Recognition of Prior Learning

General Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning for RGU Programmes

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Introduction
The focus of these guidelines is to provide the applicant with transparency regarding the process for accrediting previous learning and to assist the applicant in putting together a claim for accreditation. In order to claim credit the applicant should have a clear idea of the programme of study they wish to pursue and have the intention of enrolling on a course with Outreach Rescue Medic Skills (ORMS). Any credit successfully claimed is specific to a given programme and not necessarily transferable.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment leading to the award of credit within a recognised qualification framework. It considers whether a learner 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 these through a course of learning.

ORMS is a collaborative partner of Robert Gordon University (RGU). The rules regarding RPL for the associated courses are mandated by RGU and therefore, this RPL policy reflects the RGU requirements.

Recognition of Prior Learning
ORMS recognises two types of prior learning – certificated (RPCL) and experiential (RPEL) which may facilitate the following:

- Entry to a course for which the applicant does not possess the necessary entry qualifications;
- Exemption from specific modules/elements of a course, e.g. the work placement;
- Advanced entry to a course.

Eligibility for Accreditation of Prior Learning
Applicants are eligible to apply for accreditation of prior learning providing the following criteria are met:

- The subject has been studied or the experience has been gained during the previous 5 years;
- The content, learning outcomes and academic level of relevant previous study meet the entry requirements for a course/programme or equate to those of the module or element from which exemption is being claimed;
- The learning arising from previous study or experience can be demonstrated;
- The credit for the previous study being considered as evidence for the accreditation of prior learning claim is not simultaneously double counted towards another award from ORMS or Robert Gordon University (RGU).

Maximum Credit per RPL Claim
RPL can be facilitated for up to 50% of a stage of a course.

Credit per RPL claim applies to both RPCL and RPEL and an applicant could use both processes, where applicable. Any claim is subject to the approval of the Course/Programme Management Team.
Types of Credit

There are two types of credit, general and specific.

General credit is that which may be awarded in recognition of previous learning which is at the appropriate academic level, although may not specifically relate to the course to be undertaken. This type of credit is arrived at through agreements between awarding bodies such as Higher and Further Education Institutions and the amount of general credit is determined by the qualification held.

Specific credit is that awarded towards the achievement of a specific programme of study, and counts towards the award for which the student is registered. It is this specific credit which the RPL process can facilitate, and potential claimants for RPCL or RPEL will need to consider how previous learning will match the learning outcomes of module(s) within the programme of study.

Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)

This is achieved through the recognition of previous learning which has been assessed through a formal education process, to which the level of credit awarded, and the subject area, can be mapped against the learning outcomes of the module for the course of study. As a basic guide:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical higher education qualifications within each level</th>
<th>HE Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland</th>
<th>HE Framework for Scotland</th>
<th>HE Framework for the Republic of Ireland</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degrees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate diplomas</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate certificates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foundation Degrees (eg FdA, FdSc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher National Diplomas (HND)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irish Higher Certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher National Certificates (HNC)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The volume of credits previously awarded are also taken into consideration (e.g. 15 credits at Level 5, 30 credits at Level 6).

Process for Claiming RPCL

Applicants who consider that they may be eligible for RPCL should contact the ORMS Admin Team to arrange further discussion with a member of the programme or course management team. This discussion will enable the applicant to decide whether to proceed with a full claim and to clarify the evidence required, including level of learning and the subject area of the module.

If a claim is to be submitted, this can be identified in the ORMS application. Applicants must submit evidence to support the claim, for example a copy of the certificate and transcript or module descriptor of the previous course. Please note that it is the applicant’s responsibility to provide this evidence. However, if an applicant has a qualification and the credit rating is not known, for example an overseas qualification, we will
accept a ‘Statement of Comparability’ available through NARIC [www.naric.org.uk](http://www.naric.org.uk) or an equivalent service. Costs incurred through this process must be borne by the applicant.

When the evidence has been submitted, this will be examined by a member of the programme team who will prepare the RPL report for consideration by the Course Management Team.

Submission of evidence must be completed and successful prior to the offer of a confirmed place on the programme. Therefore, you should plan to submit your evidence at least 2 months prior to the start day of the programme you wish to enrol on.

**Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)**

RPEL is learning which has its source in experience, for example work based learning. It is important to stress that credit is not given for the experience, but for the learning which has arisen from this experience. RPEL procedures for gaining credit can also apply where an applicant is unable to provide certificated evidence of successful completion of a credit rated qualification, or where you are unable to establish a credit rating for a qualification through a credit search.

