



University of
Chester

Transfer to Chester Scheme

SECTION

2a

Quality and Standards Manual

HANDBOOK F:

The Assessment of Students at Levels 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and Taught Provision at Level 8

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Authored By: Academic Quality and Standards/Marketing,
Recruitment and Admissions/Registry Services

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Appendices

CTS-(1) Individual Learning Agreement Template – *to follow*

SECTION 2a – Transfer to Chester Scheme

The University of Chester welcomes students who have the aptitude and ability to succeed in higher education. We recognise that some students, already registered for a degree programme at another institution may, for a variety of reasons, choose to move to another institution to complete their studies. In these circumstances, our aim is that the University of Chester is viewed as a welcoming and facilitative institution, enabling students to join us, at any point in the year, through a smooth and supported transition process.

PART A: OVERVIEW OF THE SCHEME

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Transfer to Chester Scheme (the Scheme) is designed to enable a smooth transition for prospective students entering the University outside of the standard entry points, whilst rigorously maintaining our academic standards and the credibility of our awards. The Scheme is available to prospective students who:
- 1.1.1. Are currently registered with another higher education provider, regardless of whether or not they have had academic credit awarded;
 - 1.1.2. Wish to transfer to the University of Chester outside of a standard entry point (normally 4 weeks from the commencement of teaching at any given level);
 - 1.1.3. Can demonstrate reasonable engagement with study at the FHEQ level that they seek to transfer into;
 - 1.1.4. Wish to transfer into a University of Chester programme that broadly maps onto their studies at their current higher education provider; and
 - 1.1.5. In the academic opinion of the University have a reasonable opportunity to successfully complete the programme in a timely way.
- 1.2. The University will start from the position that it wishes to facilitate the transfer in of any prospective student who matches the eligibility criteria listed above. The criteria will be applied sympathetically, considering each prospective student's individual circumstances and their academic record to date.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1. In order to meet the University's aim of facilitating a smooth and swift transfer into the institution, enquiries and initial applications will be coordinated by a member of staff from Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions (MRA). They will be responsible liaising with the University's Transfer Team to consider each application to the Scheme, to be comprised as follows:
- 2.1.1. **Academic Transfer Coordinator:** each Academic Department is to appoint one member of staff to act as the nominee of the Head of Department with responsibility for making academic judgements about the suitability of an

applicant and, upon acceptance, managing the development of the student's academic programme in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.

- 2.1.2. **Wellbeing Coordinator:** Student Futures is to appoint one member of staff to act as the nominee of the Dean of Students with responsibility for providing induction support to students admitted under this scheme. They will also act as a liaison with relevant colleagues should the student have any welfare or disability support needs.
 - 2.1.3. **Accommodation Coordinator:** the Accommodation Office is to appoint one member of staff to help if the prospective student requires University accommodation to facilitate their transfer.
 - 2.1.4. **Finance Coordinator:** the Finance Department is to appoint one member of staff to assist with any student finance matters relating to their transfer.
- 2.2. In addition, the Academic Transfer Coordinator may obtain additional support to assist in the discharge of their duties from:
- 2.2.1. **Head of Academic Quality and Standards (or nominee):** to advise on the mapping of the prospective student's current programme of study and/or on the development of a bespoke package of studies for the remainder of the level that the prospective student is transferring into.
 - 2.2.2. **Deputy Registrar and Head of Student Administration:** to advise on the structure and assessment records requirements following admission of the student.

3. Stages of the Transfer Process

- 3.1. Whilst, from the point of view of the prospective student, the aim is for the transfer process to be swift and seamless there are, necessarily, a number of stages to be completed for it to be successful. These are:
 - 3.1.1. **Admissions stage:** this encompasses receipt and academic consideration of the application and the decision on whether or not to permit the student to transfer into the University; thereafter, if the decision is to admit the student:
 - 3.1.2. **Practical arrangements stage:** make the necessary practical arrangements, such as accommodation, individual induction, finance, welfare and disability support etc. so that the student is equipped to begin studying as soon as possible and;
 - 3.1.3. **Academic development stage:** formulate the bespoke programme of study that the student will complete during the remainder of the academic year.
- 3.2. In practice, the transfer process is not linear and elements of these stages may need to be conducted in tandem with others. For example, the availability of accommodation may be central to the application proceeding or not. Therefore, it will be for the coordinating officer in MRA to manage the team outlined in 2.1. as they see fit.

