



TEAGASC
Recognition of Prior Learning
Policy and Protocol

Version – 1.3

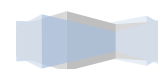
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Introduction

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Teagasc is a process by which prior learning is formally identified, assessed and acknowledged.

RPL Definitions

RPL- Recognition of Prior Learning

“Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) incorporates prior formal, informal and non-formal learning and that which is validated within the context of a specified destination award from Level one to ten on the national framework of qualifications (p.3, European Commission, Cedefop, ICF International; 2014).

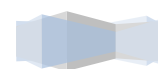
Teagasc understand that Prior Learning is learning which has taken place prior to admission to a programme.

Types of Learning

Formal Learning- this is learning which took place in a formal education setting through a course of study on an accredited programme/award.

Informal Learning- this is learning which was intentional in that it was structured and took place parallel to mainstream education e.g. work experience, community based/voluntary work. Informal learning was typically not certified.

Non-Formal Learning- this is non-intentional learning which was not-organised/structured. The learning took place through life and work experiences and is often referred to as experiential learning. Non-formal learning is not certified.



What is the Purpose of RPL

RPL in Teagasc programmes is used for the following purposes:

- to enable applicants to gain entry to Teagasc programmes
- to enable applicants to gain exemption from components of a Teagasc programme (exemptions will not normally be granted for parts of a component)
- to enable applicants to gain eligibility for a QQI award associated with a Teagasc programme
- to enable the issuing of letters of equivalence for awards not listed by Revenue/DAFM for the purposes of Young Trained Farmer status.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes provide the core structure for certified/accredited learning. A learning outcome defines a learner's ability in terms of knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies. It identifies what the learner knows and can do at a particular standard/level as a result of their (prior) learning.

Teagasc RPL Policy Principles:

- In applying RPL, Teagasc is committed to ensure that the integrity of its programmes and related QQI awards is rigorously guarded and that standards of knowledge, skill and competence are achieved. The learning achieved by an RPL applicant must be equivalent to the learning outcomes and performance criteria set down for the Teagasc programme of study.
- Teagasc will endeavour to provide applicants with information on the full range of course modules, course programmes including learning outcomes and awards associated with a Teagasc course/programme. Teagasc will mentor applicants through the application process and support them in the application.
- In applying for RPL, the applicant must provide written evidence of prior learning or through the most appropriate mode for the relevant learning outcome.
- Time limits may be applied in terms of assessing the currency of prior learning.
- Recognition for learning is usually given:
 - For complete modules/components only
 - Where ALL or 70% of the learning outcomes are achieved
 - Up to a maximum of 50% of the total credits for a Teagasc programme

RPL applicants may only be given exemption for entire modules/components, not for parts of modules/components. Exemptions will not normally be granted for parts of a component.

The focus of RPL is the learning which has occurred and evidence of same. Applications for exemptions/credits from components of the programme must be complete. Incomplete applications cannot be processed.



RPL Process

The process of RPL in Teagasc will involve:

1. Applicants contact Teagasc staff following admission to a programme or securing a place on a programme.
2. The Teagasc RPL mentor will provide the potential applicant with the RPL application form/associated (including Stage 1 and stage 2 documentation) and outline the RPL policy and practice.
3. The applicant identifies the programme/component for which they are seeking RPL and completes the required application form and submits the completed application form, fee and the required documentation:
 - a. For Certified Learning: required documentation includes copies of awards, official transcripts of results, course syllabus and course descriptors
 - b. For Experiential Learning: required documentation includes a portfolio which shows evidence that the learning outcomes have been achieved through written/practical assessments, assignments and oral presentations as appropriate.
4. The RPL application will then be reviewed within a reasonable time frame and an adjudication made to determine if the learning outcomes have been achieved by the learner
5. The learner will be informed of the outcome of the RPL process by written communication.
6. Where an applicant opts to take additional assessments in order to meet with award requirements, they will be provided with workbooks/resources as study guides for the assessments. The amount of course work to be completed will determine the course fee to be paid to the training centre/college.
7. Components exempted from or credited towards requirements of the award/programme will only be credited at basic (pass) level.

Determining Eligibility for RPL

To be eligible to avail of RPL, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- (a) Be the holder of a further or higher education and training award at the appropriate level on the National Framework of Qualifications or have at least three years direct relevant prior learning work experience
- (c) Show commitment to undertake the process of RPL
- (d) Show ability to achieve the assessments in a reasonable time frame
- (e) Be prepared to take the appropriate assessments
- (f) Attend specified coursework
- (i) Be prepared to work with a designated tutor.



External Authentication

All RPL adjudications will be subject to approval of the dedicated external authenticators in accordance with QQI Assessment Policy.

Review Process

Where an applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the RPL adjudication, they can submit a request for a review clearly stating the basis for the appeal. Further details are available from the Teagasc RPL mentor.

Updates

The Teagasc RPL Policy and Practice is subject to change in accordance with Teagasc education policies and to comply with best practice in RPL.

