



BWYQ Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Guidance for Centres

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is detailed in the Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition Condition E10.2; which states:

*“for the purposes of this Condition, ‘recognition of prior learning’ is the –
(a) identification by an awarding organisation of any learning undertaken, and/or attainment, by a Learner–
(i) prior to that Learner taking a qualification which the awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available, and
(ii) which is relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification, and
(b) recognition by an awarding organisation of that learning and/or attainment through amendment to the requirements which a Learner must have satisfied before the Learner will be assessed or that qualification will be awarded”.*

In other words, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) considers whether or not any of a learner’s previous study or employment, voluntary work and training courses has met the assessment requirements for a given unit. It recognises that the knowledge, understanding and skills within the unit have already been gained.

All RPL applications should go through the Centre initially and must be approved by the Centre and the and BWYQ Chair. Contact details are at the end of this document.

Important note - what RPL is not:

RPL relates to the knowledge and skills content of a unit, but summative assessment will still need to be completed.

RPL should not be confused with exemption and unit equivalency; which are not offered for BWYQ qualifications.

What RPL is:

RPL recognises prior achievement that has used a range of appropriate assessment, including, but not limited to previous qualifications, workplace training or expert testimony. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit or elements of units within the BWYQ qualification.

RPL can be used where a learner has not had their prior learning formally recognised but their evidence clearly meets the qualification assessment criteria and is valid and reliable.

RPL is valuable when a learner has completed other yoga training, perhaps abroad, or have been working as an established yoga teacher for some time. This will be considered on a case by case basis using the assessment mapping document.

Evidence presented by the learner must be evaluated using the learning outcomes and assessment criteria (LOAC) in the unit being claimed¹. In assessing a unit using RPL the assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the assessment standard.

Evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will depend on the extent of the learner’s prior experience, how the subject has changes over time and the nature of the outcome claimed. The VARC’s principle of evidence and assessment must always be applied to ensure that the prior learning meets all necessary criteria

(see below for the VARCS principle of evidence and assessment). If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use additional questions to check understanding, and ask for the demonstration of skills, such as a class observation, to check competence.

Where evidence is assessed to be only sufficient to cover one or more learning outcomes, or to partly meet the need of a learning outcome, then additional assessment methods should be used to generate sufficient evidence to award the learning outcome(s) for the whole unit.

Centres wishing to carry out RPL must ensure that:

- Learners are registered as soon as they formally start to gather evidence
- Records of assessment against prior learning are complete, accurate and sufficiently maintained
- RPL is assessed and evidenced against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria (LOAC) of the BWYQ regulated qualification.
- Assessment against the LOAC for RPL applicants is as rigorous and thorough as it would be if the student were undertaking the qualification in the regular format
- All relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed
- There are designated personnel with the appropriate expertise to support, assess and quality assure the RPL process
- Certification claims are made according to normal procedures but with accompanying RPL evidence approved and signed by all parties (student/ tutor/ IQA/ Lead IQA as necessary)
- All RPL applications have been approved by the BWYQ Operations Coordinator

Learner Responsibility

RPL must be applied for and evidenced by the learner and checked by the assessor who may need to refer to their Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) or QAO for advice and guidance.

Evidence could include documents evidencing previous achievements, qualifications, education, work history and references. If the evidence is sufficient the learner may not need to attend learning sessions, but must complete the required assessment tasks.

Assessor/Tutor Responsibilities

Assessors/Tutors are required to:

- Inform the learner they may apply for RPL and direct them to the RPL application form (appendix 1)
- Give the learner support and guidance about the types of evidence that they may use and how to present it (referring to learning outcomes and assessment criteria).
- On application – via completion of the RPL form (appendix 1) by the learner - ask for evidence which must then be judged by the assessor prior to starting the course or unit.
- Make a judgement based on the evidence supplied and the requirements of the unit of competence and knowledge.
- Undertake additional forms of assessment to make a judgement on the current competence of the applicant. This may include additional testing of knowledge, Observation and/or Professional Discussion (PD).

