



SOUTH MOLTON
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
— supporting success —

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Prepared September 2017

Adopted by the Governing Body: Nov 2017

Review: Nov 2019

Rationale

This policy provides our guidance on Recognition of Prior Learning. Whilst we recognise that not all qualifications allow the use of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Where the use of RPL is permitted, we will endeavour to ensure that appropriate standards are maintained and are fully compliant with the guidance of the appropriate Awarding Body.

Policy statement

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

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met.

Evidence of Prior Learning

- Must be Valid, Reliable and Robust, it must be fully compliant with the guidance of the appropriate Awarding Body.
- RPL in our school is only usually considered when a child joins a course, having transferred to us from another centre, where they have studied the same or similar course.
- RPL can be used where a learner has not had their prior learning formally recognised.
- RPL focuses on assessment of prior learning which may count as evidence towards, a unit accumulated towards a full qualification.
- RPL must follow the principles outlined above and we will keep appropriate records.

All evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. 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. We will ensure that our teachers/assessors have appropriate expertise and knowledge to facilitate this and make decisions about RPL. Evidence used for RPL will be subject to standards verification as normal.

Most often RPL will be used for units of work within a qualification and it extremely unlikely for a learner to be able to offer prior achievement that completely matches every aspect of a qualification's assessment requirements.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will undoubtedly vary if the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions or further assessment to check understanding, and ask for the demonstration of skills to check competence. Again the assessment strategy for each qualification as laid down by the Awarding Body will be adhered to.

Where evidence is assessed to be only sufficient to cover one or more learning outcomes, or to partly meet the need of a learning outcome, then additional assessment methods should be used to generate sufficient evidence to be able to award the learning outcome(s) for the whole unit.

We will ensure that:

- Identification of any achievement through RPL is prior to learners taking a qualification
- Records of assessment against prior learning are maintained
- Certification 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.
- Ahead of enrolling a potential learner, the possibility that they may be able to claim unit(s) for some of their previous learning will be raised with them.
- Assessment is valid and reliable to ensure the integrity of the award of unit(s) and, as above, the evidence gathered needs to meet the standards of the unit, or part of unit, that the evidence is being used for.
- If the collated evidence of RPL for a learner is judged not to be sufficient to meet all the requirements of the relevant unit(s), then the learner will have to complete the normal assessment for those unit(s) if they wish to be awarded the qualification.
- The assessment process will be subject to the usual quality assurance procedures of the centre, for example internal standardisation and internal verification.
- Evidence gathered through RPL will be clearly referenced and sign posted to aid internal assessment and internal and external verification. RPL processes and evidence used will be subject to the normal standards verification process.
- Assessment and internal verification records, along with any additional RPL records completed, will be retained for a three year period following certification.
- The assessor will ensure that all learning outcomes and assessment criteria being claimed for each unit are achieved and that the records of assessment are maintained in the usual way.