The Academy for Advance Studies (TAAS)

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Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Academy for Advance Studies (TAAS) is committed to providing excellent learning for all. Recognition of Prior Learning is a vital process and necessary to ensure that an individual's prior achievements can be recognised and that a learner is not disadvantaged by unnecessarily having to repeat a course of learning. This policy is to sets out the process and guidance in order to provide accurate recognition and evidencing of knowledge, understanding and skills that have previously been achieved and/or certificated. The policy will support those who are directly involved with planning, advising and delivering learning. Not all learners have access to formal learning and this is policy addresses this. This policy is written in accordance with our regulatory requirements of OfQual.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit or qualification through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning. This policy and procedure aim to ensure that The Academy for Advance Studies (TAAS) is clear on what does and does not constitute acceptable RPL and Credit Accumulation Transfer.

RPL focuses on assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- A unit accumulated towards a full qualification
- A full qualification
- This also can include functional skills qualifications; where elements of the qualification but not the full qualification have been achieved prior.

Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) is a separate process to RPL as CAT applies to learning that has been previously certified for a different regulated qualification or from a different Awarding Organisation on the same framework (RQF or QCF).

This prevents a learner from unnecessarily repeating previous learning. Where a learner has already achieved a unit with credit, we recognise that prior learning and allow the credit to be transferred onto a new qualification, provided that the units have the same OfQual reference number.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1 All applicants will be asked about prior learning and this is recorded on the The Academy for Advance Studies (TAAS) application form.

2.2 The Academy for Advance Studies (TAAS) staff understand RPL and ensure that this procedure is applied and evidence is gathered and recorded in line with the requirements of OFQUAL as follows:

- Evidence of a learner's previous achievement (learning) is assessed against the assessment criteria of a unit.
- Evidence used by learners must be current and valid and meet the assessment criteria of the qualification, and evidence must be reliable.
- Evidence obtained through RPL must therefore meet the same rigorous quality criteria that other assessment methods must conform to. It remains the role of Assessors and quality assurance staff to ensure that evidence is valid, authentic and reliable.

Valid: Does the evidence genuinely demonstrate that the demands of the assessment criteria have been met? For RPL, currency of evidence will be of particular concern.

3. OUTCOMES OF RPL

If individuals can produce relevant evidence, that meets assessment criteria requirements then, recognition can be given for their existing knowledge, understanding or skills. If an individual can meet all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria in a unit, then they can claim credit for that unit solely based on their RPL achievement. If, however, evidence from RPL is only sufficient to cover one or more assessment criteria, or to partly meet the need of an assessment criteria, then additional assessment methods should be employed to generate the sufficient evidence required to make a safe assessment decision. Knowledge, skills, behaviours and understanding must be current for RPL to be used and subject leads within centres must decide if prior learning is update for the relevant sector and subject areas. The Academy for Advance Studies (TAAS) may use questioning or other acceptable assessment strategies to check the depth and significance of prior learning.

Assessment decisions based on RPL must be made by The Academy for Advance Studies (TAAS) staff with suitable occupational competence and subject expertise. Acknowledging evidence of previous learning is considered to be part of the internal assessment process and any decisions must be made clear to External Quality Assurers.

The Academy for Advance Studies (TAAS) ensures that:

It is carried out by designated staff with relevant levels of expertise to meet the requirements of the assessment strategy/guidance for the qualification concerned.

The methods of assessment used will be determined by the assessment strategy for the qualification being assessed but might, for example, include:

- Examination of documents

- Expert testimony
- Reflective accounts
- Professional discussion.

The RPL assessment should be carried out as an entire process. This means that the Assessor should:

- Plan with the learner
- Make a formal assessment decision
- Feedback assessment decisions to the learner, confirming decision and giving guidance on the available options
- Maintain appropriate records
- Ensure that learners are aware of their right to access the appeals process should they feel the assessment decision was unfair
- Ensure that all assessment criteria being claimed are covered and that records of assessment are maintained in the usual way.

The process is subject to the same quality assurance requirements as any other assessment method.

Examples of RPL evidence:

- Relevant documents, testimonies or reflections mapped across to the qualification's assessment criteria
- Job descriptions or performance management feedback showing that the learner already has the suitable and current skills, knowledge and behaviours within the unit • Learners have evidence of recent prior study which meets assessment criteria of the current programme of study being undertaken in full
- RPL must be included on the appropriate sampling plan as an assessment method as appropriate and subject to internal quality assurance (IQA). Circumstances when prior learning will not be recognised:
- Learning that is similar to assessment criteria but which has been met at a level lower than the current programme of study being undertaken by the learner • Prior learning that is not current in meeting the qualification
- Prior learning that has been referred by an Assessor
- Prior learning that has not been assessed by an Assessor.

Applying Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) Credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) is the system by which learners can accumulate and transfer credits over a period of time, in differing locations and contexts, in order to gain qualifications. Credit transfer is the process of using credit(s) awarded in the context of one qualification or awarded by a different awarding organisation towards the achievement requirements of another qualification.

CAT is therefore the term used to describe the system which supports credit transfer. Credit transfer gives recognition to the fact that some units are the same, irrespective of the fact that they appear in different qualifications. This recognition promotes progression within and between industries and avoids unnecessary duplication of learning.

Credit transfer is relevant where a unit in a qualification is the same (include unit/qualification assessment number) as a unit in another qualification.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Review date: 28/02/2021

Changes made:

Date sign: 28/02/2021