

Recognition of Prior and/or Experiential Learning (RP(E)L) Procedure

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1 Introduction and Principles

1.1 The procedure for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RP(E)L) sets out the principles applied for awarding exemptions towards credit-based aspects of Wrexham University programmes on the basis of prior experiential or certificated learning.

1.2 The RP(E)L process is a means of building on the existing strengths of individuals and encouraging a sense of life-long learning. Within a credit-based system, RP(E)L provides greater flexibility in admitting students to award-bearing courses and links prior learning experiences to current programmes of study to enhance the student experience. As such, the RP(E)L procedure supports the University's aim of promoting and supporting the personal development, knowledge, skills and employability of its students.

1.3 It enables the University to ensure that the principles of recognised prior learning are applied consistently across the institution. Wrexham University is responsible for the academic standards of all programmes awarded in its name. Where RP(E)L has been approved, an exemption from studying the specified modules will be applied to the student record and will be recorded on the student transcript.

1.4 This procedure is informed by the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education which sets out the following expectation:

'Higher education providers have in place equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the award.'

2 Definitions

2.1 **RP(E)L** – The overarching term used throughout the procedure which applies equally to both certificated prior learning and experiential prior learning.

2.2 **RPL** - Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning is defined as the recognition of a previously awarded formal certificate, diploma or degree as equivalent to one or more module(s) on a programme of study.

2.3 **RPEL** – Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning is defined as the process by which appropriate uncertified learning gained from work based experience, can be assessed and given academic recognition, equivalent to one or more module(s) on a programme of study. This learning may have been undertaken in a range of contexts including paid and voluntary work or a personal interest.

2.4 **Advanced Standing** - Advanced Standing is defined as a RPL arrangement, which has been pre-approved at programme validation or by the Quality and Standards Committee (QSC)

for a specific qualification or award from another provider or Awarding Body. Once approved, the Advanced Standing will be entered onto the Advanced Standing Register.

3 Approved Advanced Standing Register

3.1 A register of approved certificated recognised prior learning will be maintained by the Quality and Regulations team. To propose a new qualification for an Advanced Standing arrangement, Programme teams must complete the curriculum mapping template using the Advanced Standing Proposal form.

3.2 This proposal must be considered for approval, either at the validation of the programme or by the Quality and Standards Committee (QSC) if the programme has already been validated. If the proposal is approved, the Quality and Regulations team will be responsible for adding details to the Advanced Standing Register.

4 General Principles

4.1 It is the responsibility of the applicant /student to make an application for RP(E)L and to provide appropriate evidence. The University can offer guidance in relation to process but the applicant/ student is responsible for completing and submitting their application.

4.2 The application for RP(E)L must normally approved **before** enrolment to the programme. Late applications could cause a delay to the student's start date or prevent the student from progressing to the next level of study.

4.3 Normally students will not have submitted any summative assessments for modules they are claiming RP(E)L for.

4.4 RP(E)L can be claimed for **up to a maximum of two thirds** of the credit volume of the final award.

4.5 The minimum claim for RP(E)L is a single module, irrespective of credit value.

4.6 Where a programme is accredited by a Professional Body, specific rules for RP(E)L may apply, these will be detailed in the programme specification.

4.7 Applicants/Students may choose to complete their application in Welsh or English, or a combination of both languages. Supporting evidence can be provided in either English or Welsh.

4.8 Certificates and transcripts provided in another language (other than English or Welsh) must be accompanied by:

- A certified translation, a translator's credentials should be given, along with their official declaration that the translation is accurate.

- A stamped and signed letter from the awarding institution or the academic partner, outlining the details of the qualification is acceptable.

5 Limits on recognition of prior learning

5.1 Credit is not awarded for RP(E)L, the modules are recorded on the student transcript as an exemption.

5.2 Undergraduate students cannot claim RP(E)L for modules contributing to the final year or level of an award.

5.3 Credits may not be double counted towards a second award, in the same subject area and level. (Eg, MBA cannot be used to RP(E)L into another MBA specialism in order to obtain two MBAs).

5.4 A student with RP(E)L who does not achieve their intended award, will only be eligible to retain RP(E)L credit up to a maximum of two thirds of the credit volume of their final exit award.

5.5 RP(E)L is not permitted in relation to any level 6 Top Up programmes, any major project or dissertation or the Postgraduate Advanced Practice module.

5.6 The maximum number of credits RP(E)L can be claimed towards a Graduate Certificate is 30 credits, and for a Graduate Diploma is 60 credits.

5.7 If a student withdraws from their programme, any previously approved RP(E)L will need to be re-evaluated if they re-enrol, to ensure it is still valid.

5.8 If a student transfers to another programme, any previously approved (RP(E)L exemptions will need to be re-evaluated against the new programme of learning by the Programme Leader of the new programme.

