

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Academic Year 2025–2026

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Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of the **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy** is to establish a structure for recognising and valuing the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by applicants, prospective learners and current learners at London School of Management and Media ('LSMM') through various forms of learning.

The policy allows learners to receive credit for their previous accomplishments, reducing the requirement to repeat learning while improving their access to educational opportunities, and promoting lifelong learning.

This procedure is designed to encourage equity, diversity, and adaptability by providing options for applicants, prospective learners and current learners to receive credit or exemptions in a qualification program through their current knowledge and skills.

Scope

This policy applies to all applicants, prospective learners and current learners who are seeking credit for prior learning to enter a programme, get credit for a qualification, or be exempt from certain modules or units of study.

The process of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) welcomes various forms of previous experiences, such as formal education, work experience, volunteer work, professional development, and other significant life experiences. The policy applies to all courses accredited by any awarding body/university and delivered at London School of Management and Media at all its centres and affiliate centres worldwide.

Definitions & Explanations of RPL, Credit Transfer and Exemptions

Recognition of Prior Learning

The terms 'Recognition of Prior Learning', 'Accreditation of Prior Learning' and other terms such as 'Accreditation of Prior Achievement' are interchangeable. Although different organisations

may prefer to use one term rather than another, the actual term adopted in the RQF is RPL and this is what will be used by London School of Management and Media.

RPL, Credit Transfer and Exemption support the fact that learning is continuous and therefore recognising achievement should result from using these processes. Essentially, RPL, Credit Transfer and Exemption are an assessment process that enables learners to receive recognition of their achievement from a range of activities they have already undertaken.

The **Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation UK (Ofqual)** defines this as '*a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they meet the assessment requirements for a unit, through knowledge, understanding and skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.*'

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process that allows learners to gain recognition for the knowledge, skills, and competencies they have acquired through employment, in relevant voluntary work or leisure activities, in education or training, e.g., adult education courses or in-company training, from independent or previous study in a college or university, or from other commitments or activities, e.g., involvement in a family business.

The essential point for RPL is that the learning from any or all of the activities listed in the previous paragraph, or other activities not listed here is **not** via a recognised, accredited qualification.

RPL enables learners to receive credit towards a qualification or unit, reducing the time required to complete their course of study by avoiding unnecessary repetition of learning.

RPL can be applied for entry into a programme, for exemption from certain units, or for achieving credits towards a full qualification.

The standard required of an RPL student is identical to that demanded of a learner pursuing a normal study route.

Credit Transfer

Credit transfer refers to previously certificated achievement inside the QCF/RQF. Where units have been achieved previously as a part of a qualification, they do not need to be taken again if the unit(s) achieved also comprises a part of another qualification.

Exemptions

If a learner is certificated for a previous qualification achieved in either the UK or internationally, then, where the learner is now studying for a current qualification and believes there to be commonality between their current programme of study and their previous achievement, an exemption against part of a unit(s) and/or whole units can be claimed by LSMM subject to awarding body/university approval.

Exemption for a whole qualification is generally not permitted, but where learners feel that they have a robust case for this, then LSMM will present this case directly to awarding body/university on your behalf.

Process for Assessment of Evidence Against the Qualification and/or Unit

The RPL process involves assessing the learner's submitted evidence against the specific learning outcomes and criteria of the relevant qualification or unit.

This assessment ensures that the prior learning is current, valid, reliable, and sufficient to meet the requirements of the qualification. The assessment process will involve the following steps:

Initial review:

Any learner wishing to use RPL must meet with a mentor and an assessor from LSMM in the first instance. The assessor will be experienced and have the relevant specialist subject knowledge. Although previous communications may have taken place over the telephone or via email, **the RPL process should not formally commence without a face-to-face meeting**. Where there are a small group of learners who wish to learn more about RPL and how it applies to them, the first meeting may involve more than one person.

One member of the LSMM assessment team will act as a mentor to the learner. This role will always be distinct and separate from the assessor.

The starting point for any learner wishing to claim RPL is to reflect on their experience in order to identify relevant achievement. The learners must be asked to think about experience gained in a variety of situations including those listed above in the introduction.

The learner should initially provide a CV, portfolio of practical work or selective autobiographical account. This will help the assessor to gain a broad overview of the learner's experience. In addition, it will help to put the claim into context.

LSMM will provide all learners with the qualification specification, so they are properly informed about the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the units.

It is the mentor's role to ensure that the learner understands the assessment criteria associated with individual unit(s) they wish to claim recognition of prior learning. It is only then that they will be able to work towards assembling the relevant evidence. The mentor will also provide examples of how to present evidence that must be provided to facilitate understanding and portfolio compilation.

Learners claiming RPL will be given guidance from the mentor on the evidence that will enable them to achieve the standards required. This will include:

- a CV or other resumes
- a summary of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria claimed
- a commentary identifying prior achievement against individual learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- full evidence against each assessment criterion claimed

The learner will compile a portfolio of evidence to support their claim for RPL, so at the outset he/she must be made aware of all the information the portfolio must contain.

Matching:

The assessor will examine the portfolio systematically for its completeness. He/she will ensure that the evidence relates to the assessment criteria of the unit(s) being claimed by the learner and that there are no gaps in the evidence. The assessor will be looking for evidence that is authentic, current, relevant and sufficient. The assessor checks that the evidence presented:

- is relevant to the standards (valid)
- represents sufficient breadth and quality to be appropriate to the standards to which it applies (sufficient)
- is the work of the candidate (authentic)
- is recent enough to meet the requirements of the assessment criteria

If the assessor is not satisfied with the evidence submitted, it will be necessary to seek additional evidence from the learner.

