

A student guide to Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning

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1. Introduction

1.1. What is credit transfer and RPL?

At UWL we value the experience you have may have gained through prior qualifications, learning and work. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), which includes credit transfer, allows you to:

- use academic credits you already have and/or
- convert prior related knowledge, skills and experience into credits which you can then use towards your qualification.

This guide sets out the different types of RPL and how you can use them.

This guidance also sets out what you need to do if you wish to take your credits earned at UWL and use them towards a further qualification at another institution later on.

1.2. How you can use RPL

RPL, including credit transfer, allows you to start your course at the appropriate level applicable to you and may reduce the amount of time you need to study to gain a qualification at UWL. You could get exemption(s) from part of your chosen course or enter at a higher level than the normal entry point, (which is known as Advanced Standing). For example, you could use credits from a Certificate of Higher Education to start in year two or a Foundation Degree or Diploma of Higher Education to start in the third year of a Bachelor's degree or you could use accreditations from a professional body to exempt you from certain modules on your course.

We use credits as a standard measure for learning achieved. The University's decision on whether you can receive RPL or are granted advanced standing will depend on a number of factors including number of credits previously achieved and how well your previous knowledge, skills or experience match the module learning outcomes and course aims.

We will assess your past experience and/ or qualifications to see if they can count towards the course you plan to study. You can apply for academic credit if you have:

- Been awarded academic credit by a college or university for all or part of a qualification.
- Relevant work or voluntary experience.
- Have a professional qualification.
- Participated in other courses or training.

1.3. Advantages of Credit transfer and RPL

There are advantages to claiming credit towards a UWL qualification which are that it:

- Reduces the time of study on your UWL course.
- Gains recognition for your prior work and learning experience.
- Promotes life-long learning through credit accumulation.
- Avoids repetition of learning.
- May provide financial savings.

1.4. Admission onto a course

If you wish to claim advanced standing, or module exemptions you should state this on your application form and supply the details of your previous credits. RPL is not used to gain admission at the standard entry level of a course. This is an admissions activity and the University Admissions Policy and Procedures should be followed, these can be found at: uwl.ac.uk/about-us/policies-andregulations. For example, if you do not meet the minimum entry requirements for your course but have other relevant experience within a similar field and want to know if this will allow you to study on the course you will need to contact Admissions by emailing: admissions@uwl.ac.uk.

1.5. Admission onto an Apprenticeship course

If you have been offered an apprenticeship via your employer you may be required to present evidence of prior learning, this is a requirement of the initial assessment process for apprenticeships. In accordance with the Education and Skills Funding Agency rules, RPL can be granted unless your courses assessment plan precludes it. Please check the Apprenticeship Standard that applies to your chosen course as the employer requirements need to be met. RPL can be granted provided that the University's procedures for RPL can determine that the prior learning is suitable for recognition against course or module learning outcomes in accordance with the University regulations.

2. What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

2.1. Credit transfer

Credit Transfer allows you to transfer in your credits achieved at another UK Higher Education Institution when joining a similar qualification at UWL. You will only be able to transfer academic credits which match the learning objectives of your new UWL course, and which have been awarded in the last **4 years**.

Higher education qualifications include Foundation and Bachelor's degrees, HNC and HNDs, postgraduate certificates and diplomas, and Master's degrees.

If you started but didn't complete a UK higher education course or have a higher education qualification or credits from a non-UK institution you may be able to transfer these credits into the University.

2.2. Recognition of prior certificated learning

Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) is for Higher Education level learning that didn't result in a UK higher education qualification or credits. Therefore, this type of RPL looks at your prior studies and professional qualifications (normally achieved in an education context) to see if these can exempt you from certain modules on the course you wish to study.

2.3. Recognition of prior experiential learning

Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) is a process for assessing work experience in the field of your studies for credit on your course. This is normally learning which has been achieved outside education or training systems, for example through significant employment or voluntary work.

You must compile a portfolio of evidence to show how your work experience has covered the learning objectives for part of your qualification. Your Course Leader will be able to discuss the RPEL requirements with you; it is a good idea to need to start this process before the start of your course.

You can sometimes combine credit for learning (RPCL) and credit for learning from experience (RPEL) to start your course at a higher level.

2.4. Articulation Agreements and Progression Agreements

Articulation Agreement

Articulation agreements are for students who have studied a particular qualification at another institution, guaranteeing entry at a later stage of a designated UWL course. These are agreements which are already in place between UWL and awarding institutions. Your current institution will be able to let you know if an Articulation Agreement is in place for your qualification.

Progression Agreement

Progression agreements are agreements that are already in place between UWL and another awarding institution and do not guarantee entry onto a course. They allow you to apply for entry to a later stage of a designated UWL course if you have studied a particular course at another institution. Your current institution will be able to let you know if a Progression Agreement is in place for your qualification.

REMEMBER: You can put more than one of these types of RPL towards a qualification.

