Embedding and Promoting Validation of Prior Learning across Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's College of FET

Presented by:

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Purpose of this Session

During this session we will look at how VPL has grown from small discrete projects in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board to widely offering VPL as a mainstream strand of provision through policy development, staff training and promoting awareness.

Presentation Overview

- Policy to Practice: Setting the Context
- Timeline of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board VPL Development
- VPL Professional Development and Support
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board VPL Projects
- Future Plans: VPL Marketing Campaign

Quick Poll

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Setting the Context

- 2012 EU Council Recommendation and Cedefop European Guidelines

- Ireland: Skills agendas, QQI policies, SOLAS FET Strategy 2020 – 2024, etc.

- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's response to European and national VPL policy development:
  - College of FET Strategic Framework 2022 - 2025
  - Local policy
  - Discrete projects
  - Embedding RPL into provision and practice

European Guidelines for Validating Non-formal and Informal Learning

In May 2023 Cedefop (the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) published the third edition of their **European Guidelines for Validating Non-formal and Informal Learning**.

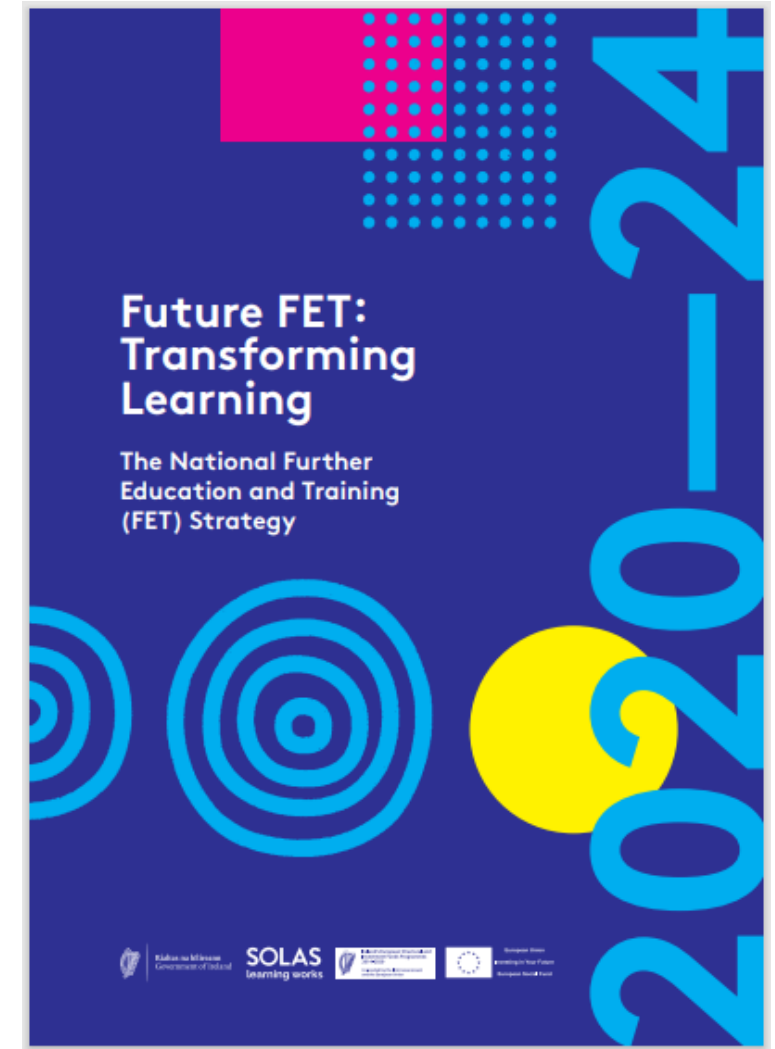People, validation and power: democracy in action?

The purpose of the guidelines is to share experiences and to support mutual learning between those involved in the development and implementation of validation arrangements in Europe.

The guidelines **put the individual at the centre** and provide insights into provision and methodologies and how the process can be coordinated and carried out.

Cedefop (2023). European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop reference series; No 124. http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/389827
European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning (europa.eu)

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SOLAS FET Strategy 2020 - 2024

- 6.3 Targeting Priority Cohorts
  - …..ensuring that recognition of prior learning plays a more prominent role.
- 7.2 Pathways within FET
  - This should encompass strong support for recognition of prior learning….
- 7.4 Facilitating Lifelong Pathways
  - ….models that have been piloted should now be mainstreamed…

Future FET: Transforming Learning

The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy

2020–24

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College of FET Strategic Framework 2022 – 2025

Priority 1: Learner-Centred Approach

1.7: Continue to develop mechanisms to recognise prior learning and certify experiential learning.

