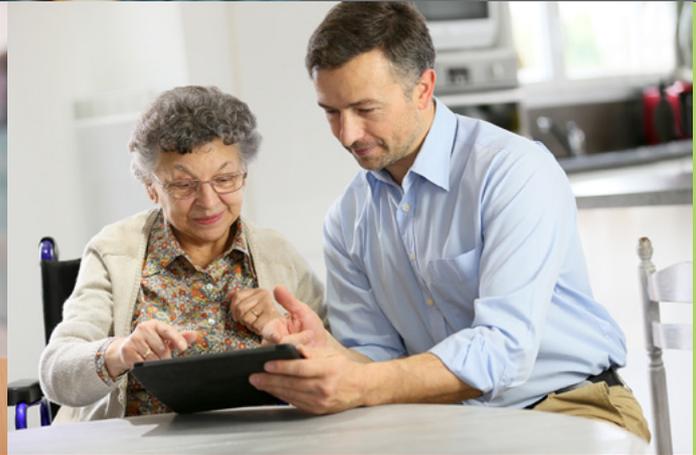


RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (FET)



TOOLKIT FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

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FOREWORD

Skills are the engine of modern economies. For individuals, skills offer routes to improved personal and working lives. However, formal learning is often more valued than informal or non-formal learning as a pathway to skills development. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) opens a gateway to recognising learning which takes place in the home, in the workplace, and in wider social contexts.

Over two years ago, Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB), working in partnership with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (ETB), embarked on a project to develop an alternative accelerated route to qualifications, initially for health care workers, using RPL as the mechanism to ensure their experience was recognised, validated and certified. The overall ambition was to embed RPL as a key process in Donegal ETB and share the outcomes of the project with the wider FET sector.

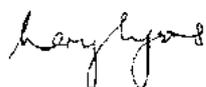
Over 200 people working in the healthcare and financial sectors have now benefited from the Validating Competencies of Care Sector project which is supported by the Skills to Advance Innovation through Collaboration Fund. This toolkit provides a range of resources for the RPL process which was developed through the project. These include publicity material, guidance for participants, briefs and tasks for portfolio building and assessment templates to guide the process.

It is envisaged that the toolkit will be used by ETB personnel in the role of mentors, and a dedicated professional development opportunity has been created in conjunction with Atlantic Technological University to support capacity building across the further education and training sector, as a key feature of the project.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the project team, led by Martina Needham, Adult Education Officer, Donegal ETB with the direction of Cróna Gallagher, Director of Further Education and Training in Donegal ETB, ably assisted by colleagues in Limerick and Clare ETB led by Triona Lynch, Adult Education Officer, Limerick and Clare ETB. Partnership with key businesses in the care and financial sectors was integral to the success of the project. And special thanks to all those employees who took that first step towards qualification, using RPL.

SOLAS welcomes this innovative work to establish structured processes and systems to facilitate lifelong pathways through further education and training. The collaborative nature of the development process highlights the increased potential for innovation when partnerships are created, as in this project which successfully linked with higher education and enterprise partners. The RPL route is attractive to employers as a means of enhancing productivity and retaining staff. It will also attract new cohorts previously unaware that they could access flexible accreditation and upskilling opportunities from their local ETB to help them advance in work.

I look forward to the widespread application of this toolkit – it has the potential to benefit a wide range of workers and their employers, as well as transforming access to further education and training.



Mary Lyons

Director, Enterprise, Employees and Skills

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit would not have been developed without the inspiration, encouragement and help of many people.

The students/learners of Donegal ETB and Limerick and Clare ETB who demonstrated that skills gained through experiential and workplace learning warranted the recognition that validation on the National Framework of Qualifications conferred.

The RPL mentors and assessors whose work informed and influenced the development of this toolkit.

The FET staff from Donegal ETB and Limerick and Clare ETB who participated in the Level 9 Special Purpose Award in Recognition of Prior Learning.

Martina Needham, Siobhan Murray, Teresa Kealy and Margaret Timoney for contributing to the content.

Deirdre Goggin, Cork Institute of Technology.

Andrina Wafer, Walter Balfe, Collette Harrison and Maria McLoughlin, Qualifications and Quality Ireland (QQI) for their support and guidance.

SOLAS for funding the VCCSE project through the Innovation through Collaboration Fund under Skills to Advance.

We acknowledge their valuable support, feedback and contribution.

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INTRODUCTION

This Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) toolkit has been developed by the Further Education and Training (FET) Service of Donegal Education and Training Board and the Further Education and Training (FET) Division of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board as part of the Validating Competencies of Care Sector Employees (VCCSE) SOLAS funded collaborative project.

The focus of the VCCSE project was to validate knowledge, skills and competencies gained through workplace learning and experience rather than learning gained through attending formal classes. For many, learning by doing is a more meaningful way to absorb and process information. It is instinctive learning that does not perish quickly. The focus of this toolkit is the resources developed to support VCCSE participants map their skills, knowledge and competencies against standards on the National Framework of Qualifications.

The staff who developed these resources did so by combining expertise gained through successful participation in the Level 9 Special Purpose Award in RPL delivered by Letterkenny Institute of Technology with their hands-on experience of promoting and implementing the RPL process for applicants.

The toolkit explains the RPL process and provides an outline of the roles and responsibilities of the RPL core provision staff (coordinator, mentor, assessor) who support the RPL applicant navigate the different stages of the process. This toolkit also has information and handouts relevant to the applicant.

The handouts and templates that are provided in the appendices can be copied for learners, mentors and assessors. The examples provided offer a starting point to support the preparation of RPL assessment tools for other awards / qualifications. In the report, Recognition of Prior Learning in Irish Further Education and Training (FET) prepared by Deirdre Goggin, Phil O'Leary and Prof. Irene Sheridan of Cork Institute of Technology in 2017, the foreword by Andrina Wafer, QQI describes RPL as "a phrase as redolent with promise and expectation as it is with anxiety and frustration". We hope that this toolkit will go some way to supporting the FET Sector to build on the promise while alleviating any anxiety or frustration that surrounds the implementation of the RPL process.

Cróna Gallagher

Director of FET
Donegal ETB.

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1. WHAT IS RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process that validates skills, knowledge and competencies gained through all forms of learning ('all learning').

1.1 What do we mean by 'all learning'?

Learning is not confined to the formal school / course setting and does not cease after school, or a course has finished. Learning continues throughout life and the acquisition of skills, knowledge and competencies takes place in many settings and through a range of different experiences. 'All learning' encompasses formal, non-formal and informal learning.

Formal Learning	Learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment. Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to validation and certification.
Non-Formal Learning	Learning which is embedded in planned activities. It is intentional from the learner's point of view but does not lead to certification.
Informal Learning	Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is, in most cases, unintentional from the learner's perspective.

The European Inventory on the Validation of Informal and Non-Formal Learning (VNFIL) defines RPL as a system that:

'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'

—
(European Commission, CEDEFOP, ICF International; 2014 p. 3).

The process of examining prior learning in the context of a destination award is about organising and structuring pre-existing learning against a set of outcomes that make up an award. The outcome of the process can:

- (i) support entry or access to a course or programme of learning.
- (ii) support submission of evidence for an award.

The approach recognises two types of prior learning – prior certified (RPCL) and prior experiential (RPEL)

1.2 Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL)

Prior Certified Learning is where a learner has already achieved certification through participation in a formal programme. RPCL can result in advanced entry to a programme or course of learning. Prior Certified Learning can be combined with experiential learning (RPEL) to support the acquisition of an award.

1.3 Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

Prior Experiential Learning is learning gained through experience, but has not been validated. RPEL is about asking the learner to demonstrate that the required standard of learning for either access or an award has been achieved.

1.4 RPL for access to a course

All programmes and courses of learning set out entry requirements. Entry requirements are essential in determining suitability for a course. RPL for access provides applicants who lack formal certification, an opportunity to have all learning considered. The process may involve some or all of the following: an interview, an aptitude test, or the completion of a skills demonstration. RPL for access and is commonly applied across the ETB FET sector.

1.5 RPL for an Award

The RPL process for an award is about facilitating learners to apply for an award, based on their prior learning. The learner or applicant will have to prepare and submit evidence to support their application. The applicant will be guided through the process to ensure that the evidence provided is mapped to the standard of learning as defined in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The NFQ defines standards as learning outcomes (LOs). This provides a transparent benchmark to validate all forms of learning (CEDEFOP 2009).

Most RPL applications for an award use a combination of RPCL and RPEL evidence. The process of collating and presenting evidence of learning involves the applicant producing a portfolio that demonstrates the knowledge, skills and competencies that have been achieved. Evidence presented must always map to the learning outcomes for the destination award. The portfolio of evidence is then internally assessed to determine if it is:

- Valid – does it measure what it is meant to measure?
- Authentic – is it the applicant’s own work?
- Sufficient – is the evidence presented appropriate to the level and award?
- Current – are the skills, knowledge and competencies claimed up to date?

