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# Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPL)

June 2024

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## 1. Introduction and Objective

Individuals gain knowledge and skills through various processes and environments. The workplace also offers the opportunity for individuals to apply knowledge and skills and acquire competences that are not necessarily acquired through formal learning. Within this context, the recognition of prior learning (RPL), requires educational entities to develop and implement robust processes for the recognition of prior learning.

**Recognition of Prior Learning** is the process for recognising and, where appropriate, accrediting the prior learning of knowledge, skills, and competences that an individual would have already gained from experience and/or previous formal, and informal learning.

**Through the process of RPL**, applicants demonstrate previous learning achieved through a range of learning experiences, including **formal** and **informal education**, and have these validated against several set criteria and assigned credit value. For this learning to be credited towards learners' study it needs to match the learning outcomes of the program and be supported by evidence. Different quantities and types of evidence may be required/accepted.

The objective of this policy is to present LSBF Malta's approach to RPL. This involves mapping the previous knowledge, skills, and competences that an individual may have acquired through formal and informal (workplace-related) means or academic paths with the accredited programs offered by LSBF Malta.

## 2. Types of RPL accepted by LSBF Malta

"RPL is the process for recognising learning that has come from experience and/or previous formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts. This includes knowledge and skills gained within school, college and university and outside formal learning situations as through life and work experiences"

(SCQF Definition 2010)

**Recognition of Prior Learning:** is a process that enables individuals to have their past learning experiences assessed and acknowledged for various purposes. This assessment is carried out by a licensed training provider following a pre-approved RPL policy, which provides detailed insights into the assessment procedures. LSBF Malta is formally seeking



authorisation to conduct these assessments by evaluating them through a direct comparison with established and accredited learning outcomes. LSBF Malta is applying to process the following types of RPL:

- **Formative RPL** refers to when the candidate is looking to have knowledge, skills and competencies assessed for personal or career development.
- **Summative RPL** refers to when formal ECTS credit is awarded and recognised as having the same value as credit in formal teaching institutions.

**Credit Transfer** refers to when a candidate has achieved a formal award or qualification, obtaining recognised ECTS credits. The candidate seeks entry at an advanced stage or exemption from a component of another programme of study, provided that the learning outcomes of the first programme align with those of the new programme of studies. The credited units can be either subject-specific or general, especially when the learning occurs at the same MQF/EQF level.

### 3. Conditions and Eligibility

This RPL policy is solely intended for individuals who intend to follow any formal and accredited programme of studies offered by LSBF Malta and is subject to a number of conditions as stipulated below:

- 3.1 The recognition of prior learning only applies to competences gained through formal study programmes and work experience in the related field.
- 3.2 Individuals will be required to submit an RPL Application for evaluation given that they satisfy conditions for eligibility which include:
  - a. Provision of evidence for awards/qualifications obtained through third party providers,
  - b. Provision of evidence of work experience in related field, and
  - c. The possibility to submit themselves to an additional competency-based in-depth interview and/or evaluations/tests as part of the RPL evaluation process.



- 3.3 Credits obtained through the RPL process can only be awarded to learners if they have not yet successfully completed the entire programme of study and/or respective modules (achieving 50% or higher marks).
- 3.4 The maximum number of credits that may be gained from the RPL process at LSBF Malta cannot exceed 50% of the programme of studies chosen by the individual for formal learning (applicable to the PG programmes). In the event that RPL is awarded to achieve credits to a named award (exemption from certain modules) a reduction in academic fees will apply. The assessment will be based on the number of exemptions and types of modules exempt.
- 3.5 The Application for RPL is free of charge except for fees related to MQRIC recognition when applicable.

## 4. Process for RPL

The RPL process is individualised and structured into four distinct phases, as follows: Guidance and Formal Application, Evidence and Initial Evaluation, Review of the RPL Claim and lastly Results and Communications. The four phases are explained below.

### 4.1 Guidance & Application

During this phase, potential applicants are guided through the process for RPL, and all conditions of eligibility (as defined in section 2 of this policy) are explained. The Recruitment Team will guide the applicant accordingly through various means to ensure the applicant is fully aware of the policy, requirements and procedure to apply for their RPL.

The document explaining the formal process for RPL will be made publicly available on the LSBF Malta website with clear reference to the MQF Referencing Report and will also be sent by email to anyone who requests it. In addition, the recruitment team will discuss any queries with individual applicants by email, direct phone and/or individual meeting (online or face-to-face) as required.

The applicant is required to complete an Application Form (available at the end of this



document) to provide and declare details of formal qualifications, awards, and competences gained through various means, including working experience. All applicants will be directed to the data protection and retention policies on the LSBF Malta website. Guidance on completing this Application Form will be provided by the Recruitment Team. Additionally, all supporting evidence (as outlined in section 4.2 below) must be submitted with the application form for it to be considered eligible. The student should apply for the RPL process at least 2 weeks before the commencement of the course.

