



Guidance document for UCD staff on converting non UCD RPL to UCD specific credit

Policy Review Group: RPL and pathway programmes

1. Introduction

This document is a guide for UCD staff who are involved in the process of converting non-UCD RPL to UCD specific credit for graduate taught pathways programmes. It sets out the process for reviewing and converting non UCD marks/grades/grade equivalences to a block of specific credit in UCD.

2. Pathway Programme definition

Pathway programmes are a sequence of UCD programmes at NFQ Level 9 that build to a Masters degree award within that sequence and have been approved as a pathway programme by the University Programmes Board. Each programme in the sequence may operate as an entry and exit point. Pathway programmes encompass more than one UCD award, and each award will contribute to the overall academic coherence of the pathway.

3. Conversion principles for applying standard RPL

3.1 Specific credit is granted when the learning outcomes of the prior learning are equivalent to the learning outcomes of a current UCD module or suite of modules.

3.2 Equivalency and equity must underpin the framework for converting non-UCD RPL to UCD specific credit.

3.3 A student should not be disadvantaged and, as far as possible, should not be advantaged by the RPL conversion process.

4. Conversion principles for non-UCD RPL on pathway programmes

4.1 On a pathway programme, specific credit is permissible where the prior learning has already counted towards an award. On a non-pathway programme, specific credit is normally only permissible where the prior learning has not already counted towards an award.

4.2 Specific credit is only awarded for non-UCD RPL on a pathway programme as a block of graded credit that is applied to the student's academic record in UCD to represent the entirety of the RPL from the other institution, multiple blocks of non-UCD specific credit are not applied.

4.3 In the case of applicants to a UCD Masters pathway programme who have received an award from another higher level institution, the relevant Programme Board may permit both the credit and grades/grade equivalencies from the non-UCD award (in the form of a block of graded credit) to count towards the UCD Masters award where:

4.3.1 The Programme Board deems that the non-UCD award is equivalent, in terms of the level of learning and learning outcomes, to an earlier programme in the UCD pathway programme.

4.3.2 The learning has been achieved within the defined timeframe for the pathway programme; and

4.3.3 All the credits on the non-UCD award remain current and are counted towards the UCD Masters award.

5. Steps in non-UCD RPL conversion process

5.1 Programme Boards, in accordance with University policy, are responsible for deciding on all RPL applications on the basis of academic judgement and published learning outcomes within a

particular programme through an evaluation of the relevance, equivalence and currency of the learning outcomes.

- 5.2 Recommendations may be made to the Programme Board by the Admissions Tutor, Head of School, Head of Subject, Principal Supervisor and/or Programme and Module Co-ordinators.
- 5.3 The UCD module grade scale must be used for the conversion of non-UCD marks/grades/grade equivalencies to a block of specific credit in UCD.
- 5.4 When evaluating a non-UCD RPL application, the Programme Board must review all the relevant academic regulations, grade descriptors, marks and standards and/or policies from the other institution and compare them to the corresponding regulations, policies, grades descriptors and/or Assessment Code of Practice in UCD.
- 5.5 If there is an approved grade equivalency matrix between UCD and the other institution, the framework must be used in the RPL decision making process while evaluating the relevance, equivalence and currency of the learning outcomes.
- 5.6 If there is no approved grade equivalency framework between UCD and the other institution, Programme Boards may consider any relevant international grade equivalency matrix such as the EU Egracon Tool while evaluating the relevance, equivalence and currency of the learning outcomes.

6. Further information & grades, marks, matrices/guides conversion information:

- EU Egracons grades/marks conversion tool:
<http://egracons.eu/page/about-egracons-project-and-tool>
- European Network of Information Centres in the European Region (ENIC):
<http://www.enic-naric.net/>
- National Academic Recognition Centre (NAIRC) Ireland, Qualifications recognition:
www.qqi.ie/Pages/Qualifications-Recognition-Service.aspx
- NUI Galway, US grade point equivalencies:
<http://www.nuigalway.ie/media/registry/exams/QA288---Recommended-US-Letter-Grade-&-Point-Equivalencies-of-NUIG-Examinations.pdf>
- Radboud University, Netherlands (2016) Conversion of Grades and Credits:
[file:///C:/Users/John/Downloads/mso-io_2016_028_conversion_radboud_2016_en%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/John/Downloads/mso-io_2016_028_conversion_radboud_2016_en%20(1).pdf)
- Trinity College Dublin (TCD) study abroad, grade conversion tables 2013:
https://www.tcd.ie/study/assets/PDF/Grade%20Conversion%20Tables_November%202017.pdf
- Waterford Institute of Technology, Grading Conventions:
www.wit.ie/current_students/student_affairs/grading_conventions
- World Education Service (WES), GPA Calculator: <http://www.wes.org/students/igpacalc.asp>