

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Early Learning and Childcare

There are a number of ways in which to join the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) sector, even if you have no formal qualifications or experience. The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) recognise the value in prior learning. Recognised prior learning (RPL) is a way of using your skills and knowledge, gained through experience and formal training and learning, towards a recognised qualification. RPL is an effective way of supporting you to make the best use of your experience and training.

RPL allows you to actively build on prior learning to support and enhance your development. ¹Recognising any existing learning you have- be that through life or work experiences, formal or informal- may help you to build confidence, help to prepare for progression within the ELC sector or identify an appropriate, or even advanced, programme entry level. Both the ²SSSC and ³SCQFP offer a range of information, guidance and tailored interactive tools. Here is a handy guide of what to expect through the RPL process and where to find further information:

Flow Chart of RPL Process

Start of RPL

You should contact your local training provider to discuss the RPL process. The learning provider will discuss this with you, including an initial discussion on evidencing learning from informal prior learning, and the expectations on both parties during this process.

Your RPL Profile

You will undertake RPL 'profiling'. This involves setting out your relevant prior experiences, skills and knowledge. This includes how you have applied them in current activity/work practice and relate to your training and learning needs.

Initial Assessment and Planning

You will review and assess your profile with the learning provider who can support you to identify and evidence existing learning. You and the provider will agree what further learning is needed and how you will achieve it.

Evidence of Prior Learning

The training provider must be satisfied that the evidence you have submitted maps to the qualification concerned, has been authenticated and is reliable and valid. Once this is agreed further study required is identified.

Develop Learning

You will undertake the agreed further learning, and evidence this in line with agreed standards and methods.

Final Assessment

Once you have completed the learning identified you will complete your studies.

¹ <https://scqf.org.uk/guide-to-rpl/rpl-tool/?option=Option1&output=Output1&provider=&page=learning>

² <https://www.sssc.uk.com/knowledgebase/article/KA-01675/en-us>

³ <https://www.sssc.uk.com/knowledgebase/article/KA-01627/en-us>

³ <https://scqf.org.uk/support/support-for-learners-parents/rpl-for-learners/>

Qualifications

- If you already have ELC related qualification, joining the sector couldn't be easier. There are many different roles that you can take up depending on your qualification. The SSSC has registerable qualification list which details all accepted qualifications for working in the ELC sector: <https://learn.sssc.uk.com/careers/children-and-young-people/pathway/index2.html>. RPL will help determine what entry level is most relatable to you. You will have 5 years in which to achieve the necessary qualification.
- Existing qualifications that are not directly related to the ELC sector (as per SSSC registerable qualification list) can be considered by the learning provider using the RPL process. You should discuss this with the learning provider directly.
- If you hold a non-UK ELC related qualification you may be able to have it assessed by the SSSC. This chargeable service determines if the qualification may be accepted or not. Where there is significant evidence of the qualification meeting some, but not all, of the requirements the applicant will be offered the opportunity to undertake further learning or maybe advised to undertake the full benchmark qualification. Enquiries should be directed to the SSSC on 0345 60 30 891.