

## **P920 Higher Nationals Recognition of Prior Learning**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Peterborough Regional College is committed to ensuring the decision making process and outcomes for admitting students with prior learning are transparent, rigorous and fair. The College aims to be an open access institution, where potential students will be recruited, subject to the restrictions imposed by individual validating bodies, by motivation, aptitude and prior experience.

### **2. PURPOSE**

- 2.2 This document reflects the QAA guidelines for recognising prior learning as described in the UK Quality Code and defines the procedures and guidance for submitting and approving requests for transferring credit in order for a student to be exempted from individual units or permitted direct entry to the second or subsequent year of a programme on the basis of prior certified and/or experiential learning.

### **3. SCOPE**

- 3.1 This policy applies to Pearson Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma qualifications, including those on the Regulated Qualifications Framework, Self-Regulated Framework (SRF) and other national frameworks in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, not all qualifications allow the use of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Where the use of RPL is permitted, this will be stated within the qualification specification.

### **4. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- 4.1 Guidance from Pearson's about transferring credit is available from <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees/scqf-credit-accumulation-and-transfer-policy.pdf>
- 4.2 Guidance from Pearson's about Recognition Prior Learning is available from [https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees/Recognition\\_of\\_prior\\_learning\\_and\\_process\\_policy.pdf](https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees/Recognition_of_prior_learning_and_process_policy.pdf)
- 4.3 Pearson Customer Services can be contacted by telephone on 0844 463 2535 or via email: [examsOfficers@pearson.com](mailto:examsOfficers@pearson.com)
- 4.4 The Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code for Higher Education has two chapters that relate to the recognition of prior learning. These are Chapter B6 Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning, and Chapter B2 Recruitment, Selection and Admission of Students.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The HNC HND College Administrator is the first point of contact for students wishing to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The Administrator will act as liaison between students and academic staff in the first stages of a claim, oversee and monitor claim forms and ensure that the student completes the RPL Application Form and, if relevant, has certificated evidence of the having passed the unit/s. Correspondence and evidence received will be saved by the HNC HND Administrator in I:\Higher Education\HNC & HND\Applications
- 5.2 The applicant is responsible for:
- the decision as to whether any application will be made for prior learning
  - submitting an application with supporting evidence
  - providing any revisions or additional information to support their application as requested
- 5.3 The HE Programme Area Lead:
- will evaluate the applicant's prior certificated learning with course leaders who have the relevant subject experience
  - decide whether the applicant's learning may be considered for accreditation in terms of equivalence to the units/module(s) for which credit is sought
  - where applicable, will liaise with awarding body/ validating university staff and follow their standard policies and procedures
  - will complete relevant sections of documentation, sign and either present the RPL claim to the Higher National Quality Meeting or provide supporting statements and refers the claim to the University Centres Academic Director for sign off. Only when this has been done may the student be informed of the decision over admission by advanced standing
  - will not offer the applicant any guarantees as to the outcome of his/her submission

## 6. RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 This policy is required to ensure that correct procedures are in place and followed by all involved in the recruitment and academic progress to higher education students. Non-adherence to this policy would result in poor external stakeholder perception and potential financial cost and compensation. It would result in failure to achieve a positive outcome from a Higher Education Review and the likelihood of additional scrutiny.

## 7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 All new policies must undergo an Impact Assessment. Failure to do so will result in the policy not being approved. A template Equality Impact Assessment form is available on [J:\Policies\Equality impact assessment \(2\).doc](J:\Policies\Equality impact assessment (2).doc)

**Section one:** Screening for impact consists of three pages (this is mandatory and must be signed and dated and attached to the new policy)

**Section two:** Full assessment (this only needs to be completed if there are equality issues within the Policy)

## **8. DATA PROTECTION**

- 8.1 Assessment and internal verification records, along with any additional RPL records completed, should be retained for the standard three year period following certification.

