

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Introduction and Policy

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the process used by LCL Awards for recognising learning that has come from a learner's experience, previous formal and informal learning or attainment;

- Prior to a learner taking an LCL Awards Managed Learning Programme (MLP), course or qualification.
- Which is relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be learnt and assessed as part of that MLP, course or qualification.

LCL Awards recognises that RPL not only benefits learners, but it can also benefit centres, employers, the labour market, the education system and the economy as well as LCL Awards.

The benefits of RPL include;

- Recognising the value of learning, achievement and experience outside of formal educational settings
- Validating non-formal and informal learning achieved independently
- Encouraging and facilitating educational or career progression through less traditional pathways
- Reducing the length and potentially the cost of learning, training and assessment time
- Achieving better value for money where learners are permitted to fast-track through a qualification
- Promoting lifelong learning
- Providing pathways for migrant work / movement of labour and
- Improving learner self-esteem and pride.

LCL Awards is cognizant to ensure that the application of RPL does not generate an unfair advantage over other learners and is at all times aware of the need to ensure the RPL process is transparent and fair to all learners.

LCL Awards will regularly review the RPL process to ensure that;

- The outcome of the assessment of RPL evidence is not compromised or creates an unfair advantage
- The RPL process does not become over burdensome
- The RPL process is no longer cost effective to apply

Recognition by LCL Awards of that learning and or attainment through adjustment to the MLP, course or qualification requirements which a learner must have satisfied before the learner will be taught and or assessed or that MLP, course or qualification being awarded by LCL Awards.

The term RPL is used by LCL Awards to reflect similar terms used in other qualification frameworks including Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Recognition of Prior Achievement (RPA).

RPL enables learners to avoid duplication of learning by recognising;

- Learners with certificated qualifications awarded within a regulated or accredited qualification framework.
- Learning and or attainment that has not been certificated within a regulated or accredited qualification framework but which can be authenticated by the learner and verified by the Approved Centre (AC).

LCL Awards may exempt learners from undertaking some or all of a MLP, course or qualification learning inputs, examination(s) and or assessment(s) and or pre-requisite requirement(s) where the learner presents to the AC qualification or certification evidence that matches the assessment criteria, learning outcomes and any additional conditions applied to the qualification for which RPL is being sought.

Exemptions may be;

LCL Awards planned exemptions;

- Where the LCL Awards qualification developers plan exemptions by predicting the type of relevant certificated attainment learners might already hold and who are likely to take a particular qualification.
- Where exemption can be predicted and planned, the units and or qualifications to which RPL exemptions apply will be set out by LCL Awards in the MLP, course or qualification specification or guidance documentation.

or

- Learner requested (unplanned) exemptions;

Note; exemption in this context means learners will not be required to undertake some or all of a MLP, course or qualification learning inputs, examination(s) and or assessment(s).

There may be occasions where RPL exemptions are requested by learners holding certificated attainments that were not foreseen when the MLP, course or qualification was developed. In that instance, learners may make a request to the AC to have their unplanned learning and or attainment considered for exemption.

The decision by the AC to grant the RPL exemption will be confirmed with the LCL Awards Operations Manager (OM) and details recorded on the Learning Input or Unit Exemption Record retained by the AC

RPL will not be accepted where the MLP, course or qualification specification does not permit.

Time limits on RPL evidence

A time limit may be set for exemptions in an LCL Awards qualification. The exemptions are detailed in the MLP, course or qualification specification and or guidance documentation.

Learning that has not been certificated which can be authenticated by the learner and verified by the AC may exempt learners from repeating knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning. This also applies where a qualification specifies particular pre-requisite requirement where the learner can demonstrate equivalence by other means.

A detailed Initial Assessment carried out by the AC prior to the registration of a learner onto a MLP, course or qualification may be used to identify and assess the learning inputs or pre-requisite requirements which the learner can be exempt from repeating.

