Recognition of Prior Achievement (RPA) Policy and Procedure

Introduction

This document sets out the IFE’s approach to considering and recognising candidates’ previous achievements in the context of the specific requirements of an IFE qualification.

The criteria that is applied in determining whether or not previous achievements are acceptable for use as evidence in relation to a particular qualification are set out below together with the process to be followed.

Scope

In relation to IFE qualifications, the contexts where RPA might be acceptable are assessments where candidates are required to provide evidence of achievement against a set of specified performance requirements. In these instances, candidates must present evidence that meets the assessment requirements and complies with the specified conditions for the assessment.

RPA is not accepted where IFE qualifications specify that assessment should take the form of an examination. In these circumstances, candidates must be assessed in the way set out in the published specification ie via an examination designed to address the knowledge and understanding as set out in the content section of the specification.

Use of Recognition of Prior Achievement

Where the use of RPA is acceptable as a means of evidencing knowledge, understanding or skills, the assessment centre must ensure that a relevant internal policy is in place. Centres must ensure that the individual assessors who make judgements as to the acceptability of prior achievement are competent and have sufficient understanding of the assessment requirements and the process of assessment to make appropriate judgements.

Centre assessors must apply the criteria set out in this document. This is to ensure that any qualification awarded by the IFE is a valid and reliable indicator of a candidate’s knowledge, skills and understanding.

Evidence generated via RPA will be subject to internal and external verification and therefore evidence must be available for quality assurance.
Criteria to be applied when assessing Evidence

The evidence from RPA must be valid and reliable and must enable the IFE to be confident that:

- The level of attainment by the candidate is in line with the qualification requirements.
- The award of a qualification, or component of a qualification, is based on sufficient evidence.
- Each case has been treated on an individual basis.

In determining whether or not evidence of prior achievement meets the requirements of an IFE qualification, assessors must apply the following criteria:

**Sufficiency**

All evidence must be evaluated against the specific requirements set out in the qualification, or component of a qualification, that the candidate is seeking to attain. Assessors must be confident in determining that there is sufficient evidence available to confirm that the candidate has fully met the requirements of the qualification and/or component of the qualification.

Evidence that only partly meets the requirements of a component of a qualification may be used if agreed by the IFE as partial achievement towards the attainment of that component. However, additional supplementary evidence will also be required where evidence is incomplete.

**Currency**

All evidence must have been generated within two years of the date of issue of the qualification certificate.

If the demands of a particular skill or practice have changed over the last two years, assessors will need to take this into account when determining whether or not evidence may be permitted.

**Authenticity**

It must be clear that the evidence provided is authentic and the candidate’s own work and that it was completed as per the required assessment conditions.

**Reliability**

Having considered the evidence available, the assessor must be confident that they would have arrived at the same decision if the assessment were to be repeated. In some instances, this may require further professional discussion with the candidate to confirm (and evidence) attainment.
Where evidence was previously used in attaining a different qualification or component of a qualification, the assessors must assure themselves that the evidence provided meets the criteria set out above in relation to the IFE qualification being undertaken.

Where candidates provide evidence of attainment of another qualification or component of a qualification as evidence, assessors must document the way in which this attainment maps to the IFE qualification and record how the evidence meets the published specification requirements.

Validity

The evidence provided must be fit for purpose and must meet the requirements as above and fully demonstrate that the particular requirements of the qualification, or component of a qualification, have been met by the candidate.

If in doubt, assessors should contact the IFE for guidance, using the following email address: exams@ife.org.uk

Process Summary

The following process must be followed:

- All relevant evidence must be assessed by appropriately skilled and experienced assessors.
- The criteria set out above must be applied.
- If the evidence provided does not meet all of the evidence requirements as specified in the qualification, then supplementary assessment (e.g., professional discussion or observation) will be required.
- A record of the assessment process (including internal QA processes) must be kept along with all relevant evidence.
- Following internal and external quality assurance checks, certification claims may be made in the usual way.
- An appeals process must be in place so that candidates may appeal against decisions.

Review

This procedure will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose, complies with regulatory requirements and reflects current best practice.

Date issued: 20/06/2022