



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Tree of Life Educational and Therapeutic Ltd
(SEMH Alternative Provision with Therapy-Led Practice)

Review date: 19/9/2025

1. Policy Statement

Tree of Life Educational and Therapeutic Ltd recognises the value of learners' prior achievements, skills, knowledge, and experiences, both formal and informal. Our approach to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is designed to ensure that learners do not unnecessarily repeat learning or assessment, while also embedding therapeutic principles to support confidence, self-esteem, and motivation.

We are committed to ensuring that the process of recognising prior learning is:

- Fair – accessible to all learners.
- Transparent – criteria and processes are clearly explained.
- Supportive – recognising that many SEMH learners may under-value their past achievements and need encouragement.
- Therapeutic – acknowledging prior successes as part of building resilience and confidence.

2. Aims of the Policy

- To enable learners to gain credit for existing achievements where appropriate.
- To avoid unnecessary duplication of learning and assessment.
- To ensure learners feel validated and supported in recognising their progress and past experiences.
- To meet the requirements of awarding organisations.

3. Use of Prior Achievement

Learners may use past achievement against units within the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) to achieve a qualification. This can be through:

- Equivalences – where previously achieved qualifications meet the same learning outcomes.
- Exemptions – where prior achievement removes the need to complete particular units.
- Credit Transfer – where credit gained in one qualification is transferred to another.

In these cases:

- The achievement will be recorded as an exemption, equivalent, or credit transfer.
- It will not generate new credit achievement, as it has already been certificated.

4. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL is an assessment method that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they already meet the requirements of a unit through knowledge, understanding, or skills they already possess.

- If RPL is approved, the learner will be awarded the unit.
- The unit will be shown as an achievement on their certificate.
- Therapists and staff will work together to support learners in recognising and articulating prior learning as part of their personal development.

5. Responsibilities

Learners

- Present original certificates or valid evidence of prior achievement.
- Engage in reflective discussions with tutors/therapists to explore informal and non-certificated prior learning.

Staff and Tutors

- Support learners in identifying prior learning, including informal or therapeutic experiences.
- Verify original certificates (taking a signed and dated copy).
- Ensure evidence is submitted with the Learner Past Achievement Form.

Internal Verifier

- Review all claims for equivalences, exemptions, credit transfers, or RPL.
- Ensure compliance with awarding organisation requirements.

Leadership Team

- Inform the awarding organisation at registration of any approved exemptions,

equivalents, credit transfers, or RPL.

- Ensure policy is applied consistently and therapeutically.

6. Processes

1. Evidence Submission

- Learners present their original certificates to a tutor.
- Tutor takes a signed and dated copy for records.

2. Documentation

- A Learner Past Achievement Form must be completed and submitted to the awarding organisation at registration.
- All supporting evidence must be retained for verification.

3. Verification

- Internal Verifiers check the documentation and evidence.
- Awarding organisations may request further checks.

4. Therapeutic Support

- Learners will be supported in recognising their achievements, building confidence, and integrating RPL into their overall learning and therapy journey.

7. Compliance and References

- Information about approved exemptions and equivalents can be found in the Qualification Guide.
- Further guidance: Learning Records Service (www.learningrecordsservice.org.uk/products/uln/)

8. Monitoring and Review

- RPL processes will be monitored by the Internal Verifier and Leadership Team.
- Outcomes will be reviewed to ensure fairness, consistency, and therapeutic alignment.
- This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if awarding body requirements change.