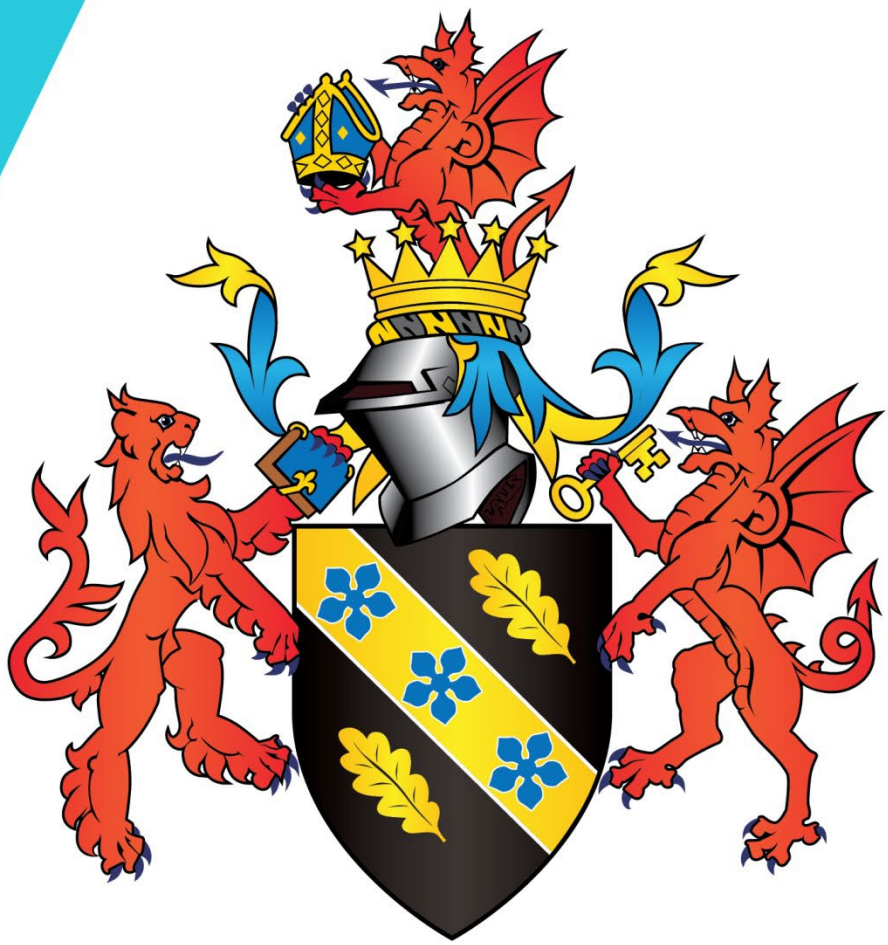
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Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

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This Policy and its appendices/forms are published on the Academic Quality Handbook webpage, under the Chapter 11 heading, unless otherwise specified.

1 Recognition of Prior Learning

1.1 Background

Some applicants or students may already have acquired credits based upon formal study at Higher Education level; in this case they may make a claim for the Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning as defined below in 1.4, and detailed in 1.8. Others may have acquired similar knowledge and skills during the course of their working life, whether paid or voluntary, and in these cases, they may be able to make a claim for the Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning, also defined in 1.4. To do this they would need to complete the Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) procedure, as detailed in 1.11. The Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures enable applicants or students to make a claim for credit for such learning that can be used to gain entry to a programme, exemption from parts of that programme, or advanced standing towards an academic award. This is applicable to all Programmes of Study leading to a University award. Any application for advanced standing in relation to Research Degrees must be made directly to the Research Degrees Committee.

Where Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements place specific restrictions or limitations on RPCL/RPEL this policy does not apply. For such programmes, information on RPCL/RPEL should be provided in the Definitive Programme Document. Similarly, there may be special exemptions approved by a PSRB or national body, which would take precedence over this policy.

1.2 Role within the Modular Frameworks

An applicant for admission with prior credit or advanced standing may be admitted to an appropriate point in the programme. The table below shows, for each qualification, the maximum number of credits that may be transferred via the RPL process. It also shows the maximum number of credits that may be considered for transfer from a lower level than that normally associated with the award. This table is consistent with the guidelines set out in the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales, 2012.