Priority 2: Staffing

2.7: Explore the area of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to identify and certify the range of staff skills and competencies.

Framework | College of FET

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Access, Transfer & Progression Policy

- Approved via internal Quality Assurance governance structures, FET Quality Council, in December 2022
- Inclusion of RPL for Access
  - Linked to RPL Assessment Procedure

[College_of_FET_Access_Transfer_Progression_Policy_V1.2.pdf (collegeoffet.ie)](College_of_FET_Access_Transfer_Progression_Policy_V1.2.pdf)

Access, Transfer & Progression Policy

Access, Transfer & Progression Policy

Policy Area	College of FET
Version	1.2
Date	Created: October 2022 Approved: December 2022 Implemented: January 2023 Revised: August 2023
Revision Details	(V1.1) CEFR proficiency details for access at NFQ Levels 3 and 4 included. Course Briefing sessions defined. (V1.2) Access to FET for ESOL and literacy support up to NFQ Level 3 for Protection Applicants now included.
Monitored	Ongoing
Responsibility	Director of FET
Approval	Quality Council

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RPL Assessment Procedure and Forms

- [College of FET_RPL Procedure](#) – Sept 2022

- Revised under QA Governance structures

- Includes:
  - Definitions of RPL, RPCL, RPEL and RPL stakeholders
  - Principles of Assessment and RPL
  - Roles and Responsibilities
  - Programme Governance
  - Foreign and UK Qualifications
  - RPCL and RPEL Application Processes
  - RPL Appeals Process

Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR
LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) PROCEDURE

(FULL-TIME PROVISION)

Division	Further Education and Training
Policy Area	Quality Assurance: Assessment Policy
Version	2.0
Date	Created: April 2022 Approved: June 2022 Implemented: September 2022
Monitored	Annually
Responsibility	Quality Council
Review Date	September 2023

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QA Assessment Templates

A suite of RPL Assessment Templates which were developed to correspond with the 'traditional' QA Assessment Templates.

Slight amendments made to make them more suitable for RPL.

Two new templates created to capture assessor comments on grades awarded.

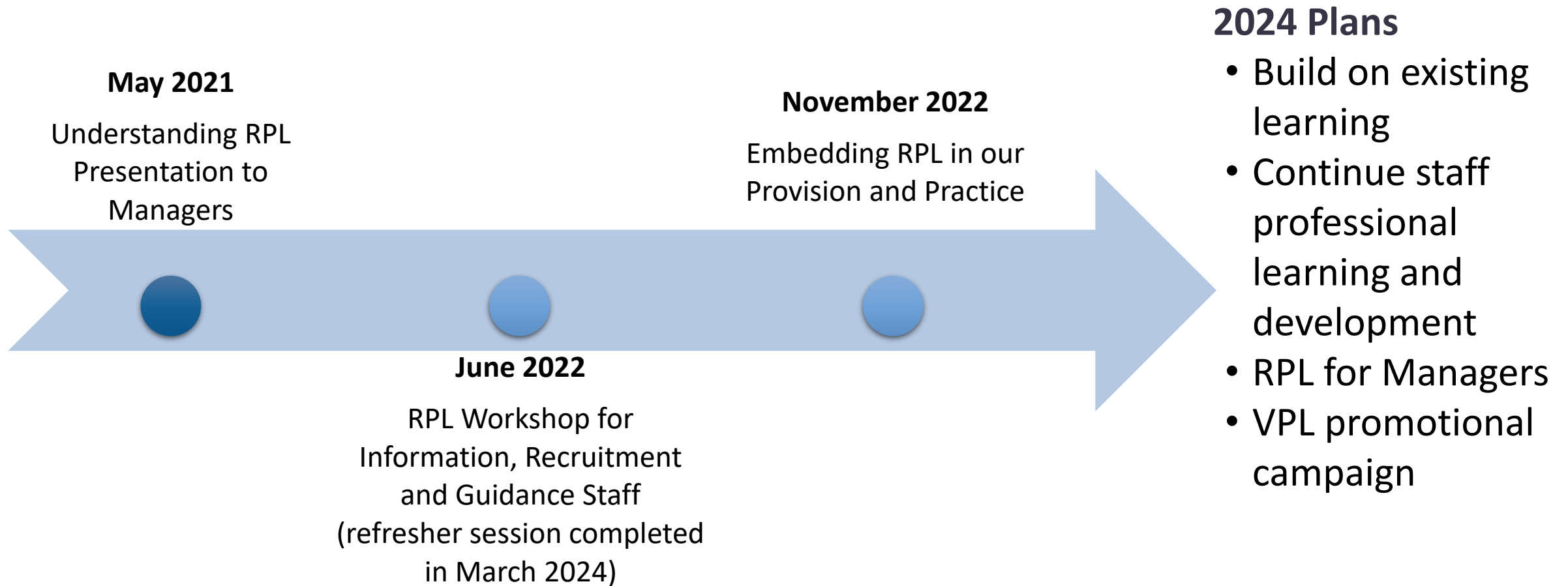| Assessment Templates	RPL Assessment Templates
01 Course Assessment Schedule	N/A for RPL
02 Module Outline	N/A for RPL
03 Assessment Cover Sheet Levels 1-3	03 Assessment Cover Sheet Levels 1-3 RPL
03a Assessment Cover Sheet Levels 4-6	03 Assessment Cover Sheet Levels 4-6 RPL
04 Assessment Brief	04 Assessment Brief RPL
04 Assessment Brief AI (New)	If requested it can be made available.
05 Marking Scheme	05 Grading Rubric. New template required for RPL portfolios. This template must be used to record grades for individual learning outcomes. These grades are then transferred to template 18 Grading Report Levels 1-6 RPL (see below).
06 Outline Solutions	Exams generally not done for RPL in FET. QASS will develop if need arises.
07 Examination Attendance Register	Exams generally not done for RPL in FET. QASS will develop if need arises.
08 Examination Cover Sheet	Exams generally not done for RPL in FET. QASS will develop if need arises.
09 Assessment Submission List Levels 1-3	09 Assessment Submission List Levels 1-3 RPL
09 Assessment Submission List Levels 4-6	09 Assessment Submission List Levels 4-6 RPL
10 Module Results Summary Sheet (Word version) 10a Module Results Summary Sheet (Excel version)	10 Module Results Summary Sheet RPL
11 Portfolio Submission Checklist	11 Portfolio Submission Checklist RPL
12 Portfolio Box Label A4	12 Portfolio Box Label A4 (stays the same)
13 Portfolio Box Label A5	13 Portfolio Box Label A5 (stays the same)
14 IV Checklist	14 IV Checklist RPL
15 IV Report	15 IV Report (stays the same)
16 EA Report	16 EA Report (stays the same)
17 Assessor Feedback Form MANAGEMENT USE ONLY	17 Assessor Feedback Form MANAGEMENT USE ONLY (stays the same)
No equivalent in traditional template. New template required for RPL portfolios.	18 Grading Report Levels 1-6 RPL New template required for RPL portfolios. This template must be used to record grades for RPL modules as the QQI Learner Marking Sheets at the back of the module descriptor aren't applicable to RPL.

