Policy and Regulations for the Recognition of Prior Learning

including the Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) and the Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

Issued by the Standards and Enhancement Office

1. Purpose of this RPL Policy

RPL, the Recognition of Prior Learning (previously known as Accreditation of Prior Learning) is a process through which students may receive credit towards part of their chosen programme of study based on recognition, identification and acknowledgement of learning from previous experience and achievements. This RPL policy takes the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (UKQC) into account, in particular Chapters B2: Admissions and B6: Assessment of Students and Recognition of Prior Learnin4des0 wagher Education

Credit accumulation

Achieving academic credit over time by successful completion of units of study or by recognition of prior learning.

Credit level

Credit is expressed in terms of an academic level of study, which relates to the relative demand, complexity, depth of learning and learner autonomy required in order to achieve the learning outcomes of a module or level within a programme. Academic level is benchmarked to the *UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards, The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, October 2014*.

Credit transfer

A mechanism which allows credit awarded by another HE provider to be recognised, quantified and included towards the credit requirements for a programme delivered by the University, and/or between programmes offered by the University.

Credit value

The number of credits at a specified credit level, indicating the amount and difficulty of the learning achieved, based on notional hours of learning.

Double counting

Double counting refers to the awarding of credit for the same learning to two (or more) separate qualifications at the same level. In effec

desirable or defensible and so will not permit RPL to be used for that purpose.

General credit (and exemption/transfer)

Credit for prior learning, at a given level or levels, which can be used to gain exemption from studying a specified amount of credit at the given academic level(s) towards a qualification. This

4.

Credit for previous certificated study awarded by a recognised body are equivalent to those awarded for study at the University.

It should be noted that, depending upon the subject area, the learning claimed for will need to have been undertaken within a reasonable timeframe to ensure that knowledge and techniques acquired remain current and appropriate for the programme of study applied for (see 10.1, below).

Examples:

A student who has successfully completed a Higher National Certificate (HNC) applies to a Bachelors degree in the same subject at the University. Following assessment, it is agreed that they will not have to take the first year (Level 4) of the programme as their HNC meets the learning outcomes for that level of study on that programme. Note that if the learning outcomes had not matched, the student might not have been able to obtain credit for the entire first year, despite having a qualification worth the same volume of credit as the first year of the undergraduate degree programme.

A student who had previously completed a Bachelors degree could not use that Bachelors degree to obtain another qualification of the same type, subject matter and level at another or the same institution. So a business degree from institution X would not entitle a student to use RPL to obtain another business qualification at the same level at institution Y(d)4(er)4(graduate)6(degree)6(progra)5(mme.)]TETQq0.000008 0 93-N0.5 TmTm0 g0

6. Process for Making a Claim for RPL

6.1 Claims for the Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning

In RPCL, the claimant has a certificate to evidence that the learning has been formally assessed by a recognised body or authority. It is the responsibility of the University to determine the status of such certification (including consideration of its content, volume, currency and level) as it relates to the programme of study to which the claimant is applying.

Documentary evidence forms the basis of a claim for RPCL and the process involves the stages laid out below. Where the evidence is fully documented and can be verified, the assessment of evidence may be carried out by the Admissions Tutor or Programme Leader for the programme.

(a) The Criteria

learning will need to meet the following criteria:

learning must be clearly differentiated from experience. (It is knowledge, capacity for reflection, understanding and skills which are assessed for credit, not the experience in itself);

learning must be at a level appropriate to the a programme offered by the University;

experiences. The portfolio includes claims to that learning, with supporting evidence, which allows the claims can be assessed.

Each portfolio will be an individualised statement of experiential learning and although there are no specific models or criteria, successful claims will include portfolios that contain both direct and indirect evidence:

(a) direct evidence may include project reports, databases, case study notes, correspondence, conference papers, work plans.

(b) indirect evidence may include statements from employers, customers or clients; documentation on courses undertaken; appraisals, references; letters of validation from people who are in a position to judge the value and quality of the learning.

