

# Credit Transfer for Open/Online Graduate Programs: Annex 11 South Africa

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### 3.9 Other countries (and institutions)

This report contains over double the number of case studies initially envisaged (24 not 10). However, if TRU wishes to go deeper into PLAR issues at master's level, there are three additional countries (Ireland, South Africa and Sweden) and seven mini-case studies which could be studied in more detail and which even at an overview level have yielded particularly useful results. The mini-case studies are:

1. Cork Institute of Technology, Ireland
2. University of Limerick, Ireland
3. Dublin City University, Ireland
4. IT Sligo, Ireland
5. **UNISA, South Africa**
6. Uppsala University, Sweden
7. University of Gävle, Sweden.

#### 3.9.2 South Africa (UNISA)

Literature has already been surfaced on PLAR at UNISA, the Open University of South Africa. There is also documentation on the UNISA web site.<sup>1</sup>

##### 3.9.2a PLAR at UNISA

UNISA, the Open University of South Africa, has over 140 master's degrees.<sup>2</sup>

There is a specific document on RPL for master's and doctoral studies, with a very useful flow diagram<sup>3</sup> and an application process with 19 steps. It is a comprehensive but complex process – some highlights are given below.

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<sup>1</sup> Such as [http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-\(RPL\)](http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-(RPL))

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Master%27s-&-doctoral-degrees/Qualifications/All-qualifications?cw\\_category=MASTERS%20DEGREES](http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Master%27s-&-doctoral-degrees/Qualifications/All-qualifications?cw_category=MASTERS%20DEGREES)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-\(RPL\)/RPL-for-master%27s-and-doctoral-studies](http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-(RPL)/RPL-for-master%27s-and-doctoral-studies)

*3.a NO, you do not meet the admission requirements. RPL is required.*

You do not have a prerequisite degree (in other words, you might have an incomplete honours or master's degree, or an honours degree and no master's degree, and so on), but you do have considerable relevant experience in the field.

The qualifications you already have – when coupled with your relevant experience in the field – must meet the SAQA-level outcomes specified for a master's student, as well as those laid down for entry into a doctorate if applying for admission to doctoral study. These claims must be supported by relevant evidence.

In deciding on the appropriate qualification for your master's and doctoral studies, [you should] take into account your previous work experience, relevant prior learning and research experience in the field.

*4. Do the RPL self-assessment*

You are strongly advised to reflect on your prior learning and then do a self-assessment exercise before applying for the RPL process. You do this by using the exit-level outcomes for a master's and/or doctoral degree to establish how your prior learning meets the requirements.

...Your prior learning should be appropriate to the academic context of the specific qualification, and your learning as a result of experience must still be current, valid and applicable.

*5.a YES, you satisfy the criteria to apply for RPL*

If you want to apply for RPL access to postgraduate studies (master's and doctoral studies), you should prepare for your RPL application process by doing research on the area in which you have relevant experience and prior learning. Before you apply, you need to ensure that your intended research falls within the research area of the department, school and/or college where you intend to register for your qualification.

*9. Complete and submit the RPL application form and all supporting documents to the RPL specialist*

Your application form should be posted/couriered or delivered to the RPL office.