New for RPL

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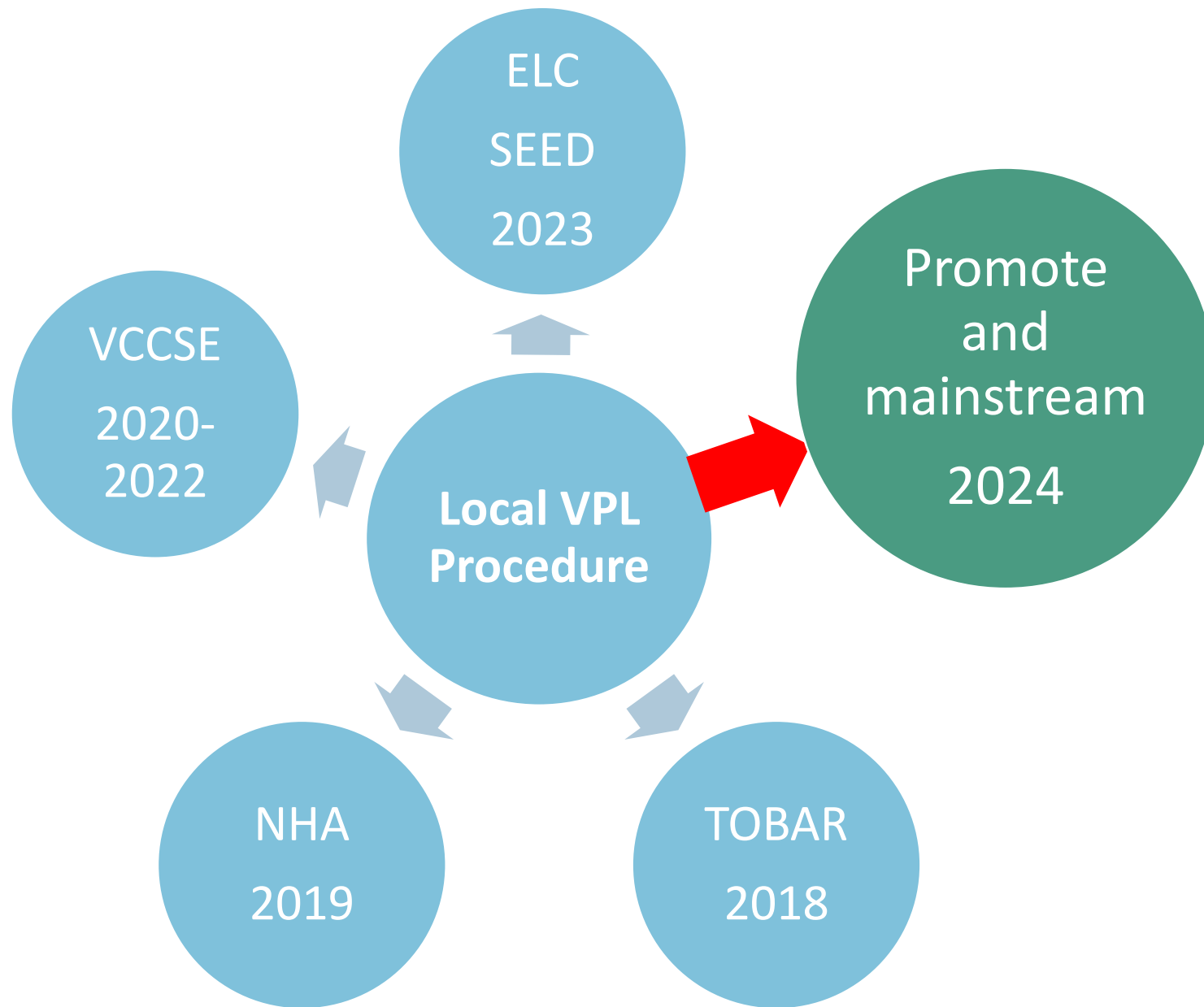
Timeline of VPL in our ETB

