

6.3 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) – An Overview (For programmes validated by The Open University)

1. Entry onto the BSc (Hons) Programme:

Regulations allow for recognition of up to 240 credits; 120 credits at level 4 and 120 credits at level 5. It is not permitted to transfer credit against level 6 provision within the programme.

The BSc (Hons) programme is open to registered Healthcare Professionals and the non-registered workforce.

It is accepted practice within the HE sector that a student who has attained a health professional qualification which leads to entry onto a UK professional register (NMC, GMC or HCPC) and holds a current registration to that register is considered to have achieved study equivalent to 120 credits at level 4 (unless their professional qualification is at a higher level (e.g. DipHE or BSc) in which case credit equivalent to their professional qualification is awarded). Maintaining entry onto the register requires on-going revalidation by the individual to demonstrate currency and effectiveness of practice and continuing professional development.

Direct Entry onto stage 3 of the BSc (Hons) programme:

Students entering the programme with a health professional qualification of either a DipHE or BSc and evidence of current registration with the relevant professional body are permitted direct entry onto stage 3 of the programme and require 120 credits at level 6 to complete.

Direct Entry onto stage 2 of the BSc (Hons) programme:

Students entering the programme with a certificate level health professional qualification (e.g. SRN, RGN) and evidence of current registration with the relevant professional body are permitted direct entry onto stage 2 of the programme and require 120 credits at level 5 and 120 credits at level 6 to complete their award.

Some of these students may also have completed additional accredited study at level 5 or 6; up to 120 credits of this can be considered as Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) where accredited study matches accredited modules within the programme. Any relevant accredited level 6 study the student has completed can be accepted and counted down towards their level 5 requirement.

A student may also have evidence of specific experiential learning which is considered equivalent a level 5 module within the programme. Equivalent Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) credit can, in this situation, be granted.

Students may be awarded a maximum of 120 credits at level 5 through a combination of RPCL and RPEL.

2. Entry onto the DipHE Programme:

Regulations allow for recognition of up to 120 credits at level 4. It is not permitted to transfer credit against level 5 provision within the programme.

The DipHE programme is open to registered Healthcare Professionals and the non-registered workforce.

It is accepted practice within the HE sector that a student who has attained a health professional qualification which leads to entry onto a UK professional register (NMC, GMC or HCPC) and holds a current registration to that register is considered to have achieved study equivalent to 120 credits at level 4. Maintaining entry onto the register requires on-going revalidation by the individual to demonstrate currency and effectiveness of practice and continuing professional development.

Direct entry onto stage 2 of the DipHE Programme:

Students entering the programme with a health professional qualification and evidence of current registration with the relevant professional body are permitted direct entry onto stage 2 of the programme and require 120 credits at level 5 to complete their award.

Entry onto the DipHE programme for students who do not hold a health professional qualification

In a very small number of cases a student who does not hold a Health Professional qualification may wish to access the DipHE Programme. Regulations allow 120 credits of '*relevant level 4 certificated learning*' to be accepted as evidence of level 4 credits towards the DipHE programme.

3. Criteria for RPCL of non-Healthcare Professional qualifications

These students will be permitted RPCL of 120 credits at level 4 if their certificated learning meets the following criteria:

FHEQ Level 4 Descriptors:

The FHEQ descriptors for qualifications at Level 4 require a student with an award at this level to demonstrate:

	Descriptor
1	knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study
2	an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study.
3	Holders of the qualification will be able to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work

4	Holders of the qualification will be able to communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
5	Holders of the qualification will be able to undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment.
6	Holders of the qualification will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.

These descriptors support the Learning Outcomes of our DipHE Programme as demonstrated overleaf:

<p>Descriptor</p> <p>EfH Programme Learning Outcome</p>	<p>knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study</p>	<p>an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study.</p>	<p>Holders of the qualification will be able to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work</p>	<p>Holders of the qualification will be able to communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments</p>	<p>Holders of the qualification will be able to undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment.</p>	<p>Holders of the qualification will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.</p>
<p>Demonstrate knowledge of the key guidelines and policies relevant to practice evidence-based healthcare appropriate to the care and management of people at risk of Long Term Conditions</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>			<p>✓</p>
<p>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subjects relevant to the care and management of people with Long Term Conditions through application to a range of clinical and practice settings.</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>	
<p>Provide effective and evidence-based care through the use of knowledge of current best practice</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>

Present information effectively to provide coherent and logical arguments to support decision making		✓		✓		✓
Reflect upon and (where appropriate) address relevant clinical issues both within their own clinical practice and their surrounding workplace	✓		✓			✓
Use appropriate research and evidence to underpin decision making		✓		✓		
Demonstrate the ability to appropriately manage patients with Long Term Conditions	✓	✓	✓			
Work in partnership with and support patients and their carers to provide patient-centered care	✓	✓	✓			✓
Demonstrate an understanding of their role and the role of others within the multi-disciplinary team			✓		✓	✓
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of effective teamwork and their role in providing this						✓
Demonstrate the ability to take responsibility for their own personal and professional development, evaluating their					✓	✓

strengths and areas for development						
Demonstrate the ability to undertake independent learning with minimal direction					✓	✓

It is evident that the level 4 FHEQ level descriptors support the DipHE programme learning outcomes, and students completing a certificated award at level 4 will have achieved these standards. It is appropriate that level 4 awards are accepted as being equivalent to stage 1 of the DipHE programme.

The following list details the specific qualification awards that will be accepted as evidence of level 4 study:

- Foundation degree
- Cert HE
- HNC
- HND (including BTEC HND)

For the purpose of permitting direct entry at stage 2 (equivalent to 120 credits at level 4) students will be required to demonstrate that their level 4 study is directly relevant to the programme learning outcomes.

Each student will be required to map the learning outcomes of their level 4 award to the programme learning outcomes to ensure the award they have achieved supports the programme to support their application. An example of this (Using the Foundation Degree in Health and Social Care from Birmingham City University (BCU)) is shown below:

BCU Programme Learning Outcomes	Demonstrate the theoretical basis and safe, competent and skilled application of theory to practice	Interpret information required to care for a range of service users	Implement problem solving skills in practical situations
EfH Programme Learning Outcome			
Demonstrate knowledge of the key guidelines and policies relevant to practice evidence-based healthcare appropriate to the care and management of people at risk of Long Term Conditions	✓		✓
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subjects relevant to the care and management of people with Long Term Conditions through application to a range of clinical and practice settings.	✓	✓	✓
Provide effective and evidence-based care through the use of knowledge of current best practice	✓		
Present information effectively to provide coherent and logical arguments to support decision making		✓	✓
Reflect upon and (where appropriate) address relevant clinical issues both	✓		✓

within their own clinical practice and their surrounding workplace			
Use appropriate research and evidence to underpin decision making	✓	✓	
Demonstrate the ability to appropriately manage patients with Long Term Conditions	✓	✓	✓
Work in partnership with and support patients and their carers to provide patient-centered care		✓	✓
Demonstrate an understanding of their role and the role of others within the multi-disciplinary team		✓	✓
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of effective teamwork and their role in providing this	✓	✓	✓
Demonstrate the ability to take responsibility for their own personal and professional development, evaluating their strengths and areas for development	✓		✓
Demonstrate the ability to undertake independent learning with minimal direction	✓		

This process will enable the Academic Review Panel to have confidence that the previously achieved credit is of an appropriate standard, has relevant content and will support the student in achieving the programme learning outcomes.