

CIPS Recognition of Prior Learning (Exemption) Policy

Introduction

The Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS) is a recognised and regulated Awarding Organisation (AO) and is committed to high levels of quality assurance and policies that are open, transparent and free from bias.

Background

CIPS recognises that many learners undertake prior learning which can be considered as being equivalent to the CIPS qualifications. The CIPS Recognition of Prior Learning (Exemption) policy is designed to ensure that learners do not need to repeat certificated learning that they have undertaken previously.

CIPS is committed to recognising, and permitting credit for, prior learning through Recognition of Prior learning (RPL) and providing exemptions for certain modules or levels of CIPS qualifications based on valid and reliable evidence.

This document summarises CIPS' approach to applications for RPL or Exemptions for CIPS Qualifications.

Consideration of RPL/Exemptions

Applications for RPL/Exemptions will only be accepted in respect of Accredited Prior Certified Learning (APCL) and will normally only be considered for learners who have achieved qualifications awarded by UK Universities, Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) or Regulated Awarding Organisations (AOs). Qualifications awarded by non-UK Institutions will only be considered if they are recognised by the Education Counselling and Credit Transfer Information Service (ECCTIS) <https://ecctis.com/> as offering programmes equivalent to UK HE qualifications.

The qualification associated with the exemption application must be at the same academic level as, or above, that for the CIPS module for which recognition is being sought. The qualification must also have equivalent or more learning hours to that for the CIPS module for which the exemption is sought.

Qualifications which are more than five years old cannot be considered for exemptions. The five-year period commences from the award date on the certificate issued by the university, HEI or AO.

Previously exempted modules cannot be submitted as part of an RPL application for a CIPS qualification.

In assessing an application for RPL CIPS must be satisfied that the evidence meets the standard for all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each CIPS module within the RPL application. Evidence to support prior learning assessment decisions must be valid, reliable and of equal rigour to the standard assessment of the CIPS module concerned. To qualify for RPL the applicant's evidence will broadly match the evidence requirements specified in CIPS module(s) and reflect the RQF level and credit value attached to the module.

Recognition is available for all modules at all levels within CIPS qualifications. However, **maximum credits are permitted for each level of the CIPS qualifications as follows:**

- **Level 2:** 9 credits
- **Level 3:** 18 credits of which a maximum of 6 will be permitted against CIPS elective modules
- **Level 4:** 36 credits
- **Level 5:** 36 credits of which a maximum of 18 will be permitted against CIPS elective modules.
- **Level 6:** 36 credits of which a maximum of 18 will be permitted against CIPS elective modules.

Applying for RPL/Exemptions

- **You must hold a CIPS student membership to apply for exemptions.**
- To apply, please go to your MyCIPS area of the website, where you will find all the forms to apply for an exemption in My Requests and Applications' section under New Applications/Qualification Related Application Forms.
- Applications should include a completed application form, a copy of the qualification certificate, an academic transcript, a fully completed mapping document, a letter of attestation from the awarding institute (on headed paper and signed by the awarding officer).
- Copies of any relevant module or unit specifications which form part of the qualifications referred to in the mapping document should also be included as part of the application.
- Mapping document templates are available via the CIPS website:
<https://www.cips.org/qualifications/exemptions>
- Fees are charged per module basis. Each CIPS module where exemption is applied for will attract a separate non-refundable fee. Fees can be accessed in the 'My Requests and Applications' under New Application/Qualification Related Application Forms.

CIPS Awarding Body
April 2026