The assessed evidence is then internally verified and externally authenticated in line with the quality assurance procedures that apply to taught programmes.

2. RPL IN A NATIONAL CONTEXT

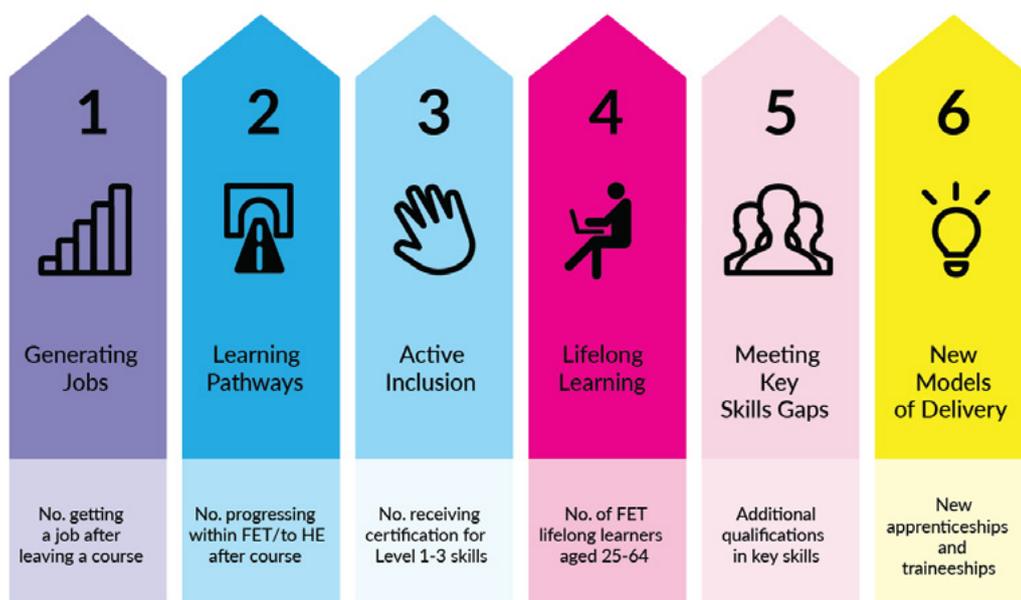
In 2005, the NQAI (National Qualifications Authority of Ireland) agreed national principles and operational guidelines for the recognition of prior learning in further and higher education. These guidelines identified RPL as an alternative pathway to qualifications that was essential in the promotion of lifelong learning. It established the ground rules for using RPL to gain recognition for prior learning.

In 2012, the European Council issued recommendations for VNFIL. Ireland responded with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (OIREACHTAS, 2012) which set out QQI's statutory obligation to RPL and, hence, the legal obligation of Further Education and Training Institutions (FET) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to clearly reference RPL for access, exemptions and awards (QQI, 2013, 2015). In 2013, QQI stated that RPL is a process that enables all learning to be mapped against defined standards. The National Skills Strategy (2021) states that "the use of RPL also needs to be promoted among practitioners and processes further developed at institution/provider level".

2.1 How does RPL fit with FET's Strategic aims?

The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2020-24 published by SOLAS in 2020, clearly states that FET should be accessible for everyone and that "sustained learning pathways where credits and qualifications can be built up over time" should be facilitated. The publication of this document in 2020, amidst the Covid-19 pandemic and with Brexit unfolding, highlighted the necessity for FET providers to be flexible and agile in responding to learning needs.

The six FET outcomes identified within the strategy are:



RPL is deeply embedded in each of these six learning outcomes and its relevance within FET was explicitly noted within the strategy.

“Recognition of prior learning (RPL) should also be an important feature. Although this can be a very resource-intensive process, ETBs are beginning to demonstrate that RPL can be delivered at significant scale, and the models that have been piloted should now be mainstreamed as this route into education and awards can be a real attribute and selling point for FET in the future.” (SOLAS 2020)

The FET Strategy 2021-2023 published in March 2021, sets out the Government vision for the Further and Higher education sectors. The mission of the Department of Further and Higher Education is stated as follows:

“Develop Ireland’s further and higher education systems to support people in reaching their full potential and to create value, prosperity, resilience and a cohesive, sustainable and vibrant society.”

RPL adopts the critical elements of this mission statement by:

- providing a supportive process to open up learning and employment pathways for everyone.
- promoting integration and diversity by reaching out to those in employment that have missed out on academic opportunities.
- connecting with other ETB providers and local HE institutions to encourage collaboration with staff and other learners developing expertise regionally and nationally.
- being inclusive and ensuring equality and respect for all involved in the process.

The RPL Process is an inclusive, integrated and holistic approach to engaging individuals in lifelong learning. It holds the individual at the centre of the process. It aims to support and scaffold the individual as they reflect on their formal and informal learning experiences to achieve academic progress.

3. THE BENEFITS OF RPL

3.1 Individuals

Individuals or groups can use RPL to support them to gain an award for skills they have acquired through experience, on the job training and mentoring and through their engagement in organisations and groups within their community.

The benefits of RPL for individuals are that it:

- provides an efficient route to an award as it avoids duplication of learning already achieved.
- validates or matches skills, knowledge and competence to an award. This, in turn, will improve mobility opportunities in the workplace.
- can be a positive first engagement with lifelong learning. It is a collaborative process that acknowledges that the learner's entry into FET is based on all their learning and not just the learning that is evidenced by a formal qualification.
- is a flexible route towards an award that does not require setting aside time to attend and participate in a course.
- integrates the lived experience of the learner and provides a mechanism that facilitates the learner to reflect on all their learning and structure it.
- increases self-confidence and self-worth.
- recognises skills.
- saves on tuition fees.
- increases engagement with lifelong learning.

Groups and individuals from these sectors have benefited from the RPL process:

- Financial
- Construction
- Healthcare
- Childcare
- Long-term unemployed
- Community and Voluntary



“I would definitely recommend the RPL programme to other Personal Assistants or carers who have experience but no qualifications. The support received from the mentor was exceptional – encouraging and providing feedback on drafts with clarity”

–

GL, 6 years as an experienced P.A.

“I decided to do it because I didn’t have all my qualifications. I wanted to do it to better myself. I didn’t have the opportunity to do it myself.”

–

M, 16 years as a care support worker

“This course has recognised the work that a lot of our care support team had done through the years, particularly older people that never had the confidence to do the paperwork and never thought they could do it and now they see that they can. I have seen their confidence grow.”

–

NH, Director of Nursing

“It can be embarrassing to say that you don’t have any qualifications, you just have work experience. So I like the thought of having my qualifications to show that I’m qualified to do the job that I’m doing”

–

MOD, a carer for 16 years

3.2 ETB FET Providers

RPL benefits FET providers by:

- Widening access to FET.
- Providing the first engagement with FET for many students.
- Supporting and motivating engagement of those who might be regarded as non-traditional learners.
- Increasing the range of awards that a provider can offer.
- Improving scope for collaborative opportunities between employers and FET.
- Forging links.
- Making skills visible.
- Engaging new learners.

Learners have achieved the following awards through the RPL process:

Transversal skills

- Customer Service – Levels 5 and 6
- Work Experience – Levels 3 and 4
- Work Practice – Level 5
- Teamworking – Levels 4 and 5
- Personal Effectiveness – Levels 3, 4 and 5
- Event Production
- Communications

Healthcare Sector

- Health Service Skills (Major Award) Level 5
- Healthcare Support (Major Award) Level 5
- Minor Awards (Modules) – Level 5:
 - Palliative Care
 - Care of the Older Person
 - Care Skills
 - Activity of Living Patient Care
 - Safety and Health at Work

Financial Sector

Major Awards – Level 6

- Administration
- Business
- Management

Minor Awards (Modules) – Level 6

- Admiration Practice
- Front Office Skills
- Information Advice and Advocacy

3.3 Employers

RPL can support employers by:

- providing a process that facilitates employees to reflect on their strengths, achievements and areas where they may need to improve;
- validating and quality assuring training provided by employers for their staff; reducing downtime for employees by recognising the workplace as a learning environment;
- meeting regulatory requirements for qualifications.

Documented benefits of RPL

Individuals	Education Providers	Employers	Governments
Personal	Reduced time to Certification	Recruitment	Efficient and effective systems
Educational	Recognition of various types of learning	Employee retention and motivation	Agility in addressing skills shortages
Social	Increased access for a variety of learners	Quality assurance	Competitiveness and growth
Economic	Enhanced relevance and currency of courses	Improved links with higher education	Democracy and active citizenship

Table II: Source:<https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/NF-2015-A-Current-Overview-of-Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-RPL-in-Irish-Higher-Education.pdf>

4. THE RPL PROCESS

RPL defines a process for FET providers that is different to the formal teaching/ learning and examination/ assessment processes associated with the delivery of a taught programme. Thus, FET providers need a different set of documentation and procedures to support and quality assure the process.

