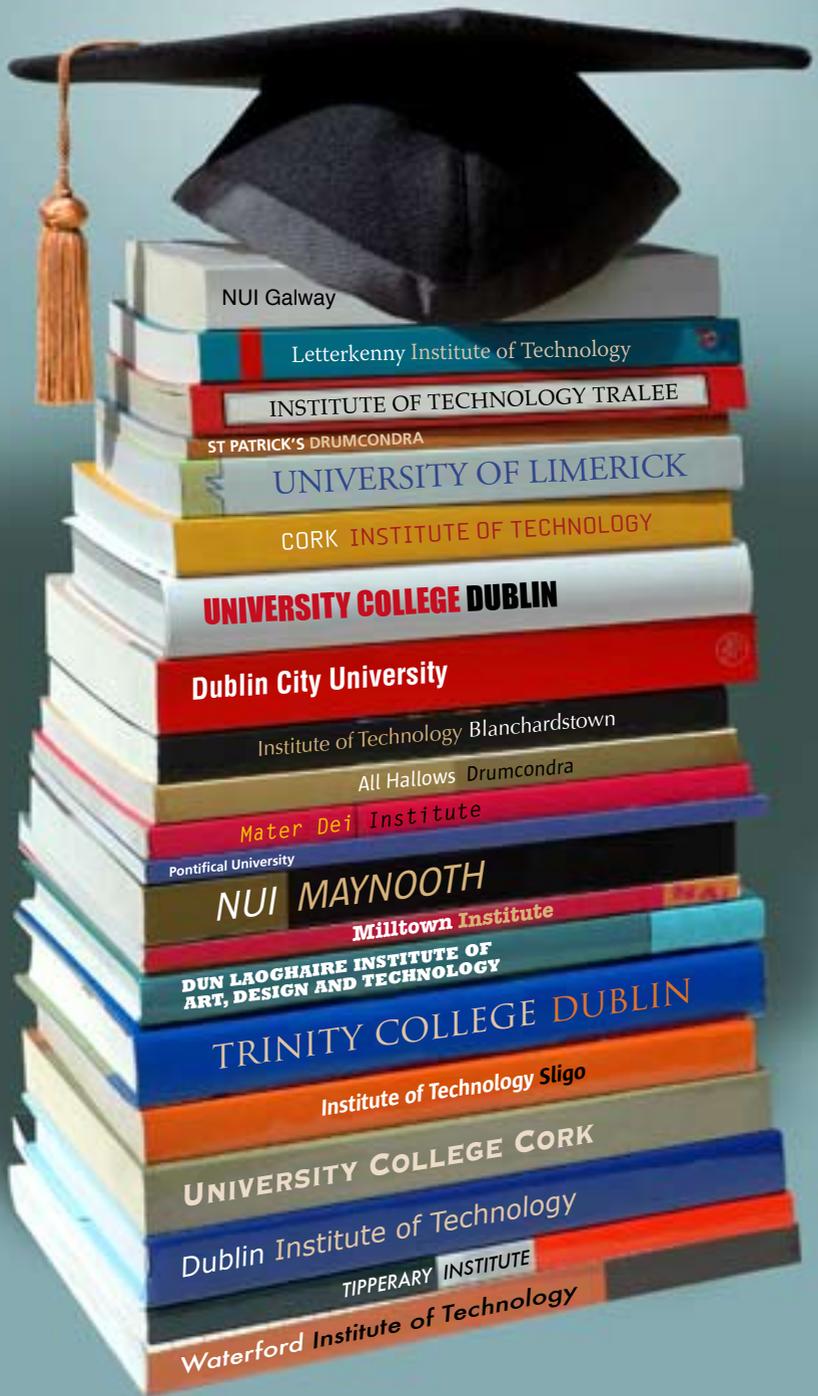


DIRECTORY

MATURE STUDENT



OF IRISH THIRD LEVEL INSTITUTIONS

DIRECTORY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



UNIVERSITIES



INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY



HEIs



ACCESS/FOUNDATION COURSES



APPENDICES



OF IRISH THIRD LEVEL INSTITUTIONS

MATURE STUDENTS

Introduction

Welcome to the first Mature Student Directory, produced by the Network of Irish Mature Student Officers (NIMSO).

