

Information for Learners

Guidelines for Providers





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I. Introduction

The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 is the first piece of Irish legislation to set out a central role for all learners in the context of lifelong learning. This focus on learner's rights to inclusion, participation and recognition of all learning reflects a significant shift of emphasis towards the individual, and away from the institutional.

The purpose of the Act is to

- Facilitate lifelong learning.
- Promote opportunities for:
 - access to education and training
 - transfer from one programme to another
 - progression to higher levels of programmes and awards.

What do the terms access, transfer and progression mean?

- Access and transfer refer to entering or starting a programme of education or training with recognition of learners' skills, knowledge or competence.
- Progression refers to the ways learners can move on to higher-level programmes.

FETAC is required to make sure that providers of validated programmes implement procedures for access, transfer and progression. The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) also has a specific role to promote and facilitate access, transfer and progression, including deciding on the procedures to be implemented by providers. The NQAI requires providers of further education and training to make specific information about access, transfer and progression opportunities available to learners.

FETAC through the range of nationally agreed policies, also set out specific requirements for provision of information for learners that providers must meet. FETAC recognizes the diversity of provider types and the rich variety of ways that providers engage with learner groups; the evolutionary nature of effective communications with learners is also acknowledged. However, regardless of the methods used to communicate with learners, the range of information must be fully available.

The purpose of these Guidelines is to help providers fulfill their obligations to give appropriate information to learners and stakeholders and also to help them to prepare publicity and other programme materials.

The guidelines are set in the context of the FETAC Learner Charter. Providers are asked to make this charter available to learners in programmes leading to FETAC awards.

2. Context

The NQAI published 'Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners' in 2003. The policy responds to Section 46 of the Qualifications (Education and training) Act 1999 and to section 8(2)(d). The policy states that

- Providers must inform learners of the knowledge, skill and competence needed as a basis for successful participation in every programme offered. Where programmes are similar, the knowledge, skill and competence needed for each should be easy to compare. Where qualifications/specific levels of achievement are required for entry or progression, these need to be clearly defined.
- FETAC must make sure that providers comply with these requirements and that there is consistency in the information provided about awards and programmes leading to awards

In addition, providers must inform learners who are starting programmes of the:

- Name of the awarding body
- Title of award associated with the programme
- Level of the award on the National Framework of Qualification
- Arrangements to assess a learner's eligibility to enter
- Arrangements for the recognition of prior learning for entry, for credit towards an award and for access to a full award or a statement regarding these
- Any associated opportunities for transfer or progression to either other programmes or awards, including specific attainments (where required)
- Details of learning supports available, including for learners with disabilities and for those whose first language is not English.

The NQAI continue to strongly encourage the referencing of the Framework in providers print materials because it assists learners make informed choices about accessing programmes; it also helps providers communicate the quality of the programme being offered because all education and training qualifications recognized through the Framework are quality assured. Referencing the Framework increases a provider's capacity to attract and retain learners. It also supports the achievement and measurement of national policy objectives on increasing participation in life long learning opportunities.

In 2004, FETAC approved policies on agreeing provider quality assurance and for access, transfer and progression.

Since then, providers who have agreed their quality assurance systems with FETAC have agreed to implement the NQAI requirements. (Quality Assurance in Further Education and Training, Policy and Guidelines for Providers c1.2, Section B4.)

As part of the policy on access, transfer and progression, FETAC undertook to provide:

- a FETAC Learner Charter; setting out a commitment to learners in relation to the provision of education and training leading to FETAC awards, the quality of those awards and FETAC services
- model 'Equipped to Participate' statements, based on the level indicators of the National Framework of Qualifications. Providers may tailor these according to the award and the programme on offer
- guidelines to providers to support national consistency in information given to learners about awards and programmes.

These Guidelines respect the diversity of learner needs, of providers and contexts of learning. A balance is sought between enabling flexibility for providers in tailoring responses to requirements, and ensuring a consistent experience nationally for learners.

These and a range of other information requirements arising across all FETAC policies are addressed in this document.

3. FETAC Learner Charter

The FETAC Learner Charter (see following page) expresses a commitment to learners with regard to awards and programmes, courses and services leading to FETAC awards. It may assist providers in addressing key elements of responsibilities in meeting learner needs, including providing relevant information. It is also available on www.fetac.ie in the section. 'Information for Learners'.

Providers are invited to assist FETAC in promoting the charter with learners.

www.fetac.ie/PDF/FETAC_Learner_Charter.pdf.

FETAC Learner Charter

FETAC formally recognises learning by making relevant quality assured awards at Levels 1-6 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

Meeting learner needs is central to the work of FETAC.

FETAC will strive to:

Make world-class awards that open up opportunities personally, socially, in education, training and employment

Make sure our awards are relevant to current and future economic and social needs

Promote our awards, nationally and internationally, with employers and other stakeholders
Promote progression through the National Framework of Qualifications

Promote equality of opportunity and the recognition of the diversity of learner groups

Publish relevant and clear information about awards and programmes through our website

Recognise learning – regardless of how or where it is achieved

Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programmes, courses and services, including learner feedback, so as to maintain and improve quality

Make sure that all major awards may be achieved in parts so that learning can be achieved at an appropriate time and pace

Make sure that assessment is fair and consistent

Require providers to give learners high-quality, accessible information about the programme, services and associated FETAC awards

Issue certificates when awards are achieved, frequently and responsively

Consult with learners in the development and review of policies, awards and our service

Deal with queries, correspondence and complaints in a professional, consistent and timely manner

4. Criteria for 'Equipped to Participate' statements

As previously set out, the NQAI require providers to inform learners of the knowledge, skill and competence needed as a basis for successful participation in every programme offered.

