

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure

For MBA and DBA Admissions and Exemptions

1. Introduction and Scope

Regent European University (REU) recognises that valuable learning may be acquired through formal education, professional practice, leadership responsibilities, research, entrepreneurship, training, and other experiential activities. Where equivalence is established, RPL may be used to support admission to a programme, advanced standing, credit transfer, exemption from specific modules, or partial fulfilment of qualification requirements, subject to the institution's regulations and approval processes.

The policy applies to all applicants seeking admission to MBA and DBA programmes through non-standard routes and those seeking recognition of prior learning for exemptions. The policy supports widening participation, lifelong learning, transparency, fairness, consistency, and academic integrity.

2. Definitions

Prior Learning: Prior Learning encompasses any demonstrably verified knowledge, skills, or competencies an applicant has acquired preceding their application, which may be formally recognized to satisfy entry requirements for the Institution's higher education programs. This framework distinguishes between two operational pathways:

- **Recognized Certificated Learning (RCL):** Academic credit or qualifications previously acquired through a structured, formally assessed, and documented course of study at a recognized institution.
- **Recognized Experiential Learning (REL):** The non-certificated acquisition of equivalent intellectual or professional capabilities, accrued through verified professional practice or relevant life experience, that is susceptible to robust institutional evaluation.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): Formal assessment and recognition of learning acquired through formal, non-formal, or informal learning.

Advanced Standing: An academic to describe a status granted to students who are

permitted to skip certain introductory courses or entry requirements, allowing them to start their degree or diploma program at a more advanced point.

Exemption: Approval to waive specific modules or components based on demonstrated equivalence.

ECTS: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

Learning Outcomes: Knowledge, skills, and competencies expected upon successful completion of a module or programme.

3. Intended Audience

This policy applies to:

- Prospective applicants and students.
- Admissions staff and Course Advisors.
- Academic reviewers and programme leaders.
- Members of the RPL Committee.
- Quality assurance personnel.
- Senior academic decision-makers involved in admissions and credit recognition.

4. Principles of RPL policy

Here are the primary principles of a robust RPL policy:

- **Fairness, Equity, and Accessibility:** Decisions are made based on academic judgment and fairness to all applicants.
- **Transparency:** Entry criteria, required evidence, fees, timelines, and the appeal processes must be clearly published so applicants know exactly what is expected of them.
- **Currency:** The prior learning must be up-to-date and relevant to current academic and industry practices. For fast-evolving fields or executive programs, experience or qualifications from decades ago may need supplementary evidence to prove currency.
- **Reliability:** Assessment practices must be consistent. Different assessors (or different cohorts of the RPL Committee) should reach the same conclusion when evaluating similar evidence or scenarios.
- **Rigour and Quality Assurance :** The RPL Committee will rigorously assess the applicant's academic capability and work experience. Admission will be subjected to a satisfactory academic interview.

5. RPL – Admission Criteria

Applicants who do not fully satisfy standard entry requirements may be considered through Recognition of Prior Learning where sufficient evidence demonstrates the ability to succeed at the relevant academic level.

5.1 MBA

Applicants should normally possess:

- A recognised Bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification; and
- English language proficiency equivalent to IELTS 6.0 or higher.

Applicants without a degree may be admitted through RPL where they can demonstrate:

- Normally 3–5 years of supervisory, managerial, entrepreneurial, or professional experience.
- Evidence of leadership responsibility and decision-making.
- Ability to engage with postgraduate-level study.
- Successful completion of an admissions interview or intention-to-study discussion where required.

5.2 DBA

Standard Academic Entry Routes

Route A – REU MBA Graduates-Direct progression from MBA to DBA

- Hold a Master of Business Administration (MBA) awarded by Regent European University, carrying 90 ECTS credits (or equivalent 180 UK credits).

RPL Entry Routes

- Holds a recognised Master's degree in Business or any other discipline.
- Applicants who wish the University to consider prior experiential learning for admission with advanced standing should submit a CV, work reference and evidence of minimum 5 years of work experience demonstrating of relevant managerial, executive, entrepreneurial, or professional leadership experience.
- Evidence may include employment records, professional portfolios, leadership responsibilities, business ownership, or equivalent professional achievements.
- Appropriate English language proficiency.

All non-standard DBA admissions shall be reviewed by the REU RPL Committee and require an academic interview and research proposal discussion.

6. Assessment Process

Stage 1 – Submission

Applicants submit supporting evidence.

Stage 2 – Verification

Admissions staff verify documentation authenticity and completeness and complete RPL form.

Stage 3 – Academic Evaluation

Qualifications may be benchmarked through ENIC/NARIC or equivalent recognition frameworks. Academic reviewers evaluate learning outcomes and experiential evidence.

Stage 4 – RPL Committee Review

Complex, non-standard, or doctoral applications may be referred to the RPL Committee for review and approval.

Stage 5 – Interview

Applicants may be invited to attend an admissions interview or intention-to-study meeting, portfolio review, or academic discussion.

Stage 6 – Decision

A formal decision is communicated to the applicant, including any conditions, exemptions, or advanced standing awarded.

Stage 7 – Appeals

Applicants may appeal decisions through the University's Complaints and Appeals Policy.

7. Record Keeping and Data Protection

The University shall maintain complete and accurate records of all RPL applications, evidence submitted, assessment decisions, committee recommendations, and correspondence.

Records shall be:

- Stored securely.
- Accessible only to authorised personnel.
- Retained in accordance with institutional retention schedules.

- Managed in compliance with EU GDPR and applicable data protection legislation.

Information may be used for quality assurance, accreditation reviews, audits, regulatory reporting, and continuous improvement activities.

8. RPL Committee Responsibilities

The RPL Committee shall:

- Ensure consistency and fairness of decisions.
- Review complex and non-standard applications.
- Monitor compliance with academic regulations.
- Support quality assurance and continuous improvement.
- Maintain oversight of institutional RPL practices.

9. Quality Assurance

RPL decisions shall be subject to periodic monitoring and review. The University shall evaluate outcomes, consistency of decisions, applicant feedback, and compliance with academic standards.

This policy shall normally be reviewed every three years or earlier where regulatory or institutional changes require revision.

10. Complaints and Appeals

Applicants dissatisfied with an RPL decision may submit a complaint or appeal in accordance with the University's Complaints and Appeals Policy.

Appeals may be considered where:

- A procedural error occurred.
- Relevant evidence was not considered.
- Bias or discrimination is alleged.
- Incorrect information influenced the decision.

Appeals based solely on disagreement with academic judgment will not normally be considered.

Please refer to the University's Complaint and Appeal Policy for details on how to appeal or complain about an admissions decision.

11. Policy Information

Policy Information

Policy Owner: Academic Senate

Approved: Pending for Ratification

Version: 1.0

Document Control:

- Classification: Public
- Distribution: All staff and students via university website
- Related Legislation: Higher Education Act, Copyright Act, Data Protection legislation
- Related Standards: QAA UK Quality Code, European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)