



Development of national principles and operational guidelines for RPL in FE and HE and Training in Ireland

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Overview of Presentati on

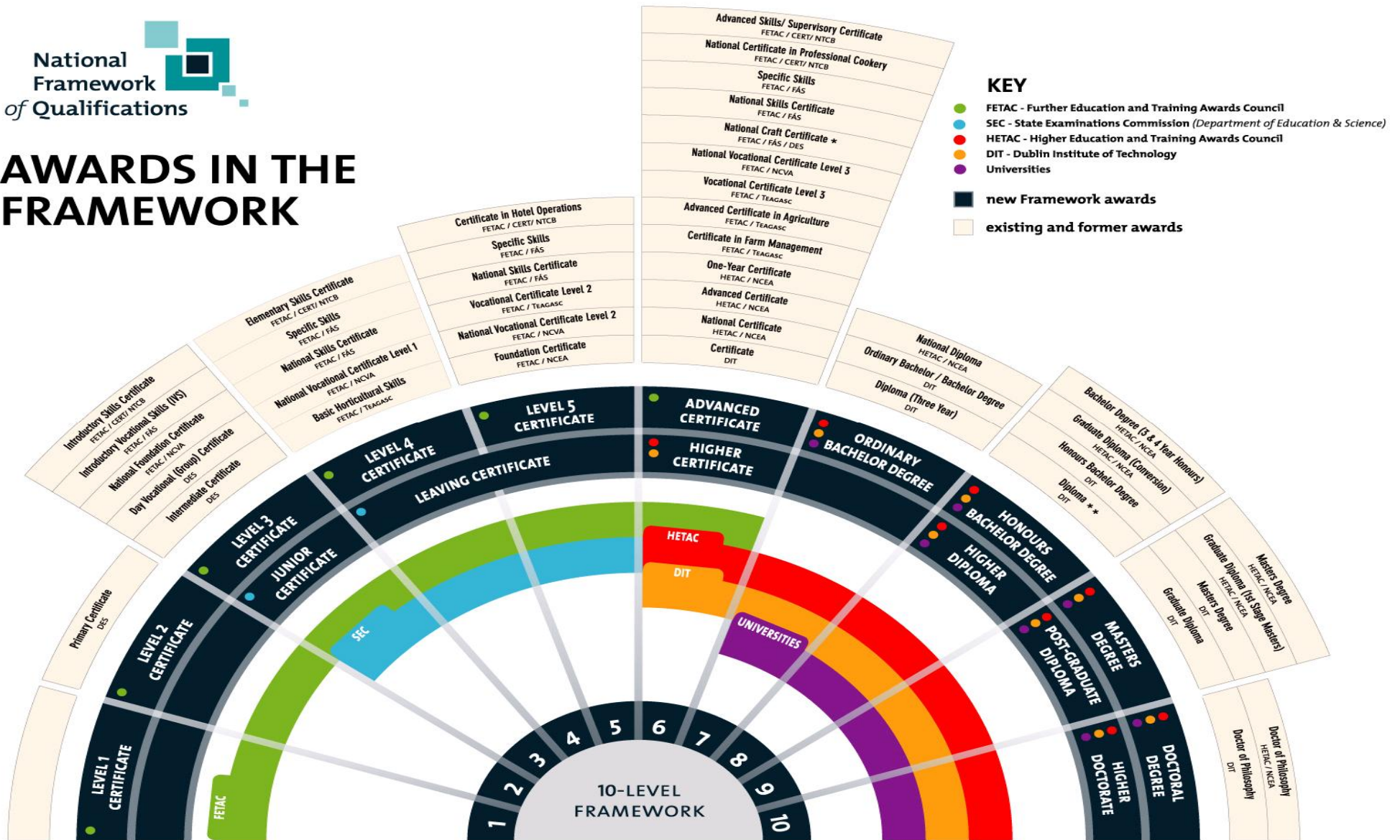
1. Developments in Recognition of Prior Learning in Ireland
2. Policy context - National Framework of Qualifications, European Dimension, OECD activity
3. The process of developing national principles and guidelines for RPL
4. Implementing RPL . drivers and challenges
5. Current stage of implementation and possible next steps.