Entering college for the first time as a mature student, or returning after many years in the workplace or raising a family, can be a daunting prospect. The wide variety of courses, at certificate, higher certificate and degree level, along with choices of foundation, access and preparatory courses, with different entry criteria, course options and outcomes can be overwhelming. How do you know if you need a foundation course? How do you choose between a certificate and a degree? What difference will it make to your career prospects? Do you apply through the CAO or directly to the college? What is the CAO?!

It is this gathering of information, deciding which courses suit, and then applying for them, which can be most confusing and daunting. And this is the reason this publication exists. We hope it is of value to you and wish you every success in your journey to third level learning, where we are confident you will enjoy yourself at the same time as developing your unique skills and talents in whatever field you choose to enter.

Irena Boydell,

Editor,

October 2006

SECTION 1: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

6

SECTION 2: UNIVERSITIES

11

- Dublin City University
- NUI Galway
- NUI Maynooth
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- University of Limerick

12

14

16

18

20

22

24

SECTION 3: INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY

27

- **Athlone** Institute of Technology
- Institute of Technology **Blanchardstown**
- Institute of Technology **Carlow**
- Institute of Technology **Carlow (Wexford)**
- **Cork** Institute of Technology
- **Dundalk** Institute of Technology
- **Dun Laoghaire** Institute of Art, Design and Technology
- **Galway-Mayo** Institute of Technology
- **Letterkenny** Institute of Technology
- **Limerick** Institute of Technology
- Institute of Technology **Sligo**
- Institute of Technology **Tallaght**
- **Tipperary** Institute of Technology
- Institute of Technology **Tralee**
- **Waterford** Institute of Technology

28

30

32

34

36

38

40

42

44

46

48

50

52

54

56

SECTION 4: OTHER HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs)

59

- All Hallows College
- Dublin Institute of Technology
- Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
- Mater Dei Institute
- Milltown Institute
- National College of Art and Design
- National College of Ireland

60

62

64

66

68

70

72

- Pontifical University, Maynooth
- St Angela's, Sligo
- St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

74
76
78

SECTION FIVE: ACCESS/FOUNDATION COURSES

■ Athlone Institute of Technology	82
■ Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology: Foundation Course	84
■ Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology: Fetac Foundation Course	86
■ Institute of Technology Blanchardstown: Foundation Course	88
■ Institute of Technology Tipperary: The Highway Programme	90
■ Institute of Technology Tralee: Foundation Certificate	92
■ Institute of Technology Waterford: Access Programme	94
■ Letterkenny Institute of Technology	96
■ Mary Immaculate College Limerick: Adult Education Access Programmes	98
■ NUI Galway: Access Course Mature Students	100
■ NUI Galway and Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	102
■ NUI Maynooth: Science/Engineering/Economic and Finance Foundation Year	104
■ NUI Maynooth: Return to Learning	106
■ St Angela's College Sligo: Access Course	108
■ Trinity College: Trinity Access Programme (TAP)	110
■ University of Limerick: Mature Student Access Certificate Course	112
■ University College Dublin: Access/Foundation Courses	114

SECTION 6: APPENDICES

■ APPENDIX 1: NIMSO	118
■ APPENDIX 2: Types of Higher Education Institutions	119
■ APPENDIX 3: Contact Details	121
→ Universities	121
→ Institutes of Technology	122
→ Other Higher Education Institutions	123
→ Access and Foundation Courses	124
■ APPENDIX 4: Adult Education and Guidance Links	125
■ APPENDIX 5: Qualifications	127
■ APPENDIX 6: Financial Supports	129
■ APPENDIX 7: Partnerships with Vocational Education Committees (VECs)	131
■ APPENDIX 8: Glossary of Terms	136

SECTION 1



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

➔ What is a mature Student?

A mature student is any candidate who is 23 years of age on the 1st of January of the year of entry (or re-entry) to an approved course in a recognised Higher Education Institute (HEI).

➔ Why consider third level education as a mature student?

Mature students enter third level education for a variety of reasons:

- to complete their education and get a degree
- to further develop an interest in a given subject
- to improve their job prospects
- to retrain for another career
- to develop their social and personal skills.

Returning to education after a break, or entering it for the first time as a mature student, is becoming increasingly popular, and indeed desirable. The mature student brings with him or her life experiences allied with determination and focus, all of which are conducive to successful learning. The ‘mature student’ very often becomes the ‘ideal student’!

