



**ECITB Awarding Organisation
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
and Procedure RV1-1
August 2023**

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Introduction

ECITB qualifications may have their own policy relating to the recognition of prior learning and, if applicable, the details for each specific qualification can be found within the Qualification Specification that can be downloaded from the ECITB website.

This document sets out the procedures that ECITB Approved Centres must follow when making decisions relating use of recognition of prior learning as evidence towards the achievement of a qualification, provided RPL is allowed within the qualification assessment strategy.

ECITB Approved Centres will discuss any previous learning and experience with candidates and/or their employers prior to registration for an ECITB qualification to ensure they meet any stated entry criteria and are capable of meeting the demands of the qualification. As part of this process Approved Centres will make an assessment of a candidates learning/training needs required for assessment of the qualification and will discuss how RPL may contribute to the demonstration of achievement.

ECITB Approved Centres are not required to seek authorisation for the recognition of prior learning for entry or towards a candidate's learning/training programme and are authorised to make the decision to registered candidates with ECITB when they consider the candidate is ready to undertake the assessment.

This procedure outlines the process Approved Centres must follow should they wish to use RPL towards achievement/assessment of an ECITB qualification.

Centres must have their own RPL policy approved by ECITB:

- Process of claiming RPL
- Assessor support and guidance for determining the validity of the evidence
- The length of time the process of assessing evidence will take.
- IQA requirements
- Costs
- Appeal

Candidates wishing to claim RPL must discuss this with their Approved Centre. ECITB will not accept any RPL claims directly from candidates or their employers.

Definition

Recognition of Prior Learning is defined by the qualification regulators, in summary it is an assessment process which makes use of **evidence** generated through learning undertaken and/or attainment by a candidate prior to the registration for a qualification, RPL is given for evidence of learning and not for experience alone.

Learning may be:

- ***Certificated Learning***, i.e. evidence of a previously achieved qualification from a regulated awarding organisation or Higher Education Institution/University. Credit transfer is a type of RPL that allows credit points from certificated learning to contribute towards the credit for another qualification.
- ***Non-Certificated***, i.e. evidence from learning that takes place either within an education or training setting but does not lead to a formal certification, an example may be training courses, work-based training activities.
- ***Experiential or Informal Learning***, evidence from learning that takes place through life and work experiences and can often be unintentional and is not certificated. It should be noted that experience alone is not deemed as evidence, evidence must be generated and/or presented by the candidate and be capable of being authenticated by an Assessor.

Approved centres may then be able to use the evidence from the above learning towards the assessment of the ECITB qualification. An ECITB Approved Assessor will be required to assess the evidence presented by the candidate against the knowledge/skills/behaviour criteria of the unit/qualification. The Assessor will need to determine that the evidence provided by the candidate is Valid, Current, Reliable, Authentic and Sufficient.

RPL Evidence

Certificated Learning

Approved Centres are responsible for authenticating the qualification certificate presented and ensuring that the qualification and any related credits have been awarded by a regulated Awarding Organisation or Higher Education Institute.

The Approved Centre are responsible for the mapping of the content as defined in the qualification syllabus documentation to the ECITB qualification/unit, and this mapping must be undertaken by an ECITB Approved Assessor. Presentation of a certificate alone is not sufficient evidence for RPL.

The certificated qualification must be at the same or higher level and in the same discipline and/or subject area and the mapping must provide evidence of achievement of the assessment criteria and scope of the ECITB qualification. Approved Assessors must refer to the regulators Level Descriptors during the mapping process. The certification date should not be more than **3 years from the date of application to the Approved Centre** for RPL, unless stated otherwise in the qualification assessment strategy.

No further assessment is required if the candidates previously achieved qualification meets the requirements of a whole unit. Where the certificated qualification does not provide evidence of the whole unit then the unit must be assessed in full by an ECITB Approved Assessor using the ECITB published assessment methodology.

Mapping of certificated learning must be internally quality assured, with consideration given to the regulators Level Descriptors and then **submitted to an ECITB EQA for approval prior to claiming for achievement**. Only qualifications regulated by UK regulators are recognised for this purpose.

RPL cannot be used to provide evidence against the achievement of an entire qualification or to replace any requirement for direct observation by an ECITB Approved Assessor.

Non-Certificated and Experiential Learning

Evidence produced from informal learning such as projects, tests or produced within the work-place must be directly assessed by an ECITB Assessor against the qualification assessment criteria, this assessment of evidence is likely to include a technical discussion with the candidate to be able to assess underpinning understanding and for authentication purposes. As evidence from non-certificated and experiential learning is assessed by an ECITB Approved Assessor this will be treated the same as evidence generated during the assessment period, i.e. the evidence will be mapped to the relevant assessment criteria and subject to internal and external quality assurance as per ECITB requirements. All evidence must meet ECITB requirements and any evidence presented should not have been generated more than **3 years from the date of application to the Approved Centre** for RPL, unless stated otherwise in the qualification assessment strategy or agreed by an ECITB EQA.

