



Access to HE Provider Toolkit

Principles for admission to Access to HE Diplomas

Admissions should be made according to transparent and justifiable criteria, and should include reference to:

1. **The match between the applicant's aims and goals and the primary aim of the programme as a preparation for higher level study**
2. **The applicant's ability to benefit from the programme**
3. **The applicant's potential to meet the demands of the programme and complete the programme requirements successfully**

A range of evidence may be considered when assessing the potential of an applicant to succeed on a particular programme. Applicants for Access to HE programmes are likely to come from a wide variety of backgrounds, and specific criteria should recognise that applicants can demonstrate their potential to succeed in a variety of ways, and that opportunities to participate in certain activities can be limited by disability or by cultural or social background. In making specific requirements in relation to life or work experience, providers should be aware of a range of legitimate types of experience, and the appropriateness of some demands for certain groups, particularly in respect of learners with disabilities.

4. **The applicant's life experience**

Applicants will normally have substantial experience outside of formal education, gained since completing compulsory schooling. Where exceptions are made to this criterion, providers should be clear about the particular circumstances which justify such an exception being made. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to require students to have particular kinds of work experience, for example, when considering admission to programmes which prepare students for a higher education course leading to a professional qualification.

5. **The applicant's educational experience**

Where an applicant has recently undertaken the whole, or part of, another Level 3 course, the application should be considered with particularly careful reference to points 1-3 above.

Where such applicants are offered a place on a course it may be possible for the college or training provider and AVA to agree that up to 50% of the total 60 credits required for successful completion of the Diploma (that is up to 30 credits) be granted through recognition of prior learning (RPL). RPL may be granted where learning outcomes have been previously achieved within a reasonable timeframe, in accordance with the college policies and in agreement with the Access Validating Agency. However, in making an offer incorporating RPL careful consideration should be given to the benefit to the student of studying the course in its entirety and the holistic student experience.