UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health Systems

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (EXPERIENTIAL)
– Admission to Taught Graduate Programmes

SECTION A

Candidates seeking entry to any of the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health Systems level 9 taught graduate programmes are required to meet the entry requirements for University College Dublin and the specific programme related pre-requisites. The academic entry requirements for the graduate programmes include holding a NQAI Level 8 qualification (Honours Degree or Higher Diploma). However, third level institutions are committed to widening access to academic programmes. Students who do not meet the NQAI Level 8 requirements may be considered for entry to the programme through the process of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

RPL takes into account "all forms of prior learning, including learning acquired by following a course of study (i.e. formal learning), learning outside of the formal education system which may not lead to certification (i.e. non-formal learning) and learning acquired through experience" (UCD Academic Policy 2012:2). The purpose of the RPL policy is to enable Programme Boards to support students/ prospective students who apply to have prior learning recognised for the study, or transfer into or between different programmes. The responsibility for deciding the most appropriate course of action for a student lies with the Programme Board. Recommendations may be made by the Admissions Tutor, Head of School, Principal Supervisor and/or Programme and Module Co-Ordinator.

Decision-making in relation to recognition of prior learning
All recognition of prior learning decisions are made by a member of the UCD academic staff on the basis of academic judgement and published learning outcomes within a particular programme subject area. Decisions are based on evidence of the following principles and informed answers to the questions listed below:

1. Learning outcomes rather than the learning experience is evaluated – there must be evidence of learning at the appropriate level.
2. Relevance of learning outcomes – how relevant is the learning to the particular programme and at what level was the learning achieved?
3. Equivalence of learning – is the learning equivalent to the UCD credit to be granted?
4. Learning outcomes related to contemporary knowledge – how long has it been since the learning was achieved: what developments have taken place in the interim period that might mean the learning is no longer current and therefore credit towards the UCD programme should not be granted?
5. Professional accreditation concerns – the school should advise both the applicant and the Programme Board if there are concerns or issues pertaining to the accreditation that will effect either the application for prior learning or an applicant's ability to subsequently achieve compliance with professional requirements of relevant accrediting bodies.

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Candidates applying for consideration for entry using RPL are required to submit relevant evidence in accordance with UCD policy available at
www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/docs/rplstudents g.pdf

The candidate is required to submit a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate his/her suitability for admission to the particular programme.

The Portfolio assessment requires the candidate to submit the following:
- o Personal information
- o General education
- o Professional education
- o Employment history
- o Continuing professional development

The portfolio should demonstrate how the candidate's clinical experience to date has prepared him/her to engage with his/her programme of choice. Candidates must critically reflect on the domains of competence that demonstrate their suitability for the programme. The requirements and standards for individual programmes may be located in http://www.ucd.ie/nmhs/taughtgraduateprogrammes/

Application for admission based on Experiential Learning
Within this section the candidate is required to describe in essay style his/her relevant professional history highlighting and discussing his/her achievements in the following areas.
- o General education
- o Professional education
- o Employment
- o Continuing professional development

Please limit this section to one page only, no grids or tables are to be included.

Demonstration of suitability for Programme
Within this section you are required to write not more than 200 words on each domain of competence. The five domains of competence are:
- o Professional and ethical practice.
- o Holistic approaches to care and integration of knowledge
- o Interpersonal relationships
- o Organisation and management of care
- o Personal and professional development

This portfolio section should contain no more than 1000 words. This allows the candidate an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, critical thinking, reflection and application of continuous professional development to nursing practice.

The candidate should critically discuss each domain that refers to recent relevant achievements (within 5 years). The candidate must use a different learning experience for each domain (i.e. a course, conference, study day, or research article). Each learning experience may only be referred to once for the purpose of providing evidence. Evidence of attendance at courses, conferences, or study days must be included. Each 200 word submissions must cite recent relevant literature pertaining to the candidate's learning experience. Please provide references for research articles only. Hard copies of research articles are not to be included.

STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION OF PORTFOLIO

- **Cover page** with the following details
    - Name
    - Address
    - Date of Birth
    - Email address
    - An Bord Altranais PIN (or equivalent professional registration if applicable)
    - Signed Declaration

Referencing and General Layout of Portfolios

- Pages should be numbered at the bottom centre, and the portfolio should be stapled at the top left-hand corner only. Do not bind or put in folders.
- A minimum of 2.5cm margin should be allowed on the left hand side of each page and at the top and bottom of the text.
- Scripts should use one side only of each A4 sheet.
- Line spacing used should be 1.5 and fonts used Times New Roman 12.
- A full Reference list alphabetically arranged, separately numbered by page and distinct from the main text should be included at the end of the text. Referencing format must follow the UCD Guidelines i.e. http://www.ucd.ie/t4cms/SNMHS_referencing%20guidelines201213_250512final.pdf
- No Appendices to be included.
- One copy of the assignment must be submitted
- Submission to be forwarded to Ms. Bernadette Manley, Senior Executive Assistant, School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health Systems, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4., Ireland.
- Word limit must be adhered to.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

In addition to presenting evidence of meeting the aforementioned points outlined above in relation to basis for decision-making, the portfolio will also be assessed based on the UCD marking criteria (see Appendix 1).

- Presentation and adherence to guidelines.
- Focus - Demonstrating the applicant's suitability for the programme.
- Comprehensive- Demonstrating an understanding of the area of practice.
- Well structured and organised- Using the guidelines set out above and drawing on guidelines for portfolio development.
- Original - Demonstrating uniqueness of thought and application.
- Clarity - Demonstrating the applicant's ability to use the written medium appropriately.
- Use of supporting literature and correct referencing.

Declaration

Please include this declaration statement in the portfolio cover page and ensure that you sign and date it:

I Hereby declare that this work is entirely my own and that I have acknowledged the writings, ideas, and work of others. Furthermore I have not knowingly allowed another to copy my work.

Signed... DATE

REFERENCES

An Bord Altranais (2005) Requirements and Standards for Public Health Nurse Registration Education Programmes. An Bord Altranais. Dublin.

Assessment Criteria
Candidate must pass each criteria
Pass/Fail System 50% Pass 50% Fail

Criteria	Presentation & Adherence to Guidelines	Exposition of knowledge and comprehension. Analysis and critical thinking.	Interpretation, integration and application to practice.	Use of supporting literature	Reflection
Grade /Fail 0-50%	Work is illegible. Poor use of English. Presentation does not meet criteria required	Contents lack relevance. Professional focus is not understood or explained. Theoretical concepts and frameworks inappropriately selected. Theories and facts do not support propositions. Work is descriptive in nature	Wrong interpretation of brief/questions. Restricted ability to draw on professional experience and link theory to practice.	Limited evidence of supporting reading without using argument and discussion. Some inaccuracies in citation of research/literature.	Limited evidence of reflection on experience. Limited evidence of evaluation of practice.
Grade Pass 50%	Work is clearly presented with good use of English demonstrated Presentation meets the criteria. Appropriate presentation of illustrated material.	Content demonstrates relevant and adequate understanding/explanation of professional focus. Correct use of facts and theories to support arguments avoiding generalisations. Some evidence of creativity. Good evidence of analysis.	Interprets brief correctly. Irrelevant material is discriminated. Adequate evidence of being able to evaluate a situation in a logical way identifying aspects of problem solving relevant to nursing. Able to set own experiences within a wider context and take an objective stance	Adequate evidence of supportive reading with use of argument and discussion. Evidence of wider reading. Accurate citation of relevant research/literature	Work shows evidence of reflective analysis of experience. Evidence of evaluation of own practice. Able to defend and justify own stance

SECTION B: Recommendations: (for Office use only)

This section is for the programme co-ordinator to record the outcome of RPL for admission to a programme. Regardless of the result, the completed document should be forwarded to Ms Bernadette Manley. A copy of the RPL recommendation is necessary for review by the Admissions Tutor prior to offering of a place on the programme.

Student Name: _____

Accept/Reject:_____

Specify Code and Name of relevant Programme:

_____

Name of Programme Co-ordinator:_____

Rationale for Module/Programme Co-Ordinator's recommendation:
Recommendation for further Action (particularly if there is no current basis to support a positive recommendation)
A final decision from the Programme Board will be forwarded to the student. Any further communication may be recorded below

Signature of Programme Co-ordinator_____

Signature of Admissions Tutor:_____

Date:_____