Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

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Owner:	**VP AR**
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POLICY STATEMENT

New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) recognizes that learning happens both inside and outside the classroom. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) gives students the opportunity to gain academic credit for the Formal, Non-formal, and Experiential/Informal Learning they already have acquired. RPL assessments are based on the learning achieved, not the individual or where the learning occurred.

PURPOSE

RPL plays a vital role in the College's strategic vision to reduce barriers for learners and offer accessible pathways to academic and career success. Accordingly, this policy outlines the regulations governing RPL processes, including rules for eligibility, enrollment, application criteria, assessment, duplicate credit, ineligible courses, credit for failed courses, appeals, and academic integrity.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The RPL process begins with a student submitting an RPL application and ends when the application is approved or denied as Credit Transfer or Credit Equivalency, with approved credits being posted to the student's NBCC transcript.

Policies relating to Academic Upgrading, as well as Apprenticeship and Occupational Certification, take precedence over this policy.

1.0   DEFINITIONS

Block Transfer
- the awarding of equal value to credits obtained for a group of courses successfully completed at a Recognized Training Institution, without the need to carry out a course-by-course assessment.

Credit
- a unit of measure which indicates the time allocated to address the course competencies.

Credit Equivalency (EQ)
- formal recognition for Experiential/Informal or Non-formal Learning. Credit Equivalency may also be granted for Formal Learning when combined with Experiential/Informal or Non-formal Learning. The prior learning must be comparable in level and content to the curricular outcomes of a specific NBCC course.

Credit Transfer (CR)
- formal recognition for Formal Learning achieved at a Recognized Training Institution. The learning must be comparable in level and content to the curricular outcomes of a specific NBCC course.

Experiential/Informal Learning
- learning gained through work, community, or life experiences.

Formal Learning
- learning gained in formal academic settings through post-secondary coursework.

Non-formal Learning
- learning gained in a structured environment outside of formal academic settings, such as workshops, seminars, non-accredited courses, or on-the-job training.

Master List
- a database that records the course-to-course (Formal Learning) assessment results for Credit Transfer.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)
- the process of identifying, documenting, and assessing an individual's prior learning for the purpose of awarding formal recognition (Credit Equivalency) for the knowledge, attitudes, abilities, skills, and competencies developed through Experiential/Informal and Non-formal Learning. Formal Learning may also be considered for PLAR when combined with Experiential/Informal or Non-formal Learning.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- a broad term that encompasses all of the processes involved in assessing and awarding Credit Transfer and Credit Equivalency.

Recognized Training Institution
- a post-secondary educational institution, adult training institution, or professional certification body with legal authority to grant diplomas, degrees, or professional certification. The institution must be recognized by accreditation bodies, licensing boards, or government education departments.

Residency
- requires a student to obtain a minimum of 25 percent of their program credits from NBCC to receive an NBCC Certificate or Diploma.

2.0   IMPLEMENTATION

2.1   Eligibility

To be eligible for Credit Transfer or Credit Equivalency, students must be active in a full-time (post-secondary) program at NBCC.

Students are not eligible to apply if they are on academic suspension, enrolled in part-time programs, or not in good financial standing with the College.

2.2   Enrollment

Students who are granted Credit Transfer or Credit Equivalency are no longer

considered to be enrolled in the NBCC course for which they were awarded credit. Students will lose their full-time status if they are enrolled in less than 60% of the standard full-time credit hours for their program's term. If accepting a Credit Transfer or Credit Equivalency will negatively impact a student's enrollment status, they may refuse the credit offer by submitting their decision in writing to the RPL Office and their Academic Chair.

Students must complete a minimum of 25% of their certification requirements with NBCC to receive a certificate or diploma (see Residency definition).

2.3   Application Criteria

Credit Transfer: The College may award Credit Transfer for courses completed at a Recognized Training Institution if the learning outcome benchmark and the minimum grade requirement have been met. Students may submit multiple RPL requests; however, only four examples of

Formal Learning are permitted for each requested evaluation. The College may also award Block Transfers to qualifying students. Credit Transfer is indicated as CR on the student's transcript.

Credit Equivalency: The College may award Credit Equivalency for learning achieved through Experiential/Informal Learning, Non-formal Learning, or Formal Learning when combined with Experiential/Informal or Non-formal Learning. The cumulative learning must satisfy the learning outcome benchmark. Credit Equivalency is indicated as EQ on the student's transcript.

Learning Outcome Benchmark: This benchmark is met when the prior learning submitted for evaluation matches at least 80% of the competencies, scope, depth, and level of learning required in the NBCC course.

Minimum Grade Requirement: Credit Transfer applications must include evidence that a minimum grade of 60% or equivalent has been achieved in the previously completed course(s), unless an alternative mark is required in the NBCC program.

In cases where the Recognized Training Institution's grading system significantly differs from that used at NBCC, the student may submit additional documentation to provide context for the grade achieved so the assessor can determine whether the College's standard has been met.

Supporting Documentation: Students are expected to submit satisfactory documentation with their RPL application to validate the prior learning achieved. When Formal Learning is submitted for evaluation, an official transcript from the Recognized Training Institution and detailed course outline(s) are required. When Experiential/Informal or Non-formal Learning are submitted for evaluation, the supporting documentation must be specific, relevant, and verifiable.

Translations: All RPL applications and supporting documentation must be submitted in English. When the original documentation is not in English, the student must submit a translation performed by a professional/legal translation company, along with the original untranslated documentation.

2.4   Assessment

NBCC establishes appropriate mechanisms for the assessment and recognition of prior learning as part of the academic management of training.

Assessors have the right to request additional documentation from the student whenever more evidence is needed to determine a result. In some cases, the student may be asked to participate in additional forms of assessment.

All course-to-course (Formal Learning) assessment results are recorded in the Master List and used to evaluate future Credit Transfer applications. This list is reviewed periodically and is subject to change.

2.5   Duplicate Credit

Credit will not be awarded more than once for the same prior learning. However, in some cases, the same previously completed courses may be used for more than one application if the assessor determines that the prior learning relating to the competencies required in each NBCC course is different.

2.6 Ineligible Courses

Certain NBCC courses may be deemed ineligible for Credit Transfer or Credit Equivalency, such as clinicals and other Work Integrated Learning courses.

2.7 Credit for Failed Courses

Students who have failed an NBCC course may not apply for credit using a course completed prior to failing because the most recent evidence of learning (the unsuccessful NBCC course) indicates the learning has not been retained.

Students who have failed a course required to graduate and do not have an option to retake the course at NBCC may make up the course at a Recognized Training Institution by submitting a Pre-approval of Credit application to the RPL Office. If the selected course is not already approved on the Master List, an assessment will be performed to determine whether the course matches at least 80% of the competencies, scope, depth, and level of learning required in the NBCC course. If the application is approved, a letter outlining the conditions for pre-approval will be issued to the student.

When the student finishes the pre-approved course, they must provide the RPL Office with an official transcript showing the minimum grade requirement has been met so that the credit can be added to their NBCC transcript.

2.8 Appeals

Students have the right to appeal a denial of credit if they can provide additional evidence of related learning. Appeals that do not include new supporting documentation will be rejected. All appeal decisions are final.

2.9 Academic Integrity

The College has the right to request additional documentation to confirm the authenticity of any part of a student's application. If it is found that the student submitted fraudulent documents or breeched the College's *Academic Integrity* policy, the application will be denied, and all previous RPL applications will be subject to review and re-evaluation. In addition, the student will not be permitted to submit any future Credit Transfer or Credit Equivalency applications.

3.0 OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

Academic Integrity (1111)