

# Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in the Dublin Institute of Technology



## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

### What is RPL?

RPL (recognition of prior learning) is a process which acknowledges, and gives value to, learning achieved prior to registering on a DIT programme, or prior to seeking a DIT award.

Prior learning may be a result of successful participation in a formal learning programme in further or higher education, or through your working career, for which you were awarded certification. If you use your prior certificated learning towards a DIT award, the process is called: **Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL)**.

Prior learning may also be an outcome of non-formal or informal learning achieved through work, voluntary activities or private study, for which you may not have a certificate. The process of using this type of learning for higher education purposes is called: **Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)**.

It is not uncommon for both APCL and APEL to be considered together in an RPL process.

### What RPL is used for in the DIT

RPL can be used for a number of purposes in the DIT including the following:

1. for **entry** to a programme at the initial stage where the applicant may not meet the standard entry requirements
2. for **advanced entry** to a programme at a stage beyond the first stage
3. for **transfer** from one programme to another
4. for **exemption** from some programme elements or from programme modules
5. for **exceptional case entry to post-graduate programmes** where the applicant may not have the standard honours primary degree but has considerable, relevant learning from work or self-study
6. for application **towards a full award**.

**Words of caution:** Not all DIT programmes offer RPL for entry, for transfer, for module exemptions, or towards a full award. Where RPL is available there may be specific conditions, limitations and application procedures.