The VARCs principle of evidence and assessment:

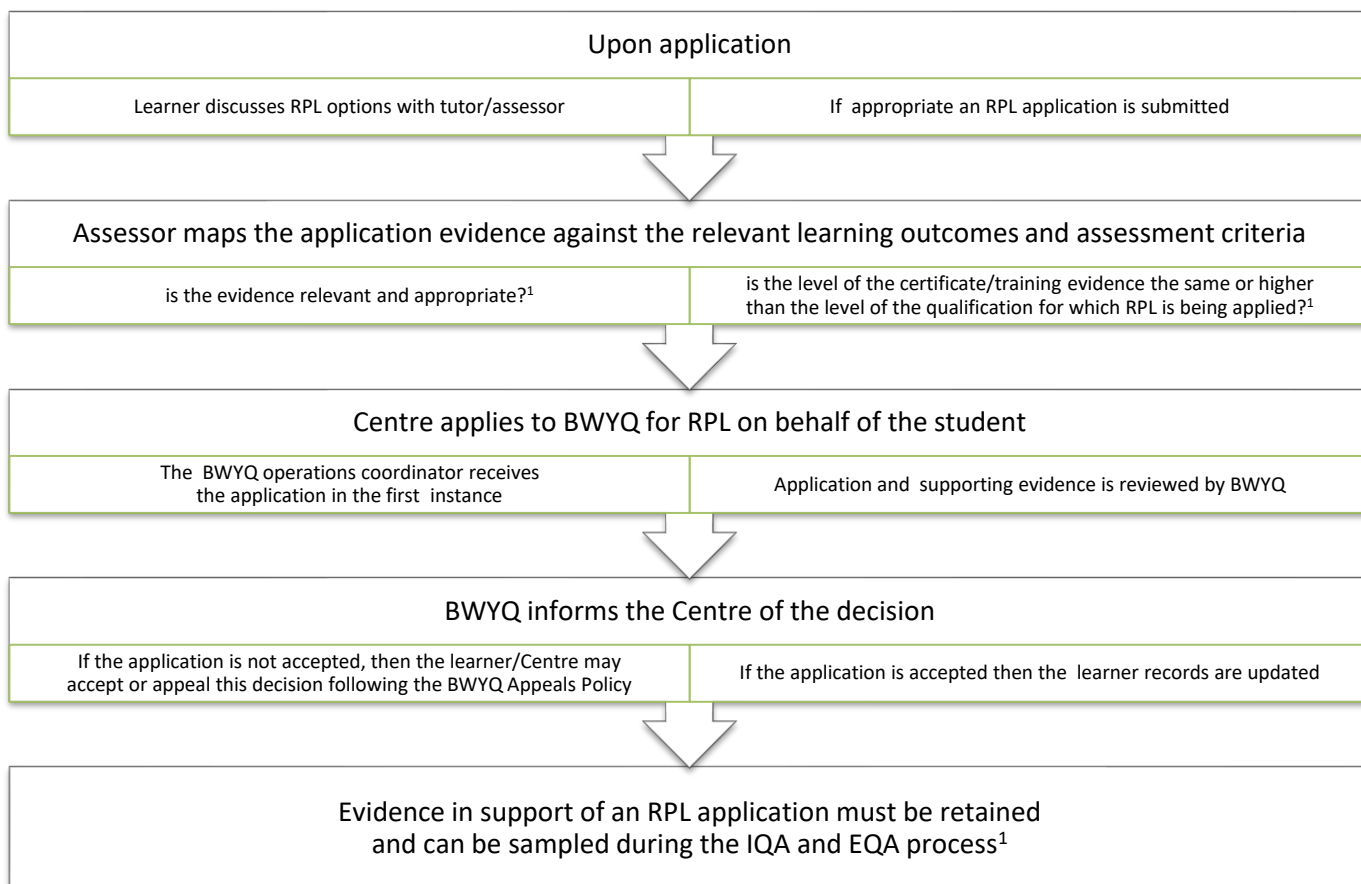
- assessors and quality assurance staff must make sure that the student's submitted work and evidence is valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient:
 - **Valid:**
 - Does the evidence genuinely demonstrate that the demands of the learning outcome have been met? For RPL, currency of evidence will be of particular concern. Does, for example, the evidence meet up-to-date demands or is it representative of practice that has significantly changed?

- **Authentic:**
- Is the evidence genuinely the work of the learner. For example, the evidence may have been produced by somebody else, or may be the result of the work of a team. In the latter case, this would be acceptable if the learning outcome was related to team / joint working, but not if it was being used as evidence of an activity which should have been carried out individually.
- **Reliable:**
- The same assessment decision should be reached if the assessment were to be repeated.
- **Current:**
- the work is still relevant at the time of assessment; students still possess the skills that are being claimed
- **Sufficient:**
- There must be enough evidence to fully meet the requirements of the learning outcome(s). If not then it must be complemented by additional evidence gained through other suitable assessment method(s).

The assessor/tutor may use the following list as a guide to what evidence may be considered for RPL:

- Certificate of attendance or achievement at appropriate level
- Demonstration of skill
- Class observation
- Record of academic results (Certificates)
- Samples of work (portfolio)
- Duty statements/job specifications
- Witness statement or supporting letter from employer/course trainer

Summary of the RPL Process



Step 1 – Awareness, information and guidance

Application for RPL (appendix 1) must be presented by the learner before acceptance on the course or before the unit studied. Portfolios of evidence will be accepted at all times, but it is advisable to apply 4 weeks before a unit for RPL assessment.