Where programmes are similar, the knowledge, skill and competence needed for each should be easy to compare. Where qualifications/specific levels of achievement are required for entry or progression, these need to be clearly defined.

FETAC is required by the NQAI to co-ordinate provider's statements nationally. This is done through implementation of a variety of policies, including through the providers quality assurance agreement. Essentially, these statements and beliefs about required knowledge, skill and acceptance for participation in a programme form the backbone of the provider's admission policy and arrangements for entry and access.

The criteria for 'Equipped to Participate' statements below, and the model statements in Appendix 1, set out a method which may assist providers.

'Equipped to Participate' statements outline the knowledge, skill and competence a learner would normally bring to a programme leading to awards at the specified level.

'Equipped to Participate' statements provide a basis for learners to judge if they can successfully take part in a programme, either with support or independently.

Providers should tailor 'Equipped to Participate' statements to facilitate access to programmes on the basis of prior learning experiences. Providers are encouraged to devise specific statements that are relevant to the programme and to their learners.

Statements should:

- **Be benchmarked against the level indicators ([www.nqai.ie/level indicators](http://www.nqai.ie/level-indicators)) for the level below the level of the award associated with the programme**
- **Clearly state any specific entry requirements for successful participation, including appropriate alternatives**
- **Indicate the required fluency in generic skills such as literacy/numeracy/ interpersonal skills**
- **Indicate the amount of independent learning normally required**
- **Indicate any particular resources required for successful participation (e.g. access to computers/internet, reading materials, tools/equipment, personal learning/study time, duration of programme and whether full-time or part-time)**
- **Indicate any specific supports available (e.g. learning supports, reasonable adaptation, funding grants)**
- **Provide a basis for learners to judge whether they can succeed within the programme, either with support or independently.**

This must be done for every programme. See Appendix 1.

Model 'Equipped to Participate' statements for programmes leading to awards at Levels 1-6 are set out in Appendix 1, for consideration by providers. These statements are written in such a way that they can apply to a broad range of programmes and training situations. Providers need to tailor information according to the relevant programme. Specific (e.g. quantitative) data can be of enormous value to learners who are trying to decide how participating in a formal programme of education or training will affect their lives.

Clearly, giving such information to learners, or admitting a learner to a programme based on meeting such requirements does not guarantee successful achievement of an award on completion of a programme. To achieve the best outcomes, learners must comply with programme requirements and actively participate. However, good quality information helps learners make informed decisions about taking part in education and training opportunities.

The process of setting out this information clearly is also helpful in matching profiles of learners, programmes and levels of awards. Initial drafts of statements may target 'typical' participants. Setting out requirements for successful participation clearly facilitates examination of who is included/excluded, intentionally or otherwise; for some applicants, 'Equipped to Participate' statements may form a basis for discussion in order to establish specific accommodations facilitating participation. Many providers have developed particular styles in provision of information based on specific missions and values; this is welcome provided the basic information is accessible for learners. Statements commonly advise connection with guidance/advocacy services.

5. Providing general information to learners within publicity and other programme materials

Learners in further education and training get the information they require from a variety of materials, including:

- Publicity/promotional material
- Prospectus for a range of programmes offered by the provider
- Induction/learner handbooks and other materials when the learner has started a programme.

Different materials support different levels of information. However all material must use the correct award titles for FETAC awards. For example:

- FETAC Level 5 Certificate in Business Studies
- FETAC Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Bar Management

Where the name of a programme differs from the award title, it is good practice to highlight this fact. This avoids any confusion or disappointment arising when a learner receives the appropriate certificate. For example:

- Medical Secretary Course leading to FETAC Level 5 Certificate in Business Studies
- Health and Safety Course leading to a FETAC Level 4 Component Certificate.

Print and all other accessible materials must also explain how a learner's eligibility for entry will be assessed. For example:

- All applicants are interviewed to help them choose the right programme and level of course. Interviews also help to make sure appropriate resources and supports are provided to learners, when a place is accepted.
- Entry is on a competitive basis requiring a minimum of six weeks experience in related employment and a recommendation from your employer.
- Entry is open to all learners with a qualification at Level 3, or equivalent, including, for example, sustained participation (three months) in a relevant area of employment.

FETAC has published a policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning ([see www.fetac.ie](http://www.fetac.ie)). Information for learners should provide details of the provider's policy, procedures and services with regard to gaining recognition for previously acquired learning.

Arrangements for transfer or progression from a programme must also be specified to learners. This will be confirmed through programme validation and monitoring.