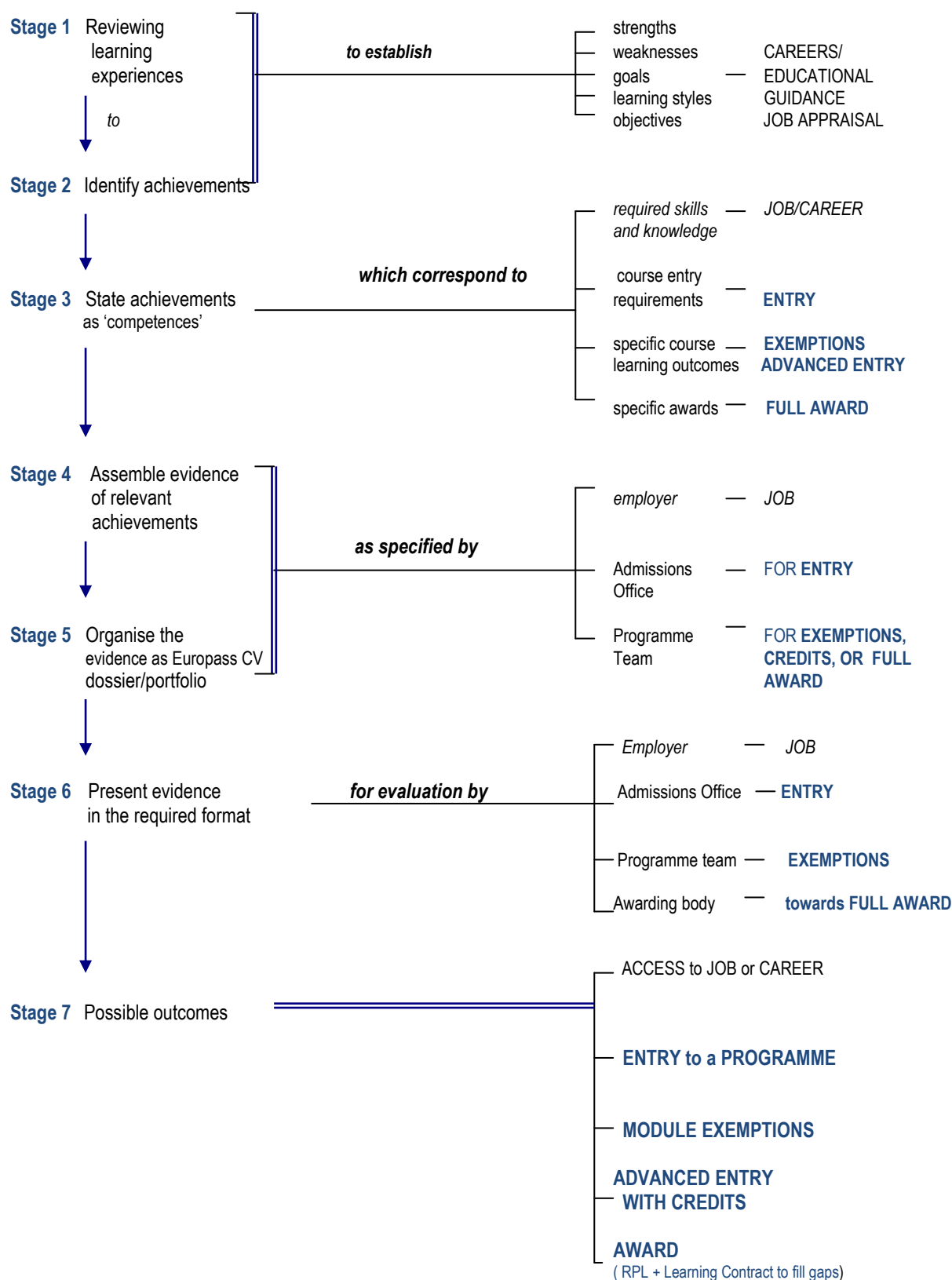
### The RPL Process

There are different processes for RPL depending on the purpose for which it is used. However, all RPL processes require the applicant to provide evidence of appropriate past learning, whether that is certificated or experiential learning. In some cases it may be sufficient for the applicant to provide copies of appropriate certificates. In other cases there may be a self-assessment exercise, preparation of a file or 'portfolio' of appropriate evidence of learning, an interview, and perhaps a demonstration or assessment task.

### Where to go for information about RPL in the DIT

It is likely that applications for RPL will be from adult learners, mature students or holders of third level awards. It is likely that applicants already know the particular programme, or set of programmes, that they wish to apply for. Therefore it is probably wise to find out if those particular programmes permit RPL. Usually this information is available under the information section related to entry requirements. It is generally good advice to enquire about the precise availability of RPL with the Department or School offering the programme, or programmes, of your choice. Contact email addresses and phone numbers will be available on the website and usually in the programme prospectus.

## A summary of the stages of an RPL processes both for employment and for higher education



## A Structure to get started on your CV/Learning Profile for an RPL application

<b>PERSONAL DETAILS</b>		
	<b>NAME</b> as on passport	
	<b>Address</b>	
	<b>Phone</b>	
	<b>Email</b>	
<b>EDUCATION DETAILS</b>		
	<b>Second Level Education</b> <i>Schools attended</i> <i>Years</i> <i>Achievements and results</i>	
	<b>Further Education</b> Colleges or Training Centres attended Years Courses taken Awards gained and results Copies of certificates	
	<b>Higher Education</b> Colleges attended Years Courses taken Awards gained Examination transcripts Copies of certificates	
	<b>Other Education</b> Provide detailed information about any relevant formal learning experiences not mentioned earlier. Include certificates etc	
<b>WORK RECORD</b>	List your work record starting with the most recent, using the following headings:  a. Self-employment details Years Role  b. Employer 1: - Name - Years - Your roles and responsibilities  c. Employer 2: - Name - Years - Your roles and responsibilities  d. Employer 3 e. Employer 4	
<b>WORK-RELATED TRAINING</b>	List the relevant training events and courses giving dates and any certificates awarded. You may be required to produce copies of certificates or to provide other evidence.	

<b>MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES or ORGANISATIONS</b>	List all relevant professional bodies or organisations with dates. Include your status as a member of those bodies and organizations	
<b>PUBLICATIONS</b>	List any publications and say where they are available. You may be required to include them in a formal application.	
<b>AWARDS OR PRIZES</b>	List and explain any prizes or awards you achieved that are relevant to your application.	
<b>FUTURE LEARNING PLAN</b>	Here you might consider your main reasons for applying for a higher education programme.	
<b>HOW RPL MIGHT FIGURE IN YOUR PLAN</b>	Here you might consider how best to include RPL in your professional development plans .	

## Frequently asked questions about RPL in the DIT

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### 1. What precisely is RPL and what is its purpose?

RPL stands for 'recognition of prior learning'. Its purpose is to give formal acknowledgement to past, or prior, learning. Past learning may contribute to further learning by using it to gain **entry** to a DIT programme at the first stage, or at an advanced stage. Past learning may also be used to gain **exemptions** from parts of programmes (modules) on some DIT programmes, but not on all. It may also be used to **transfer** from one programme to another.

### 2. Where would I get detailed information about RPL in the DIT?

You will get detailed information on the DIT website at: <http://www.dit.ie/services/academic/recognitionofpriorlearningrpl/>

### 3. Who could I contact in the DIT to discuss RPL?

The first place to contact for general information is The Admissions Office:

Phone – + 353 1 402 3445

Email – [admissions@dit.ie](mailto:admissions@dit.ie)

OR [anne.murphy@dit.ie](mailto:anne.murphy@dit.ie)

Your enquiry may be referred onwards to a particular member of academic staff involved with the programme you are interested in. However, detailed information about RPL on individual programmes may only be available from the Department offering the programme. The DIT website usually provides information about the contact numbers and email addresses for individual programme enquiries.

