

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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National Association of Licensed Paralegals (NALP)

Tregarvon Studios
Rhiwlas
Ffair Rhos
Ystrad Meurig
Ceredigion
Wales
SY25 6BN

Tel: 020 7112 8034

www.nationalparalegals.co.uk

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1. Purpose and scope of policy

NALP is an Awarding Organisation recognised by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations (“Ofqual”) in England. NALP specialises in providing regulated qualifications to the Legal and associated sectors, in particular for Paralegals, which are respected and recognised by those professions. NALP has forged close links with the other professional bodies within the Legal and associated sectors, such as the Law Society, and is committed to ensuring the provision of the highest quality qualifications to that sector.

As part of its recognition by Ofqual, NALP must ensure that it complies with all Conditions of Recognition, as amended from time to time, as well as all other relevant legislation and regulation. It must also ensure that it follows any recognised best practice where this would increase or improve the level of service, security or validity of the qualifications it offers.

This policy sets out NALP’s commitment to compliance with all Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition, with specific emphasis on those areas which are not covered within other policies.

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	Minimum Total Units	Max Units allowed for RPL
NALP Level 3 Diploma for Paralegal Technicians	4	1
NALP Level 4 Diploma for Associate Paralegals	4	1
NALP Level 5 Diploma for Senior Associate Paralegals	4	1
NALP Level 7 Diploma in Paralegal Practice	6	2

As indicated above, except where there are only two total units in a qualification, Learners will be able to claim for a maximum of 25% of their qualification for Levels 3, 4, and 5, and 33.3% for Level 7 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 (RPL)

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).

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 based on a Learner having attained the approved qualification.

If a Learner wishes to apply for exemption based on a qualification listed in the below table, they will need to complete the [RPL Application – Approved Exemptions form](#).

With the exception of approved NALP qualifications (please see section 7 of this policy), there is a standard, non-refundable fee of £50.00 per unit a Learner applies for exemption from based on the below table, payable on application.

Approved Exemption	NALP Qualification & Level	Exempted Unit
A Level Law	NALP Level 3 Diploma for Paralegal Technicians	Unit 1 – Introduction to Law for Paralegal Technicians
NALP Level 3 Award in Paralegal Practice* NALP Level 3 Certificate in Paralegal Practice NALP Level 3 Diploma in Paralegal Practice NALP Level 3 Award in Introduction to Law and Practice NALP Level 3 Award in Legal Ethics and	NALP Level 3 Diploma for Paralegal Technicians	- Unit 1 – Introduction to Law for Paralegal Technicians Or - Unit 2 – Professional Conduct for Paralegals* *Providing Learner has undertaken Unit 32 – Legal Ethics and Responsibilities for Paralegals.

Responsibilities for Paralegals		
NALP Level 4 Diploma in Paralegal Studies (including Single Subject Units) Certificate of Higher Education in Law	NALP Level 4 Diploma for Associate Paralegals	• Unit 1 – English Legal System for Associate Paralegals Or • Unit 2 – Law of Tort for Associate Paralegals Or • Unit 3 – Criminal Law for Associate Paralegals
Diploma of Higher Education in Law Foundation Degree in Law or equivalent qualification L5 Extended Diploma in Law L5 ATHE Extended Diploma in Law L5 OTHM Diploma in Law L5 ProQual Diploma in Law	NALP Level 5 Diploma for Senior Associate Paralegals	• Unit 1 – Land Law and Conveyancing for Senior Associate Paralegals Or • Unit 2 – Matrimonial and Civil Partnerships for Senior Associate Paralegals Or • Unit 3 – Public and EU Law for Senior Associate Paralegals Or • Unit 4 – Business Law and Practice for Senior Associate Paralegals
LL.B or BA Law undergraduate or Graduate	NALP Level 4 Diploma for Associate Paralegals	• Unit 1 – English Legal System for Associate Paralegals Or • Unit 2 – Law of Tort for Associate Paralegals

		Or Unit 3 – Criminal Law for Associate Paralegals
The Legal Practice Course	NALP Level 7 Diploma in Paralegal Practice	Any two of the following (depending on which subject has been studied and passed) - Unit 1 – Civil Litigation in Practice - Unit 2 – Criminal Practice - Unit 3 – Matrimonial and Civil Partnership Law in Practice - Disputes in Practice - Unit 4 – Conveyancing in Practice - Unit 5 – Succession in Practice - Unit 6 – Corporate and Business Structures in Practice

5. Applying for RPL based on unlisted qualifications

If a Learner has completed a recognised qualification which is not listed in the table set out in Section 4 above (for example a non-qualifying law degree or another recognised qualification which has sufficient legal content with minimum 75% coverage of the content of NALP units) they will need to complete the [RPL Application - Unlisted Qualifications form](#) to apply for exemption.

If a Learner's qualification is not listed on the Approved Exemptions table, NALP will be unable to confirm eligibility for exemption until an application form is submitted and a Learner's obtained qualification is mapped against the NALP syllabus.

There is a standard, non-refundable fee of £75 per unit for mapping qualifications that are not listed in the Approved Exemptions table, payable on application.

6. Applying for RPL based on experience

NALP recognises that Learners may have gained knowledge and skills through experience and will consider applications for Recognition of Prior Learning on this basis.

If a Learner wishes to apply for exemption based on experience, they will need to complete the [RPL Application – Experience form](#).

There is a standard, non-refundable administration fee of £55 per unit for applications for RPL based on experience.

7. Applying for RPL based on previously attained NALP units

If a Learner has previously undertaken a NALP qualification and passed some but not all of the units required to attain the full qualification, they may opt to re-enrol for the same qualification and apply for exemption from the units they previously successfully completed.

The number of previously attained units the Learner may be eligible for exemption from is based on the table in Section 2 above, NALP's discretion, and any changes to English Law (and therefore course content) that may have occurred during the time since their original enrolment.

If a Learner undertaking the NALP Level 7 Diploma in Paralegal Practice has passed some but not all of the units required to attain the full qualification, they may enrol on a Single Subject basis for unit(s) not previously passed. NALP may consider granting RPL for successfully completed Single Subject units in order for the Learner to attain the full Level 7 Diploma in Paralegal Practice. Learners must enrol on Single Subjects within 12 months of their original NALP Level 7 Diploma in Paralegal Practice ending (whether due to the maximum time allowed for completion expiring or because the Learner failed after the maximum allowed attempts) in order for NALP to consider granting RPL in such instances.

If a Learner wishes to apply for exemption based on previously attained NALP units, they will need to complete the [RPL Application – Approved Exemptions form](#).

There is no fee associated with such applications as no external mapping is required.

8. 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, Centres 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 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 4 and 5 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 4 and 5 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 processes.

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 RPL application 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.

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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.

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.

9. Learner responsibilities in relation to RPL exemptions

Once the Learner has been advised by their Centre that Recognition of Prior Learning has been granted by NALP, it is the Learner's responsibility to ensure that they understand and keep appropriate records pertaining to which unit(s) they are exempted from, and to refrain from requesting assessments or learning materials from any exempted unit(s). If a Learner erroneously requests, completes, and submits an assignment for a unit from which they have been exempted, the fee paid upon application will not be subject to reimbursement.