ACCESS, TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION

This section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Handbook outlines the policy and procedures for programme access, transfer and progression in Kerry Education and Training Board (Kerry ETB). This policy does not exist in isolation, so cross reference will be made to other related policies and procedures where appropriate.

This policy gives due regard to the:
• Kerry ETB Fees and Fee Waiver Policy Further Education and Training (FET Pillar).

Specific reference to the system for determining, collecting and refunding course fees associated with FET provision are made in this wider policy.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there are pathways available to enter and transfer between, and progress from Kerry ETB FET programmes. This policy also has the purpose of complying with the following:
a) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and its Sectoral Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.
b) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Topic Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended Learning, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.

SCOPE
This policy applies to all FET programmes which have a route to achieving awards and qualifications.

POLICY
Programme Access
Kerry ETB will ensure that there is a fair and consistent approach to how learners are selected and enrolled in all FET programmes. Entry requirements will be based on the principle that prospective learners who can demonstrate that they have attained a basis for successful participation based on eligibility, suitability and benefit to the applicant, as appropriate to the particular programme.

Kerry ETB will limit recruitment numbers for the programme for any one intake, to accommodate teaching/training space capacity and to facilitate practical demonstrations which are an inherent part of FET delivery. Numbers will not exceed those approved through the validation process. A waiting list will operate where demand exceeds the places available.

Kerry ETB will publish a statement of entry requirements for all programmes on an annual basis. The statement of entry requirements will define:
a) The minimum academic standard and those qualifications deemed to satisfy this.
b) The English Language entry requirements and the evidence that should be presented to demonstrate a sufficient level of proficiency.

Kerry ETB will make the following available to prospective learners:
a) Statement of the entry requirements for every programme.
b) Details as to how admission decisions are made regarding allocation of places.
c) Details on the appeals mechanism for applicants refused access to a programme.

Learners wishing to enrol for a Kerry ETB programme must have achieved at least the minimum requirements for entry onto the programme.

The Admissions Office is responsible for ensuring each application is properly evaluated and a decision reached and communicated to the applicant normally within ten working days.

Applicants may be interviewed by a member of the Admissions Office or nominated representatives. At the interview stage, applicant documentation is verified and an initial assessment made of the applicant's suitability for the selected programme.

Ideally, all applicants' original documentation will be provided by the applicant and verified by a member of the Admissions Office, as to its authenticity at the initial interview stage. Evidence of the applicant's qualifications will be filed with the standard application documentation. At this time, a course place can be offered to the applicant. In situations where an applicant is unable, due to timing circumstances, to furnish the required documentation, a provisional course offer can still be made. The provisional offer is subject to the verification of the documentation at a later date. This requirement will be expressly communicated when the provisional offer is made.

Kerry ETB will monitor the effectiveness of the process of selection of appropriate learners for a given programme, and their ability to successfully complete the programme depending on the programme entry criteria.

Recognition of prior learning for admission to a programme

Kerry ETB recognises that knowledge, skills and competencies can be acquired from a range of experiences, including formal, non-formal and informal learning. This is in line with the aims of the NFQ to recognise all learning achievements, by supporting the development of alternative pathways to qualifications (or awards) and by facilitating the recognition of prior learning.

Kerry ETB will use the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as a mechanism for determining standard access equivalences, and admitting applicants to a programme.

College Principals/Campus Managers and FET Centre Managers will ensure that all course applicants are made aware of the potential benefits of RPL and will adjudicate on applications from those seeking to use RPL as a method of satisfying entry requirements to a programme. Such adjunction shall be carried out in accordance with the Kerry ETB RPL Procedures.

Appeals

An applicant is entitled to appeal an admissions decision on the following grounds:
a) Incorrect process- specific evidence of irregularity in Kerry ETB's application process.
b) Specified/stated grounds where the decision was based on misinterpretation of data or information provided as part of the application process. The appeal must be made in writing to the College Principal/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager within 10 days of the issuing of admissions decision. The grounds for appeal will be considered by the College Principal/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager and evaluated by an Independent Appeals Committee. The outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing to the applicant normally within 10 days of receipt.

Cancellation

Kerry ETB reserves the right to cancel a course where there are insufficient numbers to run a viable programme. In such circumstances, applicants will be notified that the course is not to run and the College Principal/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager will organise a refund of any payments made. Application numbers will be reviewed at least monthly from the opening of the recruitment cycle. A final decision will be made to run the programme 3 weeks prior to the course commencement date.

For programmes that have not recruited sufficient numbers as per agreed minimum intake or insufficient numbers for a viable programme, the determination not to run the programme is made by the FET Director, informed by the Admissions Office. Applicants holding confirmed course offers will be notified not less than 2 weeks prior to the commencement date of that course.

Transfer and progression

Kerry ETB offers a range of awards on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The NFQ defines the relationship between awards, which in turn contributes to transfer and progression between levels and between award-types at the same level.

Kerry ETB FET programmes are normally divided into modules and stages. Stages and modules are sub-programmes within programmes. A stage comprises of a set of modules at a similar level, and represents a rung on a progression ladder. Kerry ETB recognises the importance of the stage concept and will develop programmes group(s) modules with the same level of learning in the relevant discipline. Learners achieving an award will be eligible to progress to a particular stage having demonstrated achievement of the minimum intended learning outcomes of all preceding stages.

Learners achieving an award are eligible to progress to a programme leading to another award at the next level up, where there is such an award in the same field of learning. Where there is not an award at a higher level in the same field of learning, learners achieving an award are eligible to transfer to a programme leading to another award at the same level.

Responsibilities
- The Quality Council is responsible for approving this policy and procedure for ratification by the Chief Executive.
- The FET Director has overall responsibility for Learner access.
- The Admissions Office will act in an administrative capacity for the FET Director for all matters. pertaining to Learner Access and Admission.
- The QA unit is responsible for monitoring compliance with the admissions process.

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Access, Transfer and Progression
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	All programmes which have a route to achieving awards and qualifications

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0		New policy	Quality Assurance Officer	