

RECOGNISED PRIOR LEARNING & ACCREDITED PRIOR LEARNING POLICY

Effective for employees, students, directors, and volunteers on or after 28th February 2022

2021 - 2023 Academic Years

Last review date: 28 February 2022

Next Review date due: February 2025

Please Note: A formal, full review of this document will take place on a 3-yearly basis. However, in the interim, the document will be updated as necessary to remain current with any statutory legislation and/or significant Government guidance updates on the subject.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

DOCUMENT TITLE: RECOGNISED PRIOR LEARNING & ACCREDITED PRIOR LEARNING POLICY
V2
DOCUMENT NUMBER: RPLP_V2
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CHANGE AUTHORITY: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Signature: _____  _____

Date: 28/02/2022

Designation: Director of Operations

Review Date: February 2025

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Recognised Prior Learning and Accredited Prior Learning Policy

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1. Introduction and Commitment

L&F Training (L&F) are committed to ensuring that all Learners are treated fairly; including in relation to recognising, as appropriate, prior learning including accredited prior learning.

This policy is an overarching policy which includes Recognition of Prior Learning only (RPL), Exemption and Equivalence. The policy aims to provide information and guidance to support those who are directly involved in the planning and advising of any assessment which incorporates prior learning from a specific and relevant subject area.

The first step in assessing a learner's prior learning or experience is to determine which category the learner's evidence fits into:

- Recognition of Prior Learning only (RPL)
- Exemption for Accredited Prior Learning (APL)
- Equivalence

2. What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) only?

RPL only is 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 that they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.

Learners may possess skills and knowledge that have not been acquired through formal learning, e.g. through work experience and/or other related learning that has not been certificated through a recognised awarding organisation.

This means that learners may be able to proceed directly to assessment without further study using evidence from uncertificated learning.

When to use RPL only

RPL only should be applied:

1. When a learner has no previous RQF certification or recognised course of learning.
2. When a learner has relevant skills and/or knowledge acquired through: - Domestic/family life- Education and training- Work activities- Community or voluntary activities
3. In order to avoid repetition of learning

How to apply RPL only

RPL only evidence is assessed to decide whether or not a learner can proceed straight to summative internal/external assessment, as applicable. RPL only evidence is assessed to identify gaps in skills and

knowledge in order to ascertain what further study (if any) is required prior to summative internal/external assessment. RPL only does not exempt learners from any element of the mandatory summative internal/external requirements of a qualification.

RPL only simply means that further learning is not necessary, and the learner can proceed directly to summative assessment. In no circumstances can any mandatory summative observations or mandatory summative examination requirements be avoided. For the avoidance of doubt, where it has been decided that RPL only is the appropriate route to achieving the qualification for a learner who holds no prior recognised certification. It is also not acceptable to exempt the learner from external examination requirements.

All mandatory summative assessments attached to the qualification must be completed as normal.

Assessment of RPL only evidence

Learners must present relevant evidence that meets the learning outcome requirements so that RPL only can be applied for their existing knowledge, understanding or skills for a unit within the qualification. Relevant evidence must be valid, authentic, sufficient and reliable.

Examples of evidence used to support the application of RPL only include:

- examination of documents
- expert witness testimony
- reflective accounts
- professional discussion
- practical skills observation or trade test
- theoretical knowledge of the learner

The RPL only process must be subject to the same rigorous internal and external quality assurance requirements as any other assessment method. All paperwork must be complete and stored along with the learner's evidence in the centre's IQA file and be available to the EQA on request.

3. What is Exemption?

Exemption is the facility for an individual to claim Exemption from some of the qualification that they are currently undertaking from their previously gained certificated achievement of a regulated qualification.

When to use Exemption

Exemption should be applied when:

- A learner has achieved a regulated qualification which is recognised as equal or comparable.
- A learner possesses knowledge and skills that are deemed to be current

- A learner holds a certificate or qualification which has been awarded on the achievement of assessment criteria and assessment methods which are deemed to be equivalent to the regulated qualification
- Exemption can only be applied when one or more of the above is deemed current
- Determining and documenting currency
- A qualification is only deemed to be current if achieved within the last three years.
- Skills and knowledge are only deemed to be current if the specific vocational qualification content i.e. work practice is current, within the last three years.
- Evidence of currency must be submitted i.e. certificates (of the same level or above with a minimum of 80% common content and assessment criteria).

How to apply Exemption

The evidence should be assessed to decide if knowledge and skills are equal or comparable to the regulated qualification.

- The evidence should be assessed to decide if the learner's knowledge and skills can be deemed to be current
- The evidence should be assessed to identify any gaps in skills and knowledge which would require the learner to
- undertake further study
- There must be evidence to demonstrate a minimum of an 80% overlap with the unit/qualification for which Exemption is being sought

4. What is Equivalence?

Equivalent units must be from the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) and equivalent in criteria and content to another RQF unit. An equivalent unit needs to be of the same credit value/guided learning hours (GLH) or greater and the same level or higher. Equivalence allows the replacement of one RQF unit in a qualification with another RQF unit that has the same general content and is of the same or greater credit/GLH value and level.