4.1 Quality Assurance

There is no distinct national quality assurance system for RPL (Murphy, 2019). The principles identified by NQAI (2005), the VNFIL stages, (CEDEFOP, 2007, 2009, 2016) and QQI's 2015 guidelines have informed practice and bring a certain level of harmonisation to a process where providers have responsibility for their own quality assurance systems. NQAI's (2005) principles state that providers and awarding bodies should embed RPL as an inclusive approach to provide opportunities for access, exemptions and the achievement of an award. The development of principles provided the impetus for providers to develop policies and processes. NQAI (2005) states that a policy should both communicate and document the direction and expectations that a provider will take concerning RPL.

Some ETBs have embedded their RPL policy in Access, Transfer and Progression policies and others have a discrete RPL policy (Donegal ETB, 2020; Limerick and Clare ETB, 2019). Appendix 1 provides links to a number of RPL policies. These will provide a starting point for ETB's who wish to develop their own RPL policy. Murphy, (2011) states that an RPL policy should define the RPL structure and provide clear descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of key players.

4.2 RPL for an award – a four-stage process

Stage 1: Identification

This stage identifies and records the applicant's knowledge, skills and competencies – what they know and what they can do – in relation to a destination award. An RPL application form is a key document at this stage. It will support the provider in determining an applicant's eligibility for RPCL and/or RPEL and help identify the destination award. An example is provided in Appendix 2.

Stage 2: Documentation stage

This stage measures what the learner knows and can do against criteria (the learning outcomes) outlined in the QQI award specification. At this stage, an RPL applicant prepares a portfolio of evidence that is mapped to the learning outcomes for the destination award.

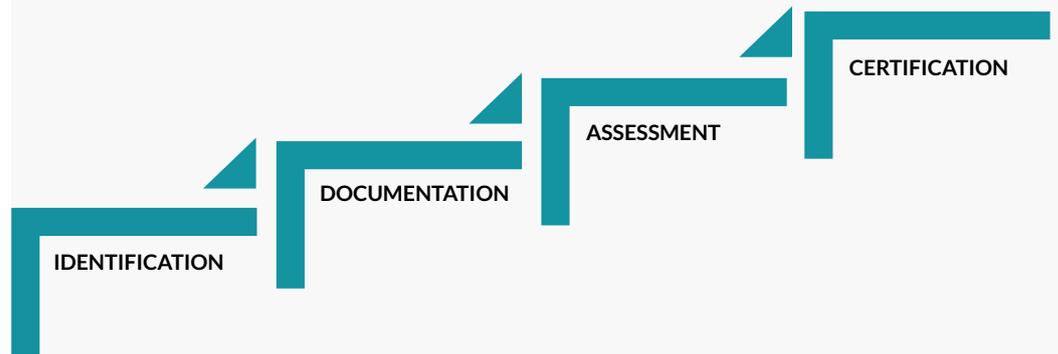
Stage 3: Assessment

This stage involves the assessment and grading of the portfolio of evidence against the standards/learning outcomes. The results are further checked through an internal verification and external authentication process.

Stage 4: Certification

Stage 4 involves the formal processing and certification of the results.

RPL FOR AN AWARD – A FOUR-STAGE PROCESS.



4.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Establishing clear roles and responsibilities simplifies and brings a level of efficiency to the process. The roles that have evolved around the RPL process are aligned to the RPL stages outlined in 4.2 and are similar to the roles that support other strands of FET provision.

RPL – AN APPLICANT-CENTRED PROCESS.



4.3.1 The RPL Coordinator

The role of the RPL Coordinator is to coordinate the implementation of the RPL process, with responsibility across all four RPL stages. This includes:

- Promoting and publicising the process. Appendix 3 provides an example of promotional material used for the care sector.
- Supporting access by:
 - o assessing applications for the process
 - o providing guidance, if needed, on possible destination awards
 - o approving the decisions to commence the RPL process
 - o preparing an RPL assessment brief to guide the applicant to collate their portfolio of evidence. This will require liaising with a subject matter expert.
 - o designing an RPL guidance document for the applicant
 - o assigning an RPL mentor to the applicant
 - o supporting the work of the RPL mentor
- Overseeing the quality and integrity of the assessment process:
 - o sourcing a subject matter expert for the assessment stage
 - o ensuring that assessment is guided by an assessment rubric
 - o arranging/carrying out internal verification
 - o supporting the recruitment of an external authenticator.
 - o preparation of results and documents for the Certification Approval Board / Results Approval Panel.

Examples of the following are provided in the Appendices:

- Promotional material - Appendix 2
- RPL guidance document and assessment briefs – Appendix 4
- Assessment rubric – Appendix 10

4.3.2 The RPL Applicant

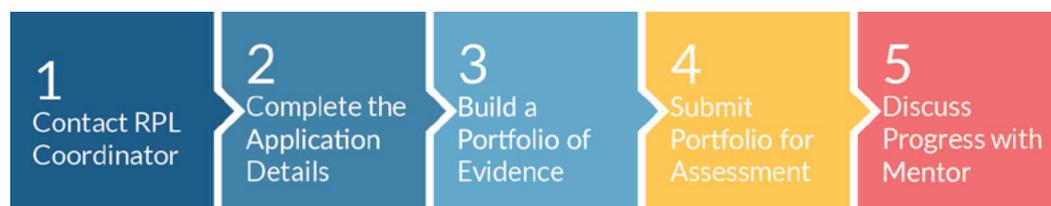
The applicant identifies the award or qualification that matches their skills, knowledge and competencies and applies for that award. The applicant is the expert in the process and must provide evidence of the skills and knowledge acquired through prior learning. The process for applicants includes:

- contacting the RPL Coordinator who will, if needed, provide initial support and guidance to identify how their experiential and non-formal learning links to the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).
- completing an RPL application form outlining their experience, training and qualifications, and details of the award(s) they are applying for.
- working collaboratively with their mentor and completing assignments/tasks.

- building and structuring a portfolio of evidence mapped to the award standards. All standards or learning outcomes must be evidenced. Evidence can include some or all of the following:
 - o curriculum vitae
 - o testimonials from employers or clients
 - o reflections on experiential learning
 - o skills demonstration
 - o short presentation
 - o recorded dialogue (formal conversation) with the applicant
 - o recent formal qualifications (less than five years old)
 - o collection of samples of work carried out e.g., care diary, meeting agendas and minutes, spreadsheets used, databases created, project plans, etc.
 - o completed brief

4.3.3 The RPL Mentor/Facilitator

The RPL mentor/facilitator supports and guides the RPL applicant to prepare a portfolio of evidence of their learning. The mentor/facilitator needs to understand how learning outcomes are structured. Learning outcomes are the standard to which the applicant will be assessed. Mentors do not need to be a subject matter expert.



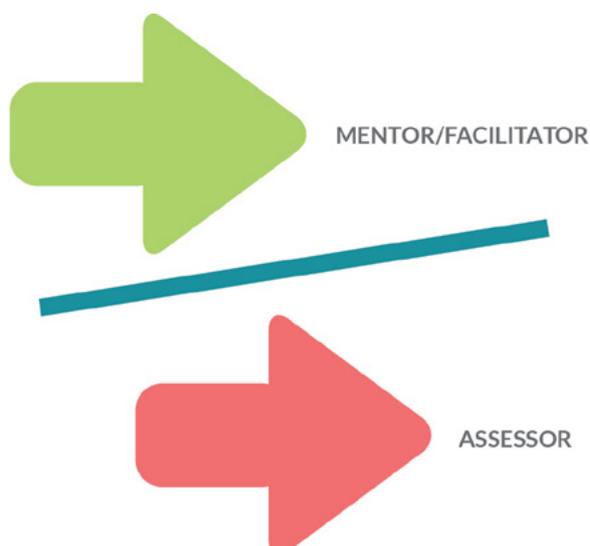
Their role is to:

- guide the applicant to collate and present evidence of their learning
- explain the 'language of FET' – learning outcomes/modules/award /certification, etc.
- provide constructive feedback
- seek clarification – the learner is the expert

While the mentor's support and guidance is critical to scaffold the process of reflection by the applicant on their previous learning experiences and to build the portfolio of evidence required, the overall responsibility for the portfolio always remains with the applicant.

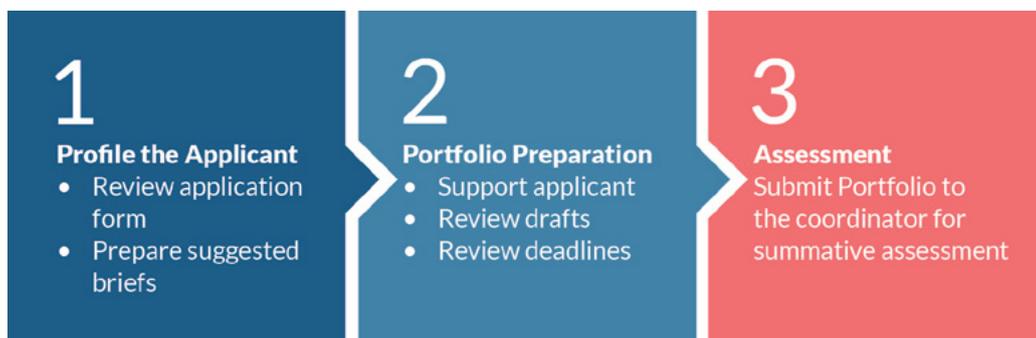
There must be a clear distinction between the role of the mentor and the role of the assessor. The assessment remains the remit of the RPL assessor – the subject matter expert.