➔ What sort of courses can I study?

Those candidates entering third level for the first time will enter at undergraduate level, and courses at this level are either certificate, diploma or degree (see Appendix 5 for full details of qualifications). Postgraduate opportunities are open to candidates who already hold an initial degree, although applications are sometimes considered from those with substantial relevant experience in their chosen area of study.

➔ How can I find out what’s on offer?

Full course details are available from each individual HEI. These details are updated annually, and are available in their prospectus, and in most cases, on-line as well. Contact details for each HEI can be found in Appendix 3.

➔ How do I apply?

Most of the HEI’s require you to apply via the CAO (Central Application Office: www.cao.ie) though some colleges require you to apply directly, and still others require you to do both. Many institutions also require you to attend an interview. Each institution has an Admissions Office, and staff are always happy to answer queries from prospective students. It is important to note that deadlines can vary, too, though

the common deadline for mature applicants applying through the CAO is the 1st February in the year of entry. Please check with your chosen college for their entry requirements.

→ Can I apply for any course I want?

Some restrictions may apply in the case of applications from mature applicants, or in relation to certain courses. Again, the Admissions Office in the HEI you are interested in can help you with that.

→ How can I find out if third level education is right for me?

If this is your first time to enter third level study, you might want to consider some sort of Foundation or Access course. Many HEIs run their own such courses, and local VEC's also run courses for mature applicants. See Section 6 for details on what is available, or contact the Admissions Office in the HEI you are interested in.

Please check with Admissions Office for their entry requirements.

→ What help is available to mature students at third level?

Most HEIs have a dedicated Mature Student Officer, who will be able to tell you what services and supports are available to mature students post-entry. These can include academic supports, counselling, careers advice, health services, accommodation, crèche facilities, disability service, and chaplaincy.

The Mature Student Officer is normally the first 'port of call' for mature students, and can offer assistance and guidance in any area that a student may be experiencing some difficulty in, whether academic or personal. Many HEIs also run dedicated Orientation/ Induction Programmes for mature students, which take place before you begin your chosen course and are designed to help in the transition to third level study.

Support is also provided for people with physical or learning disabilities, and will typically include learning support, access to specialised software, and specific individual student support where necessary.

Do I need to have Irish nationality to apply to HEIs in Ireland?

You will need to check with individual HEIs for their admission requirements. Normally you must hold an EU birth certificate or passport (or have official refugee status) and be resident in an EU member state for three of the five years prior to entry to an undergraduate course. Non-EU applicants are welcome, but will be subject to fees. In

addition, if English is not your first language you may be required to provide evidence of proficiency in the language.

➔ **What financial supports are available for mature students?**

Most mature students qualify for the Free Fee Initiative and also for the Local Authority Grant. The eligibility criteria and details of these and other financial supports are outlined in Appendix 6.

➔ **Who can best advise me on courses, colleges, application procedures, etc?**

There are many agencies and individuals around the country who can help you to find your way through the sometimes bewildering maze of third level education, and these are listed in Appendix 4 at the back. And don't forget the Mature Student Officer in the HEI's you are considering. They can answer any of the questions that you have and will be happy to do what they can to make your final decision as informed as possible. Many will be glad to introduce you to a mature student already doing your course, or arrange for you to attend a lecture, or to have a tour of the college. Contact details of the Mature Student Officers in all of the HEIs are listed in Appendix 3.

➔ **I have done some FETAC courses. Can they help me gain a place?**

There are a number of links with HEIs and FETAC and some courses are recognised as entry routes for third level studies. Please refer to individual HEI's for further information.



Mature Student Officers in most HEIs can help you with your application.

SECTION 2

→ My name is Terri, I am fifty years old and I am just about to take my final exams in History and Anthropology at NUI Maynooth. Coming from a working-class background I was not encouraged to progress beyond secondary school. In 1998 I applied to NUI Galway to do an Archaeology degree, but I had not done any sort of preparatory course and I didn't even get an interview. I shelved the idea of college until I heard of the Certificate course in Women's Studies at UL in 2001. I applied, was accepted, and by Christmas (and my first essays in thirty-odd years) I was hooked. I had decided that I really wanted to study Anthropology so I applied to NUI Maynooth. This time, because I was well-prepared, I succeeded.