**Principles of RPEL**

The applicant makes a claim to have acquired knowledge and skills recognised and the responsibility of supporting the claim rests with the applicant. The ORMS Administration Team will guide the applicant on the nature of the evidence required, for example a portfolio with reflective accounts and/or personal development plans, or work based assessments, or Objectively Structured Clinical Examinations, or an interview. Whatever the nature of the evidence, it must demonstrate the following:

- Authenticity – it must be the applicant’s own work.
- Quality – it should be at the appropriate academic level (see Academic Level of Credit).
- Breadth – a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical application should be evident.
- Directness – it should focus on areas relevant to the course applied for.
- Currency – learning should have been kept up to date.

**Process for Claiming RPEL**

Applicants who consider that they may be eligible for RPEL should contact the ORMS Admin Team to arrange further discussion with a member of the programme or course management team. This discussion will enable the applicant to decide whether to proceed with a full claim and to clarify the evidence required, including level of learning, the subject area of the module and the nature of the evidence to be provided.

As this type of evidence requires the applicant to complete a portfolio or prepare for an assessment, ORMS will assign a member of faculty to assist them in the process. The assigned faculty member will offer a maximum of 1-hour contact (telephone, email or arranged appointment) throughout the period of the claim. The faculty member will:

- Provide advice on the nature of the evidence required;
- Assist the applicant in the identification of relevant learning from his/her experience;
- Ensure the applicant has devised a plan for the presentation of the evidence.
When the evidence has been submitted, this will be examined by a member of the programme team who will prepare the RPL report for consideration by the Course Management Team.

Submission of evidence must be completed and successful prior to the offer of a confirmed place on the programme. Therefore, you should plan to submit your evidence at least 2 months prior to the start day of the programme you wish to enrol on.

**Fees**

Currently there is no charge for RPCL; however, for RPEL the current fee is £135.00 for every 15 credit points or part thereof. Fees are reviewed annually by ORMS.

**Re-assessment Opportunity**

If the initial RPEL claim is unsuccessful, the applicant would normally be permitted another submission.

**Academic Level of Credit**

The quality of the evidence that is provided needs to be at the appropriate academic level. The following descriptors are reflective of the Scottish Qualifications Framework (SCQF). These set out generic learning outcomes and are intended to provide a general understanding of each level and to allow comparisons to be made between qualifications and learning acquired experientially, or through training programmes which have not been credit rated.

They are intended to assist in determining levels of learning and the construction of statements of learning, and it is not expected that all characteristics will be met.

**Descriptor – SCQF Level 7**

**Knowledge and Understanding**

The applicant should be able to demonstrate and/or work with:

- A broad knowledge of the subject/discipline in general;
- Knowledge that is embedded in the main theories, concepts and principles;
- An awareness of the evolving/changing nature of knowledge and understanding;
- An understanding of the difference between explanations based in evidence and/or research and other forms of explanation, and of the importance of this difference.

**Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding**

The applicant should be able to:

- Use some of the basic and routine professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with a subject/discipline;
- Practise these in both routine and non-routine contexts.

**Generic Cognitive Skills**

The applicant should be able to:
• Present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas which are routine to the subject/discipline;
• Use a range of approaches to addressing defined and/or routine problems and issues within familiar contexts.

Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills
The applicant should be able to use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced skills associated with the subject/discipline. For example:

• Convey complex ideas in well-structured and coherent form;
• Use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and new contexts;
• Use standard applications to process and obtain a variety of information and data;
• Use a range of numerical and graphical skills in combination;
• Use numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/targets.

Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others
The applicant should be able to:

• Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities at a professional level;
• Take supervision in less familiar areas of work;
• Take some managerial responsibility for the work of others within a defined and supervised structure;
• Manage limited resources within defined areas of work;
• Take the lead in implementing agreed plans in familiar or defined contexts.
Descriptor – SCQF Level 8

Knowledge and Understanding
The applicant should be able to demonstrate and/or work with:

- A broad knowledge of the scope, defining features, and main areas of a subject/discipline;
- Detailed knowledge in some areas;
- Understanding of a limited range of core theories, principles and concepts;
- Limited knowledge and understanding of some major current issues and specialisms;
- An outline knowledge and understanding of research and equivalent scholarly/academic processes.

Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding
The applicant should be able to:

- Use a range of routine skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with a subject/discipline, a few of which are advanced or complex;
- Carry out routine lines of enquiry, development or investigation into professional level problems and issues;
- Adapt routine practices within acceptable standards.

Generic Cognitive Skills
The applicant should be able to:

- Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues which are within the common understandings of the subject/discipline;
- Use a range of approaches to formulate evidence-based solutions/responses to defined and/or routine problems/issues;
- Critically evaluate evidence-based solutions/responses to defined and/or routine problems/issues.

Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills
The applicant should be able to use a range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills associated with a subject/discipline, for example:

- Convey complex information to a range of audiences and for a range of purposes;
- Use a range of standard applications to process and obtain data;
- Use and evaluate numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/targets.

Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others
The applicant should be able to:

- Exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level;
- Take significant managerial or supervisory responsibility for the work of others in defined areas of work;
- Manage resources within defined areas of work.
Appeals Procedure
The appeals procedure is in alignment with the ORMS Appeals procedures.

Any applicant may request feedback on a decision made on their application. However, this does not constitute a reconsideration of the application. If an applicant wishes to appeal against a decision, they must follow this procedure and ensure they have valid grounds for the appeal.

Definition
An appeal is a request for the reconsideration of an application. The outcome of a successful appeal would be to reconsider the applicant’s application and will not guarantee that the original decision will be changed.

Valid grounds for appeal
Appeals against a decision may be submitted on one or more of the following grounds:

- Significant new information in support of the application is now available which was not available at the time of the original application;
- Believe that ORMS has not adhered to its own policies and procedures;
- Evidence of bias or prejudice.

There is no provision to appeal against the academic or professional judgement of those making the decision on the application.

Procedure
Applicants who believe, in line with the above guidelines, they have valid grounds for appeal should submit their appeal in writing either by letter or email to the ORMS Administration Team for the attention of the ORMS Quality Manager.

Persons acting on behalf of an applicant may submit the appeal when they have explicit permission from the applicant to do so. All communication in connection to the appeal will, however, be sent only to the applicant.

The appeal should include the applicant’s full name and address in addition to an explanation of the grounds for the appeal. Any further information in support of the appeal may also be given at this time.

Valid appeals will be acknowledged by the ORMS Administration Team and they will investigate in consultation, if appropriate, with the Course Management Team. If an appeal is submitted that is not based on the permitted grounds the applicant will be advised and no further action will be taken.

ORMS will seek to respond to each valid appeal as quickly as possible, and normally within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal.

Time limit
Appeals must be submitted within 8 weeks of the date of the receipt of the decision on the application.

No applicant will be discriminated against or disadvantaged for submitting an appeal in the current or subsequent application cycles.
Recognition of Prior Learning Registration Form

Name of Applicant: ____________________________________________________________

Home Address: _______________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

Home Tel No: ________________ ________________________________

e-mail Address: ____________________________________________________________

Current Place of Work: _______________________________________________________

Work Tel No: ________________________________________________________________

Credit Applied For

☐ Credit for Entry to a course

☐ Credit for Exemption from a part of a Course

Entry point on the course you are aiming to start at ______________________________

Basis of Claim

☐ Prior Certificated Learning

☐ Prior Experiential Learning

Signature of Applicant: ____________________________________ Date: ______________

Please return this form to the ORMS Administration Team, enquiries@orms247.co.uk
# RPL Assessment Report

**Name of Applicant:** 
_________________________________________________________________

**Course/Programme:** 
_________________________________________________________________

**Module / Stage for Accreditation:** 
_________________________________________________________________

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Module Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory</th>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Outcome 1:</td>
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<td>Learning Outcome 2:</td>
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<td>Learning Outcome 5:</td>
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**Signature of Assessor:** _______________________________ **Date:** ______________

**Signature of Course/Programme Lead:** _______________________________ **Date:** ______________
Application for Recognition of Prior Learning - Summary Report

Name of Applicant: ___________________________ Date of Application: ____________

Brief description of credit being applied for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Number / Title</th>
<th>LO1</th>
<th>LO2</th>
<th>LO3</th>
<th>LO4</th>
<th>LO5</th>
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Decision of Course/Programme Management Team:

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<tr>
<th>APPROVED</th>
<th>APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS</th>
<th>NOT APPROVED</th>
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Signature of Course / Programme Lead: ___________________________ Date: ____________