

Internal Policy: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure

Introduction

Career Hounds is committed to recognising and valuing the prior learning and experiences of our learners. This policy outlines our approach to Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) for two qualifications offered:

- the VetSkill VTEC Level 2 Certificate for Dog Grooming Assistants
- the VetSkill VTEC Level 3 Diploma in Dog Grooming.

The policy ensures that learners' prior learning is appropriately assessed, recognised, and applied toward meeting the entry requirements for these qualifications.

Definitions

Recognised Prior Learning (RPL):

RPL is the process of identifying, assessing, and acknowledging the skills, knowledge, and competencies a learner has acquired through formal, informal, or non-formal learning, work experience, or other means, which can be applied toward meeting the entry requirements for a qualification.

RPL Criteria for Qualifications

1. VetSkill VTEC Level 2 Certificate for Dog Grooming Assistants

Required Prior Learning:

- A minimum of 12 months of experience working within the animal care industry.
- Evidence of this experience, such as a reference from an employer, job description, or work history.

2. VetSkill VTEC Level 3 Diploma in Dog Grooming

Required Prior Learning:

- A Level 2 Dog Grooming Assistants qualification or a higher qualification in dog grooming.
- A minimum of 24 months of experience working within the animal care industry.
- Evidence of this experience, such as a reference from an employer, job description, or work history.

RPL Procedure

*Policy created: August 2024
Date of last review: August 2025
Date of next review: August 2026*

Application for RPL

Learners wishing to apply for RPL must complete the RPL section of the online enrolment form. This section will include specific questions designed to gather information about the learner's prior qualifications, work experience, and other relevant learning.

Evidence Submission

Learners must complete the stage 1 self-assessment form, once received, and submit it to the centre via email:

info@careerhounds.co.uk

Learners must provide evidence to support their self-assessment as part of the RPL application. Acceptable forms of evidence may include:

- Certificates of prior qualifications
- Employer references or letters confirming work experience
- Detailed job descriptions or records of work responsibilities
- Portfolios of work or other relevant documentation

All evidence should be uploaded as part of the online enrolment process. Learners may also be asked to present original documents when finalising their enrolment at the Career Hounds centre.

Where evidence is not provided to justify the assessment criterion within the self-assessment, a online interview will be conducted to gather further evidence as justification. This interview will be recorded and will form stage 2 of the RPL process.

Assessment of RPL

The tutor at Career Hounds will review the RPL application and evidence submitted by the learner to assess whether the learner meets the entry requirements for the chosen qualification.

If necessary, the tutor may request additional information or clarification from the learner to ensure a thorough assessment.

RPL Decision

After reviewing the evidence, the tutor will make one of the following decisions:

- RPL Accepted: The learner meets the entry requirements based on their prior learning and experience and is eligible to enrol in the qualification.
- RPL Partially Accepted: The learner meets some, but not all, of the entry requirements. The tutor will discuss with the learner any additional steps needed to meet the full requirements.
- RPL Not Accepted: The learner does not meet the entry requirements through RPL. The tutor will provide feedback and may suggest alternative pathways or further study to meet the requirements.

Notification of Decision

Learners will be notified of the RPL decision via email within 10 working days of submitting their evidence. If RPL is accepted or partially accepted, the learner will be invited to finalize their enrolment.

Appeal Process

If a learner disagrees with the RPL decision, they have the right to appeal. Appeals must be submitted in writing within 5 working days of receiving the RPL decision. The appeal will be reviewed by the tutor and the outsourced Internal Quality Assurer (IQA), and a final decision will be communicated to the learner within 10 working days.

Monitoring and Review

The RPL process will be monitored regularly to ensure it is fair, transparent, and consistent. Feedback from learners and the IQA will be used to improve the process where necessary. This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains aligned with best practices and the requirements of the qualifications offered.