For example:

- This Level 5 Certificate in Business Studies is part of the Higher Education Links Scheme and people who are awarded it are then eligible to apply for places within linked programmes in higher education institutions. www.fetac.ie/hels/Prog_HEC_2009.pdf
- Learners should be advised to confirm all progression opportunities and details of course entry requirements, including distinction requirements in their FETAC award, mathematics and any additional requirements, with the Admissions Office of individual higher education institutions.
- This Level 4 programme typically leads to opportunities for progression to programmes leading to awards at Level 5 and/or to employment. In addition learners may transfer to other programmes within this service that lead to awards at level 4. If a learner has to leave the programme before completion, every effort will be made to assess progress to date so that learning can be recognised in a modular approach to certification. Learners should discuss this with the programme director
- This programme is primarily designed for progression to/in employment as a fully qualified craftsperson.

Available learning supports must be set out for learners, in line with the provider's quality assurance agreement. For example:

- The centre provides additional language courses for learners whose first language is not English. A language support tutor meets learners by appointment to help with the interpretation of material and to support them in meeting assessment requirements
- Learning supports, including a range of assistive technologies, are available for people with specific disability
- The programme is supported by access to libraries, the centre intranet and by private personal contact with the learning support tutor. (insert tutor name and details).

Appendix 2 collates information for learners as required by the range of NQAI and FETAC policies, guidelines and other key documents. It focuses on the learner's experience of accessing and participating in a programme, using provider services, participating in assessment leading to awards and seeking to transfer or progress beyond the programme.

6. General promotion

FETAC promotes its awards nationally and internationally to enhance their status and recognition. FETAC does this through a range of measures including briefings, award ceremonies, events, advertising, public relations, sponsorship and promotional materials.

Providers are requested to build on this promotional work in a variety of ways. This includes:

- Prominent display of the FETAC Quality Assurance Agreement
- Display of other Framework materials and of the FETAC Learner Charter
- Reference to FETAC accreditation in advertising materials
- Use of the FETAC logo
- Hosting an award ceremony to present certificates.

Using the FETAC logo

As the FETAC logo is not a “quality mark” it is not appropriate to use the logo on letterheads or any other material where the information does not specifically relate to FETAC accredited programmes. If you are in any doubt, please contact the Communications Section at FETAC who will advise you. Additional specific guidelines are attached in Appendix 3.

Illustrating the National Framework of Qualifications

The NQAI also encourage the use of the ‘fan’ or rainbow diagram to illustrate the NFQ, its levels and award types. www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/

Holding an award ceremony

Many providers host an award ceremony to present FETAC certificates. A FETAC representative may be invited to speak at the ceremony. An application form for this is sent out with all certificates and this should be submitted to FETAC two weeks before the ceremony.

8. Useful Resources

1. The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999
www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/1999/a2699.pdf
2. The National Framework of Qualifications, Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and progression for Learners (NQAI, 2003) www.nqai.ie/publications_by_topic.html#atp
3. The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)...what the NFQ can say about you (NQAI, 2009) www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/
4. Quality Assurance in Further Education and Training Policy and Guidelines for Providers v1.3 (FETAC, 2008) www.fetac.ie/link_pages/policy_link_page.htm
5. The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland is the Irish centre for the recognition of international qualifications www.qualificationsrecognition.ie/recognition/

Appendix I

Model ‘Equipped to Participate’ statements for providers

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Clearly state any specific entry requirements for successful participation, including appropriate alternatives	Access to programmes leading to Level 1 is open. There are no requirements in relation to knowledge, skill or competence. No previous formal qualification is required.	Access to programmes leading to Level 2 is open. A learner seeking entry to a programme leading to awards at Level 2 does not need a previous formal qualification. Some learners may have achieved certification at Level 1.	Access to programmes leading to Level 3 is open. A learner seeking entry to a programme leading to awards at Level 3 does not need a previous formal qualification. Some learners may have achieved certification at Level 2 from, for example, FETAC / OCN / OCR/ NPTC.
Indicate the required fluency in generic skills such as literacy/ numeracy /interpersonal skills	A learner seeking entry to a programme leading to awards at Level 1 may be trying to see what areas interest them. Learners typically may be seeking to improve personal communications and interpersonal skills or learning elementary tasks or routine skills within structured, well-supported and familiar environments.	Learners may have identified areas of personal interest, including enhancing literacy and numeracy skills. Many learners will recognise and write personally relevant words and phrases. Learners are generally able to carry out familiar routines or rehearsed activities in well-supported and familiar settings (e.g. a specific workplace/social environment).	Generally learners engaging in learning activities leading to Level 3 awards are ready to take on a new task in a personal capacity or role (e.g. a parent planning a short family trip, an employee finding out about annual leave arrangements or preparing a personal budget). Learners can follow straightforward direction and are moving towards independent learning in a small range of areas of interest. Many can read basic short text in a non-supported environment (e.g. newspaper headlines or a notice of a meeting) and will make sense of quantitative information of a familiar nature (e.g. lotto/other draws, football league scores, payslip). A familiar task can be carried out in a less familiar setting (e.g. writing personal details down for a draw/raffle in a social setting).An unfamiliar task can also be carried out in a very familiar setting (e.g. trying out a relaxation exercise/simple recipe at home).

