

# 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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### 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:

<b>Qualification Title</b>	<b>Minimum Total Units</b>	<b>Max Units allowed for RPL</b>
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 3 Certificate for Paralegal Technicians	4	1
NALP Level 4 Diploma in Paralegal Studies	10	3
NALP Level 4 Certificate for Associate Paralegals	4	1

NALP Level 7 Diploma in Paralegal Practice	6	2
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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

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 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 The RPL Application – NALP Units Form 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.

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

### 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 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 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.

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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.

### 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.