



CIPD Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Introduction

As a recognised Awarding Organisation, CIPD is subject to Ofqual¹, Qualifications Wales and CCEA's² General Conditions of Recognition (GCR)³. In accordance with Condition E10, this document sets out CIPD's approach to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Scope

CIPD encourages the recognition of previous learning. This policy aims to guide Centres, learners, CIPD staff and external contractors on the process for recognition through prior learning.

Definition of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

We define RPL as a method of assessment which uses evidence of prior non-certificated learning to demonstrate that a learner already possesses the knowledge, understanding and skills required for a unit/s and do not need to develop through a formal course of learning.

This is in line with regulatory condition E.10 which applies the following definition for RPL:

E10.2 For the purposes of this Condition, 'recognition of prior learning' is the -

1. (a) identification by an awarding organisation of any learning undertaken, and/or attainment, by a Learner -
 1. (i) prior to that Learner taking a qualification which the awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available, and
 2. (ii) which is relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification, and
2. (b) recognition by an awarding organisation of that learning and/or attainment through amendment to the requirements which a Learner must have satisfied before the Learner will be assessed or that qualification will be awarded.

When to use RPL

Claims for RPL must be made in relation to a whole unit/s and are relevant where a learner can provide evidence of previous learning that has not been formally recognised through a qualification or formal certification process. Using RPL allows a learner to avoid repeating learning that they have already completed via other means, for example through work experience (either paid or voluntary), non-accredited short courses or independent research projects.

¹ Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation

² Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (Northern Ireland)

³ The GCR had their basis in the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and are therefore legally enforceable



Assessment of RPL evidence

Eligibility for RPL should be discussed as part of the initial diagnostic interview that the centre has with the learner. During the discussion, the centre must satisfy itself that the learner does not need to undertake the learning for a unit/s and would be able to meet the assessment criteria for the specified unit/s on the basis that they have demonstrated sufficiency and currency of experience and knowledge.

Evidence of presented for RPL may be drawn from any aspect of a learner's non-certificated learning and experience.

When considering the evidence presented, the centre should consider whether the evidence presented:

- demonstrates that the demands of the learning outcome have been met. For RPL, currency of evidence is particularly important. Evidence presented must be a maximum of three years' old.
- Is genuinely the individual work of the learner. It is important that you can verify this and are satisfied that this is the case.
- Is sufficient to fully meet the requirements of the learning outcomes for the unit/s being considered.

Where a decision is made by the centre that a learner can use RPL for a unit/s, evidence of this decision, including mapping of the evidence to the relevant learning must be captured from the learner and recorded using CIPD form RPLC which can be found [here](#). This evidence must be made available to the CIPD for quality assurance checks if requested.

Summative assessment requirements

Recognition of prior learning may be used to evidence where a learning does not need to complete the required learning for a unit/s. Any learner that uses RPL will still be required to undertake the summative assessment for the related unit/s. Where the Centre is approved to provide qualifications for experienced professionals, summative assessment of the assessment criteria can be carried out using competency-based methods for the specialist and optional units and using the evidence presented as part of this assessment.

Certification claims

Summative assessment completed after RPL will still be subject to CIPD moderation activity and included in end programme certification claims.

Complaints

Where a Centre or candidate wishes to complain about the process followed as part of RPL, they should follow CIPD's complaints process.

Linked documents

CIPD complaints policy, CIPD process for planned exemptions, requested exemptions and credit transfer.