

# Recognition of Prior Learning

Deirdre Goggin  
DEIS

# Overview of RPL

- What is RPL?
  - *RPL is when the Institute recognises or accredits the learning an individual has already achieved prior to commencing a programme or module.*
  - *In CIT comparison is made with the learning outcomes of a module.*
  - *The focus is on learning and not on experience per se.*
  - *Two types of learning – prior certificated and prior experiential*

## Prior certificated – Formal Learning

- Formal learning –learning takes place in a higher education institution. Pre-defined outcomes become the basis of the learning and assessment. Learner, in general, receives academic credits.

## Prior Experiential – Informal Learning

- Informal – Learning isn't planned. Activities, generally in the workplace, are undertaken which result in in-depth learning about a particular topic. Therefore, it could be said to be competence-based as opposed to outcome-based as in formal learning.

## Prior Experiential – Non Formal learning

- Non-Formal: Learning which has occurred in a planned but adaptable way. The learning is mediated. However the reason for taking on the learning is entirely intrinsic to the learner. An example of this may be learning from a continuing education programme in a local community school.

# Prior Experiential learning

- Prior learning measured against the learning outcomes of the module
- Written explanation by the learner as to their understanding of the learning outcomes of a module
- Evidence supplied must support the learning outlined
- Institute accredits learning

## CIT policy and procedures

- RPL has existed within CIT for past 13 years
- RPL Policy 2006 which has been recently updated
- Applicable to all CIT programmes (full time and part time).
- Applicable at all stages of a programme
- New policy is in keeping with national and international approaches to RPL

# Certificated Learning

- Learning which has already been formally accredited in CIT or another academic institution
- In a non-award year of a programme, there is no upper limit to the number of modules which may be applied for using prior certificated learning
- In an award year, the limit is set at 20 out of the 60 credits which may be achieved through prior certificated learning
- Exemptions are granted and the credit which has been achieved recognised but no new credit awarded.
- Overall grade of the award based on the modules assessed and graded.

# Prior Certificated Learning

- Compare to module learning outcomes using
  - Syllabus of prior learning
  - Transcript of results
  - Examination papers
  - NQAI – International qualifications recognition database [www.qualrec.ie](http://www.qualrec.ie)