My lecturers at UL had been immensely encouraging, and had given me lots of advice and skills training, so I felt that I could cope with the work. Being here with so many other matures has been marvellous. In September 2006, the friends I have laughed, cried, swotted, cursed and cheered with will join me on the podium to receive our diplomas. We'll walk - no, we'll strut - up the steps knowing that we can all achieve more than we'd ever thought we could. We've learned that when you set yourself a goal - and when you have the support of good friends and a warm welcome - there are no limits to what you can do.

Terri, NUI Maynooth



UNIVERSITIES

- Dublin City University
- NUI Galway
- NUI Maynooth
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- University of Limerick

About the University



Located in Glasnevin, just north of Dublin city centre and close to the M50 motorway, Dublin City University is Ireland's youngest university. DCU offers over 50 primary degree programmes in the areas of business, humanities, engineering and computing, science and health, and education studies.

At its modern campus, DCU's 10,000 students enjoy superb teaching and recreational facilities. These include dedicated laboratories, an award-winning library, The Hub social centre, The Helix arts centre, and the new University Sports Club.

DCU works in partnership with students to enable them to reach their full personal potential. The University's emphasis on practical learning and continuous assessment helps to ease the strain of exam pressures for students, while also ensuring strong demand for DCU graduates in the workplace. DCU strongly encourages applications from mature candidates and is continually working towards wider entry routes in order to increase participation of adult learners.

Pre-entry Supports

- Mature Student Officer offers general advice to prospective students
- Dedicated webpage for prospective mature students available at www.dcu.ie/registry/mature.shtml
- Outreach activities: Mature Student Officer available to visit adult education centres to speak with prospective students about DCU courses and the application procedure
- DCU Open Day and Mature Student Open Evening enable prospective students to meet with lecturers and view the campus
- Careers advice and guidance for prospective students offered by the Careers Service
- Mature Student Summer School prepares new students for college life. Includes workshops on study skills, computer skills and academic writing
- Admissions advice delivered by Registry Staff
- International Office staff offer advice to overseas students

Entry Requirements

- Flexible entry for mature students: assessment is based upon prior learning and/or experience
- Mature applicants for full-time study apply via the CAO by the 1st February in year of entry. Late applications can be considered until 1st May, but only while places remain.
- Mature applicants for part-time or distance education apply direct to DCU (deadlines vary so please check with the University).

Post-entry Supports

- Orientation information/presentations
- Mature Student Officer offers on-going advice and support
- Dedicated careers advisor for mature students
- Study skills workshops and Maths Learning Centre
- Personal tutor and peer mentoring systems
- Full range of general supports include Counselling Service, Financial Assistance Service, Sports and Recreation Officers, Chaplaincy, and Disability Service
- More than 100 clubs and societies to help balance study with play!

Mature Student Population

- DCU admitted over 220 mature students in 2005 representing 13% of the total first year student intake.

Partnership Courses

- FETAC certificate in Education and Training delivered collaboratively by DCU with Whitehall College of Further Education and Dun Laoghaire College of Further Education. See Appendix 7 for details.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Mature Student Officer

Tel: (01) 700 7755

Email: mature.entry@dcu.ie

Celine Jameson,

Deputy Enrolment Officer

Tel: (01) 700 8347

Email: celine.jameson@dcu.ie

About the University



There has been a growing interest within many sectors of society in recent years in returning to formal study programmes following periods in employment, unemployment or in the home. Those interested in resuming a disrupted education, in developing new employment opportunities or those seeking to awaken their intellectual interests, can meet these needs

in an environment which is stimulating academically and socially, when they join a University programme.

Recognising the importance of this trend, NUI, Galway welcomes applications on grounds of Mature Years from EU Nationals or from those who have lived for at least three of the previous five years in an EU member state. A quota of places is reserved each year in the Faculties of Arts (15%), Commerce (10%), Science (10%), Engineering (10%) and Law (10%) whilst in the University's Centre for Nursing Studies 15% of places in General Nursing, 40% of places in Psychiatric Nursing and 20% of places in Midwifery are reserved for mature students.

