

Civil Defence College

The background image shows a modern, two-story building with a light blue and white facade. A sign on the building reads 'Cosaint Shibhialta Civil Defence'. The building has a covered walkway with blue railings. The text 'Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPL)' is overlaid in large, bold, dark blue letters.

Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPL).

Policy No. 6 (2022)

Policy and Procedures for Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPL).

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Aim of RPL**
- 3. Assessment Criteria**
- 4. Role of Civil Defence**
- 5. Role of the applicant**
- 6. Role of the CDO**
- 7. Steps involved in RPL**
- 8. Portfolios of evidence**
- 9. RPL Pathway (Sample)**
- 10. RPL Application Form**

Contact Details

For further information, please contact;

College Principal
Civil Defence College
Benamore
Roscrea
Co. Tipperary

Email: courses@defence.ie
T: 050525332

1. Introduction

Civil Defence College policy for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in relation to knowledge, skills and competence of an individual.

This policy sets out the steps involved in applying for RPL, in respect of certified training, and the conditions under which applicants are evaluated. The policy also sets out the roles and responsibilities of each party during the RPL process.

The scope of the policy covers the Civil Defence College, Civil Defence Volunteer and the Local Authority Civil Defence Officer Civil Defence College internal assessor. The policy covers all RPL applications by Civil Defence volunteers seeking recognition of formal prior certified learning.

All applications for Recognition of Prior Learning must be submitted through the Civil Defence Officer.

2. Aim of RPL in Civil Defence

- Recognition of an award (in part or whole) towards a defined standard.
- Access / transfer to a programme of study.
- Recognition as a Responder in a specific discipline(s) for the purpose of being deployed by the Local Authority Civil Defence unit.
- Recognition as an instructor in a specific discipline(s) for the purpose of teaching in Civil Defence.

Recognition of an Award:

Volunteers with qualifications gained externally may wish to have the award recognised by Civil Defence in order to be deployed or teach on behalf of Civil Defence.

Access / Transfer to a programme of study.

Volunteers seeking entry to a Civil Defence course may wish to have *certified* prior learning considered to gain credit / exemption from programme outcomes (part or whole), or to progress directly to the next level of a learning intervention.

Responder: Recognition of Prior Learning:

Volunteers with externally acquired *responder* qualification(s) may apply through the RPL process to be deployed by their Local Authority Civil Defence unit. This decision is made by the Local Authority Civil Defence Officer.

Instructor: Recognition of Prior Learning:

Volunteers with externally acquired *instructor* qualification(s) may apply through the RPL process to teach within their Local Authority Civil Defence unit. This application is approved by the Local Authority Civil Defence Officer and forwarded to the Civil Defence College for decision.

3. Assessment Criteria

Dependent on the RPL application, the following criteria will be considered (in part or whole) by the Local Authority Civil Defence Officer or the Civil Defence College when evaluating an application for RPL;

- The extent and scope of the prior learning acquired.
- The relevance of the evidence submitted.
- Syllabus of the original training course.
- The recognition of original certifying agency.
- Date of the original certification.
- The ability of the individual to prove learning associated with achievements.
- Use of the qualification/skills since first awarded
- The ability of the individual to prove they have the required competencies as specified by the particular education and training standard or award.
- The ability of the person to present the evidence in the required format.

4. Role of Civil Defence in RPL Process

The role of the Civil Defence is to implement an appropriate validation process, which is equivalent, impartial, consistent, and evidence based.

The Local Authority Civil Defence Officer and/or the Civil Defence College Instructor will assess the evidence provided by the volunteer and identify the appropriate validation pathway under which RPL will be conducted.

The Local Authority Civil Defence Officer and/or the Civil Defence Civil Defence College will:

- Act in a timely manner
- Ensure fair and transparent process
- Protect all information provided to it by the learner in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
- Where appropriate amend and adapt policies and procedures to reflect internal and external standards.

5. Role of the Civil Defence Volunteer (applicant) in RPL Process

The role of the applicant is to

- Inform the CDO of their intention to make an application.
- Engage in the RPL process, provide relevant documentation,
- Act promptly and make themselves available for any validation pathways required by the decision maker.

