

University of Limerick

Access Policy

Approved by Governing Authority
23 October 2007

The Access Policy flows from a philosophy which values inclusion and diversity and is dedicated to the provision of entry mechanisms, programmes and support services to ensure equality of entry, participation and outcome for student groups significantly under-represented at the University of Limerick.

1. People from particular groups remain under represented in the student body at University of Limerick. The under-represented groups are (a) people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, (b) people with a disability, (c) people aged 23 or older and (d) people from the Traveller community and other minorities.
2. This Access Policy seeks to promote and facilitate entry to and participation in the access, undergraduate and postgraduate academic programmes and student life of the University by people from these particular under-represented groups.
3. The University will ensure awareness of its Access Policy among targeted groups through publicity material and positive engagement with schools and relevant representative groups.
4. The University will determine targets for entry into its programmes by people from each of these groups. Progress towards achievement of these targets will be monitored on a regular basis and the targets will be revised as appropriate.
5. The University will put in place accessible and clearly documented procedures to facilitate entry into its programmes by people from each of these groups.
6. The University will use internal resource allocation models that provide incentives towards positive engagement with this Access Policy by faculties and departments.
7. The University will continue to develop the University of Limerick *Access Campus* to challenge educational disadvantage in areas of economic deprivation, with particular emphasis on the geographical area known as Limerick City South. The focus of this development will be to:
 - i. Support those in primary and secondary education to have equality of opportunity to access third level education;
 - ii. Promote and support second chance learning for the adult population including the delivery of outreach programmes;
 - iii. Increase the relevance of University of Limerick to the communities in this area.

The University will collaborate actively with its partners as defined in the University of Limerick *Access Campus* Memorandum of Understanding in pursuit of these goals.

8. The University will provide Recognition of Prior Learning for applicants from appropriate under-represented groups in accordance with its Recognition for Prior Learning policy.
9. The University will:
 - a. actively and regularly seek input from under-represented groups and their representatives to further improve this policy and its related procedures with a view to ensuring that the University of Limerick continues to provide relevant, suitable and beneficial access routes for potential students from under-represented groups.
 - b. ensure that any future strategic and policy developments to widen access and participation from under-represented groups will be informed by action research activities and findings.
 - c. ensure that the Governing Authority or its relevant sub-committee will perform annual quantitative and qualitative reviews of the implementation of this policy, as well as associated procedures and programmes to ensure the successful fulfilment of its objectives and enhance the effectiveness and ongoing success of this policy.
 - d. seek and promote collaboration with other educational institutes and organisations supporting regional and educational development in order to develop and sustain flexible access routes and learning modes for students from under-represented groups. Such collaboration may include, but is not limited to:
 - i. outreach programmes;
 - ii. linkages to other educational programmes;
 - iii. flexible modes of teaching and learning including exemptions where appropriate.
10. The University will take measures to ensure that faculty and staff are provided with the information, training and means necessary to ensure compliance with this Access Policy.
11. The Director of Student Affairs will facilitate the implementation of the Access Policy in collaboration with the appropriate units and personnel within the University. The implementation of this Access Policy and the articulation and reflection of its benefits to both the University of Limerick and the wider community is a university-wide responsibility.