Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

This policy is available on-line at: www.tynecoast.ac.uk

- We will consider any request for this policy to be made available in an alternative format or language. Please note that the College may charge for this. Please contact: The Principal at Tyne Coast College.

- We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. We welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of this policy.

Approved by:	Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Contact Person:
Executive Group	V8	Nov 2026	Nov 2029	Principal Tyne Coast College

Review: **3 years**

POLICY NUMBER: 50

1 Policy Statement

1.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) 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 or skills they already possess and so not need to develop through a course of learning.

1.2 The College recognises that the RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate 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 or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be valid and reliable (see 5.6)

2 Scope

The policy can be applied to internally assessed parts vocational qualifications (inclusive of those qualifications that have externally set themes/topics which are internally assessed) including those on the Regulated Qualifications Framework, Self-Regulated Framework (SRF e.g. Pearson) and other national frameworks in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. It is also applicable for the Office for Students (OfS) in Higher Education. RPL can also be applied to internally assessed parts of equivalent vocational qualifications from different Awarding Organisations. The use of recognition of prior learning is optional. However, where learning is evidenced only through a national examination, the learner is required to sit the examination. For example, General Qualifications such as GCSEs or GCE are not within the scope of this policy.

3 Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 applies to the operation of this policy.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 All staff have a responsibility to give full and active support for the policy by ensuring that: the policy is known, understood and implemented.

5 Principles to Implement and Develop Policy

5.1 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.

5.2 RPL processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible to individuals and stakeholders to ensure that users can be confident of the decisions and outcomes of RPL.

5.3 RPL is a learner-centred, voluntary (for the learner) process. The individual should be offered advice on the nature and range of evidence considered appropriate, to support a claim for credit through RPL, and be given guidance and support to make a claim.

5.4 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. In no circumstances does the RPL process mean that any required qualification summative assessment can be avoided, e.g. mandatory

exams, practical/theory tests or assignments. This is because the prescribed summative assessment is the process through which evidence (produced via any prior assessment method or through the RPL process is evaluated).

5.5 Assessment methods for RPL must be of equal academic rigour to other assessment methods; they must 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.

5.6 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. The evidence must be authentic, current, relevant and sufficient.

5.7 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 any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, and for competence.

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

5.9 The rules, regulations and procedures governing the recognition of prior learning should be included in the Student Handbook given to every student when joining the programme/course.

5.10 A student should have the right to appeal when an application for recognition of prior learning is unsuccessful.

6 Student Entitlement

6.1 All students, full and part time, shall be entitled to apply for RPL providing they meet the specific requirements of the validating/awarding body governing the qualification for which they are studying.

6.2 A student 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.

6.3 A student 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.

7 Student Responsibilities

7.1 The student must complete a credit claim form and provide evidence to show that the requirements of the unit, module or part of a unit, or module have been covered (see Appendix 1).

7.2 The student must consult with the agreed subject specialist in the preparation of his/her evidence.

7.3 Any student applying for credit must agree an action plan to enable him/her to obtain the award (s)he is aiming for.

7.4 A student must agree to attend any further oral assessments or appropriate assessments if initial evidence is deemed to be unsatisfactory for the RPL assessor.

8 Teaching Staff's Responsibilities

8.1 To provide support and encouragement to all students wishing to claim credit for prior learning.

8.2 Following initial enquiries by any student, the member of staff should place the student in contact with a subject specialist.

8.3 The subject specialist should develop, with the student, an action plan to address the learning outcomes of the programme.

8.4 The subject specialist should identify the evidence needed to support the claim for credit, explain how this evidence will be assessed, and by whom.

8.5 Ensure that the student claiming credit is enrolled with the College for a specific award/qualification.

8.6 To notify MIS of any student claiming credits by RPL or using units gained from one qualification towards the next level of achievement.

9 Management Responsibilities

9.1 College management should ensure that:

9.1.1 All College staff are fully conversant with this policy and the demands it places on them.

9.1.2 All appropriate staff are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities in the procedures for verification and recognition of prior learning.

9.1.3 Staff development is made available to those staff not conversant with or competent to undertake the procedures for RPL.

10 Monitoring and Evaluation

10.1 The Executive Group will monitor the operation of the policy to ensure it reflects current strategic aims, every 3 years.

10.2 The standards by which the success of the policy can be evaluated are:

10.2.1 Student feedback, showing high levels of satisfaction with the advice and help received in preparing to claim RPL.

10.2.2 Staff feedback on the quality of support provided by the College to enhance skills and competence to undertake the procedures for RPL.

10.2.3. External examiner/verifier comments on the rigour and consistency applied to RPL procedures across the College.

10.2.4 Monitor the number of learners, on an annual basis, where RPL has been utilised in assessing entry requirements onto a programme of study.

11 Related Policies

- Assessment Policy – FE
- Assessment Policy – HE
- Internal Assessment Appeals Policy

Appendix 1

CREDIT CLAIM FORM (**complete all sections as fully as possible**)

If you have been offered a place on a programme of study at Tyne Coast College or are already registered on a programme you may be eligible for credit from previously acquired qualifications, vocational training and/or learning which is uncertified. If you wish to make a claim for recognition of prior learning please complete this form.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name:	
House Nº and Street:	
Town:	
Post Code:	
Telephone:	

CREDIT CLAIMED

Before you complete this section consult Section 7 Student Responsibilities. You should also discuss the possibility of credit awards with your course tutor who will advise you on the completion of this form.

Programme/Course on which you are registered, or have been accepted at Tyne Coast College:

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a) Module(s)/Unit(s) for which credit is claimed:

Module/Unit Code:		Title:	
Module/Unit Code:		Title:	
Module/Unit Code:		Title:	
Module/Unit Code:		Title:	
Module/Unit Code:		Title:	

b) Programme learning outcomes/objectives for which credit is claimed if they do not relate to specific individual modules or units of study.

BASIS FOR CREDIT CLAIM (Attach separate sheets)

In this section outline the achievements, experience and previously acquired qualifications and certificates you wish to use as the basis for your claim.

Refer to the details of the relevant modules or units in the Student Handbook for the programme or course in question.

You should attach photocopies of supporting documents wherever possible e.g. syllabus outlines, course structures, examination certificates.

On completion forward this form to your course tutor/assessor for consideration.

Equality, Diversity Inclusion and Belonging Tick List

We as a college community are focused on ensuring that those minority groups within society who are more likely to experience discrimination and are protected by the Equality Act 2010 do not experience unfair discrimination, harassment or victimisation while working at, studying at or visiting Tyne Coast College.

The Invigilation Policy has been written and complies with the following **Protected Characteristics** (please tick all that apply):

Age	x
Disability	x
Gender reassignment	x
Marriage or Civil Partnership (in employment only)	x
Pregnancy and Maternity	x
Race	x
Religion or Belief	x
Sex	x
Sexual Orientation	x

Full description of **Protected Characteristics** can be found in the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy

Name of Person responsible for Policy	David Gardner
Signed	
Date Reviewed	7-10-26