 3:** Assessment planning

The assessment planning process should formalise the approach to presenting evidence as well as help the Learner to become familiar with the standards.

**Stage 4:** Evidence collection

Assessors should support Learner's by helping them to identify appropriate evidence.

**Stage 5:** Evidence mapping

The Learner should map the evidence to the assessment criteria, with support from the assessor. This task is made easier if completed on an on-going basis rather than being left until the end of the process.

**Stage 6:** Formative feedback

The assessor should review the evidence and provide formative feedback to the Learner .

**Stage 7:** Assessment

The Learner will have six months to submit all of their evidence for the assessment including mapping documents. Learner s are able to access the assessment as many times as they wish within the six-month period. The assessor should check the evidence for

- validity,
- authenticity,
- currency and
- sufficiency

They may ask questions to plug any gaps in the evidence or strengthen weak areas. The assessor should check that the RPL limit of 50% for the overall qualification has not been exceeded.

**Stage 8:** Assessment decision

The assessor should review the evidence submitted by the Learner and award the appropriate assessment outcome, within 10 working days of the assessment taking place.

**Stage 9:** Internal verification

Once the assessment decision has been made the internal verification process can begin. In regard to workplace evidence, it is usual for internal verifiers to contact a sample of employers to authenticate employer witness testimonies. Internal verifiers should review the assessment decisions and add feedback for the assessor, ensuring that the full range of internal verifier activities have been covered, within 10 working days of the assessment decision.

**Stage 10:** External quality assurance

Once the internal verifier has confirmed the assessment decision it will be available on the assessment platform for the External Quality Assurer (EQA) to conduct the required quality checks through a process of sampling, and before results are confirmed and issued. External quality checks will normally be completed within 10 – 20 working days of the internal verification decision.

**Internal Verification**

At the beginning of a programme the internal verifier will plan any activities that need to take place for Learner's intending to present RPL evidence and record those plans.
Plans may be on a week by week or month by month basis and whilst it will be a working document and subject to change, will ensure that no activity is overlooked.
The internal verifier will undertake a range of sampling activities in accordance with the plan.
Sampling rationales will be clearly recorded It is important for internal verifiers to observe/review assessor performance in the assessment process.
The opportunity to observe assessors occurs when an assessor is undertaking the assessment planning process or giving feedback to Learner's. Choosing the sample for internal verification should not be a number driven exercise but should, as appropriate, ensure the whole of the population is reflected, for example, different delivery modes, different types of candidates following an RPL route, different assessors etc.
Once the sample has been selected, the percentage should be considered for sufficiency. This should be around 20% for experienced assessors, with a larger sample (up to 100%) for less experienced assessors. Where there is only a small number of Learner's following an RPL route then sampling evidence across all Learner's should be undertaken. The internal verifier should ensure all assessment decisions are accurate and timely. As indicated above, assessment decisions must be made within 10 working days of evidence.