RPL – THE SEPARATE ROLES OF AN MENTOR AND AN ASSESSOR.



Key considerations for the mentor are to:

- a) protect the integrity and reliability of the awards by ensuring that national standards of skills, knowledge and competences are assiduously adhered to;
- b) guide the applicant with the selection of evidence and map it against the learning outcomes;
- c) provide support and guidance to the applicant in the following ways:
 - o support the applicant to reflect on their prior experiences in order to identify their learning and how to evidence this learning.
 - o identify potential issues with gathering evidence and guide the applicant to find ways of dealing with these.
 - o identify the applicant's strengths and provide guidance on how to evidence them.
 - o reflect on activities that went well and not so well for the applicant, and identify the learnings from these experiences.
 - o review drafts of evidence produced and provide feedback.
 - o ensure that meeting schedules are adhered to, and deadlines are met.
 - o all evidence provided must remain the responsibility of the applicant.
 - o use a dialogue to garner or supplement evidence (Appendix 8).



When the process is complete, the mentor and applicant should:

1. acknowledge what was achieved in the process
2. identify what worked well - strengths / opportunities and promote these
3. identify what didn't work well - weaknesses / barriers and find solutions
4. discuss what could be done differently, if relevant, for next stage of the process
5. discuss the next steps available when the process is complete and, where relevant, refer the applicant to the ETB's Adult Education Guidance Service.

4.3.4 Subject Matter Expert

The portfolio of evidence is subject to the same quality assured assessment procedures as a taught programme of study. An independent assessor carries out the assessment of an RPL portfolio with expertise in the subject area. The assessor must be satisfied that the evidence of learning meets the learning outcomes as specified by the awarding body e.g. QQI.

The assessor should:

- assess the evidence against the standards in the award specification.
- use an assessment rubric to ensure fairness and consistency.
- use the assessment rubric to grade each learning outcome.
- ensure that each piece of evidence is the work of the applicant.
- identify the applicant's work when teamwork is presented.
- communicate the results to the RPL Coordinator and provide feedback.

The RPL Coordinator internally verifies the portfolio and submits the portfolio for external authentication in accordance with the provider's QA procedures. Following the report from the External Authenticator, the RPL coordinator will meet with the mentor to review any actions and submit the portfolio to the Certification Approvals Board.



4.3.5 Certification Approval Board / Results Approval Panel

The formal approval of the results takes place and the outcome is submitted to QQI. Provisional results are issued to the applicants with notification of the appeals procedure in line with the ETB FET provider's quality assurance procedures. Final results and certification are subsequently issued to the applicants.

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APPENDICES

The appendices contain samples of the tools that support each part of the RPL process

Appendix 1: Links to RPL Policies

Appendix 2: Promotional Materials

Appendix 3: Application Form

Appendix 4: Guidance Document

Appendix 5: Self-evaluation - Professional Knowledge in Practice

Appendix 6: RPL Assessment Brief

Sample Brief: Single Module Brief (Work Experience 5N1356)

Sample Brief: Integrated Modules Brief (Nursing Theory and Practice
5N4325 and Care Support 5N0758)

Appendix 7: Reflective Practice

Appendix 8: RPL Dialogue

Appendix 9: Applicant Progress Report

Appendix 10: Assessment Rubric

Appendix 11: Assessment notes

Appendix 1:

Link to Policies

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (2019). Quality Assurance Handbook. <https://collegeoffet.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance/>

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Appendix 2

Promotional Materials (An example which was used for the care sector)

What is RPL?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process that maps skills and knowledge gained through work and life experiences to a relevant QQI award. The RPL process avoids duplication of learning as it does not require you to sit in a course to learn something that you can already do. By formally recognising what you already know, you can either:

- join or access a course at the correct level, or,
- apply for a formal award (a certificate) that will provide evidence of your skills and knowledge.

RPL for access: If seeking RPL for access, you apply for the course you need, and the Course Coordinator will assess your skills, knowledge, and competencies to gauge if your current skills and knowledge are at the correct level for you to succeed on the course that you have applied for.

RPL for an award: If seeking to use the RPL process to gain an award, you must complete and submit an RPL application form (Appendix 3). Your application will be assessed and if approved, you will be supported to produce a portfolio of evidence for each module/award that you have applied for. Your completed portfolio will be assessed internally and by an external reviewer. If you are unsure about applying for an award, you can contact the RPL Provision Coordinator to discuss the process. Contact details are below.

What support is provided?

ETB's FET RPL Provision will appoint an RPL Mentor to guide you through the process of preparing and structuring your portfolio of evidence. Your RPL Mentor will also ensure that your evidence is sufficient to meet the award standards.

How long will this take?

While you can work at your own pace, the average time to complete a portfolio of evidence for an award (module) is between 10 – 14 hours.

How much does it cost?

The RPL process is currently free to all applicants.

Who is this provision for?

RPL provision is for adults who are in the workplace, who are involved in their communities as volunteers and also for those who are unemployed. To date, we have supported employees from the following sectors: financial, healthcare, childcare, agriculture, construction and community and voluntary.

How to find out more:

If you would like to avail of our RPL programme, please get in touch with our RPL Provision Coordinator _____

on: Telephone: _____

Email: _____@etb.ie /

rpl@_____etb.ie



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
*Donegal Education and
Training Board*



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Recognising all your Learning and Training

Do you sometimes just wish

- you had a qualification for all that you can do?
- you didn't have to sit in a course to learn what you already know? We can support you match your skills and knowledge to a QQI award.

Working in a care setting may entitle you to some, or all of the awards listed below:

- Work Practice
- Care of the Older Person
- Care Skills
- Safety and Health at Work
- Team Working
- Customer Service

Other possible awards include: Care Support, Activities of Living Patient Care, Personal Effectiveness, etc.

To find out more, contact:

Appendix 3

Application Form

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) APPLICATION FORM

This application form is your request for consideration to initiate the RPL process to have your experiential learning (learning from your work and your community activities) considered for an award. Experiential learning is skills, knowledge and competencies that you may have gained through non-formal learning (course at work, supplementary training, further education courses, etc.) and informal learning (work practice, roles at work or in your community, hobbies, interests, etc.).

The RPL process requires that the skills, knowledge and competencies you have achieved are compared with the learning outcomes (standards) of the award you wish to be considered for.

You should complete all sections of this application form.

Include copies of certificates / diplomas etc., that you have gained.

If your application is accepted, you will be required to register as a learner with Donegal ETB, and meet with an RPL Mentor, document your learning and participate in an interview or dialogue. Please also note that if the module requires it, you may be asked to complete a skills demonstration.

If your application form is not approved for the RPL process, you have the right to appeal that decision. You must make your appeal within 14 days of receipt of the decision and outline the area of the decision that you are basing your appeal on.

Please return the completed application form to the RPL office either by email or post:

Email: rpl@donegaletb.ie

Post: Recognition of Prior Learning Office, Further Education and Training Centre, Milford, Co. Donegal. F92 RTF3.

PART A - APPLICANT INFORMATION	
Applicant's Name	
Address (including Postcode) for Correspondence	
Gender	
Email Address	
Mobile Telephone	

PART B - Please specify details for the modules or programme/s for which you are looking to gain Recognition of Prior Learning:		
Please state the Major Award name and code relevant to this application		
Major Award Name		
Major Award Code		
Please state details for the specific modules you are looking to gain RPL for:		
Module Name		Module Code
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

PART C - DETAILS OF FORMAL TRAINING COMPLETED (Training that you have received a certificate for)	
Please indicate below if you have any certified qualifications to support your RPL Application e.g. QQI modules already certified, Degrees, Diplomas, Leaving Certificate, Junior/Intermediate Certificate, NVQs, City & Guilds	
Course Details - List topics/subjects covered	
Note: You can attach additional information to PART C of this application if required	

PART D - DETAILS OF PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING	
Work Experience: Please provide details of your current and previous roles at work that are relevant to this application	
Current Employer's Name	

Your Current Role Title	
Start Date:	
Details of your current role	
Note: You can attach additional information to PART D of this application if required.	
Details of your previous role/s at work	
	List below your duties and responsibilities from previous work roles (the tasks you carried out in your workplace):

PART E – Other relevant experience (e.g. voluntary work, sports club, parent associations, school clubs, youth clubs, charity work etc)	
Organisation’s Name	
Dates	
Role in Organisation	
Note: You can attach additional information to PART E of this application if required.	List below your duties and responsibilities from this role (the tasks you carry out in your workplace:)

PART F – DETAILS OF INFORMAL TRAINING COMPLETED (Training that you have received a certificate of achievement/attendance)		
Please provide details of any courses that you have completed e.g. workshops, work-based courses, webinars, Udemy etc.		
Name of Training	Date attended	Training Details
Note: You can attach additional information to PART F of this application if required.		

