

Examination policies and procedures



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Including exemptions

2025/26

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Centre name	Bankside School
Centre number	24112
Date procedures first created	21/11/2024
Current procedures approved by	Kate Jasper
Current procedures reviewed by	Kate Jasper & Dawn Taylor
Date of next review	30/11/2026

Key staff involved in the procedures

Role	Name
Head of centre	Kate Jasper
Senior leader(s)	Kate Jasper: Headteacher Tracey Hodgkins: Assistant Headteacher
Exams Officer	Dawn Taylor
Other staff (if applicable)	

This policy is reviewed and updated annually.

Scope

This policy applies to qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and other national frameworks and self-regulated qualifications. However, where learning is evidenced only through a national examination, the learner is required to sit the examination (e.g. General Qualifications such as GCSEs or GCE) **are not** within the scope of this policy.

Aims

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment (leading to the award of a qualification) 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 do not need to develop through a course of learning
- To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage or advantage any group of learners or individuals
- Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit. Evidence of learning must be valid and reliable.

Evidence of Learning

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.

Example of evidence that may be submitted include:

- Certificates – copies of previous qualifications
- Qualification Specifications – in order to map the learning outcomes and assessment methods, the assessor must see qualification units and previous assessment methods
- Witness Statements – signed by a reliable person such as a line manager as evidence of practical experience

All evidence of learning must be:

Valid

Addresses the elements and performance criteria. Reflects the skills, knowledge and context in the qualification specification.

Authentic

The evidence being submitted is in its original format, can be verified as genuine and can be confirmed as the work of the learner.

Sufficient

The assessor must see sufficient evidence to cover all aspects of the unit, units or qualification being claimed. The evidence must demonstrate competence over a period of time and that is able to be repeated.

Current

The evidence must demonstrate the learner's current skills and knowledge and must comply with current best practice guidance. For example, witness statements for practical experience must be within the last 5 years.

Reliable

Evidence must be from a reliable source and in a reliable format, on organisation headed paper or certification. All translated documents must be translated by an official translator to ensure authenticity.

Principles to Implement and Develop Policy

- RPL is a valid method of enabling individuals to claim credit/grade 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 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/grades 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/grade 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 framework.
- 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 rules, regulations and procedures governing the recognition of prior learning should be included in the learner handbook given to every learner when joining the programme/course.

Learner Entitlement

- All learners 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 learner 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 learner 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.

Responsibilities

Learner responsibilities

- The learner must complete a credit claim form (see below), and provide evidence to show that the requirements of the unit, module or part of a unit have been covered

- The learner must consult with the agreed subject specialist in the preparation of his/her evidence
- Learners applying for credit must agree an action plan to enable him/her to obtain the award they are aiming for
- Learners must agree to attend any further oral assessments or appropriate assessments if initial evidence is deemed to be unsatisfactory for the RPL assessor.

Teaching staff responsibilities

- To provide support and encouragement to all learners wishing to claim credit for prior learning.
- Following initial enquiries by any learner the member of staff should place the learner in contact with the subject specialist
- The subject specialist should develop, with the learner, an action plan to address the learning outcomes of the programme
- The subject specialist should identify the evidence needed to support the claim for credit and explain how this evidence will be assessed and by whom.
- Ensure that the learner claiming credit is enrolled for a specific award/qualification.

Changes 2025/2026

No changes applicable.

Centre-specific changes

Not applicable.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

CREDIT CLAIM FORM

FOR CENTRE USE ONLY	
Date received	
Reference No.	

If already registered on a programme, a learner may be eligible for credit from previously acquired qualifications, vocational training and/or learning which is uncertified. If a learner wishes to make a claim for recognition of prior learning, the learner or parent/guardian must complete this form at the early stages of their enrolment.

Please tick below which statement is applicable:

- I am completing this form for myself (the learner)
 I am the parent/guardian completing the form on their behalf

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Learner First name		Learner Surname	
School / College	Bankside	Programme / Course	
Relevant Qualification			
Module(s) / Unit(s) for which credit is claimed:			
Unit Code		Unit Title	
Unit Code		Unit Title	
Unit Code		Unit Title	
Unit Code		Unit Title	
Programme learning outcomes where outcomes do not relate to specific units:			
Today's date:			

This form must be signed, dated and returned to the exams officer on behalf of the head of centre