



Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is defined by Ofqual as:

The –

1. *(a) identification by an awarding organisation of any learning undertaken, and/or attainment, by a Learner –
 1. *(i) prior to that Learner taking a qualification which the awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available, and*
 2. *(ii) which is relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification, and**
2. *(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 qualifications and/or learning has met the requirements for all or part of a given unit within a regulated qualification.

This policy sets out the criteria and procedures for applying for RPL when training with The Centre (hereinafter called 'the Centre').

What RPL is not:

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

RPL should not be confused with exemption and unit equivalency.

Background

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, and evidence provided that is valid and current, the use of RPL is acceptable for demonstrating mastery of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit or part of a unit.

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. For example, when a learner has completed other yoga training, perhaps abroad. This will be considered on a case by case basis. Evidence presented by the learner must be evaluated using the learning outcomes and assessment criteria (LOAC) of the unit/partial unit for which it

is being claimed (see Appendix for an exemplar document). The assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the assessment standard at the appropriate level.

Evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will depend on the extent of the learner's prior experience, how the subject has changed 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 VARC's principle of evidence and assessment). If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use additional questions (professional discussion) 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.

When completing RPL the Centre will 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. (see appendix)
- The rigour and thoroughness applied to assessing evidence towards a given LOAC is of the same standard for all learners regardless of the format the evidence takes
- 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
- All RPL applications have been approved by the Centre **and** the awarding organisation, BWYQ

Learner Responsibility

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

Evidence could include documents evidencing previous achievements, qualifications, education, work history, and witness testimony.

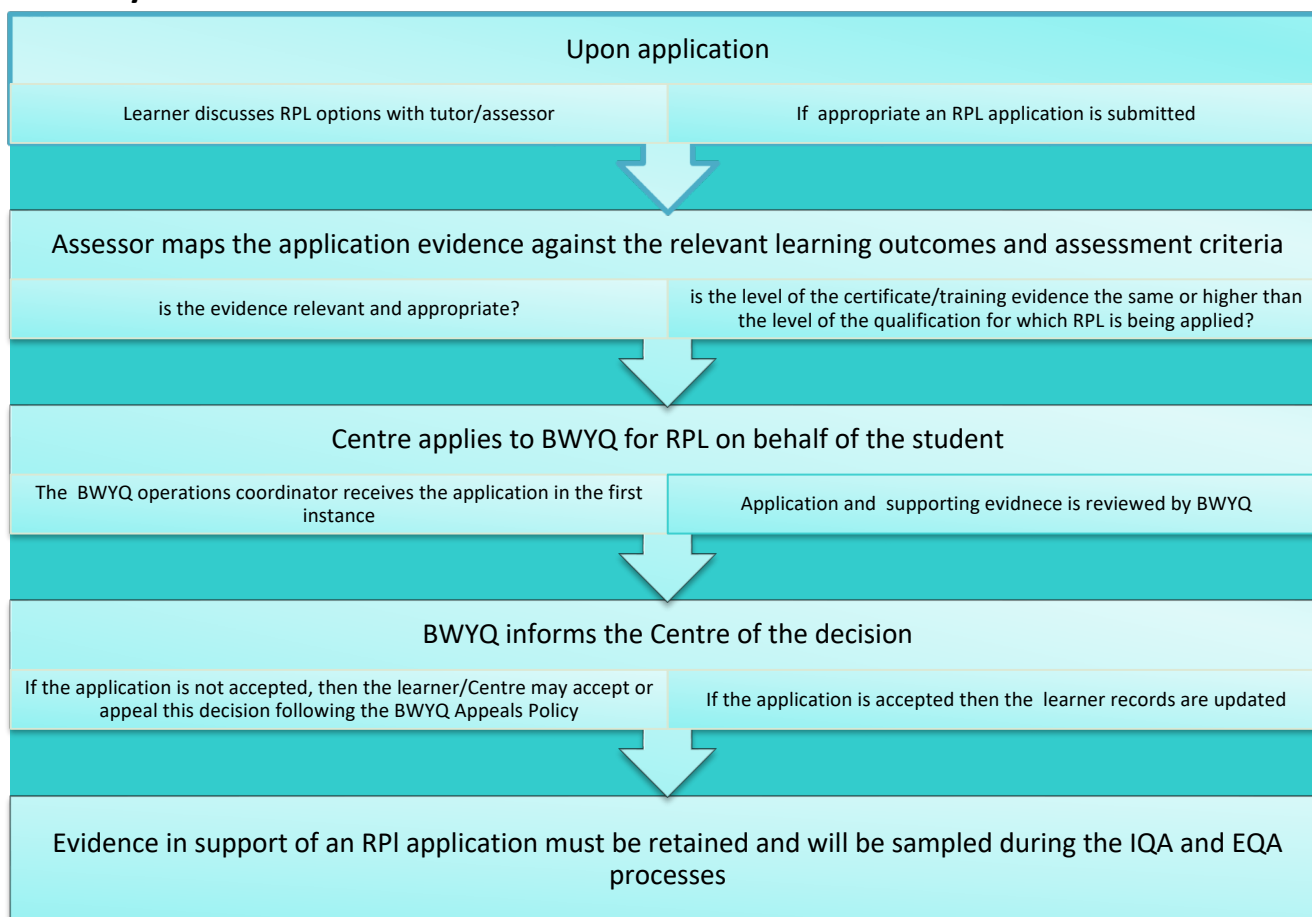
Where RPL is applied to part of a unit, the learner must be assessed on the remaining elements. This could be through completing relevant course assessments or via professional discussion, dependent on what additional evidence is needed.

