

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Document Owner	Work Based Learning Manager
Date Approved	19 th December 2025
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Last Review	November 2023
Next Review	November 2027

Version Control

Revision #	Date	Revision summary	Reviewed by
1		Policy reviewed and updated and placed on new template	EH
2	November 2025	Sections 3 and 7 updated as part of policy review	EH and HLH

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1. Introduction

This policy describes the guidance and processes for identifying an apprentice's prior learning and experience which may impact on the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the chosen Apprenticeship Standard.

The apprentice's prior learning, knowledge and skills will need to be reviewed to identify a starting point. This will identify any areas of the apprenticeship Standard to include the knowledge, skills and behaviours that the apprentice already has. This also enables WBTC to check that the apprentice is on the correct Apprenticeship standard and level prior to the start of their programme.

2. Identification of Prior Learning

Prior to start all apprentices will complete a self-assessment. This will highlight whether the potential apprentice is eligible for their chosen apprenticeship and whether any prior learning and/or qualifications will impact on the delivery of their programme. Where applicable, if an apprentice has unit certification against any mandatory qualification within their chosen Apprenticeship standard, then the recognition and/or accreditation of prior learning may take place. Apprentices should share evidence of any prior learning, achievement and certification as part of the application process so that these can be discussed. Should the assessing officer identify that any prior learning, knowledge or skills alters the delivery model and or pricing this will be amended accordingly. Please see Section 5 on reduction of funding.

Where a qualification is identified as RPL the programme will be adjusted accordingly.

3. Conducting an initial assessment to recognise prior learning and experience

A robust initial assessment forms a foundation for a high-quality apprenticeship programme by:

- Establishing the starting point for the apprentice, which demonstrates the value of the programme to the individual and the employer. Ofsted inspectors will use this to judge the distance travelled by the apprentice.
- Identifying only the training the apprentice still needs to undertake to become occupationally competent, as set out in the standard, avoiding duplication.
- Identifying where apprenticeships could be shortened or have a different delivery model whilst still meeting the minimum requirements according to the funding rules.
- Reducing the negotiated price paid by the employer for training, as set out in the apprenticeship funding rules; ESFA will use this to ensure funding is not being claimed for training the apprentice does not need.
- Identifying where apprenticeships are not suitable, for example where the individual's existing knowledge, skills and behaviours means there is not substantial new learning to achieve the minimum 372 days duration and off-the-job training requirements.

4. Eligibility based on prior learning and/or experience

Having identified whether the apprentice has prior learning and/or experience may affect the appropriateness of them embarking on their chosen apprenticeship standard. A decision will be made by the Training Consultant and Workbased Learning Manager as to whether the learner is eligible for the apprenticeship standard. This includes the potential apprentice requiring a minimum duration of 372 days with and the requirement minimum off the job learning.

5. Assessing Prior Learning and/or experience

Assessing prior learning and/or experience is composed of the following stages:

1. A discussion with the individual about their previous learning, work experience, and current competence in relation to the knowledge, skills, and behaviours in the standard. This will also identify their career aspirations and explore the compatibility of an apprenticeship.
2. A self-assessment (Skill Scan) for the apprentice to assess themselves against the knowledge, skills, and behaviour requirements of the standard.
3. Outcomes are recorded on the Training Plan which includes the impact of any prior learning and/or experience against the level required to achieve the Apprenticeship standard.
4. An Initial assessment for English and maths is completed for all apprentices, regardless of any exemptions that may exist. This is to ascertain any further learning which may be required for the apprentice or that is requested by the employer for the apprentice to further develop in line with our maths and English strategy.

5. The outcome of the above will be used to inform the Training Plan and is agreed by WBTC, the apprentice and their employer.

6. APL Qualifications

Candidates should provide evidence of any prior learning, achievement and certification to the Employer and Learner Engagement Officer prior to commencing their programme. These will then be shared with the Work based Learning Manager and relevant people so that these can be discussed. If this occurs the programme of learning and delivery models/pricing will be amended accordingly.

In relation to qualifications, if the qualification has been superseded by a new qualification then Awarding Organisation guidance is used to RPL against current standards. If required questioning or witness statements can be used to confirm knowledge, understanding and skills are still relevant.

Where the use of RPL is permitted, this will be stated within the qualification specification.

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit or units towards a full qualification. The Assessor must ensure that the evidence is:

- Valid
- Reliable
- Authentic
- Relevant
- Sufficient

All evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated learning outcomes, assessment criteria and unit assessment guidance from the qualification or unit being claimed. In assessing a unit using RPL, the assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcome and its related assessment criteria. Evidence used for RPL will be subject to standard quality assurance as normal.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary and will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed.

Candidates can present prior performance and skills of tasks completed in the past as long as this does not exceed 18 months since the activity or experience was completed or achieved. Other evidence would also be required within the unit to further support the claims made by recognising prior learning, experience and skills. Candidates would be expected to have their evidence presented for prior learning to be authenticated by a senior practitioner or witness, that the same performance and skills of the candidate could be carried out at the current time if the opportunity was presented. If the currency of any

evidence is in doubt, the assessor should use questions to check understanding, and may ask for the demonstration of skills to check competence.

Where evidence is assessed to be only sufficient to cover one or more learning outcomes, or to partly meet the need of a learning outcome, then additional assessment methods should be used in line with usual assessment requirements relating to units, for example, producing evidence over a period of time and in a variety of situations.

The assessment process will be subject to the usual quality assurance procedures of the centre, for example internal standardisation and internal quality assurance. Evidenced gathered through RPL should be clearly referenced and signposted to aid assessment and internal quality assurance.

7. Reduction in Funding or Length of Programme Rationale

Based on the Initial Assessments, Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and discussions with the apprentice and employer a pricing schedule is created and agreed. Should a reduction in funding and or length of programme be agreed then a reduction against the training element within WBTC's pricing schedule will be made. The rationale and calculations are based on an individual basis based on the outcomes of their Initial Assessments.

Outcomes will be detailed on the pricing schedule and the rationale recorded in the pricing schedule spreadsheet.

8. Review

Notwithstanding our current policies and procedures, the ELT reserve the right to amend, curtail or terminate this policy at any time and without notice.

9. Quality Assurance

The Policy will be reviewed every two years, sooner if legislation, best practice or other circumstances indicate this is necessary. It shall remain in force until any alterations are formally agreed.