

# Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship (RAA)

## Access, Transfer & Progression Policy

Arna chomhchistiú ag Rialtas na hÉireann agus ag an Aontas Eorpach

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Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



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an Aontas Eorpach

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## POLICY VERSION CONTROL

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Document Title / Reference	Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship (RAA) Access, Transfer & Progression Policy
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>The purpose of this policy is to ensure fit for purpose apprentice access and progression opportunities and programme delivery structure across all LMETB Provision.</p> <p>This policy applies to the RAA Apprenticeship mode of training delivery and throughout this document, the term apprentice refers to RAA Apprentices.</p>
<b>Scope</b>	<p>This policy applies to all phases of the apprentice 'life-cycle', admission, transfer, progression and certification.</p> <p>It relates to apprentices, LMETB personnel, Collaborating partners, Delivery associates, and other regulatory and accreditation stakeholders.</p>
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<b>Contextual Guidelines</b>	<p>QQI Core Guidelines 3.2 'Apprentice Admission, Progression and Recognition'</p> <p>QQI Policy Restatement: Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in relation to Apprentices for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training.</p> <p>Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, s. 56 "Procedures for access, transfer and progression in relation to apprentices"</p> <p><i>QQI Policy Restatement Policy And Criteria For Access, Transfer And Progression In Relation To Apprentices For Providers Of Further And Higher Education And Training [NQAI 2003, Restated 2015].</i></p>
<b>Related Policy</b>	<p>Admission Policy &amp; Criteria Apprentice Charter QAP Robotics and Automation Programme (RAA) RPL Policy</p>
<b>Audience &amp; Communication</b>	Applicable to all stakeholders of LMETB including all apprentices and staff, Apprentices of LMETB as Coordinating Provider of RAA Apprenticeship Programme, Vendors/Second Providers, Contracted Trainers, Employers and Collaborating Providers.

	LMETB's policy on access, transfer and progression and the RPL policy will be made available on the LMETB website and Apprentice Handbooks.
<b>Policy Owner &amp; Implementation</b>	<p>The Chief Executive of LMETB has overall responsibility to ensure that the policy on access, transfer and progression is embedded within the ETB's structures.</p> <p>Each FET Centre/RAA National Programme Manager is recognised as having local responsibility for information related to their area.</p>
<b>Key Implementation Mechanisms</b>	<p>Each FET Centre/Programme will establish progression pathways between programmes where possible, and determine an apprentice's eligibility to progress or transfer based on assessment of their prior learning, funding and meeting the criteria set by the provider.</p> <p>The RAA National Programme Manager will review data on apprentice progression and identify patterns of concern and take action to remedy underlying causes as early as is practicable in conjunction with annual reviews.</p> <p>Any changes in legislative requirements or changes in course content or the development of new courses or changes to existing course design will be reflected on LMETB's website and literature. The language used, and methods used in communicating information, will be in keeping with stakeholder requirements.</p>
<b>Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement</b>	<p>Detailed records of all apprentices enrolling in and completing courses is entered on the PLSS system.</p> <p>The RAA National Programme Manager will review data on apprentice progression, identify patterns of concern and take action to remedy underlying causes as early as is practicable in conjunction with annual reviews. These reviews will be informed by the QA Sub-committee.</p> <p>The policy will be evaluated every three years by the QA sub-committee and by the QA Governance Management Committee (QAGMC) in conjunction with FET Centre/Programme Managers.</p>
<b>Revision History, Commencement Date &amp; Date of Next Review</b>	<p>Review Date: 2024</p> <p>Date of next review: 2027</p>

## Access, Transfer, and Progression Policy

### 1. Policy Statement

Promoting accessibility for apprentices is a basic tenet of Louth Meath Education and Training Board's (LMETB's) mission. Entry arrangements are clear, decisions on allocation of places on programmes are transparent, and all applicants are treated in a fair, equal and consistent manner.

As a provider of Further Education and Training, LMETB enhances accessibility by the provision of flexible quality education. Each FET Centre/Programme has a teaching and learning regime that stimulates and supports lifelong learning courses in various locations in Louth and Meath that are committed to operating in an open and transparent manner. LMETB supports the educational mobility of apprentices.

Apprentices will be encouraged to progress through the various stages of LMETB's accredited programmes by providing them with clear goals and transparent paths of progression between programmes. LMETB endeavour to develop an integrated framework to facilitate a logical progression. Appropriate apprentice supports are available to facilitate successful completion of each stage.

