



RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING & EXEMPTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to any and all participants in IFA Qualification(s); learners, Centres, their staff and any additional site personnel. This policy aims to assist both the Centre and learner to determine the most appropriate learning pathway to prevent learners from repeating units. This policy provides information as to how a learner's current qualification will be compared against the IFA benchmark and when a learner would be eligible to be exempt from an IFA externally invigilated examination. This policy sets out the procedure of how to apply for exemption, when recognition of prior learning (RPL) can be applied during training and when it would be applicable for the Centre to agree a course of action with the IFA.

2. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

RPL refers to the acknowledgement of a learner's previous qualifications and experience set against the IFA's benchmark as 'of-equal'. This process will determine whether or not it would be appropriate for the learner to forgo undertaking partial units of the course; proceed straight to summative assessments and/or exemption from a summative assessment e.g. an IFA examination. Centres may use their discretion when granting RPL during training but are not authorised to exempt any learner from an IFA examination. Centres which enter learners into summative assessments without having followed the RPL assessment procedure, effectively disadvantage learners and will be sanctioned. The onus of responsibility is with the learner to provide the Centre with evidence of prior learning and achievement.

The evidence the learner presents will be assessed to ensure that it meets all the learning outcomes using the following criteria:

- Acceptable
- Sufficient
- Current
- Authentic

Acceptable

This means that the evidence presented meets all the criteria for the prescribed learning outcomes of the qualification undertaken.

Sufficient

This means that the evidence presented provides sufficient proof that the criteria has been fully met (the learner may, therefore, need to produce more than one piece of evidence for some elements).

Current

The evidence provided is current and attained within the last three (3) years. Where certificated learning is more than three (3) years old supplementary evidence must be provided to show how the knowledge or skills have been maintained (i.e. how they are still current).

Authentic

The evidence presented must be the learner's own work and must be able to confirm, where appropriate, that experiential or certified learning has been endorsed by direct evidence (e.g. certificates, references or witness statements).

Centres must ensure their assessment and internal quality assurance processes of the learner are robust, auditable and of the same standard as any other form of assessment as specified by the IFA.

3. ASSESSMENT OF RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Centres must identify where prior learning both meets the learning outcomes of the components of an IFA qualification and the same quality assurance requirements. Centres will assess a learner's previous qualifications by a method known as mapping. Centres can download the IFA's Accredited Prior Learning (APL) Mapping Questionnaire found in the centre support area, which breaks down the units of each module incorporated within the IFA syllabi. Once completed the Centre will be able to identify any gaps in the learner's skills and knowledge and address areas that require further learning and development prior to entry into summative assessments.

NB. It is important to note that comparing qualifications is not an exact science because there exists variability in terms of the methods and depth of teaching and learning delivery and requirements amongst other aromatherapy curriculum and training providers.

Centres will employ one or more of the following methods:

- Completion of the IFA APL mapping questionnaire, evidenced by certificates;
- Interview - to determine the learner's work and life experience, skills and knowledge;
- CV and references;
- Formative assessments

The IFA strongly recommends that, even if a learner does not complete a module, the Centre provides an opportunity for the learner to revise, ensures that the learner has sight of the module reading list, and provides the opportunity for the learner to participate in formative tests, and other revision tasks, alongside other learners to prepare them for examination. The IFA may also request to see the learner's internal mock examination paper and results.

4. CENTRE RESPONSIBILITIES

- If a Centre is in any doubt about a learner's qualification then they must not apply RPL. Centres are reminded that a teacher's performance is also measured against examination results and sanctions may be applied for consistently low grades.
- The Centre will obtain records of a learner's prior achievements and transferal of credits for equivalences and exemptions from attending certain units/classes.
- Centres should inform learners that the process of assessing and comparing qualifications is a time-consuming process and a cost may be incurred (charged by the Centre).

5. EXEMPTIONS FROM IFA EXTERNALLY INVIGILATED EXAMINATION(S)

RPL may be applied during training for course components however learners may only apply to be exempt from the IFA Anatomy and Physiology examination. Applications for exemption from any other examination(s) will not be accepted as there exists variability in terms of the depth of teaching, learning delivery and assessment requirements amongst other aromatherapy curriculum.

Centres will ensure a learner's submissions for exemption meet the following criteria, before submitting to the IFA:

a) **Equivalence**

Prior training and summative assessment level must be equivalent or comparable to the IFA standard. For example, medical training up to or equivalent to HE level three (3), or evidence of current practice (for example, physiotherapy, osteopathy, acupuncture, chiropractic, herbalism, pharmacy, nursing).

b) **Externally Quality Assured**

Certificates or diplomas presented will only be acceptable if regulated/issued by organisations with external quality assurance in place e.g. Anatomy and Physiology qualifications issued by ABC REFLEXOLOGY, CIDESCO, CITY & GUILDS, ITEC, LCSP, MD, MINMH, MTI, NVQ 3 and SRN. Certificates issued internally by an individual or an individual training provider will not be accepted.

c) **Current**

Previous qualifications must have been achieved no more than three (3) years ago to be deemed current. Exceptions to this rule are registered practicing medical practitioners and doctors if their qualification award date exceeds three (3) years. These applicants will be assessed on an individual basis e.g. work experience and placement.

If the learner does not meet **all** of the above criteria the learner will be required to undertake the IFA Anatomy and Physiology examination.

6. APPLYING FOR EXEMPTION

The Centre will obtain permission from the IFA when registering learners and the IFA will officially grant/refuse exemption by supplying a letter of confirmation to the learner via the Centre.

- a) Learners must apply for exemption through their Centre.
- b) The Centre will assess and validate all paperwork, evidence and certificates before submitting these documents to the IFA. Applicants who do not have evidence will automatically be rejected.
- c) The Centre will identify and highlight learners requesting exemption on the 'student registration list'.
- d) Centres will attach copies of the qualifications for each learner requesting exemption, to the student registration list. As per the Centre Handbook, learners must be registered with the IFA as a student member within four (4) weeks of being enrolled on an IFA Qualification.

- e) The Centre will receive a response within 14 days if the application is successful or not and the Centre will inform the learner(s).
- f) Examination results and certificates issued for exempt learner(s) will indicate the module a learner is exempt from and state 'exempt'.

Centres which enrol learners without submitting the relevant evidence may be sanctioned. Not following the correct procedure could amount to malpractice by misleading learners and potentially undermining public confidence in IFA qualifications.

7. QUALIFICATION PREREQUISITES

Centres will interview and assess learners based on the same principles before they enrol learners on the IFA PEOT course or any other such IFA qualification that requires a prerequisite. Examples of qualifications that meet the prerequisite criteria can be found under the qualification description found on the IFA's website. The interview will provide opportunity for Centres to validate the learner's professional qualifications and ensure their experience meets the requirements and expectations of the qualification before enrolment. Centres are not required to supply evidence of a learner's prerequisite certificate to the IFA Office for verification, but must retain copies of these for inspection when requested. Centres which recruit learners without acquiring the relevant evidence, will be sanctioned. Centres are advised to contact the IFA office if they are uncertain whether a qualification meets the required prerequisite or simply attach with the student registration form for verification.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING FLOW CHART