Appendix I

Model 'Equipped to Participate' statements for providers

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Indicate the amount of independent learning activity normally required	The programme is full/part-time, running over (specify number) weeks. Course participants complete all the requirements within class time.	The programme is full/part-time, running over (specify number) weeks. Course participants complete all the requirements within class time.	The programme is full/part-time, running over (specify number) weeks. Course participants complete all the requirements within class time.
Indicate any resources required for successful participation, for example, access to computers/ internet, reading materials, tools/equipment, personal learning/study time	All equipment and resources are provided as part of the programme.	All equipment and resources are provided as part of the programme.	All equipment and resources are provided as part of the programme.
Indicate any specific supports available for example, learning supports, reasonable adaptation, funding grants	A range of funding grants, accommodations and supports are possible according to specific disclosed need.	A range of funding grants, accommodations and supports are possible according to specific disclosed need.	A range of funding grants, accommodations and supports are possible according to specific disclosed need.
Provide a way for learners to judge if they can succeed within the programme, either with support or independently.	Please contact (insert details) to discuss how we can help you achieve your goals.	Please contact (insert details) to discuss how we can help you achieve your goals.	Please contact (insert details) to discuss how we can help you achieve your goals.

Appendix I

Model ‘Equipped to Participate’ statements for providers

Criteria	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Clearly state any specific entry requirements for successful participation, including appropriate alternatives	A learner seeking entry to a programme leading to awards at Level 4 does not need a previous formal qualification. Some learners may have achieved some certification at Level 3 (e.g. FETAC Level 3 Certificate Component Certificate or Junior Certificate).	A learner seeking entry to a programme leading to awards at Level 5 does not need a previous formal qualification. Some learners may have achieved some certification at Level 4, (e.g. FETAC Level 4 Certificate Component Certificate or Leaving Certificate).	A learner seeking entry to a programme leading to awards at Level 6 does not need a previous formal qualification. Some learners may have achieved some certification at Level 5 (e.g. FETAC Level 5 Certificate, Component Certificate or a significant range of subjects within the Leaving Certificate).
Indicate the required fluency in generic skills such as literacy/ numeracy /interpersonal skills	Learners entering programmes leading to awards at Level 4 will usually be comfortable reading, drafting, preparing and understanding personally relevant information, including quantitative information. For example, this might include text and other information relating to investigating a holiday/ a personal interest or hobby, or to work/community related concerns or procedures.	Learners entering programme leading to awards at Level 5 will usually be proficient at reading, drafting, preparing and understanding information across a broad range of topics, including quantitative information. Texts might include information in relation to a family circumstance, a community concern or a work-based plan or solution.	Learners entering programmes leading to awards at Level 6 can usually fluently read, draft, prepare and understand complex information, including quantitative information, that is personally relevant and reflecting a broad knowledge base. For example, this might include text and other information relating to abstract theoretical ideas, concerns or procedures, such as local planning concerns in relation to broader spatial strategy, political issues in relation to particular agenda, budget plans/specifications.
Indicate the amount of independent learning activity normally required	<p>Learners can solve familiar problems well, independently and as part of a familiar group.</p> <p>The programme is full/part-time, running over (specify number of) weeks. Learners need to be able to complete some work at home. Usually this programme requires (insert number) of personal study time.</p>	<p>Learners may solve predictable problems well, independently and as part of a familiar and less familiar group. Learners participate well in a chosen area of expertise, using a range of tools and procedures, responsibly and autonomously. The programme is full/part-time, running over (specify number of) weeks. Learners need to be able to complete some work at home. Usually this programme requires (insert number) of personal study time.</p>	<p>Learners can solve problems well, independently and as part of a range of different groups, accepting personal responsibility for the quality of outcome.</p>

Appendix I

Model ‘Equipped to Participate’ statements for providers

Criteria	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Indicate any particular resources required for successful participation, for example, access to computers/internet, reading materials, tools/ equipment, personal learning/study time	Some equipment and resources are provided as part of the programme.A specific book and equipment list is available prior to enrolment.	Some equipment and resources are provided as part of the programme.A specific book and equipment list is available prior to enrolment.	Some equipment and resources are provided as part of the programme.A specific book and equipment list is available prior to enrolment.
Indicate any specific supports available for example, learning supports, reasonable adaptation, funding grants	A range of funding grants, accommodations and supports are possible, according to specific need.	A range of funding grants, accommodations and supports are possible, according to specific need.	A range of accommodations and supports are possible, according to specific need.
Provide a basis for a learner to evaluate personal capacity to succeed within the programme, either with support or independently	Please contact (insert details) to discuss how we can help you achieve your goals.	Please contact (insert details) to discuss how we can help you achieve your goals.	Please contact (insert details) to disucss how we can help you achieve your goals.

Appendix 2: Provider Checklist

Use of the checklist below is voluntary. It collates requirements to assist providers to meet their obligations in providing relevant information to learners as they engage in programmes and assessment. The checklist may function as an auditing tool for providers to support monitoring and evaluation of information provided to learners. It may be useful to note where and how information is provided, evidence of same and review/evaluation plans.