Qualification	**Maximum transfer**	**Level of credits for maximum transfer**	**Max. credits from lower level incorporated into transfer**	**Remaining credits**
Higher National Certificate	80 credits	Level 4	30 credits level 3	Level 4
Certificate of HE	80 credits	Level 4	30 credits level 3	Level 4
Higher National Diploma	160 credits	120 Level 4, 40 Level 5	30 credits level 3	Level 5
Foundation Degree	160 credits	120 Level 4, 40 Level 5	30 credits level 3	Level 5
Diploma of HE	160 credits	120 Level 4, 40 Level 5	30 credits level 3	Level 5
Honours Degree	240 credits	120 Level 4, 120 Level 5	30 credits level 3	Level 6
Graduate Certificate	40 credits	Level 6	20 credits level 5	Level 6
Graduate Diploma	80 credits	Level 6	30 credits level 5	Level 6
Integrated Master's Degree	240 credits	Levels 4-5	30 credits level 3	Level 6 and 7

Postgraduate Certificate	40 credits	Level 7	20 credits level 6	Level 7
Postgraduate Diploma	80 credits	Level 7	30 credits level 6	Level 7
Master's Degree	120 credits	Level 7	30 credits level 6	Level 7
Master of Architecture (MArch)	120 credits	60 Level 6, 60 Level 7	N/A	Level 7
Master of Fine Arts (MFA)	120 credits	Level 7	30 credits level 6	Level 7
Professional Certificate in Education (PCE) Post Compulsory Education and Training	80 credits	60 Level 5, 20 Level 6	N/A	Level 6
Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (ProfGCE) Post Compulsory Education and Training	80 credits	Level 6	N/A	Level 6
Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Post Compulsory Education and Training	80 credits	60 Level 6, 20 Level 7	N/A	Level 7
Professional Doctorate	180 credits	Level 7	30 credits level 6	Level 8

1.3 Credit Claim Regulations

The maximum claim for credit that can be made on the basis of certificated or experiential learning should be consistent with the table shown in section 1.2 and is at most two thirds of the credit for the award for which credit is sought. For example, at undergraduate level, this could enable a student to progress directly onto level 6 following completion of a certificated or experiential learning claim worth 240 credits. However, these credits could not be used to award a Diploma of Higher Education in its own right.

In the event that a student claims advanced standing on the basis of experiential learning consisting of credit at two or more different levels, the advanced standing would be used to complete the requirement at the lowest level (and possibly some of the requirement at a higher level) rather than to allow some advanced standing at a higher level without completion of the lowest level. For example, if a student successfully completes a RAL module (see section 1.9) and also claims advanced standing of 80 credits at Level 4 and 65 credits at Level 5, the student could be awarded advanced standing of 120 credits at Level 4 and 25 credits at Level 5, together with 20 credits at Level 5 for a RAL module.

Claims will often consist of a mixture of experiential learning and certificated learning at different levels. For example, a student that has successfully completed 40 certificated credits at Level 4, and also successfully completes a RAL module claiming advanced standing of 80 credits at Level 4 and 65 credits at Level 5, could

be awarded advanced standing of 120 credits at Level 4 and 65 credits at Level 5, together with 20 credits at Level 5 for a RAL module.

Higher level credit will be taken to supply deficits in lower level credit such as to supply a credit requirement at a higher level. For example, an applicant with 100 credits at Level 4 and 140 credits at Level 5 will be credited with 240 credits at Levels 4 and 5.

RPL can only be granted if it does not result in 'double counting'. This means that credited learning that has already contributed to the award of one qualification cannot be used to gain RPL-based exemption in another qualification at the same level or lower (e.g. credited modules that had been part of a programme of study that led to the award of an MA could not subsequently be used to gain exemption from modules on another MA). However, in the case of intermediate awards, this would be permitted (e.g. modules that had led to the award of a PGCert could be used to gain exemption from modules on an MA). If an applicant is unclear whether their claim would result in double counting, they should consult with the admitting Academic Discipline of their programme of study for advice. In the event that a student, who has used a previously gained award as credit transfer, subsequently withdraws from the programme into which the award was subsumed, then the original award/credit will still stand. For example, if a student who has used the RPL process to transfer a Foundation Degree into a BA Honours programme, then withdraws from that programme, then the student's award of Foundation Degree will be maintained. There is no requirement to forfeit professional or vocational qualifications.

All awards of credit for prior certificated and experiential learning must be noted on the schedule presented to the relevant Examining Board. This will ensure that the credit is formally entered on the student's record, and that the Board is aware of the candidates for whom academic credit is being awarded by the RPL mechanism.

While there is no standard expiry date after which certificated learning cannot be recognised, a judgement will be made as to how appropriate it would be to recognise credit within the context of the particular subject area and, if it is deemed that the certificated learning is out of date, it may be necessary to provide evidence that the learning has been kept up to date (for example if the student has been working professionally, and building on the learning in the interim period) before allowing the credit to be recognised.