PART B: ADMISSIONS STAGE

4. Admissions Principles

- 4.1. The provisions of this scheme will only apply where a prospective student seeks to transfer into the University beyond the point at which it would be impossible make up the time lost since the beginning of teaching for the given level of study (normally four weeks after the start). Prior to this point, a transfer under the standing APL arrangements (Handbook F, Section 2) can be completed, thus enabling the prospective student to follow the programme in the same way as others in their cohort.
- 4.2. Where this scheme is to be used, the University aims to complete the process of assessing their eligibility to transfer, using the eligibility criteria at 1.1. normally within 3 working days. From the point of application to the point of offer. Where appropriate, an offer may be made to a student without first going through UCAS.
- 4.3. When applying the eligibility criteria, the Academic Transfer Coordinator must be mindful of the following:
 - 4.3.1. Where a prospective student seeks to transfer into Level 4, less emphasis may be placed on subject and course-specific content than is the case at higher levels of study and greater flexibility should be shown in respect of cases where a student's current programme does not directly map onto the University's programme¹. Such flexibility may extend to cases where a student is seeking to transfer into a different subject area entirely.
 - 4.3.2. Where a prospective student seeks to transfer into any level, the assessment of their previous studies must be mapped against programme learning outcomes rather than individual module learning outcomes. This is because students admitted under this scheme will have a bespoke academic programme for the remainder of the year in which they are admitted.
- 4.4. Where a prospective student is seeking to transfer in at Level 5 or Level 6, the credits obtained from the lower level(s) of study will be considered for APCL in the normal way in accordance with Handbook F, Section 2. However, the rules in relation to conditional progression will apply:
 - 4.4.1. The prospective student may transfer into Level 5 or Level 6 with the equivalent of no more than 20 credits outstanding from the preceding level.
 - 4.4.2. Where a student has credit at a lower level outstanding at the point of admission, this must be accounted for in the academic development stage. This will normally require additional tutorial support as attainment of such credit is essential to the completion of the programme.

¹ It is recognised that the ability to do this in respect of professionally regulated or accredited programmes may be constrained.

5. Applications

- 5.1 Full-time undergraduate students wishing to transfer into the University at the start of Level 5 or Level 6 (from other universities or colleges) will be required to apply through UCAS.
- 5.2 Prospective students wishing to transfer outside of the normal arrangements (and after the end of the UCAS admissions cycle) should contact the Undergraduate Admissions Team for an application form (Transfer Approval Form). All applications to transfer must include information on the course/module title, the credit value and level of each module taken, the date each module was taken, and the results of each module.
- 5.3 Once all essential information has been received, applications and supporting papers will be referred to the relevant Academic Content Co-ordinator for consideration. For combined courses, two Co-ordinators may be involved.
- 5.4 Following approval to transfer the MRA Co-ordinator will provide written confirmation to the applicant.
- 5.5 Applicants will be required to provide an original transcript or evidence of results and a suitable reference from their previous university or college prior to enrolment.

PART C: PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS STAGE

6. Accommodation requirements

- 6.1. At the point of application to the scheme, a prospective student may indicate that they require University accommodation for the remainder of the academic year. In these circumstances, the MRA Coordinator will alert the Accommodation Office as soon as is practical.
- 6.2. Confirmation of the availability of University accommodation must be provided to the MRA Coordinator within 3 working days of the application being received. This is to coincide with the academic decision on admittance.
- 6.3. In order to provide the prospective student with comprehensive details upon which to base their decision to accept an offer, the following must also be provided:
 - 6.3.1. Details of the type of accommodation available;
 - 6.3.2. The cost of the different accommodation types (where applicable);
 - 6.3.3. Any date restrictions on the availability of accommodation;
 - 6.3.4. Other relevant pre-contractual information in relation to the accommodation offer.

7. Welfare and disability support

- 7.1. At the point of application to the scheme, a prospective student may indicate that they have additional welfare and or disability support needs. In these circumstances, the MRA Coordinator will alert Student Futures as soon as is practical.
- 7.2. Where a prospective student indicates that they require specific support, further discussions may be required, but this should not delay the offer making process which is predominately concerned with academic considerations and the eligibility criteria set out in section 1.1.
- 7.3. In the event that a prospective student discloses a disability, at an appropriate point following admission, the Wellbeing Coordinator will liaise with colleagues on the process for supporting the student to obtain an inclusion plan. Where a student had similar support arrangements at their previous institution, it would be helpful to match these as far as possible.