Pre-entry Supports

- Dedicated Mature Students Officer to offer advice to potential students
- Open Day held in December for all intending students
- Special Information evening held in April for mature learners
- Special Orientation programmes for mature students prior to registration
- Dedicated Mature Students website: www.nuigalway.ie/prospective_students/
- Access Course for Mature Students
- Foundation Course in Science, Technology and Engineering
- Foundation Course in Business/Commerce

Entry Requirements

- Candidates must be 23 years of age on or before January 1st of year of entry
- Candidates must have EU nationality or have lived for at least three of the previous five years in an EU member state
- Application is through the CAO and closing date is February 1st (It is not possible to consider late applications on grounds of Mature Years)
- Mature applicants to Arts Faculty courses must sit a written assessment (aptitude test) in April
- In general successful applicants must demonstrate an ability to undertake, and to commit to, the programme of study for which they are applying
- Matriculation standard leaving cert. helpful but not necessary in all cases

Post-entry Supports

- Full-time dedicated Mature Students Officer
- Professional Counselling Service
- Disability Liaison Officer
- Free medical service at Student Health Unit
- Mentoring scheme
- Study Skills workshops
- Computer training
- Memory Techniques course
- Essay Writing
- Social Evenings for mature students
- Active Mature Students Society
- Parties for students and their children
- Special Careers Seminars for mature students
- Additional academic support for small groups
- Financial assistance with childcare costs
- Dyslexia Tutor and Assistive Technology Service
- Accommodation Services
- Range of Clubs and Societies including Parenting Society

Mature Student Population

- NUI Galway has 230 mature students in first year of full-time undergraduate degree programmes in 2005/06 academic year.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Mary Liddy

Mature Students Officer

Tel. (091) 492695

e-mail mary.liddy@nuigalway.ie

NUI GALWAY

About the University



The National University of Ireland, Maynooth is a dynamic and innovative university of 5,500 students from every county in Ireland as well as an increasing number of international students. Situated 25km west of Dublin, it is located in Ireland's only university town, Maynooth, which combines the historical legacy of its medieval origins with a present day location on the fringes of Dublin.

NUI Maynooth welcomes mature applicants and encourages their pursuit of study at the University. It appreciates that many people might have left school early, or were unable to achieve their full potential in education due to financial, social or family pressures. Over the intervening years circumstances change and the opportunity to return to study now presents itself. The University believes that the particular contribution of mature students to the academic and social environment of the University is a valuable and beneficial asset. A substantial number are accepted each year.

Pre-entry Supports

- Provision of advice and guidance to prospective mature students
- Open Days (last weekend in November) on campus
- Mature Student/CAO Advisory Evening (January)
- Summer Programmes
- Mature Student Orientation Programme
- Return To Learning Programme (Centre for Adult & Community Education)
- NUI Foundation Certificates in Science, Engineering or Economics/Finance (Contact Mature Student Officer)

Entry Requirements

- Mature Students apply through CAO and also make a direct application to NUI Maynooth (Closing date: 1st February)
- Applicants assessed on basis of interview, life experience/employment and academic preparation.
- Late applications may be considered up to 1st May, with the exception of some courses which have written tests for mature students (usually taking place at the end of March each year).

Post-entry Supports

- Full-time dedicated Mature Student Support Officer
- Mature Student Orientation Programme
- One-to-one Advisory Service
- Study Skills seminars
- Essay Writing Course for Mature Students
- Ongoing essay writing support
- Computer Training Workshops
- Mature Student Careers Advisor
- Mature Student Society – social events
- Disability Officer
- Learning Support worker (for students with specific learning difficulties)
- Academic Advisory Service
- Counselling Service

Mature Student Population

- At NUI Maynooth 15% of the total intake each year are mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Emer Sheerin,
Student Services Building,
NUI Maynooth.
Tel: 01-708 3307
E-mail: emer.sheerin@nuim.ie

NUI MAYNOOTH

About the University



The University of Dublin, founded in 1592, is the oldest university in Ireland. Located right in the heart of Dublin City the campus has magnificent historic buildings standing side by side with state of the art laboratory, library and information technology facilities. Trinity College offers an environment for learning and development that combines the best of the old with the excitement of the new.