Development of RPL in Ireland

- RPL activities in Ireland since 1990s
 1. Work-related . need for formal qualifications
 2. Access to higher education
 3. Adult and community education
 4. Lifelong learning
 5. EU and national research projects

AWARDS IN THE FRAMEWORK





National Framework of Qualifications

Aims to recognise *all* learning achievements

1. Promotes flexibility and integration of qualifications

- alternative pathways, credit,

2. Establishes common reference point for qualifications . learning outcomes

- . common reference point for assessment of prior learning

3. Introduces broader range of award-types . minor, special purpose, supplemental

- Increases range of qualifications that RPL can be applied to



International Dimension - European Union

- . Common European Principles (2004) non-formal and informal learning
quality, assessment, communication, the individual
- . Increasing interest in RPL
Demographic change, labour market, changes in education and training
Much diversity in legislative, policy and practice . new area for many
Practice can be linked to adult/career guidance, may be parallel formal education and training systems
Common issues: funding, focus of intervention, link to qualifications, individual rights
- EU follow-up: further principles on quality, link to qualifications frameworks



International dimension - OECD

- OECD RNFIL activity on RPL 2006-2008 (recognition of non-formal and informal learning)
 - . 22 countries, including Ireland, involved in RNFIL study
- involves preparation of country background reports, visits, case studies
- stock-taking, identify good approaches and practice to RPL

For Ireland

- . Opportunity to set out policy and practice in Ireland in all areas
- . NQAI worked with awards Councils and Advisory Group has drafted country background report
- . Recommendations expected to inform next steps in policy.



Developing National Principles and Guidelines for RPL

Developed in 2004/2005 to promote, support and co-ordinate RPL practice for all sectors (*document available*)

The process involved a **National RPL Advisory Group (18)** representing:

- É Further and higher education
- É Adult education
- É Business interests
- É Trade Unions

(List of members and remit available)



National Principles and Guidelines 2

RPL concerns **qualifications/awards** in the National Framework of Qualifications

i.e. RPL is mostly used for the purpose of

- . **Entry** to programme which has an award placed on the Framework
- . **Credit** toward a qualification or **exemptions** from programme requirements
- . Access to **full awards**



National Principles and Guidelines 3

Principles and Guidelines document address:

- Quality . embed in quality systems
- Assessment . learning outcomes-based, transparent, fair, consistent.
- Communication . statements of arrangements, documentation, awareness
- Process - clarity of roles, support for applicant, appeals mechanism
- Applicant - information, guidance, support.



National principles and guidelines 4

Role of VET and HE Providers with regard to RPL doc:

1. Develop policies and procedures for RPL
2. Develop statements of arrangements for RPL
3. Communicate policies and procedures to the public
4. Review and update arrangements frequently.



Implementing RPL - Drivers

➤ Implementation of RPL

- Wide range of practice in Ireland in higher and further education and training

Drivers for RPL are diverse:

1. Workplace needs – (nursing, social care, security)
2. Access to education, training and accreditation
3. Personal development and improved life chances
4. Availability of public funding – recently, workplace training funds (Lionra), Strategic Innovation Fund (HEA), EU projects
5. Flexible delivery, credit and modules – continuing professional development (CPD).
6. Links with work-based learning (WBL) programme design in partnership with workplaces.



Implementing RPL - challenges

1. Resources: a major issue for all
2. Challenge to pedagogy, traditional approaches to learning, knowledge and assessment
3. Raising awareness (at all levels)
4. Dealing with uncertainty about level of demand for RPL
5. Capturing practice to inform policy and next steps
6. Focus policy and practice: key groups, sectors, stages of RPL?



Endnote

- Increased interest in RPL nationally and internationally
- Many pieces of the puzzle are in place:
 1. Legislation . Qualifications (Education and Training) Act
 2. National Principles and Guidelines
 3. Experience at all levels of education and training, community and workplace
 4. Need to develop next steps based on practice, experience and feedback.



Information Points

- www.nqf.ie – see access, transfer and progression section
- www.oecd.org – Directorate for Education, Lifelong learning and Sectors of Education