

Validation Arrangements for Recognition of Prior Learning

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 IRELAND

Timeline



ID number 28683

Background

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 sets out the statutory basis for Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)'s engagement with recognition of prior learning (RPL), mainly through establishing policies and criteria for access, transfer and progression (ATP) for providers.

The establishment of the RPL practitioner network in Ireland in 2014 provides an opportunity for the continuing sharing of national practices. QQI agreed to fund research to describe approaches and practices in publicly funded further education and training (FET) within the education and training boards sector in co-operation with Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) to make recommendations for next steps.

Education and training boards (ETBs) are statutory FET providers; they manage centres for FET and adult education and training throughout the country. There are 16 ETBs in Ireland.

Objectives

Policy expectations from the provision of RPL services are high. The assumption is that if we make our skills and learning, however attained, visible as qualifications, ultimately there will be better skills matching and less unemployment and underemployment.

Description

The 2016-19 action plan for education includes the aim to develop a national policy on the recognition of prior learning (RPL) (objective 2.1, action No 44) by 2018. The 2025 National skills strategy that was published in 2016 has, among its objectives, the development of a system for RPL and better recognition of workplace learning in support of lifelong learning. In 2017, QQI published policies and criteria for validation in FET. RPL is also a part of the review of the national framework for qualifications (NFQ, the Irish national qualification framework).

2016 Approved/Agreed

The policy framework is set in 2016.

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

Education and Training Boards (ETBs) started to formalise RPL processes based on QQI's validation requirements.

2020 Implementation

In 2020, QQI released a new database, which provides a comprehensive and authoritative list of all quality-assured education and training qualifications offered in Ireland.

The Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ) lists quality-assured, recognised qualifications offered by universities and institutes of technology, as well as private higher education colleges, ETBs, and private further education and training (FET) providers delivering courses leading to a QQI award. QQI is continuing to work with awarding bodies to ensure the database is fully populated and entries kept up-to-date.

2021 Implementation

The inaugural review of quality assurance in ETBs commenced in March 2021 with an expert review team meeting a cross-section of learners, staff and stakeholders at Louth and Meath Education Training Board.

2022 Completed

Recognition of Prior Learning has been integrated into the National Skills Strategy to 2025.

Bodies responsible

- Department of Education and Skills (until 2020)
- Department of Education
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

Target group

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Further developing national quality assurance systems

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Comprehensive national qualification frameworks

Learners' possibilities of accumulation, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired non-formally and informally

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Information about the Irish NFQ on the QQI website](#)

[Recognition of prior learning in Irish FET](#)

[Kerry ETB RPL policy paper](#)

[Technical paper on the qualifications system](#)

[Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training](#)

Related policy developments

2023 Completed

Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025

The 2025 National skills strategy is targeted at ensuring relevance of education and training to the needs of learners, society and the economy. It is based on active involvement of employers and quality teaching and learning, with a perspective of lifelong learning and inclusion.

 IRELAND

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

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