The Access, Transfer and Progression Policy LMETB follows the criteria outlined in the QQI policy document "Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and progression in Relation to Apprentices for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training".

LMETB have a draft policy on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

LMETB undertakes to provide information on the possibilities for access, transfer and progression to apprentices and prospective apprentices in information and publicity documents and, where appropriate, in direct communication with them. The information provided will be up-to-date, accurate, and clear and will enable potential applications and existing apprentices to make decision regarding what and when to study.

This policy summarizes the pathways available to apprentices to commence a new apprenticeship programme, the process by which they may transfer from one programme to another and the process by which they may progress from one programme to another where each programme is of a higher academic level than the preceding programme.

LMETB provides an optimal education experience to the apprentice by creating innovative and creative programmes in an apprentice centric environment. The key objective is to provide a dynamic learning environment which encourages and supports the apprentice to realize their full potential. The National Programme Manager (LMETB) is responsible for managing the implementation of this Access, Transfer and Progression policy and for ensuring the availability of relevant information to apprentices.

As Coordinating Provider, LMETB will ensure that:

1. Apprentices commencing apprenticeship programmes are informed of the name of the awarding body and the title, award-type and framework level designation of the award associated with that programme.
2. The following information is published in a standard and accessible format:
  - a. Eligibility to enter, including the Occupational Profile outlining the knowledge, skill and competence needed by the apprentice.
  - b. A statement of arrangements available for recognition of prior learning, for entry to each of their programmes, and for access to an award.
  - c. Support available for target groups such as apprentices with disabilities or apprentices whose first language is not English.
3. Entry arrangements are clear, decisions on allocation of places on programmes are transparent, and all applicants are treated in a fair, equal, and consistent manner.
4. Appropriate arrangements are made for an appeal process.
5. For each apprenticeship programme, there is clear definition of the awards in the framework that are recognized as demonstrating eligibility for entry and, where relevant, the attainments required in these awards.

Coordinating Providers implementation of access, transfer and progression is monitored through programme validation and through review processes for quality assurance arrangements.

## 2. Apprenticeship Entry/Access Criteria

The entry requirements for admission to an apprenticeship programme are set out and agreed at validation.

### Programme access arrangements are as follows:

- Interview: Apprenticeship applicants will be selected by an interview with the prospective employer who will be a SOLAS ‘Approved Employer’.
- Registration: SOLAS registers successful apprenticeship applicants as the Regulatory Authority for the Apprenticeships.

### Minimum entry requirements are as follows:

- Applicants will be required to complete an initial aptitude test,
- Applicants must be 17 years or older,
- Applicants must have achieved a passing grade (O6/H7) in 5 or more subjects (to include Maths and English) at Ordinary Level in the Leaving Certificate

OR

A full QQI Level 5 or higher qualification.

- For those who may not hold this certification, equivalence may be decided through a Recognition of Prior Learning procedure.
- Applicants must hold a minimum of a grade B2 CEFR B2 in writing, reading, listening, and speaking or recognised equivalent (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

### Skills and attributes are as follows:

- Must be numerate and literate,
- Have good learning skills,
- Be interested in manufacturing technology and customer service,
- Have the ability to absorb product knowledge,
- Be motivated and analytical,
- Possess effective communication skills, and excellent interpersonal skills,
- Be able to work as a team member, be adaptable and flexible.

### **Skills and attributes required of an RAA apprentice are as follows:**

- Must be numerate and literate.
- Have good learning skills.
- Be interested in manufacturing technology and customer service.
- Have the ability to absorb product knowledge.
- Be motivated and analytical.
- Possess effective communication skills, and excellent interpersonal skills.
- Be able to work as a team member, be adaptable and flexible.

### **Minimum entry requirements for RAA applicants are as follows:**

- Applicants must be 17 years or older
- Applicants will be required to complete an engineering related aptitude assessment as part of the recruitment and selection process.
- Applicants must pass a Colour Vision Test (24 Plate edition) for engineering.
- Applicants must have
  - achieved a passing grade (O6/H7) in 5 or more subjects (to include Maths and English) at Ordinary Level in the Leaving Certificate, or the equivalent. OR
  - a full QQI Level 5 or higher qualification
- For those who may not hold this certification, equivalence may be decided through a Recognition of Prior Learning procedure.

International applicants must present the equivalent of a full Level 5 qualification or higher.

