



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
Candidate Guidance Handbook on how to claim
RPL credits to access the
MSc Adult / Mental Health Nursing Programme
2024-2025



Programme Team:

Adult Field: Marion Taylor M.Taylor@mdx.ac.uk

Mental Health Field: Nicky Lambert N.Lambert@mdx.ac.uk

Table of Contents

Welcome	2
Purpose and Status of Your RPL Handbook	3
The University Regulations.....	3
Information on how to submit a claim for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	4
Ethical Aspects Of Your Evidence.....	8
Learning Domain 1: Graduate Capabilities And Skills (Gcs) (20 Credits, Level6)...	9
Learning Domain 2: Research Knowledge And Skills (25 Credits, Level6).....	10
Learning Domain 3: Foundations Of Scientific Principles Of Adult/ Mental Health Nursing (25 Credits, Level 6).....	12
Guidance: Writing The Critical Analysis For Learning Domain 3 For Both Options	14
Learning Domain 4: Foundations Of Adult / Mental Health Nursing Knowledge (20 Credits, Level 6).....	15
How To Submit Your RPL Portfolio For Assessment.....	16
Submissions.....	16
Portfolio templates.....	17
Submitting a claim for practice hours – apprenticeship students.....	22
Reference template – apprenticeship students	24
RPL submission checklist.....	25

Dear Candidate,

This guide will help you to understand the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process for entry to the MSc Adult / Mental Health Nursing programme. The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Standards for Pre-Registration Nursing Education allow this course to be shortened by one year with a minimum of 4,600 hours, by using this process. You need to RPL 90 credits at level 6 to access the programme which equates to 900 hours of prior learning.

Your claim is assessed at level 6 (degree level) and will be awarded as a non-graded pass. You will have to demonstrate and provide evidence that you have completed *all of* the learning outcomes for all parts of the 4 Learning Domains, which are described in this handbook. On successful completion of your RPL claim you will be able to undertake the MSc Adult / Mental Health Nursing programme in 2 as opposed to 3 years.

We wish you success with your RPL claim.

(The Programme team)

Adult Field:



Marion Taylor Associate Professor Director of Programmes – Department of Nursing and Midwifery

Middlesex University |WG58, The Williams Building London NW4 4BT

0208 411 6741

M.Taylor@mdx.ac.uk

Mental Health Field:



Dr Nicky Lambert: Assoc. Prof. Department of Mental Health and Social Work,

Middlesex University, Room T305, 3rd Floor Town Hall Annexe, Hendon Campus, The Burroughs, London, NW4 4BT

020 8411 5302

n.lambert@mdx.ac.uk

Purpose and status of your RPL handbook:

The purpose of this handbook is to introduce you to the RPL process for nursing and to direct you to other general information about studying at Middlesex University. The material in this handbook is as accurate as possible at the date of production, however you will be informed of any major changes in a timely manner.

Your comments on any improvements to this handbook are welcome. Please put them in an email with the name of the handbook to your field contact. For Adult - Marion Taylor M.Taylor@mdx.ac.uk and for Mental Health - Nicky Lambert N.Lambert@mdx.ac.uk

The University Regulations

As a student of Middlesex University, you agree to abide by the University Regulations when you enroll and therefore you should read this handbook in conjunction with the Regulations, which are available online at: www.mdx.ac.uk/regulations.

If you have a disability, which makes navigating the website difficult, and you would like to receive information in an alternative format, please contact Disability Support on 020 8411 2502 or e-mail disability@mdx.ac.uk.

We can supply sections from this publication as:

- *a word document with enlarged type — sent by email or supplied on a CD or memory stick*
- *printed copy with enlarged type*
- *printed copy on non-white paper*
- *as Braille*

HOW TO SUBMIT A CLAIM FOR RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

The Process:

All candidates applying for the MSc adult / mental health nursing programme (with Nursing and Midwifery Council registration) need to evidence 900 hours of prior and relevant learning to access the programme via a portfolio submission.

