



Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

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1. Policy Statement

1.1 Staff Power Training (SPT) is committed to providing flexible and accessible learning pathways for all learners. We recognise that valuable learning occurs in a variety of settings, not just in formal classrooms. This policy provides a framework for identifying, assessing, and formally recognising a learner's existing knowledge, skills, and experience against the requirements of our qualifications. This process is known as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

1.2 We are committed to ensuring our RPL process is transparent, fair, valid, and reliable for all applicants.

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- *Acknowledge the value of prior learning, whether formal, non-formal, or informal.*
- *Provide a clear and consistent procedure for learners and staff to follow when applying for and assessing RPL.*
- *Prevent learners from undertaking redundant training for skills and knowledge they already possess.*
- *Widen participation and access to qualifications by offering an alternative route to assessment.*
- *Ensure compliance with the requirements of our awarding organisations and relevant UK regulatory bodies (e.g., Ofqual).*

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all prospective and currently enrolled learners on all qualifications offered by SPT where RPL is a permitted method of assessment by the respective awarding organisation.

4. Definition of Prior Learning

4.1 Prior learning is defined as any learning that has not previously been assessed and awarded credit. For the purpose of this policy, it is categorised as follows:

4.1.1 *Formal (Certificated) Learning: Learning that has been formally assessed and has resulted in a qualification, certificate, or credit from a recognised educational institution or awarding organisation (e.g., another qualification, a unit from a different qualification).*

4.1.2 *Informal (Experiential) Learning: Knowledge and skills gained through life and work experience. This is often unstructured and is not typically certificated but can be a valid source of evidence (e.g., skills learned on the job, through hobbies, or volunteering).*

5. Principles of RPL

5.1 The RPL process at SPT is governed by the following principles, often referred to as **VARCS**:

- 5.1.1 **Valid:** The evidence provided must directly relate to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the specific unit or qualification being claimed.
- 5.1.2 **Authentic:** The evidence must be the learner's own work and attributable to them.
- 5.1.3 **Reliable:** The evidence must demonstrate sound competence which would allow confidence in the ability of the learner re-producing the evidence in the future.
- 5.1.4 **Current:** The evidence must demonstrate that the learner's knowledge and skills are still up-to-date with current industry standards and practices. As a general guide, evidence should be from within the last 3 years.
- 5.1.5 **Sufficient:** There must be enough evidence to fully meet the requirements of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

6. The RPL Process

6.1 Step 1: Initial Enquiry and Guidance

- Learners expressing an interest in RPL will receive initial advice and guidance from our admissions or curriculum team.
- This discussion will establish whether RPL is a suitable pathway for the learner, explain the process, time and commitment involved.

6.2 Step 2: Application

- The learner will be provided with an RPL Application Form.
- A qualified assessor will be assigned to the learner to support them in identifying relevant units for their RPL claim and understanding the evidence requirements.

6.3 Step 3: Evidence Gathering and Portfolio Development

- The learner is responsible for gathering evidence to support their claim. The assessor will guide the learner in building a portfolio.
- Evidence may include, but is not limited to:
 - o *Certificates and transcripts for prior qualifications.*
 - o *Job descriptions and performance appraisals.*
 - o *Witness testimonies from employers or supervisors (must be verifiable).*
 - o *Product evidence (e.g., work products, reports, presentations).*
 - o *Reflective accounts detailing how their experience meets specific learning outcomes.*
 - o *CVs, personal statements, and letters of support.*
 - o *Records of attendance for non-formal courses.*

6.4 Step 4: Assessment

- The assessor will review the submitted portfolio against the VACS principles.
- Where the portfolio alone is not sufficient, other assessment methods may be used, such as:
 - o *Professional Discussion: A structured interview with the assessor to explore the learner's knowledge and understanding.*
 - o *Observation: Direct observation of the learner performing a task in their workplace (if applicable).*
 - o *Set Tasks/Questions: The learner may be asked to complete a specific task or answer questions to fill any identified gaps in evidence.*

6.5 Step 5: Decision and Feedback

- The assessor will make a judgment on the RPL claim.
- The outcome will be one of the following:
 - o *Full Recognition: The learner has met all requirements for the unit(s)/qualification.*
 - o *Partial Recognition: The learner has met the requirements for some, but not all, units. The learner will be advised on the remaining units they need to complete.*
 - o *No Recognition: The evidence was insufficient to meet any requirements.*
- The assessor will provide clear, constructive written feedback to the learner explaining the decision.
- RPL achievement must be recognised before the learner starts the qualification.

6.6 Step 6: Appeals

- Learners who disagree with an RPL assessment decision have the right to appeal. The appeal must be submitted in writing within 10 working days of receiving the decision. Please refer to our the SPT Appeals Policy for the full procedure.

7. Awarding Organisations - AIM

7.1. All applications for recognition of prior learning and credit transfer must be completed on the [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) credit transfer form](#), available to download from the AIM website.

7.2. The completed Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) form should be emailed by the centre to compliance@aimgroup.org.uk.

7.3. The date of RPL validity (the date of the evidence for RPL) will be taken from the RPL application date. All RPL applications must be completed and sent to AIM at the point of learner registration before the learner starts the programme.

7.4. The outcome of the application will be sent via email to the centre within 10 working days.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 The Learner: Is responsible for initiating an RPL request, actively participating in the process, and providing authentic and sufficient evidence.

8.2 The Assessor: Is responsible for guiding the learner, assessing the evidence fairly and consistently against the standards, providing feedback, and maintaining accurate records.

8.3 The Internal Quality Assurer (IQA): Is responsible for sampling RPL assessment decisions, ensuring consistency and fairness across all assessors, and providing support and standardisation.

8.4 Administrative Staff: Are responsible for processing applications, managing records, and communicating with learners about the process.

9. Record Keeping

9.1 All records related to the RPL process, including application forms, evidence portfolios, assessment records, and feedback, will be securely stored in the learner's file for a period of 3 years.

9.2 This will be done in accordance with the SPT Data Protection Policy and the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018. Records will be made available to the awarding organisation and regulatory bodies upon request.

10. Quality Assurance

10.1 The RPL process is an integral part of our overall quality assurance framework. It is subject to our internal verification and standardisation procedures.

10.2 RPL assessment practice and outcomes will be regularly reviewed in standardisation meetings and through our annual self-assessment review process to ensure continuous improvement.

11. Policy Review

11.1 This policy will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if there are significant changes in legislation, working practices, or following any related incidents.