The recognition of prior learning (RPL) is an inherent part of DCU’s policy in relation to access or opportunity. RPL supports and facilitates access to DCU by recognising and rewarding prior learning. The DCU RPL policy is fair, transparent and consistently applied and supports and encourages lifelong learning and contributes to the university's overall mission.

Policy

The policy is designed to enable individuals to build on prior learning to achieve additional qualifications including Major, Minor, Supplemental and Special Purpose awards. Recognition of prior learning can be used to access both undergraduate and postgraduate awards. This policy focuses primarily on evidence of prior learning through (i) demonstration of achievement of appropriate learning outcomes and (ii) demonstration of achievement of an appropriate level of prior qualification(s). The BSc in Education Programme Board RPL Committee recommends that exemptions only be permitted against academic sessions (years of study) completed and not individual modules, unless those modules completed are the same as those sought for exemption. Please note: double accreditation is not permitted.

Where candidates are non-native English language speakers, certified demonstrable achievement in a Standard English Language Competency Test will be required, which is a university requirement. See: [http://www4.dcu.ie/registry/english.shtml](http://www4.dcu.ie/registry/english.shtml)

Process

Applicants can gain entry to the First Year of the programme or accelerated entry to Year 2 through RPeL and/or APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning).

RPeL (Recognition of Prior experiential Learning)
In the case of RPeL, applicants must provide evidence that they have gained significant work-related experience in the field of education and/or training or a similar work related area to gain entry deemed equivalent to the minimum entry requirement for year 1 of the programme. In the case of accelerated entry to Year 2 or 3 of the Programme, applicants must demonstrate considerable additional experience relevant to the field of education and/or training and/or similar fields of work. This should be evidenced through work-related references and a detailed description of present and past work-related experience. All applicants seeking RPeL will be required to attend an interview between April–June of the year of entry where a member of the RPeL Committee from the Programme Board will also attend. Applicants may also be asked to provide an additional piece of work prior to this interview for the purposes of entry to the programme.

**APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning)**

In the case of APL, applicants must show evidence that they have completed the equivalent of the minimum programme entry requirements as set out in the programmes description of the required entry requirements. In the case of accelerated entry applicants must demonstrate that they have gained a minimum of 70% of the NFQ level 8 year 1 equivalent coupled with RPeL. In certain circumstances NFQ level 7 prior qualifications may be recognised and accepted in conjunction with significant previous work related experience in the field of education, training or similar.

**RPL / APL Application Procedure**

- Applicants should state on their application form for admission (Direct entry R10 form/or CAO Mature Supplement form), the option of applying for entry through using RPeL/APL or for First year or accelerated entry on to Year 2 of the programme.

- Applicants must demonstrate that they have attained the necessary learning outcomes through some other form of learning.

- Applicants must provide evidence of the assessment of this learning and/or provide evidence of the credit given for this learning.

- Applications must make a case setting out evidence as to why they should be allowed to gain entry to the prescribed year of entry.

- The onus is placed on the applicant to provide this information and they may need to contact institutions they have previously attended to source this information for inclusion in their application.

- The application is then sent to the Programme Chair who will in turn liaise with the relevant RPL Committee members of the Programme Board.
The chair or (nominated qualified person) will review all the evidence, comparing the previous learning with the learning outcomes of the relevant past learning, and will also discuss the application with the Programme Chair.

All RPL and/or APL applicants will be called for interview. In the case of applications where RPL/APL is requested an RPL Committee member from the Programme Board will also attend the interview.

A decision, including a clear rationale, is then returned to the Programme Chair and this is noted on the Review/Interview form for noting to Registry who in turn will inform the student of the outcomes of their application.