Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Document Control

Document Title	Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
Version Number	001
Status	Approved
Publication Date	7th March 2026
Policy Owner / Author	Directors
Review Date	7th March 2027
Approved / Ratified by	Directors
Distribution	All Staff, Volunteers, Directors, Sessional Workers

1. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to most qualifications, including those on credit-based frameworks.

These include the National Qualification Framework (NQF), the Qualifications and Credit

Framework (QCF) and the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and other national frameworks and self-regulated qualifications.

2. Review arrangements

Whamos Training and Development CIC will review this policy annually in line with self-assessment arrangements. This policy will be also be revised as and when necessary, in response to customer and learner feedback or good practice guidance issued by an awarding organisation or other regulatory body.

3. Location of the policy

This policy is available for all staff members, third parties and learners to access.

4. Communication of the policy

Each staff member involved in the management, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of qualifications offered by Whamos Training and Development CIC, shall be made aware of this policy during their induction period of employment. Learners undertaking Educating UK qualifications shall be informed of this policy during their induction process.

5. Policy statement

According to the regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework and the Regulated Qualifications Framework

*‘**Recognition of Prior Learning is a method of assessment** (leading to the award of credit) **that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding of skills they already possess and so not need to develop through a course of learning**’**.*

Whamos Training and Development CIC recognises that RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate methodology. Provided the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be valid and reliable.

Statement of Principles Terminology

RPL encompasses a number of terms to describe this process. Among the most common are:

- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)
- Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
- Accreditation of Prior Learning and Achievement (APLA)

These terms broadly describe the same process. Most awarding organisations use the term Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in connection with the Regulated Qualifications Framework.

6. When to use RPL

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. The knowledge, understanding and/or skills in question may have been acquired in any area of life, for example, domestic/family life, education and training, work related activities, community or voluntary activities.

As long as all the composite learning outcomes have been met, an individual can claim credit for units where RPL has been used to generate all or some of the evidence required.

7. Principles of RPL

RPL is a valid method of enabling individuals to claim credit for units, irrespective of how their learning took place. There is no difference between the achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit through prior learning or through a formal 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. The award of credit through RPL will not be distinguished from any other credits awarded.

The prior learning that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. It will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If the currency of the evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, and for competence.

The assessment and award of credit must take into account the relevant validating or awarding organisation's regulations pertaining to RPL.

Learners have the right to appeal when an application for credit is unsuccessful.

8. Learner entitlement

All learners shall be entitled to apply for RPL, providing they meet the specific requirements of the awarding organisation governing the qualification for which they are studying.

A learner who makes an initial enquiry about RPL should be given timely and appropriate guidance and support on the rules, regulations and processes involved in accreditation.

A learner may appeal against the credit points awarded but only on the grounds of non-observance of agreed procedures and/or improper application of those procedures.

9. Assessment of RPL evidence

Assessment methods for RPL must be of equal rigour to other assessment methods, be fit for purpose and relate to the evidence of learning. Credit may be claimed for any unit through RPL unless the assessment requirements of the unit do not allow this, based on a rationale consistent with the aims and regulations of the framework. The methods of assessment used will be determined by the assessment strategy for the qualification being assessed but might, for example include:

- Examination of documents
- Witness testimony
- Reflective accounts

- Professional discussion

Where units are assessed against assessment criteria or grading criteria, then all evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated criteria. In assessing a unit using RPL the assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcome and its related assessment criteria.

It is the role of tutors, assessors and internal quality assurers to ensure that evidence of learning is:

Valid – The evidence provided by the learner must genuinely demonstrate that it conforms to the demands of the learning outcome.

Current – Currency of evidence is particularly important. For example, does the evidence meet up-to-date demands or does it reflect a practice that has significantly changed? Evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. 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, and for competence.

Sufficient – There must be enough evidence to fully meet the requirements of the learning outcome, or learning outcomes, to be considered. If there is insufficient evidence to fully meet requirements, then evidence obtained through RPL must be complemented by evidence gained through other suitable assessment methods before requirements can be said to have been met.

Authentic – The evidence being examined must genuinely be the work of the learner. If the evidence produced is the result of team work, then it is acceptable providing the new learning outcome is related to team / joint working, but not if it was being used as evidence of an activity which should have been carried out individually. It is important that learners understand what plagiarism means and sign a declaration of authenticity.

Reliable – Evidence obtained through RPL should be such that an assessor would arrive at the same assessment decision, were the assessment to be repeated.

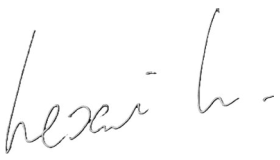
RPL requests will only be applied at the discretion of the Director of Educating UK.

The awarding organisation has the final decision regarding all RPL requested.

Any fees charged to Whamos Training and Development CIC for making an RPL request to an awarding organisation will be payable by the learner making the RPL request.

Approval & Review

This policy has been approved on behalf of the Directors:

Elizabeth Amos-Milburn *Co-Director*	**Alexandra Gager-Liebhart** *Co-Director*
	

Date of approval: 7th March 2026

Next review: 7th March 2027

Schedule 1 — Record of Changes

Version	Date	Nature of Change
001	7th March 2026	Initial published version included in the Combined Policies and Procedures 2026 edition.