- TOBAR Defence Forces – first project in 2018

- Led to development of VPL policies and procedures and a need for increasing staff capacity

- Full-time VPL Support Officer recruited in July 2021

- Dedicated VPL budget

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Timeline – Building Staff Capacity in VPL

May 2021

Understanding RPL Presentation to Managers

November 2022

Embedding RPL in our Provision and Practice

2024 Plans

- Build on existing learning
- Continue staff professional learning and development
- RPL for Managers
- VPL promotional campaign

June 2022

RPL Workshop for Information, Recruitment and Guidance Staff (refresher session completed in March 2024)

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Commitment to Upskilling Staff in VPL

Course/Event	Attendees
NFQ Level 9 RPL, Policy, Practice and Pedagogy – Munster Technological University (2020 and 2023) with Deirdre Goggin	6 in 2020 and 16 in AY 2023/24
NFQ Level 9 – Atlantic Technological University (2021)	9
Introduction to RPL for Mentors and Assessors (in-house and locally developed) • Four iterations from 2022 – 2024 (to-date)	51 from Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and 10 from six other ETBs. Of the 51 in our ETB: • 25 form a centralised bank of mentors and assessors • 26 are managers, guidance, co-ordinators.
Refresher Information session for Information, Recruitment and Guidance Support Service March 2024	12
RPL for Managers in May 2024	40
Erasmus+ 4th VPL Biennale in Iceland, 2022	3
Attendance at national training and events on VPL hosted by, for example, QQI, FESS (Further Education Support Service), the RPL Practitioner Network, HE Institutions, etc.	Monthly communications from PL&D Co-Ordinator via email and Wakelet. Centralised PL&D calendar of training and events. Staff encouraged and supported to attend training.

Introduction to RPL for Mentors and Assessors

- Developed and facilitated by Limerick and Clare ETB's Quality Assurance Support Service

- Digital Badge awarded for completion of the course (including completion of an assessment activity)

- Purpose - to provide education and training for FET staff who want to be involved in supporting applicants through the RPL process as either a mentor or an assessor using Limerick and Clare ETB quality assured processes and procedures

- 6 x 2½ hour sessions
  - Four online and two face-to-face
  - Learner effort estimated at an additional 4 to 6 hours
  - Incorporates activities, assessment and reading time
  - Full-time staff released to attend
  - Part-time staff paid PL&D rate to attend.

Recognition
of
Prior Learning

Introduction to RPL for
Mentors and Assessors

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VPL Community of Practice

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Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board VPL Projects

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VPL and the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship

1) Non-standard entry into Stage 1 where an applicant does not meet the minimum entry requirements as specified in the validated programme

2) Advanced entry into Stage 2 of the programme only. No advanced entry available for entry in Stage 3

3) Certification of the Major Award.

