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Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Chorcaí

*Cork Education and
Training Board*

QUALITY ASSURANCE

QA 6.5 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) PROCEDURE

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the process surrounding Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Cork ETB and the roles of the Cork ETB, the Cork ETB Quality Assurance Unit, individual campuses/centres, RPL mentors and assessors in the RPL Process.

RPL is defined as a process that determines the achievements of applicants of the skills, knowledge and competencies related to an award. Prior learning may have been achieved by formal, non-formal or informal routes.

Formal learning takes place through programmes of study which lead to awards on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Non-formal learning is learning such as workplace training which may be assessed but does not lead to formal certification.

Informal learning is learning that takes place through life and work experience.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to all registered full time and part time learners in all Cork ETB provision.

This procedure applies only to QQI awards at levels 3 to 6 in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) that are provided through Cork ETB. Where the RPL procedures of an awarding body other than QQI differ from this procedure, the procedure of the other awarding body takes precedence.

This procedure covers the following:

1. Recognition of QQI CAS awards previously achieved
2. Achievement of an award through RPL

Part 1: Recognition of previously achieved CAS awards towards a QQI Major Award

Where a learner has achieved a component award through the QQI Common Awards System (CAS) there is no time limit on this award.

In the case of some component awards, such as Care awards, learners will be required to attend class for successful completion of the full programme.

A separate RPL procedure applies to the Early Learning & Care programme.

Part 2: Achievement of an Award through RPL

RESPONSIBILITIES

Cork ETB are responsible for:

- providing learners with the opportunity to gain recognition of prior learning
- ensuring that RPL is only granted for programmes that have been validated for delivery by Cork ETB

Cork ETBs Quality Assurance Unit are responsible for:

- oversight of the RPL process
- RPL mentors
- supporting training for mentors, assessors and staff in the RPL process
- maintaining a database of all RPL applications and outcomes in order to enable monitoring of the process

The RPL Mentor is responsible for:

- co-ordinating the RPL process on behalf of Cork ETB
- organising workshops for learners advising them on the process to be followed
- conducting a review of all applications
- liaising with the learner's campus/centre
- liaising between the learner and the assessor
- reviewing the learner portfolio for totality prior to submission to the assessor for marking

The Campus/Centre is responsible for:

- the co-ordination of RPL within the campus/centre
- liaising with the RPL mentor and the Cork ETB Quality Assurance Unit
- communicating information on RPL clearly to learners and staff

Assessors are responsible for:

- meeting the learner at the outset to discuss the case for RPL and granting outline permission to proceed
- marking the submitted portfolio of evidence
- assessment will be fair, consistent and transparent. All the Cork ETB QA procedures apply to the assessment process

Learners are responsible for:

- registering for the award for which RPL is being sought
- contacting the campus/centre's RPL co-ordinator to express their interest in gaining accreditation through RPL
- engaging with the RPL mentor
- attendance at workshops run by the RPL mentor
- submission of an RPL application to the RPL mentor in the format requested
- continuing to attend class and completing any assessments until the RPL process is complete
- engaging with the assessor to gain outline permission for proceeding with the RPL process
- the compilation of their RPL portfolio and submission of same to the RPL mentor within six weeks of the programme commencing
- bringing any support needs to the attention of the RPL mentor in a timely manner
- the learner has the right to appeal the result
- the submission of their own original work in support of their RPL application

PROCEDURE

6.5.1 Implementation of RPL

In implementing RPL, Cork ETB commits to:

- protecting the integrity and reliability of its awards by ensuring that national standards of skills, knowledge and competencies are assiduously adhered to
- only granting RPL for programmes that have been validated for delivery by Cork ETB
- supporting applicants to assess the status of their prior learning in relation to the award applied for
- ensuring that the achievement of learning outcomes is supported by appropriate evidence
- reviewing the currency of the prior learning (the exact time frame will depend on the nature of the learning achieved and the area of study)
- validating that the learning achieved and submitted by the applicant maps to the learning outcomes set down in the QQI award specification and the Cork ETB component specification

6.5.2 Evidence required for RPL

The learner is required to present a portfolio of evidence based on skills gained through formal, informal and non-formal learning and mapped to the standards in the award specification. Evidence must be clearly mapped to the standards in the award specification.