Apprenticeship students, or students who have current work experience as a Health Care Assistant or similar, can also claim 480 practice hours via RPL – please see page 20.

What is required:

In order to be awarded 90 credits at level 6 via RPL, your submitted work is assessed against learning outcomes. A successful RPL claim will be presented at Middlesex University, School of Health and Education Quality Committee for formal recognition of the RPL credits. You will be informed of the outcome prior to commencing the MSc adult / mental health nursing programme, as successful RPL is an essential requirement.

Getting started:

There are four domains of learning relevant to the MSc adult / mental health nursing programme that you are required to submit an RPL evidence against:

Domain:	Mapped to:
Learning domain 1	Graduate and transferable skills (<i>reflecting the learning outcomes of NIP / MHN 1801 Expansive learning for professional practice</i>)
Learning domain 2	Graduate research skills and knowledge
Learning domain 3	Foundations of scientific principles of nursing (<i>reflecting the learning outcomes of NIP / MHN 1802 Scientific principles for adult / mental health nursing</i>)
Learning domain 4	Foundations of nursing knowledge (<i>reflecting the learning outcomes of NIP 1803</i>)

QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT YOUR RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Will I have support during this process? There are resources in this document to support you to prepare your RPL portfolio and there will be further opportunities for you to contact the RPL programme team to consult, review and discuss the completion and progress of your RPL portfolio development and claim. There will also be workshops that you will be invited to attend to discuss your progress and portfolio.

How can I prove that I have achieved the learning outcomes? You need to map your prior learning to the learning outcomes of all the four domains required. You will also need to provide written critical commentary, contextualising your learning within Adult / Mental Health Nursing to meet the learning outcomes at level 6.

You can present your relevant certificates from the courses that you have completed, along with any relevant assignments and/or learning activities that you have undertaken through experience as long as the learning outcomes are clearly mapped.

What can be used as evidence to support my RPL claim? Your claim for academic credit needs to be supported by evidence demonstrating achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes of the four domains.

Any evidence you select to use as your RPL claim needs to be in line with the Confidentiality Policy and GDPR regulations so please do not include names, data and images of people and organisations without their written permission /consent.

You can submit items that you have produced yourself, such as degree projects or a dissertation report or certificates from courses and correspondence you have received from colleagues or clients or attach a statement by your manager or supervisor who is familiar with your work, may be used as a supplement to discussions.

You can also use case studies: An evaluation of a particular case or event in which you have been involved, which demonstrates evidence of the learning you are claiming, and artefacts produced such as reports, policy and procedure documents, teaching plans, websites, designs, photography, video, audio files, articles etc.

What can I do to start preparing? Look at the learning outcomes for all 4 domains and collect and arrange the evidence, e.g. transcripts and certificates, course information, learning activities, dissertation and other evidence that is relevant to this programme.

The evidence submitted needs to meet the following criteria:

- **Validity** – All your evidence must be directly related to the learning claimed of a particular learning outcome. If you claim that you have an ability or skill, your evidence is only valid if it illustrates that ability or skill.
- **Authenticity** – It must be clear that any evidence submitted originates from you or refers especially to you. One way to do this is to ensure that pieces of evidence are signed (e.g. testimonial). You may need to ask for supporting statements on organisational headed notepaper.
- **Currency** – Evidence should be recent and dated if possible (usually within 5 years). Where you are claiming for prior learning, supplementary evidence may be necessary to show that you are still capable of achieving the same level of learning. Evidence that is associated with learning undertaken five years ago or earlier should only be included if you are able to demonstrate that the learning has been updated or been in used recently.
- **Sufficiency** – You must submit sufficient evidence to cover all the learning outcomes for each of the 4 learning domains.
- **Reliability** – You should be able to show the learning you claim can be repeated. Thus, evidence provided from one instance should also be relevant in another similar instance.
- **Ethical aspects** - Have you maintained confidentiality? You should always seek not to disclose and protect any person or organisation names in your evidence by keeping them anonymous, unless you get written permission to use the names of individuals or organisations.