Step 5: the assessment of claims for RPEL

The recognition of prior experiential learning involves an assessment process on the The RPEL claim is assessed by an RPL Panel (as outlined by in Annex A and the Assessment Board regulations) organised at School/Division level and ratified by the relevant Assessment Board.

Checks are made to evaluate each item of evidence to ensure that the learning is appropriate to the learning objectives of the academic award being sought.

Normally an assessment interview will be held to test claims to learning. Assessors might ask the claimant to undertake an assessment exercise to substantiate aspects of the learning claims. These exercises could be written assignments, demonstration

claim as they would through engaging with the usual assessment process for the module or level.

9. Resubmission and Appeals of Unsuccessful Claims for RPL

9.1 Resubmission of an unsuccessful claim

RPL claimants whose claim for credit is unsuccessful may be permitted one resubmission at the discretion of the Assessor(s).

9.2 Appeals in relation to unsuccessful claims

Claimants may request a review of the decisions of the RPL assessment under the y meet the grounds outlined in those regulations.

Note:
Decisions based on academic judgement cannot form the basis of an appeal. Submission of an appeal is only possible once the decision on a claim for RPL has been decided by an RPL Panel.

10. LIMITS ON CREDIT RPL CLAIMS

10.1 Applications can be made for any level of a University award subject to any limitations detailed in the programme specification (e.g. limits imposed by course teams or professional bodies) and as stated below. Formal certificated learning that has occurred **up to five years prior** to the start date of the award will normally be considered. The smallest unit of recognition will be one module.

10.2 The maximum credit claimable through an RPL process is normally two thirds of the total credits for an

Figure 1. Normal limits on RPL Credit for intended awards (note that this table does not apply to exit qualifications)

Award type	Number of credit points for award	Total amount of RPL credit permitted
Undergraduate Level Award		
Graduate Diploma	120	80
Honours Degree	360	240
Foundation Degree / Dip HE	240	120
Postgraduate Level Award		
Degree	180	90
Postgraduate Diploma	120	60
Postgraduate Certificate	60	30
Professional Doctorate	540	220

12. Fees for RPL Claims

Fees may be charged for an RPL claim depending on the circumstances in which the claim is being made.

12.1 Fees **will not normally** be charged for:

All applications for RPCL;

RPEL claims used purely for admissions purposes (but not for advanced standing). Charging a fee for RPEL in this circumstance could be regarded as providing a barrier to entry and therefore against the principles of widening participation.

12.2 Fees **will be** charged in the case of applications involving RPEL that are intended to result in the award of credit against one or more modules and that apply to:

Part-time and **full-time undergraduate** students;

Part-time and **full-time postgraduate** (including research) students and professional programmes.

12.3 RPEL fees are charged for the process rather than the outcome. Where incurred, fees are payable:

In advance of submitting the formal application for RPEL;

At the rate of 20% of the module fee for which specific credit is being claimed;

At the rate of 20% of the total level fee for the named programme.

Notes:

No refunds will be made for unsuccessful claims;

An application for RPCL or RPEL may have implications on student funding and financial support arrangements.

13. Quality Assurance

The Standards and Enhancement Office (SEO) will conduct a

Issues of academic standards vis-à-vis RPL;

School-level summaries of RPL;

Other Institution-wide issues arising from or related to the *Policy and Regulations for the Recognition of Prior Learning.*

POLICY AND REGULATIONS FOR THE RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING	
Policy ref: SEO/App1	
Version number	01
Version date	23rd May 2016
Name of Developer/Reviewer	Greg Allen
Policy Owner (Group/Centre/Unit)	SEO
Person responsible for implementation (postholder)	Heads of Schools, Admissions
Approving committee/board	Senate
Date approved	23rd May 2016
Effective from	September 2016
Dissemination method e.g. website	Website
Review frequency	Annually
Reviewing committee	Senate
Consultation history (individuals/group consulted and dates)	Drafts of the regulation have been considered by: Education Committee Senate
Document history (e.g. rationale for and dates of previous amendments)	This was a major re-write of the previous Recognition of Prior Learning regulations and policies.