#### 4.2 Evidence & Initial Evaluation

The application is processed by the Admissions Team to verify that all the required details and any supporting evidence submitted by the applicant is relevant, complete and valid (formal awards/qualification should be recognised in the country where the programme of studies to be delivered was accredited). Accompanying evidence must include:

- Certificates proving formal ECTS credits gained through previous training or programmes of study.
- Students that hold ACCA or CIMA qualifications may receive exemptions from relevant PG modules or may be exempted from Year 1 and Year 2 modules from the UG programmes.
- Students that hold HNC or HND qualifications may be granted advanced entry into the UG programmes.
- Transcripts identifying the contents of the previous training programmes, and the students results obtained in each of these areas.
- CV
- Personal statement from applicant justifying the request for RPL.
- LSBF Malta Application Form for RPL.

Additional documentation to support the application may include but is not limited to:

- Written reference letter/s from employer or other relevant persons, companies or institutions.





- Portfolio of prior work and learning.
- Other documentation or tasks/tests as necessary.
- Possibility of an interview and/or competency-based tests intended to assess aspects of learning.

Once the application has been properly vetted, an Admissions Board meeting is convened to analyse the evidence provided by the applicant and determine its 'fit' in relation to the learning outcomes of the programme of studies the applicant is requesting RPL for. This would include evaluation of qualifications with the level descriptors of the [MQF Referencing Report](#).

The Admissions Board will be composed of the Head of Institution (HOI) or the Academic Dean who will act as a chairperson of this committee. Two (2) other members will form this committee. One of the members will be a technical/professional expert in the field that is aligned with the student's RPL request, and the other member will be part of the Administrative Team. The latter will ensure that the procedure is applied correctly. Relevant training and professional development will be provided to the Staff on the implementation of RPL. This will ensure that the staff are adequately prepared to assess and manage RPL processes effectively.

#### 4.3 Review of the RPL Claim

The principles for recognising prior learning consist of:

- **Relevance:** The experience and learning provide the applicant with knowledge that is relevant to the programme applied for.
- **Sufficient:** The experience is of a sufficient academic level for the required qualification and its learning outcomes, and is sufficient to demonstrate the applicant's competence.
- **Verifiable:** The applicant can provide evidence that the experience and learning is valid and a result of their own efforts.
- **Recent:** The experiences are sufficiently recent to the time of application and ensures the knowledge is still relevant.

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The Admissions Board (AB) proceeds to map competences acquired by the applicant (with the intended learning outcomes of the specific programme with evaluation of qualifications with the level descriptors of the [MQF Referencing Report](#) to determine the number of credits/module/s/years that may be recognised for prior learning, taking into consideration all evidence provided by the applicant.

The rationale for the decision will be based on the documentation provided, which must align with the RPL criteria and supporting evidence. The Admissions Board (AB) may interview the applicant and/or request a competency-based test/s if the evidence provided by the applicant is not recognised by LSBF Malta (through the MQRIC framework), and/or not accepted by the AB as being of equivalent value of the ECTS/module/years being considered for RPL, or the student is not able to provide proper evidence.

The applicant's unjustified failure to provide any of the required documentation and/or evidence or to perform and/or undergo requested interviews/tests would result in a rejection. After reaching a decision on the RPL application, the Admissions Board (AB) will formalise the decision in a final report. This report will clearly indicate the outcome of the RPL application (choosing from the 6 possible outcomes outlined in section 4.4) and provide an outline of the rationale and reason behind the final decision. It will also indicate the support which will be offered in the event of an appeal and the next step in the event of a successful outcome. LSBF Malta is committed to ensuring that the RPL process is transparent, fair, reliable and consistent to all applicants.

Providing this information is essential to give the applicant insight into the process, enabling them to identify any potential grounds for appeal, if necessary.

The Head of Quality Assurance will review the final report to appropriately monitor the RPL process.

#### **4.4 Results and Communications**

The possible Outcomes of the RPL consist of:



1. Full acceptance of the claim as entry requirements into a programme of study.
2. Full acceptance of the claim for advanced entry (exemption) into a programme of study.
3. Partial acceptance of the claim for exemption.
4. A request to submit further information, documentation and/or evidence.
5. Rejection of the claim outlining the reasons for the decision and recommendations for alternative paths.
6. Rejection of claim supported by clear rationale for the decision.

The results of the competency-based mapping are finalised after the Head of Quality Assurance reviews the outcome of the AB and verifies the board followed due process and diligence. Finalised results are transferred to the internal records of LSBF Malta and communicated to the applicant via email, Management Staff and the Tutors of the formal programme of study. Final results are communicated to the applicant within 10 working days of the date when the AB discussed the RPL application. The full RPL process should take up to 3 weeks.

Result of the RPL shall be included in the final student transcript upon completion of their programme of studies with LSBF Malta. This shall clearly indicate the ECTS/Module exemptions the student was eligible for as part of the RPL result.

