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**FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND EDUCATION**

**RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)**

**A GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS/STUDENTS**

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the relevant regulations available at[:.https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/quality-and-standards-office/regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulation-and-credit-framework/Regulation-and-Credit-Framework.aspx](https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/quality-and-standards-office/regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulation-and-credit-framework/Regulation-and-Credit-Framework.aspx)

**1. DEFINITIONS**

Throughout this handbook the following definitions are used:

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| **RPL** | Stands for ‘Recognition of Prior Learning’ |
| **Advanced Standing** | is entry through RPL at a point in the course later than the ordinary admission stage for example. entering a 3-year course at the start of year 2. An applicant may enter an award “with advanced standing” if they hold a Cert HE, HNC, Dip HE, HND, FD, PG Cert or PG Dip or another award. Advanced Standing does not result in the award of credits by the University - using the above example, credits would only be given for years 2 and 3 and not for year 1 when entering via Advanced Standing. The imported award will normally have been awarded by a UK institution with degree-awarding powers, or by an international institution with equivalent standing. |
| **RPCL** | Stands for the ‘Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning’. This is for applicants who have UK HE credits, but no award (eg a student who has 40 credits at level 4 and wants to be exempted from two specific modules at level 4 of our course). The University will not award credits for the RPCL’d modules. |
| **RPEL** | Stands for the ‘Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning. In this process, a student demonstrates that they have met the learning outcomes for particular modules through reflection on their prior experience. This is usually through work experience, including continuing professional development activities. Applicants should apply for RPEL before they join the course. The portfolio should be submitted following registration. The course team will double mark the portfolio, credits will be awarded, and the grade will be used for the calculation of the student’s award following University marking procedures. |

**Levels of Learning**

Levels of learning are academic levels that equate to the expected achievements of an undergraduate degree or a postgraduate degree.

In broad terms, the academic levels referred to in this handbook may be described as follows:

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| Level 4 | Corresponds for example to Year 1 of a full-time undergraduate course or Foundation Degree course. |
|  |  |
| Level 5 | Corresponds for example to Year 2 of a full-time undergraduate course or Foundation Degree course. |
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| Level 6 | Corresponds for example to Year 3 of a full-time undergraduate course or modules within the Faculty’s post-registration courses e.g. BSc (Hons) Applied Practice. |
|  |  |
| Level 7 | Corresponds to Postgraduate or Master’s level work. |

**Essential criteria for RPL claims**

In determining the credit that can be awarded in individual cases, the following will need to be considered:

* **Appropriateness:** the RPL application must demonstrate that the claim is appropriate to the course in which the credits are to be transferred i.e. you must justify why your prior learning should allow you to transfer credits into the specific course.
* **Level rating:** for RPCL **and Advanced Standing** the level of the prior learning submitted must be equivalent to the level of the recognition sought e.g. to RPL out of a level 5 module the prior learning must be at level 5.
* **Amount:** No more than two-thirds of a course may be achieved through RPL. Any prior learning must demonstrate an equivalent amount of work to that for which recognition is sought.
* **Learning content:** the content of the prior learning must sufficiently match the course module(s) to allow progression to later stages of the course without disadvantage. There must be a mapping exercise undertaken to ensure that the imported credit or award meets the intended learning outcomes of the module for which it substitutes.
* **Shelf-life:** achievement used for RPL is to have occurred during the previous five years. Where the claim is made using Advanced Standing or RPCL, the five-year period is from the date that the award is made.
* **Application form:** must be completed fully and include all relevant supporting/ documentary evidence and signatures as appropriate.

**2. APPLICATION FOR RPCL**

RPCL applications should take place before you register for the course at CCCU. The Faculty reserves the right to decline applications for RPCL that are made after you have registered for the course.

**NB If this application is approved, it may have implication for your entitlement to a student loan. Depending on the number of credits you take in a year, following the approval of the application you may be deemed, for student loan purposes, to be doing the course part-time, and may therefore be ineligible for a student maintenance loan. You should seek advice about the impact of the use of Recognition of Prior Learning before making an application.**

In preparing an application for RPCL you should bear in mind that the claim needs to match the module(s) from which you wish to be exempted. If the subject matter of your prior learning is not directly relevant to the course you are entering or doesn’t map to the learning outcomes or content you will not be able to RPL out of all the modules requested.

