

# **Guide to Certification of The CAS Work Experience Component- FET**



## **1. Introduction**

WWETB is committed to supporting learners in succeeding in the vocational settings that will be available to them upon completion of their respective courses. A common mechanism for this is by way of vocational components such as Work Experience and Work Practice within our further education and training (FET) programmes. These components contain work placement requirements for course participants which present the learner with an opportunity to practice and perform in the vocational setting of their choosing.

## **2. General Approach and Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL)**

Where Work Experience or Work Practice is part of a scheduled course, each learner is expected to undertake these modules and meet the modular requirements to achieve a major award. As the Work Experience and Work Practice modules are part of the QQI Common Award System (CAS), a learner starting a course may have already achieved these components as part of another award. The learner may divulge this themselves at the application stage or early in the course and seek recognition of this. In other cases, prior completion of these modules might not come to light until entry of results onto QBS.

Being a 'CAS' award, the QBS system automatically recognizes prior successful completion of the Work Experience or Work Practice component and seeks to confirm major awards using all relevant CAS components. In instances where a learner has already completed the Work Experience or Work Practice module and has carried out a Work Placement in setting that is relevant to the new award they are seeking, then they may seek recognition for this on their course. In these instances, Learners should be encouraged to take the module again to further hone their knowledge and skills and build their catalogue of references. It may be feasible to allow learners to sit out this module as opposed to repeating it but only if they satisfy the following criteria:

- ✓ The Work Placement that was completed is vocationally relevant to their current course or they have been working in a vocationally relevant setting in the intervening period and can provide a reference.<sup>i</sup>

**And:**

- ✓ They have completed the associated Work Placement within the past 5 years, or they have been working within a relevant setting within the past 5 years.

It is the responsibility of the Programme Coordinator/Principal, or a person designated by them to confirm that the above criteria are satisfied. If the criteria cannot be satisfied, then the Learner needs to take the module again to complete the sought major award with WWETB.

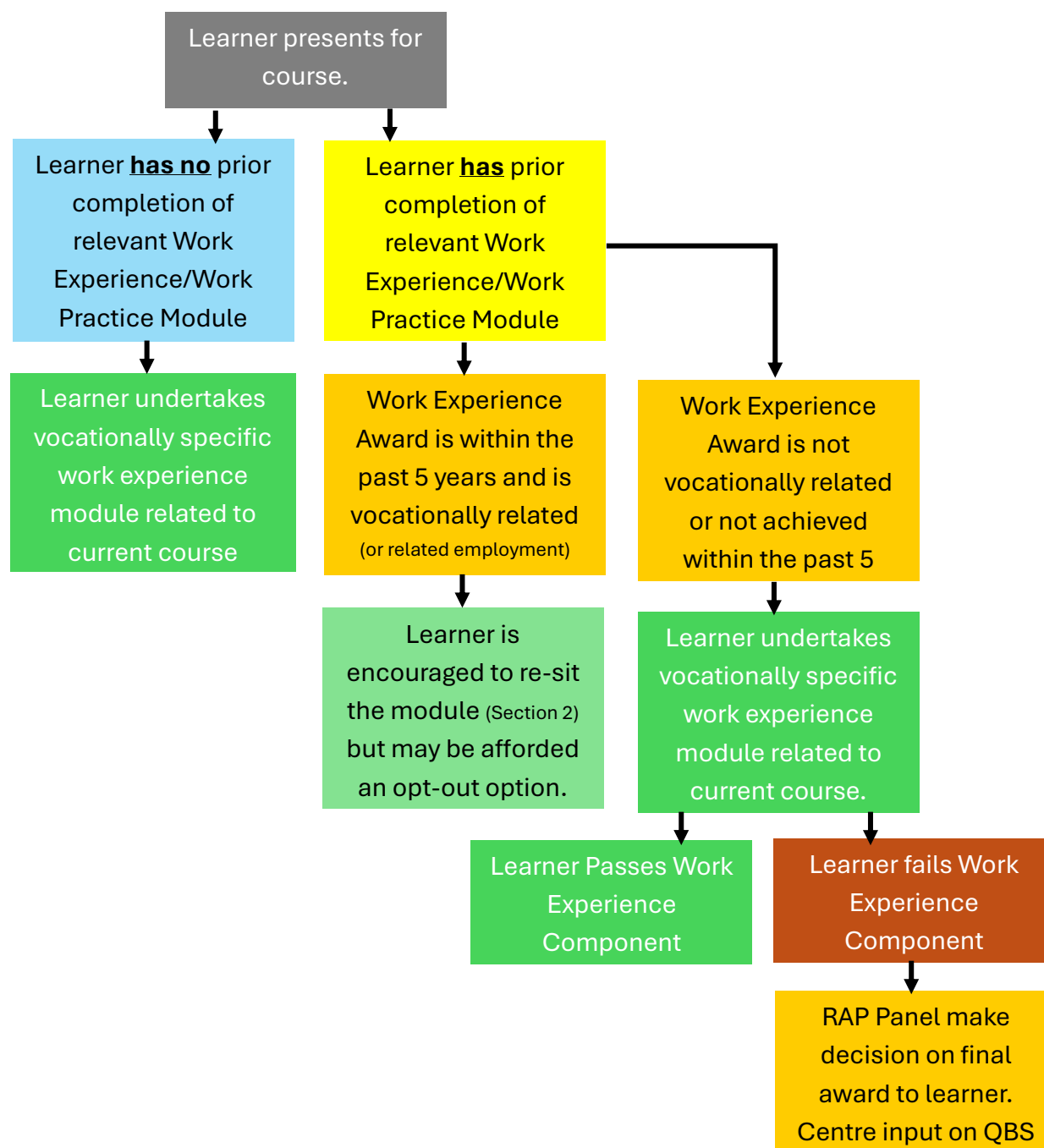
### **3. Protocol for Instances where Work Experience Criteria are not met, and the Learner has a prior Work Experience/Work Practice Award.**

As previously stated, where a learner does not meet the criteria above in relation to prior successful completion of the Work Experience/Work Practice award the learner should re-sit the component. However, it may occur that the learner is unsuccessful in their second attempt at the module. In these cases, the QBS system will automatically complete the major award for the learner based on their previous result in the module. WWETB asserts that in these instances the relevant RAP panel makes the decision on whether or not to supersede the QBS system and enter the Learner for a non-vocationally specific major award (e.g. 5M3114 General Studies). This is for the following reasons:

- The Work Experience and Work Practice modules are in themselves, non-vocationally specific whereas many QQI awards are vocationally specific. WWETB deems it imperative in terms of optimal learning, and in terms of confirmation of the achievement of vocational and award standards, that the achievement of a major award represents the learner's ability to succeed in the relevant progression options and application of the learning, particularly where that might be in an employment context.
- The learner does not lose out on any components and still may complete a major award, however the vocational nature of this award may be amended to better reflect the context and circumstances for the reason given above, and also to maintain the veracity of the QQI Awards and the standing and reputation of the ETB and our learners.
- WWETB wishes to avert the potential of a Learner receiving a vocationally specific award where the necessary application of their skills has not been tested within a work-based context or more concerningly, have been tested and shown to be

lacking. Without this protocol, there is potential for this to happen as a result of a systematic default.

#### 4. Process Flow for Confirming the validity Work Experience related CAS Components



<sup>i</sup> It should be noted that some QQI Awards have greater work placement hours requirements than the standard 60 hours. (e.g. level 5 Nursing Studies, or Healthcare Support).