



Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

East Birmingham Community Forum (EBCF)

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1. Introduction

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a way of recognising and valuing the knowledge and skills that people bring with them when they start their qualification. It is one way that learners can demonstrate competence in what they have achieved in the past, through learning and experience.

2. Aims of Policy

EBCF recognises that some learners may have prior learning, experience or qualifications that are relevant to their qualification. We are committed to ensuring that any such evidence is considered in line with the awarding organisation's policy on recognition or prior learning.

3. Implementation

The overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Directors. Commitment to this policy is firmly supported by EBCF's Management team who will be responsible for monitoring its implementation.

4. Definitions

4.1 RPL

Recognition of Prior Learning is the formal recognition of prior learning gained outside of EBCF through:

- a) formally assessed and certified programmes
- b) other experience, which is uncertified and not previously assessed. For example, learning from unpaid work or paid work, community activities, leisure pursuits and other informal learning experiences.

4.2 APL

Accreditation of prior learning (including credit transfer)

It is the responsibility of EBCF to decide how much specific credit to award an individual student via RPL, based on previous achievement. EBCF is responsible for determining whether the credit awarded by the body which validated the programme/qualification is equivalent to the credit system used by University/Collaborative Partner

5. Criteria, Conditions and Restrictions for RPL

Applicants for RPL shall provide the following evidence that learning has taken place to demonstrate equivalence. All evidence of learning shall be:

- a) Written in English
- b) Sufficient
Keep in mind that evidence presented (eg portfolio or syllabus) should be concise and contain sufficient evidence for the purpose intended.
- c) Recent
How recent the learning and/or experience is can determine its value, certain skills and knowledge, for example, can quickly become redundant.
- d) Authentic
For certain evidence to be accepted it may require endorsement or a reference from relevant sources eg employers or validating institutions.
- e) Relevant
The specifications of a job or the learning outcomes of a particular qualification will determine the relevance of the evidence.

The procedures for recognising prior learning shall ensure that the learning which has taken place and is presented as RPL is equivalent to the learning that would have otherwise occurred.

6. Detail of policy

In order to acknowledge prior learning as a part of their qualification, learners will need to provide documented evidence of prior learning to their assessor. The assessor will review, assess, and evaluate the evidence determine if it meets awarding organisation criteria. If there is any doubt, the assessor will discuss the evidence with the internal quality assurer and/ or centre manager. If, after this initial assessment, the evidence is proven to be valid and reliable evidence of prior learning, the evidence will be assessed as part of the learner's qualification. Assessors should be aware that evidence collected through the use of RPL does not in any way contribute to the guided learning hours required to be undertaken as part of a qualification.

An exact guide cannot be given to the prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills. This will vary from learner to learner and qualification to qualification. It may well include course work, certificates from other learning programmes, evidence of learning outcomes, witness testimony from managers or work products. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor will use questioning to ensure currency and understanding.

It is possible to use other qualifications can as supporting evidence in a learner's qualification, providing the qualification is current and benchmarks to the national standards of work, or knowledge and understanding, for one or more of the qualification units.

7. Criteria

When considering evidence for prior certified learning, the RPL Assessor shall:

- a) Confirm that credit has been awarded by a recognised awarding organisation.
- b) Confirm that the learning activity has been given a credit rating
- c) Assess the evidence submitted against the following
 - i) The programme requirements and level learning outcomes; and
 - ii) The module learning outcomes for Core and Mandatory modules,
- d) Confirm that the learning has been in a subject area relevant to the programme of study.

8. Arrangements with Awarding bodies

All examples of RPL and APL to be applied must be done so inline with awarding body requirements.

Infringement



EBCF will take appropriate disciplinary action against individuals who do not adhere to this policy to the detriment of any Learner.

9. Review Process

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and as and when incidents or new legislation requires it.

It will be reviewed on an annual basis as a minimum.

10. Version Control

Version	Description of Change	Author	Date	Approved by
1.0	First version	S.Carragher	August 2022	S.Johnson
2.0	Version 2.0	S.Khan / Z.Sharif	July 2024	
3.0	Version 3.0	S.Khan / J.Hall	January 2025	
4.0	Version 4.0 Policy updated to enhance complaints handling processes, strengthen governance, and improve monitoring and confidentiality.	S.Khan (HR)	January 2026	S.Etheridge (Head of Quality)