SEE: <http://www.dit.ie/study/> AND <http://www.dit.ie/study/parttime/az/>

### 4. What precisely is prior certificated learning?

Prior certificated learning is formal learning which was assessed and for which a certificate was issued on completion.

### 5. What is accreditation of prior certificated learning (APCL)?

APCL is the term used to describe the process of using awards gained through formal training or education - prior certificated learning - to gain entry to a programme, to transfer to another programme, or to gain module exemptions.

### 6. What is prior experiential learning?

Prior experiential learning is learning you have acquired through work, voluntary activities or private study. It is sometimes called *non-formal* or *informal* learning.

### 7. What is accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL)?

APEL is the process of using experiential learning in support of an application for the purpose of entry to a DIT programme or for an application for module exemption.

### 8. How could I use my prior certificated learning in the DIT?

In general, prior certificated learning may be used for initial entry purposes, for entry at an advanced stage, for module exemptions, for transfer into a DIT programme, or towards achievement of a full award. However, the use of prior learning may vary from programme to programme.

### 9. What are levels of learning as used in RPL?

RPL processes use the same levels of learning as described in the National Framework of Qualifications (NQF). Level 6 through to Level 10 apply to higher education.

## 10. How would I know the level of my prior certificated learning?

All certificated learning/awards are now being placed on the National Qualifications Framework. The rainbow diagram below shows the new award titles together with the main titles used before the development of the framework. In general, awards of higher level than Leaving Certificate are from 6 to 10 on the framework. Undergraduate degrees are level 7 or 8. Postgraduate programmes are at levels 9 and 10.

### Tips for reading the qualifications framework diagram (Rainbow and Fans)

The purple coloured band illustrates the levels of programmes provided by the universities: bachelor degree levels 7 and 8, Masters degree level 9, and Doctorate level 10.

The DIT range of awards is indicated in orange from level 6 Higher Certificate to level 10 Doctorate.

The red band represents all the institutes of technology, the private colleges and other providers for which the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) is responsible, with awards ranging from Higher Certificate to Doctorate.

The green band represents all awards up to and including Higher Certificate which can be awarded by the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) including the National Craft Certificate for apprentices.

You will notice that FETAC, HETAC and the DIT provide Level 6 awards but that the universities do not.

In the fans extending above the rainbow you will see the names of older award types which are now given a number on the National Qualifications Framework. You will notice that there are many types of older awards now placed at Level 6.

You might also note that Level 7 is now called an **ordinary bachelor degree**. Many older Diplomas are now described as ordinary degrees.

You will notice that there are Higher Diplomas at Level 8 and Postgraduate Diplomas at Level 9.

### META-FRAMEWORKS

All Irish award levels in the national Qualifications Framework (NQF) are now related to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF-LLL) and to the framework of levels for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) as illustrated in the table below.

If you need to know more about these meta-frameworks go to the website of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland <http://www.nqai.ie>

