

*There is a Welsh version of this document available.*

# Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

## Scope and Purpose of Policy

This policy is underpinned by the Group's vision – Inspirational, Inclusive and Influential and will support our work towards the key drivers of Quality, Efficiency and Growth. The policy will incorporate the following principles:

- Those who access Cardiff and Vale College Group must be **free from discrimination**.
- Learners will be supported to **enable** them to achieve their **potential** whilst in learning, in an environment which removes or minimises disadvantage, takes steps to meet their needs and which encourages participation.
- We will support learners to develop the skills they need to **progress** successfully through their lives.

The College acknowledges that all learners bring an element of relevance to knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs to the learning environment. As an ethical establishment we recognise the importance of considering prior learning and we will not force candidates to go through a course of learning when they already have the knowledge, understanding and competence to meet the assessment criteria. The College will formally recognise this prior learning where this is educationally appropriate. When not formally recognised, prior learning will not be acknowledged. We appreciate that recognition of prior learning is an important tool to supporting those who have returned to learning or who intend to do so.

## Policy Statements

This policy applies to:

- All learners within the College, regardless of mode or location of study.
- All staff.
- All partners and franchise organisations.

## Definition

**The recognition of prior learning (RPL)** is where a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment criteria within a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess without undertaking a course of learning. RPL as an overall process that embraces two subsets:

APEL (experiential where a portfolio etc. is used) and  
APCL (via certification of a unit).

This Policy is in place to ensure learners submit sufficient, reliable and valid evidence for internal and standards verification purposes.

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Last Revision Date:	09/22
Next Revision Date:	09/24

RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification; depending on awarding organisation regulations. Recognition of prior learning does not involve assessing and judging the prior learning or experience, but assessing the candidate's current competence and knowledge.

**APEL** is usually achieved by the learner 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). Evidence might include observation of the candidate's performance in the workplace, an interview with the candidate or other agreed methods.

**APCL** is achieved by prior certificated learning, depending on awarding organisation criteria.

## Fundamental Principles of RPL

Evidence of learning must be:

- valid
- reliable
- authentic
- sufficient

RPL may be claimed against one or more units – this will be set by the relevant Awarding Organisation.

The College will fully inform learners of the opportunities for RPL.

The learner is responsible for making relevant staff aware of their wish to make an RPL application.

The IQA must include RPL on the sampling plan as an assessment method and this will be subject to internal quality assurance.

## Policy Statements

In order to fulfil its responsibilities under this policy, the College will:

- Always follow an awarding organisation's procedure in relation to RPL. Where a HE learner is on a franchise provision with a HEI, the College will follow the university's procedure.
- Make learners aware of the purpose and availability of RPL at interview, as well as the specific timescales; it is expected that all applications will be made within one month of the start of a one-year course, unless stated otherwise by the awarding organisation.
- Offer professional support and guidance from staff with appropriate expertise (RPL advisor) for learners considering using RPL. This will include information related to the specific awarding

organisation. It is the learner's responsibility to put together the portfolio of evidence and any other paperwork associated with their application.

- Train staff in RPL procedures.
- Maintain the integrity of units and qualifications by ensuring all assessment decisions, including RPL, are consistent and meet awarding organisation's standards; this will be the responsibility of the RPL assessor.
- Ensuring that the role of advice and guidance is separate from that of assessor in all RPL claims.
- Give feedback to the learner, discussing outcomes and offering support and guidance on subsequent learning options if necessary.
- Ensure internal and external quality assurers confirm the process of RPL and the proposed award of credit.
- Ensure learners are aware of College and awarding organisation procedure for appeals and complaints.

## Responsibilities

The Governing Body will be responsible for ensuring that:

- The Policy is reviewed on a regular basis (as per the policy terms of review) and appropriate advice is given on content. The Main Board approves the policy.

Senior Management are responsible for:

- Reviewing this Policy and the attached procedures.
- Ensuring sufficient resources are in place to carry out the duties outlined.
- Ensuring staff have sufficient training

The senior Quality team is responsible for:

- Maintaining the currency of this policy and associated procedures.
- Ensuring the allocation of appropriate resources to meet the requirements of the policy and associated procedures.
- Ensuring awarding body and Higher Education Institution procedures are followed at all times.
- Providing appropriate training and development and support for staff to ensure they can follow the policy.
- Ensuring appropriate steps are taken to monitor data linked to this policy and that this data is used to inform and improve practice.

All Teaching and Skills Support Staff are responsible for:

- Acting in line with this Policy and procedure.
- Attending relevant CPD events.
- Making themselves aware of their relevant awarding body procedures or Higher Education Institution.
- Informing learners of the policy and procedures and supporting them to access any help.

Learners are responsible for:

- Providing the evidence required to support RPL.

## Legislation and Guidance

Awarding Organisation Guidance

## Equality and Diversity Statement

In accordance with College procedures, this Policy was written with consideration of the impact of individuals as per the Equality Act.

## Welsh Language Standards

This policy provides opportunities for persons to use either the Welsh or English language. The duties which come from the Standards mean that organisations should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language, together with promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language ie making it easier for people to use in their day-to-day life.

## Health and Safety Implications

None

## Linked Policies

- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints
- Bullying and Harassment
- Admissions
- Teaching and Learning
- Relationship Management
- Fit to Study
- Disclosure

## Linked Procedures

- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection
- Admissions
- Disclosure
- Teaching and Learning
- Bullying and Harassment
- Fit to Study

## Approval, Change and Review

This policy is reviewed every 2 years.

## Location and Access to the Policy

This is available from the website and may be out of date if printed. There is a Welsh version of this document available.

**Date approved:** 13th February 2015

**Approved by:** Main Board

**Review date:** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**Responsible Manager:** Assistant Principal Quality, T&L

**Executive Lead:** Vice Principal Quality & Learner Journey

**Accessible to Students:** : Yes

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