


Equal Access and Participation Policy

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Equal Access and Participation Policy

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Revision History

Revision	Date	Revision Description	Originator
01	September 2005	New Document	Diarmuid O'Callaghan
02	1 August 2008	Title change of Director to President	Registrar

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline Institute policy relating to equal access and participation for all students at third level.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all academic programmes offered at the Institute.

3. References

3AD08 Admissions Policy

4. Policy

The Institute of Technology Blanchardstown is committed to developing and implementing policies, procedures and practices that facilitate equality of access, participation and outcome for all students as an integral part of its commitment to equality of opportunity in higher education.

The Institute of Technology Blanchardstown acknowledges that social, cultural, economic and physical barriers can directly and indirectly adversely affect the participation of students at third level.

The Institute of Technology Blanchardstown affirms that a policy of more inclusive higher education is beneficial to the student body as a whole, as well as to the Institute as a provider of education.

5. Aims and Objectives of the Policy

5.1 The overall aims of the policy are:

- (a) To promote positive perceptions of higher education in marginalised communities.
- (b) To facilitate all those who aspire to higher education.
- (c) To assist students, as far as is possible, to successfully complete their course of study.

5.2 Specific objectives are:

- (d) To ensure that the Institute is truly a community resource and is open and accessible to all sections of society.
- (e) To facilitate school leavers from disadvantaged social and economic backgrounds to access third level education and to empower them to realise their potential.
- (f) To facilitate adult learners to develop their potential and to access and participate in mainstream activities of the Institute.
- (g) To provide and encourage a network of alternative routes to third level education.
- (h) To proactively support students with disabilities so that barriers to access and participation are addressed.
- (i) To foster co-operative links with primary, secondary and third level institutions as part of a general support framework.
- (j) To engage in active collaboration with educational institutions, other educational agencies, community groups and industry in relation to the content and delivery of Access initiatives.
- (k) To create an environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect and afforded every opportunity to achieve their full potential.

6. The Institute as a Provider of Education

6.1 The Institute will promote equality of access and participation and outcome by providing:

- (a) Consistency and clarity in relation to the selection process for students who participate in the REACH Programme.
- (b) Consistency and clarity in the selection process for schools who participate in Access initiatives.
- (c) A support framework directed at students are admitted to the Institute through the REACH programme.
- (d) A support framework directed at adult and mature students.
- (e) A specific Disability Policy appropriately resourced.
- (f) Training/ staff development programmes to respond to the specific needs of students.
- (g) The promotion and expansion of innovative teaching and learning methods.
- (h) The provision of flexible learning programmes and assessment procedures.
- (i) The provision of a standardised method of data collection with respect to students in the Institute which would assist in the revision and future development of Access initiatives.

7. Implementation of Policy

- 7.1 The overall responsibility for implementation of the Equal Access and Participation Policy lies with the Senior Management of the Institute in consultation with, and supported by, the Access Officer.
- 7.2 The Access Officer will be responsible for developing, co-ordinating and monitoring all aspects of the policy. The action plan and codes of practice will be communicated widely and effectively throughout the Institute as well as to potential students and the wider community.
- 7.3 The Access Officer will be the point of contact for queries in relation to the equal access and participation policies and programmes of the Institute.
- 7.4 Heads of Schools, and staff of the Institute, have a particular responsibility for promoting equality of access and participation and outcome.
- 7.5 The Access Officer will review Access Policy at regular intervals.
- 7.6 The Institute's Equal Access and Participation Policy shall be supported by:
 - (a) Information on policy practices and procedures contained in all prospectuses, course promotional material, general promotional material and the Institute's website.
 - (b) A staff development programme aimed specifically at equality training for all staff.
- 7.7 Appropriate reports are submitted progress, including an account of all specific measures adopted, to the President, the Registrar, and other relevant bodies within the Institute.

8 Staff Development

- 8.1 It is recognised that staff will require information and training in best practice and practical support for students. The HR Manager, in conjunction with the Access Officer, will be responsible for the identification of these training needs.
- 8.2 All academic and administrative staff will receive equality training as part of staff induction or development programmes.

