



Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Document Specification:			
Purpose:	To set out the policy and procedure to be followed by NALP on receipt of an application by a Learner (whether directly or via a Centre) for an exemption to be made for part of a NALP qualification based on learning they have already undertaken and achieved		
Accountability:	NALP Governing Board	Responsibility:	Responsible Officer
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CONTENTS

No		Page
1.	Purpose and Scope of Policy	3
2.	Maintaining Consistent Standards of Attainment	3
3.	General Requirements for Recognition of Prior Learning	3 – 4
	3.1 Qualifications	3 – 4
	3.2 Experiential Learning	4
4.	Approved Exemptions	5
5.	Guidance for Applications for the Recognition of Prior Learning	5 – 7

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

1. Purpose and Scope of Policy

The National Association of Licensed Paralegals (NALP) is an awarding organisation recognised and regulated by Ofqual. The qualifications offered by NALP are well regarded and relied upon by users, most of whom are in the legal sector.

NALP undertakes all assessment decisions in order to uphold consistent standards attainment for all the qualifications it offers, however it recognises that some Learners may have already undertaken some learning prior to the commencement of a NALP qualification which could meet the standards required on our qualifications, potentially allowing them an exemption for part of the learning required to attain the NALP qualification. In order to cater for previous learning and attainment by Learners, including experiential learning, NALP has put this Policy in place to ensure that all such requests for exemptions are dealt with consistently and fairly, plus ensure that Learners have a clear guide to what may be considered as a reason for an exemption to be applied.

2. Maintaining Consistent Standards of Attainment

NALP is committed to ensuring that, regardless of any exemptions for prior learning, all Learners are required to demonstrate that they have met a consistent standard in order to attain their NALP qualification. This means that, regardless of any prior learning, Learners must undertake and pass a minimum number of units in order to attain the qualification. A limit to the amount of prior learning that will be recognised for exemption purposes has therefore been put into place, as follows:

Qualification Title	Total Units	Max Units allowed for RPL
NALP Level 3 Award in Paralegal Practice	2	1
NALP Level 3 Certificate in Paralegal Practice	4	1
NALP Level 3 Diploma in Paralegal Practice	6	2
NALP Level 4 Diploma in Paralegal Studies	10	3
NALP Level 7 Diploma in Paralegal Practice	6	2

As indicated above, except where there are only two units in a qualification, Learners will be able to claim for a maximum of one third of their qualification to be exempted due to prior learning. This has been agreed by the Governing Board of NALP as being the maximum allowable Recognition of Prior Learning to ensure that standards of attainment can be maintained.

This standard will be carried across for any new qualifications that may be developed and offered by NALP in the future.

3. General Requirements for Recognition of Prior Learning

3.1. Qualifications

NALP will consider applications for exemption based on completed qualifications at the same or a higher level and with substantially similar content (a minimum of 75% coverage) to that of NALP unit(s). If a Learner has completed

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

a recognised qualification which is not listed in the table set out in Section 4 below (for example a non-qualifying law degree or another recognised qualification which has sufficient legal content) they will need to complete Exemption Form B to apply for exemption.

If a Learner’s qualification is not listed on the NALP Exemption table, NALP will be unable to confirm eligibility until an application form is submitted and a Learner’s obtained qualification is mapped against the NALP Syllabus. There is a non-refundable fee for mapping other qualifications depending on the level of the units applied for, as follows:

Level	Price per unit to be mapped
Level 3	£50
Level 4	£75
Level 7	£100

The above fees are payable on application for the mapping of an unlisted qualification and are not refundable. These fees will be reviewed regularly and may be subject to change.

3.2. Experiential Learning

NALP recognises that some Learners may not have formal qualifications but can demonstrate knowledge and understanding gained through experience which may be just as valid in terms of an application for Recognition of Prior Learning.

In order for such experience to be taken into account against a NALP qualification, this experience or knowledge must be relevant to the qualification the Learner is applying for; i.e. be in the same subject of study and be:

- of a similar level, and
- able to be authenticated

Learners may find that providing a portfolio of evidence may be the best way to demonstrate how their experience and knowledge maps against the learning outcomes of the qualification. An example format could be:

1. Name, including a photocopy of a suitable form of identification, such as driver’s licence, passport, etc.
2. Contents
3. Number of units applied for with the level and name of the units
4. Full curriculum vitae
5. Personal statement – as detailed as possible highlighting the experience and knowledge gained and how it has been gained (on-the-job learning and experience, personal study, in-house courses, etc.)
6. Supporting documentation – courses/training days attended; job descriptions; work achievements; statements from training providers, employers or work experience, copies of pieces of work undertaken, etc

The fees applicable to assessing applications for Recognition of Prior Learning for Experiential Learning will be the charged at the same rate as for unlisted qualifications, set out in 3.1 above. This fee is payable on application for the exemption and is not refundable, regardless of the outcome of the assessment of the evidence provided.

