

RPL

NCAD Policy and Practices

1/1/2013

## **RPL POLICY AND PRACTICE**

### **Contents**

<b>What is RPL?</b>	<b>P.2</b>
<b>Admissions year one undergraduate</b>	<b>p.3</b>
<b>Enquiries and applications</b>	<b>p.4</b>
<b>Post Graduate and RPL</b>	<b>p.7</b>

## **NCAD Recognising Prior Learning (RPL) Guidelines and Approach**

### **Introduction**

#### **What is RPL?**

*“Accreditation and Recognition of Prior learning is a process for assessing and as the standard is reached, recognising prior experiential learning or prior certified learning. The process for presenting prior learning for recognition typically involves describing experiences, reflecting on those experiences, identifying the learning associated with the experiences and defining this learning in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. This makes it possible for an individual to build on learning achieved and to be formally rewarded for it within the NFQ. Recognition occurs when the learner has demonstrated the learning has taken place.”(Sheridan, Linehan, 2009 p.45)*

#### **TERMS**

**There are many terms used to describe recognising of prior learning and experience, see below:**

(RPL= Recognised Prior Learning, Recognised Prior Experiential Learning=APEL, Accreditation of prior **experiential -or certified- learning**, APL, Accreditation of prior learning, also recognising informal and work based learning)

#### **Why is RPL important?**

An RPL approach and policy is linked to transfer and progression policies within and across third level and the university sector. RPL is used by students who want to have certified learning or learning acquired through work, and life experience recognised for; access into a programme, for advanced entry into a programme or for a full award validation at a particular level.

Recognising **Certified Learning** can be more straight-forward, this is a formal mechanism which establishes which qualifications are recognised for access into and those that are recognised for advanced entry.

Where exemption is awarded there are implications in terms of cost, as a student may not have to take all modules within a year. Equally there may be cost incurred by students seeking rpl portfolio recognition where this involves a team reviewing an application

#### **Categories where RPL applies:**

- Non-standard students who do not meet minimum academic entry requirements through the LC, FETAC or other recognised school leaving exams (Matriculation requirements are set by the NUI) ).

Non-Standard Students include:

- Students who are aged 23 by the 1<sup>st</sup> of January the year they wish to commence their studies (Mature Students)

- Students who are not yet mature and who are not current or previous years school leavers.

Non-standard students are asked to submit details on their prior learning, for example; CEAD-NCAD courses, NCAD access and other third level Access or Foundation courses, City & Guilds etc. . They are also asked to provide details on any relevant prior work or other experiences which may have a bearing on the assessment of their application.

- Postgraduate applicants who have not achieved the required standard at undergraduate level.

**Admissions and Year One:** As per College Prospectus see [www.ncad.ie](http://www.ncad.ie)

All Year 1 applications from EU students must be made through the Central Applications Office (CAO [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)).

Year 1 applicants to studio based programmes must submit a portfolio according to the relevant NCAD Portfolio guidelines. In the case of Product Design all applicants are invited to attend the College for interview and asked to bring a portfolio of work with them. Portfolios/and interviews are scored and offers are made, based on the portfolio/interview score, to applicants who meet minimum academic entry requirements. Nonstandard applicants who achieve a sufficient portfolio/interview score to warrant an offer but who do not otherwise meet minimum academic entry requirements are asked to furnish additional information on their previous learning (credited and non-credited) and on their experiential learning. Non-standard applicants to non-studio based programmes are invited to submit information on their previous learning (credited and non-credited) and on their experiential learning and may be invited to attend for interview.

Applications to matriculate based on RPL are considered by the NCAD Undergraduate Admissions Committee. The College reserves the right to interview such students. The list of students recommended for matriculation through this process is approved by the NCAD Academic Council and then noted at the NCAD UCD Joint Academic Programme Board.

### **Admissions Year 2 + (Advanced Entry)**

NCAD considers applications from candidates who wish to gain Advanced Entry to the second or subsequent year of an undergraduate degree. Applications are not normally considered for the final year of a programme.

Advanced Entry applications are made directly to NCAD on the direct entry Application Form. On the form applicants are asked to indicate the year and programme they are applying into and to provide details of previous education including School Leaving exams as well as any Further or Higher Education completed. Applicants are also asked to provide details of any previous work or other

experience that may be relevant to the programme they are applying for and asked to provide a reference from a tutor or other person.

Each application is reviewed to establish if the applicant has, through previous study or relevant work experience, met the learning outcomes appropriate for the degree stage that is being applied into. Applicants who are shortlisted will be asked to attend for interview and to bring a portfolio of work with them.

Applications to matriculate based on RPL are considered by the NCAD Undergraduate Admissions Committee. The list of students recommended for matriculation through this process is approved by the NCAD Academic Council and then noted at the NCAD UCD Joint Academic Programme Board.

## **SECTION 1**

### **RPL Enquiries and Application process**

#### **Student makes an inquiry, applies, submits required material/portfolio and comes to interview**

- *Contact admission office,*
- *Appropriate Information regarding RPL is made available to student inquiring,*
- *Student establishes whether they meet the criteria, and whether they are eligible to proceed to the next stage,*
- *Student sends required application information to the Admissions Office. ,*
- *Process is set in place to review submission based on established criteria,*
- *Outcome of the process is recorded by admissions, student is informed of outcome.*

*Application procedures and deadlines are set out in the NCAD Prospectus and on the NCAD web site.*

### **RPL Submission Process**

- Apply, (for recognition of Certified **and or** Experiential learning)
- Studio Based Programmes - Submit Portfolio(this is a visual, process based portfolio) the student can also submit other material relevant to discipline area,
- In some areas students will also be required to submit a written CV or samples of written work.
- Student completes an RPL application using the appropriate form Advanced Entry / Mature /Non-Standard / Postgraduate
- Students participate in interview with programme/departmental staff,

- Staff assess the submission and establish whether it meets the module or stage learning outcomes, and the agreed RPL criteria

*\* Details of portfolio submission requirements available on request,*

### **How does RPL work?**

#### **Criteria for assessing applications**

It is important to distinguish between recognising certified learning and experiential and informal learning. NCAD recognises both certified and experiential learning.

