

## Exemption Application Process Giving Credit for Previously Certified Learning

### ***What does Recognition of Previously Certified Learning mean?***

It means that 'Learners should not have to repeat learning or to have their learning re-assessed, if they have demonstrated through a valid assessment process (ie system of a nationally recognised awarding body) that they have already met the standards associated with an identified, comparable FETAC award'. FETAC may, subject to certain conditions, exempt learners who have already achieved nationally recognised Awards, from completing the requirements (as set out in the FETAC (NCVA) Award/Module Descriptor) necessary to achieve an identified FETAC (NCVA) minor Award.

### ***What is a FETAC (NCVA) minor award?***

A FETAC (NCVA) minor award is one of a series of smaller awards that make up a FETAC (NCVA) major award. All major and minor awards are identified by a unique title and code.

### ***What is meant by a Body with National Awarding Status?***

National awarding status applies to a body that has its awards placed on a National Framework of Qualifications (or equivalent national system) in the country from where the Award originates. This (status) is an indicator that the body has formal, quality assured processes in place and operates in a manner appropriate to its formal and, in many cases, statutory national standing.

For example, UK awards can be viewed at <http://www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk>  
Irish Framework Awards (NFQ) can be viewed at <http://www.ngai.ie>

### ***What Conditions attach to the recognition of the Awards of these bodies?***

FETAC will determine if there is **little, or no, difference** in the learning associated with each of the awards. This means that the learning underpinning BOTH Awards must be in the same or a closely related field of learning **AND** reflect a similar level, depth and breadth of knowledge, skill and competence.

### ***Who can apply for recognition of an award?***

Any learner who has achieved a nationally recognised Award **AND** who is currently participating in a programme\* of learning leading to a FETAC (NCVA) MAJOR award (ie exemptions are not given on a single module/component/minor Award basis) can apply for exemption(s). Applications must always be made in collaboration with the (FETAC registered) programme\* provider.

### ***Can a learner apply for recognition for more than one FETAC minor award?***

Yes, a learner may seek recognition for a number of FETAC (NCVA) minor awards. A separate Application Form/details should be provided in respect of each exemption sought. Exemption will be allowed for a maximum of XXXXX minor awards (leading to any single, identified major award).

### ***What is involved in the application process?***

The learner (Award-holder) should

- complete Section A of the Application Form
- provide details of the programme/Major Award that s/he is currently following
- Identify the specific FETAC (NCVA) module/minor award **from which s/he is seeking an exemption**
- identify the relevant previously certified learning (the basis on which the exemption is being sought)
- Show evidence of the previously certified learning (an **ORIGINAL** copy of the Award/Transcript of Results) and include details of the **relevant** learning outcomes/content.

### ***What is the role of the FETAC registered provider in this process?***

The provider assists in the process by

- providing general information/advice about the process to the Award-holder
- facilitating Award-holder access to information about FETAC (NCVA) minor Awards (see <http://www.fetac.ie> for Guide to Awards)
- endorsing/verifying the Award-holders' submission by completing Section B of the Form
- submitting the completed application to FETAC Certification Section, on behalf of the award-holder.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT FETAC WILL ONLY PROCESS APPLICATIONS MADE ON THE OFFICIAL APPLICATION FORM AND FACILITATED/VERIFIED BY THE APPROPRIATE FETAC REGISTERED PROVIDER.**

## How to Apply?

### **STEP 1: Prior to Completing Section A. of the Form**

- **Confirm with your provider** the title and code of the FETAC (NCVA) major Award that you aim to achieve on successful completion of your current programme of learning **AND** the title and codes of the minor awards that make up that major award (see <http://www.fetac.ie> for Guide to Awards).
- **Decide if you currently hold** a nationally recognised Certificate/Transcript of Results in the same/closely related field of learning to any of the FETAC minor awards **AND** that the learning involved in achieving your Certificate/Transcript reflects a similar depth and breadth of knowledge, skill and competence.
- **Contact the nationally recognised Awarding Body** that issued your Certificate and request the appropriate/relevant detail to support your application; level of learning involved, learning content, national context, syllabus, standards of knowledge, skill and competence, for example. Translate details into English if appropriate.

### **STEP 2: Award-Holder/Applicant completes Section A. of the Form**

Please complete the Form in Capital Letters. CLEARLY state

- The FETAC (NCVA) Major Award you are hoping to achieve on completion of your current programme of learning.
- The Module/Component/Minor (of that Major Award) **from which you wish to be exempted.**
- The previously certified learning you feel warrants this exemption and the necessary evidence to support your claim. Certificates/Transcripts /Learning Content should be ORIGINALS, legible and in the English language.

Confirm/agree the content and presentation of your Application Form/documentation with your provider.

### **STEP 3: Provider Completes Section B. of the Form**

The providers' main role is to complete Section B of the Application Form. By doing so, the FETAC registered provider

- Indicates that s/he supports and has facilitated the learner/applicant in the process
- verifies the validity of the applicant/learner (that they are following a programme of learning leading to a FETAC major Award in a FETAC registered Centre)
- verifies the authenticity of the Certificate/Transcript of Results presented as evidence of previously certified learning
- verifies the relevance, appropriateness and completeness of information provided by the learner in support of their application
- submits completed applications to FETAC on behalf of the learner/applicant
- communicates with FETAC and the learner/applicant on any related matters arising
- commits to making exemption status 'results' returns according to FETAC guidelines
- Undertakes to maintain relevant records/documentation as appropriate to their QA system/process.

### **STEP 4: Application is reviewed by FETAC and the Outcome Communicated**

FETAC evaluates the application information to determine that

- The Certificate held **is** issued by a recognised Awarding Body in the country of origin.
- The associated learning **is** of a comparable level, depth and breadth.
- The associated learning **is** in the same/similar field.

The outcome will be communicated to the provider, in writing, within 4 weeks of receipt.

The provider may seek further information from FETAC should the application be unsuccessful.

The letter communicating a successful outcome will set out the conditions of FETAC approval.

### **STEP 5: How does Exemption status apply in Practise**

Learners following a programme of learning leading to a FETAC (NCVA) Major Award may be exempted from completing some elements of the programme (eg learning, assessment) if they can show that they have previously achieved those elements via another nationally recognised and **valid** certification system.

Some exemptions are automatically available (ECDL holders and some Junior/Leaving Certificate holders – see FETAC Guide pages 28 and 36, for example – and FETAC plans to extend this facility in the future) but others require the exemption-seeker to make an application directly to FETAC.

The outcome of the application is communicated by FETAC to the provider. If successful, the provider, when submitting results to FETAC (for all learners following the same programme as the applicant) indicates which results were 'attained' (notionally) via the exemption process. This information is recorded by both FETAC (for statistical purposes) and the provider (for statistical/quality assurance purposes) but is not noted on the Certificate or Transcript of Results. To all intents and purposes the FETAC Award/Transcript (if achieved) will not differ, in any way, from that of other successful programme participants.