

<b>Document Name and Version</b>	1.3 Access, Transfer and Progression Strategy and Policy
<b>Policy Number</b>	1.3
<b>Policies that Interact with Policy 1.3</b>	<p>Policy 1.4 Recognition of Prior Learning</p> <p>Policy 2.10 Terms of Reference Academic Council Boards, Subcommittees &amp; 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>
<b>Approval Body</b>	Academic Council
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## 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](#).<sup>1</sup>

1.3.2. QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines<sup>2</sup> 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 Guidelines<sup>3</sup> 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).

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<sup>1</sup> 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).

<sup>2</sup> 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).

<sup>3</sup> 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. ESG<sup>4</sup> 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 2005<sup>5</sup>.

## **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 Registry Department 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,

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<sup>4</sup> 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](https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf) [Accessed 25/10/2018].

<sup>5</sup> 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 (CORE PROGRAMMES):**

**6.1.3.1. QQI Level 6 Special Purpose Award in Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Studies (Blended Learning)**

6.1.3.1.1. *Academic Requirements:* A full award recognised at level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) such as the Leaving Certificate is required for entry onto this programme.

6.1.3.1.2. *Language Requirements:* Where English is a second language applicants are required to submit an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) cert at Level 5.5 (CEFR B2), or equivalent.

6.1.3.1.3. *Mathematical requirements:* A pass in foundation level mathematics at F2 level or higher, or equivalent.

6.1.3.1.4. *IT Requirements:* Participants will need to have access to a PC/ laptop and the internet. Applicants will need to ensure that they have reasonable broadband. Participants will also be familiar with word processing, email and internet browser use. Minimum PC/ laptop requirements are set out on the College's website, at <https://www.iicp.ie/laptop-specifications-for-students/>

**6.1.3.2. QQI Level 8 Bachelor of Science in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Blended Learning)**

6.1.3.2.1. *Academic Requirements:* A full award recognised at level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

6.1.3.2.2. *Mathematical Requirements:* A pass in foundation level mathematics at F2 level or higher.

6.1.3.2.3. *Language Requirements:* Where English is not a first language applicants are required to submit an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) cert at Level 6.5 (CEFR B2), or equivalent.

6.1.3.2.4. *IT Requirements:* Participants will need to have access to a PC/ laptop and the internet. Applicants will need to ensure that they have reasonable broadband. Participants will also be familiar with word processing, email and internet browser use. Minimum PC/ requirements are set out on the College's website, at <https://www.iicp.ie/laptop-specifications-for-students/>

**6.1.3.3. QQI Level 9 Master of Science in Pluralistic Counselling and Psychotherapy (Blended Learning)**

6.1.3.3.1. *Academic Requirements:* A full award recognised at level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

6.1.3.3.2. *Language Requirements:* Where English is not a first language applicants are required to submit an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) cert at Level 6.5 (CEFR B2), or equivalent.

6.1.3.3.3. *Professional Requirements:* Applicants should be able to demonstrate either

- 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 120 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, or equivalent. The diploma must have counselling and psychotherapy at its core and have a minimum of 450 hours in tutor/student contact over the duration of the programme.

6.1.3.3.4. *Workplace Learning requirements:* Applicants must be in a work setting or role which will provide them with opportunities to implement their learning from this module, such as paid or voluntary work within the helping professions, counselling support services and /or project / community work.

6.1.3.3.5. *IT Requirements:* Participants will need to have access to a PC/ laptop and the internet. Applicants will need to ensure that they have reasonable broadband. Participants will also be familiar with word processing, email and internet browser use. Minimum PC/ laptop requirements are set out on the College's website, at <https://www.iicp.ie/laptop-specifications-for-students/>

**6.1.3.4. QQI Level 9 Master of Arts in Integrative Child & Adolescent**

**Psychotherapy**

6.1.3.5. *Academic Requirements:* A full award recognised at level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

6.1.3.6. *Language Requirements:* Where English is not a first language, applicants are required to submit an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) cert at Level 6.5 (CEFR B2), or equivalent.

6.1.3.7. *Professional Requirements:* Applicants should be able to demonstrate either

- 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 120 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, or equivalent. The diploma must have counselling and psychotherapy at its core and have a minimum of 450 hours in tutor/student contact over the duration of the programme.

**6.1.4. PROGRAMME ENTRY REQUIREMENTS (MINOR AWARDS):**

**6.1.4.1. QQI Level 9 Certificate in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (Blended Learning)**

6.1.4.1.1. *Academic Requirements:* A full award recognised at level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

6.1.4.1.2. *Language Requirements:* Where English is not a first language applicants are required to submit an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) cert at Level 6.5 (CEFR B2), or equivalent.

6.1.4.1.3. *Professional Requirements:* Applicants should be able to demonstrate either

- 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 120 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, or equivalent. The diploma must have counselling and psychotherapy at its core and have a minimum of 450 hours in tutor/student contact over the duration of the programme.

6.1.4.1.4. *Workplace Learning requirements:* Applicants must be in a work setting or role which will provide them with opportunities to implement their learning from this module, such as paid or voluntary work within the helping professions, counselling support services and /or project / community work.

6.1.4.1.5. *IT Requirements:* Participants will need to have access to a PC/ laptop and the internet. Applicants will need to ensure that they have reasonable broadband. Participants will also be familiar with word processing, email and internet browser use. Minimum PC/ laptop requirements are set out on the College's website, at <https://www.iicp.ie/laptop-specifications-for-students/>

**6.1.4.2. QQI Level 8 Certificate in Improving Clinical Outcomes (Blended Learning)**

6.1.4.2.1. *Academic Requirements:* A full award recognised recognised at level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

6.1.4.2.2. *Mathematical Requirements:* A pass in foundation level mathematics at F2 level or higher.