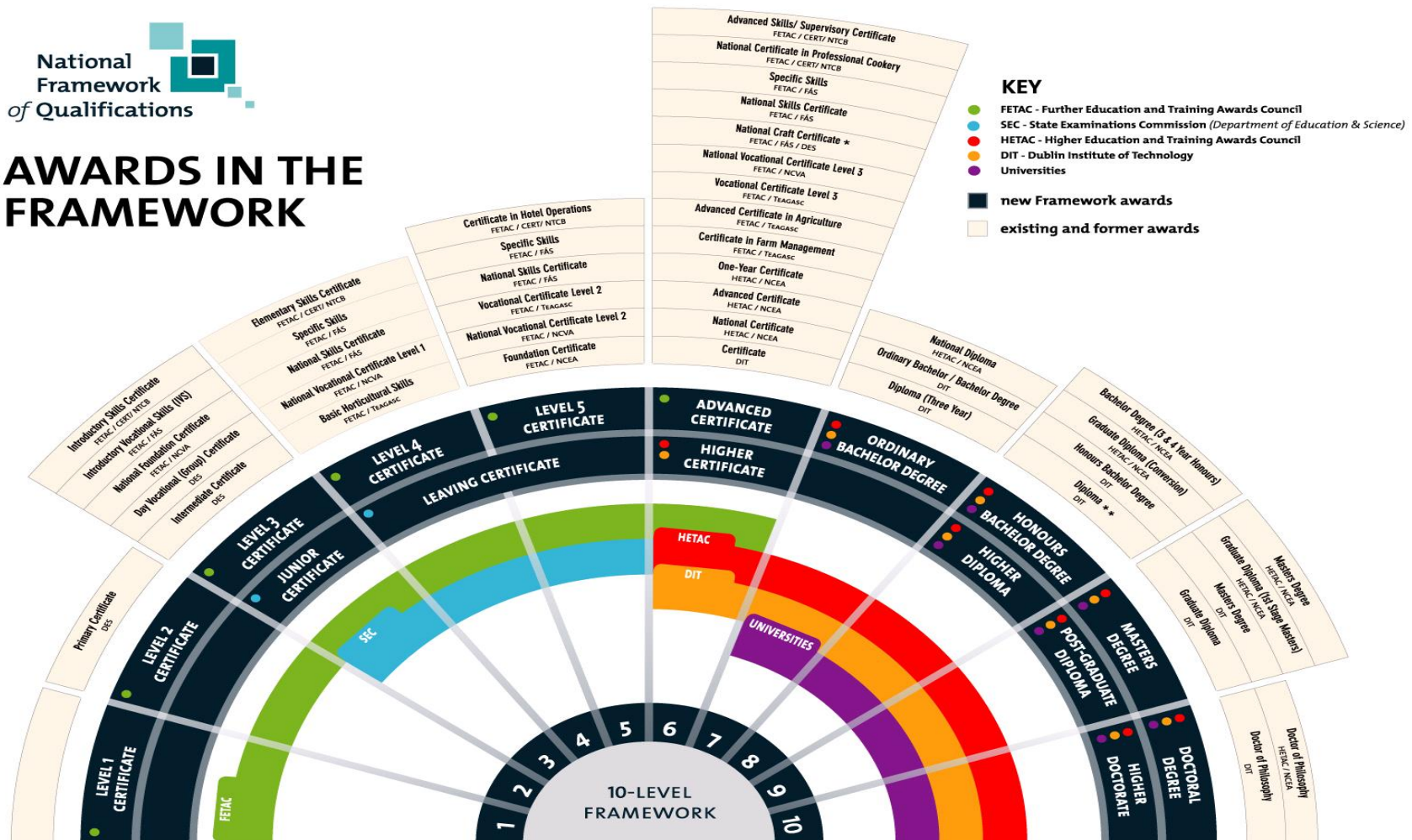
The relationship between the Irish National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF), the European Qualifications Framework (EQF-LLL) and the framework of the Bologna European Higher Education Area (EHEA), with indicative major award types

<i>EQF Levels</i>	<i>EHEA Framework (Bologna)</i>	<i>Irish NFQ Levels</i>	<i>Irish NFQ Major Award-types</i>
1		1	Level 1 Certificate
		2	Level 2 Certificate
2		3	Level 3 Certificate, Junior Certificate
3		4	Level 4 Certificate, Leaving Certificate
4		5	Level 5 Certificate, Leaving Certificate
5	Short Cycle within First Cycle	6	Advanced Certificate (FET award)* Higher Certificate (HET award)
6	First Cycle	7	Ordinary Bachelors Degree
		8	Honours Bachelor Degree, Higher Diploma
7	Second Cycle	9	Masters Degree, Post-Graduate Diploma
8	Third Cycle	10	Doctoral Degree, Higher Doctorate

\*The Advanced Certificate is a further education and training award at Level 6 on the NFQ and is not aligned with the *Bologna Framework*

Source: NQAI, Country Education Profile: Ireland (October 2009)

