

## **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy**

**Centre:** Footprint School of Business (FSOB)

**Policy Owner:** Quality Assurance Lead

**Approval Date:** 1 April 2026

**Review Date:** A1 April 2027 (Annually)

### **1. Policy Statement**

Footprint School of Business (FSOB) is committed to recognising prior learning in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) enables learners to receive credit for previously acquired knowledge, skills, and understanding that meet the assessment requirements of an NCFE qualification.

### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a structured framework for recognising prior learning
- Ensure consistency and fairness in RPL decisions
- Prevent unnecessary duplication of learning and assessment
- Support learner progression and achievement
- Maintain compliance with NCFE quality assurance standards

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All NCFE qualifications delivered by FSOB
- All learners requesting RPL
- Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs), and administrative staff
- All forms of prior learning (formal, non-formal, and informal)

### **4. Definition of RPL**

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process through which previously assessed or experiential learning is formally recognised against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a qualification.

RPL includes:

- **Formal learning:** Previously certificated qualifications
- **Non-formal learning:** Structured training without formal certification
- **Informal learning:** Work experience or life experience

## 5. Principles of RPL (NCFE Aligned)

FSOB ensures that all RPL decisions are:

- **Valid** – Evidence meets the assessment criteria
- **Authentic** – Evidence is the learner's own work
- **Current** – Knowledge and skills remain relevant
- **Sufficient** – Enough evidence is provided
- **Reliable** – Assessment decisions are consistent

## 6. Eligibility for RPL

Learners may apply for RPL where:

- Prior learning directly maps to qualification learning outcomes
- Evidence can be verified and authenticated
- Learning is current and relevant to the qualification

RPL will **not** be accepted where:

- Evidence is outdated or unverifiable
- Assessment criteria are not fully met
- There is a risk to qualification integrity

## 7. RPL Process

### Stage 1: Initial Enquiry and Guidance

- Learners are informed of RPL opportunities during recruitment and induction

- Initial screening conducted by assessor/IQA
- Learners advised on suitability and evidence requirements

### **Stage 2: Application**

Learners must:

- Complete an RPL Application Form
- Provide supporting evidence (portfolio, certificates, work products)
- Map evidence to specific learning outcomes (with support if needed)

### **Stage 3: Assessment**

The assessor will:

- Review submitted evidence against assessment criteria
- Assess validity, authenticity, currency, and sufficiency
- Conduct professional discussion where necessary
- Record assessment decisions clearly

### **Stage 4: Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)**

- All RPL decisions are subject to IQA sampling
- IQA ensures consistency, fairness, and compliance
- Any discrepancies are addressed before certification

### **Stage 5: Decision and Feedback**

- Learners receive clear written feedback
- Outcomes may include:
  - Full recognition
  - Partial recognition (gap assessment required)
  - Rejection (with justification)

## **Stage 6: Certification**

- RPL credits are recorded appropriately
- Certification claims comply with NCFE requirements
- Full audit trail maintained

## **8. Evidence Requirements**

Acceptable evidence may include:

- Certificates and transcripts
- Work-based evidence (reports, projects, portfolios)
- Witness testimonies
- Professional discussions
- Reflective accounts

All evidence must:

- Be clearly mapped to learning outcomes
- Be authenticated
- Demonstrate competence

## **9. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **9.1 Assessors**

- Provide guidance to learners
- Assess RPL evidence fairly and consistently
- Maintain accurate records
- Ensure compliance with assessment standards

### **9.2 Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs)**

- Sample RPL decisions
- Ensure consistency and standardisation
- Provide feedback to assessors

- Maintain quality assurance records

### **9.3 Quality Assurance Lead**

- Oversee RPL implementation
- Ensure NCFE compliance
- Monitor RPL trends and outcomes
- Update policy and procedures

### **9.4 Learners**

- Provide valid and sufficient evidence
- Engage in the RPL process
- Declare authenticity of submissions

## **10. Appeals Procedure**

Learners have the right to appeal RPL decisions:

- Appeals must be submitted in writing within 10 working days
- Reviewed by an independent assessor/IQA
- Final decision communicated within 15 working days
- Escalation available through formal complaints procedure

## **11. Equality and Fairness**

FSOB ensures that:

- RPL is accessible to all learners
- No learner is disadvantaged
- Reasonable adjustments are applied where required
- Decisions are free from bias

## **12. Data Protection and Confidentiality**

- All RPL records are securely stored
- GDPR compliance is maintained
- Information shared on a need-to-know basis

### **13. Quality Assurance and NCFE Compliance**

To meet NCFE standards, FSOB will:

- Maintain full audit trails of RPL decisions
- Include RPL in IQA sampling plans
- Review RPL processes annually
- Ensure staff are trained in RPL procedures
- Provide evidence during EQA visits, including:
  - RPL applications
  - Assessment records
  - IQA sampling documentation
  - Learner feedback

### **14. Risk Management**

Potential risks and mitigation:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Invalid RPL claims	Strict evidence verification
Inconsistent decisions	IQA sampling and standardisation
Outdated evidence	Currency checks
Audit failure	Full documentation and tracking

### **15. Monitoring and Review**

- Policy reviewed annually
- Updated in line with NCFE guidance

- Continuous improvement informed by:
  - IQA findings
  - EQA feedback
  - Learner feedback