1.4 Definitions

The Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) is defined as the evaluation of acquired learning that has been previously assessed and certificated. This could be at a different institution, or on a different Programme of Study to the programme on which the student currently wishes to register, or from professional certification. Only applications that are relevant to or compatible with the proposed programme of study will be progressed.

Standard RPCL is whereby the process of recognition of prior certificated Learning, as described above, is facilitated for large numbers of candidates (see section 1.10).

The Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) is defined as the process by which appropriate experiential learning is evaluated and awarded credit. Experiential learning can be described as the knowledge and skills acquired through life experience, work experience and study which are not formally attested through any educational or professional certification. It may also include learning resulting from

staff development provided by any organisation, which has not been examined in any of the public examination systems. It is the achievement of learning, or the outcomes of that learning, and not just the experience of the activities alone, that can be considered for recognition.

The term RPL is used as a generic acronym to cover the recognition of certificated and experiential learning.

Credit is treated as either general or specific. General credit is the total credit value attached to a period of learning or a qualification e.g. used to gain entry to a programme or for advanced standing; specific credit is the amount of that credit which may be used towards another qualification.

An applicant or student may apply for general credit and specific exemptions at higher and/or lower levels of study. Levels are defined in Chapter 6 of the Academic Quality Handbook.

Student transcripts will clearly identify credit that has been awarded on the basis of prior learning.

1.5 General Credit

Decisions regarding the recognition of prior learning must be based on equivalence. The prior certificated or experiential learning must be demonstrably equivalent to the learning that could have been achieved by following the validated module(s) for which exemption/transfer of credit is sought.

An applicant or student may claim general credit for recognition of prior learning in accordance with the tariff of academic credit approved within other institutions/organisations. However, the amount of general credit recognised, relative to components of learning undertaken elsewhere, may not correspond exactly with the amount of specific credit awarded by the University towards the total number of credits needed for the named award on which the student wishes to register.

1.6 Specific Credit

Specific credit is that which is awarded towards the total number of credits required for a named programme of study, which may be less than the amount of general credit which a student may hold.

Specific credit is awarded for learning which closely matches the learning outcomes of a particular module. This could be the result of certificated or experiential learning.

In all cases, the prior learning for which specific credit is awarded must constitute a coherent programme of study when considered together with the credit expected to be gained for modules studied within a programme leading to an award.

Where specific credit is awarded the student will, in addition to gaining credit, be exempt from that module: **exemption** signifies that the student is considered to have completed the module for the purposes of pre-and/or co-requisite and/or core module requirements. All such credit must be recorded for inclusion on the student's transcript.

Credit can only be applied against whole completed modules, partial completion cannot be considered. In addition, RPCL will be awarded for whole modules only, the University does not permit exemption from part of a module.

1.7 Transfer of HE Credits

It is possible for students to gain credit from modules that they have successfully completed at HE level at a different institution. However, credit cannot normally be awarded for prior learning for which the student has already obtained a named academic award although this could be used for direct entry into the appropriate level.

The marks awarded for credit that is transferred via the RPCL process will not be used to calculate the final overall average mark which is used to determine the degree classification. Regulations for calculating the final overall average mark of an award, where credit has been transferred, are set out in the relevant sections of Chapter 6 for each degree.

1.8 Procedure for the Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning

With the exception of collaborative partnership programmes, Programme Managers will be responsible for making decisions on the RPCL applications for their Programmes of Study and the Admissions Manager approves by checking that due process has been followed. RPCL applications for programmes delivered at collaborative partner institutions, are first considered by the relevant Programme Manager and approved by the Collaborative Partnerships Office (CPO). Applicants/Students can normally make one RPCL application when they apply/ initially register on a Programme of Study.

The applicant/student must provide information on their certificated learning on the Appendix PL3a Application Form for RPCL (available on the Advice for Applicants webpage). Appendix PL3c RPCL Upgrade Form (available via the intranet) should be used for applicants wishing to gain recognition for UWTSD credits (excluding partner institutions) for the consecutive year. Appendix PL3d (available on the Academic Quality Handbook webpage) should be used for applicants/students at collaborative partner institutions. Forms and guidance on completion should be sought from the Admissions Team or from the Collaborative Partnerships Office as appropriate. In all cases documentary proof that the qualification, or part thereof, has been obtained must be provided. It is the applicants/ student's responsibility to provide this documentation.

Applications for all programmes, other than those that form part of the Professional Practice Framework, must:

- normally be processed before an applicant initially registers, including in the case of direct entry into the second or third year of an initial degree. Retrospective applications will not normally be allowed.
- be accompanied by a transcript for the prior certificated learning.
- be presented on the same form. Further recognition is not normally allowed in the case of credit for which an award has already been made.

