Exams: Recognition of Prior learning policy

Henry David Learning

Woodfield School

August 2026 – August 2027

Amendments made: August 2026

Review due August 2027

Reviewed by: Lynsey O'Keeffe

Signed off by Proprietary Body

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

This policy applies to all NOCN qualifications.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Fair Assessment Policy and Internal Quality Assurance Policy.

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. Partial unit completion is not acceptable.

Woodfield school encourages the use of RPL where it is of value to learners in facilitating assessment. The use and application of RPL enables learners to gain all or part of a qualification without having to undertake a formal learning programme. RPL focuses on assessment and awarding prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- A unit accumulated towards a full qualification
- A full qualification.

When carrying out RPL, Woodfield school will ensure that:

- Identification of potential achievement through RPL should normally take place before learners are registered for a qualification, wherever possible.
- Records of assessment are maintained, as for any other unit/qualification
- Certification and claims are made according to normal procedures
- All relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed
- There are designated personnel with the appropriate expertise to support and assure the RPL process.

Evidence of Learning

All evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. 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.

Example of evidence that may be submitted include:

- Certificates—copies of previous qualifications
- Qualification Specifications—in order to map the learning outcomes and assessment methods, the assessor must see qualification units and previous assessment methods
- Witness Statements—signed by a reliable person as evidence of practical experience.

All evidence of learning must be:

Valid

Addresses the elements and performance criteria. Reflects the skills, knowledge and context described in the qualification specification.

Authentic

The evidence being submitted is in its original format, can be verified as genuine and can be confirmed as the work of the learner.

Sufficient

The Assessor must see sufficient evidence to cover all aspects of the unit, units or qualification being claimed. The evidence must demonstrate competence over a period and that is able to be repeated.

Current

The evidence must demonstrate the learner’s current skills and knowledge and must comply with current best practice guidance. For example, witness statements for practical experience must be within the last 5 years.

Reliable

Evidence must be from a reliable source and in a reliable format, on organisation headed paper or certification. All translated documents must be translated by an official translator to ensure authenticity.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal and Internal Quality Assurer, or sooner if awarding organisation requirements, legislation or school procedures change. The date of the next review is August 2027.