

Recognition of Prior Achievement for Advanced Standing Advanced Programmes Policy

This document describes the process candidates for advanced programmes may use to achieve advanced standing on a higher level programme based on their prior learning.

1. Introduction

1.1 Multiverse welcomes applications from candidates of all backgrounds, including those who have already undertaken other kinds of formal and informal learning. This document describes how people with prior learning may have that learning recognised for advanced standing, which means that the candidate is permitted to join the programme part-way through because their prior learning means that they are exempt from the earlier stages. This prior learning can be certificated (which is learning that has been formally assessed and certificated from previous study) or experiential, which is the non-certified acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge, gained through relevant experience, which can be evaluated.

1.2 This policy has been developed using QAA guidelines on ensuring “a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system” as well as the Characteristics Statement for Apprenticeships.

2. Associated Policies and Procedures

- Admissions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Teaching and Learning Strategy

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to any candidate applying for a place on a higher level accredited programme who would like to have prior learning recognised for advanced standing.

4. Definitions

Recognition of Prior Achievement	The process by which a candidate’s prior learning is recognised and quantified, in this case for the purposes of advanced standing.
Advanced standing	Permitting a candidate to join a programme part-way through because their prior learning means that they are exempt from the earlier stages.
Prior Achievement of Certificated Learning	Learning which has been undertaken at another educational provider or institution, leading to formal certification of educational achievement. This may include an apprenticeship, a higher education programme, or any relevant or industry-recognised training programme.
Prior Achievement of Experiential Learning	Learning which has been achieved through experience / training that has not been formally assessed. Experience in itself does not count for experiential learning; candidates must be able to demonstrate that prior experiential learning has led to learning outcomes equivalent to those that they are claiming exemption from

5. Principles

5.1 In line with Multiverse's mission to create a diverse group of future leaders, our approach to recognition of prior achievement (RPA) is flexible, focused on widening participation, and based on learner success. Candidates who are able to demonstrate that they have already fulfilled the learning outcomes of up to 120 credits of a higher level accredited programme may be admitted with an exemption of up to 1 year (or 120 credits) of learning at level 4.

5.2 Multiverse will consider applications for RPA for exemption from the whole of the first year or part thereof. Where an application for RPA for advanced standing demonstrates that the candidate meets some but not all of the learning outcomes for the first year, Multiverse may offer 'bridging' courses so that the candidate may achieve 120 credits. If a bridging course is necessary, clients employing the learner may incur a commercial fee.

5.3 All applications for RPA will be subject to academic scrutiny and evaluation. The evaluations will be undertaken by the Multiverse Admissions team with support from subject matter experts within the relevant programme. Candidates applying through the RPA process will receive guidance on evaluation criteria based on the programme as well as the minimum evidence required for evaluation. This is to ensure candidates have the potential to succeed on a programme if entering with advanced standing.

5.4 Multiverse's approach is based on the achievement of equivalent, not identical, learning outcomes. This means that learning achieved should be equivalent in terms of the level, breadth, and currency of Multiverse's accredited teaching (see Decision Making Principles table in section 9).

6. Responsibilities

6.1 The RPA process will be led by the Multiverse Admissions Team alongside the Multiverse Quality team. The Admissions team will receive RPA requests and evaluate in line with the guidance in this policy and any further programme specific guidance such as learning outcomes and eligibility criteria.

6.2 The RPA claim is processed by the Admissions Team, in line with Quality Assurance mechanisms, and evidence securely stored.

7. Applying for RPA

7.1 Prior Achievement of Certificated Learning

7.1.1 Candidates with prior certificated learning (as defined above) should apply for RPA during the normal admissions process. The Multiverse Go To Market team will identify if candidates are eligible for RPA based on conversations with their employer. Once a candidate has been identified as eligible for RPA, the process listed below will commence.

7.1.2 The application process is the same as that described in the Multiverse Admissions Policy with the exception that candidates must upload proof of their certificated learning. Depending on the certificated learning evidence, candidates may be asked to provide further evidence in the form of an apprenticeship portfolio, higher education transcript, or more. Where possible,

candidates will be asked to provide the learning outcomes identified in their accredited learning which they believe are the same or similar to those in the Multiverse programme.

7.1.3 Certificated learning may include but is not limited to:

- A Level 4 Apprenticeship at Multiverse or another apprenticeship training provider;
- Higher education accredited courses or modules;
- Professional training and certifications;
- Industry-recognised training with certification.