## Appeals

If the applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they have the option to appeal to the Head of Institution (HOI) or Academic Dean via email ([appeals@lsbf.edu.mt](mailto:appeals@lsbf.edu.mt)) or to the Recruitment Team and request a revision of the assessment process within fifteen (15) working days of the date on the written RPL outcome. There is no fee to appeal.

Applicants may appeal on one of the following grounds:

- **Procedural Error**

If the applicant believes that there was any error in implementing the RPL process they are entitled to submit an appeal clearly identifying and explaining the procedural error that may





have impacted the final outcome of the application. This may be done by assessing the final report of the Appeals Committee with the approved RPL Policy available on the LSBF Malta Website.

- **Misinterpretation of Evidence**

If the applicant believes that evidence submitted as part of the RPL process may have been misinterpreted, they are entitled to submit an appeal on these grounds. In such cases the applicant is required to provide clarify any ambiguous evidence and provide additional context if necessary.

- **Failure to Consider Relevant Information**

If the applicant believes the outcome fails to consider previous proof of learning submitted, they are entitled to appeal on these grounds. In such cases the applicant is required to identify which proof they believe was not considered and highlight its relevance in relation to the specific learning outcomes of the relative program of studies.

The applicant must inform the Recruitment Team about Appeal requests via email ([appeals@lsbf.edu.mt](mailto:appeals@lsbf.edu.mt)), clearly identifying the grounds for the appeal and providing adequate justification and additional evidence (if required) for these grounds. The Recruitment Team will inform the HOI of LSBF Malta, who, after reviewing the request for appeal, may proceed in nominating an appeals board which will be made up of an expert who was not involved in the initial assessment and 2 other members of LSBF Malta, 1 of which should have been involved in the initial assessment of the RPL application. The Appeals Board will carry out the re-assessment/appeals process.

The decision of the Appeals Board will be communicated through a report to the HOI whom upon final vetting that the board effectively considered the appeal, will communicate it to the student via email within 10 working days from the day when the Appeals Board reviewed the case. The decision of the Appeals Board after being endorsed by the HOI is final and uncontestable.

All documents relating to the case – including minutes of each meeting and final report endorsed by the HOI – are filed by the Admissions Team and retained securely. The duration of the appeal process should take up to 1 calendar month.



## 5. Quality Assurance

The final report and results including all required documentation and evidence of the RPL claims will be submitted to the internal quality assurance expert appointed by LSBF Malta to ensure adherence to LSBF's institutional (IQA, EQA and RPL Policies) as well as national and international Quality Standards established by MFHEA. This will be required to formalise the final decision of the Admissions Board.

To effectively implement and maintain the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy, it is crucial to establish a comprehensive system for monitoring and reviewing the overall processes. This ensures the policy remains effective, transparent, and aligned with the educational objectives of the institution. Below are the key components of this system:

**Monitoring and Review of Systems:** This policy will be subject to regular reviews and updates in order to ensure internal and external quality standards are constantly met. Regular reviews of the RPL processes will be conducted to assess their effectiveness and adherence to policy guidelines. Feedback from applicants, staff and students will be utilised to identify trends, challenges and opportunities for enhancement. The Admissions Board will be responsible for overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the RPL policy. The AB will ensure that all procedures are followed correctly and will be the primary point of contact for any issues or questions related to RPL. The Academic Dean will provide oversight and ensure that the RPL policy aligns with the school's academic standards and goals.

Tracking of the implementation of action plans to enhance the RPL processes will be overseen by the Admissions Board. It will establish a continuous improvement cycle where feedback and evaluation findings are regularly used to refine and enhance the RPL policy and processes. By implementing these detailed monitoring, review, and follow-up processes, the institution can ensure that its RPL policy remains effective, fair, and beneficial for all stakeholders involved.

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## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Application Form

Applications for RPL are assessed in line with LSBF Malta RPL Policy and Process available on the website. There is no fee applicable for the RPL assessment of the applicant.

### Part A. Student Information (to be completed by student)

Name & Surname	
Date of Birth	
ID/Passport Number	
Name of Programme of Studies	

### Part B. Type of RPL Requested (to be completed by student), tick where appropriate:

**Option A: Request to have knowledge, skills and competencies assessed for personal or career development.**

(Formative)

**Option B: Request to transfer previously obtained ETCS within a formal learning structure. (Summative)**

**Option C: Request an exemption for entry requirements for a particular programme of study. (Credit Transfer)**

*Kindly indicate which evidence you are submitting with this application.*

Certificates and Transcripts confirming completion of modules

An MQRIC Certificate in case of foreign qualifications.

CV

Reference letter

*(detailing the work experience, informal/non-formal training has taken place)*

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**Part C. Additional Information** *Provide any additional information you wish LSBF Malta to be aware of when reviewing your RPL Application.*


I confirm that the information in this form and attached documentation are accurate and correct.

<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Name and Surname (in block letters)</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

END OF DOCUMENT