Pre-entry Supports

- Mature Student Officer available to provide advice and guidance to prospective mature students
- Open Day held annually in December includes seminars for mature students.
- Mature Student Information Evening (January)
- Mature Student Welcome Programme September.
- Foundation course for Higher Education: Mature Students from under-represented socio-economic groups (see appendix 5 for further details)

Entry Requirements

- In order to qualify for consideration as a mature student applicant you must be 23 years of age or over by the 1st January of the year in which you wish to start study and have EU Status (See Trinity College Mature Student Guidelines).
- All undergraduate full-time degree programmes are open to Mature Applicants. Mature Applicants are not required to meet either the minimum academic (matriculation) requirements or the competitive academic entry level. (See Mature Students Guidelines for details of entry criteria for specific courses). Applicants must complete a CAO form and a Trinity College Mature Student Supplementary

Application Form. Deadline for submission of application forms to Trinity and to CAO is 1st February.

- Applicants will be short-listed for interview on the basis of information supplied on the Trinity College Mature Student Supplementary Application Form.

Post-entry Supports

- Full time dedicated Mature Students Officer
- Mature Students Resource Centre including a “drop in” service.
- Mature Student Orientation and Welcome Programme held two weeks prior to registration.
- College Tutors
The Tutorial Service is a confidential service that is available to all undergraduate students. The service offers student support in all aspects of College life.
- Mature Students Society and up to 90 other societies.
- Learning Support Service provides courses including Study Skills and exam preparation
- Disability Services
- Student Counselling
- Student Health
- Financial assistance with childcare costs
- Accommodation Services
- Student’s Union
- Chaplaincy
- Student Parent Group
- Sports clubs
- Careers Advisory Service
- Maths Help room
- Computer Programming Help room
- Writing Resource Centre: See <http://www.tcd.ie> for detailed information on all support services

Mature Student Population

- In 2005 the number of mature students who registered as 1st year full time undergraduates increased to 220. This brings the total of mature students currently in Trinity College to over 500.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Mature Students Officer

Tel: 01-8961386

Email: mature.student.officer@tcd.ie

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

About the University



University College Cork is a constituent University of the National University of Ireland. It was founded in 1845, one of the three non-denominational Queen's Colleges established in Ireland by an Act of Parliament of Sir Robert Peel. The campus is an attractive one, containing as it does, a pleasing mixture of architectural styles, having as its centre the magnificent quadrangle designed by the noted Cork architect Sir Thomas Deane. The south channel of the river Lee flows through the grounds.

UCC is Irish University of the Year 2005/6 and also held the title in 2003/4. There are over 15,000 students studying in UCC with 10 per cent of the undergraduate population being mature students.

Pre-entry Supports

- Open Days
- Mature Student Information Evening
- Consultation and Advice Service
- Visits to Community Education and Adult Learning Centres
- Mature Student Office
- UCC Mature Student Guide
- Website: www.ucc.ie/mature

Entry Requirements

- All of our degree programmes are open to mature students.
- Entry requirements vary according to the degree programme applied for.
- Closing date for receipt of application is 1st February.
- Applications should be made through CAO.

Post-entry Supports

UCC prides itself on the excellent post-entry support it offers Mature Students. In addition to the services offered by the university to all students, the following services are provided to Mature Students:

- Mature Student Orientation which takes place prior to Registration
- Peer Mentoring Support
- Tutoring Service
- Consultation Service
- ‘Drop-in’ Service
- Writing Skills for the University (First Years)
- Exam Skills Workshop
- Study Skills Workshop
- Transition / Focus Groups for Mature Students.
- Strategies for Successful Transition to University Workshops:

Three day workshop run during the summer months for mature students who have been offered a place on a degree programme in UCC.

Mature Student Population

- There were 349 mature students registered in first year undergraduate degree programmes in UCC for the academic year 2005/06. In total, there are 1103 mature students undertaking full time undergraduate degrees, which represents 10% of the undergraduate student population, with a further 2600 in evening degree, diploma and outreach programmes.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Dr. Carmel Quinlan
Mature Student Officer,
West Wing, UCC.
Tel: 353-21-4903670
Email: c.quinlan@ucc.ie

Christina Farmer
Project Coordinator,
Mature Student Office,
West Wing, UCC.
Tel: 021 4903671
Email: c.farmer@ucc.ie

About the University



University College Dublin is a dynamic, modern university. UCD provides excellent facilities to support teaching and learning. There are well-resourced libraries and extensive computing facilities. Student health, welfare and counselling services are second-to-none and there are superb opportunities for sports and recreation. UCD provides the range of services that students need to make their time at UCD enjoyable and fulfilling, educationally and professionally.