7.1.4 Multiverse will consider applications for admission with advanced standing by certificated prior learning only where:

- The learning outcomes for the prior learning are the same as, or of the same subject area and level as, those of the learning the candidate is seeking exemption from;
- The candidate can provide original certification for the learning;
- The learning was certificated within the last 5 years.

7.1.5 Where possible, Multiverse will use evidence and data gathered from previous RPA cases to minimise the administrative burden on candidates applying for this route. Multiverse progression candidates (candidates who have already completed a Multiverse programme in another Level) may receive RPA decisions more quickly than those who are applying with evidence from other institutions.

7.2 Prior Achievement of Experiential Learning

7.2.1 As a provider whose teaching and learning strategy is predicated on applied learning, we are aware that many candidates come with significant experience within their chosen field. As such, Multiverse welcomes applications for RPA from candidates who have experiential learning if they believe that experiential learning meets some or all of the learning outcomes from the first year of the Multiverse programme.

7.2.2 The Multiverse Go To Market team will identify if candidates are eligible for RPA based on conversations with the employer. Once a candidate has been identified as a potential candidate for experiential RPA, they will be provided with a skills assessment.

7.2.3 If the candidate meets the threshold for passing the skills assessment, they will be invited to apply to the programme and build their evidential portfolio. The skills assessment will consist of a self-evaluation against the learning outcomes of the level they are seeking to gain credit for as well as indication of evidence they may have already available. This portfolio must include evidence of the learning outcomes the candidate is seeking exemption from. The assessment and the portfolio will provide the materials for our Admissions team to assess. This combined evidence will determine whether a candidate has sufficient experiential learning to be granted up to 120 credits.

7.2.4 Evidence within a portfolio can include but is not limited to:

- Project work undertaken during the candidate's career;
- The candidate's job description and daily activities;
- A line manager's testimony;
- Additional work which demonstrates the achievement of set learning outcomes.

7.2.5 Where possible, Multiverse will seek to minimise the administrative burden on candidates by providing assessment opportunities and other varied solutions to gather evidence of achieved learning outcomes. As with gaining RPA from certificated learning, there is no guarantee that candidates will gain credits through this process. Candidates may also be required to undertake “bridging” courses if any elements of the portfolio are lacking.

8. Considerations for RPA

8.1 The Multiverse Admissions team will work collaboratively with relevant coaches and team members to consider each case of prior learning and decide whether candidates may be granted credits. The Head of Admissions has the authority to make final decisions regarding the awarding of RPA credits. The assessment is whether the candidate has sufficient knowledge and ability to have a reasonable expectation of completing the remainder of the programme successfully. The candidate's success is at the forefront of all decisions made at Multiverse, therefore every effort will be made to ensure that the evidence gathered and assessed leads to positive outcomes, either in the identification and approval of RPA credits, or in clarifying the further development they will gain from taking the credits for which they were unable to provide sufficient evidence.

9. Decision-making principles

9.1 Any judgement about RPA, whether certified or experiential, will be assessed through these principles:

Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the candidate provide sufficient evidence that matches the Learning Outcomes of Multiverse’s programme? • Is the evidence specific? • Has the learning demonstrated understanding of the content through their evidence?
Sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there adequate evidence to make a decision on RPA? • What type of evidence has been submitted?
Authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the authenticity of the evidence been checked? If it is from an accredited institution, is there proof? • Is there any other validation of the evidence that is relevant to the assessment?
Currency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the evidence submitted at the same relevance as Multiverse programmes? • Is it older than 5 years old? If so, is it still appropriate?
Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the learning equivalent to the exemptions the candidate is applying for? • Is there any accredited level associated with the learning which is at an equal level to Multiverse’s programmes?

10. Decisions and Appeals

10.1 All appeals to rejected submissions of RPA will follow the same process as outlined in the Multiverse Admissions Policy.

Written (name, role, date):	Doniya Soni, Advanced Programme Lead August 2022
Version number:	V3
Updates:	5.4 - linked to Decision Making Principles table in section 9 7.2 - experiential RPA will be introduced later in June 2024 V3 - 7.2 - clarified Admissions' role in evaluating skills assessments
Last updated (name, role, date):	Karine Frame, Senior Quality Lead October 2024
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