

Mandala Complementary Studies with the Institute of Crystal and Gem Therapists,
Samarpan Alchemy and Amber Complementary Health

Recognition of Prior Learning May 2010

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1. Policy Statement on RPL

1.1 RPL policies and procedures have been developed over time, which has led to the use of a number of names to describe the process. Among the most common are:

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

1.2 RPL is a method of assessment leading to the award of credit that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so not need to develop through a course of learning.

2. Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework

2.1 RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid 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.

Evidence of learning must be:

valid
reliable.

2.2 RPL is a process which recognises that learning is continuous – at work, home and at leisure, as well as in the classroom. RPL provides a route for the recognition of the achievements resulting from continuous learning. It will enable students to gain a part of a qualification on the evidence of their past achievements.

2.3 The RPL process is **not** concerned with allowing for exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study. It focuses on assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning which may count as evidence towards a unit.

2.4 When appropriate, MCS/ACH reserves the right to require samples from additional units where students have gained qualifications in other educational establishments.

2.5 An exact guide cannot be given to the prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills. This will vary from sector to sector. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions or practical assessments to test any reservations.

2.6 The starting point for any learner wishing to claim for RPL is to reflect on their experience in order to identify relevant achievement. They should think about experience gained:

at work ,in any relevant voluntary work and leisure activities, formal or informal education and training – for example, adult education courses or in-company training from independent study.

2.7 Learners will need to provide evidence which shows that they have covered the requirements of the unit(s).

2.8 Professional discussions or oral assessment can be used to contribute towards portfolio evidence, which must be documented and can be supported by audio/video tape recordings.

2.9 The standard required of an RPL learner is identical to that demanded of a learner pursuing a conventional study route.

For instance, RPL evidence for any internally assessed unit must at least fulfil the requirements of the pass criteria in the assessment guidance grid.

2.10 As for conventional learners, RPL learners must be given guidance on the evidence that will enable them to achieve a pass.

2.11 Where evidence presented in support of a claim of RPL is strongly convincing, it may be deemed sufficient for the purpose of certification.

2.12 If the evidence is less convincing, but nevertheless substantial, the learner might, where suitable:

- undergo an oral assessment**
- complete an appropriate assignment**
- complete a written test**
- carry out a demonstration**
- a combination of the above.**

2.13 If the learner is registered with Open College Network for the course in question, approval of RPL must be given by both the Internal Verifier and the Quality Reviewer.