Evidence may include some of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

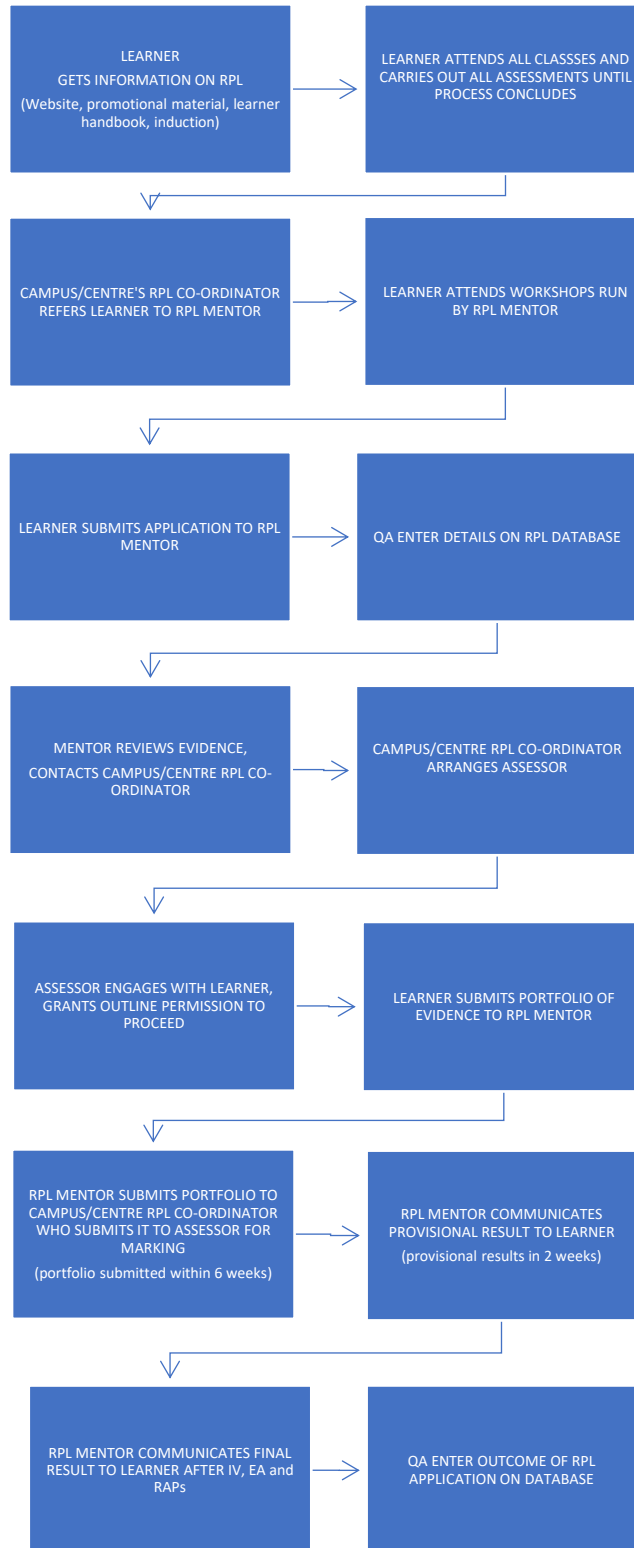
- formal certification that has been previously gained
- evidence of skills, knowledge and competencies acquired (from workplace, community, social)
- professional/voluntary work learning statements
- testimonials /references
- reflective journal

6.5.3 RPL Process

- A flowchart for the RPL process is provided in **Figure 1**
- Prior to starting a programme information is provided to the learner via website and promotional material
- On commencement of the programme the campus/centre provides learners with information on RPL via the learner handbook and induction
- The completed RPL portfolio must be submitted within six weeks of programme commencing
- The learner continues attending classes and carrying out any assessments until the RPL process is complete
- A campus/centre's RPL co-ordinator refers any learners interested in gaining accreditation through RPL to the Cork ETB RPL mentor
- The learner attends workshops run by the RPL mentor advising of the process to be followed to make an RPL application
- The learner completes [6.5a Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Application Form](#) and submits it to the RPL mentor
- Quality Assurance update the RPL database with details of the learner's application
- The RPL mentor reviews the evidence provided in the application prior to progressing to the next stage
- The RPL mentor contacts the campus/centre RPL co-ordinator to arrange an assessor
- The campus/centre RPL co-ordinator arranges an assessor
- The assessor engages with the learner to discuss their application and grants outline permission to proceed with the process
- The learner may liaise with the RPL mentor whilst preparing the portfolio. [6.5b Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Portfolio Template](#) must be utilised for the compilation of the evidence
- The learner submits the completed portfolio of evidence to the RPL mentor

- The RPL mentor submits the completed portfolio to the campus/centre RPL co-ordinator
- The campus/centre RPL co-ordinator submits the portfolio to the assessor for marking
- Portfolios will be graded as per Cork ETB QA assessment procedures
- The provisional result of the RPL is communicated by the RPL mentor to the learner within two weeks
- The RPL mentor informs the learner of the final result following Internal Verification (IV), External Authentication (EA) and the Results Approval Panel meeting (RAPs)
- The learner has the right to appeal the result as per Cork ETB Appeals Procedure
- Quality Assurance update the RPL database with the outcome of the application

FIGURE 1



DOCUMENT DETAILS

Title:	QA 6.5 – Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Procedure
Authors:	Cork ETB Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Group
This Version Number:	1.1
Approval	Cork ETB FET Strategy Group
Status:	Active
Effective Date:	April 2023
Review Date:	April 2025
Templates/Resources:	6.5a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Application Form 6.5b Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Portfolio Template



6.5a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Application

Please complete this form if you wish to apply for RPL. A separate form must be completed for **each component** for which RPL is sought.

