

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy for CACHE qualifications

RPL is a formal recognition process that confirms another training and/or qualification meets the requirements of part or all of a qualification. This will be stated in a qualification specification and potential learners will be required to submit evidence of achievement of the recognised training or qualification to be granted RPL.

If a qualification specification allows equivalence of another training and/or qualification the following process must be followed:

- A centre will make an RPL request on behalf of a learner to the Head of Quality at Crossfields Institute. The request should be sent by email to qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com The Head of Quality (or deputy if absent) will then review the request to ensure it meets any stated equivalences within the qualification specification. The outcome of the review will be sent to the centre with a clear rationale for the decision. The decision will be given to the centre within 10 working days of receiving the request.
- Requests for RPL should be made as soon as possible once the learner is registered on a qualification. They should not be left until delivery and assessment activities have come to an end, as this could seriously disadvantage the learner if the request is rejected.
- Learners registered on CACHE qualifications must be registered with CACHE (which is done by Crossfields Institute as the centre). Requests for registering RPL learners can be made at any time. The learner will be registered for the qualification in the usual way. Crossfields Institute does not accept simultaneous applications for a learner to be registered and to receive certification.

RPL is also a process that enables learners to submit evidence of skills, knowledge and understanding that they already possess and which meet the standards (assessment criteria and learning outcomes) for a specified qualification.

The assessment process for this approach to RPL enables confirmation of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL evidence is acceptable for accrediting all or part of a qualification unless this is disallowed in the qualification specification. The RPL evidence is mapped to the qualification assessment criteria of the qualification being taken.

The RPL process in practice

The Assessor's role is to provide advice, guidance and support to make the right choice about whether to take the RPL route, and if they do, to assess the appropriate evidence. The evidence presented will need to be assessed fully in order to judge whether prior claims constitute valid, authentic, sufficient, reliable and current evidence.

The evidence presented may include:

- Written assignments
- Reflective accounts
- Witness statements
- Professional discussion records

The Assessor will need to confirm that evidence meets the following Principles of Assessment:

1. **Authentic** – is the evidence provided the learner's own work? Is the evidence transparent, unambiguous and easily identified as evidence of achievement?
2. **Valid** – does the assessment measure what it claims to measure? Is there a close fit between the assessment activities from previous achievements and the new assessment criteria? Is the evidence at the right level?
3. **Sufficient** – is there enough evidence to fully meet the requirements of the assessment criteria? Where there is a gap in evidence then additional evidence must be submitted and assessed. This may be through written tasks or professional discussion for example.
4. **Reliable** – if evidence is submitted through RPL, the assessor must be able to arrive at the same assessment decision were the assessment to be repeated.
5. **Current** – is the evidence from the learners' work sufficiently recent? It is important that evidence should be relevant to current occupational standards. Where there are no occupational standards, the course provider should make a judgement; usually that evidence presented should be within the last 2-5 years.

Evidence through RPL must meet the same rigorous quality criteria for the qualification. The stages involved in the RPL process are:

1. The assessor gives general information, advice and guidance (IAG) about claiming RPL
2. The student gathers evidence and agrees the assessment plan with the assessor
3. The assessor carries out the assessment and documents the evidence
4. The assessor gives feedback to the students
5. Where the student can meet all the assessment criteria for a unit, then the assessor recommends the award. If assessment criteria are not fully met then the assessor and student plan how to gather evidence through additional assessment criteria.
6. Following the assessment decision, if the award is not given, the learner may wish to appeal using the centre's appeals process.

Guidance for this RPL process is contained within the Crossfields Institute Assessor's Toolkit, and is made available to all approved Crossfields Institute centres.

Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) for CACHE Centres

- Where a learner has already achieved a unit with credits, this prior learning can be recognised to allow the credits to be transferred to a new qualification provided they have the same Ofqual reference number. This prevents unnecessary repetition of learning.
- Requests for CAT should be made as soon as possible once the learner is registered on a qualification. They should not be left until delivery and assessment activities have come to an end, as this could seriously disadvantage the learner if the request is rejected.

If you need guidance regarding CAT contact the Quality Team at Crossfields Institute qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com

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