

Polisi Coleg Penybont

Bridgend College Policy



Enw'r Polisi/Policy Name: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption Policy and Procedure

Côd dogfen/Document code (os yn berthnasol/if applicable)

Adran/Department: Curriculum and Quality

Awdur y Ddogfen/Document Author: Claire Flay-Petty

Teitl Swydd/Job Title: Head of Quality

Dyddiad Cymeradwyaeth/Date of Approval: December 2022

Dyddiad Adolygu/Review Date: December 2025

Polisi Coleg Penybont

Bridgend College Policy



Policy Checklist:

Policy Inception Requirement	Yes / No / N/A	Supporting information
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been completed? See form below.	Yes	
Has a Welsh Language Impact Assessment been completed? See form below.	Yes	
Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been considered with regards to this policy? If yes, please contact the Information Services Manager in order to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment.	N/A	
Has the review taken account of the latest Guidance/Legislation?	Yes	Awarding Organisation Guidance has been consulted - this policy creation is in relation to that guidance
Is legal advice required? If yes, please ensure you have taken the necessary steps to secure the appropriate legal advice before proceeding further.	No	
Is staff training required? If yes, please ensure that the necessary training is arranged through the Learning & Development Advisor.	No	
Are there HR related issues that need to be considered? If yes, please contact the HR Manager to discuss further.	No	
Are there financial issues? If yes, please contact the Finance Manager to discuss further.	No	

1. Pwrpas ac Amcanion/ Purpose and Objectives:

Bridgend College recognises that the development of skills, knowledge and competence can take place both within and outside of a traditional teaching and learning environment. The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption Policy and Procedure details the process for:

- formally assessing skills, knowledge and competence already achieved by learners against the learning outcomes and/or assessment criteria of a unit(s) on a programme of study;
- enabling concession or exemption from certain prerequisites or achievement requirements of a programme of study for learners already in possession of eligible certificated achievement.

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption Policy and Procedure is available for use by students, staff and the general public as part of the College's Curriculum and Quality framework. This Policy relates to Further Education, and Higher Education which is not delivered as part of a franchise arrangement with a University partner. Where Higher Education is delivered as part of a franchise arrangement with a University partner, please refer to the relevant University regulations and process.

This policy must be read and implemented in line with the associated policies of the relevant Awarding Organisations and Regulatory Bodies, including Qualifications Wales (QW) and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

2. Manylion Polisi/ Policy Details:

2.1 Overview

This policy will:

- definite Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption,
- detail the Bridgend College process and procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption,
- provide clear and consistent guidance to those involved in enquiries, requests, assessment and award of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption,
- meet the requirements set out by Awarding Organisations and Regulatory Bodies.

2.2 Definitions

Recognition of Prior Learning (hereafter referred to as RPL) is an assessment process that measures evidence of a learner's previous achievement, skills or competence against the learning outcomes and/or assessment criteria of a unit(s), without the learner having to undertake the associated formal teaching and learning. This could include learning acquired through home and family life, previous education and training, work activities, or community/voluntary work. For the purposes of this policy, RPL is used to encompass the following acronyms, which are often used interchangeably:

- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)
- Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
- Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL)

Exemption is a process that enables a learner to claim concession or exemption from certain prerequisites or achievement requirements of a programme of study, using evidence of certified achievement deemed to be of equivalent value. This could include when a learner has achieved a regulated qualification which is recognised as equitable or comparable to certain elements of the qualification, or where a learner holds a certificate or qualification which has been awarded on the achievement of learning outcomes/assessment criteria which are determined to be equivalent to the unit(s)/qualification in question.

The RPL and Exemption process may allow the learner to:

- evidence that the learning objectives/assessment criteria of a unit(s) on a formal programme of study have already been met;
- (in relation to RPL only) undertake the same assessments as those followed in the formal programme of teaching, learning and assessment leading to the achievement of the desired unit or qualification, but without attending the associated taught sessions, where specified by the relevant Awarding Organisation. In this scenario, an authenticity statement signed and dated by the learner and the member of staff leading the RPL process must be provided, and where relevant the staff member should observe the learner undertaking the assessment;
- (in relation to Exemption only) gain exceptional entry to a programme of learning. For example, where a learner wishes to join an extended diploma qualification after having

achieved the diploma qualification that forms the first half of the extended diploma at another institution or with a different Awarding Organisation. If Exemption is granted, no additional study or assessment is required for the exempted units.