Assessor/Tutor Responsibilities

Assessors/Tutors are required to:

- Inform learners that they may apply for RPL and direct them to the RPL application form (appendix)
- 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).
- Assess RPL evidence before the start of the course/unit to ensure there is enough time and resources to fill any gaps.
- Make a judgement based on the evidence supplied and the requirements of the unit.
- Ensure that the evidence meets the requirements for a learner working at the level of the qualification.
- Complete any additional assessment needed. This may include additional testing of knowledge, Observation and/or Professional Discussion (PD).

Summary of the RPL Process



Step 1 – Awareness, information and guidance

Application for RPL (see appendix) 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 (see appendix)
- Sources of support and guidance available to them.
- 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 course units.

The VARC principle of evidence and assessment:

Assessors and quality assurance staff must make sure that the learner's 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 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

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

Step 4 - Quality Assurance

The assessor will forward the application to the Course IQA for advice. The IQA will forward the application to the Centre's Lead IQA). The application will be reviewed, and additional evidence sought if necessary. This will then come to BWYQ for final approval.

Evidence used to support a RPL claim must be kept in the learner's portfolio. It will be requested as part of EQA activities.

Step 6 – Appeal

As with any assessment decision, if a learner wishes to appeal against a decision, they need to follow the Centre procedures and, if this does not resolve the issue, then they may apply to the awarding organisation, BWYQ. Learners would normally exhaust the 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 on this BWYQ web page: <https://bwyq.org.uk/bwyq-policies>

Further guidance is available from training@mindbodywellness.uk

Appendix: RPL Application Form and Exemplar Evidence grid¹

Name of Learner		Unique learner registration number	
Name of tutor/assessor		Course number	
Qualification name		Qualification number	

Summary details of RPL claim by learner (which units/partial units) Complete the evidence grid to cross reference how the RPL has been evidenced.
List of Evidence supplied for above claim with reference number Please include certificates for previous qualifications where appropriate Evidence must be listed against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the qualification on the RPL evidence grid
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 on the RPL evidence grid
Give any additional information that will support the RPL claim Evidence must be listed against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the qualification on the RPL evidence grid

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			
Signature of tutor/assessor		Date	
Signature of learner accepting the decision of tutor/assessor		Date	
Signature of IQA/Lead IQA		Date	
Signature of BWYQ Operations Coordinator		Date	

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

Sample RPL LOAC Evidence Grid - BWYQ Level 4 DIPLOMA IN TEACHING YOGA (RQF) QAN 501/0828/1

Learner Name:

ULN:

