



# Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy

## INTRODUCTION

1. New College of the Humanities (the College) recognises that learning can take place in a variety of contexts and be achieved in many ways. The College will award credit to those students who can satisfactorily demonstrate, in terms of currency, depth, breadth and volume, that they have achieved the equivalent of the unit or level/stage learning outcomes as defined by the named award they are enrolling on or have enrolled on.
2. The College is therefore committed to the principle of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) whereby appropriate learning, wherever it occurs, may be recognised for academic credit towards an award, provided that learning can be assessed and deemed equivalent to the stated learning outcomes.
3. This Policy outlines the processes involved with undergraduate and postgraduate students transferring to the College from other Higher Education Providers (HEP) and students transferring from the College to another HEP. It provides information on the transfer process and how to make an RPL claim.

## DEFINITIONS

Recognition of Prior Learning	The process by which a student's previous learning is recognised and given a credit value. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) encompasses both the recognition of prior 'certificated' and prior 'experiential' learning.
Recognition of Prior Certified Learning	The process for assessing, recognising and awarding credit for learning that has been previously accredited, formally recognised or certificated through a higher education provider or other higher education/training provider.
Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning	The process for assessing, recognising and/or awarding credit for learning that has been achieved through experience and/or training that has not been formally assessed. Experience in itself is not experiential learning; students must be able to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes that are equivalent to those of the course/level/stage for which they are claiming RPL. Only the credit value of courses approved for RPL will count towards a College award (no marks/grades will be counted).
Advanced Standing	Where an applicant can demonstrate that they have achieved all the learning outcomes of an earlier stage/level of an award, they can be granted advanced standing to the next stage/level of the

	award, without the award of College credit. In such cases only the courses assessed at the College will count towards the final award classification. This route of entry does not involve the award of credit and is therefore an admission rather than an RPL process.
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## RPL PRINCIPLES

4. In line with its mission, strategic plan and educational principles, the College's approach to RPL is flexible, student-centered and based on learning outcomes.
5. Credit awarded for prior certified experiential learning is of equal credit value to that acquired through completion of College taught provision. This includes learning achieved in the workplaces as part of the College's commitment to employer engagement.
6. Credits may be given for prior learning where the level, standard, content, relevance and currency of that learning are appropriate to a particular programme of study. Credit may be awarded via RPL for:
  - 6.1 individual courses (noting that RPL can only be awarded for whole courses)
  - 6.2 where the applicant or student can demonstrate that they meet the assessment requirements for the course through knowledge, understanding and/or skills that they already possess as a result of prior learning
  - 6.3 for an entire level of study (i.e. 120 credits), where the applicant or student can demonstrate that they meet the assessment requirements for the relevant level of study through knowledge, understanding and/or skills that they already possess as a result of prior learning.
7. All applications for the award of credit through RPL, including those arising from internal transfers, are subject to formal academic scrutiny and are the responsibility of the relevant Assessment Board.
8. The College's approach for the award of RPL is based on the achievement of equivalent, not identical, learning outcomes. This means that the learning achieved should be equivalent in terms of the level, breadth, depth, volume and currency.
9. RPL is awarded against the achievement of learning outcomes. However, credit can only be awarded for whole courses/levels/stages. In cases where a student can demonstrate partial achievement of the learning outcomes for a course/level/stage, an agreed assessment strategy for how they will make good the missing learning outcomes must be determined.
10. The College only considers RPL applications for complete courses/levels. If the evidence provided by the student covers only some but not all of the course/level learning outcomes, then the student, at the discretion of the relevant Head of Faculty/Programme Director, may be offered the opportunity to make good the missing learning outcomes and achieve the credit which will be classified as RPL. 'Making good' on missing learning outcomes will most likely take the form of the student attending and

auditing a first-year course, but this should be agreed by the student and Head of Faculty/Programme Director.