Where appropriate, clearly identify the equivalence of the prior learning to the learning outcomes of the modules for which credit is sought (for specific credit).

The information that must be included in an application includes:

- The Programme of Study towards which the credit is sought.
- The institution or professional body where the prior learning was undertaken.
- The dates and duration of the previous period of study.
- The mode of study.
- Details about syllabuses, assessment and which components of the award were successfully completed.
- Details of the credit awarded and the tariff used by the awarding institution.
- A transcript of the marks awarded for the components of the award which was successfully completed at the awarding institution.

1.9 Individual Responsibilities for RPL Claims Based on Certificated Learning

This section outlines the responsibilities of each party in relation to the recognition of prior certificated learning as part of any other programme. Full details of responsibilities in relation to the recognition of prior certificated learning that forms part of the Professional Practice Framework can be found in the Recognition and Accreditation of Learning (RAL) Handbook.

(1) The Applicant or Student:

(i) Will be responsible for submitting their claim with supporting evidence to the Programme Manager, by the deadline set by the Programme Manager, noting that retrospective applications are not normally allowed

(ii) Will be responsible for any revisions to their submission, requested by the Programme Manager.

(2) The Programme Manager

(i) Will be responsible for all admissions onto the programme and for the administration of all RPCL applications [NB Where there is an Admissions Tutor in place then the responsibility for admissions is taken by the Admissions Tutor].

(ii) Will normally be a member of the academic staff who teaches on the programme on which the student wishes to be registered.

(iii) Will evaluate the student's prior certificated learning and decide whether the student's learning may be accredited in terms of equivalence to the module(s) for which credit is sought. In the case of partner institutions, partner staff will evaluate the claim and will make a recommendation for approval by the CPO.

(iv) With the exception of those based at collaborative partner institutions, will report all RPCL decisions to Admissions who will then forward it for processing by Registry Services. For collaborative partner institutions, the CPO will report RPCL decisions to Registry.

1.10 Standard Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning

Standard recognition of prior certificated learning is whereby the process of Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) is facilitated for large numbers of candidates in respect of certificated learning (qualifications such as BTEC, HND, (PG) Certs/Dips or those recognised by ENIC). This avoids the process of multiple individual RPCL claims where certificated learning that is equivalent to a programme's

module(s) has already been mapped and approved, and where it is expected that a number of applicants with this certificated learning will progress to a University programme (including programmes at partner institutions).

Standard RPCL proposals (using Appendix PL3e) for students studying at collaborative partnership institutions are submitted and considered by the Collaborative Partnerships Office (CPO). Following confirmation, the CPO informs the relevant University departments and the partner institution of the approval. Standard RPCL is reviewed every three years, via Appendix PL3f. For non-partner Standard RPCL, Institutes/Faculties may consider and confirm the proposals and carry out the review.

1.11 Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning

Credit for experiential learning may be gained from a variety of sources, for example, within the workplace, from training courses that the individual has completed but which are not certificated, through experience in voluntary work, or by individual study. Credit, once awarded, is not distinguished by its source. Experiential learning can lead to either specific or general credit. It is normally possible to recognise up to two thirds of a programme by awarding academic credit for prior experiential learning.

1.11.1 Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning for Specific Credit

It should be noted that Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) is also an alternative means of demonstrating that the student has achieved the intended learning outcomes of a module or modules to completing the module or modules in the usual way.

Students will be allocated an Academic Mentor or equivalent who will guide them to prepare a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates the learning achieved against the learning outcomes and the modules for which the credit is being claimed.

The portfolio will normally consist of:

- a detailed annotated CV;
- an annotated job description;
- a portfolio of learning experience that demonstrates the level of learning against the relevant learning outcomes and modules within the programme of study;
- a completed PL3b outlining the details of the claim and including a supporting statement from the Academic Mentor.

To comply with data protection legislation, personal and sensitive data within the portfolio of evidence must be anonymised. According to the Information Commissioner's Office, personal data is information that relates to an identified or identifiable individual which could include a name, home address, identification number or an IP address. Special category data (sensitive data) is personal data that needs more protection because it is sensitive. Examples of this type of data include race, ethnic background, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, genetics, biometrics, health and sex life or orientation. Further information can be found at: https://ico.org.uk/

The claim must be supported by a letter of support from an employer or appropriate alternative. This must be on official headed notepaper of the organisation concerned and signed and dated by the author. Evidence presented by email may be acceptable

if the email has been sent by the author from the official domain name of the author's organisation.

