

Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy

1 General

- 1.1 Skills and Education Group Access encourages its centres to recognise the previous achievements of learners. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a general term and is a process of recognising previous learning, experience or achievement which may satisfy the requirements of a unit/component yet to be assessed or awarded. Prior experience/achievements may have resulted from past or present employment, previous study, or voluntary activities.
- 1.2 RPL must be current to be used by the learner, which will normally be within the last three years. For credit transfer the unit must still be valid. For exemptions this means three years from the start of the original award to the point at which the learner registers with the centre on the course for which the claim is to be made.
- 1.3 We provide centres with advice and guidance on how to approach the RPL process and will consider any claims for RPL under the following headings subject to the procedures laid down in *Delivering and Assessing Qualifications*.
- 1.4 It is a requirement that no more than 50% of a Diploma may be achieved through Credit Transfer or RPL.

2 Definitions of Prior Learning

2.1 Credit Transfer:

We attach credit to all units with our Access to Higher Education Diplomas. Credit transfer is the process of using certificated credits already achieved on an Access to HE Diploma and transferring that achievement as a valid contribution to the award of another Diploma. Units / components transferred must share the same credit value, although there is no requirement for the learning outcomes and assessment criteria to be identical.¹

Where a student wishes to transfer credit either between Diplomas or between AVAs, it is up to Skills and Education Group Access to determine the relevance of the achievement to which the credit relates to the receiving

¹ This is a deliberate policy of QAA, designed to facilitate the transfer of credit between AVAs. Please see QAA (2020) *The Access to Higher Education Diploma specification* for further details.

named Diploma. A Skills and Education Group Access team member will make this judgement on a case by case basis.

Where credit is transferred this must be derived from units that are acceptable within the rules of combination of the named Diploma for which the student is transferring. A Skills and Education Group Access team member will judge, on a case by case basis, whether the unit being transferred is within the spirit of the rules of combination.

Units that are claimed via Credit Transfer are not recorded on students' transcripts, nor is detail of such achievement passed to UCAS. Therefore students and providers are advised that where credit transfer is used, they should inform UCAS (where applicable) and any HEIs that they are planning to apply to.

2.2 Recognition of Prior Learning:

Recognition of Prior Learning may take the form of recognition or prior certificated learning where prior certificated learning is recognised as demonstrating achievement equivalent to that required to achieve one or more units of a named Access to HE Diploma. As the previous learning has already been certificated, no credit is awarded, but students are exempted from the achievement of credit to a value judged by Skills and Education Group Access to be equivalent.

Recognition of Prior Learning may also take the form of recognition of prior experiential learning where non-certificated learning achieved in a range of learning contexts is recognised as demonstrating learning equivalent to one or more units required for the award of a named Diploma.

3 Claiming RPL or Credit Transfer

- 3.1 It is a requirement of all Access to HE Diplomas that any request for Credit Transfer or recognition of Prior Learning must be made in advance of the learner being registered to the units they are studying.² Any requests made after 12 weeks of the learner joining the course will be declined.
- 3.2 For RPL requests, the student should present evidence from previous experience, which is then assessed by the provider against the learning outcomes of the units being claimed. Providers should then send evidence of RPL, mapped against a specific Access to HE unit, to Skills and Education Group Access with a completed form AVA PL04 Request for RPL or Credit Transfer. If Skills and Education Group Access is in agreement with the

² The current requirements is that a learner must be registered to their Access to HE Diploma within 42 days of that learner joining the course, and must be registered to their units no later than 12 weeks following the date the learner joined the course. Skills and Education Group Access checks registration data against ESFA data, to ensure that the start date of the course given to Skills and Education Group Access matches that given to ESFA by the provider.

provider that the evidence satisfies the requirements of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the unit, the unit is achieved, and the student awarded credit. Units achieved in this way are not graded.

- 3.3 If a student wishes claim credit transfer (either from a Skills and Education Group Access validated Diploma, or from that offered by another AVA), providers should complete form Request for RPL or Credit Transfer and send this to Skills and Education Group Access with evidence of achievement.³ In considering such requests, a Skills and Education Group Access team member will make a judgement on whether the skills, knowledge and behaviours acquired correspond to or complement the content of the receiving Diploma.
- 3.4 Skills and Education Group Access will respond to all applications for RPL or Credit Transfer within 10 working days of receipt of a completed Request for RPL or Credit Transfer form.

4 Quality Assurance

- 4.1 This policy will be reviewed biennially to meet regulatory compliance or following any case of confirmed malpractice.

³ If the unit that the student wishes to Credit Transfer was gained on a Skills and Education Group Access awarded Access to HE Diploma, there is no need to send evidence of achievement, unless the student has changed name since the certificate was issued. In such cases, the evidence of achievement should be sent to Skills and Education Group Access along with proof of the student's changed ID (such as marriage certificate, deed poll record or decree nisi).