Ethical aspects of your evidence: This is a key requirement, so it is expanded upon here.

You must not disclose private information about individuals, so please protect any person or organisation names in your evidence by keeping them anonymous.

The following points form a useful guide, if you wish to include confidential material as evidence:

- Ensure *consent* for the use of the material is obtained from all people involved, for example, team members/managers. Details of the consent obtained should be included with the evidence itself, for example, a signed letter on headed notepaper.
- Consider how to *anonymise* the evidence. For example, you may wish to represent names and addresses using pseudonyms. Striking names through with a pen or concealing them with correction fluid is not enough. Photocopying documents and blotting out names with black felt tip is preferable.
- Always check the *legal status* of material before using it. If in doubt, check with your organisation or line manager.

Learning Domain 1: Graduate Capabilities and Skills (20 credits, Level 6)

Learning Outcome: Describe how you plan to use and develop your graduate and transferable skills in your future career as a nurse

Evidence examples/guidance

Middlesex's Graduate Framework Attributes are described below

1. **Leadership and Influence** - You are action-oriented and motivated with a capacity for self-management and autonomy.
2. **Curiosity and Learning** - You embrace the spirit of enquiry, curious to understand the world around you. You proactively seek to acquire knowledge to engage in informed debate and be able to effect change.
3. **Communication, Empathy and Inclusion** - You are a strong, confident and professional communicator. You are compassionate and considerate, at ease with diversity and difference
4. **Collaborative Innovation** - You are a leader of change, confident to collaborate. You are experienced and comfortable working in groups and multidisciplinary teams.
5. **Resilience and Adaptability** - You are strong in the face of adversity. You are flexible and pragmatic and able to adapt when circumstances demand. **Problem solving and Delivery** - You can critique and solve complex problems. You generate ideas and see a project through to the end.
7. **An Entrepreneurship Mindset** - You have a capacity for innovative and strategic thinking in relation to decisions and organisational resources and using this to maximise positive outcomes.
8. **Technological Agility** – You can use technology to solve problems through creative solutions. You are agile in your capacity to evolve and upgrade your skills as needed.

Please see template for submission on page 16.

Assessment of RPL Claim

Consider and map your own prior learning/experience to Middlesex Graduate Attributes

Show you have these graduate and transferable skills

- **Critically analyse how you plan to use and enhance these attributes within your future career as a nurse and include your complete BSc transcript**
(Critical analysis: 750 words) (LO 1)
(Weighting: 20 credits)

Learning Domain 2: Research Knowledge and Skills (25 credits, Level 6)

Learning Outcome(s)

1. Critically appraise the strengths and weaknesses of peer-reviewed research
2. Demonstrate and justify selection and applicability of appropriate research methods and data analysis in qualitative and quantitative studies/research

Select one of the options below based on your evidence to show prior learning of **Research Knowledge and Skills**.

You must choose either “**Option one**”, “**Option two**” or “**Option three**”.

Evidence examples/guidance

Option one

BSc dissertation and / Research Methods transcript or other research projects where appropriate.

OR

Option two

Submit a written analysis (1,000 words +/- 10%) of a recent peer-reviewed adult / mental health nursing research article (using a research critiquing tool. Find some critiquing tools below)

OR

Option three

Submit a reflection on being part of a research project/study perhaps in the role of a research assistant (1,000 words +/- 10%

Please see template for submission on page 17.