Upon successful completion of the portfolio, claims may be submitted to the RPEL and Accreditation Board for evaluation, specifying the number and level of credits claimed, using the claim form (Appendix PL3b). RPEL and Accreditation Board decisions are reported to Programme Managers to inform admission decisions, and to Registry Services for the recording of recognised credit. A fee of £5 per credit awarded is normally payable.

No mark will be available for the experiential learning for which recognition is sought and the academic level will be established over the duration of the process and at the point of assessment.

Upon successful completion of the portfolio, the student will be able to commence their academic studies on the agreed programme.

1.11.2 Role of Academic Mentor

Each student will be allocated an Academic Mentor to provide support and guidance in preparing their claim for recognition of experiential learning. The role of the Academic Mentor will be to:

- introduce the student to the language that is used for defining learning outcomes within the higher education sector;
- provide advice and guidance in annotating their CV and job description to demonstrate the learning has taken place;
- support the student in identifying the theories and concepts that are relevant to their experience, in relating theory to practice and in mapping theories;
- support the student in quantifying and qualifying the volume and level of their credit claim;
- hold a professional discussion with the student;
- provide a statement on the RPEL claim form (PL3b) on the portfolio of evidence.

1.11.3 Experiential Learning leading to General Credit

Rather than awarding specific credit which reflects learning in a particular subject discipline, the award for experiential learning in this instance is for general credit in their professional area. This learner-centred approach recognises the range of learning achieved by the individual and may include learning in the workplace, staff development and training programmes, voluntary work and individual unaccredited study.

Claims for credit in respect of modules worth no more than 40 credits in total, or no more than one-third of the award sought, may be made directly to the Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) and Accreditation Board in consultation with an Academic Mentor using the claim form (Appendix PL3b). Claims for credit in respect of modules worth more than 40 credits in total will be dealt with by the following procedure.

In order to gain credit for experiential learning in respect of modules worth more than 40 credits in total, students are required to register on a Recognition and Accreditation of Learning (RAL) module. A fee is payable for undertaking the RAL module. Evidence of the experience itself is not considered sufficient for the award of credit and must be presented in a way that demonstrates that learning has taken place. RAL module

assessment includes a portfolio of evidence and a reflective essay evaluating the learning that has been achieved (see 1.12). Students will be allocated a RAL Adviser and provided with a detailed handbook and access to a wide range of online resources to guide them through the process of producing a claim for credit. Upon successful completion of the RAL module and confirmation at an exam board, claims may be submitted to the RPEL and Accreditation Board for evaluation, specifying the number and level of credits claimed, using the claim form (Appendix PL3b). RPEL and Accreditation Board decisions are reported to Programme Managers, to inform admission decisions, and to Registry Services for the recording of recognised credit. A fee of £5 per credit awarded is normally payable.

No mark will be available for the experiential learning for which recognition is sought and the academic level will be established over the duration of the process and at the point of assessment. However, within the University, its Recognition and Accreditation of Learning (RAL) module, for which a charge is made, is a 20 credit module for which a mark is awarded, and which will be used in calculating the programme award for the Professional Practice Framework. Further information about the University's RAL module can be obtained from the RAL Module Coordinator for Professional Practice programmes.

1.12 Areas of Learning

Any experiential learning can be categorised into specific areas and these are known as Areas of Learning. These might, for example, relate to:

- learning and teaching;
- service delivery;
- management;
- planning and organizing resources;
- teamwork and motivation;
- initiative, problem solving and decision making;
- analysis, research and reporting.

Each Area of Learning can take many forms, for example, knowledge and understanding might be the result of staff development, training or personal study within the workplace or elsewhere. Management could include one or more of the following: management of service delivery, human resources, physical resources, financial resources or project management.

Areas of Learning will be at various levels, for example, management of Human Resources could range from supervisory duties to line management of a department or senior management.

1.13 Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes reflect the knowledge, understanding, practical skills and transferable skills that the student has acquired as a result of the experiential learning that has taken place within each Area of Learning. Students will need to reflect on the Learning Outcomes and provide evidence that the Learning Outcome has been achieved, for example, by identifying examples of the impact of the learning on workplace practice.

The nature of the Learning Areas will vary considerably, for example, in order to provide evidence relating to service delivery, the student could reflect on evidence of managing conflicting demands to maintain the quality of service, anticipating changes

in demand and planning accordingly, anticipating and modifying practice in response to external drivers or systematically reflecting upon, evaluating and modifying performance in response to customer feedback.

Similarly, in order to provide evidence of analysis, research and reporting, the student could reflect on evidence of considering a number of possible ways of addressing a problem in the workplace, collating information relating to the problem from the key stakeholders, deconstructing this information into its constituent parts, reassembling the information identifying different options for addressing the problem and preparing a report summarising the advantages and disadvantages of each.

