



ICHAS

Section 8 - Student Supports

Subject:	Policy on Student Leave or Temporary Suspension of Studies		
Applicable QQI Core Standard	Support for Learners		
<i>Date Approved by Board of Directors:</i>			July 2019
Policy Version	1/2019	Date due for Revision	February 2024

CONTEXT

The College is committed to underpinning its activities through the values it espouses, namely to encourage social awareness and responsibility as well as promoting flexibility, maximising opportunities for social inclusivity and accessibility in Higher Education. Within that context, the College accepts that there may be circumstances where a temporary suspension of studies is warranted. Such a temporary suspension is granted on the grounds that the student is unable to engage effectively with their studies because of factors outside their control (including, but not limited to)

- Serious and persistent health problems,
- Disability,
- Bereavement or additional sole caring responsibilities,
- Serious financial problems,
- Unanticipated changes in a student's employment pattern.

POLICY STATEMENT

While the College normally expects learners to complete their studies within a single continuous period, it does recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances where that aim may not be possible. The College, in such circumstances considers applications for voluntary Suspension of Studies for a temporary and defined period and may grant such a suspension having considered the evidence presented to support the application. Learners should note that there is not an automatic right to suspend their studies. As a suspension of study will interrupt a student's progress on their programme, applications may be considered on an individual basis and will only be granted where there are reasonable grounds and supporting documentation (e.g. a report from a registered medical practitioner).

SCOPE

Applies To	Staff	Students	Both	
		✓		
Responsible for Implementation	Registrar, Director of Studies, Programme Director			
Responsible for Monitoring & Review	Vice President (Corporate Affairs)	Vice President (Academic Affairs)	Registrar	Quality Assurance & Enhancement Officer
		✓		

DEFINITIONS

Suspension of studies is defined as the formal introduction of a pause in a Learner's studies during which they are not required to engage with their studies. No definitional distinction is made between leave and voluntary suspension and the terms are used interchangeably.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES/ POLICIES INFORMING THIS POLICY

- Charter for Inclusive Learning (AHEAD, 2009)
- Policy on Quality Assurance Guidelines (QQI, 2014)
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines Developed by QQI for use by all Providers
- 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).
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016) Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines Developed by QQI For Independent/Private Providers Coming To QQI On A Voluntary Basis
- Government of Ireland (2012) Qualifications & Quality Assurance (Education and Training Act).
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016) Policies & Criteria for the Validation of programmes of Education.
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2015) QQI Policy Restatement Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training.
- National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (2005) – re-published by QQI, 2015) Principles and Operational Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning in Further and Higher Education and Training June 2005
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2018) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes
- Protection of Enrolled Learners: Protocols for Implementation of Part 6 of the 2012 Act.
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2013) Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013

- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (revised 2018) Quality Assuring Assessment: Guidelines for Providers
- Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) (Text with EEA relevance)
- Government of Ireland (2018) Data Protection Act 1988 Revised 2018.
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016) Policy on Quality Assurance Guidelines

Linked Policies and Procedures

Linked Policies	
Linked Procedures	Procedures associated with Student Leave or Temporary Suspension of Studies