4. Approved Exemptions

NALP has undertaken a review of the most common law-based qualifications which may be suitable for Recognition of Prior Learning. The following table sets out the approved qualifications, the NALP qualification they have been mapped to and the units which may be exempted on the basis of a Learner having attained the approved qualification:

Approved Exemption	NALP Qualification & Level	Exempted Unit
A Level Law	NALP Level 3 Award in Paralegal Practice NALP Level 3 Certificate in Paralegal Practice NALP Level 3 Diploma in Paralegal Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 30 - Introduction to Law and Practice
LL.B or BA Law undergraduate (completed Year 1) or Graduate	NALP Level 4 Diploma in Paralegal Practice	Any three of the following units (depending on which subject has been studied and passed) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 1 English Legal System Unit 2 Contract Law Unit 3 Law of Tort Unit 4 Criminal Law
The Legal Practice Course	NALP Level 7 Diploma in	Any two of the following (depending on which subject has been studied and passed) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 1 Civil Litigation Unit 2 Criminal Practice Unit 3 Matrimonial and Civil Partnership Law Disputes Unit 4 Conveyancing Unit 5 Succession Unit 6 Corporate and Business Structures

There will be a standard, non-refundable fee of £50.00 per unit that a Learner applies for an exemption for, based on the above table of approved qualification, payable on application.

5. Guidance for Applications for Recognition of Prior Learning

NALP has put in place the following guidance for Centres and Learners wishing to make an application for the Recognition of Prior Learning:

Stage 1 – Awareness, information and guidance

Ahead of enrolling a potential learner, Centre and Learners should consider the possibility that they may be able to claim credit for some of their previous learning. If an application is required, the Learner and/or Centre (if

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

applying on their behalf) should ensure that they are fully conversant with this policy and the requirements and fees involved.

All applications must be made prior to enrolment on a specific qualification. Please note that once a Learner has enrolled and received the learning materials for their qualification, the window for an application for Recognition of Prior Learning will be closed and they will be required to complete the NALP qualification syllabus in full.

Stage 2 – Pre-assessment; gathering evidence and giving information.

At this stage the Learner will carry out the process of collecting evidence against the requirements of the relevant unit(s), as detailed in Sections 3 and 4 above. Due to the nature of the evidence required, it may be beneficial to utilise an assessment plan and tracking document or similar, to ensure that the evidence is collated in a clear manner that can be easily mapped to the unit(s) the exemption is being applied for.

Please note that the evidence gathered must meet the requirements set out in Sections 3 and 4 above to be accepted. If a submission is made with omissions in the evidence required, the application will be declined on the basis of being incomplete and a new application, along with payment of a new fee, will be required for it to be considered again. This does not affect the right of appeal if a Learner or Centre believes that the evidence submitted is complete and should be considered as it stands.

Stage 3 – Assessment/documentation of evidence

Assessment as part of Recognition of Prior Learning is a structured process for gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgments about a Learners' prior learning and experience in relation to unit standards. The assessor may be looking at work experience records, validated by managers; previous portfolios of evidence put together by the Learner or essays and reports validated as being the Learner's own unaided work. Assessment must be valid and reliable to ensure the integrity of the award of a unit or units and, as above, the evidence gathered needs to meet the standards of the unit, or part of unit, that the evidence is being used for. The assessment process will be subject to the usual quality assurance procedures of the centre, for example internal standardisation and internal verification as well as NALP's quality assurance procedures. Evidence gathered for the purposes of Recognition of Prior Learning should be clearly referenced and sign posted to aid internal assessment and internal and external verification.

Once the Learner and/or Centre is satisfied that the evidence clearly demonstrates the Learner's achievement and satisfies the requirements of the unit(s) being claimed, the Learner and/or Centre should fill in the relevant Exemption Claim Form and send it to NALP for consideration.

Stage 4 – Claiming Certification

If an application for Recognition of Prior Learning is approved by NALP, the Learner will then commence with their study of the remaining unit(s) required in order to achieve the qualification. Once the Learner has completed and submitted their assignments and has met the required assessment criteria for those, certification claims can be made by the Learner and/or Centre.

Centres should retain any assessment and internal verification records, along with any additional Recognition of Prior Learning records completed, for the standard three-year period following certification.

On Certification, the supplied Unit Certificate will indicate the unit(s) that have been awarded under the Recognition of Prior Learning.

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Stage 5 – Appeal

As with any assessment decision, if a Learner and/or Centre wishes to appeal against a decision made about an assessment, including for the Recognition of Prior Learning, they should refer to the NALP Appeals Policy for details of how to do this.