

QA 3.4 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

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1 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

1.1 Introduction

Cenit College is fully committed to ensuring all learners get the opportunity to engage in a programme of learning if they have the appropriate skills and competencies. To this extent all learner's achievement will be considered.

1.2 Policy Ownership

This policy will be owned by the Training Manager.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Cenit College sets out the process and procedures to be followed in considering Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). This policy is in keeping with the Cenit College policy on Access, Transfer and Progression to consider each learner's application in a fair and transparent manner.

1.4 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all Cenit College programmes, where learners seek to be admitted on the basis of RPL.

1.5 Responsibilities

Programme Development Team: Sets out the RPL opportunities on any programme that they validate.

Programme Co-ordinator: Evaluates the RPL application.

Subject Matter Expert (SME): Provides guidance on the evaluation where required.

Training Manager: Reviews the application.

Quality Manager: is responsible for oversight.

1.6 Policy Statement

Cenit Colleges recognises that learners may have achieved their learning through informal or formal means. This can be through accredited, non-accredited or experiential learning. To this extent Cenit College will ensure that every learner has a right to apply based on RPL. The RPL process is conducted in a fair and transparent manner considering a systematic and consistent process for all application.

1.7 RPL Procedure for Prior Certified Learning

RPL may be considered for the following circumstances:

- Admission to a programme
- Advanced entry into a programme
- Exemptions for part of a programme

The RPL procedure is as follows:

1. Applicants who wish to be considered for RPL via the prior certified learning route should contact Cenit College to request the start of the process. They will be asked to complete an application form. This should be submitted to the Programme Coordinator along with the relevant supporting documents.
2. The Programme Coordinator screens the application and requests further information if necessary.

- When all the information has been gathered the Programme Coordinator will evaluate the information to ensure that applicants prior certified learning is equivalent to the entry requirements for the relevant programme. Guidance may be sought from a SME.
- The applicant may be asked to attend an interview. This will be conducted via electronic communication means.
- Once the evaluation of the applicant is complete, the applicant's evidence for RPL, the application form, the mapping and a report should be forwarded to the Training Manager for final verification.
- The programme Co-ordinator will inform the applicant of the RPL outcome. Cenit College will finalise all RPL eligibility within 10 working days.

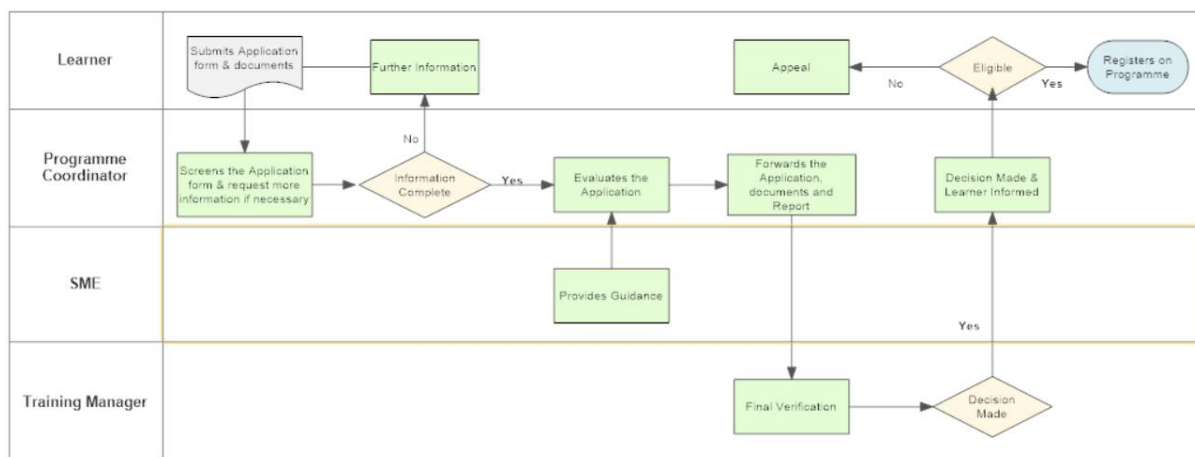


Figure 1.1: RPL Prior Certified Learning Process

1.8 RPL Procedure for Prior Un-certified Learning

- Applicants who wish to be considered for RPL via the prior un-certified learning route should contact Cenit College to request the start of the process. They will be asked to complete an application form along with relevant documents. This should be submitted to the Programme Coordinator. These applicants should provide evidence/information of their experiential learning.
- The Programme Coordinator screens the application and requests further information if necessary.
- When all the information is gathered the Programme Coordinator will evaluate the information. Further clarification may be sought from the applicant, in some instances. This can take the form of documentation, projects available or other items deemed necessary to provide such clarification.
- The applicant may be asked to attend an interview. This will be conducted via electronic communication means.
- When the Programme Coordinator is verifying the prior experiential learning, they will consider the following:
 - Will the applicant be likely to meet the learning outcomes?
 - Will the applicant be likely to meet the standard of learning as detailed on the NFQ?
 - Will the applicant have the ability to apply the learning in a new context?
- If required, the Programme Coordinator may seek guidance from an SME.
- Once the evaluation of the applicant is complete, the applicant's evidence for RPL, the application form, the evidence, the mapping, and a report should be forwarded to the Training Manager for final verification.

