



ILM Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

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Document Change History

Changes to specific sections of the document are listed below:

Scope

Page No	Change
5	Provides definition(s) of RPL

Section 1 – ILM Policy – Centre Requirements

Page No	Change
6	Sets out ILM requirements for Centres to have an RPL Policy in place

Section 2 – ILM Guidance to Centres and Providers when developing an RPL Policy

Page No	Change
7	Provides guidance and suggestions to centres on the content of an RPL Policy

Scope

ILM is the UK's leading provider of leadership, management and coaching qualifications, and a City & Guilds Group Business. ILM offers a specialist suite of qualifications ranging from Level 2 to Level 7, which are awarded by The City and Guilds of London Institute. ILM also specialises in assessment, learning content, and the accreditation of high quality training in the fields of leadership, management and coaching.

This policy applies to prospective and existing ILM Centres offering ILM qualifications. It provides a definition of RPL and information which will be useful for centres and their learners.

This ILM policy is provided for two purposes – to set out the requirements for centres to have an RPL Policy in place and to provide some guidance on how you might develop and structure your own policy statement.

RPL is the preferred term which ILM have chosen to use; some centres may refer to this as APEL.

This policy supersedes and replaces the ILM Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and toolkit October 2012.

Definitions

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process which makes use of evidence of a learner's previous achievements, knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess to demonstrate competence or achievement against a unit or qualification. Through the RPL process, evidence of a learner's previous achievement (learning) is assessed against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit.

The definition of RPL is quite specific and relates to assessment of experience, knowledge, understanding or skills leading to the award of credit. Assessment for RPL is conducted against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit and is subject to exactly the same internal and external quality assurance requirements as any other kind of assessment.

Section 1 - Requirement for Centres to have an RPL Policy

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment [which leads to the award of a qualification or unit] that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a qualification or unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and rather than through a course of learning. RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities. 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. Partial unit completion is not acceptable. Evidence of learning must be:

Valid - Does the evidence genuinely demonstrate that the demands of the learning outcome(s) and assessment criteria have been met?

Authentic - Is the evidence being examined is genuinely the work of the learner.

Reliable - The evidence obtained through RPL should be such that an assessor would arrive at the same assessment decision, were the assessment to be repeated.

Sufficient - There must be enough evidence to fully meet the requirements of the learning outcome, or learning outcomes being considered. If there is insufficient evidence to fully meet requirements, then evidence obtained through RPL must be complemented by additional evidence gained through other suitable assessment method(s) before requirements/outcomes can be said to have been met.

ILM encourages the use of RPL where it is of value to centres and learners.

All centres are required to have their own policy and process for RPL and to ensure that all staff within the centre are familiar with the content.

Underlying principles of RPL

The centre is responsible for RPL assessment and claiming credit. There is no difference between achievement of the required standards by RPL and achievement through a formal programme of study.

Where appropriate RPL can be used to claim credit for a learners achievements. This process can give them either a part or full qualification irrespective of how their skills and knowledge were learnt. Content as well as assessment can be used as RPL. This recognises that learning occurs in many different contexts as well as from formal learning or training or from the work place. Assessment of the learning must be valid and reliable to ensure the integrity of the award of unit(s) and the evidence gathered needs to meet the requirements of the unit, or part of unit, that the evidence is being used for.

A learner can RPL Evolve test results but they must have undertaken the Evolve assessment in the first instance.

Section 2 – Guidance for ILM Centres and Providers in developing an RPL Policy and Process

Process

Centre policy should detail the RPL process and should state that its purpose is to enable the learner(s) to record and assess their knowledge, understanding and skills acquired from their work experiences and training against the requirements of a qualification.

Centre policy should state that learner(s) can do this using a range of evidence including, for example a CPD log, a portfolio of evidence put together by the learner showing the prior learning undertaken or evidence of their learning for example, having completed an assessment (non-ILM). The policy should state that the requirements are that the evidence can be 100% mapped to the ILM assessment criteria. This piece of assessment would have been assessed and internally quality assured.

Key roles in the RPL Process

Centres wishing to use this process with their learners must ensure that it is carried out by staff with the relevant expertise to meet the requirements of the delivery and assessment for the qualification they are working with. The policy should state the requirement's for staff involved in the RPL process:

- Occupationally competent assessors will assess if the evidence fully meets the assessment requirements of the unit within the qualification, record the assessment process and then record their judgement
- An occupationally competent IQA must carry out a final internal quality assurance check in order to ensure validity and consistency in the assessment judgements and record their findings.

The RPL Process

The centre policy should outline the steps to be taken when using RPL. These may include the following:

- Induction of learner(s) into the requirements of Recognition of Prior Learning
- Pre-assessment – advice, support and mentoring for gathering of evidence
- Assessment of evidence against unit standard by a competent assessor
- Feedback to the Learner following the assessment process
- IQA of the assessment process
- Claim of Credit from ILM.

Further guidance can be obtained from your regional Quality and Compliance Manager (QCM).

Outcome

If individuals can produce relevant evidence, that meets the requirements of the qualification then, recognition can be given for their existing knowledge, understanding or skills.

If an individual can meet all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria in a unit, then they can claim credit for that unit solely on the basis of their RPL achievement.

If however, evidence from RPL is only sufficient to cover one or more learning outcomes, or to partly meet the need of a learning outcome then additional work must be undertaken by the learner. All assessment criteria must be met in order for an assessment decision to be reached.

Continuous Improvement

The ILM Quality and Regulatory Group monitor this policy and any associated feedback and ensure that the ILM Standard is maintained to ensure our qualifications and programmes are accessible to all whilst maintaining quality in implementation. This policy shall be the subject of a three year review cycle or as necessary.

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We believe that great leaders can come from anywhere. With the right support, anyone can grow and develop to make a real difference to their team and organisation. Which is why we help individuals from all levels to realise and apply their potential, so that the organisations they work for can reap the benefits.

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