

# Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process (Examinations)

## Clarity Independent School

Bridge Barn Farm  
Woodhill Road  
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CM2 7SG

### ***Clarity Independent School is committed to safeguarding...***

*"Our school is committed to our whole-school approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do, and underpins all systems, processes and policies...We promote an environment where children and young people feel empowered to raise concerns and report incidents and we work hard in partnership with pupils, parents and caregivers to keep children safe."*

Clarity Safeguarding Policy September 2024

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## **Purpose of this policy**

Clarity Independent school aims to provide opportunities for learners to submit evidence using recognised prior learning (RPL) that can be mapped against learning outcomes and assessment criteria, to contribute to a recognised qualification. The policy aims to ensure that learners are able to apply for RPL against any recognised qualification, for which they are currently enrolled, to recognise learning based on experience and/or other previous formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts. This will include knowledge and skills gained within school, in previous setting prior to enrolment at Clarity and other formal learning situations such as through life and work experiences.

## **Related Policies and Guidelines**

This policy is linked to our:

- Examinations Management Policy
- Examination Internal Appeals Policy
- Examination Contingency Plan
- Examinations Complaints and Appeals Procedure Policy
- Examinations Word Processing Policy
- Assessment Procedures Policy
- Non-examination Written Controlled Assessment Policy
- Student Recruitment, Identification, Registration and Certification Policy
- Equality Policy
- Conflict of Interests Policy
- Staff Handbook
- Whistleblowing Policy



## Introduction: What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

The Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) provides the following definition of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is *'a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills that they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning'*.

In the context of the QCF, the definition of RPL is quite specific and relates to assessment leading to the award of credit. Assessment for RPL is conducted against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit/module and is subject to exactly the same internal and external quality assurance requirements as any other kind of assessment.

RPL is about using a learner's evidence of earlier learning and achievement towards part of a qualification. An assessor reviews whether the evidence is enough to show that a learner has met the assessment requirements for a current qualification. The learner needs to show that through knowledge, understanding or skills they already have, they do not need to repeat the course or complete extra assessment activity.

If there is evidence that the learner has previously shown the knowledge, skills or understanding required by a qualification, this may be used towards achieving that qualification. The evidence must be valid, current, reliable, authentic, sufficient.

RPL is not normally used to provide evidence against achievement for an entire qualification. This would be called an exemption and is usually used where a learner must gain a specified qualification for a particular purpose (for example, as an entry requirement for further study, employment, or registration). If learners think that they are entitled to an exemption, the examinations officer will refer to the organisation which has specified the original qualification requirement to verify if a particular qualification is specified as an entry requirement to the qualification being entered for, and to verify any appropriate exemptions in the qualification specifications.

Applications for RPL will be carried out by the Examinations Officer in collaboration with the Lead Internal Verifier and Assessor.



## Principles to Implement and Develop Policy

- 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.
- RPL 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.
- RPL is a learner-centred, voluntary (for the learner) 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.
- 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.
- 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 be claimed for and transferred from 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.
- 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. The evidence must be authentic, current, relevant and sufficient.
- The prior learning 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 for competence.
- The assessment and award of credit must take into account the relevant validating or awarding body regulations pertaining to RPL.
- A student should have the right to appeal when an application for credit is unsuccessful.

## Student Entitlements

- All students shall be entitled to apply for RPL providing they meet the specific requirements of the validating /awarding body governing the qualification for which they are studying.
- A student who makes an initial enquiry about RPL should be given timely and appropriate guidance and support on the rules, regulations and processes involved in accreditation.
- A student may appeal against the credit points awarded but only on the grounds of non-observance of agreed procedures and/or improper application of those procedures.

## RPL Procedures

Any RPL must first satisfy the awarding organisations' requirements. This must be quality assured by the appropriate Curriculum Leader and the Examinations Officer. Post approval, the following procedures shall apply:

1. An application is made in writing by the learner indicating their intention to apply for RPL for a specific unit of their current course/framework to the course tutor.
2. The Course Tutor undertakes a recorded personal tutorial with the applicant to confirm the unit, learning outcome and assessment criteria against which evidence submitted is to be assessed. Confirmation and accuracy will be undertaken by the Examinations Officer and the Lead Internal Verifier. Clear direction will also be given as to the types of evidence that may be utilised and the timeframe for submission.
3. The Course Tutor will assess the evidence within three weeks of submission clearly mapping to the specified assessment criteria and ensuring that evidence is valid, sufficient and current in relation to expected qualification competence. The evidence should be consistent with non-RPL evidence submitted as part of a learning programme/framework.
4. The nominated Internal Verifier (IV) will view the assessed evidence to confirm that accurate mapping against the identified criteria has been undertaken by the assessor. The IV will then provide feedback to confirm achievement or indicate clearly any further evidence required.
5. Further to the IV confirming that evidence is sufficient, the course tutor follows normal school procedure by submitting the result to the School Assessment Co-ordinator and Examinations Officer.



6. If the student, parent or course tutor wishes to appeal an unsuccessful application for credit, they will be supported by their Key worker/Course tutor/ SENDCo to follow the school's Examination Internal Appeals Policy procedures.

## **Staff Responsibilities**

All staff have a responsibility to give full and active support for the policy by ensuring: The policy is known, understood and implemented.

## **Management Responsibilities**

School Senior Leadership should ensure that:

- All staff are fully conversant with this policy and the demands it places on them.
- All appropriate staff are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities in the procedures for verification and recognition of prior learning.
- Staff development is made available to those staff not conversant with or competent to undertake the procedures for RPL.
- Senior Leadership Team will monitor the operation of the policy to ensure it reflects current strategic aims.

## **Equality**

All our staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

We will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that we provide to candidates in accordance with the requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of head of centre, exams officer and the SENDCO.

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any student and it helps to promote equality at this school.



This policy will be reviewed annually in accordance with JCQ regulations. Overall responsibility for The Clarity Independent School Exam Centre rests with the Headteacher, Debbie Hanson.



## Appendix 1: Credit Claim Form

(Complete all sections as fully as possible)

If you have been offered a place on a programme of study at Clarity Independent School or are already registered on a programme you may be eligible for credit from previously acquired qualifications, vocational training and/or learning which is uncertified. If you wish to make a claim for recognition of prior learning, please complete this form.

### Personal Details

Name: .....  
Address: .....  
.....  
Post Code: .....  
Telephone: .....

### Credit Claimed

Before you complete this section, you should speak to your Key worker. You should also discuss the possibility of credit awards with your course tutor who will advise you on the completion of this form.

**Programme/Course** on which you are registered, or have been accepted at Clarity Independent School.....

a) Module(s)/Unit(s) for which credit is claimed:

Course/Module/Unit Code ..... Title .....  
Course/Module/Unit Code ..... Title .....  
Course/Module/Unit Code ..... Title .....  
Course/Module/Unit Code ..... Title .....  
Course/Module/Unit Code ..... Title .....

b) Programme learning outcomes/objectives for which credit is claimed if they do not relate to specific individual modules or units of study.

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**Basis For Credit Claim** (Attach separate sheets)

In this section outline the achievements, experience and previously acquired qualifications and certificates you wish to use as the basis for your claim. Refer to the details of the relevant modules or units in the student handbook for the programme or course in question. You should attach photocopies of supporting documents wherever possible, e.g. syllabus outlines, course structures, examination certificates.

On completion, submit this form to your course tutor/assessor or the Examinations Officer for consideration.