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| Document Name and Version | 1.3 Access, Transfer and Progression Strategy and Policy |
| Policy Number | 1.3 |
| Policies that Interact with Policy 1.3 | <p>Policy 1.4 Recognition of Prior Learning</p> <p>Policy 2.10 Terms of Reference Academic Council Boards, Subcommittees & Panels</p> <p>Policy 2.11 Procedures for Appeals and Hearings</p> <p>Policy 9.4 IICP College Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.</p> <p>Policy 9.5 IICP College Programme Review and Revalidation.</p> <p>Policy 9.6 IICP College Reviewing the Effectiveness of Quality Assurance Institutional Review</p> |
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| Revisions | |

In force from 25th January 2021

1. Preamble.

- 1.1. IICP College's values, ethos and strategic goals emphasise its commitment to encouraging and facilitating applications from diverse participants into its programmes. To this end it assures the quality of processes for learner entry, transfer and progression to programmes, recognition of prior learning [RPL], and facilitation of learner diversity by the provision of learner supports.
- 1.2. The formal recognition of core IICP College programmes on the National Framework of Qualifications, and the allocation of credits to learning outcomes successfully met, facilitates the operation of its transfer and progression policy.
- 1.3. This policy has been written to address the following regulatory requirements:
- 1.3.1. QQI [Access, Transfer and Progression Policy Restatement 2015](#).¹
- 1.3.2. QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines² requirements that: "Programmes must be designed, developed and operated in line with the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications and associated policies and procedures on Access, Transfer and Progression."
- 1.3.3. QQI Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines³ requirements that: "Providers will have quality assurance procedures in place to have ... access, transfer and progression arrangements that meet QQI's criteria for a provider" (p. 3).

¹ QQI *Policy Restatement: Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training* (2015). Available at: <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/ATP%20Policy%20Restatement%20FINAL%202018.pdf> (Accessed 28 October 2018).

² Quality and Qualifications Ireland. (2016) *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines*. Available at: <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf> (Accessed 28 October 2018).

³ QQI *Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis* (2016). Available at: <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Sector%20Specific%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines%20V2.pdf> (Accessed 28 October 2018).

1.3.4. ESG⁴ states that: “It is important that access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner. Induction to the institution and the programme is provided” (p. 13).

1.3.5. NQAI’s Principles and Operational Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning in Further and Higher Education and Training 2005⁵.

2. Purpose.

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure fit-for-purpose learner access, transfer and progression opportunities and programme delivery structures.

3. Scope.

3.1. This is an overarching policy and applies to all aspects of the College’s operation.

4. Roles and responsibilities.

4.1. The Academic Council is responsible for formally approving this policy and for overseeing its implementation.

4.2. The Admissions Manager is responsible for the management of entry into the programme, including selection of learners.

4.3. The Registrar is responsible for managing RPL applications.

5. Policy.

5.1. *Admission and transfer:* IICP College policies of admission and transfer are in accordance with the criteria outlined in QQI (2015). To this end it has in place clear entry arrangements, provides transparent decisions on the allocation of places,

⁴ European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), et. al (2015), *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*, 2nd edn, Available at https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf [Accessed 25/10/2018].

⁵ 1.1.5. NQAI *Principles and Operational Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning in Further and Higher Education and Training* (2005). Available at: <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Principles%20and%20Operational%20Guidelines%20for%20RPL%202005.pdf> (Accessed 29 October 2018).

promotes transfer and progression, and ensures that all applicants are treated in a fair, equal and consistent manner.

5.2. Entry requirements:

5.2.1. QQI restatement requires that applicants for programmes must 'have available statements of the knowledge, skill and competence needed as a basis for successful participation.'

5.2.2. IICP College ensures that entry arrangements for each of its programmes are clear, the application processes and admissions processes is clearly communicated to applicants and decisions on the allocation of places on programmes are transparent.

5.2.3. Entry criteria, and statements of the knowledge, skill and competence needed as a basis for successful participation, for each programme are established at Validation/ Revalidation.

5.2.4. The College operates an RPL policy for applicants who do not meet the entry requirements and for applicants seeking advanced entry based on prior learning.

5.3. Accommodating diversity: IICP College is committed to promoting accessibility for diverse learners. To this end admission criteria accommodate non-traditional learners and there are Recognition of Prior Learning mechanisms in place for non-standard applicants.

5.4. Transfer and progression: IICP College has in place transfer and progression routes into and onwards from programmes leading to awards on the framework, the College communicates to all of its learners any particular attainments required for transfer or progression. The College makes reasonable adaptations to programmes to facilitate successful transitions, especially for those accessing programmes through non-standard routes.

