

Recognition of Prior Learning

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn y Gymraeg / This document is available in Welsh

Prepared by:	Assistant Principal – Teaching & Learning		
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Preamble to the Policy

Equal Opportunities

The College shall comply with all statutory duties in respect of equal opportunities in the areas of sex, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, transgender, religion, belief, pregnancy, maternity and paternity, marriage and civil partnership and the rehabilitation of offenders. The college shall also comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and any subsequent enactments or modifications.

Sustainability

The College will comply with all statutory duties in respect of sustainable development by seeking to improve the long-term economic, social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities. This needs to be done in ways which promote social justice, equality of opportunity and which enhance the natural and cultural environment while respecting its limits.

Welsh Language

The Welsh Language Measure of 2011 ensures the equal status of the Welsh language alongside the English language. This law has created the role of a [Welsh Language Commissioner](#) and has introduced a number of Welsh Language Standards with which the College are under a statutory duty to comply. This includes conducting Welsh Language Impact Assessments for all new and revised policies.

Terminology

RPL policies and procedures have been developed over time, which has led to the use of a number of terms to describe the process. Amongst the most common are:

- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Experimental Learning (APEL)
- Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
- Accreditation of Prior Learning and Achievement (APLA)

Policy Statement

The College will undertake Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where appropriate. Competencies already held by individuals may be formally assessed against units of competency within a course. Appendix 1 outlines the RPL process.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment [leading to the award of credit] that considers whether the learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so do not need to develop through a course of learning.

Regulatory arrangements for the Qualification and Credit Framework (Ofqual/08/3726)

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment and methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be:

- Authentic
- Valid
- Current
- Reliable
- Sufficient

However, where learning is evidenced only through an examination, the learner is required to sit this examination, e.g. General Qualifications such as GCSE's or GCE are not within the scope of this policy. RPL cannot be used for external assessment or set examinations.

RPL is also of value to learners transferring across various learning programmes that have relevant learning but do not hold relevant credits or certificates. This may include learners transferring from NQF to QCF specifications.

The College will adhere to the following principles:

Principles of RPL

Principle 1

RPL is a valid method of enabling individuals to claim credit for units, irrespective of how their learning took place. There is no difference between the achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit through prior learning or through a formal programme of study.

Principle 2

RPL Policies, processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible to individuals and stakeholders to ensure that users can be confident of the decisions and outcomes of RPL.

Principle 3

RPL is a learner centred, voluntary process. The individual should be offered advice on the nature and range of evidence considered appropriate, to support a claim for credit through RPL, and be given guidance and support to make a claim.

Principle 4

The process of assessment for RPL is subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring standards as any other form of assessment. The award of credit through RPL will not be distinguished from any other credits awarded.

Principle 5

Assessment methods for RPL must be of equal rigour to other assessment methods, be fit for purpose and relate to the evidence of learning. Credit may also be claimed for any unit through RPL unless the assessment requirements of the unit do not allow this, based on a rationale consistent with the aims and regulations of the framework.

Records of assessment against prior learning must be made available for external verification if requested.

Guidance

Opportunities will be given to learners to discuss RPL during interview, initial assessment and induction. An application form (see Appendix 2) must be submitted to the Head of School where the claim for the award sits. Guidance and support will be given by an Assessor/Tutor who has sound knowledge of the awarding body requirements including course/units.

RPL can be used where a learner has not had their prior learning formally recognised. If a learner has certified learning, then they should apply for exemption from some of the achievement requirements of a qualification, using evidence of certified achievement deemed to be of equivalent value.

Learners will document their claim for competency in sufficient detail to enable the Assessor to decide on the assessment needed (i.e. the best means to prove their claim).

Assessors/Tutors are required to be fair and reasonable during assessment; to understand the relevant industry standards; to understand assessment methods and procedures appropriate to RPL and to make sound assessment decisions based on explicit evidence of competency.

RPL focuses on assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- a unit accumulated towards a full qualification
- unit or units recognised by an Awarding Organisation for Certificate of Achievement
- a full Awarding Organisation qualification.

Most often RPL will be used for units; however, it is acceptable to claim for an entire qualification through RPL (although this is not the norm because it would be unusual for a learner to be able to offer prior achievement that completely matches every aspect of a qualification's assessment

requirements). Please refer to Awarding Body guidance/policies in this instance.

Where units are assessed against assessment criteria or grading criteria, then all evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated criteria. In assessing a unit using RPL the assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcome and its related assessment criteria. Centres must have personnel with appropriate expertise and knowledge to facilitate this.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. It will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, and competence. Note also that the assessment strategy for each qualification must be adhered to.

If the Assessor/Tutor has any reservations regarding the evidence provided or the learner's ability to demonstrate competence, the College reserves the right to request that the learner undertakes a test/activity in order that RPL can be granted.

Note: CACHE specifically specify that all prior learning that is submitted as evidence by a learner must be complemented by a professional discussion to make sure the learner's knowledge or the application of this knowledge meets the requirements of the assessment criteria.

The learner will receive post-assessment guidance. The Assessor/Tutor will provide clear and constructive feedback and will review the results with the learner. Unsuccessful learners will be informed about appeals provisions.

If assessment successfully demonstrates competency, the Assessor/Tutor will forward the results to the examination office/awarding body to recommend appropriate certification or exemption from the unit.

Note: The Assessor/Tutor records the evidence considered, assessment outcomes and the competencies confirmed, plus sufficient summary evidence for third parties in case of appeal. Any appeal will be determined by the Assistant Principal (T&L) in discussion with the Head of School and Assessor/Tutor (see Appendix 3).