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Evidence Summary (with evidence reference)	Evidence of Level 4	RPL applied (yes/no)	Date
Unit A1 - Professional Responsibilities of a Yoga Teacher (Foundational Knowledge Unit)					
A1. Understand the scope of the role and responsibilities of a yoga teacher	1. Explain how the historical background of yoga can inform the role of a modern yoga teacher.				
	2. Describe how current legislation and codes of practice apply to the teaching of yoga.				
	3. Describe what records should be kept, how and why.				
	4. Outline key considerations and tasks when setting up a yoga class.				
Unit A2 – Basic Breathing and Relaxation (Foundational Knowledge Unit)					
A2. Understand the relationship between the breath, relaxation, stress and the individual	1. Define stress and describe the effects				
	1. Explain how relaxation and conscious breathing techniques can help reduce stress				
	2. Evaluate the need to adapt breathing and relaxation techniques for different individuals				

Unit A3 – Preparing for Asana (Foundational Knowledge Unit)					
A3. Understand the key principles of anatomy, physiology and movement to teach safely and effectively	1. Use appropriate vocabulary to describe how the body moves				
	2. Identify ways in which asana can be modified for vulnerable areas of the body and common health conditions				
Unit B – Approaching Asana, Basic Breath Control and Relaxation (Foundational Skills Unit)					
B1. Use key principles of anatomy, physiology and movement to teach safely and effectively.	1. Teach a given asana using a staged approach.				
	2. Apply ways of using the breath within asana.				
B2. Modify and adapt asana to suit different needs and abilities.	1. Use teaching points that support the safe practice of these modifications, including aids and resources that could be used.				
B3. Teach breath control and relaxation techniques effectively.	1. Plan and teach a simple breath control practice and appropriate guided relaxation session.				
	2. Identify possible areas of caution and suggest ways to modify for them.				
Unit C – Effective Planning, Teaching, Assessment and Evaluation (Foundational Skills Unit)					
C1. Produce effective plans for teaching.	1. Devise a scheme of work, course plan and lesson plans that meet the needs of a range of students within a class setting.				

C2. Teach in different ways in response to the needs of students.	1. Teach a course of lessons using relevant teaching methods to meet the needs of a range of students.				
	2. Observe class students and adapt instructions to meet the needs of individuals.				
C3. Use assessment, reflection and evaluation to develop personal and student learning.	1. Use assessment and evaluation to support student learning, explaining why this is important.				
	2. Reflect upon and evaluate the effectiveness of own teaching, suggesting how this can inform future planning/teaching.				
Unit D – The Classical Foundations of Modern Yoga (Advanced Knowledge Unit)					
D. Place modern yoga in its historical and philosophical context.	D1.1 Explain key concepts of Hatha yoga as contained in the <i>Hatha Yoga Pradipika</i> .				
	D1.2 Describe their significance to contemporary teaching.				
	D2.1 Select and present a key theme from the <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> or the <i>Upanishads</i> .				
	D2.2 Describe how a philosophical principle can be integrated in the teaching of a general yoga class.				
	D3.1 Explain key concepts from Patanjali's <i>Yoga Sutras</i> .				

	D3.2 Describe their significance in a contemporary context.				
Unit E – Incorporating Philosophy, Pranayama, Meditation and Advanced Asana (Advanced Skills Unit)					
E1. Understand and use pranayama, kriya, mudra and bandha safely and effectively	1. Evaluate a personal pranayama practice.				
	2. Plan and teach an appropriate pranayama practice, including mudra and bandha if appropriate.				
	3. Outline how a selected pranayama or kriya practice may be developed over a series of lessons.				
	4. Identify areas of caution, suggesting modifications and stating when a given practice is inappropriate.				
E2. Understand and use appropriate meditation techniques safely.	1. Plan and teach a suitable guided concentration or meditation, explaining the rationale for the choice.				
	2. Identify possible areas of caution and suggest modifications.				
E3. Know when, how and why to progress students	1. Demonstrate ways in which students may be progressed through physical challenge or subtle aspects of practice in a class setting.				

	2. Select teaching points based on sound principles of when and how to progress individuals safely				
E4. Select and use relevant historical and philosophical concepts and communicate them effectively.	1. Plan and teach a key philosophical or yoga concept				

Working at Level 4

If a qualification is not designated as level 4, what evidence demonstrates that the candidate is working at that level? (Use the assessment guidance grid to support this.

Descriptor	Evidence summary (inc. reference to assessment guidance grid as appropriate)	Evidence reference number
Has practical, theoretical or technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine..		
Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.		
Is aware of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work.		
Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.		

Identify, adapt and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined.		
Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions and results.		

¹ Evidence grids are available for all BWYQ qualifications