♥ RPLPractitionersIreland liked

Andrina Wafer @andrinaeuropa · 1h
Mary Ryan, Graduating with the #AdvancedCertificate in #Hairdressing ! 'Age is no barrier'. @rpl_network @QQI_connect @SOLASFET 'I know I'm worth it. I'm doing a great job now and I know it'

BLOWN AWAY

TV presenter, fashion designer and former hairdresser, Brendan Courtney, with Graduates Michelle Nugent Considine from Clarecastle, and Bridget Haren from Ennis, both of Bridget Haren Hair & Beauty pictured as Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board conferal ceremony for the first eight graduates of the new QQI award 'Advanced Certificate in Hairdressing'. These graduates are the first nationally-recognised, qualified hairdressers in the country. Photograph by Brian Arthur

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VPL and the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship: National Process Roll-out

- Pilot group of 8 applicants graduated in August 2022
- National roll-out began in 2023 following extensive evaluation and review of the process
- VPL Process currently in
  - Ennis (7 applicants)
  - Mallow (10 applicants)
  - Waterford (7 applicants)
- Two new groups will be starting in Ennis in the coming weeks
- This process is available nationally to all Collaborating Providers of the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship
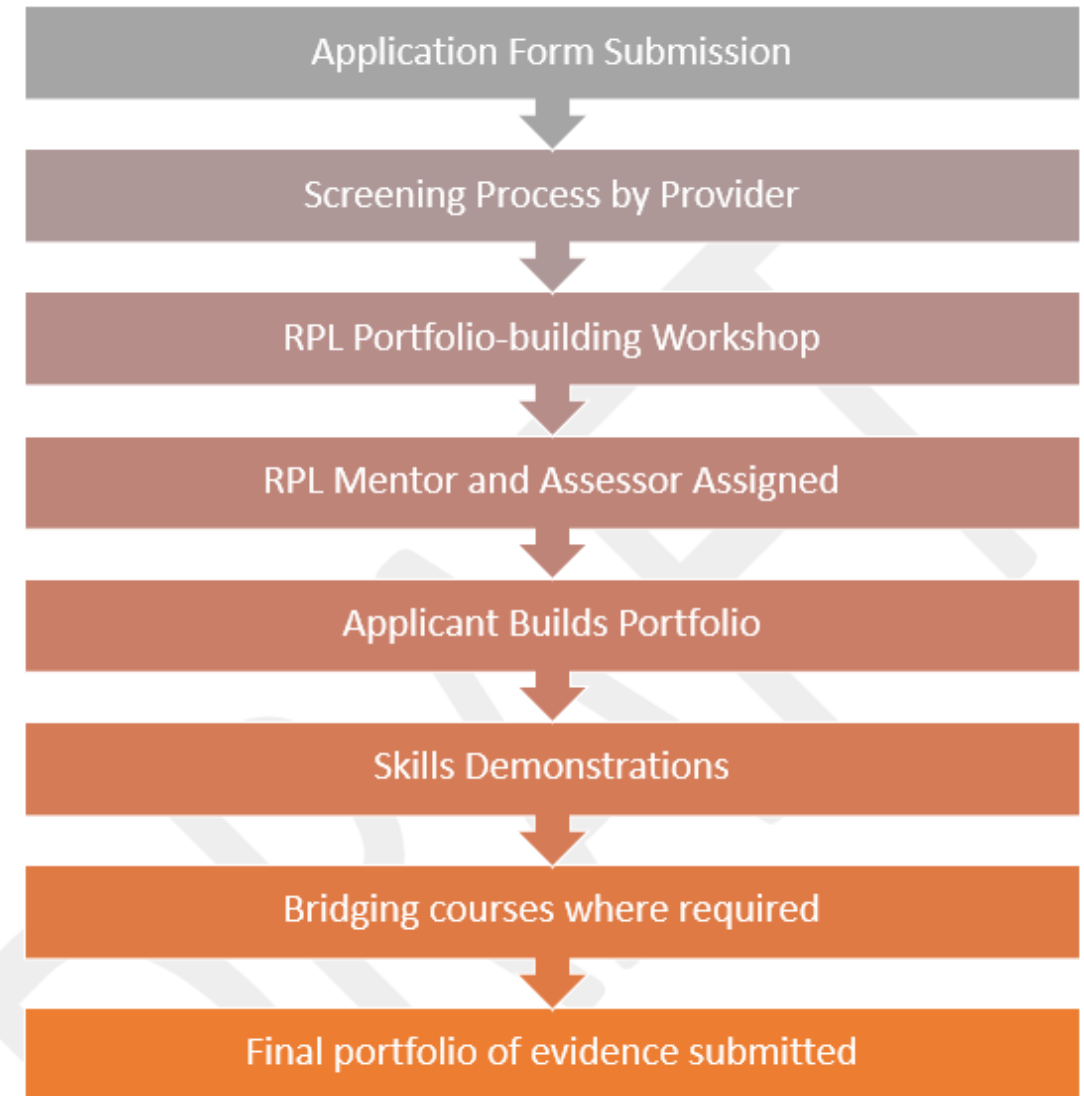
Application Form Submission