## **9. PROCEDURE**

### **9.1 Definition of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

RPL is the term used to describe the process for admitting students with either or both;

- prior learning acquired through formal study through 'Credit Transfer'
- through work, and through experience 'Prior Experience Learning'

- 9.2 The College allows for entry to the Pearson Higher Nationals programme by both relevant work experiences as an approved entry requirement, and for advanced standing where a prospective student has studied and passed units through study elsewhere.

## **10 Principles of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

10.1 Principles for RPL procedures which follow QAA guidelines are:

- Policies, processes and procedures are transparent, rigorous, fair and accessible.
- The assessment of RPL is subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring as other forms of assessment.
- Learning for which credit transfer is sought must have been completed within five years (60 months) of submission of an application in addition some applicants are required to provide evidence of updating of their professional knowledge and practice.
- Learning for which prior experience is sought must be current and relate to within the last three years due to professional and sector updates.
- Only applications for whole units can be made and only be awarded where defined in the relevant course specification.
- Credit cannot be gained through RPL procedures of a major project.
- Applications can be made for no more than 45 credits
- Credits awarded via Pearson's RPL procedures will not normally be graded.  
Calculation of the classification of an award (where appropriate) is done only on the basis of the marks achieved for modules studied at the College.

## **11 Submission Timescales**

- 11.1 Applications for RPL must be submitted to the HNC HND College Administrator at the point of application for an academic place, or as soon as possible following application.
- 11.2 Ahead of enrolling a potential student, the possibility that they may be able to claim unit(s) for some of their previous learning and/or experience should be raised with them. If the learner is interested in this, they will need to know the:
- Process of claiming achievement by using RPL
  - Sources of support and guidance available to them
  - Timelines, appeals processes and any fees involved

## **12 Processing Timescales**

- 12.1 Applications for RPL will normally be considered and a decision communicated to the applicant within 10 working days of receipt of all required evidence and application information. If, after considering the application, further evidence is required an appropriate deadline will be communicated to the applicant.
- 12.2 Approval in writing of RPL must be made before a student formally commences their studies. Certain circumstances can allow for such admission to be permitted, provided the process is completed by the Friday of the second teaching week of the first semester, or trimester, as appropriate, to the pathway on which an applicant wishes to register.
- 12.3 Applicants must not assume RPL credits have been granted until they receive an official statement to that effect.

## **13 Fee**

- 13.1 There are costs for applicants who are successfully admitted with prior learning. The charge is £250 which is payable at enrolment. The advantage to an applicant of being admitted with credit is the volume of work will normally be reduced.

## **14 RPL Application Stage 1, Application and documentation of evidence**

- 14.1 During the application process, the applicant will be made aware of the RPL process. Interviews will take place where potential RPL assessment is identified and the applicant will be provided with guidance and the relevant paperwork to complete.
- 14.2 At this stage the student will carry out the process of collecting evidence against the requirements of the relevant unit(s). In some cases the development of an assessment plan and tracking document or similar may be required, to support the learner through the process. The evidence gathered will need to meet the standards of the unit, or part of unit, that the evidence is being used for.
- 14.3 Assessment as part of RPL is a structured process of gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgments about a student's prior learning and experience in relation to unit standards. Evidence required might include work experience records (validated by managers); previous portfolios of evidence put together by the student, or essays and reports validated as being the student's own unaided work.
- 14.4 Learning for which Credit Transfer is sought must have been completed within five of submission of an application. If the learning is beyond the five year currency limit, applicants are required to provide evidence of updating of their professional knowledge and practice. If experiential learning is being claimed, prior experience needs to be current and within the last three years to ensure it is relevant to professional and sector updates, RPL applications are only accepted for a maximum of 45 credits.

## **15 RPL Application Stage 2 Assessment**

- 15.1 Applications are submitted to the HNC HND College Administrator who will ensure that application paperwork has been correctly completed and expected documentation received. The application is forwarded to the Programme Area Lead for review.
- 15.2 The RPL claim is assessed to ensure that the evidence provided is appropriate and maps to

the learning outcomes of the unit being accredited. Further evidence from the applicant might be requested to aid assessment.

