PROVIDER NAME:	CCT College Dublin (CCT)
POLICY AREA:	Standard 6: Admissions, Access, Transfer, Progression Recognition and Certification

Policy and Procedure Title: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Admissions and Exemptions	Policy No: CCTP602	Version: 2.1

Policy Statement

CCT is committed to considering all learners' previous achievements and experience when applying for entry onto courses offered by the College. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process of identification, assessment and recognition of learning howsoever acquired.

CCT will frame its Policy and Procedures in the context of The Principles and Operational Guidelines for The Implementation of a National Approach to Credit in Irish Higher Education and Training (NQAI) June 2005, republished by QQI in 2015

Such prior learning may have been acquired through formal, non-formal or informal routes and includes accredited, non-accredited and experiential learning. The purpose of CCT having procedures for RPL, is in keeping with its policy on Access, Transfer and Progression, and to consider every learner's application in a fair and transparent way. CCT is committed to having arrangements in place to facilitate RPL for Entry and RPL for Credit towards an Award.

Staff Involved

Head of Admissions, Dean of School, Programme Leader, School Manager, QA Officer

Procedure Outline / Method(s) used to carry out this procedure	Responsibility of	Evidence generated by this procedure to ensure its effectiveness
CCT applies the following procedures for Recognition of Prior Learning: **Recognition of Prior Learning Process for Entry and Advanced Entry** RPL is advertised in CCT recruitment literature, and on the website. RPL may be sought for admission to a programme, advanced entry to a programme or for exemptions from a part of a programme. Potential RPL applicants seeking to access a CCT programme through RPL are invited to a preliminary meeting with the Head of Admissions to discuss the requirements for RPL entry. The Head of Admissions will advise the applicant of the minimum standards that must be evidenced and explain the RPL process to the applicant. Should the applicant wish to proceed, the School Manager and Programme Leader is notified and assigned to the applicant as an RPL advisor and assessor. **Advice and Support** The RPL advisor and assessor provides guidance to the learner to identify and agree a plan for the assessment of prior learning and will indicate the type of portfolio proof that will be required (e.g. formal transcripts, certificates, certificates of achievement/attendance, references, evidence of completed projects or artefacts, testimonials from employers that the applicant has and used relevant knowledge, skill or competence in his/her employment etc). The applicant is advised that it is the learning from experience that is assessed, not simply the experience itself. The	Head of Admissions Head of Marketing Head of Admissions	E-mail communication Admission form

applicant is provided with the criteria they are required to evidence. This is normally taken from the QQI award standards for the relevant discipline. **Assessment** Once the applicant feels they have compiled a portfolio of evidence ready for assessment it should be submitted for assessment. The RPL assessor will map the evidence, on a best fit basis, of the learner against the criteria (normally the QQI award standards for the level of the academic entry being sought). Where advanced entry is being sought and the assessor is of the opinion that the appropriate standard has not been met, an assessment against the standards for initial entry should also be undertaken. Assessment for entry is undertaken on a pass / fail basis with the opportunity for the applicant to address any shortcomings where the assessor feels this would be realistic and achievable. On completion of assessment the assessor should forward the portfolio along with the recommendation to an internal reviewer, normally the School Manager or Dean of School, for verification. The decision is communicated to the applicant who may then proceed with the application or appeal the decision.	RPL advisor	
Appeal against RPL Admissions Decision Should an applicant wish to appeal and RPL admissions decision the appeal must be put in writing to the Head of Admissions within 5 working days of communication of the decision. Disagreement with the decision in itself does not constitute grounds for appeal. Where it is felt there are adequate grounds for appeal the Head of Admissions will liaise with the Dean of Academic Affairs to determine the appropriate course of action normally one of the following: • Review of the decision made and rationale for same to ensure suitability and accuracy of the decision • Arrangements for re-marking of the portfolio by an independent party • Consideration of additional material by the original assessor The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the applicant at the earliest opportunity, determined by the specifics of the individual case.	Dean of Academic Affairs	Appeal application Records of appeal deliberations
RPL for Exemptions Exemptions from modules may be sought by applicants or current students. Applicants should identify their intentions at the point of enquiry / application and will be directed to the appropriate Programme Leader. Current students should approach the Programme Leader directly and outline their intentions to apply for exemptions. Such approaches should be undertaken in a timely manner to allow for an exemptions application to be completed prior to the module(s) commencing so that the learner journey is not unnecessarily disrupted. Where insufficient time is allowed, and the exemptions application is subsequently denied, the learner may have to defer or delay their studies in order to catch up the module(s) concerned. **Advice and Support** The Programme Leader will assign a subject matter expert to meet with the exemptions applicant to discuss the learning outcomes of the module(s) for which intention to seek exemption is sought. The exemptions applicant is	Programme Leader Applicant	Application