1.14 Assessing Claims for Experiential Learning for General Credit over 40 Credits

In order to make a claim for credit based on experiential learning in respect of modules worth more than 40 credits in total, students must provide verifiable evidence to support their claim, and complete a Recognition and Accreditation of Learning (RAL) module. The focus of the module will be for students to:

- identify the Areas of Learning for which recognition is being sought;
- relate those Areas of Learning to the language that is used for defining learning outcomes within the higher education sector;
- quantify and qualify the volume and level of their credit claim.

Students will need to provide verifiable evidence clearly identifying the experience that has resulted in achievement of the Areas of Learning and evaluating and reflecting upon the impact of the learning on their work practice. Assessing of the RAL module should be carried out in collaboration with members of staff from the Professional Practice Framework Team in the Institute/Faculty of Management and Health.

In addition to the portfolio of evidence, the RAL module is assessed by means of a reflective essay in which students will reflect upon, analyse and evaluate their own learning experience during the RAL process. The credit level of a RAL module will depend upon the extent to which students can demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate and synthesise their learning experience, and to identify opportunities and develop strategies for strengthening its impact in the workplace, for example by modifying current practice. The volume of the credit to be awarded will reflect the principles of the Credit and Qualifications Framework with 10 credits reflecting 100 notional hours of experiential learning.

The portfolio will normally consist of:

- a detailed annotated CV;
- an annotated job description;
- a portfolio of learning experience;
- a completed PL3b outlining the details of the claim and including a supporting statement from the RAL Adviser.

To comply with data protection legislation, personal and sensitive data within the portfolio of evidence must be anonymised. According to the Information Commissioner's Office, personal data is information that relates to an identified or identifiable individual which could include a name, home address, identification number or an IP address. Special category data (sensitive data) is personal data that needs more protection because it is sensitive. Examples of this type of data include race, ethnic background, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, genetics, biometrics, health and sex life or orientation. Further information can be

found at: https://ico.org.uk/

The claim must be supported by a letter of support from an employer or appropriate alternative. This must be on official headed notepaper of the organisation concerned and signed and dated by the author. Evidence presented by email may be acceptable if the email has been sent by the author from the official domain name of the author's organisation.

The student will be required to demonstrate precisely where the Areas of Learning have taken place. Regardless of the level and volume of the credit claim, no credits or marks are awarded for the portfolio components. However, a mark is awarded to the reflective essay in a RAL module (worth 20 credits) which will be used in classifying the programme award.

The following level descriptions will be used to identify the appropriate level:

Level 4

1. Responsibility for courses of action and their results, including wider impacts.
2. Thinking through and choosing courses of action.
3. Coping effectively with a range of unfamiliar situations and problems.
4. Recognising the implications of different issues and courses of action.
5. Identifying and evaluating the practical effects and impact of operating parameters.
6. Acting on understandings of relationships and contradictions between principles and ideas.
7. Investigating, analysing and evaluating information to identify relationships and make informed judgements.
8. Reinterpreting and combining information to develop ideas and choose courses of action or develop ways forward.
9. Designing investigations to provide new information and affect practice, including through practical investigation.
10. Evaluating the appropriateness of different approaches and their impacts.
11. Producing own ideas and developing innovative responses.
12. Developing novel solutions to problems.

Level 5

1. Responsibility across a broad area rather than for individual tasks, including for negotiating objectives and outcomes and for their wider impacts.

2. Developing thought through courses of action.

3. Coping effectively with a range of unfamiliar situations and problems.

4. Understanding the implications of different issues and courses of action.

5. Identifying dilemmas and value conflicts.

6. Identifying and evaluating the effects and impact of operating parameters and principles.

7. Drawing on a broad personal or formal knowledge base and set of mental models relating to the area of practice.

8. Developing practical theories, ideas and models including finding ways forward when faced with contradictions and gaps in theories.

9. Researching, analysing and evaluating information to identify relationships and patterns and make informed judgements.

10. Designing practical research to provide new information and affect areas of practice.

11. Evaluating the effects of options and actions, including impacts outside of the immediate context.

12. Taking innovative approaches to address issues.

13. Developing novel solutions to sets of problems.

Level 6

1. Responsibility across a broad area including for planning, resourcing and quality as well as for outcomes and their immediate and wider impacts.

2. Developing thought through courses of action.

3. Working effectively in complex and unpredictable contexts.

4. Understanding the implications of different issues and courses of action.

5. Understanding and managing dilemmas and value conflicts.

6. Identifying interrelationships between wider systems in which the area of practice is located.

7. Drawing on a broad personal or formal knowledge base and set of mental models relating to the area of practice.

8. Developing and evaluating a range of practical theories, ideas and models, including finding ways forward in problematic situations.