- The programme Co-ordinator will inform the applicant of the RPL outcome. Cenit College will finalise all RPL eligibility within 10 working days.

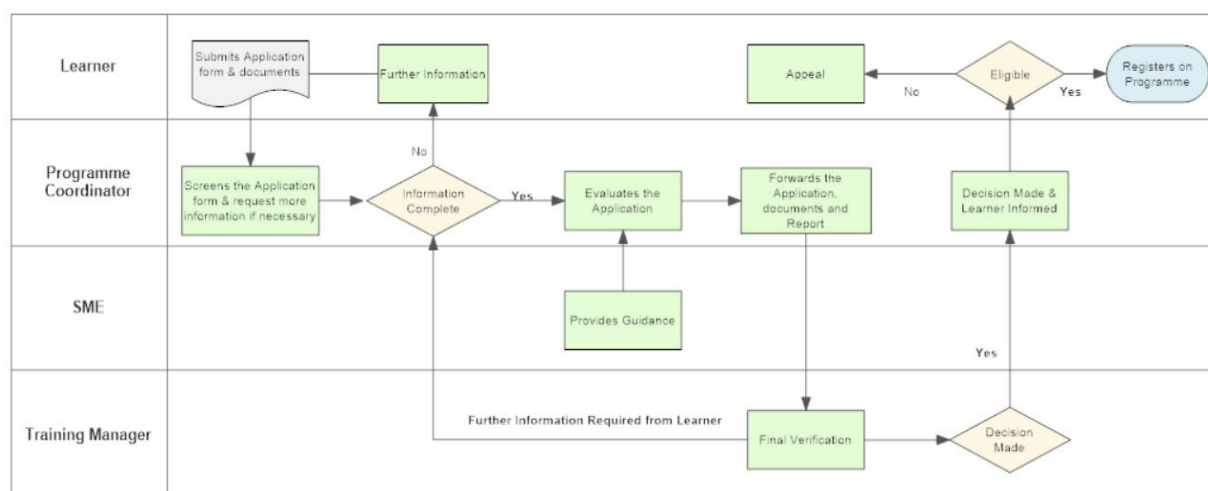


Figure 1.2: RPL Prior Un-certified Learning Process

1.9 RPL Appeals Process

The applicant has the right to appeal the decision in relation to RPL. An applicant may only appeal on the following grounds:

- Incorrect process. Specific evidence of irregularity in the College's application assessment process must be provided.
- Specified/stated grounds where the College's decision was based on misinterpretation of data or information provided as part of the application process.

The RPL Appeals Process is as follows:

- Appeals should be initiated within five (5) working days of the issue of the decision being appealed, subject to extenuating circumstances (for example, serious illness). The appellant (person making the appeal) submits their appeal to the Training Manager within five working days of the issue of the decision being appealed. The appeal submission should include:
 - A completed appeals application form (Appeals Form).
 - Verifiable evidence which addresses the appeal criteria.
 - A fee of €50. In the event of a successful appeal, the fee will be refunded.
- The Training Manager assesses the application for appeal to establish if it is complete and meets the grounds for an appeal. The learner will be notified if there are grounds for appeal or not.
- Where the appeal is considered valid the appeal will be heard by the Appeals Committee. It is at the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee discretion, for learners to be in attendance. See QA1 Governance (Section 1.6.7) for details of the membership, roles, and responsibilities of the Appeals Committee.
- The appeal will be considered impartially, (i.e. those reviewing the appeal will not have been directly involved in the original decision) and based on the written submission of the appellant.
- The outcome of an appeal should be communicated in writing to an applicant within 15 working days from the date that the appeal was made unless exceptional circumstances arise.

6. A record will be maintained of the appeal which details, the decision, the rational for that decision and any supporting evidence.
7. The outcome of the appeal is reported to the Academic Committee.
8. The appellant may communicate dissatisfaction with an outcome to the Managing Director whereupon any communication from the Managing Director is final.

1.10 Monitoring

Quality Manager will review this policy as part of the annual QA audit. The RPL applicants will be included as part of the audit on the admissions process.

The monitoring mechanisms are as follows:

- Comparison of RPL attendance and pass rates to overall programme attendance and pass rates
- Minutes from Programme board
- Minutes from Academic Council
- Learner records
- RPL Application forms
- Appeals Form

1.11 Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Originator	Approved by
Version 1	14/02/2024	QQI Approval of Policy	QA	QQI