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners accessing programmes	<p>Legislation</p> <p>Lifelong learning is to be promoted through the promotion of access and opportunities for all Learners (Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, Section 4 (1) (e))</p> <p>FETAC shall... 'ensure that procedures for access, transfer and progression determined by the Authority under Section 8(2)(d) are implemented by providers of validated programmes, and who have authority to make awards' (Section 14-(2)(d (i)(ii))</p> <p>FETAC may request assistance of providers to form an opinion as to whether a person independently approaching the Council for recognition has achieved the standards for an award (Section 14 -(3)(a)(b))</p> <p>Providers of validated programmes shall from time to time provide information to the Council in relation to completion rates...(Section 15 (5)(d))</p> <p>Arrangements for protection for Learners-Sections 43,44,45</p> <p>Providers shall ... 'inform learners whether the programme is accommodated through the procedures for access, transfer and progression...the name of the awarding body and the title of the award' (Section 46-(1) (i))</p> <p>NQAI</p> <p>Providers must inform learners of the knowledge, skill and competence needed as a basis for successful participation in every programme offered. Where programmes are similar, the knowledge, skill and competence needed for each should be easy to compare. Where qualifications/ specific levels of achievement are required for entry or progression, these need to be clearly defined.</p> <p>In addition, providers must inform learners starting programmes of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the awarding body • Title of award associated with the programme • Level of the award on the National Framework of Qualifications 	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners accessing programmes contd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements to assess a learner's eligibility to enter • Arrangements for the recognition of prior learning for entry, for credit towards an award and for access to a full award or a statement regarding these • Any associated opportunities for transfer or progression to either other programmes or awards, including specific attainments (where required) • Details of learning supports available, including for learners with disabilities and for those whose first language is not English. <p>FETAC must make sure that providers comply with these requirements and that there is consistency in the information provided about awards and programmes leading to awards</p> <p>FETAC</p> <p>These Guidelines provide criteria for providers to assist in tailoring information for learners per specific programme. (See Information for learners, Guidelines for Providers, Appendix I)</p> <p>FETAC will strive to require providers to give learners high-quality accessible information about the programme, services and associated FETAC awards (Learner Charter)</p> <p>Awards</p> <p>Providers give information in relation to award titles, award type, framework levels, awarding bodies, entry requirements, assessment, programme adaptations and learner supports, transfer and progression opportunities for the award at national and local level, how feedback can be given and received, fees, grants and associated regulations, protection for learners policy (QA, Section B4, Access, Transfer and Progression Policy, Section 4.5)</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners accessing programmes contd.	<p>Learner Entry arrangements</p> <p>Providers make a statement of the entry requirements for the programme, details of how decisions are made regarding the allocation of programmes, programme details, advice/guidance to facilitate making informed choices in programme selection, details of supports/accommodations available, an appeals mechanism for learners refused entry to the programme (QA, Section B4) www.fetac.ie/qa/default.htm</p> <p>Recognition of Prior Learning</p> <p>FETAC is to provide a system for coordinating and comparing education and training awards (Act, Section 4(1) (c)) www.fetac.ie/rpl/default.htm</p> <p>Providers must have a statement of arrangements in place for the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry to a programme, exemptions within the programme, receiving credit towards an award, access to an award (QA, Section B4; Provider Guidelines: Recognition of Prior Learning) www.fetac.ie/rpl/default.htm</p> <p>Providers are required to support and advise learners of the value of prior learning and of steps in the process in making an application. RPL information in an appropriate medium should be included in all programme materials ie programme prospectus/course profile. (Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Guidelines) www.fetac.ie/rpl/default.htm</p> <p>Appropriate information must be available for learners on the entry criteria/requirements to successfully participate in the programme; these should specify the entry criteria which form the basis for successful participation for each programme. (Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Guidelines) www.fetac.ie/rpl/default.htm</p> <p>The procedure to assist learners apply for entry to programmes on the basis of prior learning should be fair and transparent.</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners accessing programmes contd.	<p>An appeals procedure to appeal unsuccessful application for entry to programmes on the basis of recognition of prior learning should be provided. (Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Guidelines)</p> <p>Exemptions within a programme may be granted to learners on the basis of prior learning. Clear criteria for this should be available to learners.</p> <p>This information should be available in advance of the selection of learners in all programme literature. It should include some reference to granting exemptions on the basis of a previously achieved FETAC minor award towards a major award for which the same minor award is a requirement. Learners must be advised that the original certificate must be presented to the provider. (Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Guidelines) www.fetac.ie/rpl/default.htm</p> <p>Where other 'recognised awards' are held by the learner, these may be referred to FETAC by the provider for advice on appropriate recognition as part of the programme. (Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Guidelines) www.fetac.ie/rpl/default.htm</p> <p>Learners seeking entry to programmes or exemptions within a programme will demonstrate to the provider that he / she has the capacity to successfully participate in the programme. On the basis of this evidence, Providers may grant learner exemptions from particular programme requirements. Learners will be asked to demonstrate attainment of the exempted element of the programme (Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Guidelines) www.fetac.ie/rpl/default.htm</p> <p>FETAC provides a service to learners who are seeking to have prior learning experiences formally recognized for the purposes of achieving a major, minor, special purpose or</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners accessing programmes contd.	<p>supplemental award. FETAC does this with the assistance of quality assured providers. (Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Guidelines) www.fetac.ie/rpl/default.htm</p> <p>Other Awards</p> <p>NQAI are the National Reference Point to help meet the need of learners seeking recognition for diverse awards within the Irish system. A wide range of awards are recognised through the National Qualifications Framework and are accurately referenced through level and where practicable through award type. Any award that is 'included' or 'aligned' with the National framework of Qualifications is subject to quality assured processes. The NQAI provide clear well-researched information regarding the status of awards. FETAC will assist learners by providing appropriate recognition within its own awarding system. (Award Inclusion and Alignment Policy) www.fetac.ie/Award_Incl_and_Align/default.htm</p> <p>Learners applying get a statement of comparability which outlines the relationship of the award and FETAC benchmark awards; it also indicates where there are gaps and how they might be overcome within the Irish setting. FETAC will establish a register of all Recognised Awards for providers, learners and employers to view and apply as appropriate. (Recognition of Other Awards Policy) www.fetac.ie/recognition_otherawards/default.htm</p> <p>Facilitating diversity</p> <p>Information on adaptations and supports re-selection procedures, entry requirements, programme