# DERBY COLLEGE GROUP POLICY

# HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

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| Policy Number: | HED-012 |
| Executive Owner: | Deputy CEO |
| Owning Strategy / Department: | Higher Education |
| Approval Board / Committee / Group: | HE Academic Board |
| User Group: | All students on a Higher Education programme |
| Relevant To: | As above |
| Implementation Date: | July 2019 |
| Approval Date: | July 2019 |
| Next Review Date: | September 2022 |
| Expiry Date: | December 2022 |

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| Date: | September 2021 |
| Originator: | Director of Higher Education |
| Area: | Higher Education |

**POLICY - PROCEDURES - GUIDELINES - RELATED DOCUMENTS**

# Policy Accountability and Implementation

Policy Title:                                HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
Policy Author / Reviewers:          Director of Higher Education, Director of Quality Compliance

Policy Implementation:             Director of Higher Education
Policy Monitoring and Compliance:  Director of Higher Education, Director of Quality Compliance
Policy Review Timeline:           Annually
Synopsis:
The College's provision for RPL seeks to ensure that applicants are admitted to the highest level of award for which they are qualified and for which they wish to apply, and that they are awarded the maximum amount of relevant credit to which they are entitled by virtue of their prior learning achievements. These principles apply equally to pre-entry, post-entry or credit transfer applications

# Policy Classification and Publication

## Classification
- Not Classified (NA)

## Publication
- Intranet – Policy portal
- Website – HE page

**Empowering/related legislative and/or authoritative references:** None

# Periodic Policy Review / Change History

| Version | Reviewed / Modified by: | Change History | Advisory committee / groups or specialists | Review / Meeting Date/s |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| V1 | Director of Quality and Director of Higher Education | Agreed policy | HE Academic Board | July 2019 |
| V2 | Director of HE | Policy review | HE Academic Board | November 2020 |
| V3 | Director of HE | Policy Review | HE Executive Board | July 2021 |
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# 1.    Policy Statement

1.1    This policy aims to provide guidance and clarity to the students, staff, employers and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies who are involved in the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

1.2    The College's provision for RPL seeks to ensure that applicants are admitted to the highest level of award for which they are qualified and for which they wish to apply, and that they are awarded the maximum amount of relevant credit to which they are entitled by virtue of their prior learning achievements. These principles apply equally to pre-entry, post-entry or credit transfer applications

# 2.    Definitions

2.1    RPL is defined as a method of assessment, leading to the award of credit, that considers whether a student can demonstrate that they meet the assessment requirements for a module through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a programme of learning.

2.2    The types of RPL are as follows:

(a) **Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)** (such as professional development awards or employment-based awards) which is at higher education level but which has not led to the award of credits or qualifications positioned on the relevant higher education qualifications framework;

(b) **Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)** is a process through which learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes, usually through the award of credit.

(c) **Credit Transfer** is recognition of credit or qualifications at higher education level (4 or above) awarded by a UK higher education awarding body in accordance with the relevant higher education qualifications framework;

(d) **Direct entry** is where students may be admitted to a degree programme in one of the later stages, having already completed the equivalent of the earlier stage(s) on a different programme e.g. a Foundation Degree or a Higher National. They will be recorded as "exempt" from the earlier stage(s), and this exemption will be reported on each issue of the student's Statement of Achievement or equivalent, thereby signalling that the credit requirements for the stage(s) have been completed.

2.3    RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given module or qualification have been met, the use of RPL may acceptable for accrediting a module, modules or a complete stage. Partial module completion is not acceptable. Evidence of learning must be:

- valid
- reliable
- authentic
- sufficient

## 3. Principles

3.1.    The following principles govern consideration of claims for recognition of prior learning:

(a)    Decisions about the recognition of prior learning take account of The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England.

(b)    Decisions about the recognition of prior learning are assessment decisions, and not simply admission decisions.

(c)    The principles associated with good practice in the management of assessment apply equally to processes for the RPL: transparency, fairness, consistency, reliability, and validity.

(d)    RPL is a student led activity. To qualify for an award all students must be treated equitably regardless of the source of the learning that is being assessed

(e)    Credit is given for relevant and recent learning and not for experience alone.

(f)    Assessment of claims for RPL must be given only for demonstrated learning, where equivalence of learning outcomes can be demonstrated, which is of an equivalent level, volume and currency.

For Undergraduate Awards, the maximum credits available as RPL is 50% of the credits for the level and applies only up to and including foundation degree, it is not applicable for a bachelor level award.

