



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Decision Appeal Procedure

Introduction

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applications for taught programmes apply to DCU using the methods outlined in the published [DCU Recognition of Prior Learning - How to Apply](#) section of the DCU website and assessed using the published [DCU RPL Process](#). RPL applications for research programmes apply to DCU through the DCU application portal and are assessed based on DCU's published "[Recognition of Prior Learning Policy for Research Degrees](#)". All RPL assessments and decisions are made by the relevant Faculty.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is:

- to define the grounds for an appeal against an RPL decision;
- set out how an applicant can appeal an RPL decision; and
- outline how the University will assess the RPL appeal.

Scope

This procedure applies to all candidates who submit an RPL application to Dublin City University.

Procedure Statement

For feedback on the outcome of an RPL application, applicants should in the first instance liaise directly with the Programme Chair for taught programmes or the Research Supervisor for research programmes. This next step should only be taken following receipt of this initial feedback.

A formal appeal is a request for an RPL decision to be reviewed. An RPL appeal will only be considered where feedback in relation to the RPL decision has already been received by the applicant. An appeal will only be considered where there is adequate grounds as described below:

- i) Procedural irregularity; specific evidence of procedural irregularity in the University RPL applications assessment process;
- ii) Specified/stated grounds where the University's decision was based on misinterpretation of data or information provided as part of the RPL application process.

Appeals may be submitted only by the applicant. Appeals submitted by a third party will not be considered. Where an appeal is deemed to be malicious or vexatious, or where

false information is submitted, the appeal will not be considered and appropriate action may be taken.

Roles & Responsibilities

Submitting an RPL Appeal

If an applicant believes that s/he has grounds for appeal against an RPL decision as outlined in the procedure above, s/he should:

- i) Submit the appeal through the [DCU RPL Decision Appeal Form](#). Appeals will not be accepted by email.
- ii) The appeal must be received within 20 working days of the date of the original decision, stating the grounds for the appeal and other relevant information to support the appeal.
- iii) Provide any relevant supporting documentation with the appeal.

RPL Decision Appeal

The appeal will be considered impartially and by staff who were not involved in making the original decision. The function of the appeals procedure is to ensure that RPL decisions are applied fairly. The appeals procedure cannot set aside the rules for applicants who appeal for special treatment.

The Registrar or their nominee will conduct an initial assessment of the appeal to establish if there are sufficient grounds for an appeal.

The membership of the Appeals panel will be decided by the Registrar. The Appeals panel should consist of at least three individuals. Membership of the Appeals panel may vary but will normally include a senior academic from the relevant faculty.

- i) In the majority of cases the appeal will be assessed on the basis of the submission alone.
- ii) If necessary, the applicant may be contacted for further information or to clarify points already raised.
- iii) Unless exceptional circumstances arise (e.g. if requested further information / clarification has not been provided by the applicant) the decision relating to the appeal will be communicated to the applicant in writing (either e-mail or hard copy) within 20 working days of the receipt of the appeal.
- iv) The decision will be considered final in all cases and there shall be no further opportunities for review or appeal within the University.

Note: If an RPL applicant feels that they have been unfairly treated or are not satisfied with the decision, it is open to applicants to contact the Office of the Ombudsman. By law the Ombudsman can investigate complaints about any administrative actions or procedure, as well as delays or inaction in your dealings with the institution. Further information can be accessed on the website – [Office of the Ombudsman](#).


Related Documentation

DCU RPL Webpage	DCU RPL Webpage
-----------------	---------------------------------

Procedure Review

This procedure will be reviewed every three years by the University Standards Committee/ Academic Council.

Version Control

Procedure Name	RPL Decision Appeal Procedure		 Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City University
Unit Owner	Vice President for Academic Affairs / Registrar		
Version Reference	Original Procedure V1.0		
Approved by	Academic Council		
Effective Date	April 2025		

End.