5.9 Where a student has entered the programme with more than 60 credits exempted for Recognition of Prior Learning/Experiential Learning, they will not be eligible for Compensation. (Academic Regulation E10.4).

5.10 The final classification of a student's award will be calculated using modules they have studied and achieved at the University, it will not include any RP(E)L exempted modules.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Applicant/Student	Responsible for completing and submitting their application for RP(E)L.
Admissions Office	Responsible for processing applications from 'home' and WU Online applicants/students and following up outstanding applications.
Partnerships Office	Responsible for processing applications from 'partner' applicants/students and following up outstanding applications.
International Office	Responsible for processing applications from 'International' applicants/students and following up outstanding applications.
Programme Leader	Responsibility for approving RP(E)L applications in their programme area. Providing feedback for unsuccessful claims.
Academic Link	Responsibility for approving RP(E)L applications on behalf of partners. Providing feedback for unsuccessful claims
Associate Deans (Academic Affairs/Quality and Student Engagement)	Responsible for reviewing RP(E)L appeals for the relevant Faculty.
SPSA Transactional team	Responsible for reviewing the central record of approved RP(E)L and updating the student records. Initiate automated email to notify student of approved RP(E)L claims.
Quality & Regulations	Maintain the Advanced Standing Register. Provide reports to Quality and Standards Committee and Academic Partnerships Committee of Approved claims.
QSC (Quality and Standards Committee)	Responsible for reviewing and approving new Advanced Standing arrangements.
APC (Academic Partnerships Committee)	Receive reports on approved Partner RP(E)L claims.
Assessment Board	Decide course of action for students received at board with outstanding RP(E)L claims (missing credits).

7 Applications for RP(E)L

7.1 It is the applicant's/student's responsibility to submit their application.

7.2 The student must submit their application for exemption due to recognised prior learning within one month of enrolment and normally prior to any assessment taking place on the relevant modules to ensure that they can progress and achieve their intended award.

7.3 The student must complete the RP(E)L application form fully, providing correct details of the modules they are claiming exemption for

7.4 The completed application and supporting evidence should be submitted to the University at RPL@wrexham.ac.uk.

7.5 For **RPL applications**, the applicant/student must:

- Complete the RPL application form.
- Map the learning outcomes of the certified learning to the corresponding programme or module learning outcomes they are claiming exemption for.
- Mapping can either be completed at programme level or module level, to enable the Programme Leader to assess whether the learning outcomes are equivalent.
- Provide supporting evidence (certificate and transcript of results) of their prior learning, to support their application.
- Prior learning must normally have been awarded within 5 years of the intended start date. If this is not the case, students must provide evidence of how their knowledge / experience has been maintained as current.
- The transcript must evidence that a pass mark has been achieved for the module(s) used in the application. If a student's transcript indicates they have been awarded RPL in their prior learning, they will be required to provide the certificate and map the learning outcomes of the original qualification.

7.6 For **RPEL applications**, the applicant/student must:

- Complete the RP(E)L application form.
- Provide supporting evidence to demonstrate how their professional experience meets the module learning outcomes for which they are claiming exemption.
- Supporting evidence must be mapped to the relevant module learning outcomes.
- Supporting evidence may include a portfolio of evidence or personal statement of experience.

7.7 For **Advanced Standings**, the applicant/student must:

- Provide a copy of the certificate and transcript from the awarding institution.

- Where the prior learning has been awarded by Wrexham University, the award can be verified on the student record by the relevant professional services team.
- The prior learning must normally have been awarded within 5 years of the date of intended start date.
- Prior certificated learning must be verified on the Approved Advanced Standing register by the relevant professional services team responsible for RP(E)L.

7.8 Further information for students is available in the RP(E)L student guide.

7.9 Initial review of RPL and RPEL application:

- The application for RP(E)L will be reviewed by the relevant team (please refer to table section 6). If the application is not fully completed, further guidance will be provided to the student.
- If the curriculum from the student's previous certificated learning is not available, then the claim cannot be progressed.
- Supporting evidence will be checked to ensure it matches the application and is current.
- Once the application is complete, it will be sent with the supporting evidence to the Programme Leader for their academic assessment and approval.

7.10 Initial review of Advance Standing applications:

- The relevant team will check the Advanced Standing Register to ensure the supporting evidence provided matches the approved qualification.
- A student list will be completed for each programme and supporting evidence collated and sent to the Programme Leader to confirm approval.
- If the qualification is not on the approved Advanced Standing Register, the student will be advised to complete an RPL application.

8 Assessment and Approval

8.1 Assessment of the RP(E)L is the responsibility of the Programme Leader. In making their assessment, they will consider the following approval criteria.

8.2 RP(E)L Approval Criteria:

RP(E)L Approval Criteria	
Match:	There is an appropriate match in terms of curriculum content, level and volume of study, between the evidence presented and the exemption being sought.