As part of our continuing commitment to lifelong learning, UCD offers a comprehensive support service for mature learners. The Mature Student Administrator offers information and advice to prospective students regarding application, eligibility and admissions procedures. The Mature Student Adviser provides ongoing support to mature students once they have embarked on their studies.

Pre-entry Supports

- Dedicated Mature Students Administrator available to offer information and advice about making an application, eligibility criteria and admissions procedures to prospective students. <http://www.ucd.ie/newstudents/mature.htm>
- Dedicated mature students publication Application on the Grounds of Mature Years
- Out-reach visits to Adult Education Centres on request
- Open Days in January, March and December
- Pre-Enrollment Writing Academy
- Orientation Day for mature students in September.
- Access Courses for Mature Students: N.U.I. Certificate Courses in Arts and Human Sciences, Commerce and Science and Engineering, See section 5 for further details.

Entry Requirements

- Applicants must be 23 years on or before January 1st in year of entry
- Application for the majority of our courses is through the CAO by 1st of February. For some courses late applications up to 1st of May will be considered.
- In general, applicants are assessed on academic ability, relevance of life and work experience, commitment, motivation and interest. For many courses, selection is based on the written application.

In addition to UCD Admissions Office the following units encourage mature applicants:

- UCD Distance Learning Unit offers a number of part-time programmes in business through distance learning. www.ucd.ie/quinn
- UCD Continuing Professional Education offers certificates, diplomas and bachelor degrees across many broad areas. www.ucd.ie/cpe
- UCD Adult Education Centre offers a large and varied programme of access, credit and interest courses. www.ucd.ie/adulted/

Post-entry Supports

- Dedicated Mature Students Adviser available to offer advice and guidance and support to registered mature students. <http://www.ucd.ie/matures/>
- Academic Skills Refresher Courses for mature students
- Active Mature Students Society
- Accommodation Services
- Careers and Appointments Office
- Chaplaincy
- Clubs and Societies
- Disability Support Services
- Financial assistance towards childcare costs
- Mathematics Support Centre
- Niteline
- Peer mentoring
- Sports Centre
- Student Health Services

Mature Student Population

In 2005, 330 mature students registered for undergraduate degree programmes. UCD is committed to achieving a mature student participation rate of 15% of student population.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Úna Hegarty

Mature Students Administrator

Tel: 01-7161375

Email: mature.students@ucd.ie

Post Entry

Ronan Murphy

Mature Students Advisor

Tel: 01-7168245

Email: ronan.murphy@ucd.ie

About the University



The University of Limerick is a vibrant and dynamic institution enjoying an outstanding physical setting on the banks of the river Shannon. It has one of the finest sports and recreation facilities in Europe and a 1000-seat concert hall which serves as the cultural centre of the region. The university is committed to increasing the participation rates of mature students and to the development and maintainance of an environment conducive to their specific needs.

The Mature Student Office was established in 2001 to provide supports, both pastoral and academic, to ensure the full participation of mature students. The Office also provides an information and advisory service to the prospective mature student population in the wider community and co-ordinates the Mature Student Access Certificate course.

Pre-entry Supports

- A Mature Student Office
- Information service
- One-to-one Advisory Service
- Resource materials: Mature Student Handbook, campus Noticeboard and website
<http://www.ul.ie/mso/>
- Visits to Centres of Adult Education in the mid-west region.
- Visits from mature student groups
- Annual Open Evening for mature students and adult learners
- Career guidance from a dedicated mature student careers adviser.
- The Mature Student Access Certificate Course

Entry Requirements

- Mature students (23 years of age on the 1st of January of the year of registration) may apply for entry to any of the university's programmes of study. Each mature student is considered on an individual basis. Academic qualifications, work /life experience, motivation and overall potential for the programme of study are evaluated usually by means of an interview.
- The application deadline is 1st April each year. Application material may be obtained from the Admissions Office. (Tel. 061 202015, <http://www.ul.ie/admissions>)