6.1.4.2.3. *Language Requirements:* Where English is not a first language applicants are required to submit an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) cert at Level 6.5 (CEFR B2), or equivalent.

6.1.4.2.4. *IT Requirements:* Participants will need to have access to a PC/ laptop and the internet. Applicants will need to ensure that they have reasonable broadband. Participants will also be familiar with word processing, email and internet browser use. Minimum PC/ laptop requirements are set out on the College's website, at <https://www.iicp.ie/laptop-specifications-for-students/>

#### **6.1.4.3. QQI Level 7 Certificate in Suicide Postvention (Blended Learning)**

6.1.4.3.1. *Academic Requirements:* A full award recognised at level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

6.1.4.3.2. *Mathematical Requirements:* A pass in foundation level mathematics at F2 level or higher.

6.1.4.3.3. *Language Requirements:* Where English is not a first language applicants are required to submit an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) cert at Level 6.5 (CEFR B2), or equivalent.

6.1.4.3.4. *Professional Requirements:* Learners must have a clinical qualification that allows them to work therapeutically with clients.

6.1.4.3.5. *IT Requirements:* Participants will need to have access to a PC/ laptop and the internet. Applicants will need to ensure that they have reasonable broadband. Participants will also be familiar with word processing, email and internet browser use. Minimum PC/ laptop requirements are set out on the College's website, at <https://www.iicp.ie/laptop-specifications-for-students/>

#### **6.1.5. Programme entry procedure:**

6.1.5.1. 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.

- 6.1.5.2. *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.
- 6.1.5.3. *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.
- 6.1.5.4. *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.
- 6.1.5.5. *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.
- 6.1.5.6. *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.

6.1.5.7. *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.

6.1.5.8. *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.

6.1.5.9 *Garda Vetting:* Applicants to programmes requiring placement or work-integrated learning that brings them into contact with children and/or other vulnerable groups must satisfactorily complete Garda Vetting. The letter of offer will include the details of the Garda Vetting Procedure that must be satisfactorily completed by the applicant to ensure their registration on the programme (See Garda Vetting Procedure #1.3a). Failure to satisfactorily complete the Garda Vetting process may result in any admission offer being rescinded.

6.1.6. *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.

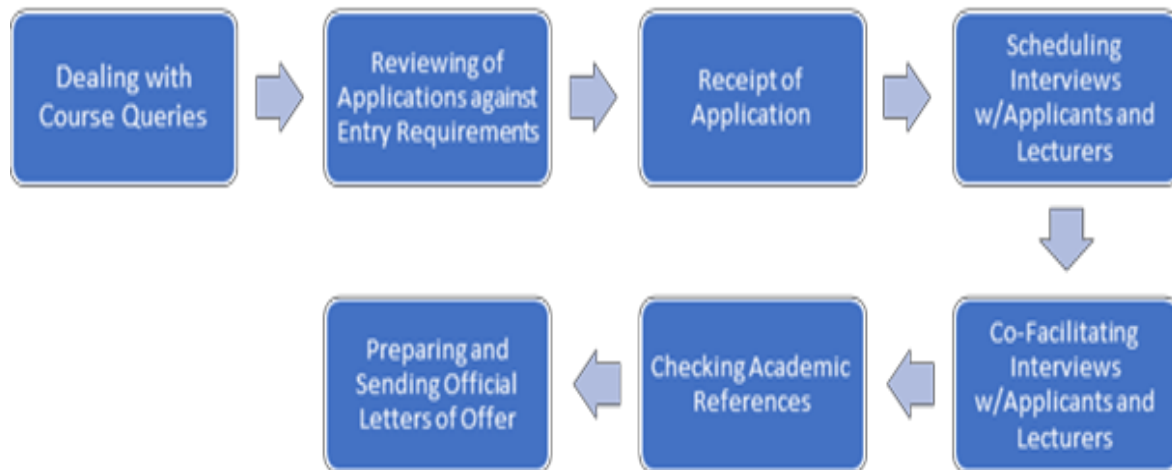
- Where the applicant is of the view that the decision is based on misinterpretation of information and/or data submitted as part of the application process.

6.1.6.1. 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.

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

- 6.1.6.3. The Registrar, or another staff member who has had no prior involvement in the case, will review the appeal and respond to the appellant.
- 6.1.6.4. 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.
- 6.1.6.5. 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**

<b>LIST OF IICP'S CURRENTLY PROVIDED QQI PROGRAMMES</b>			
<b>NFQ Level</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>	<b>Validation Date</b>	<b>Awarding Body</b>
9	Master of Science in Pluralistic Counselling & Psychotherapy	2022	QQI
9	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Pluralistic Counselling & Psychotherapy	2022	QQI
9	Certificate in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	2022	
9	Master of Arts in Integrative Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy	2018	QQI
9	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Integrative Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy	2018	QQI
8	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy	2021	QQI
8	Certificate in Improving Clinical Outcomes	2021	QQI
7	Certificate in Suicide Postvention	2021	QQI
6	Certificate in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Studies	2021	QQI

6.3.3. Progression arrangements are as follows:

6.3.3.1. Learners who successfully complete the Level 6 Certificate in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Studies programme may progress to the Honours Bachelor Degree programme.

6.3.3.2. Progression to a Master's programme from the BSc (hons) is not automatic. Learners who successfully complete the Honours Degree Programme (level 8) may apply to progress to a Masters Programme once they have achieved professional recognition and can satisfy all entry criteria.

6.3.3.3. Learners admitted to the 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.

6.3.3.4. Learners admitted to either Masters programme 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.

6.3.3.5. 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.

6.4.5. 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.