Agenda 2026 National Event: RPL Practitioner Network Ireland

Recognition of Prior Learning: Closing the Skills Gap
Recognising Work-Based Learning to Meet Labour Market Needs
Wednesday 11th November 2026, 9.30am to 3.30pm
Tullamore Court Hotel, Co Offaly, R35 D406

Time	**Item**
From 9.30am	**Registration and refreshments**
9.30am to 9.55am	**Welcome session for those new to RPL and the Network** *(This optional informal session will take place in the back of the main venue room)*
10am to 10.10am	**Opening and Welcome by RPL Practitioner Network Co-Convenor** • Patsy Hogan, Quality Assurance Officer, Limerick and Clare ETB
10.10am to 10.40am	**Keynote: Vasileios Symeonidis, Experts on Qualifications and Credentials, Department for VET and Qualifications, Cedefop** *Dr Vasileios Symeonidis is an Expert on Qualifications and Credentials at Cedefop, where he leads research on the comparison and recognition of VET qualifications. His current work focuses on developing a methodology to facilitate the recognition of VET qualifications for employment and further learning. He also contributes to research on digital credentials, key competences and the future of VET. Previously, he held academic positions as a visiting professor at the University of Education Freiburg in Germany and as a postdoctoral researcher at the Universities of Graz and Innsbruck in Austria.*
10.40am to 11.20am	**Group/table work** • Group work and feedback based on Cedefop presentation and publications • Useful Links: Recognition and Validation of Foreign VET Qualifications in Europe, and further reading: Spotlight on VET Ireland | CEDEFOP and/or Vocational education and training in Ireland | CEDEFOP
11.20am to 11.40am	**Break**
11.40am to 12.15pm	**Guest Speaker: Donnie Wood, Head of Pathways Policy, Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Partnership, Glasgow** *Donnie is Head of Pathways Policy at the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Partnership (SCQFP) and leads on the development and implementation of pathways policy within a changing education, qualifications and skills system, in addition to promoting lifelong learning and Recognition of Prior Learning for the benefit of individuals, their communities and the economy. Donnie has also managed the SCQF National schools programme with 250+ schools across the country, supporting schools to create flexible learning pathways for all learners.* • Useful Links: SCQF levels: Understand Scotland's qualifications, All about the SCQF (YouTube video)
12.15pm to 12.40pm	**Guest Speaker: Anna Kahlson, Senior Advisor/Coordinator NCP EQF** **The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education** *Anna Kahlson is Senior Advisor and National Coordinator for the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) at the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (MYH). Her work covers qualifications, validation of prior learning and lifelong learning, with a focus on how transparent, trusted qualifications can strengthen skills supply and match labour market needs. She has been involved in European and Nordic initiatives, including the NOVA-Nordic project on non-formal qualifications and validation, and the YH-flex pilot of a flexible validation pathway to higher vocational education qualifications.* • Useful Link: YH-flex | University of Applied Sciences

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12.40pm to 1pm	**QQI: Update on National and International Developments** Andrina Wafer, Head of International Mobility and Prior Learning Development Directorate, QQI
1pm to 2pm	**Lunch**
2pm to 2.45pm	**Panel Discussion facilitated by Fergus Craddock, FET Manager - Access, Inclusion and Learner Voice, Education and Training Boards Ireland** Panel members include: • Andrina Wafer, Head of International Mobility and Prior Learning, QQI • Gráinne Timlin, Assistant Manager, Climate Strategy & Skills, Construction, Quality and Climate Strategy & Skills Unit, SOLAS • John Costello, Midlands Regional Skills Forum Manager
2.45pm	**Tea/coffee/networking break**
2.55pm to 3.10pm	**Participants reflections, comments and questions for panel**
3.10pm to 3.25.pm	**RPL Practitioner Network Business (Eilís O Leary, RPL Practitioner Network Co-Convenor)** • Work plan of the Steering Group • Work plans of the Sub-Groups (Communications and Development) • Feedback from attendees to inform future direction
3.25pm to 3.30pm	**Closing remarks - RPL Practitioner Network Co-Convenors**