



DERBY COLLEGE GROUP POLICY

PROCEDURE

HE Recognition of Prior Learning

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POLICY - PROCEDURES - GUIDELINES - RELATED DOCUMENTS

1.0. Introduction

- 1.1. Applications for RPL are administered by the Admissions Office.
- 1.2. Applications for RPL are normally considered at the point of application to a programme at the College, and decisions made alongside the admissions process, and no later than six weeks after the commencement of the programme. Only in exceptional circumstances will later claims be considered. Decisions on claims for RPL are final and appeals against decisions are not permitted, although the complaints procedure may be followed if an applicant is unhappy with the process followed or feedback.
- 1.3. Admissions tutors (or RPL Advisors) are responsible for ensuring appropriate internal assessment and moderation of applications in line with the procedures set out below.
- 1.4. Students who wish to make a claim covering more than one type of RPL should be advised to ensure that they complete the relevant sections of each application form that applies and to provide all supporting evidence.
- 1.5. Charges are made for RPL to cover the advice and guidance necessary and the administration associated with process of claims.

Credit Transfer

- 1.6. Applications from students who have completed qualifications delivered by the College to progress to a linked or identified 'top-up' or progression route, require no special consideration since these are based on agreed progression opportunities.
- 1.7. Applications to level 6 'top-up' awards that meet the standard entry requirements for the award, also require no special consideration since these are considered at the point of programme approval.
- 1.8. Applications from students who have completed qualifications from a non-partner awarding body, normally require more detailed consideration. These applications will require an assessment of the relevance of the completed HE qualification to the programme applied for, and for this reason it may be necessary to request further information from the applicant and/or meet with the applicant to ascertain the relevance of the prior learning and the volume of credit that can be recognised. The objective of the process is to ensure applicants entering with 'advanced standing' are not disadvantaged.
- 1.9. For undergraduate entry to level 5 on the basis of credit transfer there is some flexibility in relation to the matching of prior learning to specific modules – the general principle is that if the applicant has general HE credit and is judged able to cope with entry to level 5 of the programme for which they have applied, the credit will be recognised; it need not be in the same discipline area as the College programme.
- 1.10. Credit transfer for entry to level 6 of undergraduate programmes is more concerned with ascertaining whether the applicant can demonstrate they have met the appropriate learning outcomes at module and programme level, and therefore the prior credit should be directly relevant to the programme applied for.
- 1.11. Where programmes receive annually a significant number of applications through UCAS (or other admissions body) for entry with credit on the basis of a recognised HE qualification and where no detailed consideration of relevance is required, the programme admissions tutor and programme leader should, on an annual basis, complete a single credit transfer form to cover all such applicants, and forward this to the Admissions Office by the end of October.

- 1.12. Admissions Office informs applicant of outcome of claim and, if accepted, requests copy of transcript of previous study (if not previously provided). Once evidence received, Credit Transfer against the relevant stage/s and/or modules, is recorded on the student record system.

Prior Certificated Learning

- 1.13. Recognition of prior certificated learning (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, requires detailed consideration. These applications require assessment of the certificated learning in relation to the level and volume of credit that can be recognised in relation to the programme applied for.
- 1.14. Applicants should have the opportunity to discuss their potential claim with the admissions tutor or RPL Advisor who provides guidance on the mapping and information required to support a claim.
- 1.15. It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate the relevance of their prior learning, by mapping to the programme and/or module learning outcomes of the award for which they are seeking credit recognition.
- 1.16. At the discretion of the admissions tutor/programme leader the applicant may be asked to attend an interview to discuss their application. In some cases, it may be decided that the application is better considered under the processes for recognition of prior experiential learning. The objective of the process is to assess the learning, in terms of level, currency, volume and relevance.
- 1.17. The completed claim is normally considered by the admissions tutor and the programme leader. If both of these have been extensively engaged in advising the applicant, an independent colleague should act as one of the assessors. The purpose of the assessment is to make a recommendation about the level and volume of credit that can be recognised. The assessment may conclude that the learning is not at the appropriate level and/or not relevant to the new programme, or may recommend that only a small part of the prior learning can be recognised towards the award. As for credit transfer, in relation to relevance there is normally more flexibility for entry at level 5.
- 1.18. Assessors complete the RPL form, and the completed form and related documents are forwarded to the Chair of Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) to confirm the assessment of credit to be awarded.
- 1.19. Chair of AQSC checks RPL form and confirms recommendation (or not) on behalf of the Board of Examiners, before forwarding to Admissions Office.
- 1.20. Admissions Office informs applicant of outcome of claim and RPL is recorded against the relevant stage/s and/or modules on the student record system.
- 1.21. Annually a sample of RPL claims (minimum number 5) should be presented to the external examiner for comment, as part of moderation activity.

Prior Experiential Learning

- 1.23. In cases of RPEL, academic judgement must be applied to the evidence supplied by the applicant to ensure equivalent learning outcomes are demonstrated.
- 1.24. Applicants must demonstrate that they have mapped the relevance and equivalency of their prior experiential learning against the learning outcomes of the module(s) for which exemption is sought.

- 1.25. Applicants must also demonstrate that they have reflected on the experiential learning and not just described examples of their previous experience.
- 1.26. Applicants considering a claim for recognition of prior experiential learning will be assigned an advisor to provide guidance on making an appropriate claim.
- 1.27. RPL Assessors are encouraged to make an initial assessment of any individuals who are planning to make an APEL application through an interview, to discuss their prior experience and establish whether they have the potential to make a full application through a portfolio.
- 1.28. The completed claim should normally be considered by the admissions tutor and programme leader. If both of these have been extensively engaged in advising the applicant, an independent colleague should act as one of the assessors. The purpose of the assessment is to make a recommendation about the level and volume of credit that can be recognised. The assessment may conclude that the learning is not at the appropriate level and/or not relevant to the new course, or may recommend that only a small part of the prior learning can be recognised towards the award. As for credit transfer and recognition of prior certificated learning, in relation to relevance there is normally more flexibility in relation to entry at level 5.
- 1.29. Assessors complete the RPL form, and the completed form and related documents are forwarded to the Chair of Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) to confirm the assessment of credit to be awarded.
- 1.30. Chair of AQSC checks RPL form and confirms recommendation (or not) on behalf of the Board of Examiners, before forwarding to Admissions Office.
- 1.31. Admissions Office informs applicant of outcome of claim and RPL is recorded against the relevant stage/s and/or modules on the student record system.
- 1.32. Annually a sample of RPL claims (minimum number 5) should be presented to the external examiner for comment, as part of moderation activity.

2.0. APPEALS

- 2.1. Students have the right to request a review of the conduct of the process for considering an RPL process, using normal College procedures; however, there is no appeal against the final decision as this is a matter of academic judgement.
- 2.2. Appeals can therefore only be based on material administrative error, regulatory irregularity, or other material irregularity.
- 2.3. In line with the College's complaints process, complaints in relation to RPL decisions will only be considered on the grounds of procedural error or unreasonable conclusions of the initial investigation of the complaint or if any additional evidence is available that was not available at the time of the original complaint.