### **RPL AND CREDIT TRANSFER LIMITS**

11. The College believes that it provides a distinctive student learning experience, characterised by its educational principles and practices and the ethos and value of its awards. As such, it has set minimum limits on the proportion of study that a student must undertake at the College in order to be eligible for a degree awarded by the College:
  - 11.1 For undergraduate degrees, a student must study at least 240 credits at the College.
  - 11.2 For postgraduate degrees, students can apply for RPL for up to a maximum of one half of credits points (90 credits) and would be required to study the remaining half of the credits at the College, including their dissertation,

### **TRANSFERRING TO THE COLLEGE FROM ANOTHER HEP**

12. If a student from another higher education provider is considering transferring to the College, they should:
  - 12.1 Check that they meet the entry criteria for the programme they wish to transfer to.
  - 12.2 Contact the College's Admissions Team to express their interest in transferring and find out if there are spaces on the programme they wish to join. Alternatively, students can apply directly through UCAS as there is the option to apply for second year entry.
13. As per the [Admissions Policy](#), the College considers all applications on a case-by-case basis. It will consider past and predicted academic achievements as well as evidence of an applicant's ability, skills, interests, motivation and potential.
14. Students have the opportunity to transfer within level (transfer to the College within the academic year without re-doing their application). In order to do so, students need to:
  - 14.1 Find out how the implications of a transfer on student finance or student visas (if applicable)
  - 14.2 Submit their request to transfer within the first five weeks of Michaelmas term. Applications submitted after this date will not normally be accepted.
15. Students have the opportunity to transfer to the College after their first year of undergraduate study. They will not be permitted to transfer to the College after their second year of undergraduate study. This is because they need to have completed 240 credits at the College in order to graduate.

## **NCH DIPLOMA**

16. The full NCH Diploma, core courses and LAUNCH, is only available to students who complete their first year of study at the College.
17. Students who transfer to the College in their second year will be eligible for the LAUNCH Enrichment Certificate, provided they complete all required learning and assessments.

## **APPLYING FOR RPL**

18. Applicants should normally apply for RPL as part of the admissions process. Potential applicants who may be eligible for RPL should be made aware of the opportunities available, and associated timescales, as part of the recruitment and admissions process. RPL may be awarded at other points during a student's period of study at the discretion of the relevant Assessment Board (for example where an enrolled student is studying part-time and gains relevant learning experience through employment in parallel to their academic studies).
19. Applicants and students should be encouraged to submit RPL applications in a timely manner, to enable RPL decisions to be made prior to the commencement of the element(s) of the course for which they are seeking exemption.
20. Claims for RPL must be in the form of a portfolio. The portfolio, which must be in English, will vary depending on the nature of the claim, but the evidence supplied must be mapped against specific course or level learning outcomes. For instance, evidence of prior certificated learning might include relevant certificated, course documentation and results. In the case of experiential learning, experience per se is not grounds for awarding credit; the experience must be converted to the learning achieved and documented and mapped against the course or level learning outcomes. Evidence might include a systemic personal reflection, details of specialist training, or a record of achievements. Students are encouraged to seek guidance from Student and Academic Services prior to submitting an application for RPL.
21. When students applying to transfer to the College, the relevant Head of Faculty/Programme Director makes the decision regarding the transfer, and thus is responsible for assessing an RPL claim.

## **ASSESSING AN RPL CLAIM**

22. Determining whether a student has demonstrated achievement of the learning outcomes is an academic judgement. The overall level of achievement should be equivalent to that required to pass a course/level.
23. Claims should be assessed by the appropriate Head of Faculty/Programme Director. The evidence provided for RPL claims will be judged on:
  - 23.1 Acceptability: is the learning evidenced equivalent to the state course/level learning outcomes and is the evidence valid and reliable?

- 23.2 Sufficiency: is there sufficient evidence that the learning is at the right level, volume and breadth to meet the learning outcomes claims?
- 23.3 Authenticity: is the evidence clearly related to the claimant's own efforts and achievements?
- 23.4 Currency: does the evidence relate to current learning? Does it meet course validation and/or PSRB time limits in terms of currency of prior learning?
- 24. The RPL portfolio will be reviewed, by the Head of Faculty/Programme Director and Registrar, to determine whether to:
  - 24.1 Award the credit/level as claimed
  - 24.2 To accept the claim and the strategy for making good the missing learning outcomes
  - 24.3 To reject the claim
  - 24.4 Exceptionally, to refer the claim for further information.

#### **APPEAL AGAINST AN RPL DECISION**

- 25. An applicant has the right to appeal the decision and should put their appeal, including new information, in writing to the Registrar, no later than 10 working days.
- 26. The new information will be reviewed by the Registrar and Head of Faculty/Programme Director and a decision will be reached and communicated to the applicant within 10 working days of receiving that appeal letter. This decision will be final.

#### **RECORDING RPL ON A TRANSCRIPT**

- 27. Credits awarded by means of RPL will be assigned against the equivalent courses and will be recorded as 'Pass' and included on the student's transcript.