Appendix 4

RPL Guidance document

Purpose: to provide clear information for the applicant about the RPL process.
Guidance Document for RPL Applicants

(Insert Name) ETB is committed to recognising all types of learning for access to an award. The process involves providing a portfolio of evidence of your learning.

This document aims to outline and explain some key terms and to clarify the process. All RPL applicants for an award will be assigned a mentor who will facilitate and provide guidance throughout the documentation stage.

What is Prior Learning?

Prior learning is all the learning that has taken place to build your skills and knowledge.

This includes:

- Formal learning: this is learning that took place in a taught setting and received a qualification, e.g., QQI Module
- Non-formal learning: this is learning that took place in an organised setting but did not have an award attached to it e.g., in-house training
- Informal learning: this is learning through your current work, as a volunteer in the community or through hobbies e.g., peer mentoring/coaching, self-study etc.

(Insert Name) ETB uses the generic term Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to include Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

Recognition of Prior Learning for an award

Recognition of Prior Learning for an award is a process that involves applicants matching learning that you have achieved against standards. Standards are defined as learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are presented in the QQI award specifications and are module (subject) specific. Please refer to the brief for details of the learning outcomes for your specific module.

Your learning must be:

- Current: it must have been achieved in the last 5 years
- Sufficient: there must be enough evidence of learning to achieve each learning outcome
- Reliable: you will have to prove that your learning is authentic
- Relevant: your learning must relate to the module that you are looking to get recognition for

The evidence of all your learning should be structured and presented in a portfolio. Portfolio of evidence of learning for an award.

A portfolio is a folder of evidence that is presented in an ordered and structured manner. The evidence will need to demonstrate that each learning outcome has been achieved. Evidence may include some or all of the following:

- samples from work
- explanations and description of your roles and responsibilities in work
- journal/diary entries
- testimonials/references
- dialogue/interview
- CV
- organisational charts
- workplace policy documents
- a case study
- questionnaires
- workplace observations
- skills demonstrations.

Personal details and work submitted will be respected and all Donegal ETB confidentiality and data protection policies are adhered to by all staff.

Structuring a portfolio of evidence of learning for an award

The structure of the portfolio is important. It is a document that will be assessed by a subject matter expert and will also be reviewed by an external examiner. You will be issued with a brief and tasks that will instruct you on how to gather the evidence required to meet those learning outcomes. The completed brief and supporting documents will form the basis for the portfolio of evidence and will be presented for assessment.

Preparing your portfolio will require you to reflect on your learning. You will be expected to draw on your own experiences evaluating the 'how and what' you have learned and proving the relevance to the learning outcomes. Your RPL mentor will be available to provide clarification and give support to you throughout this process.

Duration

The time taken to complete a portfolio will depend on your other commitments. The recommendation is 10-14 hours, approximately, for a module.

Assessment of evidence of learning

The portfolio assessment will be in line with (Insert Name) ETB's Quality Assurance Processes and will be carried out by an independent assessor with expertise in the subject. The assessor must be satisfied that the evidence of learning meets the

learning outcomes:

Grading will be as follows:

Pass (50% to 64%)

Merit (65% to 79%)

Distinction (80 to 100%)

Appeals

Applicants who are not satisfied with the grade they receive will be able to appeal under Donegal ETB's Quality Assurance Processes for assessment.

Appendix 5

Self-assessment/Checklist

Purpose: to give potential applicants an opportunity to carry out a self-assessment against standards in an award specification.

Assessment Checklist

To support self-evaluation of skills, knowledge, aptitude and competencies against Work Experience Level 5

Professional knowledge in practice

Module: Work Experience 5N1356	1=Minimal Knowledge/ skills/ competences	2=Adequate Knowledge/ skills/ competences	3=Good Knowledge /skills competences	4=Excellent Knowledge /skills/ competences		
Standard of Skills, Knowledge and Competency Outlined in the Award Specification	1	2	3	4	Completed (location of evidence/ verification)	Incom- plete (rec- ommenda- tion)
1. Can you give details of your work organisation and personal career opportunities from your work experiences - include consideration of work-related issues and needs?						
2. What were the key challenges and opportunities facing you based on your experience in a particular vocational area?						
3. Can you summarise the basic rights and responsibilities of employees and employers in a particular work, organisational or institutional context, to include health, safety and welfare at work, equality legislation, union representation and regulations relating to pay?						

Appendix 5 CONT

Assessment Checklist

To support self-evaluation of skills, knowledge, aptitude and competencies against Work Experience Level 5

Professional knowledge in practice

Module: Work Experience 5N1356	1=Minimal Knowledge/ skills/ competences	2=Adequate Knowledge/ skills/ competences	3=Good Knowledge /skills competences	4=Excellent Knowledge /skills/ competences		
Standard of Skills, Knowledge and Competency Outlined in the Award Specification	1	2	3	4	Completed (location of evidence/ verification)	Incom- plete (rec- ommenda- tion)
4. Can you compile a personal and vocational skills audit and career plan for a specific vocational area, to include goals and action points for the period of work experience?						
5. Can you present relevant work experience material, to include a CV or personal statement, letter of application, evidence of job-finding skills, skills checklist, statement of learning goals, contractual arrangements?						
6. Can you give details from your work experience of times you observed good timekeeping, worked independently while under general direction, met deadlines, showed good personal presentation, showed good communication and how you adhered to health, safety and other relevant regulations?						

Appendix 5 CONT

Assessment Checklist

To support self-evaluation of skills, knowledge, aptitude and competencies against Work Experience Level 5

7. Can you give examples of effective communications skills in the workplace, to include personal, interpersonal and technological communications skills?						
8. Can you reflect on feedback by supervisors or mentors on personal performance and challenges such as conflict, criticism, meeting new people and learning in relation to quality management?						
9. Can you give details of how you might have explored options for future education, training and employment in light of work experience?						

Appendix 6

RPL Assessment Brief

Purpose: to provide direction to applicants on how to structure their portfolio and also gives a clear indication of the evidence that is required.

Brief 1: is for Level 5 Work Experience

Brief 2: is an integrated brief for two health care modules.

RPL EVIDENCE – Brief

Programme Module Name:	Work Experience
Programme Module Code:	5N1356
Weighting	100%
Level:	5
Learning Outcomes:	Learning Outcomes 1–9

Instructions:

Complete the assignments on the attached page.

Date Brief Issued: _____

Submission Date: _____

I, _____, (Applicant) confirm that this evidence is my own work.

Signature: _____
Applicant

Date: _____

Signature: _____
RPL Mentor

Date Received: _____

Work Experience QQI Level 5 5N1356

Complete the tasks on the following pages.

You have the experience and the skills. We will work with you to document and show evidence of these.

Gathering evidence

You will have to complete the tasks that are attached. It may be some time since you wrote an essay style answer, or you may not have experience writing a case study. Donegal ETB can organise a workshop to support you with this. In the current climate, this can be provided over the phone, or an example can be provided. You may also produce short video demonstrations where appropriate.

Recognition of Prior Learning

As your portfolio is being produced through the RPL process, you should include examples, scenarios and references to your workplace. Please refer to the Learning Outcomes (see additional page). The learning outcomes are what you are proving your experiential knowledge, competency, and skills against. However, please note that this is a reference guide only.

Succeeding

Marks can only be given for what you submit, and we want to make sure that you have the best possibility to achieve. To support you with this, you will have an opportunity to submit each assignment as a draft. This will be reviewed and discussed with you to give you an opportunity to improve and fill in any gaps.

You can do the assignments in any order that you choose.

While a reasonably good writing standard is expected, you will not be marked on spelling and grammar.

Using knowledge gained in your individual workplace and reflections on your own work practices and experiences, please complete the following tasks as fully as you can. There are 3 tasks in total.

Task 1:

Using your own experience of working in the care sector, please provide the following information:

- The structure of the organisation you work(ed) for- can you provide a diagram?
- Your own rights and responsibilities as an employee.
- The rights and responsibilities of your employer.
- Name the policies and procedures that you both have to adhere to, and, if possible, include copies.
- Name other organisations that provide care in Ireland.
- What are the options available for working/progressing in the care sector.

Task 2: Personal Profile

What is /was your role and job description in your current position or in a job that you worked in within the last 5 years. You should include:

- The length of time that you worked in the role
- A list of duties performed daily and those performed every week

Please include a copy of your CV. If you have a letter of application for the job you now have, please include it. If not, please include a letter of application for a job in the care sector. Include any references that you have.

Task 3: Reflection and Evaluation

Following on from Task 2, reflect and evaluate on the following areas of your work.