8. Induction requirements

- 8.1. Students admitted to the University under this scheme are entitled to a bespoke induction process. This will consist in two parts:
 - 8.1.1. Part one will be a general induction to the University, delivered in person or online as requirements dictate and will be coordinated by Student Futures. The Wellbeing Coordinator identified as part of the formation of the transfer team is responsible for ensuring that the student has access to such an induction.

- 8.1.2. Part two will be an academic induction to the Faculty and Department. This should be overseen by the student's Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) and cover the same topics that feature in the normal induction programme delivered to students at the beginning of each academic session. The Academic Transfer Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the allocation of an appropriate PAT and that the academic induction takes place.

PART D: ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT STAGE

9. Academic principles

- 9.1. The scheme is designed to facilitate student transfer into the University beyond the point when it is feasible for them to be registered and complete the standard suite of modules for a given programme. Consequently, a student admitted in this way will require a bespoke schedule of work that considers:
- 9.1.1. The previous academic experience of the student, including any work that they have completed and for which academic credit has already been awarded;
 - 9.1.2. The amount of work, assessed or otherwise, that the student has completed at their previous institution and the extent to which this aligns with the programme learning outcomes; and
 - 9.1.3. The time available to verify the learning that the student has already done and complete additional teaching and assessment activities at the level that they are transferring into.
- 9.2. The development of a bespoke schedule of work will necessarily be a detailed exercise, best conducted in partnership with the student. Consequently, this stage is separate from the point at which a decision is made on the student's eligibility to transfer under the Scheme based on the criteria outlined in section 1.1.

10. Programme structure

- 10.1. In order to develop a coherent academic programme for a student transferring into the University under this scheme, there are four elements that will be combined in differing proportions:
- 10.1.1. **Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) credits:** recognition of academic credit awarded by another Higher Education Institution, applied to the student record on a 1:1 basis and which does not require any further assessment.
 - 10.1.2. **Learning Reflection Credit (LRC):** University of Chester credits awarded for academic reflections, of an appropriate length, in relation to learning and assessment that a student has completed at their former institution, but for which no formal academic credit has been awarded. Such credits can be awarded in multiples of 5.
 - 10.1.3. **Credit Accumulation Block (CAB):** University of Chester credits awarded for successful achievement of a prescribed schedule of learning and assessment, appropriately aligned to the programme learning outcomes for the course of study that the student has been admitted into. Such credits can be awarded in multiples of 5.
 - 10.1.4. **Individual Learning Agreement (ILA):** The detailed underpinning of the student's admission to the University. This consists in two parts; part one describes the learning that the student has completed prior to admission (APL and LRC). Part two describes the learning and assessment that the student will complete in order to achieve University of Chester credits.

- 10.2. The APL credits and Learning Reflection Credits relate to learning and assessment that has been completed at another institution and consequently demonstrate only threshold achievement. In the case of APL, the award of these credits reduces the volume of learning, teaching and assessment that must be completed by the student. In the case of LRC, the award of these credits is based on the verification of prior learning that has not been certified by the student's previous institution.
- 10.3. APL credits carry no mark and LRC is awarded on a pass/fail basis only. Consequently, these mechanisms do not enable the student to demonstrate achievement beyond the threshold standard. For this reason, the maximum amount of APL/LRC available for the level of study into which the student has been admitted is capped at 80. This does not preclude students from bringing in full years of APL (e.g. a student admitting part-way through Level 5 may still import 120 credits at Level 4).
- 10.4. The credits awarded by successful completion of one or more Credit Accumulation Blocks, described in an Individual Learning Agreement, are based wholly on learning and assessment completed at the University and consequently are capable of demonstrating achievement beyond the threshold standard. The marks awarded in relation to these credits will therefore determine a student's overall award classification in accordance with the mechanism set out in the University's Principles and Regulations.

11. Accreditation of Prior Learning

- 11.1. Where a student provides evidence of certificated learning which has resulted in the conferment of academic credit, this can be imported, in whole, to the University's student record. The admitting department will conduct a mapping exercise against the relevant programme learning outcomes. APL may be awarded for full and/or partially completed levels.
- 11.2. The process for the award of APL and the maximum number of APL credits that are permitted for each award are described in Handbook F, Section 2.
- 11.3. APL credits are awarded without a mark.