Assessment of RPL Claim

Consider and map your own prior learning/experience to the learning outcomes

- **Show you have basic research knowledge and skills**
- **Critically analyse how you plan to use and enhance these attributes within your future career as a nurse (refer to evidence based practice).**

(Critical analysis: 1,000 words)

(LO 2, 3)

(Weighting: 25 credits)

Critical appraisal tools/frameworks:

	Name of Framework/Model	Type of Research
1.	Caldwell et al (2011) critiquing framework	Qualitative and Quantitative
2.	Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (2018)	Qualitative and Quantitative
3.	Holland and Rees (2010) framework quantitative	Quantitative
4.	Holland and Rees (2010) framework qualitative	Qualitative

[A step-by-step guide to critiquing research. Part 1: quantitative research](#)

[A step-by-step guide to critiquing research. Part 2: qualitative research](#)

[Understanding research: 3 Critiquing findings and conclusions](#)

[Critical Appraisal: Centre for Evidence Based Medicine](#)

Learning Domain 3: Foundations of Scientific Principles of Adult / Mental Health Nursing (25 credits, Level 6)

Learning Outcome(s):

Demonstrate knowledge of anatomy and physiology and explain the role of body systems and mechanisms in maintaining homeostasis; and critically reflect on its relevance for adult / mental health nursing

Select one of the options below based on your evidence to show prior learning of 'Scientific Principles' you must choose either "**Option one**" or "**Option two**" to make your claim, as set out below. Please make sure that you read the guidance on how to write your critical analysis

Option one (certificated) / Option two (uncertificated)

To claim for academic credit in this option, your claim needs to be supported by **certificated evidence** which demonstrates achievement of Learning outcome for this domain:

Examples of evidence

- *Course/degree certificates*
- *Course/degree transcripts*
- *relevant assignments are undertaken*
- *school/ college projects/written work*
- *Certificates of achievement from relevant courses*
- *Exams/course work*

Assessment of RPL Claim

Critically analyse the importance of this knowledge (**LO3**) to the role of adult / mental health nursing practice.

(Critical analysis 500 words)

Please see template for submission on page 18.

To claim academic credit in option two for learning domain 3, you need to demonstrate your achievement of learning outcome. Watch the *links* to the videos below and write a short narrative discussion (of not more than 150 words) guided by the set questions alongside each link.

Question 1. Describe the structure and the function of the parts of the heart

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWambZ8vTL4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sh5DZU2eVxk&t=2s>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPZ_Am4HgQA

Question 2. What are the implications of conducting pulse oximetry (monitoring blood oxygen saturation) in clinical practice?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wouUBT80nU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2v3rae-73jc>

Question 3. Blood circulation in the circulatory system is complex but simple. What are the differences between systemic and pulmonary circulation and what parts of the circulatory systems are involved in both?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1576t9-SP6A>

Question 3. Describe the structure and the functions of the liver

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKZS9IpfuXw&t=8s>

Assessment of RPL Claim

Critically analyse the importance of this knowledge (LO3) to the role of adult nursing practice. (Critical analysis 500 words)

Guidance: Writing the Critical analysis for learning domain 3 (500 words)

In your short analysis, please address the following areas:

For mental health nursing applicants:

- a) How are mental and physical health and wellbeing linked?
- b) Why are physical/medical conditions more common in people with mental illness? -
Give two examples of physical/medical conditions common in this patient population.
- c) Why is it important for mental health nurses to be aware of service users' physical health needs when planning and delivering care in mental health settings bearing in mind current local/national health policies and guidelines?

For adult nursing applicants:

- a) How are mental and physical health and wellbeing linked?
- b) Choose one body system and identify how clinical observations can identify the body system is not working effectively.