Screening Process by Provider

RPL Portfolio-building Workshop

RPL Mentor and Assessor Assigned

Applicant Builds Portfolio

Skills Demonstrations

Bridging courses where required

Final portfolio of evidence submitted

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S.E.E.D PROJECT

NOVEMBER 23
Scoping exercise within the barracks complete

DECEMBER 23
14 Candidates for VPLwere identified after the initial briefing to the Defence Forces

JANUARY 24
Started with 12 applicants who were assigned a RPL Mentor to support them 1:1

MARCH 24
Total completed - 9
Work Experience Level 5 - 3
Work Experience Level 6 - 6

FUTURE PLAN
Work towards major award in Administration Level 6 and minor award in Beverage Services Level 5

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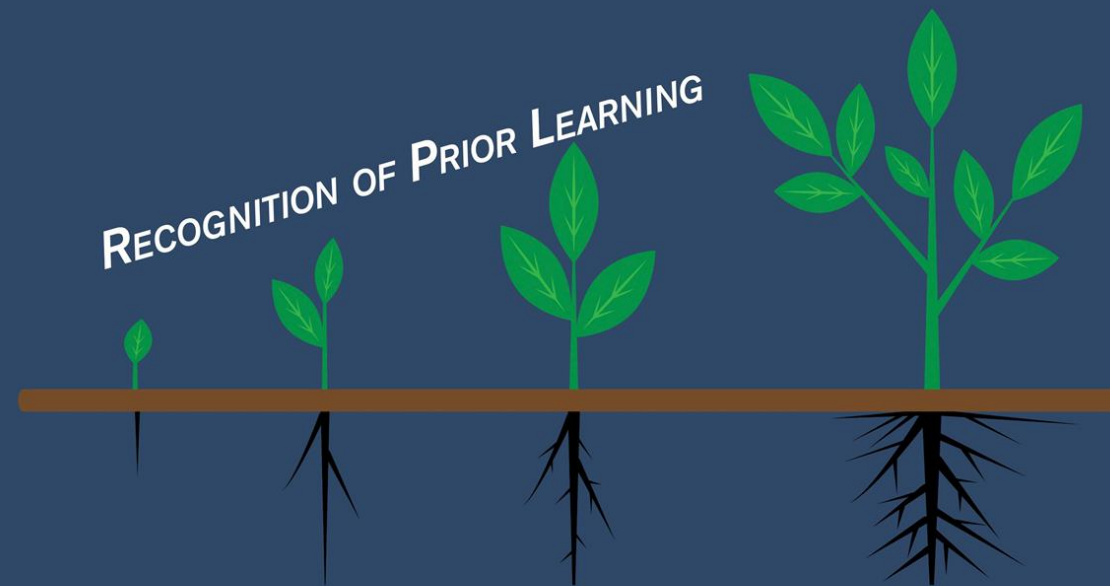
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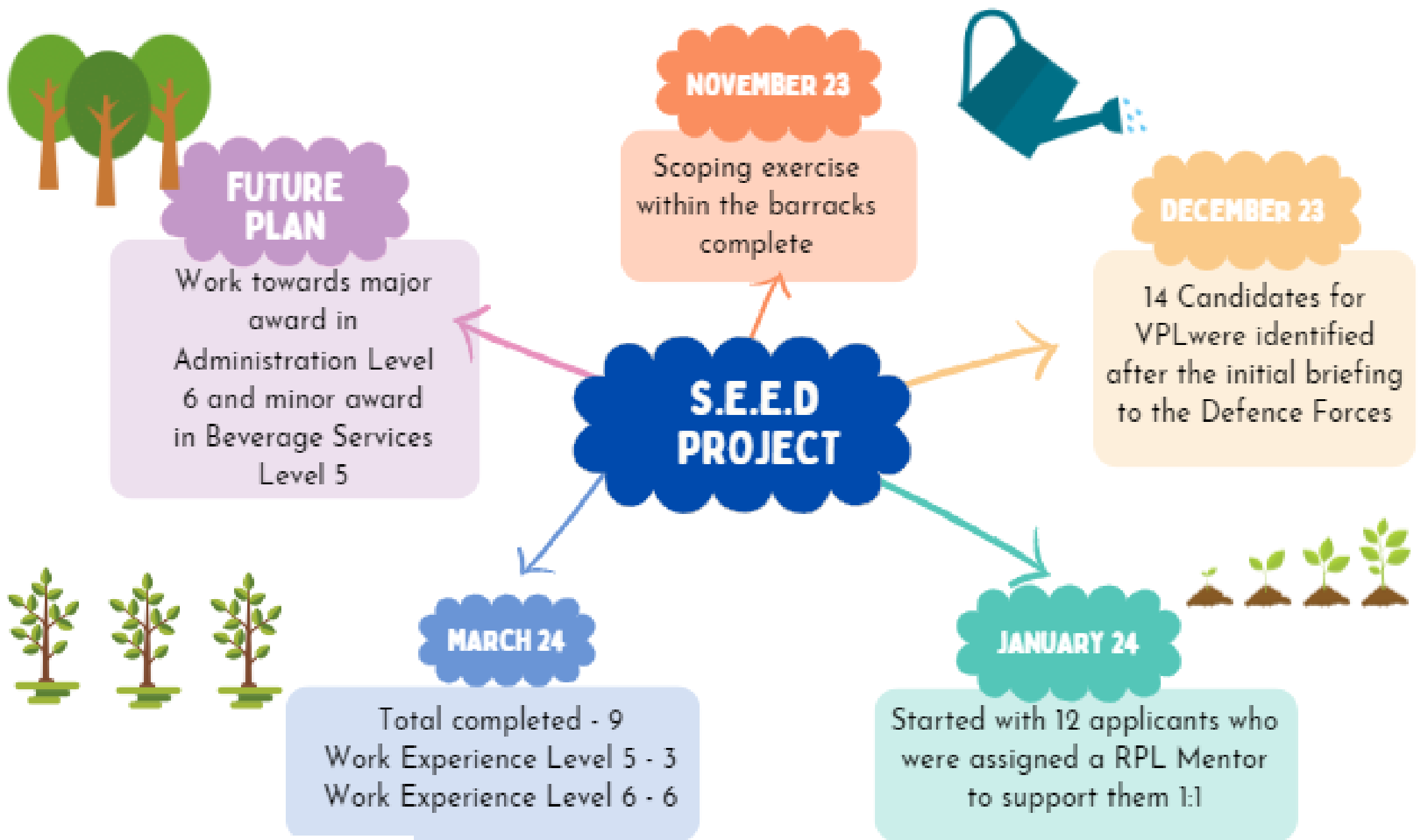
VPL with Ukrainian Applicants