Learner name	
Address	
Telephone no.	
Email address	
Campus/centre	
Course	
Component name/code for which RPL is sought	
Basis for application for RPL (mark X for all that apply)	<p>Formal learning</p> <p>Non-formal learning</p> <p>Informal learning</p>
Briefly describe past learning relevant to the component for which RPL is sought (include dates achieved)	
<p>Learner declaration:</p> <p>I wish to claim RPL for the component named above</p> <p>I declare that I have registered for the component in the current academic year</p> <p>I declare that all information provided is an accurate description of my learning</p>	
Learner signature	
Date	



6.5b Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Portfolio Template

The portfolio must be completed and submitted to the RPL mentor within **six weeks** of programme commencing.

Learner name	
Component name/code for which RPL is sought	
Basis for application for RPL (mark X for all that apply)	<p>Formal learning</p> <p>Non-formal learning</p> <p>Informal learning</p>
<p>I confirm that:</p> <p>Outline permission to proceed with the RPL process has been granted by the assessor</p> <p>I have been provided with information about Cork ETB’s assessment and appeals procedures and my responsibilities with regard to assessment</p> <p>All information provided is an accurate description of my learning and the Portfolio produced is all my own original work</p>	
Learner name	
Date	

Note to learners:

- Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas, arguments, concepts or work as your own by failing to reference or acknowledge it properly. All such work must be acknowledged. Any learner, who presents another’s work as their own, will be investigated in line with Cork ETB Assessment Malpractice procedures and may be awarded a zero grade
- Learners should keep copies of all assessment material submitted, where applicable



Section 1- Formal Learning

Include information on qualifications obtained when attending Third Level Education, Further Education (FE), Apprenticeships or Professional Body membership. **Only include formal learning relevant to the component for which RPL is sought.**

Educational programmes

Title of course	
Course provider	
Provider address	
Dates attended	

Examination results			
Subject	Level	Grade	Year

Replicate this section for any other courses attended.

Professional body membership

Are you a member of a professional body?	
If yes state which body	
Date from which membership commenced	

Please attach the transcript of results (certified copy) and learning outcomes/syllabus for each subject.



Section 2 - Non-Formal Learning (Training)

This includes attendance at workplace training which may be assessed but does not lead to formal certification. **Only include non-formal learning relevant to the component for which RPL is sought.** Include certificates of attendance where available.

Title of course	
Course provider	
Location of training	
Dates attended	

Replicate this section for any other training courses attended.

Section 3- Informal Learning (Work and life based learning)

Attach Curriculum Vitae describing previous relevant employment and voluntary work.

For each role specify the following:

- job title
- company
- company address
- dates position held
- responsibilities of the role



Section 4 - Mapping of Learning

Compare your previous learning to the learning outcomes for the award you are seeking RPL. Map where your previous learning covers the learning outcomes for the current award. The formal, non-formal and informal learning itemised in Sections 1-3 should be mapped to **each** of the learning outcomes when completing this section. **Evidence must be provided for every learning outcome.** Include any supporting evidence with your application (e.g. employer references, reflective journal, samples of work as evidence of skills, knowledge and competencies acquired in workplace or voluntary setting).

Title of component/ code	Input name of component and associated code here
<p>Learning outcome 1: Input the text of learning outcome 1 here. This information is found in the QQI award specification for this component. The learning outcomes for the award reflect the knowledge, skill and competence that must be evidenced by the learner to achieve that award.</p>	
<p>Describe here how your previous learning (formal, non-formal, informal) covers learning outcome 1 in the QQI award specification. Note that evidence can span across multiple learning outcomes, but all learning outcomes must be evidenced.</p>	
<p>Learning outcome 2: Input the text of learning outcome 2 here</p>	
<p>Describe here how your previous learning covers learning outcome 2</p>	
<p>Learning outcome 3: Input the text of learning outcome 3 here</p>	
<p>Describe here how your previous learning covers learning outcome 3</p>	
<p>Learning outcome 4: Input the text of learning outcome 4 here</p>	
<p>Describe here how your previous learning covers learning outcome 4</p>	

* Extend this table for any other learning outcomes.



Section 5 - Index of Evidence Provided

Learning outcome (LO) number	Title and description of evidence	Location of evidence
LO1		
LO2		
LO3		
LO4		

* Extend this table for any other learning outcomes.



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