

Access, Transfer and Progression

Policy & Procedure

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Approved By: Tony O' Brien
 CEO

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This policy pertains to **Northridge House Education and Research Centre at St Luke's Cork**, hereafter referred to as **the Centre**.

1. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to describes the pathways available to Learners to enter and transfer between, and progress from programmes of education and training, which are the main route to achieving awards and qualifications.

2. Definitions

Access - the process by which learners may commence a programme of education and training having received recognition for knowledge, skill or competence required.

Transfer - the process by which Learners may transfer from one programme of education and training to another programme having received recognition for knowledge, skill and competence acquired.

Progression - the process by which learners may transfer from one programme of education and training to another programme.

3. Scope of Policy

The policy will apply to all learners and staff of the Centre.

4. Policy Statement

The Centre's policy in this area is informed by the following policies: - QQI Policy Restatement - Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training (NQAI, 2003, Restated 2015) - Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 - Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016), QQI.

It is the policy of the Centre, as far as is practicable, to admit all applicants who fulfil the minimum academic requirements for its courses and programmes. Guidelines are published on the entry requirements for those seeking advanced entry onto a programme, and for those seeking additional supports or accommodations for reason of a disability or a medical condition. All documentation is published on the Centre's website and brochure.

Access

Entry requirements and progression opportunities for each programme module are documented in the QQI validation application and are made available on the Centres website and printed promotional material. Promotional materials for courses, show clear information on programme titles, the awarding body (QQI), access routes and outline of content available to learners and other stakeholders.

Admission requirements will be framed by reference to a clear and consistent approach for all Learners, based on:

- QQI component award specification.
- NFQ award level.
- Course delivery method (e.g., IT skills for access to learning materials; and
- Learner existing competencies and suitability for the course (e.g., English language and IT skills)

It is the responsibility of learners to ensure they are fully briefed about their chosen course of study. Learners will take responsibility for ensuring that they have completed all documentation required for enrolment and paid the necessary fees if applicable. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a completed enrolment form
- a photocopy of personal identification
- a photocopy of any previous qualification
- proof of English language proficiency (if required)

It is the learners responsibility to ensure the information supplied is accurate. Submitting false or misleading information or documentation may lead to cancellation of admission or expulsion from a programme.

Entry requirements for each of our programmes are listed on our website www.northridgehouse.ie

There is currently no specific requirement for participants to have completed a previous programme of training at a similar or lower level on the NFQ.

The Centre Administrator will ensure that the prospective learner understands the entry and eligibility criteria for the specific programme of interest and will offer to send a full programme

outline to the learner, complete with comprehensive details of course content and assessment requirements.

Minimum English Language Requirements:

Teaching is through the medium of English. Learners must demonstrate a high level of competence in the English language to be admitted. Minimum English language requirements apply to all applicants at all levels of study.

Learners whose first language is not English must show that they meet a certain standard of English language proficiency. This can be proven through any one of the following methods:

- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) Level B2 or higher
- Merit or Distinction in the QQI Level 5 modules English as a Second Language 5N1632 or Communications 5N0690
- International English Language Testing System–Academic (IELTS) – Minimum overall band score of 7.0, with a result not less than 6.5 in each of the individual sections
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) – Internet Based Test: Minimum total score of 100 out of 120, with a score not less than 22 in Reading and Listening. Not less than 26 in Speaking and NOT LESS than 24 in the test of written English

In all cases the test results must not be more than 2 years old

Access to all online programmes will be subject to meeting minimum IT skills.

To benefit from the range of tools used to deliver our programs, learners are required to have the capability to:

- Use Internet Explorer or other browsers.
- Use Microsoft Outlook or similar e-mail and task management application.
- Submit assignments in a Word document format.
- Use Zoom or similar
- Be able to carry out web-based research.

If a learner is unsuccessful in accessing a module, they are informed of the appeals procedure. Learners who successfully complete a QQI component module will have further learning opportunities within a learner progression pathway.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning or RPL is defined by the RPL Practitioner Network Ireland as “A process used to evaluate the skills and knowledge acquired by the person outside the classroom for the purpose of recognising competence against a given set of standards, competencies, or learning outcomes”.

The European Commission state that RPL includes formal learning (typically education or training provider programmes leading to awards), non-formal learning (such as workplace learning which may be assessed, but typically not certified) and informal learning (experiential learning / learning by doing). Northridge House offers a number of QQI Modules both at Level 5 and Level 6 but does not at this time offer full Awards.

The modules offered by the Centre are stand alone but can be added to the Learners journey toward their goal

The Centre is aware of the significance of “prior learning” as a means of enabling candidates to access and participate successfully on specific QQI programmes in areas where they may have already acquired relevant knowledge or skills.

The existence of “Prior Learning” will be recognised and discussed with prospective learners at the enquiry and entry stages to programmes.

Due to the nature and short duration of our programmes, “Recognition of Prior Learning” will not confer any special privilege or advantage on prospective learners, at present.

- Learners may raise the potential for the recognition of prior learning to gain them specific programme credits or exemption at the enquiry stage of enrolment to programmes.
- Learners will be informed by administrative staff that all participants undertaking QQI programmes with Northridge House Education & Research Centre will complete programmes in full, regardless of prior learning achievements, and will be required to complete all aspects of course assessment, as specified.
- Learners will also be informed that it is likely that candidates with “prior learning” experience and knowledge will perform at a high level on our programmes and often, although not always, achieve grades of a higher than average level on assessment.
- Learners will be informed at contact stage and advised if their current levels of knowledge and experience indicate their suitability to participation on a programme at a higher level than that of their current enquiry.
- If prospective learners are happy to proceed then enrolment for the programme takes place. They may of course opt for a different programme of learning, at a higher level, as a matter of choice.

Transfer

Learners may transfer to another QQI course offered at the Centre, should they satisfy the

enrolment requirements for that course.

Progression

The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) defines the relationship between awards: this in itself contributes to improved transfer and progression. The NFQ is based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) which allows for transfer and progression: - between levels - between award-types at the same level - between named awards.

The Centre does not offer a full QQI award, but modules taken can be used together to obtain the full award. The Centre will submit for the full award on behalf of a student once they have been informed that the student is completing their last module towards this full award. The Centre must be informed at the time of enrolment that this is the case, and an administration fee will apply for this service.

The Centre has established a relationship with the College of Commerce, Cork and supports students directly by referral to the College.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the learners responsibility to ensure they are familiar with the contents of this policy.

It is the Tutors responsibility to inform learners of this policy and to identify where a learner has not met the requirements in this policy.

6. Referenced Policies

Quality Assurance Policy (ED 18)

Equality and Accessibility Policy (ED 8)

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (ED19)

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed every 3 years or more frequently as required.