

RPEL Case study

The Wales Academy for Professional Practice and Applied Research (WAPPAR) supports University of Wales Trinity Saint David's Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) process that enables individuals who have a breadth of work-based experience to claim credit for the experiential learning they have gained throughout their career. This can be learning they have gained through paid or voluntary employment and can also include non-accredited learning.

The RPEL process enables individuals to claim credit at levels 4 through to 7, which can normally account for up to two-thirds of a qualification. As part of this program, students receive support to develop critical analysis skills and enhance their ability to reflect on their practice. Each student is assigned a Recognition and Accreditation of Learning (RAL) Tutor who would regularly review their work and provide guidance on their progress. WAPPAR distinguishes itself by offering both online and face-to-face delivery options, with tutorial support tailored to suit the availability and requirements of each individual student.

Examples of experiential learning include:

- Attending non-accredited courses including conferences and seminars.
- Receiving work-based coaching/mentoring.
- Undertaking job shadowing.
- Completing new activities or projects and gaining experience/developing knowledge and skills throughout.
- Reflecting on activities and individual performance in order to improve practice.

Through undertaking reflection on experiential learning, students will prepare a portfolio that includes:

- an annotated Curriculum Vitae and job description.
- learning area/s that identify the experiential learning that has been acquired.
- a range of evidence to support the claim.
- PL3b RPEL application form.

The University's on-line platform, Moodle has a wealth of resources including videos, templates, examples of best practice and a range of recommended reading material.

What our students say:

"My decision to undertake the RAL programme was not based on a desire to seek out some kind of career change but more so to gain recognition for what I have learned at a strategic level and at the same time to enhance my future employment prospects."

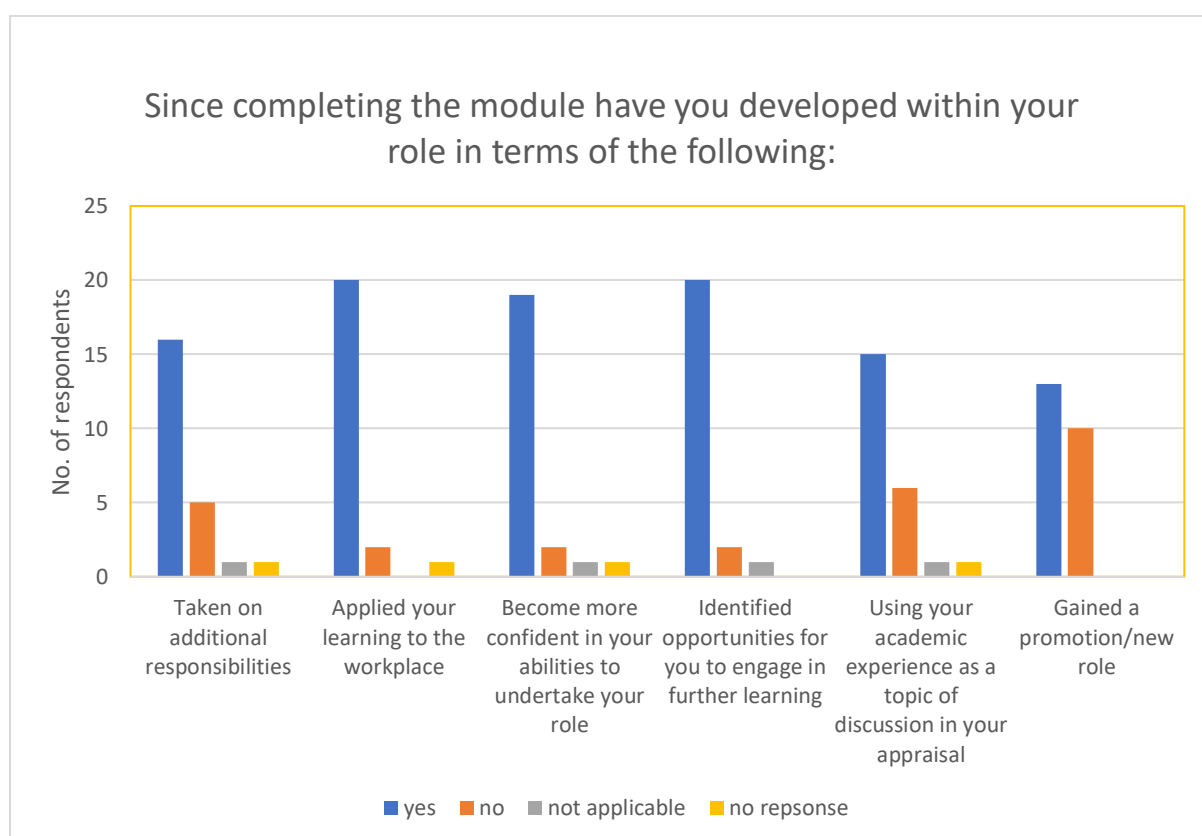
"The module challenged me; it gave me confidence and has enabled me to look back on what I have achieved and gain credit for those achievements by reflecting on my practice."

“Creating the learning areas for the RAL project has really broadened my understanding of my role as a manager and leader. I am amazed that I have achieved so much success to date; not once during my career have I considered or understood the importance of reflective practice or sat back and looked at my own achievements.”

“RAL itself was not a conventional training course. It was a place to reflect, a time to learn and a time to enjoy my achievements. It has been a time to reflect on my own leadership style, personality and mental toughness, a time to discover my own growth and development.”

What impact is the module having on an individual's development?

WAPPAR has undertaken research into the impact of the RPEL process and it is clear that past students have found real value in undertaking this module in terms of improving their confidence and efficacy in their work role.



Studying for a Master's in Professional Practice at UWTSD helps Detective Chief Inspector achieve his career goals

Dean Llewellyn, Detective Chief Inspector at South Wales Police will graduate with a [Master's in Professional Practice](#) from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) this summer. He credits the course for helping to further his career.

He has spent the past three years studying at the University's [Wales Academy for Professional Practice and Applied Research \(WAPPAR\)](#) and says the support received has helped him to progress within the police force.

Dean said: "The course has had a significantly positive effect on my professional development. I have gained invaluable strategic leadership and management insights, as well as an increased ability to plan and maximise my own professional development. I have also been able to use the learning by positively influencing my staff, colleagues, and partner agencies within often challenging and complex Criminal Investigation and safeguarding arenas."

During his studies, Dean was promoted to his current role and attributes this success to the confidence and knowledge he has gained since joining the University.

"I have seen myself developing significantly in a number of areas; particularly in respect of my confidence in my professional knowledge and academic ability," he said. "My studies have enabled me to find my 'academic voice;' and as a result, I am now able to confidently articulate strategic thoughts and ideas, whereas prior to the course I might not have had the confidence to do so within certain forums."

Dean said he wanted to inspire others in similar circumstances to consider a return to learning.

"It can be challenging, and you need to be disciplined when it comes to juggling your studies with your family and your job, but it is possible," he said.

"The support you receive from the lecturers enables you to achieve. They are friendly and always on hand to help with any questions. That support is invaluable."

Dean is now considering staying on at UWTSD to study for his [Doctor of Professional Practice](#) (DProf).

Sarah Loxdale, a lecturer from the Wales Academy for Professional Practice and Applied Research (WAPPAR) said: "Dean has been able to draw upon his extensive career at South Wales Police in order to gain credit for the learning he has acquired whilst working. Balancing study with work is challenging and Dean has shown great commitment to his studies, and we are delighted that he has gained a promotion during this time."

If you are interested in finding out more about the flexible range of programmes the Academy can offer you, please take a look at our website – www.uwtsd.ac.uk/wappar