

Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for the Purpose of Admission to NCAD

Policy and Procedures

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| | | This policy is effective from | <u>March 2025</u> |
| Approval body | <u>Academic Council</u> | Approval date | <u>18 March 2025</u> |
| Owner | <u>Head of Academic Affairs</u> | Next review date | <u>March 2027</u> |

1. Purpose

As Ireland's leading university level art and design college and as a world leading specialist art and design institution, The National College of Art & Design welcomes students from all over the world into our programmes from level 7 to level 10.

The purpose of the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications Policy is to ensure that applicants presenting foreign qualifications for admission are assessed in a transparent, equitable and timely manner as required under the European Standard Guidelines and the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the NCAD Entry Requirements and other policies and procedures relevant to the admissions process, including the English Language Policy. It also supports the College's compliance with the QQI Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners.

NCAD is a Recognised College of the University College of Dublin (UCD). As a Recognised College, this policy aligns with UCD's academic entry requirements.

2. Definitions

2.1. International Learner

An international learner is defined by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 as 'as a person who is not an Irish citizen but is lawfully in the state primarily to receive education and training' and for whom English is frequently an additional language requirement for admission. This definition, as defined by QQI, includes international applicants and learners on their programme of study.

2.2. International Applicant

An international applicant is defined by NCAD as a person who is applying to be an international learner and is categorised as:

2.2.1. EU Applicants

| <i>Doc version</i> | <i>Approval date</i> | <i>Modified by</i> | <i>Summary of modifications</i> |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| V1 | 18 March 2025 | N/A | N/A |

An EU applicant encompasses EU/EEA/Swiss Confederation/United Kingdom applicants who are entitled to EU fees based on the criteria at <https://www.ncad.ie/study-at-ncad/fees/>

2.2.2. Non-EU Applicants

A non-EU applicant is an applicant deemed not eligible for EU fees based on the criteria at <https://www.ncad.ie/study-at-ncad/fees/>

2.3. International Education Mark (IEM)

The International Education Mark (IEM) is defined as a statutory quality mark (TrustEd Ireland) and is part of a suite of legislative measures designed to protect international learners, as defined under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. It is awarded to Higher Education and English Language institutions who demonstrate that they meet the national standards to ensure a quality experience for international learners from pre-enrolment through to the completion of their studies.

2.4. Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is the state agency responsible for promoting the quality, integrity and reputation of Ireland's further and higher education system.

2.6. Foreign Qualification

For the purposes of this policy, foreign qualifications are any educational qualification (second level, further and higher education) presented for admission obtained outside the State.

3. Scope

This policy applies to both undergraduate and postgraduate applications for admission.

4. Principles

NCAD's Vision is Changing the world through bold and curious thinking, making and doing. Our five core values are bold and curious thinking, distinction, diversity, respect and relevance. In line with our vision and values, NCAD welcomes applicants from a wide variety of international backgrounds.

All applicants are required to meet the minimum academic entry requirements for admission as set out by UCD Academic Regulations and the NUI matriculation requirements.

5. Objectives

- 5.1. Support the selection of applicants who demonstrate the capacity to engage with and benefit from the unique NCAD educational experience, thereby promoting a diverse student community.
- 5.2. Recognise that it is not in the interest of an applicant to be admitted onto a programme of study on which they are unlikely to be successful if they do not meet the required level of English language competency.

Procedure:

6. Undergraduate CAO Applications:

- 6.1. EU undergraduate applications are centrally processed at a sectoral level through the [Central Applications Office \(CAO\)](#). Recognition of EU/EFTA/UK qualifications is therefore agreed and implemented at a sectoral level.
- 6.2. NCAD is a member of a national Admissions Officer Group from the participating CAO institutions. The expert group publishes a document annually on the CAO website that details the entry criteria from all EU/ EFTA/ UK countries. [CAO Other School Leaving qualifications](#) This document sets out the framework for comparison of EU/EFTA/UK qualifications for entry to undergraduate degree programmes in Irish Universities. Admissions Office staff use this document as the basis for determining if an applicant presenting an educational qualification from EU /EFTA /UK meets the minimum academic entry requirements.
- 6.3. Additional entry requirements such as a portfolio of work are assessed by the programme academic teams.
- 6.4. Place offers are made through the CAO to EU/ EFTA/ UK applicants who meet minimum entry requirements. In the case of a programme with a portfolio requirement, offers are made to applicants who meet the minimum entry requirements based on a ranking by portfolio score.

7. Undergraduate NonEU (Direct) Applications:

- 7.1. All undergraduate non-EU applicants apply directly to NCAD. All applications are assessed in accordance with the published admissions criteria.
- 7.2. Academic Registry (Admissions Office) has delegated responsibility from the Head of Academic Affairs to assess any qualifications presented by applicants to establish equivalence with the published minimum academic entry requirements for the programme applied for.
- 7.2. The Admissions Office uses a number of sources to establish equivalence, including, the NARIC Ireland Foreign Qualifications (QQI) .
- 7.3. Additional entry requirements such as a portfolio of work are assessed by the programme academic teams.

- 7.4. Offers are made to international applicants who meet minimum entry requirements, in the case of a programme with a portfolio requirement, offers are made based on a ranking by portfolio score.

8. Postgraduate Applications:

- 8.1. The Academic Registry (Admissions Office) has delegated responsibility from the Head of Academic Affairs for the review of postgraduate applications to the College.
- 8.2. All postgraduate applications are made directly to NCAD. All applications are assessed in accordance with the published admissions criteria on the NCAD Website.
- 8.3. Applications are initially assessed the Academic Registry (Admissions Office) for quality assurance ensuring that offers are made to applicants that meet the entry requirements for that programme, and validating the authenticity of applications.
- 8.4. The assessment of postgraduate applications includes the use of NARIC databases (Ireland, UK and others as required) to compare foreign qualifications against the published admission criteria.
- 8.5. Once basic eligibility has been established applications are then reviewed by members of the academic community, usually course Directors/Co-ordinators, for academic suitability to a programme.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

- 9.2. NCAD Academic Council is responsible for approving admissions policies, procedures and processes that include the Recognition or Foreign Qualifications Policy.
- 9.3. NCAD Academic Council is responsible for setting any requirements for programmes that are in addition to or above the minimum entry requirements.
- 9.4. The Head of Academic Affairs is the senior academic officer with responsibility for Admission to the College.
- 9.5. NCAD Academic Registry (Admissions Office) is responsible for ensuring that this policy is operated fairly and consistently in recruitment and student admissions, in line with the College's strategic aims, sectoral and legislative requirements in relation to the IEM.