Example 1:

Student A has worked in Business Administration for 3 years, they have completed a CertHE in Business Skills at an overseas institution.

Student A can request advanced standing into Level 5 of the appropriate degree credits from their CertHE as well as RPEL for any relevant work experience.

Example 2:

Student B has already been awarded a Foundation Degree in Computing and has achieved an employment-based award for computer skills. Student B would like to undertake further higher-level study in Computing.

Student B can request Credit Transfer for the Foundation Course on a BSc Computing course at UWL and RPCL to allow exemption from certain modules for the employment-based award

3. Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

Where a course is subject to requirements of a PSRB (with or without professional accreditation) the number or level of academic credits may be restricted by the requirements of the PSRB, or they may restrict claims for RPL on core modules. Some PSRBs do not allow any credit to be awarded through RPL, and some may set specific requirements for credited awarded through RPL.

Accreditations are on the website, and you should check with Admissions or your Course Leader if your course is accredited by a PSRB and you wish to apply for credit transfer or RPL.

4. Applying for Credit transfer and RPL

The way you apply for credit transfer or other forms of RPL depends on the quantity and nature of your qualifications and experience and whether you are applying for advanced standing.

If you wish to apply for exemption from particular modules, you need to have applied for your course or be registered on it.

The deadline for applying for credit transfer or RPL depends on how you're using your previous academic credit or experience.

Remember to give yourself enough time to work on your portfolio of evidence, if this applies.

4.1. Using credit transfer to start on a higher level of a course

If you wish to use existing credits to apply for advanced standing, you will need to apply for this through the Admissions Process and details of how to apply can be found [here](#).

In order to assess your application, we will require a certified copy of your transcript to verify your credits. The Course Leader will assess this against the course and the learning outcomes. Where you have met these by studying similar courses elsewhere, your application will be approved, although please note that while courses may have the same title they may not have the same content.

4.2. Using RPL to claim some credits on a level of a course

If you want to use RPL to claim some but not all credits on a level of the course (for example, because a module that covers knowledge you already have), you must apply as soon as possible.

5. RPL limitations

5.1. University Regulations for RPL and Admission with Advanced Standing

The University has specific regulations in relation to RPL and admission with Advanced Standing Credit.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the University Academic Regulations and should be used to support understanding and interpretation of the regulations and associated process.

Specific regulations relating to RPL and Admissions with Advanced Standing Credit can be found in the University Academic Regulations, Section 2 – Admissions. Advice on these Regulations can be provided by the Academic Registry and queries should be emailed to PriorLearning@uwl.ac.uk.

The regulations cover what is required to claim academic credit for prior learning, how much academic credit can be awarded and the minimum and maximum permitted duration of study when RPL is awarded.

Section 8 of the University Academic Regulations details how the classification of the final award is calculated when a portion of the programme has been achieved through RPL.

Some important limitations to note:

- **Double counting is not permitted:** You can't use RPL for a course you've already completed. For example, if you want to repeat a module or year to get a higher final classification.
- **Maximum credit limits: The maximum amount of RPL you can put towards a qualification is two-thirds of the total credit value of the course.** For example, 240 RPL credits towards a 360-credit Bachelor's degree, or 100 credits for a Masters degree.
- **Dissertations/Capstone projects/Final Year Project:** RPL cannot be claimed for a dissertation/capstone project/Final Year Project module.
- **Higher to lower level:** You usually cannot normally request credits at a higher level to be transferrable to a lower-level award.
- **Marks and credits:** You can't use marks from modules you completed on another course in calculating the final classification of an award when you use RPL.

6. How much does RPL cost?

Applying for RPL is free for most of our courses.

There may be a fee for assessing your portfolio of evidence for work-based degrees. Contact the Admissions (undergraduate.admissions@uwl.ac.uk or [020 8231 2220](tel:02082312220)) department for further information.

7. Transferring your credits to another institution

Just as you can use credit gained at another higher education institution towards a UWL qualification, you can also use credits gained at UWL to transfer elsewhere.

If you wish to transfer to another Higher Education Institution you are advised to gain an in principle, decision before withdrawing. We also recommend that you get advice from Student Services Advice Team about any financial implications.

You will need a copy of your transcript. If you have completed modules during your studies at UWL, we will send you your academic transcript after the Assessment Board has ratified your marks.

You will need to withdraw from the University, and you should be aware of the following:

- Your withdrawal date will be determined by your last engagement date.
- Once your withdrawal has been processed, a change of circumstance will be sent to Student Finance detailing your withdrawal date.
- If you are in receipt of funding from student finance, your withdrawal date may in some cases require you to return part of your maintenance loan back to student finance.

If you are applying for funding for your studies at your new institution, then you should tell Student Finance as soon as possible. If you have already received an assessment that shows the University of West London, then ask your new institution to send a manual registration so that you receive your maintenance loan as soon as possible.