RPL cannot be used to provide evidence against the achievement of an entire qualification or to replace any requirement for direct observation by an ECITB Approved Assessor.

Process of Assessing Candidates for RPL

Applications for RPL must be considered by an ECITB Approved Assessor and quality assured by an ECITB Approved IQA.

Step 1: Induction/Prior to Registration

An ECITB Approved Assessor should:

- Discuss with candidates and their employers, if applicable, the option of using recognition of prior learning in relation to both their training towards and claiming achievement towards unit/s of the ECITB qualification. Candidates should be provided with a copy of the Approved Centre's RPL policy.
- Create and agree with the candidate an Assessment plan that details the units/assessment criteria that could be demonstrated using RPL/previously generated evidence. Any assessment plan that includes recognition of certificated learning must be agreed with an ECITB EQA.
- Agree with the candidate the evidence and deadline for presentation, Approved Centres should expect candidates to produce the required evidence normally **within 15 days** of this agreement unless under exceptional circumstances that are approved by the Approved Centre IQA and candidates should be registered as soon as they start to gather evidence.
- Explain the process and timescales for the internal assessment and mapping of the evidence to ECITB qualification criteria, including the:
 - possibility that the RPL evidence may not meet assessment requirements;
 - requirement for internal and external quality assurance;
 - candidate's right of appeal as per the Approved Centre's Appeals Policy.

Step 2: Assessment of RPL Evidence

The Assessor must:

- Assess evidence and map to assessment criteria, using an ECITB Candidate Assessment Record or a mapping document/E-portfolio.
- Determine if evidence presented requires additional assessment or evidence to meet ECITB requirements and the requirements of VARCS (valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient). It is expected that Assessors undertake a technical discussion with candidates to ensure any RPL evidence meets the requirements of VARCS.
- Seek IQA guidance and approval as per the Approved Centre internal IQA and RPL Policy.
- Provide feedback to the candidate explaining which units/criteria have been demonstrated by RPL, which units/criteria will require additional evidence or assessment and which units/criteria remain to be assessed directly using the qualification assessment methods.

Step 3: Recording Quality Assurance of RPL Evidence and Decisions

The Assessor must:

- Complete Candidate assessment records, clearly indicating which units/criteria have been assessed using RPL evidence, ensuring the RPL evidence is clearly mapped.
- Ensure any additional assessment and/or supplementary evidence is also clearly mapped to the assessment criteria.
- Ensure RPL decisions are subject to internal quality assurance as per the Approved Centre's RPL policy prior to claim for achievement.
- Submit the mapping for any RPL using **Certificated Evidence to an ECITB EQA for approval prior to claiming for achievement**. EQA's will moderate RPL for certificated learning in line with published service level agreements.

Step 4: Continue with direct assessment

The Assessor should continue with direct assessment of the unit/qualification assessment criteria as outlined by in the Approved Centre Qualification Requirements, including assessment of any criteria where RPL evidence has not been accepted by either the IQA or ECITB EQA.

Step 5: Certification Decisions

- A **minimum of 60%** of assessment criteria and/or credit for a qualification must be directly assessed (by the ECITB Awarding Organisation where externally assessed or an ECITB Approved Assessor where internally assessed), unless stated otherwise in the qualification assessment strategy.
- A **maximum grade of a Pass** can be awarded for any unit within a graded qualifications where RPL using evidence from certificated learning is deemed to have met the requirements of that entire unit.
- Credits awarded as a result of RPL of certificated learning must be of the same level and value as credit gained through the certificate learning.
- RPL evidence generated through non-certificated and experiential learning is assessed by an ECITB Approved Assessor therefore there no restriction on grading as the ECITB Approved Assessor will be assessing the RPL evidence presented directly against the qualification assessment criteria. All RPL evidence must meet ECITB requirements (including VARCS).
- The Assessor must provide a written rationale for any certification decisions using RPL and this must be countersigned by the Approved Centre IQA.
- **RPL cannot be used to provide evidence against the achievement of an entire qualification or to replace any requirement for direct observation by an ECITB Approved Assessor.**



Review Arrangements

This policy and its associated procedures will be reviewed and revised, as and when necessary, as part of continuous improvement arrangements and/or in response to customer, candidate or regulatory feedback (e.g. to align with any enquiries, processes established or revised by the regulators) and/or in response to any trends that may emerge in the subject matter of enquiries received.

Contact Details

If you have any queries about any aspect of this process, please contact:

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