

# Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

## 1. General

- 1.1 This policy is for our Approved Training Centres (ATC) that are planning to use Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as evidence towards the achievement of qualifications provided by Swim England Qualifications.
- 1.2 It is not a requirement for an Awarding Organisation to recognise RPL, however we do.
- 1.3 It is not mandatory for you to offer RPL opportunities, however we do encourage you to as the following are just some of the benefits of RPL:
  - Reduction of the duplication of learning
  - Increased Learner engagement
  - Recognition of skills / knowledge gained without previous formal recognition
  - Enables gaps in skills and knowledge to be filled
  - Allows for more tailored and individualised learning programmes

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy sets out how and when RPL can be used as a method of assessment for our qualifications.
- 2.2 This policy sets out the requirements for ATCs to have an RPL Policy in place (if they offer RPL) and to provide guidance on how the RPL process can be managed.

## 3. Definition

- 3.1 The recognition of a Learner's previous achievements and / or experience is known as RPL. RPL is a general term and is a process of recognising previous learning, experience or achievement so that a Learner does not have to repeat learning or assessment.
- 3.2 RPL is an assessment so must be of equal rigour as with any other assessment and as such is also subject to your internal quality assurance and our monitoring activities.

## 4. RPL Accepted

- 4.1 You can apply RPL to our internally assessed qualifications.
- 4.2 The use of RPL is optional. But, if you choose to apply it, you need to have an internal policy on RPL and the proper resources to do so.
- 4.3 Applications for RPL must be carried out by staff who are competent to consider and make decisions about RPL.
- 4.4 You cannot use RPL for externally assessed or exams based qualifications.
- 4.5 Further guidance on delivering and assessing can also be found in the Swim England Qualifications Guidance for Delivering and Assessing Qualifications.
- 4.6 There is no difference between achievement of the required standards by RPL and achievement through a formal course / programme.

## 5. Types of RPL

We accept the following types of RPL:

### Assessment Transfer

- 5.1 When developing a qualification we may identify Assessment Criteria that will have already been met either in part or in full via the achievement of our other qualifications. This is defined by us and is either provided as a pre-set mapping document or stated within the Qualification Specification.

### Exemption

- 5.2 Applies to any formal achievement which is deemed to be of equivalent value but which does not necessarily share the exact Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria.
- 5.3 It is your responsibility to map this previous achievement against the assessment requirements of the qualification in order to determine its equivalence. Any queries about the relevance of any certificated evidence, should be referred in the first instance to your Internal Quality Assurer / Internal Verifier (IV).
- 5.4 It is important to note that a Learner's ability to claim exemption will be dependent upon the currency and existing levels of skill or knowledge. Where past certification only provides evidence that could be considered for part exemption of a qualification, Learners must be able to offer additional evidence of previous or recent learning or achievement or undertake the required assessments.

### Non-certification

- 5.5 Any previous non-certificated learning or experience which may exempt a Learner from a further course of learning.
- 5.6 Evidence must be presented and mapped against the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria for the qualification.
- 5.7 When making decisions using this evidence, you must be satisfied that the evidence produced will allow the Learner to meet the requirements of the qualification and the Assessment Tasks must still be completed.
- 5.8 The Assessor may look at:
  - Work experience records, validated by managers
  - Past portfolios of evidence or essays by the Learner
  - Reports validated as being the Learner's own unaided work
  - Expert witness testimonies
  - Professional discussions
  - Existing assessment tasks that have been used to fill any gaps in the Learner's work. Please note: any new assessment tasks that an ATC wishes to use as part of their RPL process must be approved by us prior to use.
- 5.9 It is important to note that a Learner's ability to claim Non-certification RPL will be dependent upon the currency and a Learner's existing levels of skill or knowledge.

## 6. Key Areas of an ATC RPL Policy

### ATC Preparation

Ensure you have the staff with the expertise to deliver against your RPL policy.

### Awareness

- 6.1 Before registering Learners, discuss with them the option of using RPL for their past learning or experience. If the Learner is interested in this, you should explain to them:
- The process of claiming using RPL
  - The support and guidance that is available
  - How long the process will take, how to appeal and any costs included.
- 6.2 You should check that the evidence provided by the Learner for RPL has been achieved before the start of their course of study.

### Pre-Assessment

- 6.3 Register your Learner as soon as they officially start to gather evidence.
- 6.4 To help the Learner in gathering evidence you could create an assessment plan or tracking document.
- 6.5 The evidence gathered needs to meet the standards that the evidence is being used for.

### Assessing

- 6.6 Ensure the IV is aware that you have applied RPL for a Learner as they may include these in their sample.
- 6.7 A Learner's past achievement that would show evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills varies. It depends on the range of their experience, changes in the subject area and the nature of the outcome claimed. The Assessor may ask questions or ask a Learner to show them skills, to check that their understanding and skills are current.
- 6.8 The assessment strategy and qualification specification for each qualification must be followed.
- 6.9 Assessment as part of RPL is a structured process for gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgements about a Learner's past learning and experience.
- 6.10 Evaluate all the evidence using the learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the qualification. In assessing using RPL the Assessor must be satisfied that the evidence from the Learner meets the standard for all of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- 6.11 If you find gaps in the Learner's work then those gaps will need to be assessed in order to generate sufficient evidence. For these situations, extracts of existing assessment tasks could be considered.

### Documenting Evidence

- 6.12 Evidence collected through the RPL process needs to be assessed and verified through the same quality assurance procedures that your ATC uses for any other internal assessment methods.
- 6.13 Ensure records of assessment against prior learning are kept and are available for verification if requested. See Swim England Qualifications Guide to Delivering and Assessing for further details on retention of records.

## Outcomes

- 6.14 Once you've checked a Learner's evidence and made an assessment decision, it is important that feedback is given to the Learner including the assessment decision and what options are available to the Learner if you have decided not to claim results.
- 6.15 You should check that the Learner understands how they can appeal if they do not agree with the assessment decision.
- 6.16 If we identify that requirements have not been met, we will ask the ATC to provide more evidence, or ask you to ensure that the Learner completes the standard assessment requirements if they want to achieve the qualification.

## Monitoring Activities

- 6.17 ATC monitoring activities and quality assurance are undertaken by us as per our standard procedures.

## Learner Results and Certificates

- 6.18 Once the Learner has completed their assessments, the ATC submits the results to us, as per our standard procedures.
- 6.19 The awarding of the qualification and issuing of certificates are undertaken by us as per our standard procedures.

## 7. Complaints

- 7.1 All our ATCs must have a policy and procedure in place for complaints. Our complaints policy can be found on our website [www.swimenglandqualifications.com](http://www.swimenglandqualifications.com)

## 8. Quality Assurance

- 12.1 This policy supports regulatory conditions; E10 and H5.
- 12.2 This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it continues to meet our needs and the Regulators (Ofqual / Qualification Wales).