6. Role of the Civil Defence Officer in RPL Process

The role of the Civil Defence Officer (CDO) in the RPL process is to approve or reject the application. A CDO may decide to reject an RPL Application for a number of reasons, for example:

- The application does not meet the agreed criteria
- If a CDO has sufficient instructors or responders in a specific discipline, he/she may make a decision that they do not need additional volunteers, at this time.
- If a volunteer is not active and engaging on a regular basis in deployments or training.

When the CDO approves the application, the following steps are required:

- Inform the applicant of the requirements
- Provide information to the applicant on the RPL process and advising the applicant on entry requirements and validation pathways.
- Advising the applicant in identifying and gathering evidence to support their application.
- Assisting the applicant to analyse the standards for an award in terms of his/her prior knowledge, skill and competence and the matching of these to the learning/ standard outcomes of the award.
- Assisting with the determination of eligibility prior to the submission of a portfolio of evidence to the Civil Defence College.

Responder level RPL applications

CDO makes a decision whether the applicant can be approved immediately or if the applicant needs to complete upskilling. This is a decision for the CDO and may be based on the individual Local Authority requirements.

PHECC Paramedics and Advanced Paramedic qualifications do not require the RPL process, the CDO, if satisfied that these practitioner skills are required should update the volunteer register through Affiliated Training

Instructor level RPL Applications

The CDO approves the application and submits it to the college for decision. This includes all instructor courses certified through the Civil Defence College and PHECC Assistant Tutors, Tutors and Facilitators.

7. Steps involved in RPL Process

The table on the next page outlines the overview of the process. Please note the steps are not exhaustive and subject to change. Further information on specific RPL pathways is available from Civil Defence College.

Responder Certification

Application submitted to CDO

CDO Decision
Accepted or Rejected
Informs Volunteer

Accepted: CDO Decision
Upskilling Required or Not

No Upskilling Required:
CDO Updates Volunteer Register with
qualification details under Affiliated Training

Upskilling Required
CDO informs applicant of requirements

Applicant completes Upskilling
CDO Updates Volunteer Register with
qualification details under Affiliated Training

Instructor Certification

Application submitted to CDO

CDO Decision
Accepted or Rejected
Informs Volunteer

CDO submits to Civil Defence College

Civil Defence College Decision
Adds applicant to Upskilling Workshop

Applicant completes upskilling

Civil Defence College informs CDO
Civil Defence Instructor Certification issued
Faculty list updated

8. Portfolios of Evidence / Upskilling / Pre Requisites

In recognition of the broad depth of prior certified learning, both in Ireland and abroad, applicants may be required to compile a portfolio of evidence demonstrating how they have achieved the learning outcomes of a particular course or how they meet the entry requirements for a field of study. The applicant may also be required to submit detailed course information such as syllabus, project work, modules, etc. as part of their submission. The extent of documentation and detail required by the volunteer in their submission will depend on the award in which recognition is sought.

For Responder related certification and awards, the CDO may consider elements such as attendance at duties (active volunteer), certification obtained, workshops attended, evidence of attending local training, etc. will be factored in to a volunteers requirements for their portfolio of evidence.

Upskilling:

The upskilling referred to in the next table may include a number of methods,

- Responder Level Applicants duration and number decided by CDO:
- Attending Local Training (number of duties decided by CDO)
- Being assessed by experienced Instructor
- Observed by experienced Volunteer
- Working with an experienced volunteer for a defined time

Pre-Requisites

Minimum Training Standard Requirements and agreed pre-requisites will be checked and confirmed for all RPL Applications

Notes:

Local Authorities have the right to accept instructor qualifications and standard without approval from the Civil Defence College. In such case, the Instructor is responsible for the provision of training materials and certification. The Local Authority CDO updates the volunteer records. In order to use Civil Defence College materials, receive Civil Defence College certification and have volunteer records updated by the college, an instructor must complete this RPL Process.

When an Instructor completed the RPL Process successfully, he/she will be awarded a Civil Defence Instructor Certificate, regardless of holding the same certificate from another provider. The date on the Civil Defence Certificate will coincide with the bulk of Civil Defence Instructor expiry dates and allow for standardisation of recertification dates.