5.5. Information Provision: IICP College is committed to providing comprehensive, accurate, accessible information to learners and prospective learners on its programmes in relation to the following:

- Entry requirements to programmes;
- The possibilities for access, transfer and progression;
- Programme fees and costs;
- Career pathways.

5.6. *Learner mobility*: The College supports the mobility of learners. Learners are encouraged to progress through the various stages of the accredited programmes by providing them with clear goals (certificate, diploma, degree and other awards) and transparent paths of progression. Progression is logical, stepped and achievable, made possible through careful course construction. Appropriate learner supports facilitate successful completion of each stage.

5.7. *Recognition of Prior Learning [RPL]*: IICP College has in place a Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure [RPL]. RPL is intended for applicants who may not have the specified direct entry requirements gained through formal accredited education but who have learned from their involvement in training, education, employment, and work-based learning. This process may also be used by applicants who are seeking advanced entry to a programme of learning within the College. Applicants who are seeking credit for uncertified learning towards an award may be considered at the discretion of the Registrar.

6. Procedures.

6.1. Entry

6.1.1. For each programme, IICP College has in place a clear definition of the awards on the NFQ that are recognised as demonstrating eligibility for entry and the performance levels required in these awards.

6.1.2. Candidates must satisfy the minimum entry requirements and any additional requirements specified for their programme of choice to be considered eligible for entry.

6.1.3. Programme entry requirements:

6.1.3.1. Entry Qualifications:

6.1.3.1.1. Higher Certificate (Level 6), Bachelor Degrees (Level 7), and Bachelor (Hons) Degrees (Level 8) require a qualification recognised at level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

6.1.3.1.2. Masters programmes (Level 9) in general require a qualification recognised at level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). These also carry additional minimum entry requirements as follows:

- An honours degree, Level 8 on The National Framework of Qualifications [NFQ], in counselling and psychotherapy or equivalent and evidence of completion of 50 hours of personal therapy and 100 hours of supervised clinical practice.

OR

- An honours degree, Level 8 on the NFQ, plus a professional diploma in counselling and psychotherapy that meets with IACP /IAHIP course recognition standards. The diploma, or equivalent must have counselling and psychotherapy at its core and have a minimum of 450 hours in tutor/learner contact over the duration of the programme.

6.1.4. Programme entry procedure:

6.1.4.1. The following delineates the processes and procedures for the management and operations related to admissions. This is managed by the Admissions Manager and the administration team of IICP College.

6.1.4.2. *Dealing with course queries:* IICP College has established processes and procedures for dealing with course enquiries. Once the programme is advertised, admissions staff are fully trained in the specifics of the content and delivery of the programme. Course enquiries are received through emails, through the website or over the phone. All course enquiries are noted on a central 'Enquiries Database', where prospective details are recorded, with the consent of the prospective learner. All enquiries are then followed up with an email and any relevant information and application forms are sent to the prospective learner.

6.1.4.3. *Reviewing of applications against entry requirements:* When applications are received by the admissions team, each application is fully

reviewed to ensure that they meet the entry requirements of the programme. If the applicant is suitable and eligible the application is processed. If not, the admissions team will inform the applicant, and may discuss other courses that might be suitable for the applicant and offer them feedback on their application.

6.1.4.4. *Receipt of Application:* On receipt of an eligible application, the applicant's details are added to the corresponding accounts database. As there is an application fee that is required to be paid upon application, this fee is processed and receipt for the payment is sent to the applicant along with an acknowledgment of the receipt of their application.

6.1.4.5. *Scheduling Interviews:* Once eligibility is determined and the application fee is processed, the admission team then schedule an interview for the applicant. Interviews are scheduled in blocks and generally take place 1-2 days per month. Applicants receive email notification of the proposed interview appointment at least 10 days before the interview is due to take place and the admissions team work with the applicant to find a mutually agreement time if the proposed appointment is not suitable.

6.1.4.6. *Co-Facilitating Interviews:* Interviews are facilitated by a member of the admissions team and members of the core teaching staff. The interview is made up of a series of set questions devised to determine their suitability and their motivation for applying for the programme. The interview for this proposed programme will take approximately 30 minutes and each candidate is scored against a standard interview score sheet. Applicants are advised that they will receive a formal response within 3-5 working days.

6.1.4.7. *Checking Academic References:* Following on from the applicant's interview, the admission team may deem it necessary to contact a reference provided on the application form. This reference check is done using IICP's Academic Reference Check Questionnaire, contained in supporting documentation.

