

# INSTITUTE of ACCOUNTANTS & BOOKKEEPERS

## POLICY: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Including Work Placed Evidence (WPE)

| Date         | Changes          | Owner            | Approved by | Review date  |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|
| October 2023 | Document Created | Head of Awarding | PSC         | October 2024 |
| March 2025   | Review & update  | AO Director      | PSC         | March 2027   |

### 1. Regulatory Requirements and Review

This policy addresses the following requirements:

Regulator: Ofqual Conditions of Recognition.

- A8 Malpractice and maladministration.
- B3 Notification to regulators of certain events.
- C2 Arrangements with centres.
- E10 Recognition of Prior Learning.
- G4 Maintaining confidentiality of assessment materials.

Legislation: Applicable to the Centres and IAB - You must ensure that you have appropriate security measures in place to protect the personal data you hold. This is the 'integrity and confidentiality' principle of the **GDPR** – also known as the security principle. [\(ICO 2025\)](#)

This policy is reviewed every two years as part of the IAB's self-assessment activity, which considers user and regulatory feedback and good practice guidance.

Should the regulators notify the IAB of the failure of any similar policy, procedure, or process of another awarding organisation, the IAB will review the content of this document to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

### 2. Introduction.

IAB is one of the UK's leading professional bodies offering bookkeeping, accountancy and finance qualifications throughout the UK and across the globe. IAB members and independent students are represented at every level of the finance, bookkeeping and accounting spectrum, including people already working in accountancy, bookkeeping and self-employed business owners.

IAB qualifications are assessed primarily via online examinations. There are some qualifications assessed through internal e-assessed assessments and in some cases independent markers, which are administered by approved centres under controlled conditions. However, students may be eligible to submit evidence of prior learning instead, which is assessed by their centre and quality assured by IAB using the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process.

This policy sets out the principles and process for centres who are planning to use RPL for their students to achieve IAB qualifications. It explains the requirements for centres to have an RPL policy, how and when RPL can be used as a method of assessment, the type and suitability of evidence and processes that should be followed to achieve a successful RPL outcome. It applies to all assessable units, except for the synoptic assessments, where applicable.

### **3. Definition.**

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether students can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so do not need to develop through a course of learning. It is used sparingly and can be applicable to adult students returning to education.

RPL provides a route for the recognition of the achievements resulting from continuous learning. RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met (through evidence that the relevant unit learning outcomes have been met by a students' prior learning), the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit. Units or a whole qualification are not an exemption for a whole qualification.

### **4. Evidence of learning must be:**

Evaluate using the learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. In assessing a unit, the assessor must be satisfied the evidence produced by the learners meets the assessment standard set by the learning outcomes and related assessment criteria.

Such evidence submitted could include:

- Certificates.
- Qualification specifications – the assessor must have view of qualification units and assessment methods to map the learning outcomes. In accordance with the Conditions of Recognition.

All evidence of learning must also be:

- **Valid.**  
Reflects the skills, knowledge and context described in the qualification specification.
- **Current.**  
The evidence must demonstrate the learner's current skills and knowledge and must comply with current best practice guidance. Any practical experience must be within the last five years.
- **Authentic.**  
The evidence submitted must be in its original format, be verified as genuine and be confirmed as the learner's original work.

- **Sufficient.**

The assessor must be able to assess sufficient evidence to cover all aspects of the unit, units or qualification being claimed. The evidence must demonstrate competence over a period and is able to be repeated.

The process of assessment for RPL applies the same quality assurance and quality monitoring standards as is any other form of assessment offered by the IAB and its approved centres.

## 5. **RPL Procedure.**

To apply for IAB qualifications RPL, learners must submit

- A completed RPL application form.
- Copies of all prior learning evidence including certificates, qualification specifications, witness statements where applicable.
- **Payment of the RPL fee £50 +VAT**