#### **TRANSFERRING FROM NCH TO ANOTHER HEP**

- 28. A student who is considering transferring to another higher education provider should:
  - 28.1 Contact the University or College and find out if they accept transfers and if there are spaces on the programme they want to join.
  - 28.2 Ensure they meet the entry criteria for the programme they wish to transfer to.
  - 28.3 Find out whether they are able to transfer into the second or third year of a different programme or not. The provider may be able to accept the credits awarded by the College as RPL.
  - 28.4 Obtain a transcript from the College of the marks and credits awarded for the courses they have already completed.

29. Arrange a meeting with the Head of Faculty/Programme Director to discuss their decision.
30. The student should arrange a meeting with the Student Wellbeing Team (SWT) for further information, advice and guidance.
31. A Tier 4 student should arrange a meeting with the Visa and Immigration Manager to discuss the implications for their visa.
32. A student who still wishes to transfer to another provider after discussing their proposal must complete the Withdrawal Form and submit it by email to [sas@nchlondon.ac.uk](mailto:sas@nchlondon.ac.uk).
33. The SWT will arrange an exit interview with the student.
34. The Registrar will confirm the withdrawal in writing.

## **IMPLICATIONS TO CONSIDER**

### **Financial**

35. If a student is in receipt of financial support from the Student Loans Company (SLC) or the Student Awards Agency of Scotland (SAAS), a withdrawal from studies has a number of consequences on a student's entitlement to support.
36. Should a student return to higher education in the future, a student will be treated as a new student and will be assessed for the student support package available in the year of re-entry into education; this will include the relevant new entrant fee.
37. Furthermore, a student will be assessed as already having utilised some of their student support entitlement which could affect the level of support they receive in the future.
38. The College will inform the SLC or SAAS when a transfer to another provider has been processed, but a student can also contact the SLC or SAAS themselves to inform them of their change of circumstance.
39. For fees paid to the College, a student should consult the [Terms and Conditions](#) and [Cancellation, Withdrawal, Refund and Compensation Policy](#) under which they accepted an offer of a place to study at the College. The Financial Controller can offer guidance and will be available to discuss options with a student. If a student decides to withdraw from their studies, they may still be liable for fees at the College.

### **Tier 4 Visa Students**

40. The College is required to report to the Home Office if a Tier 4 Visa student interrupts or withdraws from their studies. The Home Office will curtail their visa and they will be required to return home. To ensure that a student's withdrawal from studies complies with the College and the Home Office regulations, a student is required to make an appointment with the [Visa and Immigration Manager](#).
41. Currently, a student is not eligible to transfer to another programme within an academic year. The Visa and Immigration Manager can offer further information about this.

### **Accommodation**

42. A student who lives in student or private rented accommodation should refer to the accommodation provider's tenancy agreement and adhere to its procedures as they may need to notify the provider immediately that they are leaving their studies. A student may need to move out of their accommodation and may be liable for the remaining rent due on their tenancy agreement. For the purposes of Council Tax, a student withdrawing from their studies, must inform the local authority that they are no longer a student.

### **NCH Email**

43. A student's College email account will be terminated once their withdrawal/transfer to another provider has been processed. It is a student's responsibility to obtain any emails and documents that they may need before this happens.

### **NCH ID Card**

44. A student's College ID card must be handed in to the Central Office when they withdraw from the College where it will be deactivated.

### **Senate House Library**

45. Senate House Library cards will be deactivated as soon as a student's withdrawal/transfer to another provider is confirmed. A student must return all books on loans from the library and pay any fines that are due.

### **Student Oyster Card**

46. A student who has a student discount Oyster Card and subsequently withdraws/transfers to another institution will no longer have access to the discounted rates. Transport for London (TFL) will be informed and the card will be made invalid.

### **FURTHER ADVICE**

47. For general queries student transfer and RPL, please contact the Quality Team for more information.
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<b>Title: Recognition of Prior Learning and Student Transfer Policy</b>					
<b>Approved by: Quality Team</b>					
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1.0	October 2020	October 2020	Head of Quality Assurance	Academic Handbook; Admissions	July 2022
Referenced documents	Academic Appeals Policy; Admissions Policy; Terms and Conditions; Cancellation, Withdrawal, Refund and Compensation Policy.				
External Reference Point(s)	UK Visas and Immigration;				