1. What personal qualities did you bring to your workplace?
2. Provide an example of when you met a deadline.
3. Provide an example of when you communicated well.
4. Provide an example of how you managed a situation where communication did not go well (e.g., colleague, client, family of client, other care teams, ...)
5. Did you ever experience conflict in the workplace – with a colleague or with a client? How did you respond? What did you learn from it?
6. Name two tasks that you carried out independently.
7. Name a task that you carried out under supervision.
8. Are you good at managing your time in the workplace? Can you provide some evidence – reference, testimonial, etc.?
9. Provide an example of when you used technology in the workplace (e.g., recording information, accessing information, communicating, etc.)
10. What aspects of your own personal presentation did you feel were important? (dress, manner, etc.)
11. Did you receive feedback from your supervisor about your work?
12. Did your supervisor highlight any areas that you did well?
13. Did your supervisor highlight any areas on which you needed additional training?

Additional Information:

Please see below how the evidence you have been asked to present based on your prior learning, knowledge and experience for each task corresponds with the Learning Outcomes as per the QQI Module Descriptor. This is for your reference only and not the assignment questions.

TASK LEARNING OBJECTIVE:		
	LO. 1	Examine work organisations and personal career opportunities in a particular vocational area, to include consideration of work-related issues and needs.
TASK 1	LO. 2	Analyse key challenges and opportunities facing a particular vocational area.
	LO. 3	Summarise the basic rights and responsibilities of employees and employers in a particular work, organisational or institutional context, to include health, safety and welfare at work, equality legislation, union representation and regulations relating to pay
	LO. 9	Explore options for future education, training and employment in light of work experience
TASK 2	LO. 4	Compile a personal and vocational skills audit and career plan for a specific vocational area, to include 2 goals and action points for the period of work experience.
	LO. 5	Present relevant work experience material, to include a CV or personal statement, letter of application, evidence of job-finding skills, skills checklist, statement of learning goals, contractual arrangements.
	LO. 6	Participate effectively in work experience, to include observation of good timekeeping, working independently while under general direction, meeting deadlines, personal presentation, communication, adherence to health, safety and other relevant regulations
TASK 3	LO. 7	Demonstrate effective communications skills in the workplace, to include personal, interpersonal and technological communications skills
	LO. 8	Reflect on workplace experiences, to include feedback by supervisors or mentors on personal performance and challenges such as conflict, criticism, meeting new people and learning in relation to quality management.

Further Education and Training Centre

EVIDENCE - Joint Brief

Programme Module Name:	Care of the Older Person and Care Skills
Programme Module Code:	5N2706 5N2770
Weighting	100%
Level:	5
Learning Outcomes:	Learning Outcomes 1-15

Instructions:

Complete the assignments on the attached page.

Date Brief Issued: _____

Submission Date: _____

I, _____, (Applicant) confirm that this evidence is my own work.

Signature: _____
Applicant

Date: _____

Signature: _____
RPL Mentor

Date Received: _____

Care of the Older Person 5N2706 And Care Skills 5N2770

Complete the tasks on the following pages.

You have the experience and the skills. We will work with you to document and show evidence of these.

Gathering evidence

You will have to complete the 5 tasks that are attached. It may be some time since you wrote an essay, or you may not have experience writing a case study. Donegal ETB can organise a workshop to support you with this. In the current climate this can be provided over the phone, or an example can be provided. Tasks that you would prefer to discuss including Task 4 which is an essay, can be replaced by a dialogue (conversation / discussion) with you. Include where possible workplace documents, photographs and/ or video skills demonstrations to support your portfolio and make it as unique and as creative as you are.

Recognition of Prior Learning

As your portfolio is being produced through the RPL process, you should include examples, scenarios and references to your workplace, photographs where possible and any training certificates that you may already have in a specific area/ learning outcome.

Succeeding

Marks will only be given for what you submit, and we want to make sure that you have the best possibility to achieve. To support you with this, you will have an opportunity to submit each assignment as a draft. This will be reviewed and discussed with you to give you an opportunity to improve and fill in any gaps.

You can do the assignments in any order that you choose.

While a reasonably good standard of writing is expected, you will not be marked on spelling and grammar.

Task 1: Your profile

Provide an outline of your own role as care assistant. Include:

- How long have you worked as a care assistant?
- What are the duties and tasks you carry out on a daily basis?
- Are there additional tasks you carry out periodically?
- Outline what steps do/ or would do to prevent pressure sores for your client(s)?
- Provide a detailed description of how you ensure a safe and hygienic environment, including the correct procedure for the disposal of soiled linen.

The profile of your care setting?

Provide a brief outline of the care setting under the following headings:

- General Description of the care setting/ organisation.
- Can you outline other care agencies and people that require care other than your own clientele?
- Number of staff and/ or healthcare teams in your care setting. Can you list their:
 1. Roles
 2. Function
 3. Duties that you share/ cooperate on. Give an outline of the type of team work that is part of your role?
- Health and Safety Policies that you must follow (name of policies. Include a copy of each, if possible) and how these improve the quality of the care for the clients and their families.
- Training that you received in your workplace:
 - o Training can be a short course, delivered by your manager and/or support from a more experienced carer.
- Rotas and schedules
- Recreational activities provided for clients, if any?

Task 2: Case Study 1:

Please produce a case study on an older person that you have / are working with. You should call the person 'client 1' and use the following headings:

- Profile:
 1. Age:
 2. Gender:
- Background to came to need the assistance of additional care support or became a resident in a care centre. Prompts:
 - o Impact of ageing on this person
 - o Name any conditions that he / she has and give a brief outline of the symptoms relating to the condition and how they have impacted on him or her.
 - o What are / were the physical, social and psychological needs of your client? How were these needs responded to?
 - o What issues did /does your client face?
- Medicinal needs
 - o Do you oversee medication? Can you provide an example of administration steps you take. If you do not, consider what you feel would be important factors in the administration of medication?
 - o Do you use hoists and or any special equipment? Can you give examples of how and when these are used? Can you provide photographs?
 - o Special clothing?
- Hygiene needs
 - o Can you outline the personal care routine that you support?
 - o How is respect and dignity shown through the care provided? What do you do (prompts: communicate, the way you carry out tasks) to show respect?
- Engaging with others
 - o How is your clients' family involvement supported within your organisation? What is your engagement with the family? If any? Can you provide examples. Or what do you feel would be important factors to consider when engaging with family members?
 - o What other services and supports are available to this client and how do you or your client engage with them?

Task 3: Please choose an option either A or B

Task 3 Option A: Case Study 2

Please produce a case study on an older person that you worked with (or are working with) who was dying.

You should call the person 'client 2' and use the following headings:

- Background
 - o Profile:
 - o Age:
 - o Gender:
 - o Illness/conditions
- Typical day
 - o Describe a typical day with your client/ clients and the care support activities that take place e.g., washing, dressing, feeding. You should also detail the steps in planning and carrying out the activity (1 or 2 examples)
- Client Comfort
 - o How did you identify his or her individual needs and how did you plan/ respond to these?
 - o Give examples of ways in which you demonstrated respect for this person. o Include an actual care plan that you use (all personal data that may identify your client should be removed should be removed)
 - o Following the death of a client, what tasks need to be carried out? How best can we show respect to this person's body?
- Engaging with others
 - o Outline the team of carers, nurses, doctors, etc. involved in the support of your client.
 - o Give an example of a time when you interacted with your client's family. Did the family have needs?
- Physical, Social, Emotional and Spiritual needs
 - o Outline your clients physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs, where appropriate and describe your involvement in assisting them. Include an example of when you have assisted a client with 'activities of daily living' and/ or social events, appointments etc.
- Changes, if any, that you would make
 - o What would you do differently in a similar situation?
 - o Do you feel the home, or the nursing home is the right environment for your client? Why/why not?

Task 3 Option B:

If you have not yet worked with someone at the end of their life, this task is to prove that you have the preparatory work completed and that you understand the needs of a person who is dying as well as the needs of their family.

You will interview an experienced work colleague to find out about their experiences and how best to prepare yourself for this time.

You can either video or do an audio recording with your mobile phone.

You can make up your own questions or use the following prompts:

1. What advice would you give to someone who has never worked with a dying person before? What should they be aware of?
2. What changes did you make in your approach to caring as the person neared the end of their life? How did the tasks change, or differ from your normal routine?
3. How did you work / communicate with their family and loved ones?
4. What changes had to be made to the team of carers? Were other groups / individuals added?
5. What changes did you make to how you communicated? What worked best and please let me know if something did not work for you? Ask for examples relating to: (a) the client who was dying, (b) their family and (c) the multidisciplinary team?
6. Has your own attitude to dying changed as a result of working with people who have passed away?
7. Following the death of a client, what tasks need to be carried out? How best can we show respect to this person's body?
8. How do you cope after losing a client? Is there any support(s) that you can avail off?

