

Purpose

This procedure allows Teagasc comply with the QQI (March 2015) circular and updated December 2015) on *Exemptions for the Purpose of a Compound (Major / Special Purpose) Award*.

Scope

Learners who have completed a Higher Education and Training (HET) **major** award (HEDDEG) at Level 6 to Level 10 can be granted an exemption from Communications Level 5 and/or Communications Level 6 if the higher education award was achieved less than 5 years from the date when the learner applies to Teagasc for an exemption. The exemption is available to learners on full-time, part-time and distance education courses that have successfully completed lead to a Major or Special Purpose Award.

The following guidelines should be followed;

1. Awareness of Policy

As part of the application process, learners must be informed of this policy, its procedures, and potential impacts.

2. Eligibility for Exemptions

Exemptions are available for learners enrolled in full-time, part-time, and distance education courses that lead to a Major or Special Purpose Award.

3. When can the Exemption be applied to the learners record

- Learners can only apply for a Communications exemption when achieving a Major or Special Purpose Award.
- Exemptions will not be granted when only component awards are being put forward for certification.
- Where a learner meets the criteria for this exemption but is only being presented to QQI for components then the grade for the communications module should remain blank.

4. Reapplication for Exemptions

- Learners who do not complete the Major Award with their initial cohort and wish to repeat components must reapply for the exemption.
Repeat learners run the risk of losing the exemption if they do not reapply on time. Reapplying learners must meet the 5-year rule (exemption eligibility within 5 years from the reapplication date).

5. 5-Year Rule for Higher Education and Training (HET) Awards

- If more than 5 years have passed since completing a HET Major Award, the learner is no longer eligible for an exemption.
- Learners may apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) through the standard RPL process if eligible.

6. Exemptions for Non-Teagasc Communications Modules

- Exemptions apply even if the Communications module(s) are not delivered within a Teagasc program but are part of the structure of the Major or Special Purpose Award.
- A learner may gain an exemption for Communications in lieu of another QQI generic module as outlined below;

Level 5	Level 6
Constructive Thinking (5N0693)	Entrepreneurship (6N1941)
Team Working (5N1367)	Team leadership (6N1948)
Personal Effectiveness (5N1390)	Personal Professional Development (6N1949)
Start your Own Business (5N1418)	Supervisory Skills (6N2104)
	Leadership (6N2191)

6. Exemptions for Holders of Further Education and Training (FET) Communications Component Learner who provide valid evidence of completion of the G20001 / 5N0690 Level 5 communications modules and / or the G30001 / 6N1950 Level 6 Communications modules in the past 5 years can be granted an exemption. If the period of time since completing a QQI Communications module is greater than 5 years at the time when the exemption is sought, a learner can gain credit through recognition of prior learning. The module grade (pass, merit or distinction) will be recorded as per the grade on the transcript of result or other evidence provided in support of the RPL application.

QQI Module Code Presented	If the Award is Less than 5 years old*	Award more than 5 years old
G20001	Exemption can be granted	Learner can be given RPL** at the grade achieved
5N0690	Exemption can be granted	Learner can be given RPL** at the grade achieved
G30001	Exemption can be granted	Learner can be given RPL** at the grade achieved
6N1950	Exemption can be granted	Learner can be given RPL** at the grade achieved

* Example – Graduates who achieved a higher education award between the 1/1/2015 and 31/12/2015 can gain an exemption if they apply for an exemption up until 31/12/2020.

** No RPL fee is applicable in these cases

Procedure for Granting an Exemption for Communications

The following procedure outlines the steps for processing a Communications module exemption.

1. Application Timing

- **Apply Early:** Exemptions should be requested as part of the application process, ideally before the course begins but no later than **two weeks after course commencement**. Applications received after this period may be declined.

2. Information for Learners

- **Inform All Learners:** Ensure that all learners (full-time, part-time, and distance education) are made aware of available exemptions during the course application or induction process.