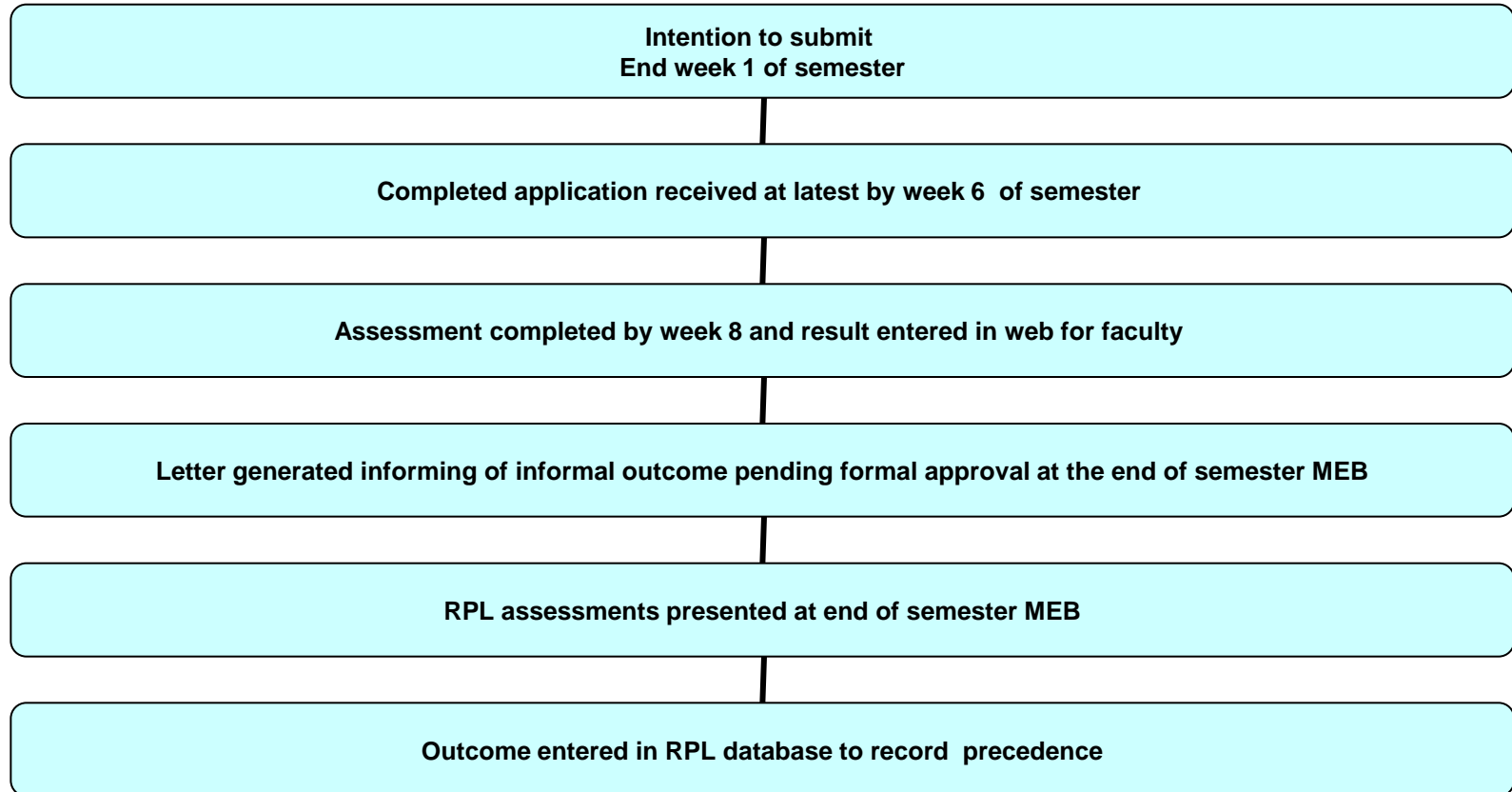
# Experiential Learning

- Under the new RPL policy there is no limit to the number of modules which may be achieved based on prior experiential (informal/non-formal) learning
- A full award may be achieved based on prior experiential learning
- Grades and credits are awarded for this learning
- Overall grade of the award includes contribution from this learning

# Combination Cases

- It is possible for a student to base their submission on a combination of prior certificated and experiential learning
- Full module fee will apply
- Exemption only will be granted

# Flowchart of process



# Implications

- Intention to submit is earlier in the semester
- Deadline for receipt of applications to guarantee result in that semester is set at week 6
- Applications may be received outside of these deadlines however the applicant is informed of the implications of doing so
- Speed up the process

## Staff information

- Intention to submit and application must be received by week 6 in a semester for guaranteed assessment in that semester
- Result to be entered in web for faculty and email/ letter informing student of provisional result by the module coordinator
- RPL results presented along with other students at MEB at the end of the semester
- Portfolio retained with all other examination material for the extern examiner
- Additional information on the policy, procedures and supporting documentation is available on Gateway under 'student recruitment and access'

# Student

- Onus is on the student to:
  - discuss the basis of their application with their module lecturer, course co-ordinator, Head of Department
  - register for the module(s) and they are advised of the implications if they don't
  - prepare the application and provide appropriate evidence. (Guidance is provided on how to construct a portfolio and what is expected in the application)
  - adhere to the deadlines

# RPL- looking forward

- Attracting students to CIT
- Advanced entry and non standard entry
- Statistics of RPL in CIT over the past number of years and how it has evolved and expanded
- Case Studies

# RPL cases

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Number of Portfolios</b> |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 2001/02     | 82                          |
| 2002/03     | 85                          |
| 2003/04     | 87                          |
| 2004/05     | 142                         |
| 2005/06     | 284                         |
| 2006/07     | 308                         |
| 2007/08     | 330                         |
| 2008/09     | 531                         |
| 2009/10     | 502                         |
| 2010/11     | 589                         |