- 15.3 During the assessment process, demonstration that the following criteria has been met is sought;
- a) Applications and certificates are written in English (or accompanied by official translations)
  - b) Evidence is sufficient
  - c) Any learning or experience is recent and its value can be determined
  - d) Evidence is authentic and validated
  - e) Evidence is relevant

## **16 RPL Application Stage 3 Outcome**

- 16.1 It is the responsibility of the College to decide if, and how much specific credit is awarded to an individual through credit transfer based on the level and relevance of the learning to the intended course of study.
- 16.2 Decisions on an application for RPL credit will be based on academic judgement of the equivalence of the learning outcomes of previous study or experience to the stated learning outcomes of a unit validated by Pearson. Even if there is judged to be equivalence in this respect it may be that the award of credit would disadvantage the applicant in terms of their level of achievement in the award for which they are registered, due to the fact that credit awarded through RPL procedures is not normally graded.
- 16.3 Recommendation One: If the collated evidence of RPL for a student is judged not to be sufficient to meet all the requirements of the relevant unit(s), then the student will be informed in writing of the reason. They will be told that that they will be required complete the normal assessment for those unit(s) if they wish to be awarded the qualification.
- 16.4 Recommendation Two: If an application is successful the student will be informed that they can enrol and will not be required to sit the assessments relating to the unit/s that have been successfully mapped. A fee of £250 will be charged at this stage.

## **17 Claiming Certification**

- 17.1 A record of RPL credits awarded will be made against the students' academic College record. An electronic copy of the approval documentation, application and supporting evidence will be saved on the College MIS system. Assessment and internal verification records, along with any additional RPL records completed, are retained for the standard three year period following final certification or the qualification.
- 17.2 Credit transfers are submitted to Pearson Customer Services with a copy of the certificate issued. Pearson will authenticate the credit value within the rules of combination for the qualification against which credit is being claimed. The final decision regarding credit value that can be transferred rests with Pearson if we are awarding the qualification for which credit is being claimed

## **18 Monitoring and review**

- 18.1 The HN Admission Officer will log documentation from each decision (which will be the

basis for an annual report) and advise the Awards Board about APL applications as APL may form a substantial amount of the award given. An annual report will be presented to the University Centres Academic Standards and Operations Committee on:

- Which students applied for APCL/APEL
- On which modules
- Which applications were declined or accepted
- The reasons for these decisions
- A short summary of this data
- Recommendations for improvements to the system

The aim is to support the development and enhancement of current policies and ensure that there is ongoing monitoring and evaluation procedures.

## **19 Appeals**

19.1 If an applicant is unhappy with the outcome of their RPL application they may lodge an appeal on grounds that;

- a) New evidence in support of their claim for RPL has become available
- b) They feel that the application process was not administered appropriately

19.2 Written request to appeal must be submitted as per the Academic Appeals Procedure (P800).

# Application for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)



This document is to assist applicants and students with claiming Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL). It should be read alongside the Recognition for Prior Learning Policy.

RPL gives you the opportunity to gain recognition for all of the learning you gained prior to your studies at the College. This can include learning which has already been assessed and credit rated at a university or college, or other learning and training provider (credit transfer). It also includes learning gained through life or work experiences (Prior Experience Learning).

## How do I apply?

Contact the HND HNC College Administrator or complete and return the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Application Form. Once submitted, an advisor will contact you to set up a meeting where you will discuss your options. A fee of £250 is payable at enrolment if your application for PRL is successful.

<b>Applicants Name:</b>		<b>College ID Number:</b> <i>(where appropriate)</i>	
<b>Course applying to study:</b>		<b>Mode of Study:</b>	FT / PT
		<b>Expected Start Date:</b>	Sept 2017/Feb 2018
<b>Contact telephone Number:</b>			
<b>Email Address:</b>			
<b>Is the RPL application</b> <i>(please deleted as appropriate)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> based on certified learning only <input type="checkbox"/> based on experiential learning only <input type="checkbox"/> based on a mixture of both certified & experiential learning		

## SECTION 1: APPLICATION BASED ON PRIOR CERTIFIED LEARNING

### QUALIFICATIONS:

This should include only those qualifications which you feel relate directly to the course for which you are seeking accreditation of prior certificated learning.