12. Learning Reflection Credit

- 12.1. A student being admitted to the University via the Scheme is likely to have completed some learning and assessment at the level that they are being admitted into, but this may not necessarily have led to the conferment of academic credit at the point of transfer. Learning Reflection Credit (LRC) aims to take account of this prior exposure to level-appropriate learning in a way that is fair to the student and allows the University to meet its Quality Code obligations.
- 12.2. Following the admission decision, when developing the bespoke schedule of work, the Academic Transfer Coordinator should work with the student to obtain as much evidence as possible of the learning and assessment that they have successfully completed. This may include, for example:
 - 12.2.1. Interim transcript of results.
 - 12.2.2. Copies of marked work with feedback showing any provision or indicative marks.

- 12.2.3. Copies of relevant module descriptors and/or programme specifications.
 - 12.2.4. Copies of relevant module handbooks.
 - 12.2.5. Copies of relevant assignment briefs.
- 12.3. On the basis of this evidence, the Academic Transfer Coordinator will make a reasonable interpretation of those programme learning outcomes that the student has already successfully completed and the volume of their engagement in terms of academic credit. They will then set an appropriate learning reflection task, the length of which will be related to the number of credits being applied for. This will be recorded in part one of the Individual Learning Agreement.
 - 12.4. The precise nature of the task set for the student to obtain the LRC will be at the discretion of the Academic Transfer Coordinator but, as a minimum, it must enable the student to demonstrate level-appropriate reflection of the learning that they undertook at their previous institution in relation to the programme learning outcomes being claimed.
 - 12.5. The outcome of an assessment task set for LRC will be pass/fail only.

13. Credit Accumulation Block

- 13.1. For the remaining credits that cannot be awarded via either APL or LRC, the Academic Transfer Coordinator will complete part two of the Individual Learning Agreement with details of the Credit Accumulation Blocks (CAB) that the student will be registered for.
- 13.2. CABs have a minimum credit value of 5 and are available in multiples of 5 credits. This is to enable close tailoring of a programme depending on the factors outlined in 9.1.
- 13.3. CABs take the place of modules for the remainder of the level of study into which the student has been admitted. They must be aligned to the relevant programme learning outcomes in such a way as to enable engagement with those that the student has not demonstrated threshold achievement of via another method. In addition, the assessment activity undertaken in a CAB must be sufficient to allow the student to demonstrate achievement beyond the threshold of those programme learning outcomes, even where these have already been mapped against APL/LRC.
- 13.4. The learning, teaching and assessment activities assigned to each CAB are at the discretion of the Academic Transfer Coordinator, but normally will, in combination:
 - 13.4.1. Overlap with one or more module being studied by the rest of the cohort in such a way as to facilitate the student's broad engagement with their peers;
 - 13.4.2. Recognise the need for additional tutorial support that may be required, the volume of which will depend on the point that the transfer takes place;
 - 13.4.3. Enable the student to engage with appropriate learning and teaching activities to support their successful completion of assessment;
 - 13.4.4. Broadly replicate the assessment activities that the rest of the cohort are completing.

14. Individual Learning Agreement

- 14.1. The Individual Learning Agreement (ILA) is created by the Academic Transfer Coordinator in close collaboration with the student. A template for the ILA is provided and is comprised of two parts:
 - 14.1.1. Part two records details of the APL credits that the admitting department is accepting in lieu of further assessment in relation to one or more of the programme learning outcomes. It also provides details of any LRC credits being applied for and the assessment task that has been set; and
 - 14.1.2. Part two is the definitive description of the learning and assessment with which the student is required to engage for the remainder of the level of study into which they have been admitted.
- 14.2. There will be a single ILA, unless the student is admitting onto a combined honours route, when there will be one per subject.
- 14.3. The second part of the ILA must detail the following:
 - 14.3.1. The learning outcomes (mapped in relation to the programme learning outcomes) that the student is expected to achieve on successful completion of the schedule of work in relation to each CAB;
 - 14.3.2. The timetabled learning events that the student is required to attend. These may align with one or more timetabled sessions being delivered by the admitting department in the current academic year;
 - 14.3.3. Any individual tutorials, online learning or other teaching events with which the student is required to engage;
 - 14.3.4. The assessments that the student will be required to complete and the deadlines for these; and
 - 14.3.5. Details of the student's PAT and other key contacts to support them through their learning.
- 14.4. The University expects that a completed ILA will be provided to the student and Registry Services within no more than 14 days following receipt of the student's acceptance of the offer made at the admissions stage.