Any evidence submitted for the Recognition of Prior Learning must be;

Valid

- Meeting the learning outcomes and performance criteria of the qualification and reflects the skills, knowledge and context described in the qualification specification.

Authentic

- The evidence being submitted is in its original format, can be verified as genuine and can be confirmed as the work of the learner.

Sufficient

- The Assessor must see sufficient evidence to cover all aspects of the unit, units or qualification being claimed. The evidence must demonstrate competence over a period of time and that is able to be repeated.

Current

- The evidence must demonstrate the learner's current skills and knowledge and must comply with current best practice guidance.

Reliable

- Evidence must be from a reliable source and in a reliable format, e.g. on organisation headed paper or certification. All translated documents must be translated by an official translator to ensure authenticity.

Types of RPL evidence

The types of evidence provided by learners and acceptable to LCL Awards and the AC may come from a variety sources including but not limited to;

- On-the job learning and training
- Self-directed development
- Non-certificated assessments and learning
- Portfolio records of other courses or qualifications undertaken by the learner
- Original certificates of qualifications or accreditations held by learners
- Course work
- Projects

The qualification specification or the qualification's centre guide will where appropriate set out the types of evidence that is appropriate to that qualification or will state that RPL is not applicable.

Responsibilities

LCL Awards has responsibility for RPL and for ensuring that it acts in accordance with this policy and where necessary, provides AC with appropriate guidance on RPL approaches and requirements. It is primarily responsible for ensuring integrity and fairness in the awarding process and for acting in accordance with its conditions of recognition and or standards.

It is the AC responsibility to ensure that they conduct RPL in accordance with this policy and processes. This includes ensuring that the AC staff involved in the RPL process have subject and or sector expertise that is relevant to the qualification and is sufficient to meet delivery, assessment and quality assurance requirements.

The AC also has a role to play in identifying learners and work closely with LCL Awards to facilitate RPL in accordance with this policy.

The AC is responsible for ensuring that Assessors and Internal Verifiers (IV) are familiar with the application of RPL in each MLP, course or qualification delivered by the AC.

The AC will appoint a competent person for checking the MLP, course or qualification specification and or guidance documentation to ascertain whether and which aspect of RPL is applicable.

An Assessor or other competent person is responsible for assessing the evidence presented by the learner seeking learning input and or unit examination and or assessment exemption. The Assessor and IV are responsible for completing the relevant sections of the Learning Input or Unit Exemption Record.

The AC is responsible for accessing and interrogating the appropriate learner qualification record or database to confirm learner qualifications or certification (regulated qualifications).

The Internal Verifier (IV) is responsible for reviewing and internally quality assuring (where appropriate) the Assessors decision to accept the learners claim for RPL or exemption.

The AC is responsible keeping a record of the RPL evidence presented by the learner, details of the RPL assessment and the decision made by the AC to allow the RPL to apply (or otherwise) and any unit or pre-requisite exemptions made to learners.

The AC is responsible for keeping a record of learners who have not completed the Guided Learning Hours (GLH) or met the published pre-requisite requirements for a MLP, course or qualification due to the AC allowing RPL to be applied.

The AC is responsible for ensuring that where appropriate, learners are aware of the process for appealing a decision when the AC or LCL Awards does not allow RPL to be applied to the learner.

The AC is responsible for processing appeals made by learners where RPL is refused by the AC.

RPL Application Procedure

The AC will advise learners of the application and assessment procedure relevant to the MLP, course or qualification being applied in accordance with LCL Awards requirements.

Recording RPL judgements

After completing the assessment of RPL evidence, the AC will document and record the evidence and criteria used and what decision was reached. Where RPL is permitted, the record will confirm how the evidence matches the criteria and what part or all of the qualification is being awarded through RPL.

The AC will retain the RPL evidence for inspection during external quality assurance audits.

Quality assurance of the RPL process

The RPL process will be subject to internal quality assurance monitoring and audit by the IV and by the LCL Awards external quality assurance auditing of the AC.