

RPLip (Recognition of prior learning in practice) is a peer-learning project coordinated by The Swedish Council for Higher Education.



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Validation of non-formal and informal learning in higher education

Validation of learning acquired through non-formal and informal learning plays an important role in providing educational opportunities and increasing possibilities for lifelong learning.

Validation and lifelong learning are priorities within the European Union. Member states have adopted a recommendation stating that arrangements should be in place to validate individuals' knowledge, skills and competences

acquired through non-formal and informal learning in order to gain access to higher education, for credits or awards. This overview of the validation process is based on the Council of the European Union's recommendation and European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning. It has been developed in cooperation with project partners in Austria, Croatia, Iceland, Ireland, Sweden and EURASHE.



Nobody should be required to study something they already know.

The four phases of validation

Important building blocks for successful validation in higher education:

- An institution committed to RPL
- Transparency about procedures and expectations
- Counselling/guidance throughout the process
- Quality-assured process in place
- Clearly-defined learning outcomes in place
- Committed and well-informed academic and other staff

1. Identification

- Clarify the purpose of the validation; is it for access, credits?
- Manage expectations, what outcome is realistic?

2. Documentation

- Develop criteria and templates
- Be flexible when it comes to forms of documentation of prior learning

3. Assessment

- Use a mix of different assessment methods including methods already implemented

4. Certification

- Certify the results as a qualification, credits leading to a qualification, or in another form as appropriate