RP(E)L Approval Criteria	
Currency:	The learning demonstrated is still current in terms of the exemption being sought. This will be particularly important in fast moving disciplines where for instance, consideration might need to be given to the provision of additional evidence of learning to support certificates more than five years old.
Authenticity:	The evidence of prior study/experience is unambiguously the student's own.
Sufficiency of evidence:	The evidence presented is sufficient to demonstrate the requirements associated with each of the above criteria.

8.3 Confirmation of Approval:

- Where the application for RP(E)L is approved by the Programme Leader, the status of the claim will be recorded onto the central record for approved RP(E)L and supporting documentation stored in the central repository on [MS Teams](#).
- The central record of approved RP(E)L and repository for approved claims will be maintained by the relevant teams responsible for processing student RP(E)L claims.
- Approved applications will be added to the student record by the SPSA Transactional team. The student will receive a formal email notification to confirm their exemption has been approved once their student record has been updated.

8.4 Applications which do not meet the criteria for approval:

- The Programme Lead/Academic Link will confirm the outcome of the application to the relevant professional services team. If the application does not meet the approval criteria, they will provide feedback explaining the reasons for this decision.
- The professional services team will be responsible for communicating the outcome and feedback to the student and where applicable Partner organisation.
- Reasons may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - There is insufficient evidence to confirm that the learning outcomes claimed are the equivalent of relevant learning outcomes for the module or programme.
 - There is insufficient evidence to confirm that the experience claimed for is of the appropriate credit level.
 - The experience claimed for took place outside of a reasonable timescale.
 - The student has not been able to demonstrate achievement of appropriate learning outcomes from the experience claimed.
- The feedback will be provided from the Programme Leader/Academic Link and communicated to the student via the relevant team responsible for processing the application.

- Where claims have not been approved and the student has already commenced their programme of study, they will be required to undertake the specified module(s) in order to satisfy the programme learning outcomes.

9 Bridging modules

9.1 In some instances, where there is a small skills gap in terms of the curriculum mapping, a student may be given the opportunity to complete a bridging module.

9.2 Where this is agreed by the Programme Leader, achievement of the bridging module will be a condition of the RP(E)L, the student must pass the bridging module within the specified timescale. A bridging module is a stand alone module that has been developed to help students who require further skills in a particular area. The stand-alone module must be approved through QSC, please refer to the Programme Lifecycle Procedure for further details on the approval process for stand-alone modules.

10 Students with outstanding RP(E)L applications

10.1 It is the student's responsibility to submit their own application.

10.2 The student must normally submit their application for exemption due to recognised prior learning, prior to enrolment.

10.3 Any conditions of the offer regarding RPL must be specified in the applicant/student offer letter and it is the applicant/student's responsibility to complete these within the specified timescale.

10.4 The student will not be permitted to progress to the next level of study until the RP(E)L has been approved.

10.5 The student may be offered the opportunity to undertake the specified module(s) to satisfy the programme learning outcomes in order to continue with their studies.

11 Appeals

11.1 RP(E)L decisions are a matter of academic judgement. Students have a right to receive feedback on their submission. An appeal will only be considered where there is clear evidence of a significant administrative or regulatory error.

11.2 If the student believes there is clear evidence of a significant administrative or regulatory error, they may appeal, in writing, to RPL@wrexham.ac.uk within 10 days from the date of issue of the decision, citing the grounds and basis of the appeal, with evidence as appropriate.

11.3 The appeal will be reviewed by the Associate Dean responsible for Academic Affairs and Quality for the Faculty. The decision of the Associate Dean is final, the outcome will be relayed to the student by the relevant officer responsible for processing the claim.

12 Authenticity

12.1 In submitting their claim the applicant/student is confirming that the information provided is accurate, honest and verifiable. Any concerns regarding the authenticity or integrity of the application for RP(E)L, may be referred for consideration under the University's Admissions Policy for applicants and Disciplinary Procedure or Suitability for Practice Procedures for students.

13 Reporting of RP(E)L

13.1 Quality and Regulations will provide a report of approved applications to the Quality and Standards Committee and Academic Partnerships Committee for monitoring.

14 Useful links

[QAA \(Quality Assurance Agency\) Quality Code](#)

Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures are available to view on the University website:

[Academic Regulations Policies and Procedures - Wrexham University](#)

[Advanced Standing Proposal](#)

[Advanced Standing Register](#)

[Admissions Policy](#)

[RPL Application form](#)

[RPEL Application form](#)

Contact rpl@wrexham.ac.uk for any templates/documents that are not linked above.

15 Accessibility

15.1 Wrexham University strives to be a supportive and trauma-informed university in the design and operation of all our processes and procedures. If you need adjustments to access this procedure or have any other comments to make on the accessibility, wording or any part of this procedure, please do email us on RPL@wrexham.ac.uk.