



Learner Engagement Policy

Date Adopted: 20th January 2022 (Last Updated 29th October 2024)

This policy document outlines the approach that Engineers Academy maintains towards students recruited for, studying on, and receiving certification from Engineers Academy's Higher National programmes of study.

It includes the following sections:

1. Learner Recruitment, Registration and Certification
2. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy
3. Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Learner Recruitment, Registration and Certification

Engineers Academy adopts the following approach for the recruitment, registration and certification of students onto its programmes:

- 1.1. A number of systems are in place for the recruitment of students, including the use of social media platforms including (but not limited to) Facebook and LinkedIn to capture initial interest in distance learning programmes in Engineering. Engineers Academy also maintains direct engagement with engineering companies and organisations. Clear course information is made available on the Engineers Academy website.
- 1.2. Engineers Academy engages in advertising campaigns on social media, which seek to target potential candidate students working in the engineering sector.
- 1.3. Engineers Academy provides free sample lessons to potential students, so that they may have a transparent and realistic experience of the course platform, in order to gauge its suitability for their studies.
- 1.4. Engineers Academy provides unaccredited **bridging courses** at Level 3, designed to facilitate those candidates who have not been in formal education for 5+ years, have not studied a Level 3 qualification in an appropriate discipline, or feel that they would benefit from such pre-course material for any other reason. The bridging courses also allow prospective students to explore the suitability of online learning for their own circumstances.
- 1.5. Engineers Academy provides details of entry requirements for prospective students, which are detailed on both the Engineers Academy website and programme specification documents, where:
 - 1.5.1. Students wishing to enrol on a **Level 4 Higher National Certificate (RQF)** programme in Engineering should have achieved a Level 3 qualification in a relevant discipline, and/or have demonstrated a certain amount of engagement with the bridging courses detailed above, the extent of which to be determined during an initial advice and guidance process.
 - 1.5.2. Students wishing to enrol on a **Level 5 Higher National Diploma (RQF) top-up** programme must evidence their achievement of a Level 4 Higher National Certificate (RQF) programme in engineering. Where students have achieved their Level 4 certificate at another centre, the student is made aware that

additional units may have to be completed in order to meet the combinatorial rules set by the awarding body (Pearson) and to be eligible for a full Level 5 qualification upon completion of the Engineers Academy HND top-up study programme.

- 1.5.3. Students wishing to enrol on any Higher National programme must be a resident of the United Kingdom and must be able to demonstrate sufficient practical knowledge and understanding of the English language. Upon application, students are deemed to meet this requirement, if any of the following conditions are met:
 - 1.5.3.1. The applicant has a grade C GCSE in English language, or equivalent.
 - 1.5.3.2. The applicant has previously achieved a full level 3 vocational qualification in the United Kingdom.
 - 1.5.3.3. The applicant has completed the '*International House English Language Level Test*' with a 'Score Band' of Level B2 or above, and has provided evidence of their current level.
- 1.6. Students interested in studying on a Higher National (HN) programme are required to fill out an online application form. This is then followed up by direct communication from an Engineers Academy assessor, who will gauge the candidate's suitability for the course based on their prior learning and experience.
- 1.7. Students deemed suitable for enrolment on to an HN programme, following the above, will complete an **online enrolment form**. This form captures all necessary information for a registration of the applicant with Pearson, including appropriate learner identification.
- 1.8. Student details from the enrolment form are cross-checked with the identification provided, as well as with information held on the Learning Record Service (LRS). Once validated, students are registered using their personal details and Unique Learner Number (ULN).
- 1.9. Engineers Academy will investigate any instances of inaccurate, early/late and possibly fraudulent instances of student registration, and report details of such to the Awarding Body (Pearson) where required.
- 1.10. Engineers Academy will make a student registration with Edexcel Online following student payment, or the first instalment of such payment, and within 4 weeks of enrolment.
- 1.11. Learner progress is effectively tracked using Engineers Academy's Learning Management System (LMS) as well as spreadsheet tracking documentation, in order for both students and assessors to confidently gauge the progress of learning.
- 1.12. Upon successful completion of the study programme and following the conclusion of verification processes (including the activities of the HE Assessment Board, as well as internal and external verification), the grades awarded to students are claimed using Edexcel Online. All claims are checked by a 2nd assessor prior to submission.
- 1.13. Engineers Academy checks certificates received from the awarding body for correctness, by comparing these to both Assessment Board minutes as well as internal tracking records, before these certificates are issued to students.
- 1.14. Should any errors or discrepancies become apparent during the checks outlined in 1.12, these errors are reported to the Awarding Body (Pearson).
- 1.15. Where a student has not completed their full study programme due to withdrawal from the programme, interim certificates are claimed for any completed units, following the same processes detailed in the previous points.

2. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

Wherever possible, Engineers Academy recognises the prior learning of candidates in their application for study on an HN programme.

- 2.1 As noted in section 1, the prior learning of applicants is recorded when considering an application for an HN programme. Bridging courses at Level 3 are either advised or mandated for candidates where appropriate.
- 2.2 Applicants will provide evidence of certification for all relevant prerequisite qualifications upon application, and these will be securely stored by Engineers Academy. Where the authenticity of such certification is called into question, the relevant awarding body will be contacted for clarification.
- 2.3 Engineers Academy refers to the Pearson QCF Mapping Document when receiving applications from students with evidence of prior learning on QCF programmes who wish to study on an RQF programme.
- 2.4 Engineers Academy have created an '*RQF 2017 to RQF 2024 Assessment Criteria Mapping*' document and process for applicants with evidence of prior learning on the 2017 RQF framework, wishing to continue their studies on the 2024 RQF framework. In addition, an '*HNC RPL (RQF 2017 to 2024)*' course and assessments have been developed, to address shortfalls in the requirements for 2024 RQF units. Note that where additional assessment is required to convert units from the 2017 RQF framework to equivalent units on the 2024 RQF framework, only Pass grade criteria will be assessed.
- 2.5 Where appropriate, prior achievement of certain learning outcomes and assessment criteria can be mapped across at the time of learner registration, in line with the Pearson documentation and expectations.

3. Equal Opportunities Policy

As a distance-learning provider, equal opportunity for study is at the heart of Engineers Academy's ethos; allowing access to flexible study programmes for those students who would be unable to commit to conventional study programmes for geographical, work-related or other reasons.

3.1. Engineers Academy has been designed to facilitate flexible learning programmes for:

- Those employed in the engineering sector, unable to attend a conventional study programme due to shift work, mobile work, offshore work, overseas work or otherwise.
- Those who are unable to attend a learning institution such as a college due to mobility issues, disabilities or similar.
- Those who are unable to attend a learning institution such as a college due to commitments such as family or care-giving.
- Those who are unable to attend a learning institution such as a college due to lack of transport, or remote geographical location.
- Those who are not local to a provider which offers suitable HN courses in engineering.
- Those who do not wish to attend a conventional learning institution such as a college for any other reason not listed above.

- 3.2. Engineers Academy treats all students with respect and dignity, and seeks to provide a positive learning environment free from all forms of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- 3.3. Engineers Academy believes in the right of everyone to be treated with respect and regarded as equal status regardless of the following protected characteristics:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Economic Situation
 - Gender re-assignment
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- 3.4. Engineers Academy Acknowledges that both staff and students have a responsibility to support the principles of equality as required by the Equality Act 2010, including the general duty to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share any of the above protected characteristics and those who do not.
 - Promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.5. As part of the standard introductory communications to new students upon enrolment, students are invited and encouraged to declare any particular learning needs, or additional help that may be required in order to engage with the study programme. Engineers Academy will engage in discussions with students who identify such requirements in order to implement assistive measures where applicable and appropriate.
- 3.6. Engineers Academy takes into account the progression aspirations of its students. There are facilities available on the online study platform for students to declare their interest in progressing from Level 3 Bridging Courses to an accredited Level 4 HNC programme, and likewise to capture interest from students interested in progressing from Level 4 to a Level 5 HND, with further guidance and documentation for those students with such progression aspirations.
- 3.7. Engineers Academy monitors its own online platform, to guard against any content or communication which breaches the above points. Where a student or staff member is found to have posted, shared or otherwise engaged in such content on the study platform, appropriate action is taken by the directorship of Engineers Academy. Such action may take the form of:
 - A written warning
 - Restriction of the offending student/staff permissions on the online platform
 - Expulsion from the online platform, and the study programme.
- 3.8. It is the responsibility of the Directorship of Engineers Academy to implement and monitor this policy, as well as to take positive action where required.