provided with the module descriptor and information regarding expectations. The Programme Leader will continue to act as an advisor to the exemptions applicant and will agree the timeline for submission of an exemptions application. All exemptions applicants must be made aware of: • The fact that exemptions can only be granted for full modules, not components of a module • Exemptions will only be permitted where satisfaction of module requirements through exemption does not negatively impact on the overall programme learning experience for the learner or the cohesion of the programme. • Exemptions based on experiential learning will be assessed for the learning acquired, not the experience itself. • The implications of failing with their application • The potential implications for award classification where it is not possible to assign a mark for the exemption. • Evidence of learning will be verified for accuracy and authenticity • To ensure currency of knowledge, evidence to support exemptions is normally restricted to the last 5 years and may be less in areas where progress and development is rapid e.g. IT. As per QQI Assessment and Standards 2013, if the module where exemption is being sought contributes to the overall award classification, a grade must be awarded for the award to be classified. Where a grade cannot be awarded an unclassified award should be made. There may be circumstances where the learner may be advantaged by waiving their right to exemption. Modules which do not contribute to the award classification do not need to be graded. Exemptions in the award stage of a programme are restricted to a maximum of 30 credits and exclude the capstone assessment where applicable. **Assessment** Once the applicant feels they have compiled a portfolio of evidence ready for assessment it should be submitted for assessment. The RPL assessor(s) will map the evidence of the learner against the learning outcomes for the module(s) for which exemption is being claimed. Assessment for exemptions are subject to the standard assessment practices of CCT College and is therefore subject to internal moderation and external examining. A grade for exemption should only be awarded where a fair, consistent and transparent process for grading can be applied. Any grading process should be submitted, by the assessor, to the Dean of School and Dean of Academic Affairs for approval prior to it being applied. The exemptions decision is communicated to the exemptions applicant in writing.	Head of Admissions Dean of Academic Affairs Programme Leader	Records of guidance Email records Grading proposal

Appeal against RPL Exemptions Decision Applicants seeking exemption as part of an admissions decision should follow the process for appeal outlined under Appeal of an RPL Admissions Decision Current students seeking to appeal an exemptions decision should follow the standard process for appeal of an assessment decision as outlined in the Review, Recheck and Appeal Policy. Further information can be obtained from the QA Officer.		
Preparing and Supporting Staff for Managing and Assessing RPL Applications The Dean of School and Dean of Academic Affairs work collaboratively to provide regular training to the School Manager, Programme Leaders, and module leaders with regards to RPL. The Dean of School also acts as mentor to any member of staff currently engaged in RPL advising or assessing. The CCT Centre for Teaching and Learning provides resources to support faculty engaged in RPL advising and assessing.	Dean of School Dean of Academic Affairs	Staff workshop schedule Evaluation records
Monitoring As part of the monitoring of the effectiveness of this procedure the QA Officer will include RPL applicants in the admissions audit to establish adherence to the policy. Exam Board and External Examiner records will be used to inform appropriateness of RPL admissions in the context of student achievement. Standard retention and progression monitoring as part of annual review highlight if there are patterns associated with RPL admissions and exemptions.	QA Officer Programme Leader	Admissions Audit Annual monitoring report

Monitoring		
Monitor (Job Title)	**Frequency**	**Monitoring Method(s)**
Head of Admissions School Manager Programme Leader Dean of Academic Affairs QA Officer	**Annual**	Admissions External Examiner reports Staff development evaluation forms Admissions Audit

POLICY CONTROL SHEET

Policy Title	Access, Transfer and Progression
Responsible Officer(s)	Dean of Academic Affairs
Issuance Date	March 2018
Effective Date	May 2018
Last Review Date	July 2019
Supersedes	Version 2.0
Next Review Date	August 2024
Designated Reviewer(s)	Dean of Academic Affairs

Revision History

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved By
New Policy	August 2015	New QA system	Senior Management Team	Head of Academics, College Registrar
2.0	March 2018	Updates to reflect differentiation between RPL admissions and RPL exemptions. Detail of criteria and standards to be applied and clarification on guidance to issued.	Dean of Academic Affairs	Academic Council
2.1	September 2019	Edits to reflect organisational change. Requirement to complete RPL record for learner file.	SMT / QA Committee	Academic Council

References upon which the Policy section is based

CCT Policy area	Access, Transfer and Progression
Statutory & System Wide Basis	The Irish Qualifications and Quality Act (Education and Training), 2012; European Standards and Guidelines for QA in the European Higher Education Area, Relevant QQI Standards and Guidelines The Principles and Operational Guidelines for The Implementation of a National Approach to Credit in Irish Higher Education and Training (NQAI) June 2005, republished by QQI in 2015 QQI Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013
Related CCT Policies / Forms	CCTP601 – Access, Transfer and Progression CCTF132 – Admissions Form