# AWARDS IN THE FRAMEWORK





## Higher Education LEVELS - Irish National Framework of Qualifications

	LEVEL 6	LEVEL 7	LEVEL 8	LEVEL 9	LEVEL 10
<b>Knowledge</b> <i>Breadth</i>	Specialised knowledge in a broad area	Specialised knowledge across a variety of areas	An understanding of theory, concepts and methods pertaining to a field (or fields) of learning	A systematic understanding of knowledge, at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning	A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of a field of learning
<b>Knowledge</b> <i>Kind</i>	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant underpinning theory	Recognition of limitations of current knowledge and familiarity with sources of new knowledge; integration of concepts across a variety of areas	Detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialized areas, some of it at the current boundaries of the field(s)	A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning	The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy review by peers
<b>Know-how and Skill</b> <i>Range</i>	Demonstrate comprehensive range of specialised skills and tools	Demonstrate specialized technical, creative or conceptual skills and tools across an area of study	Demonstrate mastery of a complex and specialized area of study skills and tools; use and modify advanced skills and tools to conduct closely guided research, professional or advanced technical activity	Demonstrate a range of standard and specialized research or equivalent tools and techniques of enquiry	Demonstrate a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials which are associated with a field of learning; develop new skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials
<b>Know-how and Skill</b> <i>Selectivity</i>	Formulate responses to well defined abstract problems	Exercise appropriate judgement in planning, design, technical and/or supervisory functions related to products, services, operations or processes	Exercise appropriate judgement in a number of complex planning, design, technical and/or management functions related to products, services operations or processes, including resourcing	Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques	Respond to abstract problems that expand and redefine existing procedural knowledge
<b>Competence</b> <i>Context</i>	Act in a range of varied and specific contexts involving creative and non routine activities; transfer and/or technical or creative skills to a range of contexts	Utilise diagnostic and creative skills in a range of functions in a wide variety of contexts	Use advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity, accepting accountability for all related decision making; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills in a range of contexts	Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill-defined contexts	Exercise personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent contexts
<b>Competence</b> <i>Role</i>	Exercise substantial personal autonomy and often take responsibility for the work of others and/or for allocation of resources; form, and function within multiple complex and heterogeneous groups	Accept accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes; take significant or supervisory responsibility for the work of others in defined areas of work	Act effectively under guidance in a peer relationship with qualified practitioners; lead multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups	Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity	Communicate results of research and innovation to peers; engage in critical dialogue; lead and originate complex social processes
<b>Competence</b> <i>Learning to Learn</i>	Learn to evaluate own learning and identify needs within a structured learning environment; assist others in identifying learning needs	Take initiative to identify and address learning needs and interact effectively in a learning group	Learn to act in variable and unfamiliar learning contexts; learn to manage learning tasks independently, professionally and ethically	Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development	Learn to critique the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts
<b>Competence</b> <i>Insight</i>	Express an internalized, personal world view, reflecting engagement with others	Express an internalized, personal world view, manifesting solidarity with others	Express a comprehensive, internalized personal worldview, manifesting solidarity with others	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and act to change them	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and lead action to change them

Note: The outcomes at each level include those of all the lower levels in the same sub-strand.

### **11. What are ECTS credits and RPL credits?**

ECTS credits refer to a system of describing volumes of student learning effort on higher education programmes across Europe (European Credit Transfer System = ECTS).

The system represents one credit as being roughly equivalent to twenty (20) learning hours, or hours of student effort. So a module that is worth 5 credits would demand at least one hundred hours learning effort on the part of the student. (This formula does not logically apply to RPL however.)

Modules may be small as in a 5 credit module, or large as in a 30 credit module.

A year's programme would generally be designed to involve 30, 40, or 60 credits depending on whether it is full-time or part-time.

### **12. What is meant by RPL transfer credits, general RPL credits and specific RPL credits?**

The DIT policy for RPL distinguishes among three types of RPL credits – transfer, general and specific – as follows:

*RPL transfer credits* may be awarded within the process of *advanced entry* to a DIT programme. Such transfer credits may be achieved through DIT or other programmes, or through APEL.

*General credits* are awarded when an RPL claim has been processed in relation to a stage of the receiving programme or to a set of programme modules but not necessarily in relation to individual module learning outcomes. These types of credits are awarded as exemption from a block of study (stage or named modules).

*Specific credits* are awarded when an APCL claim has been processed in relation to the module learning outcomes and credits of the receiving programme. Specific credits may be awarded where APEL is used to achieve module exemption/s. In both these cases it is usual to award the same level and number of credits as available for the module where an applicant can provide evidence of learning equivalent to the learning outcomes of the module and where RPL is acceptable for module exemptions in the first instance as outlined in the programme validation document.

### **13. How would I know the credit value of my prior certificated learning?**

Most certificates/awards are now related to the National Qualifications Framework. Awards on the Framework are allocated a range of ECTS credits at the different levels. For example, what is now described as a Higher Certificate at Level 6 may have from 60 or 90 credits attached to it.

However, you should be aware that you may not get the same number of RPL credits as your original programme credits. Your prior learning normally needs to be of immediate relevance to the receiving programme in terms of content and level to be considered for advanced entry or for module exemptions.

### **14. How would I know if my prior certificated learning could be used to gain entry to a DIT programme?**

In general, school-leavers use the CAO application system to gain a place on a full-time DIT programme.

Adults/mature students may use the mature student access scheme, or specific initiatives such as Access programmes, the Labour Market Activation Fund, or the Globalisation Fund, to gain entry

There are many part-time programmes which have direct entry procedures. Some programmes accept only prior certificated learning for entry purposes, others do not require a certificate and will consider prior experiential learning or a mix of both. The specific entry requirements for any DIT programme are clearly stated in recruitment literature.