Ahead of enrolling a potential learner, the possibility that they may be able to claim credit for some of their previous learning should be raised by their tutor. They will need to know the:

- Process of claiming achievement by using RPL process/ application form (appendix 1)
- Sources of support and guidance available to them.
- The BWYQ Appeals/complaints policies and processes that are in place, the relevant timescales and any fees involved.

Step 2 – Pre-assessment; gathering evidence and giving information.

The learner will collect evidence against the LOAC of the unit(s). In some cases, an assessment plan and tracking document, to support the learner through the process may be necessary. All evidence must be clearly recorded and identify the learning outcomes and assessment criteria it demonstrates.

Step 3 – Assessment/documentation of evidence

Assessment is a structured process for gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgments about learners' prior learning and experience in relation to unit learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

This must be as rigorous and as thorough as all the other qualification assessment.

Assessment must be valid, current and reliable to ensure the integrity of the award. This will require sufficient evidence against all of the learning outcome and assessment criteria as if the learner had studied the original BWYQ course units.

The assessment process will be subject to the usual quality assurance procedures of the centre. Evidence gathered through RPL should be clearly referenced and signposted to aid internal assessment and internal and external verification (IQA/EQA).¹

Step 4 - Quality Assurance

The assessor/tutor will forward the application to the Course IQA for advice. The IQA will forward the application to the Centre/QAO. The application will be reviewed, and additional evidence sought if necessary. Final approval will be sought from the BWYQ Operations Coordinator.

Step 5 – Claiming certification

A certificate claim can be submitted once the internal and external quality assurance procedures have been successfully completed.

The assessor must ensure that all learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit are achieved and that the records of assessment are maintained in the usual way.

Copies of all students' assessed work/ portfolios are submitted as part of a BWYQ certificate claim and so evidence supporting the RPL will also be requested to support the certification process. Assessment and internal verification records, along with any additional RPL records completed, will be retained at the centre for the three years following certification.

Step 6 – Appeal

As with any assessment decision, if a learner wishes to appeal against a decision they need to follow centre procedures and, if this does not resolve the issue, then further BWYQ policies can be accessed via the BWYQ website (see BWYQ 019 Complaints Policy and BWYQ 020 Appeals Policy). Students would normally exhaust their centre complaints and appeals policies before considering these BWYQ processes, unless their appeal or complaint is directly related to BWYQ representatives or activities.

The BWYQ policy documents are available to centres via the ‘fact sheets’ section of the BWYQ web page: [http://www.bwyq.org.uk/information/74/About the BWYQ.htm](http://www.bwyq.org.uk/information/74/About%20the%20BWYQ.htm)

Document History		
Date	Author	Action
October 2015	BWYQ Operations Coordinator & Responsible Officer, Amanda Buchanan	Reviewed and revised
December 2015	BWYQ Chair, Paul Fox	Approved
August 2016	BWYQ Operations Coordinator & Responsible Officer, Amanda Buchanan	Reviewed and revised
20.08.16	BWYQ QA Lead Director, Mila Bogen	Approved
November 2017	Head of BWYQ Operations, Amanda Buchanan	Reviewed and revised
29.11.17	BWYQ QA Lead Director, Mila Bogen	Approved
May 2020	BWYQ Operations Coordinator, Jenny Howsam	Reviewed and revised
___.05.20	BWYQ Board of Directors	

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¹ Evidence grids are available for all BWYQ qualifications.

Appendix 1: RPL Application Form

All applications for RPL must be approved by Centre's Assessor, IQA/QAO and BWYQ Operations Coordinator

Name of learner		Unique learner registration number	
Name of Tutor/Assessor		Course number	
Qualification name			

Details of RPL claim by learner
Give unit titles then specify the assessment criteria and how it has been met.

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Evidence supplied for above claim¹
Please include certificates for previous qualifications where appropriate
Evidence must be listed against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the qualification.

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Details of professional discussion or Q&A with learner to accredit the claim for RPL
Evidence must be listed against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the qualification.

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Tutor/assessor comments
Give any additional information that will support the RPL claim
Evidence must be listed against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the qualification.

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Does the tutor-assessor support the RPL claim based on the evidence provided (yes/no)
If no, please supply reasons including detail of any further evidence requirements

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Signature of tutor/assessor(s)		Date	
Signature of learner accepting the decision of tutor/assessor(s)		Date	
Signature of IQA / QAO		Date	
Signature of BWYQ Operations Coordinator		Date	

¹ Evidence grids are available for all BWYQ qualifications.