Separate evidence is not required for each qualification assessment criterion. Learners may present a small number of complex pieces of evidence to demonstrate achievement of several

unit assessment requirements. However, the evidence needs to be clearly mapped by the learner so there is no ambiguity.

Many units draw on a wide basis of knowledge and understanding. RPL learners must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the unit or part of the unit they are claiming. Professional discussion could be undertaken to ensure the candidate has this knowledge. Whilst professional discussion will be frequently used as this best fits the RPL process, it may also be necessary to ask learners to complete an assignment or written test or perform a demonstration. A combination of these methods may be used. Evidence of the professional discussion/additional testing should be submitted as part of the portfolio of evidence. Its purpose in the process will be clearly indicated.

Where a learner is unable to produce evidence of prior learning, for example, if an employer does not respond to a request for a witness testimony, the learner will need to take an assessment appropriate to the outcome being claimed. If only part of the unit's requirements has been met, arrangements will need to be made to cover the appropriate additional learning and assessment.

Assessment Decision:

The mentor and assessor will maintain full records of the time they spend with the learner and the decisions taken. This documentation, as well as the learner's portfolio, will be subject to the normal internal quality assurance and standardisation processes at LSMM and be available for external quality assurance. In such a way, the awarding body/university will be fully informed that assessment decisions at LSMM are based on the RPL process.

The main focus of the process is assessment and, therefore, responsibilities for decisions on RPL belong with assessors. The assessors may come from different vocational areas depending on the nature of the RPL claim, but implementation of this policy ensures a consistent approach to RPL at LSMM.

The assessor will determine whether the evidence sufficiently demonstrates the learner's competence and can be credited towards the qualification.

Process for Advising the Learner about RPL Requirements

Learners seeking RPL will receive detailed advice on the process, including an explanation of what RPL entails, the evidence required and the steps they must follow. This guidance will be provided during the initial information session, through written guidelines and/or consultations with an assessor.

Learners will also be informed about the timeline for submission of evidence and the criteria against which their prior learning will be assessed.

Support Available to Learners in the RPL Process

Learners will be provided with required support throughout the RPL process through their dedicated mentor. This support includes:

- guidance on gathering and presenting appropriate evidence
- one-on-one support to help interpret the qualification standards, learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- access to resources such as workshops, templates for evidence portfolios, and opportunities to clarify any uncertainties during the process.

Learner Responsibility to Provide Appropriate Evidence for RPL Claim

It is the responsibility of the learner to collect, compile and submit appropriate evidence that supports their RPL claim.

It is the responsibility of the learner to generate and submit the evidence to the assessor for assessment. Evidence must be:

- **authentic** – it must clearly be the learner’s own evidence
- **reliable** – the source of the evidence must be clear and authoritative
- **current** – the evidence must show at least a recent demonstration of knowledge and skill
- **valid** – the evidence must be relevant to the skill or knowledge claimed
- **sufficient** – there must be the correct breadth/depth of evidence provided

While LSMM will support the learner in the process, learners are encouraged to work closely with their assessors to ensure the evidence meets the necessary requirements.

Types of Evidence

The learner’s evidence may include, but is not limited to:

- **Formal qualifications or certificates:** Accredited courses or training certificates relevant to the qualification or unit.
- **Work experience:** Testimonies, job descriptions, or records of employment that demonstrate relevant experience.
- **Professional development:** Records of participation in seminars, workshops, or conferences.
- **Practical demonstrations:** Videos, portfolios, or records of competency-based tasks performed in a workplace.
- **Self-assessments or reflective statements:** Written accounts of personal experiences that relate to the qualification’s learning outcomes.
- **Third-party reports:** Endorsements or references from employers, supervisors, or colleagues attesting to the learner’s skills and knowledge.

Process for Assessors

The assessor will follow a structured approach when evaluating the evidence presented for RPL, including:

- **Reviewing the evidence:** Ensuring that all submitted evidence is valid, current, reliable, and sufficient.
- **Mapping against learning outcomes:** Cross-referencing the learner’s evidence with the specific criteria and learning outcomes of the qualification or unit.
- **Providing feedback:** Offering constructive feedback to the learner regarding the evidence and its relevance to the learning outcomes.
- **Making a decision:** Deciding whether the learner’s prior learning meets the necessary standards for credit or exemption. If additional evidence is needed, the assessor will communicate this to the learner.
- **Recording the decision:** Documenting the assessment outcome, detailing the evidence reviewed and how it meets the qualification’s requirements.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Requirement

All RPL assessments will be subject to internal quality assurance (IQA) to ensure consistency, fairness, and adherence to standards prescribed by concerning awarding body/university.

An IQA will review the assessor's decision by sampling the evidence submitted, reviewing the assessment records, and ensuring that the process followed complies with college and awarding body requirements.

The IQA will confirm the decision or request further action if necessary.

Process for Claiming Certificates under RPL

The assessor will maintain accurate records of internal grades awarded of learners' performance across each unit at learning outcome and assessment criteria level.

Once the RPL assessment has been completed and internally quality assured, the assessor will submit the relevant documentation to the awarding body/university for certification.

This includes:

- A completed RPL assessment report detailing the evidence and decisions made.
 - A copy of the learner's evidence portfolio (if required).
 - The necessary forms and paperwork as stipulated by the awarding body/university to confirm that the learner has met the qualification or unit requirements through RPL. Upon approval from the awarding body/university, the certificate will be issued, reflecting the credits or qualification achieved through the RPL process.
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