Cardiff and Vale University Local Health Board

GIG CYMRU NHS WALES | Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Caerdydd a'r Fro Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY

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Documents to read alongside this Policy	Academic Malpractice In The Delivery Of Credit Based Education Policy Agored Cymru Appeal and Complaints Policy and Procedure Agored Cymru Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure

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OUT OF DATE POLICY DOCUMENTS MUST NOT BE RELIED ON

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Version Number	Date of Review Approved	Date Published	Summary of Amendments
1	20/08/2013	06/09/2013	New Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is the responsibility of the UHB to recognise prior learning, and where appropriate use the evidence of this learning to exempt a learner from repeating assessed work unnecessarily. This enables the learner to transfer evidenced skills and knowledge from one area to another, regardless of employer or assessment centre. It prevents time being wasted in repeating the same training, education or learning, thus benefitting both the UHB and the member of staff concerned.

As a centre delivering credit based units the UHB is required to have Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy, approved by Awarding Body as part of the UHB's recognition process. This Policy ensures that appropriate measures are taken when prior learning is being accepted as evidence (in part or in full) for the awarding of academic credit. The UHB have the responsibility to train staff in conducting fair and robust RPL, to verify that the work being assessed is that of the learner, to monitor through robust Internal Verification that RPL assessment is being conducted appropriately and to support the role of the External Verifier as the representative of the Awarding Body securing the validity of the award of units or qualifications.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The UHB is a recognised education centre. In partnership with Awarding Bodies the UHB is committed to providing a fair, consistent and accurate approach to RPL, the assessment and award of qualifications and credit awards. In order to ensure this is achieved the UHB requires that our staff are fully aware of their duties and responsibilities, demonstrate honesty and integrity in the award of units and qualifications and understand the nature and implications of RPL. Staff responsible for quality assurance need to be fully aware of the RPL policy, and related policies and procedures.

The profile of RPL has been significantly raised in recent years as a means of engaging with those who have returned to learning or who intend to do so. The UHB actively works towards avoiding duplication of learning by providing opportunities to transfer and accumulate credits towards a qualification. The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) requires that awarding organisations are consistent in their positive approach to RPL, particularly with assessment guidelines and QA systems. As a service provider and educational establishment, the UHB recognises that RPL is a key issue, which enables workforce and organisation development to move forwards.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a *method of assessment, (*leading to the award of credit)

> "*that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so not need to develop through a course of learning.*"

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

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment 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, rarely, a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be Valid and Reliable.

3. AIMS

This Policy aims:

To outline the RPL process to ensure that all previously achieved knowledge and skills are recognised appropriately to avoid repetition of work.

To ensure the integrity and validity of all academic and competence based assessments within the UHB.

4. OBJECTIVES

To maintain academic standards in the organisation

To ensure that all staff involved in the delivery and assessment of credit based learning and competency understand their roles and responsibilities

To ensure that all candidates understand their personal responsibilities in undertaking credit based and competency based courses

To ensure that all candidates and staff involved in the delivery and assessment of credit based learning and competency understand the process of taking previous evidence of learning into account as evidence of achievement.

5. SCOPE

This Policy covers all UHB employees, candidates, assessors, and verifiers involved in the delivery of Awarding Body accredited courses delivered within the UHB. This Policy reflects the Awarding Body Recognition of Prior Learning Guidance. Additional information and advice which can be found online. The UHB encourages the use of RPL where it is of value to learners in facilitating assessment.

RPL is:

- A valid method of enabling individuals to claim credit for units, irrespective of how their learning took place.

- It means 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.

- Transparent, rigorous, reliable, accessible

- 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.

- Subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring standards as any other form of assessment.

  Credit awarded 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 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 CQFW framework. RPL is also of value to learners transferring across various learning programmes who have relevant learning but do not hold relevant credits or certificates, and therefore can be used where a learner has not had their prior learning formally recognised.

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

    - a unit accumulated towards a full QCF qualification

    - unit or units recognised by a Certificate of Achievement

6. PROCESS

6.1 The following conditions apply :

  i. Learners must be registered with a recognised awarding body, as soon as they formally start to gather evidence

  ii. Records of assessment are maintained, as for any other unit/qualification including Internal Verification.

  iii. Certification and claims are made according to normal procedures i.e supported with witness statements and other evidence

    iv. All relevant evidence is assessed and candidate informed before assessment decisions finalised

6.2 To achieve a unit of credit using RPL, two options are open to the learner:-

    i. undertaking the same assessments as those followed in the formal course of learning and assessment that leads to the desired unit or qualification. These assessments may be undertaken without attending taught sessions. If the latter is the case, either an authenticity statement, signed and dated by the learner and signed by a witness (usually the tutor) must be obtained or the tutor may observe the learner undertaking the assessment.

    ii. submitting a portfolio of evidence based on previous learning, skills and/or competence cross-referenced to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the unit or units for which RPL is being sought, together with an authenticity statement, signed and dated by the learner and signed by a witness (usually the tutor).

6.3 In some circumstances there may be a limit to the proportion of a qualification that can be achieved by either credit transfer [1] or RPL. Within Access to Higher Education Diplomas, not more than 50% (i.e. 30 credits) may be achieved by either or both of these processes. Full details of the requirements to limit the proportion are identified in the rules of combination for any qualifications offered by Agored Cymru. (Agored Cymru 2011).

Where units are assessed against assessment criteria or grading criteria, 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.

Whist RPL is usually used for units; it is acceptable to claim for an entire qualification through RPL although this is not the norm. 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.

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[1] Transfer of like-for-like accredited achievement from within or outside the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) to count towards another qualification: 'the process of using a credit or credits awarded in the context of one qualification towards the achievement requirements of another qualification', *Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework*, 2008.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary, depending on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If there is an element of doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, and/or insist on practical sessions to ascertain competence. The assessment strategy for each qualification must be adhered to, therefore, if the assessment requires 'competence in practice' witness statement will be required.

7   REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Claiming credit. Guidance on the recognition of prior learning within the Qualifications and Credit Framework, QCA 2008.

http://www.agored.org.uk/getfile.aspx?fileid=372

Davies P (2011) *Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure. Agored Cymru pg 3 16/6/2011 accessed 30/8/2012*

Implementation of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) within the Training Provider Network, Welsh Assembly Government, 2010, pp. 17-18.

www.accesstohe.ac.uk