9. Researching, analysing and evaluating information to identify relationships and patterns and make informed judgements.

10. Designing practical, methodically sound research to provide new information and affect areas of practice.

11. Evaluating the actual and potential effect of theories and actions, including impacts outside of the immediate context.

12. Taking innovative approaches in complex situations.

13. Developing novel approaches to systems.

Level 7

1. Full responsibility for methods, actions and immediate and wider impacts which extend beyond the immediate area of practice.

2. Developing thought through courses of action which take into account issues beyond the immediate area of practice.

3. Working effectively in problematic contexts, which contain value-conflicts, and uncertainties which extend beyond the immediate area of practice.

4. Understanding alternative implications of different issues and courses of action.

5. Understanding and managing dilemmas and value conflicts.

6. Understanding and acting on interrelationships between wider systems in which the area of practice is located.

7. Using mastery of knowledge relating to and extending into the wider context of the area of practice.

8. Developing and critically evaluating a range of practical theories, ideas and models, including overcoming dilemmas and finding ways forward in problematic situations.

9. Researching, analysing and evaluating information to identify interrelationships between wider systems in which the area of practice is located.

10. Undertaking substantial investigation to address significant areas of practice, using methodologies, which are consistent with their purposes and contexts.

11. Critically evaluating thinking, action and structural factors operating in the area of practice, including underlying assumptions, and identifying implications for wider systems beyond the area of practice.

12. Developing innovative ways forward in complex and unpredictable situations.

13. Developing novel approaches to systems.

1.15 Role of RAL Adviser

Each student will be allocated an Adviser to provide support and guidance in preparing their claim for recognition of experiential learning and completion of a RAL module. The role of the Adviser will be to:

- introduce the student to the language that is used for defining learning outcomes within the higher education sector;
- provide advice and guidance in identifying the student's possible Areas of Learning;
- provide advice and guidance in annotating their CV and job description to demonstrate the learning has taken place;
- support the student in identifying the theories and concepts that are relevant to their experience, in relating theory to practice and in mapping theories, concepts and practice to their Areas of Learning;
- support the student in quantifying and qualifying the volume and level of their credit claim;
- provide support and guidance in writing a reflective essay for the RAL module;
- hold professional discussions with the student during tutorials throughout their period of study;
- provide a statement on the RPEL claim form (PL3b) on the portfolio of evidence and the reflective essay evaluating the learning that has been achieved.

1.16 Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) and Accreditation Board

This Board is responsible for considering claims submitted by prospective and current students for the recognition of their experiential learning. The Board may award credit on the basis of such claims and Admissions Tutors may use this credit in considering student applications for admission to, or advanced standing for, a programme of study.

The extent to which individual cases will vary makes it impossible to be entirely prescriptive in the rules for awarding credit for experiential learning. However, it is possible to develop acceptable norms for the awarding of credit, based on the fundamental premise of aiming to achieve consistency and justice for the student while maintaining the quality and standards of awards. For these reasons an Academic Mentor or a RAL Adviser will initially assess the claim and make a recommendation for the volume and level of credit to be awarded. Applications from the University's Structural or Collaborative partner institutions will require additional recommendations from a member of staff from the Professional Practice Framework Team in the Institute/Faculty of Management and Health and the relevant Partnership Team Leader.

The RPEL and Accreditation Board will meet to evaluate each claim, and to make a final decision on the volume and level of credit to be awarded.

In some cases, a time-limit will need to be placed on certain elements of the credit that can be awarded for experiential learning, for example in areas of rapid and significant technological change.

Terms of Reference

This Board is responsible for considering claims submitted by prospective and current students for the recognition of prior experiential learning as specified in the University's RPL Policy and for functioning as an examining board for accredited provision as outlined in Chapter 10 of the Academic Quality Handbook.

The Board is chaired by a Chair to be appointed by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and, will normally meet at least four times each academic year, and reports to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

RPEL

(1) To implement the RPL Policy and evaluate RPEL claims submitted to the committee and to make a final decision on the volume and level of credit to be awarded.

(2) When assessing RPEL claims, the Board considers the following:
   i. whether the statement provided by the applicant is valid and reliable and relates to the applicant's own efforts and achievements;
   ii. whether any supporting statements are sufficient to make a recommendation of achievement of the Areas of Learning for which credit is sought;
   iii. whether the evidence provided is sufficient to demonstrate achievement of the Areas of Learning for which credit is sought;
   iv. whether the applicant should be required to present further documentation in support of his/her claim, or that the applicant should be required to revise and resubmit his/her claim form;
   v. whether any conditions apply (for example, a time limit for progression to the next level);
   vi. whether the decision is in line with any precedent set;
   vii. that the integrity of the academic standard of the award is maintained.