All PHECC Responder qualifications and NQEMT are included in the Civil Defence RPL Process.

9. Examples: RPL Pathways.

A Volunteer informs the CDO that he/she has a PHECC EMT Certificate and wants to be recognised as an EMT within the Local Authority Civil Defence unit.

The CDO needs to decide if this volunteer is active and will be a positive addition to the unit – if yes:

- requests a copy of the original certificate
 - decide if upskilling is required
 - gives EMT the privileging application
 - Update the Volunteer Register (Affiliated) with the details of the EMT Certificate
- If no: Inform the volunteer

A Volunteer informs the CDO that he/she has completed Manal Handling Operator and a FAR course at their work – and wants to submit it for Civil Defence

The CDO needs to decide if this volunteer is active and this certificate/training meets the need of the Local Authority Civil Defence

– If yes:

- requests a copy of the original certificates
 - decide if upskilling is required
 - Update the Volunteer Register (Affiliated Training) with the details of the Manual Handling Certificate and the FAR Certificate
- If no: Inform the volunteer and include him/her on Civil Defence training course

A Volunteer informs the CDO that he/she has completed Manal Handling Instructor course at their work – and wants to teach in Civil Defence

The CDO needs to decide if this volunteer is active and the Local Authority Civil Defence unit needs a Manual Handling Instructor

– If yes:

- requests a copy of the original certificate
- submit application to the Civil Defence College
- The College will inform the CDO of the requirements and include the MH Instructor in the next Upskilling Course/workshop

A Volunteer informs the CDO that he/she has completed Swiftwater and Flood Instructors course at their work – and wants to teach in Civil Defence

The CDO needs to decide if this volunteer is active and the Local Authority Civil Defence unit needs a Swiftwater and Flood Instructor

– If yes:

- requests a copy of the original certificate – confirm that it is provided through a Rescue 3 recognised training site
- submit application to the Civil Defence College
- The College will confirm details with Rescue 3 Europe and inform the CDO of the requirements (if any)
- If appropriate add the SWFRI to the Civil Defence Facult

10. RPL Application for *Certified* Prior Learning

Application to Civil Defence College for Recognition of Prior Learning 2023

| | | | |
|---|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Volunteer Name | | Volunteer Signature: | |
| Local Authority | | Volunteer No. | |
| Qualification/s Applied for: | | | |
| Please list qualifications relevant to RPL sought | | | |
| Certification | Awarding Body | Date of Award | Certificate No. Expiry Date |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| <p><i>Please note – Attach copies of all <u>current</u> Certification with application - in addition to certification an applicant may be required to submit a detailed syllabus in relation to certificates</i></p> <p>Additional Information which may be relevant to application:</p> | | | |
| <p>I, as Civil Defence Officer, nominate the above named volunteer to be approved/recognised as a _____ Instructor</p> <p>Signed: _____ CDO Date: _____</p> | | | |

The Department of Defence will treat personal data that you provide as confidential, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection legislation. Full details of the Department of Defence Data Protection Policy can be found on our website at www.defence.ie; by email from dataprotection@defence.ie or in writing from Data Protection Office, Department of Defence, Station Road, Newbridge, Co. Kildare W12 AD93.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| For Official Use Only | Date Received in Civil Defence College : | | |
| Result of Application : | Complete Approval <input type="checkbox"/> | Partial Approval <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Approved <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Certification/Letter of Acceptance issued (if applicable) : | | | |
| Assessment Required : | Date of Assessment : | | |

The Department of Defence will treat personal data that you provide as confidential, in accordance with the General

Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection legislation. Full details of the Department of Defence Data Protection Policy can be found on our website at www.defence.ie; by email from dataprotection@defence.ie or in writing from Data Protection Office, Department of Defence, Station Road, Newbridge, Co. Kildare W12 AD93.



Civil Defence College
Benamore
Roscrea
Co. Tipperary
E53 CY 80

© *Civil Defence College* - 2023

No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or any information or retrieval system, without the prior permission of Civil Defence College in writing.