6.1.4.8. *Preparing and Sending Official Letters of Offer:* Subsequent to a successful applicant interview, the admissions team draft an individual letter of offer for the applicant, based on the College Template (contained

in supporting documentation). This letter outlines the course of study to which they have been accepted, the date that the course commences and details for making the next stage deposit payment for the acceptance of their place. This letter is sent along with the IICP College's standard Terms and Conditions [T&Cs]. Applicants are asked to review the letter and T&Cs and to return a signed copy to the admissions team before a specified date. These letters are posted as well as emailed to the applicant to ensure their prompt and ensured receipt.

6.1.5. *Appeals.* Applicants may submit an appeal on the following grounds:

- Where the applicant is of the view that their application has not be processed in line with the published criteria.
- Where the applicant is of the view that the decision is based on misinterpretation of information and/or data submitted as part of the application process.

6.1.5.1. Appeals procedure. An applicant should seek feedback from the College admissions office before deciding whether or not he/she has grounds to appeal the admissions decision. An appeal will not be considered until after an applicant has received formal feedback.

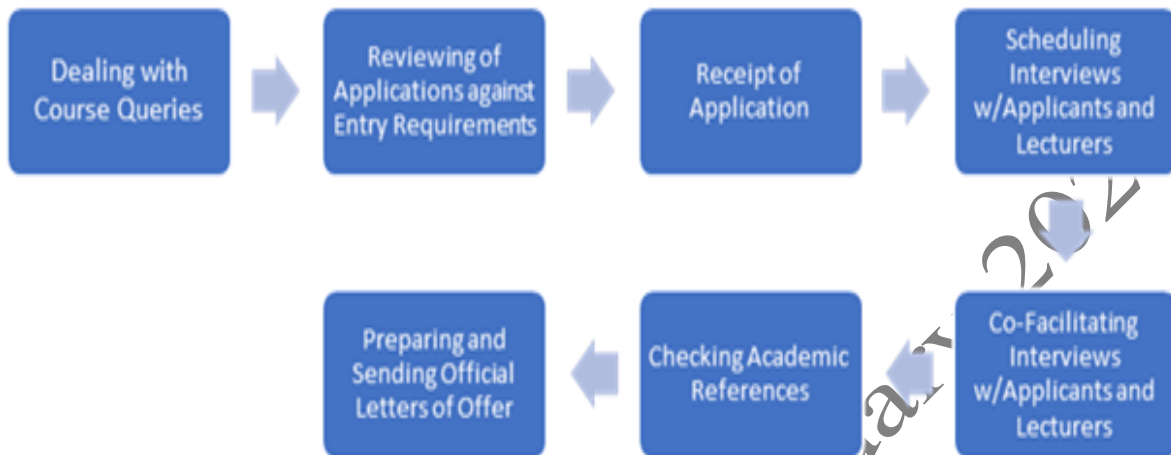
6.1.5.2. The appeal must be submitted in writing (either email or hard copy) along with any relevant supporting documentation to the Registrar.

6.1.5.3. The Registrar, or another staff member who has had no prior involvement in the case, will review the appeal and respond to the appellant.

6.1.5.4. In the majority of cases the appeal will be assessed on the basis of the written submission alone. If necessary, the applicant may be contacted for further information or to clarify points already raised.

6.1.5.5. The applicant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal and given an explanation for the decision which has been reached. The decision of the Registrar is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Figure 1. Programme Entry Procedure.



6.2. Transfers into the programmes.

6.2.1. Applications are welcome from learners from other Higher Education Institutions (HEI) wishing to transfer from other Higher Education Institutions (including Universities) with stage or award qualifications. Advanced entry applications are subject to places being available on that programme. To be eligible, applicants must have passed the stage examinations and have achieved the learning outcomes.

6.3. Progression.

6.3.1. IICP College provides clear information on progression information to learners at the College.

6.3.2. Progression between IICP College programmes is facilitated and encouraged. The programme in place are as follows:

Table 1 - List of Current QQI Programmes

| LIST OF IICP'S CURRENTLY PROVIDED QQI PROGRAMMES | | | | | |
|--|-----------|---|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Ref. Code | NFQ Level | Programme Title | Last Programmatic Review | Validation Date | Awarding Body |
| | 9 | Masters / Level 9 Degree in Integrative Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy | | 2018 | QQI |
| | 9 | Postgraduate Diploma Integrative Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy | | 2018 | QQI |
| PG21047 | 9 | MA in Pluralistic Counselling & Psychotherapy | 2019 | 2014 | QQI |
| PG21048 | 9 | Postgraduate Diploma in Pluralistic Counselling & Psychotherapy | 2019 | 2014 | QQI |
| PG22392 | 8 | Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy | 2016 | 2016 | QQI |
| PG22380 | 7 | Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy | 2016 | 2016 | QQI |
| PG22386 | 6 | Higher Certificate in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Studies | 2016 | 2016 | QQI |
| PG22387 | 6 | Certificate in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Studies | 2016 | 2016 | QQI |

6.3.3. Progression arrangements are as follows:

6.3.3.1. Learners who successfully complete the Certificate programme may progress to the Higher Certificate, Ordinary Bachelor Degree programmes and Honours Bachelor Degree programmes.