Some Awarding Organisations specify that previously certificated learning cannot be considered for RPL, and may instead require centres/learners to apply for exemption from some of the achievement requirements of a qualification. Awarding Organisations will have specific RPL and Exemption policies and procedures that must be read and adhered to alongside this policy.

2.3 Principles and limitations of RPL and Exemption

- In order to apply for RPL or Exemption, a learner is required to compile a portfolio of evidence demonstrating how the previously achieved skills, knowledge and/or competence meet the learning objectives/assessment criteria of the unit(s)/programme of study for which RPL or Exemption is being sought. An assessor reviews whether the evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that a learner has met the assessment requirements for the qualification which the learner is currently pursuing. The evidence provided by the learner must be:
 - Valid - the evidence must genuinely demonstrate that the demands of the learning outcomes/assessment criteria have been met
 - Current - the evidence must meet up-to-date demands and/or practice in the relevant area, and must have taken place within an appropriate time frame
 - Reliable - the evidence provided should be such that an assessor would arrive at the same assessment decision, were the assessment to be repeated
 - Authentic - the evidence being examined must genuinely be the work of the learner
 - Sufficient - there must be enough evidence to fully meet the learning outcomes/assessment criteria being considered
- If the evidence presented by the learner is insufficient, appropriate learning and assessment, such as a competency assessment, must take place to ensure any outstanding learning objectives or assessment criteria are evidenced.

- The assessment methods applied to evidence provided must be fit for purpose and of equal rigour to the assessment methods that would otherwise be applied to the programme of study.
- RPL may not be appropriate where qualifications feature a Licence to Practice, a Health and Safety requirement, a work placement, or where the qualification subject is a regulated profession.
- RPL cannot be used for external assessment, set examinations, or any element of the mandatory assessment requirements of a qualification.
- Subject to Awarding Organisation guidelines, Exemptions do not attract credit as the skills, knowledge and/or competences described in the unit will have already been recognised and/or certificated.

2.4 The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption Procedure

- Any process for informing/applying to the Awarding Organisation, or associated External Examiner, must be completed by the deadline specified by the Awarding Organisation.
- All applications for/of RPL and Exemption must be submitted via the Bridgend College Quality Team. A central record of RPL and Exemption applications must be maintained.

STAGE 1: INFORMATION PROVISION AND PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

- Learners will be made aware of the RPL and Exemption Policy and Procedure through prospectuses, web-based information, the learner portal, enrolment and induction materials, and/or tutorials.
- The learner is responsible for making their lecturer/tutor aware that they would like to apply for RPL or Exemption. If a learner expresses an interest in applying for RPL or Exemption, an initial discussion covering the following elements must take place:
 - The process of applying for RPL or Exemption, including the support and guidance available, and the process of compiling the portfolio of evidence;
 - Any Awarding Organisation requirements or limitations, including deadlines for applying for RPL and Exemption, any restrictions to the proportion of a

qualification that can be achieved by RPL or Exemption and any caps or maximum grades that will apply to assessments/units/qualifications that are in receipt of RPL or Exemption;

- How long the process will take, and any associated costs;
 - The process for appealing any decisions relating to RPL and Exemption.
- At this point, the lecturer/tutor must check that the evidence to be provided by the learner for RPL or Exemption has been achieved before the start of their programme of study and that the evidence meets the principles of validity, currency, reliability, authenticity, and sufficiency as outlined in section 2.3 above.
 - Where a learner wishes to apply for Exemption on the basis of previously certificated learning or achievement, the lecturer/tutor must be satisfied that the qualification that has previously been achieved by the learner covers substantially similar learning outcomes/assessment criteria, is at an equivalent or higher level, and that assessment methods are sufficiently rigorous.
 - Once a learner has confirmed that they would like to proceed with the RPL or Exemption process, the relevant lecturer/tutor must complete and submit the [RPL and Exemption Notification Form](https://forms.gle/fctZRshA36yoK7M67) (<https://forms.gle/fctZRshA36yoK7M67>). This form must be submitted **before** any applications for or notification of RPL or Exemption is made to the Awarding Organisation. This form will be supplied to the relevant Curriculum Manager and the Quality Team.
 - On receipt of the [RPL and Exemption Notification Form](#), the Curriculum Manager will appoint a member of staff who is competent in and has prior experience of RPL and Exemption to lead the process.
 - All requests for RPL and/or Exemption must be made at the start of the academic year during which the unit will be completed, unless stated otherwise by the Awarding Organisation.