Learning Domain 4: Foundations of Adult / Mental Health Nursing Knowledge (20 credits, Level 6)

Learning Outcome(s):

1. Define public health, discussing the key drivers influencing public health policies and the public health role of the adult / mental health nurse.
2. Discuss the factors that can impact on physical and mental health and discuss how the nurse can safely assess the physical and mental health needs of service users / patients

Evidence examples/guidance

Modules/studies undertaken previously and associated with relevant subject areas can be drawn upon to provide evidence to support your claim e.g. sociology; psychology; human sciences; public health; social and/or political sciences; social policy;

If a candidate has not completed prior studies in these areas, they can complete a reflective account against one of the 'themes' below drawing on their learning and experience from related practice e.g. nursing assistant; support worker;

Theme 1: Role of the nurse in promoting public health (1500 words +/- 10%)

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/public-health/the-role-of-nursing-staff-in-public-health>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/developing-the-public-health-contribution-of-nurses-and-midwives-tools-and-models>

OR

Theme 2: Impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACE) on physical and mental wellbeing (1500 words +/- 10%)

<https://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/esss-outlines/aces>

<https://www.nationalelfservice.net/mental-health/psychosis/adverse-life-events-and-the-risk-of-psychotic-experiences/>

Please see template for submission on page 19.

Assessment of RPL Claim

Consider and map your own prior learning/experience to the learning outcomes.

- **Demonstrate your knowledge of public health.**
- **Critically analyse how you plan to use and enhance your knowledge within your future career as a nurse**

(Critical analysis: 1,500 words) (LO 1,2)

(Weighting: 20 credits)

How to submit your RPL portfolio for assessment:

Once you have collated the necessary evidence and completed the required critical reflection and analysis for EACH domain please submit your complete e-portfolio for assessment using the template provided to the [RPL MSc email address](#):

Your RPL claim needs to be submitted as a *one document file* which is divided into 4 *domains*. This means that your evidence and any certificates need to be scanned and attached to the relevant section. This must be submitted as a PDF, not photographed image.

- Add a short paragraph introducing yourself e.g. your work role(s) previous degree and key courses.
- Make sure that you have included your name; student number and contact details (phone and email) and your RPL portfolio

Submissions:

You will be permitted three submission attempts, which are one formative and two summative.

The purpose of the formative assessment is to get feedback on your progress in meeting the learning outcomes of the domains. If this is a pass on all domains, it may become your summative submission, which means your RPL is successful. You will then be contacted by the Admission team with the next steps.

However, if the formative is not a pass, you will receive feedback and a chance to resubmit. Hopefully, this will be a pass. If not, you will get feedback and one more, final opportunity to submit.

Portfolio Templates

Front sheet:

Please submit the front sheet as below with each submission:

Full name:

Middlesex University student number:

Email address:

Phone number:

Employer (apprenticeship students only):

Learning Outcome 1: Describe how you plan to use and develop your graduate and transferable skills in your future career as a nurse

In this section show you meet these graduate and transferable skills by critically analysing how you plan to use and enhance these attributes within your future career as a nurse and include your complete BA/BSc transcript. You have 750 words).

Marker Comments:

Appropriate Evidence presented YES/NO

PASS/FAIL

Learning Outcome 2 Select one of the options below based on your evidence to show prior learning of **Research Knowledge and Skills** and **critically analyse** how you plan to use and enhance these attributes within your future career as a nurse (refer to evidence based practice). You must choose either “**Option one**”, “**Option two**” or “**Option three**”.

- **Option one** Insert a BSc dissertation and / Research Methods transcript or other research projects where appropriate.
 - **OR**
- **Option two** Submit a written analysis (1,000 words +/- 10%) of a recent peer-reviewed adult / mental health nursing research article (using a research critiquing tool. Find some critiquing tools below)
 - **OR**
- **Option three** Submit a reflection on being part of a research project/study perhaps in the role of a research assistant (1,000 words +/- 10%) **(You have 1,000 words)**

Marker Comments:

Appropriate Evidence presented YES/NO

PASS/FAIL

Learning Outcome 3: Select options one or two to show prior learning of 'Scientific Principles' and provide a critical analysis on the importance of this knowledge to adult / mental health nursing practice (**Critical analysis 500 words**).

You must choose either "**Option one**" or "**Option two**" to make your claim. Option one - to claim academic credit in this option, your claim needs to be supported by **certificated evidence**.

