

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out the process and guidance relating to the use of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for approved GA centres.

The process aims to provide accurate recognition and evidencing of knowledge, understanding and skills that have previously been achieved and/or certificated. The policy will support those who are directly involved with planning, advising and delivering learning. Not all learners have access to formal learning. The main principles behind RPL are that an individual's prior achievements can be recognised and that a learner is not disadvantaged by unnecessarily having to repeat a course of learning.

All personal data gathered on candidates in respect of any Recognition of Prior Learning requested and/or granted will be held in the strictest confidence and only be used for the purposes of ensuring all qualifications are delivered in a fair and consistent manner and that all certificates issued are valid and reliable. All data will be held in accordance with the current data protection legislation including, but not limited to, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations.

2. Definitions

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit or qualification through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.

The use of RPL has been developed over time, which has led to the use of a number of terms to describe the process. Among the most common are:

- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)
- Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
- Accreditation of Prior Learning and Achievement (APLA)

These terms broadly describe the same process. GA uses the term Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification.

Evidence of learning must meet the GA **CRAVES** requirement:

- **current:** the work is relevant at the time of the assessment
- **reliable:** the work is consistent with that produced by other learners
- **authentic:** the work is the candidate's own work
- **valid:** the work is relevant and appropriate to the subject being assessed and is at the required level
- **evaluated:** where the learner has not been assessed as competent, the deficiencies have been clearly and accurately identified via feedback to the learner
- **sufficient:** the work covers the expected learning outcomes and any range statements as specified in the criteria or requirements in the assessment strategy.

RPL focuses on assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- A unit accumulated towards a full GA qualification
- A full GA qualification

3. General Guidance for Centres

Where RPL is permitted for a qualification, this will be stipulated in the relevant Qualification Specification.

The centre must undertake a RPL mapping exercise to identify and evaluate whether the learner's previous evidence of learning satisfies the current assessment criteria and a decision must be made on whether the evidence provided partly or fully maps against the qualification or unit.

Where units are assessed using RPL, then all evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. In assessing a unit using RPL, the centre's assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learners is CRAVES (as above) and meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcomes and its related assessment criteria.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. It will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, knowledge and/or competence. Where there is an assessment strategy/plan for a qualification, this must be adhered to at all times. If a centre wishes to use RPL, the following must be ensured:

RPL processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible.

- Achievement must be identified prior to taking a qualification.
- Learners are registered as soon as they formally start to gather evidence.
- All evidence of RPL is retained for the purpose of External Quality Assurance by EAL.
- Certification and claims are made according to normal procedures.

- All relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed.
- Assessors must have the appropriate expertise in order to support the RPL process.
- The process is not concerned with allowing for exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study.
- The process of assessment for RPL is subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring standards as any other form of assessment.

4. Evidence

RPL evidence may not, in some cases, cover all requirements of a unit and further methods of assessment may be necessary such as professional discussion or observation.

Assessors must ensure that any evidence presented is valid and authentic.

Examples include:

- Documentation e.g., work products/artefacts, project plans, commissioning reports, design documents
- Audio-visual evidence e.g. photographs, videos
- Expert Witness testimonies
- Reflective Accounts
- Professional discussion

5. Appeals

The GA Appeals Procedure applies to any assessment decision including RPL evidence. Please refer to GA's Appeals Policy for further details.

6. Monitoring the RPL Policy

Gatehouse Awards will ensure that:

- reports are made to the Governing Body and Quality Panel, as appropriate as part of our monitoring and reviewing arrangements
- guidance from the Regulators is reviewed and the policy is updated to comply with best practice, as required
- information from monitoring activities is made available to the Regulator(s) as part of the Awarding Organisation's self-evaluation procedure and on request
- this policy is reviewed as required.

Document Specification:	
Accountability:	Gatehouse Awards Governing Body
Responsibility:	Director
Version:	1
Interim Review / Update (if applicable):	n/a
Effective from:	October 2022
Indicative review date	October 2024
Links to Ofqual GCR	E10
Other relevant documents:	Gatehouse Awards Regulations for Conducting Controlled Examinations Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) & Moderation Policy Record of Reasonable Adjustment/Special Consideration Form Request for Reasonable Adjustment and Exemption Form Qualification Specifications Gatehouse Awards Centre Handbook Gatehouse Awards Appeals Policy and Procedures