content/delivery should be specific to learners requiring adaptations... (QA, Section B4) www.fetac.ie/qa/default.htm</p> <p>Meeting Individual Learners needs</p> <p>Communication with staff procedures include communication of individual learner needs (QA, Section B1) www.fetac.ie/qa/default.htm</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners participating in programmes	<p>Equality Policy is prominently displayed; staff promote equality and combat discrimination (QA Section B2) www.fetac.ie/qa/default.htm</p> <p>Records Records on learner participation and achievement - ie attendance, progress through the programme and certification data are maintained (QA Section B5) www.fetac.ie/qa/default.htm</p> <p>Feedback/evaluation Communication with learners - providers must have a policy and procedures enabling inclusive feedback from learners in relation to programmes and services (QA, Section B1, B8, B9) www.fetac.ie/qa/default.htm</p> <p>FETAC Learner Charter FETAC will strive to make sure that all major awards may be achieved in parts so that learning can be achieved at an appropriate time and pace This means that programmes should where possible facilitate learners to achieve certification over time; in particular providers are asked to attempt to ensure that learners leaving programmes gain recognition for learning acquired during participation in the programme.</p>	
Learners using provider's services	<p>Access to services Learners will be facilitated to fully access services through clear communications for example, list of services and how to access them, health and safety information, list of learner rights and responsibilities, grievance procedure, events of relevance to learners (QA Section B4, Section B5,) www.fetac.ie/qa/default.htm</p> <p>External communications Communication with other stakeholders, individuals and agencies that are important to learners are informed of the programmes and services available(QA, Section B1) www.fetac.ie/qa/default.htm</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners using provider's services contd.	<p>Feedback/evaluation</p> <p>Communication with learners- policy, procedure enabling inclusive feedback from learners in relation to programmes and services (QA, Section B1, B8, B9) www.fetac.ie/qa/default.htm</p> <p>Cessation of programme</p> <p>All providers (operating programmes on a commercial and profit making basis) are required to provide learners with information about the arrangements that are in place where a programme ceases to be provided and to advise learners of the providers compliance with the provisions for access, transfer and progression and the name of the awarding body making the award to which the programme leads.</p> <p>FETAC is required to provide assistance to learners in finding an alternative provider should a programme cease in advance of completion. (Policy on Protection for Learners) www.fetac.ie/private_providers/default.htm</p> <p>Providers should make available details of arrangements in place, if any which will protect learners in the event of a programme ceasing unexpectedly...compliant with Section 43 of the Qualifications Act (QA Section B7) www.fetac.ie/qa/Policy_and_Guidelines_on_Provider_QA_v1.3.pdf</p> <p>FETAC Learner Charter</p> <p>FETAC will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programmes, courses and services, including learner feedback, so as to maintain and improve quality.</p>	
Learners experiencing assessment in programmes	<p>Legislation</p> <p>Providers are required to implement fair and consistent assessment of learners. (Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999.) www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/1999/a2699.pdf</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners experiencing assessment in programmes contd.	<p>Information about assessment</p> <p>Providers will provide learners with information about assessment and appeals procedures. Learners should be advised that assessment is required to be fair and consistent. (Quality Assuring Assessment Policy) www.fetac.ie/qa/Policy_and_Guidelines_on_Provider_QA_v1.3.pdf</p> <p>Coordinated planning of assessment: programme design, delivery and assessment are coordinated so as to facilitate learners to maximize the value of assessments ie programme modules are integrated and learner needs are considered in scheduling (QA Section B6, Programme Validation application). Providers will develop a coordinated assessment plan per programme. Appropriate timing of the assessment will occur. (Quality Assuring Assessment Policy (general policy statements) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Information for Learners; All pertinent information will be given to learners in advance of assessment; assessment will be transparent (Quality Assuring Assessment Policy) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Learners have access to the information necessary for them to successfully participate in assessment, including regarding responsibilities and entitlements.</p> <p>Learner responsibilities</p> <p>Learners will be informed of their responsibilities and entitlements (Quality Assuring Assessment Policy) including producing own work to demonstrate evidence of meeting required standards, seeking information with regard to meeting deadlines and related policy eg treatment of assessment evidence submitted late, including compassionate consideration arrangements. www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners experiencing assessment in programmes contd.	<p>Providers should have clear and transparent policies with regard to submission of evidence, and learners must present evidence within specified deadlines. Extenuating circumstances affecting submission of evidence will be considered by the provider. (Quality Assuring Assessment, Provider Guidelines, Assessment procedures)</p> <p>www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Learners must comply with providers requirements for demonstrating that the work is their own. (Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers)</p> <p>www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Learner entitlements</p> <p>Learners are entitled to appropriate opportunity to demonstrate the standards of an award, to receive the award on demonstration of the standards, and to appeal any assessment decision firstly to the provider and then to FETAC. (Quality Assuring Assessment Policy)</p> <p>www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Learners submitting evidence for assessment will have receipts for evidence submitted. (Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers)</p> <p>www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Methods and schedules</p> <p>Assessment for FETAC awards are criterion referenced, ie evidence is assessed based on whether the learner has achieved national standards for knowledge, skill and competence. Assessment must be valid, ie measure what it is supposed to measure, and reliable ie allow evidence to be produced in consistently applied conditions. It must be fair and give equally opportunity to all learners to achieve standards for the award. (Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers)</p> <p>www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm.</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners experiencing assessment in programmes contd.	<p><i>This means that learners should understand that assessment offered within the centre is fair, valid and reliable, and that learners must provide evidence which can be measured against standards.</i></p> <p>Providers are required to assess learners through the advance provision of clear briefs, instructions and guidelines for learners, along with assessment criteria and marking criteria (QA Section B6, Quality Assuring Assessment Policy (Sections: general statements, and process)) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Assessment briefs and instruments will use appropriate language and expressions (Quality Assuring Assessment Policy (general policy statements)) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Consistency of marking between assessors: this involves comparison of results achieved across a range of learners and assessors. (QA Section B6) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Repeat of assessment activity: Providers should inform learners of whether opportunities are available or not to repeat assessment opportunities and the associated procedures if applicable. (Quality Assuring Assessment Provider Guidelines) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Reasonable accommodations available Accommodations(s) used should be agreed by all those involved in the programme delivery and assessment, <i>including learners</i>. (QA Section B6, Quality Assuring Assessment Policy (general policy statements)) http://www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners experiencing assessment in programmes contd.	