

Recognition of Prior Learning policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University policy and procedures for the recognition of prior learning have been reviewed in line with the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education published in June 2024.
- 1.2 An application may be made for exemption from modules on University undergraduate courses based on the Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL).
- 1.3 An application may also be made for exemption on a small number of postgraduate courses based on RPCL or on the basis of experience, known as Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), which may include professional development or employment-based awards.
- 1.4 The application procedure set out below is designed to ensure that the degree aims are achievable and that the academic standards of the University award are maintained. See also the [Student Transfer policy](#).

2. Definitions

2.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- 2.1.1 A generic term covering the exemption of a student from a module/s on taught courses at the University on the basis of prior achievement of the relevant learning outcomes.

2.2 Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)

- 2.2.1 An application may be considered for exemption from modules on an undergraduate or postgraduate taught course at the University based on credit or an award made by the University of Sussex, another HE provider or an international institution.
- 2.2.2 The process set out below ensures that the credit or award gained is taken into consideration in relation to the course requirements and the higher education qualifications framework. An application may be made for exemption from a small number of postgraduate taught courses at the University, based on evidence of learning which may have been formally assessed through professional development or employment-based awards, but did not result in credit or award being made by a UK Higher Education degree-

3.1.7

3.2.3 The above applications may exceptionally be approved based on evidence that the

- 3.3.1 Decisions are made via a two-stage process as set out in 3.1 and 3.2 to ensure that the course entry requirements are met.
- 3.3.2 Decisions are based on academic judgement.
- 3.3.3 The outcome of an application must be provided in writing in advance of the start of the course.
- 3.3.4 The University will inform the applicant of the decision and arrange for the course tuition fee to be raised in all cases.
- 3.3.5 There will be no appeal against a decision to not accept an application for exemption, as such decisions are based on academic judgement.
- 3.3.6 A fraudulent application for recognition of Prior Certificated Learning will be considered in accordance with the University's Admissions policy.

4. Applications for postgraduate courses

4.1 Application process for credits achieved at another institution

- 4.1.1 Prospective students may make an application to PG Admissions for Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL), based on credits previously achieved or Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), based on experience or professional/employer-based awards.
- 4.1.2 Applications may only be considered for the following postgraduate courses: MA Education (part-time only; please see additional points in 4.2 and 4.3 below); MA English Language Teaching; PG Dip Psychological Therapy; MSc Psychological Therapy; MA Social Work; PG Dip Social Work; PG Dip Social Work (Step Up to Social Work); and Online Distance Learning Courses.

4.1.3

- A maximum of 50% of the credits required for the new course may be imported from another HE provider (for example 90 level 7 credits not used for a previous award may be imported to a masters)
- credit achieved on a dissertation/project may not be imported
- a maximum of 50% of the credit previously used for an award may be imported, subject to a maximum of 50% of the credits required for the award being imported (for example 60 level 7 credits used for a PG Dip may be imported to a masters)
- Marks achieved on credit imported will not be recorded on the student record or the University transcript and will not contribute to classification.

(ii) Credit level requirement: The Faculty must ensure that any exemption recommended is based on evidence of prior learning at the level of the exempted module/s.

(iii) The course requirements: the Faculty must ensure that the prior learning undertaken will enable the student to engage with the course and to achieve the degree aims. A mapping process should be carried out to ensure that the prior learning undertaken enables

- 4.4.1 In relation to applications for RPEL, Faculties must ensure that an appropriate assessment is used to assess the prior learning achieved, rather than the experience itself, and to assess how the learning achieved relates to the modules to be exempted. For example, an appropriate assessment could include a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate the learning achieved, a reflective account, a set assessment task and/or a structured interview.
- 4.4.2 Faculties must provide clear information on the assessment in a timely manner and must provide subject specific guidance where appropriate, for example, on portfolio preparation and any independent verification of evidence that is required.
- 4.4.3 Faculties must provide information on how prior learning will be judged in advance of the assessment including the marking criteria that will be used.
- 4.4.4 The applicant must demonstrate evidence in relation to the learning claimed:
- (i) There must be sufficient evidence to indicate that the learning is relevant and that it relates to the applicant's own achievements.
 - (ii) Evidence should also be provided in relation to the timeframe over which the learning has been achieved.
 - (iii) The evidence must verify that the prior learning is appropriate in relation to the modules to be exempted in terms of credit volume and level of learning outcomes.
- 4.4.5 In summary, the evidence provided by the applicant must satisfy the following criteria which must be taken into consideration in addition to the criteria set out in 4.1.6 above:
- (i) Relevance: evidence must be provided that the prior learning that is being claimed is relevant to the modules to be exempted and/or course. The applicant must demonstrate a match in both level and learning achieved in relation to the module/s for which they are seeking exemption.
 - (ii) Sufficiency: applicants must provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate they have achieved the learning claimed.
 - (iii) Authenticity: applicants must provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the learning claimed relates to their own efforts and achievements.
 - (iv) Currency: A University award must be made based on learning achieved within a reasonable timeframe. Prior learning achieved within 5 years of the start of the course may be considered.
- 4.4.6 Feedback should be provided by the Faculty in relation to all RPEL applications for exemption, whether accepted or rejected.
- 4.4.7 Where an application has been accepted, feedback is intended to support the student with 'feed-forward' to future assessments.
- 4.4.8 Where an application has been rejected, feedback is intended to support the applicant in understanding the reasons for rejection in relation to any future study.
- 4.4.9 Student Records and Data will record Advanced Standing on the candidate record.
- 4.5 CPD applications