Option two - demonstrate your achievement of this learning outcome by watching the *links* to the videos provided and writing a short narrative discussion (of not more than 150 words) guided by the set questions alongside each link.

For both options, please read the guidance on how to write your critical analysis on the importance of this knowledge to the role of adult / mental health nursing practice (**Critical analysis 500 words**).

Marker Comments:

Appropriate Evidence presented YES/NO

PASS/FAIL

Learning Outcome 4 Demonstrate your knowledge of public health.

Critically analyse how you plan to use and enhance your knowledge within your future career as a nurse. You have 1500 words, please use one of the themes indicated in the guidance (LO 1,2). Choose either of the themes provided and ensure your work is well presented.

Marker Comments:

Appropriate Evidence presented YES/NO

PASS/FAIL

Submitting a claim for practice hours for apprenticeship students or students who have current work experience as a Health Care Assistant or similar

In order to claim 480 hours of practice via RPL you are required to submit the following:

Item 1: Confirmation of your current employment status within healthcare.

This will usually take the form of your Job Description and confirmation of your employment status, with dates, from your manager. This needs to show that you have worked as a Health Care Assistant or a similar role for 6 months within the last year within the UK.

Item 2: Reference:

The reference will confirm that you have completed within the last year 480 hours of work experience where you have used skills that are transferable to nursing. This should follow the template overleaf and be signed by your supervisor or line manager. This will need an email address for verification.

Item 3: Mandatory training record for the current year:

A screenshot to show your MAST compliance is recommended here.

Item 4: Review and reflection of NMC proficiencies:

Please see the NMC Proficiencies for Registered Nurses on page 22 and complete the reflective activity outlined for each one. These will need signing by a Registered Nurse.

NMC Proficiencies for Registered Nurses Nursing Midwifery Council (2018) *'Future nurse: Standards of proficiency for registered nurses.'* London: Nursing & Midwifery Council

Standard of Proficiency	Student reflection on achievement	RN name and signature reflecting discussion and agreement
1.9 understand the need to base all decisions regarding care and interventions on people's needs and preferences, recognising and addressing any personal and external factors that may unduly influence their decisions		
1.13 demonstrate the skills and abilities required to develop, manage and maintain appropriate relationships with people, their families, carers and colleagues		
1.14 provide and promote non-discriminatory, person-centred and sensitive care at all times, reflecting on people's values and beliefs, diverse backgrounds, cultural characteristics, language requirements, needs and preferences		
3.4 understand and contribute to a person-centred approach to nursing		

care, demonstrating shared assessment, planning, and decision making when working with people, their families, communities and populations of all ages		
3.9 recognise and assess people at risk of harm and the situations that may put them at risk, ensuring prompt action is taken to safeguard those who are vulnerable		
4.2 work in partnership with people to encourage shared decision making in order to support individuals, their families and carers to manage their own care when appropriate		
4.8 demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to identify and contribute to appropriate interventions to support people with commonly encountered symptoms, for example, anxiety, confusion, discomfort and pain		

Reference template:

Name of applicant;

Name of referee:

Email address:

Signature:

Position of referee in relation to the applicant:

How long have you worked with the applicant in their current position?

Please identify their skills and qualities in relation to:

Communication:

Teamwork:


Respect of others:

Professional values:

Care of patients / service users:

Please comment on their suitability to transfer these skills and qualities to the role of the student nurse / registered nurse:

RPL submission checklist:

	Please check and confirm that you have completed the following:	Tick here to indicate completion 
1	Front sheet	
2	Learning domain 1 evidence	
3	Learning domain 2 evidence	
4	Learning domain 3 evidence	
5	Learning domain 4 evidence	
6	Claim for practice hours (apprenticeship / employed students only)	
7.	NMC proficiency activity	
8.	Reference from current manager (apprenticeship students only)	