(3) To make recommendations to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on any matters relating to Credit and Advanced Standing on the basis of experiential learning;

Accreditation

(4) To scrutinise a sample of learner assessments, to approve the level and credit value of work completed by the learners on accredited provision, and to request certificates or transcripts to be issued by Registry as relevant;

(5) To make recommendations to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on assessment processes relating to accreditation, if relevant.

(6) To receive annual reports from Institutes/Faculties on the operation of their accredited provision.

Membership
Chair to be approved by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (on a three-year rolling basis)
Programme Manager for the Professional Practice Framework
RAL Module Coordinator
Institute/Faculty Accreditation Tutor representative(s)
One member of staff from each Institute/Faculty

One representative from the Apprenticeship Unit
External member
Academic Mentors
RAL Advisers

1.17 Fraudulent claims

If there is evidence that a student has fraudulently presented documentation in support of his/her claim, this matter would be regarded as an attempt to gain unfair advantage and should be dealt with under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy or Admissions Policy as appropriate.

1.18 Appeals

An appeal may only be submitted if the student believes there to have been material irregularity in the processing of their application.

Applicants/students wishing to appeal in relation to the awarding of RPCL should write to the Admissions Manager, or Collaborative Partnerships Office as appropriate, and provide details of the grounds of their appeal.

Applicants/students wishing to appeal against the decision of the RPEL and Accreditation Board should follow the process outlined in the Academic Appeal Policy. In accordance with the Academic Appeal Policy, there will not be any right of appeal against the academic judgement.

1.19 Resource Implications

Implication	Detail
Finance	*No financial implications anticipated.*
Staff	*No additional resource anticipated.*
Assets	*There are no identified asset costs.*
Partners	*Consideration will be given to the application of this policy across the dual-sector group.*
Timescales	*Once approved the policy will be implemented immediately. The policy will be reviewed annually as part of the review of the Academic Quality Handbook and its associated policies.*
Leadership	*PVC responsible for Academic Experience*

1.20 Impact Assessment

Implication	Impact Considered (Yes/No)	Impact Identified
Legal		*The policy conforms with:* • *QAA UK Quality Code* • *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications*
Contribution to the Strategic Plan		*The policy aligns with the values expressed in the Strategic Plan*
Risk Analysis		*The policy manages the risk of recognising certificated and experiential learning.*
Equality		*The policy will ensure adherence to provisions of the Equality Act.*
Welsh Language		*The policy aligns with the principles expressed in the Welsh Language Act.*
Environmental and Sustainability		*None identified.*
Communication/ Media / Marketing		*The policy is cross-referenced in Chapter 11 of the Academic Quality Handbook and will be published next to the relevant chapter on the Academic Office webpages.*

Policy author(s):

……Teleri James……..Job Title…Head of Quality……..

1.21 Document version control

Version No:	Reason for change:	Author:	Date of change:
0.1	Draft Policy to AQSC	TJ	24.02.2021
0.2	Approved Policy	TJ	01.03.2021
0.3	Revising RPEL Board to RPEL and Accreditation Board	MP/TJ	01.08.2021
0.4	Further clarification of guidance on: data protection, applications from students at partner institutions, documentation for portfolios and microcredentials.	MP/TJ/AG	12.08.2022
0.5	Sections 1.6 and 1.7 revised for further clarity and consistency with AQH	TJ	03.03.2023
0.6	Roles of Academic Mentor and RAL Adviser updated to include professional discussions with the student	AG	16.08.2023
0.7	Section 1.2 updated to align with AQH Chapter 6 Section 1.16 updated to align RPEL and Accreditation Board Terms of Reference and Membership with changes to Accreditation procedures set out in AQH Chapter 10	TJ	12.12.2024 (Approved by ASC Chair's action 17.12.2024)
0.8	Minor updates to update location of published forms and changes in staffing responsibilities	TJ, AG, SMc	16.09.2025
0.9	Housekeeping update to clarify Standard RPCL process, and to amend Institutes to Institutes/Faculties and ASC to AQSC	TJ	03.09.2026

(this should include the journey of the policy through the Committee structure).

Current status of Policy: ~~draft~~ / approved*

Is the Policy applicable to: Both FE and HE*

Date ratified: 24 / 02 / 2021**

Date effective from: 24 / 02 / 2021**

Policy review date: 01 / 05 / 2027**

For publication: on UWTSD website ~~/ MyDay / Not to be published.~~

*Delete as appropriate
** insert when available

Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David