When to use Equivalence

Equivalence should be applied when a learner has achieved an equivalent RQF unit in another RQF qualification.

How to apply Equivalence

Units from different qualifications but sharing the same Unit Reference Number are deemed to be equivalent.

Equivalence for Technical Qualifications

For Technical Qualifications where a qualification contains an identical unit from another Technical Qualification. Where this unit is a mandatory unit, the learner's grade for the unit graded assessment will be carried over from their previous qualification. However, the learner must still complete the graded synoptic assessment and external examinations that accompany the new qualification, which

may assess the unit in question. If the learner wishes to increase their grade, then they may re-take the graded practical assessment, the highest grade will always stand.

Each individual request must be considered and confirmed by the Awarding Body. Evidence will need to be presented in at least 12 weeks before an exam date to ensure that the correct grade is recorded on the learner's final certificates.

Determining and Documenting Currency

- A qualification is only deemed to be current if achieved within the last three years.
- Skills and knowledge are only deemed to be current if the specific vocational qualification content i.e. work practice is current, i.e. within the last three years

5. L&F Responsibilities as a Centre

L&F will ensure that:

- The accountable person appointed, will need to have the relevant subject specific knowledge and a full understanding of each RPL method: RPL only, Exemption and Equivalence.
- In all cases of RPL, mandatory assessment requirements are complied with, when applicable.
- If RPL only, Exemption or Equivalence is to be used, the relevant Quality Assurer is informed.
- Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) procedures and practices are rigorous, robust and auditable, and of the same standard as any other form of assessment and IQA.
- Evidence provided by the learner for RPL only, Exemption or Equivalence is relevant, authentic, sufficient, valid, clear, transparent and current.
- If the accountable person has any concerns or doubt regarding the learner's knowledge, understanding, skills, competence or evidence proposed, RPL only, Exemption or Equivalence must not be applied.
- Formal records including the mapping form and learners evidence of RPL only, Exemption or Equivalence are kept by the centre.
- Formal records of Exemption or Equivalence, including the mapping form and the learner's evidence should be forwarded to the Awarding Body for approval.
- Learners are informed that RPL only, Exemption and Equivalence are not necessarily money or time-saving exercises and that the collation of evidence may involve a high proportion of time and may incur some cost, charged by the centre

6. RPL only, Exemption and Equivalence process

Stage 1:

Prior to enrolment, all learners should be informed of the possibility of applying RPL only, Exemption or Equivalence.

If learners decide to apply for RPL only, Exemption or Equivalence a learner interview should take place where they are fully informed about the:

- Process

- Support and guidance available
- Timelines
- Appeals processes
- Centre Fee(s) involved – to include a clear breakdown and explanation of costs

Stage 2:

All learners who apply for RPL only, Exemption or Equivalence must be provided with literature that informs the learner about:

- What they should know (related to the specific unit or qualification)
- What they should be able to demonstrate (related to the specific unit or qualification)
- Amount and type of assessment(s) they need to undertake
- The type and range of evidence which can be considered

Stage 3:

- Learners and centres together will collect evidence to meet the standards of the learning outcome(s)/ unit(s).
- Learners and centres will cross map evidence to the relevant learning outcome(s)/unit(s). Evidence may meet unit requirements partially or in full, as applicable.

Stage 4:

The evidence will be assessed, and judgements made in relation to unit standards. Evidence must be valid and reliable. The assessment process is subject to the usual internal and external quality assurance processes. A learner has the right to appeal against any assessment decision and should follow the centre's appeals process.

Stage 5:

Where further evidence/learning is needed, learners will be provided with an action plan:

- Identifying the further evidence required
- Identifying any further learning required
- Highlighting available assessment and re-assessment opportunities

Stage 6:

- Original certificates should be made available for your EQA to view on their visit.
- Evidence needs to be presented at least 12 weeks before an exam date to ensure that the learner is not disadvantaged.

Stage 7:

On successful completion of all quality assurance processes, certification claims can be made following the normal procedure.

7. Key contacts

- Denise White, Curriculum & Development (Curriculum Development Manager South West region) – denisewhite@landftraining.com
- Miguel de la Fuente, Curriculum & Development (Curriculum Development London region) - Miguel@landftraining.com
- Fran Deeley, Director of Operations (Deputy DSL for L&F Training Somerset and London sectors) – frandeeley@landftraining.com

8. Associated policies

- L&F Learner Recruitment, Enrolment, Registration and Certification Policy
- L&F Centre Approval Withdrawal Policy
- Learner Break in Learning and Withdrawal Policy