


Exemptions from modules based on prior certified or experiential learning		
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Exemptions from modules based on prior certified or experiential learning

Revision History

Revision	Date	Revision Description	Originator
01	31 July 03	Conversion from OP164	Registrar
02	23 October 03	Addition of limit for language electives for native speakers	Registrar
03	17 September 2004	Revisions based on recommendations of Admissions subcommittee of Academic Council	Registrar
04	21 October 2004	Revisions adopted at admissions sc of AC 15 October 2004	Registrar
05	21 September 2016	Updated to replace HETAC with QQI	AA&SAM
06	23 February 2017	Updated to clarify policy based on recommendations of Admissions Subcommittee of Academic Council	AA&SAM
07	22 January 2020	Title Name of College amended throughout document	Registrar
08	22 January 2020	Change Academic Council to Academic Board in document	Registrar

1. Purpose

- The purpose of this document is to identify Institute policy on granting of exemptions from modules based on prior certified or experiential learning, and to describe the application procedure and the decision making process involved in granting exemptions to modules on approved course schedules.
- This process allows academic credit to be gained for learning, of an appropriate level, achieved through work, and other certified and non-certified activities.

2. Scope

- This policy applies to all students of the Institute. This policy refers to all modules taken as part of QQI¹-accredited courses, courses accredited by the Institute under authority delegated by QQI, and courses accredited by other agencies. This policy does not apply in the case of students applying for exemption from modules, which constitute a complete level of a course.
- This process is relevant to students who may have substantial certified or non-certified experiential learning, in many cases accumulated while in employment.

3. Definitions

- Exemption: An exemption in a module means that the student does not have to take examinations in a module that is a mandatory module in an approved course schedule. Students are not granted credits for module in which exemptions are obtained, and the pass mark or the level of an award is subsequently calculated based on the results obtained in the remaining modules. Exemptions are normally granted only when demonstration of meeting over half the learning outcomes of a module is achieved.
- Prior certified learning: Achievement of learning outcomes that have been attested through formal certification. Certification should include the overall level of the award and should have an attachment outlining the syllabus followed.
- Prior experiential learning: Knowledge and skills acquired through life, work experience and study, not formally attested through formal certification. Academic credits can be awarded for the achievement of learning outcomes, but not for experience per se. The achievement of learning outcomes is dependent on the learner and the quality and duration of the experience. Experience can include experience gained as a result of involvement in employment, community activity, home duties, sport and other life or work experiences.

¹ Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI – the body with awarding and quality assurance responsibilities previously governed by HETAC)

4. Reference

3AS06	Academic programme assessment policy and procedure
4FAD02	Application form for exemptions from taking specific module examinations
4FAD01	Advanced entry application form
	QOI policy document on prior experiential learning (5 April April 2001)
3AD08	Admissions Policy
4RAS04	Examples of grade point average calculations

5. Policy

- i. All mandatory modules on the approved course schedule must be completed, and a total of at least 60 credits must be accumulated at each level, unless an exemption has been granted by the Academic Board of the Institute.
- ii. The Academic Board grants exemptions from examinations for specific modules after consideration of recommendations of the Admissions sub-committee of the Academic Board.
- iii. Exemptions will be granted based on evidence provided of prior certified or experiential learning.
- iv. Applications for exemptions must be made in a timely manner and must include adequate detail to allow the Admissions subcommittee of the Academic Board and the Academic Board to consider the case being made.
- v. Applications will be considered from registered students for the current year of registration only.
- vi. Applications for exemptions should be made in the year in which the module is to be taken.
- vii. Exemptions will only be granted when evidence of prior certified or experiential learning indicates that the learning outcomes of the modules under consideration were addressed in full during the course of the prior learning being provided as the basis for the application.
- viii. The NARIC equivalences are used for comparison of international awards. [update]
- ix. Exemptions will normally not be granted for European language modules to native speakers of those European languages after year 1 of ab-initio higher certificate, ordinary degree or honours degree programmes.
- x. Exemptions will not generally be granted on Special Purpose Awards; such awards meet specific, relatively narrow focussed, learning requirements. [update]
- xi. Only in exceptional circumstances will exemptions be granted where students were admitted through advanced entry into an award year. [updated]

- xii. Only in exceptional circumstances will an exemption be granted in an award year. [updated]
- xiii. Only in exceptional circumstances will exemptions be granted based on academic qualifications more than 10 years old.
- xiv. Only in exceptional circumstances will exemptions be granted for more than 10 credits per stage of a programme. [updated]

6. Procedure

- i. Approved course schedules are published on the Document Management System (DMS).
- ii. Applications for exemption from taking specific module examinations should be made on the application form for exemptions from taking specific module examinations (4FAD02).
- iii. Applications will only be considered from registered students. Applications must be signed by the student and the course co-ordinator.
- iv. Applications must be made before the first Monday of week 3 of the semester in which the module is to be taken.
- v. Application forms should indicate the modules for which exemptions are sought and the basis for the application. Note the decision of the sub-committee will be primarily based on the material supplied with the application.
- vi. Certificates to support prior learning must be included with the application.
- vii. In the case of applications based on prior experiential learning, a portfolio to support the application should be included. This should include references from two people of appropriate academic standing. Students requiring further details of standards required for exemptions of prior experiential learning should refer to the QQI policy document on prior experiential learning.
- viii. Recommendations of the Academic Board subcommittee on admissions will be brought to the October and March meetings of the Academic Board for consideration.
- ix. Students wishing to seek exemption from modules making up a complete level of a course should refer to Institute admissions policy (3AD08) and application procedures for online advanced entry.
- x. Students wishing to consider how grade point average values are calculated in the event of exemptions being granted should refer to a document entitled Examples of grade point average calculations (4RAS04). **Students should note that choosing to take examinations in modules rather than applying for exemptions in those modules might increase their grade point average value for a level.**