Task 4: Write a short essay titled:

'Ageing in the 21st century'

You should research this area and name your sources. Focus on:

- Factors that contribute to healthy ageing and what are the trends in Ireland and globally.
- Provide a summary of the various types of care settings for older people and the various members of a multidisciplinary team you would expect to find in each care provision setting.
- What changes for a person as they get older (psychologically, physically and socially)?
- Do you think people prepare enough for retirement?
- Do you think that older people experience discrimination? What are the attitudes towards older people?
- What are the cultural and ethnic influences on older people? Are there any? (Prompt: consider spiritual or cultural differences that you need to consider ensuring inclusivity in your workplace, if any?)
- Conclude by recommending preparations that people should make for their retirement.

Task 5

You will be required to show evidence that you carry out the tasks below in a competent, skilful and respectful manner, with attention to health and safety.

The tasks are:

- Performing hand hygiene.
- Performing oral hygiene
- Communicating with your client
- Meeting various needs of an older person in a care setting
- Demonstrate that you can care for at least one identified condition as well as general care
- Working in quality assured care settings to develop best practice
- Communication and a range of care skills required for working with the older person
- Discuss/ outline how your care practice changes to meet the needs of a client who has diverse physical, sensory or neurological conditions?
- Empower the older person

Evidence can be one or all of the following:

- Record (diary/chart) of how you used these skills over a two-year period
- Reference from your supervisor/manager
- Testimonials, confirmations
- You can also refer to examples in any of the other assignments.
- Include photographs of notices, rotas, etc. Remove any information that might identify someone in your care.
- Video skills demonstration(s).

Additional Information

As you are aware, the Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) approach maps your learned experience to the specific module specification learning outcomes (LO). For your reference only, please see below where the various LO's for the 'Care of the Older Person and Care Skills' can be found within the individual task questions.

TASK	LEARNING OUTCOMES
<p>TASK 1 Your Profile</p>	<p>Care of the Older Person: LO 2. Analyse the roles of the health care assistant in promoting positive attitudes to ageing and of statutory and voluntary agencies in promoting the well-being of older people</p> <p>Care Skills: LO 1. Identify relevant groups of people in need of health care. LO 4. Discuss the prevention of pressure sores. LO 5. Demonstrate knowledge of the correct procedures for the cleaning and replacement of a range of patient equipment. LO 7. Demonstrate a range of interpersonal skills when dealing with clients to include empathy, respect, patience and effective communication skills. LO 9. Contribute to the maintenance of safe and hygienic environments for clients to include the safe disposal of soiled linen</p>
<p>TASK 2 Case Study 1</p>	<p>Care of the Older Person: LO 1. Discuss a range of age related issues to include healthy ageing, global and national demographic trends, the normal physiological and psychological processes of ageing, the social impact of ageing on older people and differing attitudes to ageing and older people. LO 4. Explore a range of older people's needs to include physical, social, emotional, psychological, recreational, financial, environmental and spiritual needs. LO 6. Discuss the issues related to an older person with mental illness or dementia and of living with chronic illness.</p> <p>Care Skills: LO 2. Examine the physical, emotional, social, psychological and spiritual needs of a range of groups of people, taking into account individual variation. LO 3. Identify the hygiene needs of dependent clients. LO 6. Adapt levels of assistance to the needs of particular clients. LO 8. Exercise initiative to improve client involvement in social events, outings and occupational therapy and physiotherapy. LO 10. Assist clients with dressing, grooming, eating, drinking, toileting, continence promotion, mobility and where appropriate, social needs. LO 11. Apply client safety and security procedures to include appropriate on-site client care procedures for washing, bathing, showering, positioning, moving and handling. LO 12. Give assistance that enhances the privacy, dignity, independence, and positive self-image of clients in care. LO 13. Give assistance to clients in the use of a range of care equipment to include sensory equipment, aids to encourage independence and mechanical aids including mobility aids, feeding aids, washing aids, elimination aids and hoists LO 14. Report changes in the client's condition to the relevant Supervisor. LO 15. Complete client documentation where appropriate.</p>

TASK	LEARNING OUTCOMES
TASK 3 Case Study 2	Care of the Older Person: LO 7. Recognise the individual needs of the dying older person and their families. LO 11. Employ effective communication with the older person, their family and the multi-disciplinary team. LO 13. Exercise duties in a way that is respectful to the person's body after death.
TASK 4 Ageing in the 21st Century	Care of the Older Person: LO. 2. Analyse the roles of the health care assistant in promoting positive attitudes to ageing and of statutory and voluntary agencies in promoting the well-being of older people LO 3. Examine a range of concepts and practices to include preparation for retirement and the ethnic and cultural influences on the older person. LO 8. Summarise the range of the care settings for older people and the members of the healthcare team available in each care setting LO 9. Explore a range of specific services that are available for older people to include education, lifelong learning, retirement/the workplace and leisure LO 10. Analyse current approaches towards developing quality in the provision of services for older people and their families to include standards and quality assurance. LO 14. Promote a range of aspects of care for the older person to include empowerment, advocacy, independence, individualised care, dignity, respect, choice, self-esteem and include family and carers as partners in care.
TASK 5 Reflection	Care of the Older Person: LO 12. Adapt care and practices to meet the needs of older people with cognitive and sensory impairment and physical disabilities. LO 15. Give assistance in the identification of how health promotion issues can be promoted in care settings for older people and in the provision of therapeutic interventions that will enhance the social interactions and quality of life of the older person.

Appendix 7

Reflective Practice

(Applicant—Guided by the Mentor)

Purpose: To provide direction on how to respond to reflect on their experience and provide written evidence of this.

What is Reflective Practice?

Recognition of Prior Learning – what is reflective practice?

All applicants who are accepted for the RPL process will be asked to submit a portfolio of evidence based on experiential learning. This requires the candidate to reflect on their experience and write about it. The following overview will provide guidance for both the applicant and mentor who is guiding the process.

Reflective practice is:

- thinking about **what** you do
- thinking about **how** you do
- thinking about **why** you do

The following overview of the process will provide guidance in responding an assessment brief requiring a reflective response on a task, or specific part of a role.

In choosing a task that demonstrates learning, an RPL applicant must choose a task that is current. This means that it must have been carried out recently – no longer than 4 years ago.

When you think about this, you **document it** (write it up) and then you review / ponder your practice. You name any changes that you need to or feel that you would make. To do this ask yourself:

- What worked well: What areas would use the same approach again and why?
- What did not work as well as you would have liked/hoped for? What areas would you improve upon and why?

Reflection is about learning from your own experience and arriving at the solution (changes / improvements) that you would make.

Reflection requires a conscious effort. The following approach should work:

- Stage 1:** Think about the work or experience that you are writing about. Outline this (the task and experience – it is your experience) in a short paragraph. This will be the first paragraph of your reflective assignment.
- Stage 2:** Think about what worked and did not work and also why the task / problem / issued needed to be responded to. Name the key people involved and how they behaved. Do not use real names – initials will do. This is your second paragraph.
- Stage 3:** This is where you think about the actions you took. You need to document how you might improve your response for another similar situation / task. Is there room for improvement? Are there different strategies that you would, or could use? Would you have benefited from support from a colleague? This is your third paragraph.
- Stage 4:** This final paragraph should outline how you carried the learning forward to another task – how you integrated it into your practice.

Note to mentors:

A reflective assignment based on experiential learning will have a minimum of four paragraphs.

- It will be personal to the candidate.
- It will be unique to the candidate.

The word count will vary, but the guidelines below will support you in guiding the process:

- Level 3 – 150 to 250 words
- Level 4 – 300 to 400 words
- Level 5 – 400 to 600 words
- Level 6 – 600 to 800 words

This is only a guide. The word count will be determined by the experience / job task which the candidate chooses to reflect upon. The applicant can include photographs, charts, and diagrams.

Appendix 8

RPL Dialogue (Mentor and Applicant)

Purpose: To provide applicants with an opportunity to:
Fill gaps if they lack documentary evidence
Clarify documentary evidence
Supplement documentary evidence.

RPL Dialogue – a brief overview

A dialogue is a formal conversation between an RPL mentor and an RPL applicant / group of applicants. The conversation is recorded. The dialogue allows applicants to provide clear responses to questions on how they applied their knowledge and used their skills in one or more situations. An RPL dialogue is similar to a competency-based interview. The applicant will:

- identify a situation;
- outline the task and how they performed;
- explain the outcome;

The learning outcomes determine the competencies that the dialogue represents. Not every learning outcome will require a competency dialogue or conversation. The following are examples of where a dialogue will add value to an applicant's RPL portfolio of evidence.

Lack of documentary evidence, but evidence of the skill:

- When the 'gap' is not in the 'skill', but in the availability of documentary evidence, the 'dialogue' is a tool that removes this barrier.
- Where documentary evidence is weak/insufficient

Where evidence needs some additional clarification.

- The applicant is the expert and will be able to provide the mentor with clarification. The assessor (also an expert) will determine the validity of the evidence.

The questions that direct the dialogue should be aligned to the learning outcome(s) that are being assessed.

Preparing for an RPL dialogue

- Mentors should prepare a list of questions.
- The number of questions will depend on the skill(s) being assessed.
- In a dialogue/conversation, the answers may lead to further questions which have not been prepared. This can enrich the process.