**Step 1:** Contact the relevant Course Director for the course that you wish to RPCL your credits into.

**Step 2: C**omplete the RPL application form and enclosean **original copy** of the certificate(s), a letter from the Awarding Body and/or a transcript of credits. The Course Director will provide details of what is required.

**Step 3:** If you are funded by your employer obtain the relevant Budget Holder agreement and signature and return the completed form and all attachments to the address on the back of the RPL application form. If you are a self-funding student you should enclose a cheque made payable to Canterbury Christ Church University or indicate that you wish to be invoiced. Please see Fees for amounts payable.

**Step 4:** You will receive acknowledgement of the application and any original certificates will be photocopied and returned.

**Step 5:** Following a review of the application form you will be informed of the outcome by the Faculty Quality Office. You should then proceed with your application as normal.

**3. APPLICATION FOR RPEL**

RPEL applications should normally be made before registration for a course at CCCU, although the assessment activity will normally take place after registration.

**Step 1: Seek advice from the** relevant Course Director to complete and complete the RPL application form.

**Step 2:** If you are funded by your employer obtain the relevant Budget Holder agreement and signature and return the RPL application form(s) to the address on the back. If you are a self-funding student you should enclose a cheque made payable to Canterbury Christ Church University or indicate that you wish to be invoiced. Please see Fees for amounts payable.

**Step 3** The Faculty RPL Panel will consider whether an RPEL portfolio may be constructed.

**Step 4:** The Course Director will notify you of the name and contact details of an academic facilitator who will support you in preparing your claim through the development of a portfolio of evidence. You should arrange to meet with him/her and a submission date for your RPEL claim will be negotiated (this will normally be within 18 weeks of registering your intent to submit a claim).

**Step 5:** When the precise nature of the required evidence has been agreed upon with the academic facilitator/ Course Director, this will be confirmed to you in writing. You will undertake the work as planned with support and guidance from your academic facilitator. This will involve identifying some learning outcomes and producing a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that you have met those learning outcomes. The portfolio must include:

* a statement of the Intended Learning Outcomes from which you are seeking exemption. This may be in the form of a mapping tool that indicates how the evidence presented demonstrates achievement of the learning outcomes;
* your written reflection and evaluation of evidence being produced to support the claim for the recognition of experiential or prior learning.

The evidence produced to support a claim for the recognition of experiential learning may include some or all of the following:

* An up-to-date Curriculum Vitae;
* A reference, testimonials or witness statements from your most recent employer;
* Evidence of achievement of the learning outcomes from the workplace, volunteering and similar activities;
* Certificates/evidence of up-to-date continuous professional development activities e.g. attendance at short courses, conferences, mandatory training such as health and safety
* Evidence of current registration with a Professional or Statutory Regulatory body (if applicable).

You are required to demonstrate to the markers not only that you have achieved the learning outcomes but that you can write in an academic style, gather and collate evidence and show the development of an analytical and reflective approach consistent with the level of study for which you are seeking credit.

**Step 6:** Submission of the portfolio. You should submit your portfolio by the submission date to Faculty Academic Administration and/or Student Records and Assessments (your academic facilitator will be able to advise you where this is).

**Step 7:** The portfolio will be double marked by Faculty staff. If your RPEL claim is successful, credits will be awarded by the relevant Board of Examiners and the mark will be used in the classification of your award.

**5. FEES**

There is no fee for Advanced Standing. There is no fee for using CCCU credits for RPCL.

There is a fee for processing RPL claims for credits from other institutions. Sometimes your employer will pay this for you in which case you will need to obtain the signature of the authorised fund-holder on the application form.

**No claim will be processed until the fee, or another funding arrangement is confirmed.**

RPCL - £ 177 (2022/23 academic year)

RPEL - £ 505 (2022/23 academic year)

Self-funding students should enclose a cheque made payable to Canterbury Christ Church University or indicate that you wish to be invoiced.