<b>The college applies the following criteria when assessing RPL submissions:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>CURRENT:</b>  That the learning material presented for RPL is recent and current ( a guideline of five years is in place to establish currency of material)</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>RELEVANT</b>  Relevant to current context and is applicable,</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>AUTHENTIC</b>  Authentic, Reliable: Student has supplied material and there is verification of the authenticity of the material being presented as the work of the student.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>VALID</b>  The material submitted should meet the learning outcomes/ or is equivalent to the learning outcomes/assessment, at the level as stated within college programmes.</li></ul>
<b>Students should keep in mind that “Experience is not what is being evaluated but learning”.</b>

The template below acts as a guideline for students to complete when submitting RPL application based on EXPERIENTIAL learning. Students will be offered support and guidance in the completion of this template

---

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describe the main areas of work (art or design practice) you have been engaged in</i></li> </ul>	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describe activities you have learned from experience,</i></li> </ul>	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describe the kind of knowledge gained from experience,</i></li> </ul>	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What can you do having learned from experience,</i></li> </ul>	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describe skills learned from experience,</i></li> </ul>	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describe problems have you have solved and how you achieved this</i></li> </ul>	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Outline your motivation for returning to education why you are applying for this course?</i></li> </ul>	•

---

## SECTION 2

Below are guidelines for RPL within under-graduate programmes across Faculty and Departments at NCAD. This information is in addition to the general guidelines on Advanced Entry given above.

### Faculty of Education

- *The maximum ECTS credits to be waived in a year is; 20 ects.*
- **Year 2;**
- **Students outside of NCAD** will have the opportunity to apply to year 2 as advanced entry. As the Education programme is a joint course, then agreement with studio departments on advanced entry student's applications is required. Submissions will be jointly assessed.
- *Where students transfer into year two they should indicate if they have undertaken any voluntary work experience that has contributed to their learning such as working in youth community and informal learning situations. Transcript of results from other institutions will be required where student is coming from an established under graduate course.*

- *Students transferring into year 2 should have 60 ects and meet the learning outcomes for year one of the undergraduate programme at NCAD.*
- **Year 3.**
- *Students will have the opportunity to transfer into year 3 but application is on a case by case basis, again as this is a joint degree course agreement from other departments is necessary for applications. Students will have to meet teaching council requirements. Students will be required to submit portfolio, come to interview.*
- *Applicants should pay attention to teaching council requirements. There are issues of legacy awards, particularly where mature students RPL applications are being considered that require attention.*

### **Faculty of DESIGN**

#### **Year 2**

The Faculty of Design accepts advanced entry to year 2, students applying will have to demonstrate they meet the learning outcomes for year one of the undergraduate degree, and submit a portfolio, RPL application and CV. Students are also required to attend an interview.

#### **Year 3**

The Faculty of Design accepts advanced entry to year 3, students applying will have to demonstrate they meet the learning outcomes for year two of the undergraduate degree, and submit a portfolio, RPL application and CV. Students are also required to attend an interview.

### **Faculty of FINE ART**

#### **Painting**

#### **Year 2**

Painting accepts advanced entry to year 2, students applying will have to meet the learning outcomes for year one of the under-graduate degree, submit a portfolio, RPL application and CV. Students are also required to attend for interview.

In individual cases where students have served an apprenticeship with an artist, worked in a museum, gallery, cultural centre, then this experience and learning could enhance and inform the application process.

#### **Year 3**

Access as advanced entry to year 3 is on a case by case basis and students should submit a portfolio, RPL application, CV and come to interview. Students should meet the learning outcomes for year 2 of the under graduate programme.



## SECTION 3 POST GRADUATE RPL

NCAD welcomes RPL application to PG programmes, the process and criteria are set out below

- *Students should submit a process portfolio, a CV demonstrating key knowledge, skills learning and their relevance to the subject area with particular emphasis on contemporary practice for studio disciplines. Students are also required come to interview and, in some instances students may be required to undertake a qualifier project. Students applying to PG NCAD from cognate disciplines should ensure that learning is transferable and relevant to the subject domain.*
- *At Post-graduate level there is recognition of certified learning, including recognition of qualifications in cognate areas. Applicants who intend to submit applications for experiential learning who want to access L9 programmes should meet the programme outcomes for L8 or demonstrate equivalent learning through portfolio, application, CV and interview.*
- *RPL applications for PG programmes, requires that students can demonstrate the capacity to sustain a research project and written components within such, suitable for L9.*
- *Applications are reviewed through Higher Awards committee,*

### **Criteria for assessing applications**

<b>The college applies the following criteria when assessing RPL submissions:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CURRENT:</b>  That the learning material presented for RPL is recent and current (material that is more than 5 years old will need to be reviewed by Hof AA)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>RELEVANT</b>  Relevant to current context and is applicable,</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>AUTHENTIC</b>  Authentic, Reliable: Student has supplied material and there is verification of the authenticity of the material being presented as the work of the student.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>VALID</b>  The material submitted should meet the learning outcomes/ or is equivalent to the learning outcomes/assessment, at the level as stated within college programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>Students should keep in mind that “Experience is not what is being evaluated but learning”.</b>