



University of  
**Portsmouth**

# **Recognition of Prior Learning - Guidance for Staff**

## **Introduction**

This guidance document is to assist staff with recognition for prior learning (RPL). It should be read alongside the Policy for Recognition for Prior Learning but this document should provide further guidance.

### **When should an applicant claim for RPL?**

Claims for RPL will be one of two types:

1. To allow for direct entry to a course at a level other than the first

If an applicant wants to enter on a level of the course other than the first, claims for prior learning must be submitted before the first day of teaching in the academic year for which they wish to claim RPL.

2. To allow for claiming specific credits, but not all credits, on a level of a course

If an applicant wants wish to claim just for credits on a level of the course, claims for prior learning must be submitted within 20 working days of the first day of teaching in the academic year.

### **How does an applicant claim RPL?**

An applicant will normally need to submit one of the two standard forms :

- Application Form for Certificated Learning only  
<http://www.port.ac.uk/accesstoinformation/policies/accreditationofpriorlearning/filetodownload,196201,en.docx>
- Application Form for Certified and Experiential Learning  
<http://www.port.ac.uk/accesstoinformation/policies/accreditationofpriorlearning/filetodownload,196202,en.docx>

## **The different roles in making an RPL decision**

Appendix B gives a process flowchart of the RPL process. There are two stages to the RPL process involving contact with two different roles. Once UAC have ascertained that the form has been completed correctly, they will forward it to the RPL Advisor with a decision as to whether the RPL decision can be made by just the RPL Advisor or whether it needs to be sent to the RPL Assessor as well

### **1 The RPL Adviser**

The role of the RPL Advisor is to make the initial decision on each claim

The RPL Advisor will carry out an initial assessment of the claim within 5 working days of receipt of the complete and accurate claim.

The RPL Advisor can make one of three decisions:

1. Accept the claim
2. Ask for more information
3. Reject the claim

The RPL Advisor will carry out an initial assessment of the claim as to whether the information provided is sufficient to go forward as a claim for RPL.

Where the application matches the details of qualifications held on the RPL database, then the RPL Advisor can agree the claim and it does not need to be countersigned.

Other accepted claims will be forwarded with the relevant evidence to the RPL assessor.

If the RPL Advisor is not satisfied that there is sufficient evidence they can either reject the claim or seek more evidence.

Regardless of the decision, the RPL Advisor shall inform UAC of the outcome of the initial assessment together with the reasons why. UAC will then inform the student. In the case of applications rejected in part or in full, the student shall be informed of the appeals procedure.

## **2 The RPL Assessor**

The RPL Assessor will review the evidence provided in order to make the decision on the level of RPL and any credit to be awarded.

The RPL Assessor will either be a designated person or the Chair of an internal departmental meeting that is convened to look at RPL applications.

The RPL Assessor makes a decision as to whether the claim is valid, whether the evidence has been provided and if accepted, the volume of credit that will be assigned to the applicant.

When considering the recognition of learning, the evidence must be linked to the learning outcomes expected, be at an appropriate level and of an appropriate volume. The University will look at:

- a) the relevance of the evidence presented – whether it is an appropriate match between the evidence presented and the learning claimed; and
- b) the authenticity of the evidence presented – whether there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate the achievement of the learning claimed; and
- c) the authenticity of the evidence presented – whether the evidence relates to the applicant's own efforts and achievements; and
- d) the currency of the evidence presented – whether the evidence relates to current learning.

The standard claim form provides a formal record of the decision made and will be used in the originating department to:

- Update student records.
- Form part of the relevant range of evidence (e.g portfolio, transcript) which is retained for a sufficient time to allow scrutiny by external examiner(s).

- Offer evidence of good practice on a sample basis to external auditors and/or assessors.

If the RPL Assessor is not satisfied that there is sufficient evidence, they can either reject the claim or seek more evidence.

Regardless of the decision, the RPL Assessor shall inform UAC of the outcome of the assessment together with the reasons why. UAC will then inform the student. In the case of applications rejected in part or in full, the student shall be informed of the appeals procedure.

## Appendix B Recognition of Prior Learning – Process flowchart