3. Application Form for Exemption

- **Submit an Application:** Learners seeking an exemption from Communications Level 5 (5N0690) and/or Communications Level 6 (6N1950) must complete an application form (sample included below).

4. Required Supporting Documentation

- **Evidence Submission:** It is the learner's responsibility to provide supporting documentation, such as a certified award parchment or a valid transcript of results, when applying for an exemption.

5. Review and Approval by Course Coordinator

- **Approval:** The Course Coordinator reviews the application, and if approved, completes a Record of Exemptions form (sample included below). This form should be signed by the course director and kept on file for external authentication purposes.

6. Recording the Exemption on Quercus

- **Enter in Quercus:** Enter the exemption for Higher Level Communications in Quercus, with a note on the learner's module record explaining the rationale for the exemption. A grade (pass, merit, or distinction) should not be assigned. Instead, the module is assigned a null value, which means the overall award grade will be based on the remaining credits.

7. No Additional Fees

- **Fee Policy:** There is no charge for learners seeking an exemption through this process, and no changes to standard Teagasc course fees will apply.

8. Recording in Results Pre-approval Meeting

- **Record Exemption in Minutes:** The course director must document the exemption in the minutes of the Results Pre-approval Meeting and notify the external verifier at the beginning of the external verification process.

9. Timing for Claiming the Exemption

- **Timing for Major or Special Purpose Award:** Exemptions may only be claimed for the purpose of achieving a Major or Special Purpose Award, where Communications is a required part of the award structure. This includes Level 5 Certificates or Level 6 Advanced Certificates where Communications is a component award.

Review and Update:

This guidance document will be reviewed as required to ensure it remains aligned with QQI guidelines and best practices.



Application Form for Exemption from Communications Level 5 (5N0690) and/or Communications Level 6 (6N1950)

Surname:

First Name(s):

Previous Name:
(If name on award is different)

Address:

Phone (incl area code): **Date of Birth:** Day Month Year

Mobile Phone: **Email:**

Nationality: **Quercus ID:**

1 Module(s) for which an exemption is sought

QQI Module Title	QQI Module Code	I wish to apply for an exemption for the following module(s) Please tick
Level 5 Communications	5N0690	
Level 6 Communications	6N1950	

2 Details of Higher Education Training (HET) qualifications achieved in the past 5 years

Title of Award	Awarding Body	Is this a HET Award (yes/no)?	Is this a Major Award (Yes/no)?	Year of HET Award

Details of Further Education Training (FET) Communications Component Qualifications achieved:

Module Title	Module Code	Awarding Body	Year of Award

Please tick the relevant category below:

1. I hereby apply to Teagasc for an exemption(s) for QQI Communications module(s) having completed a Higher Education and Training (HET) **major** award (Level 6 to Level 10) in the past 5 years.
2. I hereby apply to Teagasc for RPL for QQI Communications module(s) having successfully achieved a FETAC/ QQI Communications Component Qualification

I enclose a certified copy of my award / transcript of results to support my application for this exemption.*

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Completed Application Form with supporting documentation should be returned to the course director at the college or regional centre.

* To support an application for an exemption from Communications an applicant will be required to have their **major award** qualification parchment / transcript of results copied and the copy verified as a true copy at any Teagasc office. Applicants will be required to submit this verified copy of their award with their application. In the absence of a parchment, a full transcript of results for each year of the programme is acceptable, if accompanied by a covering letter from the awarding body stating the candidate's name, address, award title, award level, duration of the programme, years the candidate was a registered learner with the provider and the date award conferred.

For Teagasc Office Use

Record of Exemptions for Level 5 Communications (5N0690) and/or Level 6 Communications (6N1950) granted to learners on Teagasc programmes.

Learner Name	Title of Award held	Is this a HET Award?	Is this a Major Award?	Year of HET Award	Date (year) of application for exemption	Exemption Determination (Yes / No)

Learner Name	Module Title	Module Code	Year of the Award	Date (year) of application for exemption	Exemption Determination (Yes / No)

Signed _____
Date _____

