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Specialist Care Divisions
✠ Schools   ✠ Autism
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✠ Learning Disabilities   ✠ Physical Disabilities
✠ Children Services   ✠ Custodial Care

Strategy and principles for Use of RPL (Recognised Prior Learning)

There are many learning experiences that each one of us will have been involved in – both planned and totally coincidental – but just how many of these can we use as evidence towards a nationally recognised Award?

To help distinguish between the prior learning being presented – NVQ Academy uses 3 distinct categories:

- Evidence which can be fully used – no further evidence required.
- Evidence which can be partially used – with further clarity required.
- Evidence which is of no use for the current Awards.

Evidence which can be fully used – no further evidence required.

There may be times when a Candidate has completed exactly the same Units of competence s/he is now working towards. It is perfectly acceptable to accredit a whole Unit if the following criterion is satisfied:

- The original certificate of Unit Credit is presented (issued by an authorised Awarding Body).
- The Unit is underlined exactly the same as the current Unit of Competence.

In the above cases it is fully acceptable to cover all criteria of a particular Unit or Units – and therefore they can be marked off in the normal manner in the Candidate workbook and portfolio. A photocopy of the original certification must be signed and verified as authentic by the Assessor – if there is any doubt at all it must be referred to the Internal Verifier before signing the unit off.

Evidence which can be partially used – with further clarity required.

By far the biggest (and most complicated) category – often presented as one of the following:

- A very similar Unit Award (similar or same title and Level from a now obsolete Award).
- A certificate of attendance for a skilled activity from an authorised third party training/ development organisation i.e. fire procedures, first aid, lifting & handling etc. (a copy of the course syllabus is recommended)
- An in-house certificate covering mandatory training e.g. safeguarding. (a copy of the course syllabus is recommended)
- A detailed thesis-type piece of work from another study (current/previous) covering subject relevant to a particular Unit.

This list is not exhaustive – but if any of the above (or similar) is offered as evidence – it can be used to satisfy knowledge criteria only. To make sure that the work covers the criteria thoroughly and fairly the work must be:

- Valid - no more three years old unless there is an actual "valid until" date
- Current – It must reflect current and up to date practices
- Authentic – it must be proved to belong to the candidate presenting.

Only when it is determined that these are fully satisfied – questioning and clarification can then be used to ensure the syllabus, certificate, piece of work etc covers the criteria in question – and the candidate can be provided with an opportunity to prove that sufficient knowledge has been gained from the course/activity - and that it is fully transferable and relevant as evidence towards that particular unit.

Evidence which is of no use for the current Awards.

Any "evidence" from these categories is not acceptable at all and cannot be considered:

- Anything out of date
- Anything unsubstantiated – not appearing to belong to a recognised course of study
- Photocopies of certificates/course-work - originals must be seen and authenticated (see above)
- A very similar Unit Award (similar or same title but a lower Level from a current or obsolete Award).

Any other forms of evidence presented as RPL – not included in the above strategy - must be referred to the Internal Verifier before attempting assessment.