### **15. How would I assess myself for the value of my certificated learning?**

Some programme documents state clearly how much prior learning may be used for entry and/or for module exemptions. Sometimes lists of possible certificates are mentioned: sometimes not. It is probably best to read the recruitment literature carefully before you contact the particular course co-ordinator to get further information.

The example of a self-assessment activity on page 16 of this booklet might be useful as guidance. However, self-assessment of your prior learning is simply an exercise to prepare for a formal application.

**16. How would I know if my prior certificated learning could be used to get into a DIT programme at an advanced stage?**

The DIT has a specific procedure for advanced entry to undergraduate programmes.

For details go to: <http://www.dit.ie/study/undergraduate/advancedentry/>

AND <http://www.dit.ie/study/undergraduate/advancedentry/>

AND <http://www.dit.ie/study/mature/>

AND <http://www.dit.ie/upskill/>

Some programmes offer applicants an opportunity to apply for module exemptions based on particular prior certificated learning, others do not.

It is best to check with the particular programme you have in mind.

**17. How would I know if I could use my prior certificated learning to transfer into a DIT programme from another DIT programme?**

There is information about procedures for transfer available at : <http://www.dit.ie/study/undergraduate/fetac/>

**18. How would I know if I could use my prior certificated learning to get exemptions from programme modules?**

Some programmes have arrangements in place to apply for module exemptions. These arrangements are generally included in the students' Programme Handbook.

It is best to enquire directly with the particular programme co-ordinator when you start your programme. The DIT does not process RPL applications for module exemption until an applicant is a registered student on a programme.

**19. When does my prior certificated learning go out of date?**

It depends: some learning, such as *latin*, or *algebra*, stay in date for a long time. Other learning, such as software design goes out of date very quickly. Applications for RPL are usually judged for their 'currency' or 'recency' of learning as well as other qualities. If your learning is quite old and you have not kept it up-to-date it might be wise not to look for module exemptions!

**20. Would I need certificates to prove my prior certificated learning?**

Generally Yes! If you have lost your certificate you might be able to get transcripts of examination results, or a formal letter from the awarding body instead. However, it is best to check the requirements of the receiving programme in this regard.

**21. Would I need examination results as evidence?**

Frequently Yes! especially if you are seeking advanced entry or transfer. In general you need to show your capacity to succeed and benefit from being offered a place at advanced entry or through transfer.

**22. Would I need detailed information about the courses I have successfully completed such as a syllabus or handbook?**

Frequently Yes!

**23. If I have no certificates would a letter do and whose letters might be acceptable?**

Sometimes, as 20 above.

**24. If I got my certificates in another country how could I use RPL?**

Certificates from other countries are generally measured against databases of known awards such as the NARIC system or Qualifications Recognition. Other countries may not use similar descriptions of awards as we do, so do not be surprised if a foreign qualification seems more or less valuable than a similar Irish award.

The Diploma Supplement is frequently used to present information about prior formal learning.

**25. Will I get the same number of credits for RPL as I got for my prior course?**

It depends. If you are using RPL for transfer within DIT programmes you may get the same number of RPL transfer credits but this may vary from programme to programme.

You may also get the same number if there are arrangements between the DIT and other institutions for this precise purpose.

However, it may be the case that very little of your prior learning is of relevance to the new programme, and in such a case, you may get very few, or perhaps no, RPL credits.

**26. Who decides the number of RPL credits I get for my prior certificated learning?**

Each DIT programme decides about RPL credits separately, and generally keeps a record of past decisions to guide current and future decisions. Outside agents or negotiators are not used in processing RPL in the DIT.

**27. Can I appeal a decision about RPL credits and apply again?**

You can appeal an RPL decision on the grounds that you did not have all the necessary documentation required at the time of application but you now have them.

**28. Would I have to be examined again for RPL if I have certificates?**

Unlikely! But you may be required to attend an interview or to make a case in writing.

**29. How is RPL recorded on my examination record?**

In general RPL does not result in grades, but it may do so on programmes with this particular procedure in place.

If you accept RPL credits or module exemptions you should understand the impact it might make on your final assessment results and award classification. It is best to discuss this with the programme Co-ordinator.

It may be the case that your academic record will show that you accepted RPL credits and/or module exemptions.

**30. How is RPL graded for classification of awards?**

Generally prior certificated learning is not re-graded for RPL or award classification purposes.

