

Recognition of Prior Learning and Exemption policy

Policy statement

The YMCA Awards Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Exemption Policy sets out our position on RPL and the procedures approved centres should follow to meet our requirements on RPL.

The policy outlines the centre's role in making decisions regarding RPL, the type of evidence required and how we will review and make decisions on claims for achievement where RPL applies.

YMCA Awards seeks to enable learners to avoid duplication of learning and assessment for the purposes of achieving a qualification. This can be managed through:

- Exemption
- Recognition of prior learning

Recognition of prior learning **does not include** prerequisite entry requirements which must be met before a learner is permitted to enrol on a qualification.

Scope

Learners, employers and YMCA Awards must be confident that any RPL and/or exemption decisions which contribute to qualification achievement do not compromise the integrity of our qualifications.

To ensure this is the case, we set and maintain requirements regarding claims for achievement which feature RPL and exemption. These requirements apply to all approved centres and learners completing our qualifications.

Responsibilities of YMCA Awards approved centres

In order to maintain the integrity of YMCA Awards qualifications our approved centres must ensure that:

- **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) decisions:**
 - The learner has provided sufficient evidence that their prior learning is current and relevant to the qualification or qualification component they are looking to achieve.
 - They design an individual training and assessment plan for the learner to successfully achieve all the required learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
 - They are confident the learner has the necessary underpinning knowledge, understanding and skills before commencing formal assessment without having undertaken the full programme of study with their centre.
 - Their RPL policies, processes, procedures, practices and decisions are transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible to individuals and stakeholders.
 - They retain a copy of all evidence of the RPL assessment and outcomes for internal and external quality assurance by YMCA Awards.
 - They do not allow a learner to proceed to assessment – or claim achievement – if there is any doubt regarding the learner's skills, knowledge, competence or the quality of evidence.

- **Exemption decisions:**

- The certificated achievement sufficiently covers the requirements of all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the unit(s) or component(s) of the qualification the learner is being exempt from.
- The learner's knowledge, understanding or skills have been formally assessed recently, to ensure the achievement remains current.
- In circumstances where the date of certification may indicate the achievement is not sufficiently current, they seek additional evidence to demonstrate the learner has kept their knowledge, understanding and skills up-to-date; in some cases, RPL may be the more appropriate route.
- They retain a copy of the certificate used to provide the exemption for internal and external quality assurance; exemption evidence is reviewed by YMCA Awards before certification.
- They do not request an exemption if there is any doubt over the learner's skills, knowledge, competence or the quality of evidence.

A note on currency of evidence: we do not stipulate a maximum time threshold (for example, prior certificated achievement within three years of the date of claim) because this may not be appropriate for all qualifications and specific learner situations. Centres should use their professional judgement to establish currency in the context of the qualification and the learner's evidence (including supporting evidence) and seek advice from their YMCA Awards External Quality Assurer (EQA).

Evidence requirements

The evidence must be **authentic**. All documentary evidence must be submitted in its original form. For example - original copies of certificates and reports must be provided. All evidence must be signed and dated at the time of achievement. The work must also be the learner's own. Forged documents or fraudulent claims must not be accepted and should be reported to YMCA Awards.

The evidence must be **valid**. The evidence must relate directly to the criteria and must meet all the assessment criteria for the area(s) of competence claimed. For example - a GCSE Biology certificate would not be a valid source of evidence for demonstrating the same underpinning knowledge required of an exercise and fitness instructor.

Centres must retain records that clearly show how eligibility for exemption/RPL was determined. All such records should be made available to our EQA upon request and should be kept by the centre until reviewed by YMCA Awards.

Example RPL procedure

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Information, advice and guidance

Before enrolling a learner, the centre should discuss the option of using RPL. If the learner feels their past experience and/or qualifications will allow them to do this, the centre should ensure the learner is made aware of the definition of RPL, the process of applying RPL and what evidence needs to be provided.

2	<p>Evidence checking</p> <p>We advise that the evidence is checked prior to enrolment and registration with YMCA Awards. The evidence gathered needs to meet the standards of the qualification.</p>
3	<p>Assessment and record keeping</p> <p>Assessment as part of RPL is a structured process of gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgements about learners' past learning and experience in relation to qualification standards. In assessing using RPL, the centre must be satisfied that the evidence from the learner meets the standard for all the learning outcomes and criteria.</p> <p>Centres must keep copies of all evidence used when deciding if RPL can be applied. This can include – but is not limited to – individual learning plans, details of discussions with the learner and certificate evidence.</p> <p>Evidence collected through the RPL process needs to be assessed and verified through the same quality assurance procedures that the centre uses for any other internal assessment methods.</p>
4	<p>Outcomes of the RPL process</p> <p>If it has been decided that the evidence provided is not sufficient to apply RPL, the learner must be informed as soon as possible. The centre should explain exactly why RPL cannot be applied and what this means for the learner with regards to their programme of study.</p>
5	<p>Appeals</p> <p>If a learner wishes to appeal against a decision made by their centre regarding RPL they will need to refer to the centre's appeals policy and procedures. If a learner or their centre wish to appeal against a decision made by YMCA Awards regarding RPL, the YMCA Awards Appeals procedure should be followed.</p>
6	<p>Claiming certificates</p> <p>All evidence used for RPL must be verified and securely stored prior to submitting a certificate claim for the learner. This evidence must be available for EQA sampling.</p>

Example exemption procedure

1	<p>Information, advice and guidance</p> <p>Before enrolling a learner, the centre should discuss the option of using exemption. This will apply if the learner is being enrolled on a qualification with components/units that appear in another qualification which the learner may have achieved.</p>
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2	Evidence checking Centres must ensure that the learner provides evidence of exemption prior to enrolment and registration with YMCA Awards.
3	Record keeping Centres should upload the evidence for exemption against the learner record in Y-Connect as soon as possible. This will enable our team to review the evidence prior to certification.
4	Outcomes of the exemption process If it has been decided that the evidence provided is not sufficient to apply exemption, the learner must be informed as soon as possible. The centre should explain exactly why exemption cannot be applied and what this means for the learner with regards to their programme of study. The possibility of using RPL should be discussed.
5	Claiming certificates All evidence used for exemption must be submitted to YMCA Awards; without this evidence being approved, the certificate cannot be released. This evidence must be available for EQA sampling.
6	Appeals If a learner wishes to appeal against a decision made by their centre regarding exemption they will need to refer to the centre's appeals policy and procedures. If a learner or their centre wish to appeal against a decision made by YMCA Awards regarding exemption, the YMCA Awards Appeals procedure should be followed.