

SoundSkool Music

Recognition of Prior Learning and Accreditation Policy

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Amendments Made Since Last Review Date	Section 3 updated regarding RPL requests and adhering to the qualification awarding organisation's RPL process and procedures, prior to learner registrations.



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1.0 Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to set out the process and guidance for the relevant staff within SoundSkool, its intention is to provide an accurate as is possible recognition and evidencing of knowledge, understanding and skills that have previously been achieved and/or certificated by an individual. This policy is part of the bigger initial assessment process and will support individuals who are directly involved with planning, coaching, guiding and delivering learning.

Not all learners have access to formal learning. The main principles behind RPL are that an individual's prior achievements can be recognised and that a learner is not disadvantaged by their educational background.

2.0 Defining 'Recognition of Prior Learning'

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can show that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit or qualification through knowledge, understanding or skills they already have and do not need to develop through learning.

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be VACS:

- **Valid** – the work is relevant to the assessment criteria
- **Authentic or Attributable** – the work has been produced solely by the learner
- **Current** – the work is still relevant at the time of assessment
- **Sufficient** – the work covers all the assessment criteria

RPL focuses on assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- A unit towards a full qualification
- A full qualification

This also can include functional skills qualifications, where elements of the qualification but not the full qualification have been achieved prior.

3.0 Process

Applications for RPL must be submitted to the Head of College at either a learner's programme Initial Advice and Guidance (IAG) stage or at the point where the learner's ILP (Individual Learning Plan) is being created with the learner. All RPL activity must be completed prior to a learner starting their qualification learning activities and prior to the registration with the qualification awarding organisation. It is imperative that the qualification awarding organisation's process and procedures for requesting RPL is adhered to, prior to the learner registration(s).

Where RPL is permitted for a qualification, the centre must undertake a mapping exercise to identify and evaluate whether the learner's previous evidence provided, satisfies current assessment criteria and a decision made whether the evidence provided partly or fully maps against the qualification or unit being claimed.

Where units are assessed using RPL, then all evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. In assessing a unit using RPL, the tutor

must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learners is VACS (as above) and meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcomes and its related assessment criteria.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary. 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, knowledge and/or competence. Where there is an assessment strategy/plan for a qualification, this must be adhered to at all times.

If a tutor wishes to use RPL, the following must be ensured:

- RPL processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible.
- The qualification awarding organisation's process and procedures for requesting RPL must be adhered to, prior to the learner registration(s).
- Achievement must be identified prior to taking a qualification.
- Learners are registered as soon as they formally start to gather evidence.
- All evidence of RPL is retained for the purpose of External Quality Assurance.
- Certification and claims are made according to normal procedures.
- All relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed.
- Assessors must have the appropriate expertise in order to support the RPL process.
- The process is not concerned with allowing for exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study.
- The process of assessment for RPL is subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring standards as any other form of assessment.

4.0 Examples of RPL Evidence

RPL evidence may not, in some cases, cover all requirements of a unit and further methods of assessment may be necessary such as professional discussion or observation. Assessors must ensure that any evidence presented is valid and authentic.

Examples include:

- Documentation (e.g. work products/artefacts, project plans, commissioning reports, design documents)
- Audio or Visual evidence (e.g. photographs, videos)
- Expert Witness testimonies
- Reflective Accounts
- Professional discussion

5.0 Appeals

Appeals Procedure applies to any assessment decision including RPL evidence. Please refer to the Appeals Policy.

6.0 Review Arrangements

SoundSkool will review this policy annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements; amendment and review may also be in response to feedback requests or good practice guidance issued by Regulators, to align with their appeals and complaints process.