Generally RPL on the basis of prior experiential learning is not graded either, but it may be in programmes where there are specific arrangements for the process. This kind of information should be in your Programme Handbook. If not, ask your programme Co-ordinator.

**31. Would I be better off taking a module instead of accepting RPL if it affects my final grade or award classification?**

It is best to fully consider the implications of RPL for award classification before accepting any exemptions.

**32. Is there a cost for RPL by certificated learning?**

At present the cost is subsumed in the cost of processing your application. But this may change in the future. However, payment for an RPL process cannot in any way be interpreted as payment for credits or exemptions. Programme fees are generally paid on an annual or half-yearly basis, so it might not be possible to offer fee reductions per module.

**33. How long might an RPL process take for a module exemption based on certificated learning?**

This is generally a very quick process taking days rather than weeks. Be prepared to attend an interview if required.

#### **34. What is my responsibility in making an RPL claim through certificated learning?**

You, as applicant, are generally responsible for the entire application, including supplying the correct certificates, letters, examination results etc. though you may be given directions regarding what is required. The DIT does not use the services of external agents in preparation or processing of RPL applications.

#### **35. How would I prove that I have learned from work and life experience in an RPL claim?**

The particular programme applications procedure/RPL procedure should indicate what is involved for you to prove your prior experiential learning. You may be required to make a written application only, or a mix of written application, interview, presentation, etc.. In some cases you may be offered a challenge test. Please do not be surprised if you are required to prove your learning in several ways as the DIT is keen that you have the capacity to succeed and that you have sufficient learning outcomes to merit entry, advanced entry, or module exemptions.

#### **36. What kinds of APEL evidence might I offer as proof of appropriate learning?**

You are likely to be required to provide authentic documents, products, artefacts, publication, letter of support etc.. You should be given specific advice on the size and content of the application required and the nature of the evidence you should include.

#### **37. Who might guide me through the APEL process?**

It is likely that you will receive sufficient guidance from the programme co-ordinator or from the Admissions Office. If a specific application form is required it will be made available to you, generally on the DIT website.

#### **38. How long would it take from application to decision?**

Applications are generally processed in good time for start dates of programmes and modules. The more time you give yourself to prepare your application the better for yourself. So apply in good time.

#### **39. How much does an RPL application cost?**

Currently there is no cost separate fee for an RPL application other than any normal application fee. This may change in the future.

#### **40. What are the risks and benefits of accepting APEL credits or module exemptions?**

There are generally two risks as follows:

- Risk 1:* If you accept module exemptions you may miss out on important learning.
- Risk 2:* If you accept module exemptions at award stage you may not have them included in calculation of your final award classification.

The main benefits are:

- Benefit 1:* You do not need to learn again what you already know
- Benefit 2:* You get more time to devote to other parts of the programme
- Benefit 3:* You may not need to attend class so often
- Benefit 4:* If the DIT moves to paying fees per module in the future, you could have a smaller overall fee for your programme. However, this is not the case at the moment.

#### **41. What is the difference between entry by RPL and non-standard entry?**

RPL is the process of making a judgement on the value of prior learning.

Non-standard entry is the process of applying for a place on a programme where the applicant does not have the usual prior qualifications/certificates required as 'standard' but who can provide evidence of 'equivalent' learning as well as evidence of the capacity to succeed on the programme.

#### **42. Can I use RPL to gain entry to post-graduate programmes?**

Prior learning can be used in what is called 'exceptional case' entry to postgraduate programmes. It may be the case that the applicant has a Diploma but may not have had the opportunity to gain a degree - perhaps there was no degree at the time of award – and has significant work-based learning since graduating.

It may be the case that an applicant has a pass degree but not the honours degree required for 'normal' entry and has gained valuable work-related learning since graduating.

In both these cases a combination of APCL and APEL may be used to decide if an applicant gains entry. However, it is up to the receiving programme team to decide the entry requirements.

Non-standard applicants may be required to demonstrate their capacity to succeed and benefit from being offered a place on a post-graduate programme, usually through an interview, and perhaps through completion of a 'qualifier' activity.

Each postgraduate programme has its own specified entry requirements, though holding an honours degree with at least a second class honours classification is normal.

#### **43. Can I apply for RPL at postgraduate level?**

It is not usual for RPL module exemptions to be offered at postgraduate level, though it may be the case that an applicant has a doctoral level qualification that would justify an exemption, and where the specific programme/s permit it.

#### **44. Can I apply for RPL at an award stage?**

This will depend on the specific regulations and conditions for each programme or award.