STAGE 2: COMPILING THE PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE

- In order to claim credit under the RPL and Exemption process, the learner must produce a portfolio of evidence mapped against the learning objectives/assessment criteria for all units for which RPL or Exemption is being sought. This must include any mapping exercises as required by the Awarding Organisation. The staff member leading the

process may consider compiling an assessment plan to guide the learner in compiling the portfolio of evidence.

- Where prior learning is experiential, the portfolio must evidence the prior learning, skills and/or competence achieved. Evidence of experiential learning could include, but is not limited to: home or family life, previous education and training, work activities, and community/voluntary work.
- Where prior learning has been certificated, the portfolio must include a copy of the original certificate. This copy must be signed and dated by the staff member leading the RPL or Exemption process to confirm sight of the original document, and an electronic copy of the certificate must be stored centrally.
- The portfolio of evidence must include an authenticity statement signed and dated by the learner and the member of staff leading the RPL process.

STAGE 3: ASSESSMENT OF THE PORTFOLIO

- The portfolio of evidence must be assessed against the learning outcomes/assessment criteria of the unit(s) for which RPL/Exemption is being sought. For Exemption, the assessor must make sure that the components of the certificated qualification are sufficient to meet the requirements of all of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the unit/s for which it is being sought.
- The assessor must be satisfied that the evidence from the learner meets all of the learning outcomes/assessment criteria. If gaps are found in the evidence provided, further assessment methods must be used to provide enough evidence to be able to award credit for the whole unit.
- Evidence collected through the RPL and Exemption process needs to be assessed and verified through the same quality assurance procedures used for any other internal assessment methods, and records of assessment must be maintained in the usual way. Where a unit/s has been achieved through RPL, this must be indicated on the relevant learner tracking.
- The outcome of the portfolio, and the decision to award or withhold RPL or Exemption, including any support and guidance on subsequent learning options, must be discussed with the learner.

- A learner may appeal the outcome of their RPL and Exemption claim by following the College's Appeals Policy and Procedure.

STAGE 4: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CLAIMS

- Any assessment decision to award credit as a result of the RPL and Exemption procedure must undergo internal verification and must form part of the sample for internal quality assurance.
- Any individual appointed by the Awarding Organisation to conduct external quality assurance checks, for example a Standards Verifier or External Examiner, must be informed of any applications for RPL or Exemption as part of any monitoring activity that takes place. Awarding Organisations may also specify that any assessment decisions resulting from the RPL and Exemption procedure are sampled as part of the external quality assurance process.
- The Curriculum Manager and the Quality Team must be informed of the assessment decision before any claim for credit is made.
- Any award of credit under the RPL and Exemption process must be recorded and, where appropriate ratified, at the relevant curriculum forum, including in Course Team Meeting (CTMs) and Assessment Boards.
- Once internal and external verification of the assessment decision relating to RPL or Exemption has been completed and confirmed, claims for credit should be made as specified by the relevant Awarding Organisation.
- All evidence relating to RPL and Exemption, including the learner portfolio, records of any communication with Awarding Organisations or their representatives, applications for and confirmation of RPL and Exemption, and any mapping exercises, must be stored centrally and made available to the relevant course team, the Curriculum Manager, and the Quality Team. These records must be available for verification if requested by an Awarding Organisation.

3. Cyfrifoldeb (os yn berthnasol)/ Responsibilities (if applicable):

Lecturers will:

- Familiarise themselves with the detail of, and apply, this policy and procedure in the appropriate circumstances, with particular reference to the procedure listed under section 2.4.

Curriculum Managers will:

- Familiarise themselves with the detail of, and apply, this policy and procedure in the appropriate circumstances;
- Appoint a member of staff who is competent in and has prior experience of RPL and Exemption to lead the process;
- Ensure that any successful applications for RPL and Exemption are recorded and reported in the manner specified above, including informing the Quality Team before an assessment for RPL or Exemption is conducted.

