

Christ Theological College

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Document Control

Version: 1.0

Date Approved: July 2026

Approved By: CTC Leadership Team

Policy Owner: Academic Dean

Review Cycle: Three-yearly

Next Review Date: July 2029

Applicable Programmes: CTC Micro-credentials (Level 4/5)

This policy applies to CTC's microcredentials provision (Level 4/5, mapped to QF-EHEA short cycle / EQF Level 5), validated by Union School of Theology (UST) under its ECTE accreditation.

1. Policy Framework

This is CTC's first Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy. It has been developed with reference to the following, and is informed by them rather than asserting compliance CTC cannot yet evidence:

- ECTE Micro-credential Provider standards, in particular the expectations on admission, progression, recognition and certification;¹
- the ECTE approach to recognising formal, non-formal and informal learning;²
- the QAA Characteristics Statement on Micro-credentials³ and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education;⁴
- CTC's own Admissions, Complaints and Academic Appeals policies.

2. The Place and Value of RPL

RPL matters especially in CTC's context. CTC exists to equip world Christians and diaspora leaders, many of whom bring substantial ministry experience and prior learning gained outside formal higher education. RPL allows CTC to recognise that learning fairly, widen access, reduce unnecessary duplication of study, and affirm the value of learning wherever it has been gained. It supports CTC's commitment to inclusion and its partnerships with churches and Christian organisations.

¹ ECTE, "Micro-credential Providers: Standards and Guidelines (Nov 2025), MCP 4 - student admission, progression, recognition and certification," [12 chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://ecte.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Micro-credential-Providers-Standards-and-Guidelines.pdf](https://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://ecte.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Micro-credential-Providers-Standards-and-Guidelines.pdf).

² ECTE approach to recognition of formal, non-formal and informal learning (identification, documentation, assessment, certification).

³ QAA, Characteristics Statement: Micro-credentials (2022).

⁴ QAA, UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

3. Purpose

This policy provides a transparent, fair and consistent approach to recognising prior learning for entry to CTC's microcredentials, gives applicants and partners confidence in CTC's decisions, and sets out clear internal procedures - all at a scale proportionate to a small, developing provider.

4. What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

- RPL is the process of recognising learning a person already has, whether from previous formal study, from structured non-formal training, or from experience (informal learning). It includes Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL), Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). CTC will assess RPL claims using the four stages of:
 1. Identification
 2. Documentation
 3. assessment and
 4. certification of the learning against the relevant standard.⁵

5. How RPL Applies to CTC's Microcredentials

Microcredentials are small, self-contained units of learning whose main aim is not stackability.⁶ This shapes how RPL works at CTC:

- **Access and prerequisites.** CTC uses RPL principally to decide whether an applicant meets the access requirements of a microcredential and, where a microcredential specifies a prerequisite, whether prior learning satisfies it.⁷

⁵ ECTE approach to recognition of formal, non-formal and informal learning (identification, documentation, assessment, certification).

⁶ QAA, Characteristics Statement: Micro-credentials (2022).

⁷ ECTE, Micro-credential Providers: Standards and Guidelines for Accreditation (Nov 2025), MCP 4-- student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

- **No partial exemption within a microcredential.** Because each microcredential is a single, self-contained unit, CTC does not award exemption from part of a microcredential. A learner either takes the whole microcredential or does not enrol on it. (The degree-style module exemptions and credit transfer used by larger institutions do not apply here.)
- **Stacking is the receiving institution's decision.** Whether a CTC microcredential counts towards a larger qualification is determined by the institution receiving it, not by CTC.⁸
- **Open-access trade-off.** Where a microcredential is offered on an open-access basis, this is indicated on the certificate, and such a microcredential would not normally stack into a formal higher education qualification.⁹

6. RPL Principles

- RPL decisions are transparent, fair, consistent and accessible, so all stakeholders can have confidence in them.
- Assessment of RPL is of equal rigour to CTC's other assessment, and evidence must be relevant, sufficient, authentic and current.
- Applicants are given clear guidance on what evidence is needed and support to make a claim; availability and procedures are publicised on CTC's website.
- RPL is subject to the same quality monitoring as any other academic process. (See CTC Quality Assurance Policy)

7. RPL Processes

- RPL is normally considered as part of admission to a microcredential.

⁸ QAA, Characteristics Statement: Micro-credentials (2022).

⁹ ECTE, Micro-credential Providers: Standards and Guidelines for Accreditation (Nov 2025), MCP 4 - student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

- The applicant completes CTC's RPL application (Appendix A), supplying transcripts or certificates for certificated learning, or a reflective statement and evidence for experiential or non-formal learning.
- The RPL Assessors who are the module lead and the Academic Dean assesses the claim against the microcredential's access requirements and learning outcomes, using the four-stage model in section 4.
- The decision is communicated to the applicant in writing before enrolment, and recorded in the applicant's record.
- Any fee for assessing an RPL claim is waived for the foreseeable future

8. Appeals and Complaints

An applicant who wishes to challenge an RPL decision may do so under CTC's admissions appeal and complaints procedures. The person reviewing an appeal will not be the person who made the original decision, to ensure impartiality (see CTC Student Complaints Policy and CTC Student Academic Appeals Policy)

9. Governance and Review

This policy is reviewed every three years, or sooner if the partnership or standards change.

RPL activity is monitored annually by CTC's academic committee as part of quality monitoring, and reported through CTC's Annual Quality Monitoring Report (see CTC Quality Assurance Policy).



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Appendix A: Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form

Section 1- Applicant

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Microcredential Applied for:

Section 2 - Type of Claim (Tick one)

- Prior certificated learning (attach official transcripts/certificates)
- Prior experiential or non-formal learning (complete Section 3)

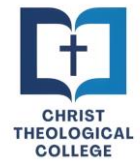
Section 3 - Experiential / non-formal learning (attach on separate sheets)

- A short statement of the learning claimed;
- A reflective account mapping that learning to the microcredential's access requirements or learning outcomes;
- Supporting evidence (assessed for relevance, sufficiency, authenticity and currency).

Section 4 - Declaration. I confirm the above is accurate and that CTC may verify it with the awarding body or employer.

Signed:

Date:



For CTC Use:

RPL Assessor decision:

Access requirements met

Access requirements not met

Notes:

Assessor name:

Signed

Date

Version control

Version	Author	Date	Reason for change	EIA check	Approval date
1.0	Naar M'fundisi- Holloway	July 2026	First RPL Policy for CTC, scoped to microcredentials for the UST/ECTE partnership	checked	July 2026