#### **45. Can I apply for a whole DIT award by RPL?**

Theoretically, an application for a whole award is possible, but rare. In any case, an application for a full DIT award by RPL will normally involve at least one year's registration and successful completion of a process which clearly proves achievement of the learning outcomes for the award.

There is an existing arrangement for a PhD by Publications, which could be described as RPL, which involves one year's registration and an agreed work schedule.

#### **46. How might I self-assess myself for my prior certificated learning?**

The criteria for assessment of prior certificated learning normally includes the following:

- a. Relevance of the title of the award
- b. Equivalence of the award as determined in accepted databases
- c. Appropriate level on frameworks of qualifications
- d. Years of study involved
- e. Relevance of learning outcomes to the receiving programme
- f. Relevance of the syllabus
- g. Completion of a research project or thesis
- h. Relevance of literature covered
- i. Types and outcomes of examinations as recorded in transcript of results
- j. Professional recognition of the award where relevant
- k. Status of the awarding institution
- l. Diploma Supplement record.

#### **47. Where might I see a sample of APEL evidence for a DIT module?**

Programmes which offer advanced entry usually indicate the type of prior learning evidence they require in their Student Handbook.

If you are applying for a module exemption on your programme you will be given sufficient information to put together the appropriate evidence. The type of evidence required will vary from module to module.

#### **48. What assessment criteria are used for APEL assessment activities?**

It is general practice that there are common criteria for prior experiential learning such as:

*Authenticity:* it is genuinely your own learning evidence

*Sufficiency:* there is sufficient learning to 'match' the volume of learning required

*Relevance:* the learning is relevant to the learning outcomes of the receiving programme

*Currency:* the learning is not out of date

*Validity:* the learning can be proven with evidence or demonstrated in an RPL task.

Additionally a programme team may use other assessment criteria specific to the particular module or stage. It is best to request these criteria directly from the programme team as criteria are likely to vary from programme to programme.

#### **49. What happens at an RPL interview?**

If you are applying for module exemptions the RPL interview team will probably use the opportunity to discuss your evidence of learning with you in relation to your RPL claim.

If you are using RPL for entry or transfer purposes the interview team will wish to establish that your evidence is sufficient, relevant and valid, and that you have the capacity to succeed on the programme and to benefit from being offered a place.

#### **50. How is RPL shown on the Diploma Supplement?**

The DIT is developing its Diploma Supplement and RPL exemptions may be indicated on it together with other standard information.

**Note:** The responses to the frequently asked questions above are for general information only and do not represent a contract.

## SAMPLE SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY IN RELATION TO A PROGRAMME MODULE

DIT Programme using this module	Multiple usages across programmes
Module Title	<b>Introduction to Business Finance</b>
Module Level	<b>6</b>
ECTS credits (5 credits = 100 hours notional learning effort)	<b>5</b>

Select the self-assessment responses that best match your prior learning in relation to the 7 learning outcomes below.

Module Learning Outcomes <i>On completion of this module the learner should be able to...</i>	I have learned this through my former studies or working career and can provide paper evidence/ documents/ certificates	I know most of this but I have no paper evidence	I am willing to complete a task or assignment to show I have learned this (example below)	I really need to take the module
1. Explain the importance of financial management within a business environment				
2. Record basis business transactions and produce final accounts				
3. Evaluate accounts within the context of performance evaluation				
4. Describe the relationship between costing, pricing, cash and profit				
5. Prepare basic budgets and budget projections, and carry out simple variance analysis				
6. Carry out bank reconciliation and stock variation exercises				
7. Discuss the underlying principles of investment appraisal				

Types of RPL evidence you might consider for this module: your CV, job descriptions, work responsibilities in relation to the outcomes, training courses attended, certificates gained, awards, reports you produced yourself or with others, letters of commendation, examples of documents produced/completed, etc.

### Sample task/assignment to show prior learning in relation to the 7 learning outcomes for the module.

Write and submit a **1,000 word report** using the headings below the timescale agreed:

#### **Report Title: The Key Elements of Business Finance**

*Recommended headings/sections:*

1. The importance of good financial management in a small/medium enterprise
2. How best to manage cash flow, overheads and investment of profits
3. How best to monitor finances on a day-to-day basis
4. How best to maintain competitiveness through knowledge of investment opportunities.

#### **Format of the Report:**

Font: Times New Roman  
 Spacing: 1.5 line spacing  
 Pagination: Page numbers at foot and centred  
 Printing: One side only  
 Cover page: Author's name, Date, Programme Title and Module Title concerned in the RPL application  
 Page header: As details on cover page  
 Paper: White  
 Binding: No binding required: Staple at top left-hand corner only.