taken sequentially in accordance with the course structure. The module/s taken during a year of study must be passed before registration on modules in a further year of study. Exceptionally, registration may be permitted for a further year of study on a different module where the cycle of assessment has been exhausted and the credit not achieved, provided the maximum registration period has not been exceeded and that this only occurs on one module.

(iv) Timeframe requirement: CPD modules achieved within the last 5 years may be considered. A student must register on an award once 60 credits that form part of the course structure have been achieved (PG Cert, PG Dip or masters). Candidates may apply to transfer from one award to the next prior to the award being made in order that all the credits achieved can be considered for the new award.

4.5.10 Once registered on the award the following timelines apply:

- PG Cert – award made simultaneously upon registration once 60 credits achieved (student may not be registered before award is made)
- PG Dip – maximum period of registration on the award is five years and the award must be made within 7 years from when the first imported module was taken at the University
- Masters - maxi-sity

- (vii) note that in accordance with Admissions policy, students returning to the University following permanent withdrawal will not be entitled to apply for University accommodation
 - (viii) note that the current terms and conditions will apply upon return to the University
 - (ix) note that if accepted, registration restrictions may be applied, for example, a limitation on the period of study
- 4.6.2 An application will not normally be accepted where a candidate has already had two academic years to complete a course. Such applications can exceptionally be approved by the Director for the Student Experience (or nominee), based on evidence that the candidate is likely to achieve the degree aims. This could be because the candidate's circumstances have improved, for example, recovery following health issues or support being in place for a condition that was previously unsupported.
- 4.6.3 All decisions to re-admit a candidate within these procedures are made under the delegated authority of the Chief Operating Officer.
- 4.6.4 The following apply to applications for readmission with Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning:
- (i)

- a maximum of 50% of the credit previously used for an award may be imported, subject to a maximum of 50% of the credits required for the award being imported (for example 60 level 7 credits used for a PG Dip may be imported to a masters)
- Marks achieved on credit imported will not be recorded on the student record or the University transcript and will not contribute to classification.

(ii) An application may be made for readmission to the same course or a new course title (ODL or on campus) after a period of permanent withdrawal or departure with an exit award, in line with 4.4 above and the specific credit related requirements in 4.4(vi) repeated below:

In relation to credit achieved at the University, the following criteria apply:

- There is no maximum number of credits that may be imported to the new course, provided the credits have not been used towards an award (for example 120 level 7 credits may be imported to a masters)
- credit achieved on a dissertation/project may not be imported
- a maximum of 50% of the credit previously used for an award may be imported, (for example 60 level 7 credits used for a PG Dip may be imported to a masters).
Alternatively, a student may rescind a previous award made in order that all the taught credits may be used towards the masters.
- Marks achieved on module/s that are imported to the new award will be used for classification, provided the credits have not already been used for an award (A candidate may not apply to a course at the same level where they have already achieved the main award (excluding exit award))

5.2 Students currently registered on an ODL course at the University may apply to transfer to a

application and the course tuition fee to the student. The student will need to complete the fee status questionnaire separately.

- 6.5 Where an application is not accepted, the student may apply via the standard application process. In these circumstances, marks already achieved on the modules will not be retained for progression/award purposes.

7. MPharm Pharmacy students

- 7.1 Students in stage 4 of the final cohort of the MPharm Pharmacy course who fail PHA408 Advanced Pharmaceutical Care Practice – Preparing for Practice, may apply to the University of Brighton to repeat the module during the next academic year.

- 7.2 Where a student fails a module at the University of Brighton, they may apply to the University of Brighton to repeat the module during the next academic year.

Summary of approval route

Categories	Via Admissions	Via Student Data & Records	comment
External UG with 120 credits in year 0 (level 3)	yes	no	See section 3.1
External UG with 120 credits in stage 1	yes	no	See section 3.1
External UG with fewer than 120 credits in stage 1 (or stage 0)	no	no	RPL can only be considered where the credits for the whole stage have been achieved
UG PWD return with 120 credits in stage 1/0	no	yes	See section 3.2 including 3.2.5
UG PWD return without 120 credits in stage 1/0	yes	no	See section 3.2 including 3.2.6
External PG RPCL or RPEL (designated awards)	yes	no	See section 4.1, 4.2
CPD credit from University of Sussex	yes	no	See section 4.3
PG PWD with RPL	no	yes	See section 4.4 including 4.4.4
PG PWD without RPL	yes	no	