The Quality Team will:

- Maintain a central record of all applications for RPL and Exemption submitted via the [RPL and Exemption Notification Form](https://forms.gle/fctZRshA36yoK7M67) (<https://forms.gle/fctZRshA36yoK7M67>)

4. Adolygiad dogfen/Document review:

Ysgrifennwch yma/Write here

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Enw Polisi / Gweithdrefn Name of Policy / Procedure	Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption Policy and Procedure
Perchennog Polisi Policy Owner (to complete this EIA)	Claire Flay-Petty, Head of Quality
Nod(au'r) a Pwrpas y Polisi Aim(s) and Purpose of Policy	To detail the policy and procedure for formally assessing skills, knowledge and competence already achieved by learners against the learning outcomes and/or assessment criteria of a unit(s) on a programme of study, and enabling

Polisi Coleg Penybont

Bridgend College Policy





	concession or exemption from certain prerequisites or achievement requirements of a programme of study for learners already in possession of eligible certificated achievement.				
I bwy mae'r polisi hwn yn effeithio? Who does the policy affect?	Dysgwyr Learners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y Cyhoedd Gyffredinol / General Public

Equality characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Reason/comment
Age	x			Mature learners will be more likely to have developed skills, knowledge and competence, within or outside of a traditional teaching and learning environment, that can be considered for RPL and Exemption
Disability		x		
Gender reassignment		x		
Marriage and civil partnership		x		
Pregnancy and maternity		x		
Race		x		
Religion or belief		x		
Sex		x		
Sexual Orientation		x		


Date completed: **02.12.2022**

Signed by Manager completing the assessment:

Asesiad Effaith Iaith Gymraeg/ Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Enw Polisi / Gweithdrefn Name of Policy / Procedure	Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption Policy and Procedure					
Perchennog Polisi Policy Owner (to complete this EIA)	Claire Flay-Petty, Head of Quality					
Nod(au'r) a Pwrpas y Polisi Aim(s) and Purpose of Policy	To detail the policy and procedure for formally assessing skills, knowledge and competence already achieved by learners against the learning outcomes and/or assessment criteria of a unit(s) on a programme of study, and enabling concession or exemption from certain prerequisites or achievement requirements of a programme of study for learners already in possession of eligible certificated achievement.					
I bwy mae'r polisi hwn yn effeithio? Who does the policy affect?	Dysgwyr Learners		Staff		Y Cyhoedd Gyffredinol / General Public	

Safonau Iaith Gymraeg / Welsh Language Standards

Rhif/ No.	Math/ Type	Safon / Standard	Cadarn haol (gallai fod o fudd) Positive (could benefit)	Negyddo I (gallai effeithio) Negative (could impact)	Dim Effaith No Impact
94	Safonau Llunio Polisi Policy Making standards	Pan fyddwch yn llunio polisi newydd, neu'n adolygu neu'n addasu polisi sydd eisoes yn bodoli, rhaid i chi ystyried pa effeithiau, os o gwbl (pa un ai yw'r rheini'n bositif neu'n andwyol) y byddai'r penderfyniad polisi yn eu cael ar— (a) cyfleoedd i bersonau ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg, a (b) peidio â thrin y Gymraeg yn llai ffafriol na'r Saesneg. When you formulate a new policy, or review or revise an existing policy, you must consider what effects, if any (whether positive or adverse), the			

Polisi Coleg Penybont

Bridgend College Policy



		policy decision would have on — (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.			
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Cynllun Gweithredu / Action Plan

Dylai camau gweithredu ddangos camau i'w cymryd i leihau neu, lle bo modd, ddileu unrhyw effaith negyddol ar yr Iaith Gymraeg.

Actions should demonstrate steps to be taken to reduce or where possible, eliminate any negative impact on the Welsh Language.

Gweithredu/ Action	Pwy/ Who	Erbyn Pryd/ By When	Mesur Llwyddiant/ (sut y byddwn ni'n gwybod ein bod wedi cyflawni'r camau gweithredu) Success Measure (how will we know we have achieved the action)

Dyddiad Cwblhau Asesu / Assessment Completion Date: 02.12.2022