Recognition of prior learning (certified, experiential or uncertified) is not permitted at level 6 of a bachelor's degree or for the thesis/dissertation module, where students are experienced to complete 120 credits in order to gain the award.

| Exit award | Maximum credits available as RPL | Total credits required |
|---|---|---|
| Certificate in Higher Education | 60 credits at level 4 | 120 |
| Foundation Degree | 120 credits at level 4 or 5 | 240 |
| Level 6 (Top up) | 0 credits – RPL is not allowed at this level | 120 |

RPL claims exceeding the stated maximum for each stage (including the final stage) are permitted but with the proviso that students will not be eligible for the stage award.

For example, a student enrolled on a Foundation Degree who is awarded 80 credits at level 4 via RPL claim would not be eligible for an exit award of Cert HE as the maximum 60 credits has been exceeded.

(g)    Credit is not normally awarded for learning that has taken place more than six years previously, and in the case of some awards the currency of learning may have a shorter shelf life.

(h)    The principles of internal moderation of RPL apply.

(i)    All decisions regarding RPL should be recorded on the standard forms to ensure due process has been followed.

(j)    Under some circumstances there may be a limit to the proportion of a qualification that can be achieved by either credit transfer or RPL. Full details of these requirements will be identified in the rules of combination for any

qualifications offered by an awarding organisation/institution.

(k) Prior achievement of HE credit or qualifications is not automatically granted recognition in relation to College programmes; it depends on the currency and the relevance of the learning to the College programme, as well as it being at the appropriate academic level and of sufficient volume

## 4. Scope and Limitations

4.1. This policy is applicable to all Higher Education programmes that are not subject to a recognition of prior learning policy set by an awarding organisation/institution. These processes are designed to enable students to avoid the duplication of learning and assessment. There are two ways in which this will be achieved:

- The opportunity to transfer credits, i.e. to recognise previously accredited achievement to count towards other qualifications.

- For individuals with learning or achievements that have not been certificated/accredited it may be possible to assess and validate these through an RPL process. These achievements may then count towards a qualification.

4.2. This policy applies to all qualifications, including those on the National Qualification Framework (NQF), the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) Self-Regulated Framework (SRF), Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and other national frameworks in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and self-regulated qualifications.

4.3. This policy is applicable to all Higher Education programmes that are not subject to a RPL policy set by an awarding organisation/institution. These processes are designed to ensure that standards are achieved and recognised through the award of appropriate marks and to assure students that their work is assessed objectively and against clearly defined, published, assessment criteria. This applies to:

- Higher National programmes

- Honours degrees

- Degrees (non honours)

- Foundation degrees

- Short course at HE Levels 4 to 7

4.4. The College bases its assessment methods, practices and procedures on the principles of: transparency; consistency; validity; reliability and fairness and has been guided by the UK Quality Code, *Assessment,* and *Recognition of Prior Learning* and meets the following Core Practice:

(a) *The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.*

## 5. Responsibilities

5.1. Responsibility for this document rests with the Director of Higher Education.

5.2. The Policy Controller and Compliance Manager, in conjunction with the HE department will track all cases of Academic Misconduct and will submit an annual report to the Senior Management Team summarising the cases of Academic Misconduct. When requested, details of all Academic Miscount cases will be provided to the Higher Education Institution (HEI) with whom the students are ultimately registered with.

## 6. Implementation Arrangements

6.1. The arrangements that outlined below build on previous good practice and seek to provide additional impetus and coherence.

6.2. All new members of staff are made aware of the policy and procedures during the formal employee induction process.

6.3. The policy is published via the staff policy portal, is available to students via the student VLE and is accessible via the Derby College Group website. This policy can be provided in alternative formats on request.

6.4. Any updates or amendments to the policy and procedures are disseminated to the Leadership and Management team and communicated to team members.

## 7. Monitoring and Review

7.1. The policy and procedure is subject to regular review. It will be reviewed on a three year cycle with an annual appraisal of procedures and documentation. Review will take into account the views of students and stakeholders. DCG reserves the right to make whatever changes it deems appropriate.

## 8. Guidelines

8.1. There are no specific guidelines in relation to this policy.

## 9. Procedures

- HE Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure:
  - Introduction
  - Credit Transfer
  - Prior Certificated Learning
  - Prior Experiential Learning
- Appeals

## 10. Templates / Forms

10.1. There are no specific templates or forms related to this policy

## 11. Related Documents

11.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- HE Admissions Policy
- HE Enrolment and Registration Policy
- HE Internal Moderation Policy