Non-EU applicants are subject to work permit regulations. Additional requirements may apply to non-EU/EA Please refer to Labour Market Access Permission - Immigration Service Delivery (irishimmigration.ie)

### **For further information of requirements for non-EU applicants see:**

- Coming to study in Ireland
- ILEP
- Visa applications
- Registering your permission

Prior to registration, candidates must furnish all relevant documentation to the Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship National Programme Manager to ensure they meet the entry criteria.

Prior to commencement candidates must complete the statutory apprenticeship registration process. Prospective Apprentices on the RAA Apprenticeship programme must be numerate, literate and interested in robotics and automation and in pursuing a career in advanced manufacturing. They should possess good communication skills, excellent interpersonal skills, and an ability to work in a team. They should display an interest in and a capacity to absorb product knowledge and related technical competencies. They should demonstrate motivation to commence and complete the RAA apprenticeship programme within the timeframe specified.

Apprentices wishing to enrol on the RAA Apprenticeship programme should notify their prospective employer during the application process if they require any reasonable adjustments (i.e, provisions for physical or unseen impairments or a requirement for additional aid to utilise technology during the application process or during the programme of training). This should be immediately communicated to LMETB prior to commencement on the programme.

Applicants who do not have the standard entry requirements are deemed **non-standard applicants** and their application will be assessed by the Coordinating Provider or the Collaborating Provider for suitability for admission to the apprenticeship.

Non-standard applicants are considered on a case-by-case basis. The admission of a non-standard applicant is determined through a considered review of the candidates' qualification and experience and other relevant admission data by the LMETB National Programme Manager.

### **3. Procedure for Access to a National Apprenticeship Programme for a Non-Standard Applicant**

- Applicants who do not reach the minimum entry requirement but who are looking to access the RAA can do so if they have relevant work experience as specified in the validated Apprenticeship Programme. Candidates wishing to avail of RPL for Experiential Learning must have a minimum of two years' experience in the Robotics and Automation industry. The suitability and relevance of industry experience is to be decided by the National Programme Manager together with the Subject Matter Expert (SME)/Contracted Trainer/Lecturer.
- Advanced entry to the RAA programme does not apply, as statutorily all apprentices must be registered with SOLAS on the National Register of Apprentices for a minimum of two years.
- Applicants and their employer are informed of entry requirements including reference to relevant work experience in the programme related area.
- Collaborating ETBs/Providers will adjudicate on applications from potential apprentices seeking to use RPL as a method of satisfying entry requirements to the RAA New National Apprenticeship Programme.

Applicants are interviewed (including reference to work activities carried out with previous and current employer as appropriate) by Subject Matter Expert and LMETB National Programme Manager/Programme Leader (Collaborating Provider). A record of the interview outcome is maintained.

1. Applicants and employer informed of interview outcome.
2. Successful applicants are registered as an apprentice.

#### **4. Apprenticeship Transfer**

LMETB is committed to enabling and facilitating the apprentice to transfer to other appropriate programmes leading to awards at the same level of the National Framework of Qualifications. In the context of further development of the National Framework of Qualifications, routes of transfer and progression will be established for all awards including L7/L8 Advanced Certificates. LMETB will work closely with the Collaborating Providers to facilitate transfer between programmes.

## 5. Apprenticeship Progression

LMETB will work in collaboration with the Consortium Steering Group and National Programme Boards to identify progression opportunities and pathways for new apprenticeship programmes. Progression opportunities will be identified and made known to the apprentice.

Specific transfer and progression opportunities are detailed in the validated programme documentation.

LMETB New Post 16 Style Apprenticeship, including RAA Apprenticeship graduates may progress to numerous progression pathways to Levels 7 and 8 HE programmes including:

- Electrical and Engineering
- Bachelor of Engineering
- Energy Systems Engineering
- Aerospace Engineering
- Agricultural Engineering
- Industrial Engineering
- Mechatronics Engineering

Progression from the New Post 16 Apprenticeship Programme to different institutes will be supported by LMETB. Clear pathways will be communicated to all apprentices who have graduated from the programme. An apprentice may then seek entry to a subsequent programme of education and training of higher NFQ, subject to approval by individual institutions on an individual basis.

Applicants are advised to refer to the LMETB policy on RPL, and the Apprenticeship Learner Handbook when seeking further information on the RPL process.

This policy will be reviewed at the end of the RAA Pilot Programme and if necessary, appropriate revisions will be made.