Access, Transfer and Progression Policy

Section 1 - Introduction

Purpose

(1) This policy sets out Hibernia College's approach to Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP), ensuring inclusivity and equality of opportunity for our prospective and current students and alumni.

Scope

To whom does the policy apply?

(2) This is an overarching policy that applies to all Hibernia College programmes.

Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

(3) The Academic Board is ultimately responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Section 2 - Context

Legal or Regulatory Context

Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012

(4) This policy guides the College in its implementation of its legal requirements to put in place procedures for access, transfer and progression as set out in the [Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012](#).

National and International Policy

(5) This policy is designed to help implement the requirements in the area of ATP set out in:

   a. [QQI Policy Restatement: Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training](#)
   b. [Assessment and Standards](#)
   c. [European Standards and Guidelines](#)

AHEAD Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning

(6) Hibernia College fully adopts the AHEAD [Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning](#) and reflects this in quality assurance policies and procedures and the teaching, learning and assessment practices of the College.

Section 3 - Policy Statements

(7) ATP is manifested in entry to programmes, transfer between programmes and credit for learning.

Part A - Principles of Access, Transfer and Progression

(8) Higher education is considered a right in the European Higher Education Area, and the principles of enabling reasonable access to, transfer within and progression from programmes are key to the democratisation of education. As a College committed to online and blended learning provision, these are key ideas and must be underpinned by equitable and thoughtful practices to assist learners in their path of lifelong learning.

(9) The unique challenges international students may face including differences in educational systems, cultural barriers and local legislation, are taken into account in ATP. For all new international and fully online programmes, the admissions requirements, information accessibility and support services specific to the local contexts are reviewed by the Admissions Office.

Access – Entry to Programmes

(10) Hibernia College is committed to lifelong learning and seeks to provide access to programmes to all learners who meet the entry criteria and requirements of a programme, regardless of their life stage, personal circumstances or geographic location.

(11) The College is committed to ensuring no artificial barriers are put in place to prevent potential learners participating in a programme of their choice.

(12) All programmes shall include clear and reasonable entry criteria which are published and indicate the prerequisite learning for a programme as well as its intended learning outcomes.

(13) There shall be clear and transparent entry procedures for all programmes.

(14) The College is also committed to promoting access for prospective students who may have disabilities and/or additional needs, where it is reasonably possible to do so.

(15) Learners may enter a programme at various stages or with exemptions where they have gained recognition of prior learning.

Progression and Transfer

(16) Where transfer can be facilitated between Hibernia College programmes, unconstrained by programme rules, we facilitate this.

(17) Students who wish to exit a programme prior to its completion are assisted to do so, with all academic credit clearly documented.

(18) Students who cannot successfully complete a programme are assisted to exit it with all academic credit attained clearly documented.

(19) Exit awards for programmes are designed and embedded into programmes where possible.

(20) At the point of the design and development of programmes, pathways to other programmes in Hibernia College or in other institutions are considered:

   a. The ease of transfer
   b. The ease of progression to higher awards or sideways to conversion awards

Recognition of Prior and Credit

(21) Hibernia College is committed to the recognition of a learner's prior learning, whether:

a. Prior Formal Learning
b. Informal learning
c. Non-Formal Learning

(22) Hibernia College is committed to the recognition of a learner's prior learning for any of the following purposes:

a. Entry to stage one
b. Advanced entry
c. Gaining exemption from various elements of a programme

(23) Students who pass any module will have the credit for that module recorded on their student record and academic transcripts.

(24) Where a student has already used academic credit towards an award in another programme, they cannot obtain credit (ECTS) for it a second time, but they can receive an exemption for further study in that module.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	5th March 2025
Review Date	5th March 2028
Approval Authority	Quality Assurance Officer
Approval Date	5th March 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Enquiries Contact	Quality Assurance

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Non-Formal Learning" - Learning which is acquired through planned activities but does not result in formal certification

"Policy" - Policies are principled statements adopted by the College at a high level to enable decisions about actions and desired outcomes to which the College is committed. They clearly articulate the formal position of the College on specific issues in order to guide internal decision-making. Policies set out 'what to do' on a given issue. They have a medium- to long-term review cycle.

"Prior Formal Learning" - Learning which has already attracted formal certification within an education system, including the NFQ