- A VPL project created for two Ukrainian learners with a wealth of Childcare Experience

- Aim – Validate their knowledge, experience and skills with an award on the NFQ for the purposes of employment in the childcare sector

- Time constraint due deactivation of the QQI Level 5 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) major award in Dec 2023

- Mapped and integrated <u>72 learning outcomes</u> across <u>eight modules</u> from the QQI ECCE major award

- Five linked themes were used to create <u>five assessment briefs</u>. Each brief contained several tasks.

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How did it work?

- One face-to-face meeting followed by eight online meetings using MS Teams

- Documented experiences through reflections, interviews, supervisor reports, voice and video recordings and much more

- Both applicants were successful in achieving the full award at the end of this VPL Process and are now in full-time employment.

What did the applicants have to say?

"RPL has completely transformed my life and that of my family. I am now employed in a job that I never thought possible when I first arrived in Ireland."

"Achieving this qualification has allowed me to work as an educator in a childcare centre. As I am currently pursuing further studies in English language, when I finish this current language course, I want to develop my teaching skills further and achieve a level 7 qualification which will improve my future job prospects."

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VPL in Full-time Provision

- Potential for VPL is identified at the learner briefing stage
- VPL happens within the programme timetable
  - Scheduled in Programme Learner Support System (PLSS) as a part-time time 'course' – RPL option
- Learners can address gaps in learning by attending a class where necessary

Currently:

- NFQ Level 5 Word Processing (8 learners)
  - Typical gap is Mail Merge
  - Learners attend one class and do a short assignment
- NFQ Level 5 Intellectual Disability Studies (7 learners)
- Traditionally challenging to implement in this area of provision but pilot is working very well
- This offering will be expanded for September 2024.

VPL Marketing Campaign

- VPL landing page on College of FET website

- Flyers, posters, social media, billboards

- All with testimonials, images and videos featuring real stories

- Linking to Access, Transfer and Progression Policy (equity of access and inclusion)

1. WHO IS RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) FOR?	see more
2. WHAT IS QQI?	see more
3. WHAT IS RPL?	see more
4. WHAT IS AN RPL PORTFOLIO?	see more
5. WHO WILL HELP ME?	see more
6. HOW DO I MAKE AN RPL PORTFOLIO?	see more
7. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE ME?	see more
8. WHAT MAKES ME SUITABLE FOR RPL?	see more
9. HOW DO I APPLY FOR RPL?	see more
10. WHAT HAPPENS THEN?	see more