You will be required to provide original copies of certificates and transcripts at interview.

Qualification / Unit Title	Awarding Body Name	Award Date	Grade


### Supporting Evidence

We expect that your previous accredited learning will have been completed within the last five years. If this is not the case, we will ask for evidence of how you have kept your knowledge up-to-date, including:

- CV: covering your employment history since qualifying, detailing how you have maintained learning
- Reflective statement: explaining how you have maintained learning in the subject area you wish to study. We generally expect between 750 and 1,000 words
- Employer reference (on letter headed paper): from your most recent employer detailing how your job has keep up-to-date with information and practices in the subject area.

**Please list the supporting evidence you will provided:**

## SECTION 2: APPLICATION BASED ON EXPERIENCIAL LEARNING

### EVIDENCE:

The evidence required for recognition of experiential learning will be a portfolio containing pieces of work, which clearly show the learning you have gained. These may include reflective accounts; projects; employer statements; work produced as part of your employment; assignments set by your RPL Advisor.

We will not expect you to produce your claim without help. An Advisor will be allocated to you and will help you identify your learning and advise you on how to present it. When you have done this, we will arrange to have it assessed.

Remember, the principle for recognition of experiential learning is that it is what you have learned that is being recognised, not what you have done.



Please outline the basis from your claim and possible evidence you can provide:

Applicant Confirmation:

Signature

Name

Date

**SECTION 3: TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF AT INTERVIEW**

Please detail the unit/s you are proposing the applicant be exempted from studying and whether this decision is based on certified or experiential learning in each case and be for no more than 45 credits.

Unit Code	Unit Title	Credits	Level	Certified or Experiential

Learning outcomes of unit at PRC

Evidence of successful learning OR experience related to the learning outcomes of PRC unit

*e.g. PHM032, LO 1*

*Refer to any additional evidence which may be included in support of this as an appendix. For Recognition of Prior Experience Learning **evidence** must point to practical experience meeting each learning outcome.*

Is any prior learning more than 5 years old?

Yes / No

If 'Yes':

a) is the learning still relevant and does it meet the Learning Outcomes?

Yes / No

b) Has the applicant demonstrable evidence of keeping their knowledge updated? **Yes / No**

Please note that if the prior learning is more than 5 years old and the response to a) and b) above is 'no', then the learning cannot be RPL'd.

**Application approved**

**Application Rejected**

**Please give a brief summary of the reason for the above recommendation(s).**  
*If no modules are proposed for exemption or you are proposing to exempt fewer units than the applicant has requested, please include a rationale for this in order to provide feedback to the applicant.*

*If the rationale includes a recommendation for the student to complete additional work to be marked and moderated, please give details of the work together with the deadlines for submission / confirmation of result.*

<b>CONFIRMED START DATE:</b>		<b>Mode of Study:</b>	<b>FT / PT</b>
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**FULL TIME STUDY PLAN:**

**Year 1 entry**       **Year 2 entry**       **Year 3 entry**      **Other:**

Specific **NEW LEARNING** details – List all units a student will complete to receive the award they will enrol for.

Level	Credit Volume	Unit Code:	Unit Title:	Academic Year	Semester

**OR PART TIME STUDY PLAN:**

**Year 1 entry**     **Year 2 entry**     **Year 3 entry**     **Year 4 entry**     **Year 5 entry**    **Other (specify)**

Specific **NEW LEARNING** details – List all units a student will complete to receive the award they will enrol for.

Level	Credit Volume	Unit Code:	Unit Title:	Academic Year	Semester

Recommended by RPL Assessor			
Signature			
Name		Date	

**Office Use Only**

To be completed by Admissions	Date actioned
Letter sent to applicant/student confirming outcome	
Applicant's Prosolution record updated	
Original form and all original supporting documentation scanned to Prosolution	