<p>Security of assessment related processes and materials: <i>many items listed here have implications for information for learners while not directly specified as such.</i> These include security arrangements for assessment briefs, and materials, supervision of tests, verification of authorship, retention of evidence, learner records of assessment. (QA Section B6, Quality Assuring Assessment Policy (general policy statements) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm)</p> <p>Recognition of Prior Learning</p> <p>The provider's policy needs to be made clear in relation to credit and exemptions and access to awards. Providers facilitating the recognition of prior learning towards an award will assist learners by providing a mentor to support and advise in preparing evidence of learning against the standards of the specific award. Learners have significant responsibility in seeking the recognition of prior learning including eg working with a mentor to analyse the standards for an award in terms of prior knowledge, skill or competence. The learner may be required to undertake further assessments and an interview(s) as appropriate to demonstrate standards for an award. (Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Guidelines) www.fetac.ie/rpl/default.htm</p> <p>Feedback to learners</p> <p>Learners must be kept informed of what is expected of them in assessment and of their progress towards it. Assessors are responsible to give timely and constructive feedback on their assessments to individual learners which informs participation on the programme. The feedback is appropriate to the nature of the assessment ie formative or summative. (QA Section B6, Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for providers, Roles and procedures) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners experiencing assessment in programmes contd.	<p>Grading</p> <p>Learners should be fully aware of the FETAC award and of the assessment and grading requirements. (Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Assessment records</p> <p>Assessment records may include learners' name, content details, name of FETAC award, title of the programmes, dates and details of feedback to learners, recorded dates, and results of assessment activities, outcome of results approval process including appeals, and date award is received (Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Results of assessment</p> <p>Once results are approved within the centre they should immediately be made available to learners. (Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for providers, Roles and procedures) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Learner appeals:</p> <p>Learners can appeal an assessment result which they consider to be unfair (QA Section B6). www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Providers operate a local appeals process of which learners must be informed. FETAC will operate a national appeals process to provide for appeals not satisfactorily resolved through the local process. Learners must be informed of the provider's appeals process and that if an appeal is entered into, the learners results are marked 'under appeal'. (Quality Assuring Assessment, Section 5.5) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners experiencing assessment in programmes contd.	<p>A provider's learner appeals process enables learners to appeal both the assessment process and the result, within a minimum of fourteen days from receipt of results. The appeal provides for review of the assessment process and the result. If a learner is not happy with the assessment or the appeals process, they may appeal to FETAC. (Quality Assuring Assessment Section 2, Quality Assuring Assessment, Provider Guidelines, Procedures)</p> <p>www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Appeals may be made to FETAC where it is perceived that there was unfair treatment, or where the learner was disadvantaged by the appeals process. This applies only to the process used by the provider and not on the assessment decision itself. The appeal is made through the provider. (Quality Assuring Assessment section 3)</p> <p>www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Appeals can be made to FETAC within 6 months from receipt of notification of appeal to provider, and within one year of receipt of certification. Appeals must be submitted in writing by the learner to the centre using the Learner Appeals Submission Form. The appeal to FETAC is subject to a fee. Where the appeal is in relation to learner evidence, the evidence for all learners in the cohort must be maintained. (Quality Assuring Assessment Section 4.1)</p> <p>www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Where a Learner appeals to FETAC, a formal process ensues involving two stages. As part of the internal FETAC Review, further evidence may be sought by FETAC in relation to the appeal. Within the second stage, an Appeals Review Panel is appointed to determine that the learner has been treated fairly and that due process has been followed. The panel may request to meet the learner, who may be accompanied if required.</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners experiencing assessment in programmes contd.	<p>The outcome of the national appeals process is to protect learner's interests and the integrity of the award(s). This means that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners must understand the providers appeal system as it applies to the assessment result and to the assessment procedures. They must also be aware of the possibility of appealing the procedures to FETAC. The time frame for appeals must be made clear to learners. Fees for appeals should be explicit. Where a Learner appeals to FETAC, further evidence may be sought by FETAC in relation to the appeal. Learners may also be required to attend a meeting with the Appeals Review Panel. All learners should understand that in instances where a learner appeals against the assessment result, all the evidence of that class group must be retained by the centre for up to a year. <p>Corrective action</p> <p>The provider develops and implements an action plan to deal with any deliberate actions by learners to impact on the validity of the assessment process (QA Section B6) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p> <p>Certification attainment</p> <p>FETAC will strive to issue certificate when awards are achieved, frequently and responsively (Learner Charter) www.fetac.ie/PDF/FETAC_Learner_Charter.pdf</p> <p>Learners PPSN number is required by FETAC along with learner results.</p> <p>FETAC will publish national statistics on the outcome of the certification process, including number and type of awards made, fields of attainment, numbers of learners achieving certification and grades obtained nationally. (Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines) www.fetac.ie/assessment/default.htm</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners seeking to transfer and/or progress	<p><i>While this does not directly affect individual learners, it is a point of reference for them in relation to evaluating personal attainment.</i></p> <p>National/local arrangements Providers must inform learners starting programmes of the associated opportunities for transfer or progression to either other programmes or awards, including specific attainments (where required). (NQAI 'Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners' (2003) www.nqai.ie)</p> <p>FETAC awards will create opportunities for learners appropriate to the purpose of the award. (Access, transfer and progression policy, Section 4(i) www.fetac.ie/access_transfer_pro/default.htm)</p> <p>FETAC Learner Charter FETAC strives to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make world-class awards that open up opportunities personally, socially, in education, training and employment, • make sure awards are relevant to current and future economic and social needs • promote awards, nationally and internationally, with employers and other stakeholders • promote progression through the National Framework of Qualifications • publish relevant and clear information about awards and programmes through the website <p>Certificate Supplements Certificate Supplements corresponding to all new major awards are available on www.fetac.ie. They provide information about the award level, the awarding body, access/progression and are a requirement common to all awarding bodies in the EU (Common Awards System).</p>	