The RPL process is **not** concerned with allowing for exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study.

The RPL process does **not** allow the recognition of any unit assessed by external assessment only because such units are subject to specific evidence requirements

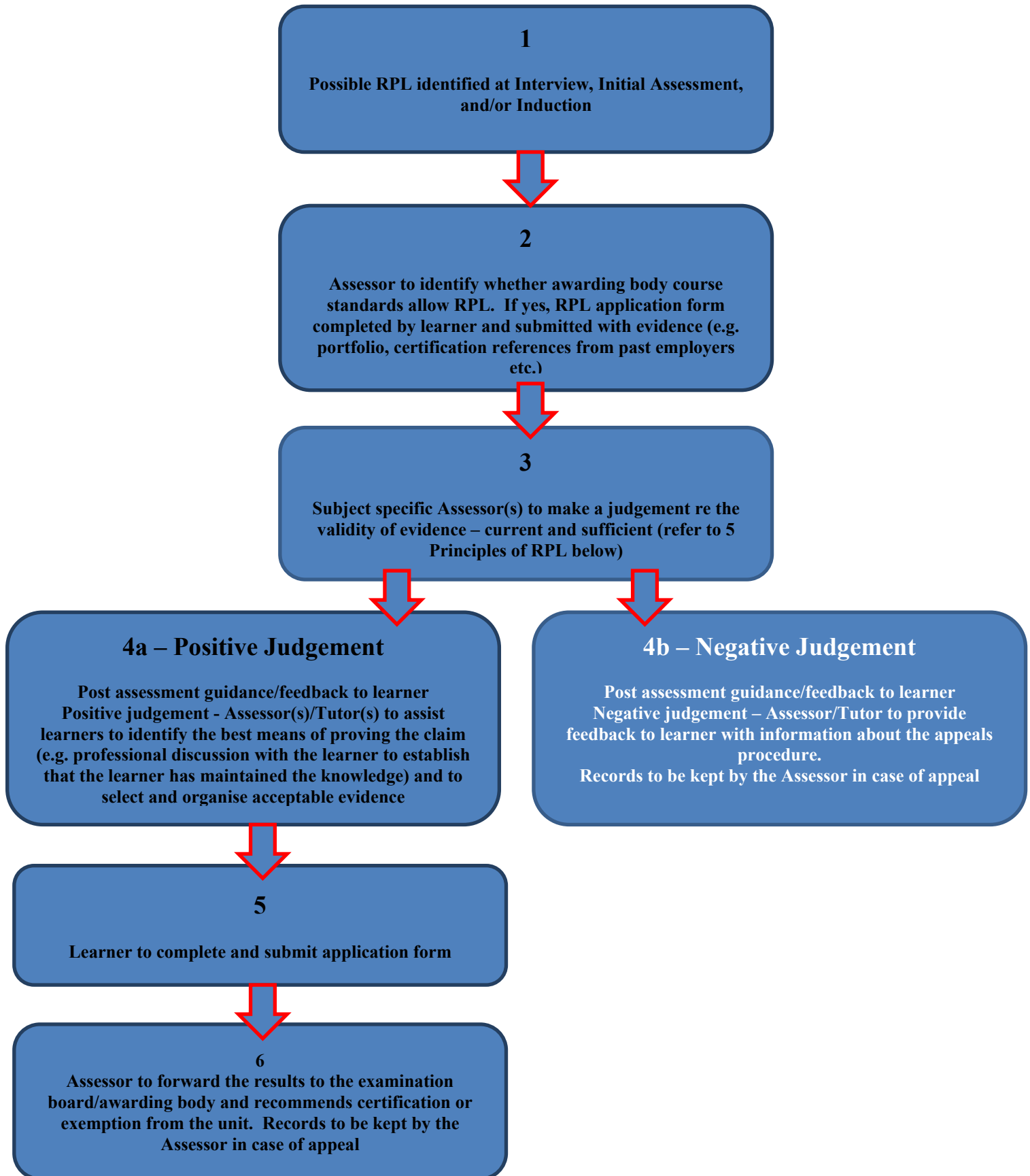
The College will ensure that:

- Learners are registered as soon as they formally start to gather evidence
- Records of assessment are maintained, as for any other unit/qualification
- Certification and claims are made according to normal procedures
- All relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed
- There are designated personnel with the appropriate expertise to support and assure the RPL process.

Claiming credit. Guidance on the recognition of prior learning within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (version 2) QCA 2010.

(http://www.viauc.dk/projekter/NVR/Documents/Viden%20om%20realkompetencer/claiming_credit_qcda104726.pdf)

Appendix 1 - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Process



Appendix 2 - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Application Form

RPL Application Form

(If you require assistance to complete the form, please contact the Course Assessor)

Learner information

Surname:

First name:

Learner ID:

Date of birth:

Address:

Phone: (work)

Phone: (home)

Phone: (mobile)

Course code:

Course name and level of learning:

Please state which unit criteria/module you are applying for RPL:

Evidence attached (please list):

I hereby certify that the information provided and the documentation attached are true and correct

COLEG Y CYMOEDD POLICY DOCUMENT

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Office use only

Head of School/Faculty Assessor/Tutor contact names: _____

Ext: _____

Date received from learner: _____

Decision: _____

Date returned by assessor: _____

Feedback given to learner: _____

Appeals procedure discussed Yes/No/Not Applicable (delete as appropriate)

Comments: _____

Signed: _____ (Assessor/Tutor)

Date: _____

Appendix 3 - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Appeals Procedure