Recording the dialogue

An RPL dialogue is either a face-to-face or online meeting. The dialogue can be recorded in a number of ways:

- Written as minutes.
- Completing a matrix
- Digital recording—voice apps on a phone; digital device

Protocols to observe

- The mentor should introduce themselves
- The applicant should introduce themselves
- The mentor should state the learning outcome(s) being assessed
- When recording a group discussion / dialogue, the mentor should chair the discussion as they would chair a formal meeting.
- Only one person should speak at a time;
- Each person should indicate when they want to speak.
- The chair should ask for their input, by saying their name;
- If recording as minutes of a meeting, the mentor should include each name before their comment is recorded.

The dialogue should be signed by the mentor and the applicant(s).

Appendix 9

Applicant Progress Report (Mentor to Coordinator)

Purpose: To provide mentors with a simple record keeping and reporting mechanism.

RPL Applicant Progress Report

Mentor Name:	
Applicant Name:	
LDF Received (Y/N)	
Modules:	
(List only modules that are currently being worked on by the applicant)	1. 2. 3.
Date Started with stated module/s:	
Deadline Agreed for portfolio:	

Details of Mentor/Applicant Meetings (insert rows as needed for each support call/meeting with applicant):

Date:	Meeting Type: (online / tel / in person)	Length of Meeting: (minutes)	Details Discussed:	Actions Arising: (incl. Details of short term deadline set, specific part of brief discussed/ requiring action, next meeting date, etc.):

Appendix 10

Assessment Rubric

Purpose: To provide assessors with a transparent method to grade each learning outcome and determine an overall grade for each module.

Assessment rubric – Work Experience 5N1356

This assessment rubric has been developed to assist the assessor (subject matter expert) in grading the RPL applicant's portfolio.

It is a reference document used in conjunction with the Assessment Notes.

Each learning outcome detailed on the rubric must be given a % grade. This % grade is noted on the Assessment Notes and a comment for each learning outcome.

It is important to grade the evidence at the correct point within each band for each learning outcome. Below are general guidelines on awarding a % grade:

Distinction 80 to 100%:

- Evidence should be excellent for any grade awarded within this grade band. It should be accurate and supported with excellent comments and strong evidence.
- Exceptional or exemplary evidence with relevant comments will warrant a grade of over 90%. Superior information also deserves to be in the 90%+ bracket.

Merit 65 to 79%:

- Evidence should be very good within this grade band. Information should be accurate, detailed and clearly expressed.
- Information with strong supporting evidence will be in the 72-79% band

Pass 50 to 64%:

- Evidence should be to a good/adequate standard. Information should be relevant, with sufficient detail, clearly expressed and with some supporting evidence.
- Good, but not very good, will be marked at the 60 to 64% grade.
- Sufficient evidence will be in the 56-59% band.
- Adequate evidence will be at the 50 to 55% band.

Assessment rubric – Work Experience Module at Level 5 – 5N1356

	Excellent Understanding and Knowledge (80– 100%) DISTINCTION	Very good Understanding and Knowledge (65–79%) MERIT	Reasonable Understanding and Knowledge (50–64%) PASS	Not enough Understanding and knowledge (49% & below) – Refer to the course.
Learning Outcome				
1. Examine work organisations and personal career opportunities in a particular vocational area, to include consideration of work-related issues and needs.	Demonstrates an excellent knowledge and understanding of their workplace and structure of organisation, including progression opportunities	Demonstrates very good knowledge and understanding of their workplace and structure of organisation, including progression opportunities	Demonstrates reasonable knowledge and understanding of their workplace and structure of organisation, including progression opportunities	Insufficient evidence
2. Analyse key challenges and opportunities facing a particular vocational area.	Applicant demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the challenges faced by their industry/enterprise.	Applicant demonstrates very good knowledge of the challenges faced by their industry/enterprise.	Applicant demonstrates reasonable knowledge of the challenges faced by their industry/enterprise.	Insufficient evidence
3. Summarise the basic rights and responsibilities of employees and employers in a particular work, organisational or institutional context, to include health, safety and welfare at work, equality legislation, union representation and regulations relating to pay	Applicant presents an excellent understanding their own role, duties and responsibilities and personal responsibility in relation to those around them and their organisation's premises and equipment. Knows the boundaries between their responsibilities and that of their employer.	Applicant presents a very good understanding of their own role, duties and responsibilities and personal responsibility in relation to those around them and their organisation's premises and equipment. Knows the boundaries between their responsibilities and that of their employer.	Applicant has a good understanding of their own role, duties and responsibilities in relation to those around them and their organisation's premises and equipment.	Insufficient evidence
4. Compile a personal and vocational skills audit and career plan for a specific vocational area, to include goals and action points for the period of work experience	Able to present to a very high standard a personal profile that includes strengths and areas for improvement.	Able to present to a very good standard a personal profile that includes strengths and areas for improvement.	Sufficient personal profile presented	Insufficient evidence. Little awareness of their strengths and areas for improvement.

	Excellent Understanding and Knowledge (80–100%) DISTINCTION	Very good Understanding and Knowledge (65–79%) MERIT	Reasonable Understanding and Knowledge (50–64%) PASS	Not enough Understanding and knowledge (49% & below) – Refer to the course.
5. Present relevant work experience material, to include a CV or personal statement, letter of application, evidence of job-finding skills, skills checklist, statement of learning goals, contractual arrangements.	Demonstrates excellent ability to compile/produce a very high standard CV and letter of application – can be related to when they applied for their current position, or a position that they would like to apply for.	Demonstrates very good ability to compile/produce a very good standard CV and letter of application – can be related to when they applied for their current position, or a position that they would like to apply for.	Presented a CV and letter of application to a good standard.	Insufficient evidence
6. Participate effectively in work experience, to include observation of good timekeeping, working independently while under general direction, meeting deadlines, personal presentation, communication, adherence to health, safety and other relevant regulations	Provides excellent examples from their workplace that they actively and conscientiously participate and carry out their role to a high standard. Demonstrates excellent awareness of workplace protocol and implements policies and procedures.	Provides very good examples from their workplace that they actively and conscientiously participate carry out their role to a very good standard. Demonstrates very good awareness of workplace protocol and implements policies and procedures.	Provides some examples from their workplace on how they carry out their role. Might have some late morning, and personal presentation could be improved. Has a good understanding of autonomy and teamwork in the workplace and a good awareness of workplace policies and procedures.	Insufficient evidence
7. Demonstrate effective communications skills in the workplace, to include personal, interpersonal and technological communications skills	Provides evidence of excellent communication in the workplace that includes various forms – face-to-face, emails, texts, meetings, etc.	Provides evidence of very good communication in the workplace that includes various forms – face-to-face, emails, texts, meetings, etc.	Adequate evidence of communication in the workplace that includes various forms – face-to-face, emails, texts, meetings, etc	Insufficient evidence

	Excellent Understanding and Knowledge (80–100%) DISTINCTION	Very good Understanding and Knowledge (65–79%) MERIT	Reasonable Understanding and Knowledge (50–64%) PASS	Not enough Understanding and knowledge (49% & below) – Refer to the course.
8. Reflect on workplace experiences, to include feedback by supervisors or mentors on personal performance and challenges such as conflict, criticism, meeting new people and learning in relation to quality management	Demonstrates ability to improve areas that need strengthening – responding to performance management or to an evaluation. Could be a reflection on a task and improving approach. Should be excellent standard.	Demonstrates ability to improve areas that need strengthening – responding to performance management or to an evaluation. Could be a reflection on a task and improving approach. Should be very good standard.	A good standard of reflection demonstrated on workplace experience and feedback considered to an adequate standard.	Insufficient evidence
9. Explore options for future education, training and employment in light of work experience	Provides excellent evidence that training has been considered and that a plan for continual improvement is in place.	Provides very good evidence that training has been considered and that a plan for improvement is in place	Good evidence that consideration has been given to training.	Insufficient evidence

Useful Websites

1. European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning, (2015) Cedefop. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3073_en.pdf
2. The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1999/act/26/enacted/en/print.html>
3. Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ): <https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/the-qualifications-system/national-framework-of-qualifications>
4. Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025 <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/24412/0f5f058feec641bbb92d34a0a8e3daff.pdf#page=null>
5. 'Programme for Government, Our Shared Future' published in June 2020 commits to 'Develop and implement a standardised system of accreditation of prior learning taking account of previous education, skills, work experience and engagement in society' (Government of Ireland 2020). https://www.finegael.ie/app/uploads/2020/06/ProgrammeforGovernment_Final_16.06.20-1.pdf
6. Recognition of Foreign Qualifications in Ireland is supported through NARIC Ireland. Policy and Criteria for Facilitating the Academic Recognition of Foreign Qualifications <https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-11/qp-14-policy-and-criteria-for-facilitating-the-academic-recognition-of-foreign-qualifications.pdf>
7. The RPL Practitioners Network: <https://rpl-ireland.ie/>



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