



## Personal Trainer Academy

### ***Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Exemptions and/or Equivalence Requests Policy.***

Learners often commence a qualification with some form of prior learning and experience and PT Academy has a process in place whereby these can be recognised so as to remove unnecessary duplication and repetition.

#### **What is RPL?**

The recognition of prior learning (RPL) in the QCF is defined as:

*“A method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills that they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.”*

In other words, RPL is a process that allows learners with work experience and/or other related learning, but without appropriate certification, to proceed directly to assessment.

A learner may wish to gain a unit or qualification but may already possess some of the subject related:

- skills
- knowledge
- experience
- understanding

To allow RPL and for the learner to proceed to assessment, PT Academy must be satisfied that the learner has the necessary underpinning knowledge and skills to perform the tasks required of the workplace.

To do this, learners must provide evidence to back up their claim. PT Academy appoints an assessor to manage claims of Exemption and RPL. Assessor will need to weigh up the evidence produced by the learners, prior to agreeing with them the plan for their individual training and assessment pathway to the specific unit or qualification they wish to obtain.

The following points are considered by PT Academy for effective, consistent and quality assured practice in RPL:

- RPL must comply with all regulatory requirements for assessment. RPL policies, processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and in line with PT Academy RPL Policy. This is accessible to individuals and stakeholders to ensure that users can be confident of the decisions and outcomes of RPL.



- RPL is a learner-centred, voluntary process. The individual will be offered advice on the nature and range of evidence considered appropriate to support a claim for assessing RPL, and will be given guidance and support to make his or her claim by PT Academy.
- The process of RPL is subject to the same standard of quality assurance and monitoring processes as any other form of learning and assessment.
- Assessment methods for RPL must be of equal rigour as other assessment methods, be fit for purpose and relate to the evidence of learning. An individual can claim RPL against any whole unit unless the assessment criteria of the unit states otherwise. To be eligible for certification the learner must demonstrate their competence successfully in all of the components relevant to the unit or qualification under the same conditions as other learners.
- RPL or Exemption is not necessarily a way of saving time or money. The work required to gather evidence and the cost of presenting it, may render it simpler, cheaper and easier to follow the traditional training and assessment route.
- PT Academy will apply for Exemption or RPL if we are in any doubt about the learner's skills, knowledge, competence or quality of evidence.
- To claim Exemption or RPL, PT Academy must submit an application to the awarding body.

**Definition of Exemption: As per Ofqual:**

*“The facility for a learner to claim exemption from some form of the achievement requirements of a QCF Qualification, using evidence of certified, non-QCF achievement deemed to be of equivalent value. This may include certified achievements inside or outside the NQF”.*

This means that the learners who have certified achievements outside of the QCF can claim exemption from units within the QCF qualifications that are deemed to be of equal value. Therefore, a learner could achieve a qualification through a combination of credits awarded for the units within the QCF and exemption from the requirement to achieve credits for a unit or units based on certified achievements outside the QCF.

**Planned Exemptions:**

These are decided by the awarding body and will appear in the rules of combination within a set of units leading to a qualification.

**Individually Requested Exemptions:**

There may be cases where exemptions are requested by learners holding certified achievements that were not foreseen when the rules of combination were submitted for regulation.

In such cases PT Academy will consider requests on an individual basis. PT Academy will make the initial evaluation and submit a request to the awarding body for approval.



**NOTE:** Learners will not receive credits for exemptions as they come from outside of the QCF. This means that exempted units/qualification do not have a credit value that can be banked and transferred too other QCF Qualifications.

### **What is Equivalence?**

Within the QCF it is possible to count credits awarded for another qualification and/or by a recognised awarding organisation within a qualification's rules of combination. There may also be circumstances where credits from expired (and therefore inactive) units can still be counted towards a qualification.

Although determining exemptions will follow a similar process to determining equivalent units, there is an important distinction in that *equivalence* substitutes units within the QCF, whereas *exemption* substitutes a unit or units within the QCF for achievement that has been certified outside of the QCF.

### **AO Centre Requirements for applications for Exemption or RPL:**

It is the responsibility of the PT Academy to provide all Exemption or RPL learners with a detailed breakdown of:

- Literature that informs the learner of:
  - What they should know (underpinning knowledge related to the specific unit or qualification - as detailed in AO syllabus) and
  - What they should be able to demonstrate (list of criteria as detailed in the assessment specifications and observation checklists in the AO syllabus)
  - Evidence requirements (as outlined below)
  - Portfolio requirements, including, cross-referencing to specific criteria
- Exemption/RPL procedures, to include:
  - PT Academy RPL Policy
  - Learner application for Exemption/RPL
  - Assessor contact to arrange a time, date and venue for Exemption/RPL interview
  - Interview and assessment (discussion to establish appropriateness of evidence)
  - Action plan (identifying any training or assessment needs)
  - How much it will cost

### **Evidence requirements for Exemption and RPL:**

- The evidence must be authentic. All documentary evidence must be submitted in its original form. For example - original copies of certificates and reports must be provided. All evidence must be signed and dated at the time of achievement. The work must also be the learners own. Forged documents or fraudulent claims must not be tolerated and should be reported to the AO.
- The evidence must be valid. The evidence must relate directly to the criteria and must meet all the assessment criteria for the area(s) of competence claimed. For example - a certificate showing that a learner has passed a theory paper would not be evidence to support a claim of competence as a practical teacher. A GCSE Biology certificate would not be a valid source of evidence for demonstrating the same underpinning knowledge required of an exercise and fitness instructor.



### **AO requirements:**

- Centre must ensure that the AO is provided with copies of all Exemption or RPL evidence prior to certificate claims being submitted. Centres should ensure they detail:
  - Name of the awarding/certifying body
  - Type of evidence
  - Date
  - Unit for which it is claiming competence against
  
- For Exemption relating to non AO programmes, centres must forward to AO an authenticated copy (signed by a qualified assessor) of any non AO certificate for which they are claiming Exemption prior to submitting a certificate claim.
  
- For Exemption relating to past AO programmes (within the last three years), centres should notify AO of which past achievement is being used for the purposes of Exemption prior to submitting a certificate claim.
  
- Centres should retain records that clearly show how eligibility for APA/Exemption and RPL as determined. All such records should be made available to the AO EV upon request.