6.3.3.2. Learners who successfully complete the Higher Certificate programme may progress to the Ordinary Bachelor Degree programme and Honours Bachelor Degree programme.

6.3.3.3. Learners who successfully complete the Bachelor Degree programme may progress to Honours Bachelor Degree programme.

6.3.3.4. Progression to the Masters programmes is not automatic. Learners who successfully complete the Honours Degree Programme (level 8) may progress to the Masters Programmes once they have achieved professional recognition.

6.3.3.5. Learners admitted to either an ab-initio Ordinary Bachelor Degree programme or an ab-initio Honours Bachelor Degree programme and who

exit before completion may apply for an approved exit award that is embedded in the major award provided they meet the learning outcomes of the exit award and have earned sufficient ECTS credits.

6.3.3.6. Learners admitted to either Masters programme and who exit before completion may apply for an approved exit award of Postgraduate Diploma embedded in the major award provided they meet the learning outcomes of the exit award and have earned sufficient ECTS credits.

6.3.3.7. Where an award is not achieved then IICP College CPD Certificates, plus a transcript of results indicating what credits have been earned, are awarded to successful participants.

6.4. Monitoring and record keeping.

6.4.1. Personal data is processed in accordance with IICP College's Data Protection Policy.

6.4.2. Programme Entry and Progression policies and procedures, including Admissions Appeals, are subject to ongoing monitoring and review through Programme Monitoring (Policy 9.4 IICP College Monitoring and Evaluation Policy), Programme Review (Policy 9.5 IICP College Programme Review and Revalidation), and QA and policy reviews (2.1 IICP College's Quality and Governance Framework; (i) Quality Assurance). Specifically:

6.4.2.1. An Admissions Audit is carried out by the QA Manager, and submitted to the relevant Programme Boards on an annual basis. The Programme Board include consideration of this audit in their annual programme monitoring.

6.4.2.2. Data on Admissions Appeals is compiled by the Registry Department, and submitted to Programme Boards.

6.4.2.3. Exam Board and External Examiner records are used to inform trends and anomalies in admissions in the context of student achievement.

6.4.2.4. Standard retention and progression monitoring occurs as part of annual Programme Review. This is utilised in order to highlight if there are trends and anomalies associated with admissions and exemptions.

6.4.3. Programme Review Reports . These 5-yearly reports consider programme grades and QQI award classifications comparing these against entry qualifications and other learner characteristics, and benchmarking them against corresponding results published by other providers (see policy 9.5).

6.4.4. Institutional Review Reports: These cyclical reports consider the effectiveness of the College's QA procedures for access, transfer and progression.

These records allow the programme faculty to take action to enhance, and to act to remedy, any difficulties, in relation to learner access, transfer and progression as well as learner engagement, as early as is practicable in conjunction with annual reviews.

7. Supporting Documentation.

7.1. Fees Information for Learners (Contained in Terms and Conditions).

1. Several payment options are available to learners including debit/credit card, direct debit, EFT, cheque and cash.
2. At present, there are no additional charges for debit/credit cards, however IICP College reserves the right to apply any additional charges as it sees fit and in line with any rise in variable interchange rates / bank charges / card charges.
3. Prior to the commencement of their studies, learners agree to either pay all fees in full or sign up to a payment plan. The administration fee for a payment plan is currently €50 for direct debit option and €100 for all other payment options.
4. Learners will not be registered as learners until either their programme fees are paid in full or they have signed up to a payment plan.
5. Learner's attention is drawn to Policy 4.5 in IICP College's Quality Assurance Manual (available at <https://www.iicp.ie/qam/> from 1st September 2019). This sets out the consequences of failure to meet the agreed deadlines for payment of programme fees.
6. Learners who do not complete the required modules within the given timeframe may incur additional costs.
7. Programme fees are reviewed on an annual basis and are subject to change.

8. Programme fees are non-refundable in any circumstances.
9. All programmes are run subject to sufficient demand and the formation of a viable class cohort (which shall be determined in the sole discretion of IICP). A refund of any fees paid less the application fee will be given to applicants in the event that the programme does not proceed.

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