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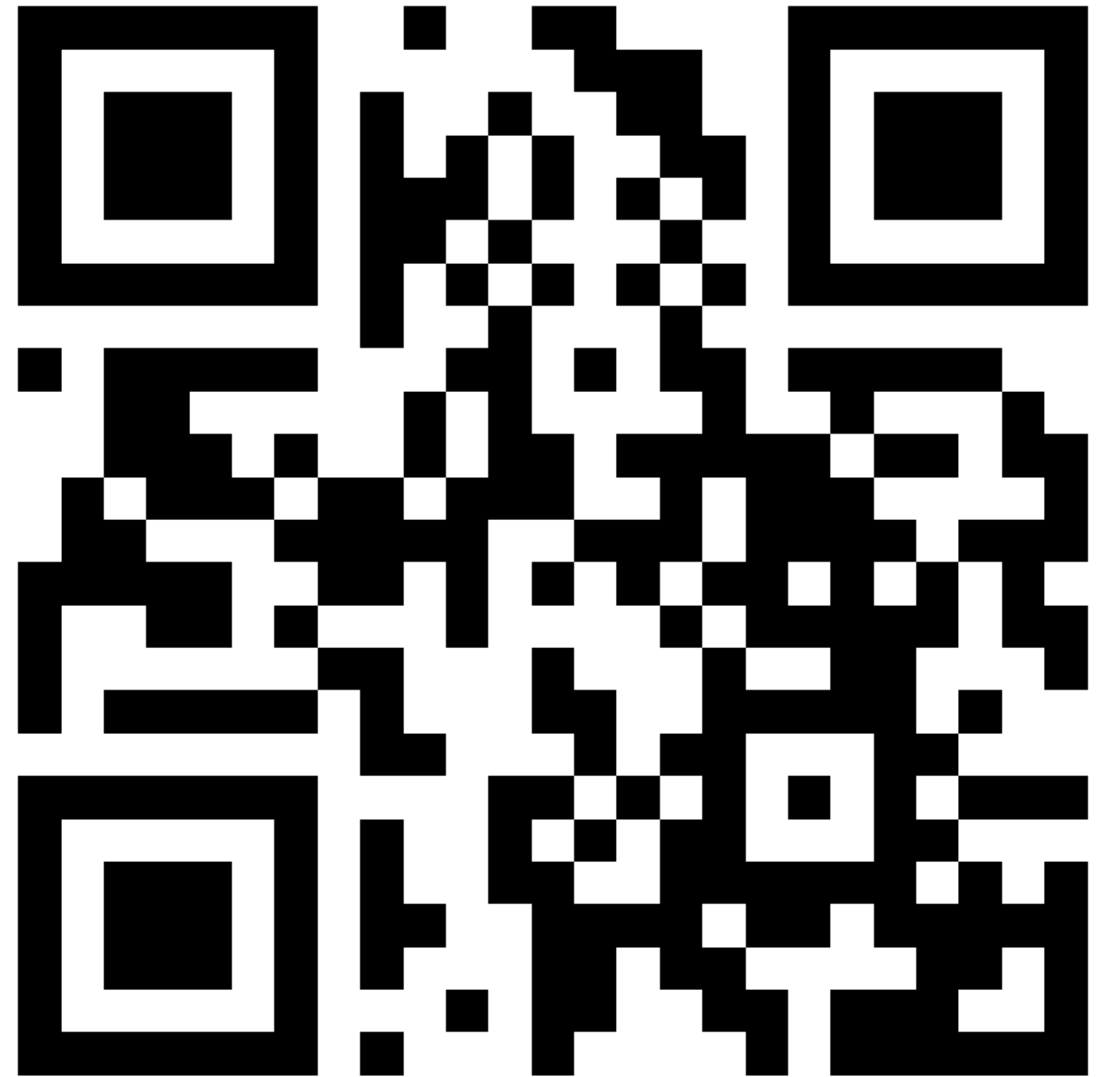
Enabling the effective embedding of VPL – a summary

- European Guidelines
- National Strategy
- Organisational Strategy
- Management Commitment
- External Support
- Passionate Champions
- Resources – Staff, funding, time

- Development Plan
- Policy and Procedure
- Information and Communication
- Staff Engagement
- Staff Upskilling
- Community of Practice
- Review and Improvement

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Acknowledgements

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board would like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals for their contributions and ongoing support in relation to progressing RPL in the ETB:

- Deirdre Goggin – Recognition of Prior Learning and Work Based Learning Company Advisor, MTU
- Andrina Wafer – Head of International Mobility and Prior Learning, QQI
- Anne Higgins – Independent Consultant and former Quality Assurance Co-Ordinator, Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board
- Martina Needham – Adult Education Officer (Retired), Donegal Education and Training Board

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Any Questions?

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