	Requirement and implication	Provider notes
Learners seeking to transfer and/or progress contd.	<p>Useful resources:</p> <p>Qualifax is the Irish National Learners Database. It provides information on courses, across further and higher education and training. It operates as part of the NQAI. www.qualifax.ie</p> <p>FETAC provide extensive web based information in relation to awards, progression links schemes etc. Follow the Information for Learners Link. www.fetac.ie</p>	

Appendix 3 Using the FETAC logo

Background to the logo

The FETAC logo is built from blocks formed in the shape of the letters FET italicised, conveying a sense of forward thinking and progression through learning and training, which has characterised this sector and the learners in it. The predominance of curved shapes represents the idea of inclusiveness, which is paramount to FETAC. The blocks are laid out in an ascending structure reflecting the levels of the new national framework of qualifications. The FETAC colour palette of gold and rich green reflects quality and the fact that FETAC is a national awarding body. The use of italics gives a sense of motion and continues the theme of progression portrayed by the building blocks.

Logo variations

The FETAC logo is available in greyscale and colour in both a landscape and portrait version. It is also available for use on a white or coloured background. To obtain a copy of the logo please send an email with your requirements to information@fetac.ie with the word “Logo” in the subject heading.



Using the logo

The logo must not appear any smaller than 32mm in height, from top to bottom on the portrait version and 17mm in height, from top to bottom on the landscape version. In other words the logo should not be reduced so much that the small print becomes illegible. In exceptional cases (where the logo must appear smaller than this size), it is preferable to omit the bilingual description. However the logo should never appear without the name FETAC.

A clearance area that measures half the width of the icon must be applied to all sides of the logo. No type or imagery should invade this clearance area. Where a number of different logos are displayed side-by-side, equal prominence should be given to the FETAC logo.

Printing References

Process colour values (CMYK); <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Green C: 100 / M: 0 / Y: 69 / K: 30• Gold Pantone 871 Coated• When Gold appears in CMYK the values are: C: 20 / M: 35 / Y: 50 / K: 10 Grey C: 0 / M: 0 / Y: 0 / K: 65 Beige C: 7 / M: 12 / Y: 22.5 / K: 0	Pantone Colour Values <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Green Pantone 341 Coated• Gold Pantone 871 Coated• Grey Pantone 424 Coated• Beige Pantone Pastel 9221 Coated
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