SIAS

RECOGNISED PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) POLICY

VERSION 1.0

1. Introduction

This Recognised Prior Learning [1] (RPL) Policy is designed to ensure that learners' previous learning is acknowledged and appropriately recognised against their current qualification. This policy outlines the principles, process, and types of evidence acceptable for RPL, ensuring a fair and consistent approach is taken across SIAS Centres.

RPL may be used to avoid any unnecessary learning. This means a learner can complete a summative assessment where they have already demonstrated they have met the learning outcomes.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the Product Specification for the relevant qualification when determining whether RPL can be applied as not all SIAS qualifications may allow for the application of RPL.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a clear framework for the recognition of prior learning.
- Ensure that learners receive appropriate recognition for prior learning and experience.
- Maintain the integrity and standards of SIAS qualifications.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all learners seeking recognition of prior learning for qualifications awarded by SIAS. It also helps Centres in determining whether RPL can be applied to prior learning.

4. Principles

In determining whether RPL can be applied, SIAS Centres must adhere to the following principles:

- Fairness: Ensuring that all RPL applications are assessed equitably.
- Transparency: Clearly communicating the RPL process and requirements.
- Validity: Recognising learning that is relevant and meets the required standards.
- Consistency: Applying uniform criteria and processes across all RPL assessments.
- Currency: Ensuring any RPL evidence is from within the past two years unless otherwise stated in the Qualification Guide.

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[1] OFQUAL defines Recognition of Prior Learning as the identification by an awarding organisation of any learning undertaken, and/or attainment, by a Learner prior to that Learner taking a qualification which the awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available, and which is relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification.

5. Types of Evidence Acceptable for RPL

Various types of evidence can be submitted by the learner to support RPL applications. Evidence must be authentic, current, relevant, and sufficient. RPL related activity must be clearly marked and made available to SIAS during quality assurance engagements. Types of acceptable evidence include, but are not limited to:

- Certificates and Transcripts: Official documents from previously completed qualifications.
- Workplace Evidence: Job descriptions, performance appraisals, references, and testimonials from employers.
- Professional Development: Records of continuing professional development (CPD) activities, training courses, and workshops attended.
- Reflective Accounts: Personal statements or reflections on relevant experiences and learning.
- Portfolios: Collections of work that demonstrate skills, knowledge, and competencies.
- Projects and Assignments: Completed projects or assignments from previous courses or professional work.
- Competency Assessments: Results from competency-based assessments or practical demonstrations.
- Interviews and Oral Assessments: Verbal assessments conducted by assessors to validate the learner's knowledge and experience.

6. RPL Process

1. Learners should be made aware of the opportunity to use RPL by the Centre. They should be advised that RPL is an alternative route to achievement rather than shortcut.
2. Learners must be supported by the centre to apply for RPL with supporting evidence which reflects the purpose, learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the relevant unit(s).
3. A qualified assessor, at the Centre, should evaluate and assess the evidence against the learning outcomes and/or assessment criteria of the relevant qualification to ensure validity and reliability. The assessment process for RPL should be subject to the same quality assurance processes as any other element of the assessment process via internal and external quality assurance.
4. The learner will be informed of the outcome, including any RPL awarded or further evidence required. If the decision has been made not to award RPL the learner will have to complete the relevant training and assessment for the qualification.
5. Learners have the right to appeal the decision. Appeals must be submitted in in line with the Centre's Appeals Policy. Learners can also appeal to SIAS if they are unhappy with the outcome of their appeal to their Centre.

7.Retention of Evidence

Centres must notify SIAS about the use of RPL. As part of SIAS's Centre monitoring activities, SIAS External Quality Assurers (EQAs) will sample assessments where RPL has been applied.

All RPL evidence will be securely stored in compliance with SIAS and the Centre's data protection policies. Evidence will be retained for a minimum of three years from the date of the RPL decision.

8. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains current and effective. Any changes to the policy will be communicated to all stakeholders.

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