Post-entry Supports

- Induction Programme
- The Induction Programme affords an opportunity to meet fellow matures and find out about the supports available. It also provides a Study Skills Tutorial.
- Drop-in personal support and information (Mature Student Office)
- Basic computer skills (Mature Student Office)
- Study and Writing Skills (Centre for Teaching and Learning)
- Mathematics Skills (Mathematics Learning Centre)
- Disability Liaison Service including support for dyslexia
- Career Guidance (Careers Division)
- Library Skills (Library and Information Service)
- Information Technology Skills (Information Technology and Communications Learning Centre)
- Science Skills (Science Learning Centre)
- Language Skills (Language Resource Unit)
- Financial assistance
- Counselling Service
- Student Health Service
- Accommodation Service
- Clubs and Societies
- Students' Union

Mature Student Population

- At UL mature students represent approximately 9% of incoming first years in 2005 with numbers increasing each year. This brings the total current full-time mature population to 600+.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Noreen Coveney O'Beirne

Tel: 061-213481

Email: noreen.coveney@ul.ie

SECTION 3



→ On completing my Leaving Certificate in 1992, I took a diploma course in a Dublin college. However, due to personal circumstances, I was unsuccessful in my exams and ultimately dropped out. I always had a desire to go back into education when it suited me better and, before commencing my course in September 2005, I psyched myself up for what was ahead. My attitude was that if everyone else is doing this, then so can I. So far, the course is going well, I have just received my exam results (all passed!).

The key as a mature student is to keep with the programme, ask for assistance when it is required, and take each day as it comes. I am fully settled in now, and wouldn't look back. Mature students tend to form a clique on the first few days, and stick together, so there are no problems in making new friends. I would advise anyone who aspires to acquiring a third level qualification to take the first step now. Where there's a will, there's a way and you'll find the way - just as I have!

Ian, B.Sc. in Business Studies



INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY

- **Athlone** Institute of Technology
- Institute of Technology **Blanchardstown**
- Institute of Technology **Carlow**
- Institute of Technology **Carlow (Wexford)**
- **Cork** Institute of Technology
- **Dundalk** Institute of Technology
- **Dun Laoghaire** Institute of Art, Design and Technology
- **Galway-Mayo** Institute of Technology
- **Letterkenny** Institute of Technology
- **Limerick** Institute of Technology
- Institute of Technology **Sligo**
- Institute of Technology **Tallaght**
- **Tipperary** Institute of Technology
- Institute of Technology **Tralee**
- **Waterford** Institute of Technology

About the Institute



Athlone Institute of Technology aims to contribute to the technological, scientific, commercial, economic, industrial, social and cultural development of the State with particular reference to the midland region, through the provision of a balanced education to the highest international standard founded in accessibility, mobility, collaborative links and research excellence.

The Institute currently offers an extensive range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to over 5,000 students. In relation to mature student learners the Institute believe that Access is not simply about gaining a place at the Institute but involves the student's whole progression into and through their chosen course.

Pre-entry activities/Outreach/Access courses

- **Foundation Certificate Course** - AIT offer a full-time one year foundation course for adult learners who wish to return to study after a break in their educational experience and who may not have benefited fully from, or had access to previous educational opportunities. Participants who successful complete the Foundation Certificate are guaranteed entry to a Higher Certificate/Ordinary Degree course.
- **Information Seminars** - The Access Officer provides on and/or off-campus, specifically tailored, information sessions for interested groups with particular emphasis on funding for third level education and courses offered. These groups include FAS, VTOS, various Community Groups and a variety of re-training and education centres.
- **Open Evening** - AIT host an open evening annually specifically designed for full-time and part-time mature students.

Entry Requirements

- **Foundation Certificate** - Persons over 21 years on the 1st January of the year of entry, with or without a Leaving Certificate are eligible to apply. Selection may involve an interview.
- **Full-time Study** - Applicants must be 23 years or over on 1st January in the year of entry to the undergraduate course. Such applicants may not be required to have the minimum entry requirements. Applicants should apply through the CAO system, and may be required to attend for interview at the institute as part of the selection process.
- **FETAC** - The Institute welcomes applications from mature students who have successfully completed FETAC Level 2 courses.
- **Part-time Study** - Students applying to attend the Institute on a part-time basis should contact the Adult Education Office, on 090 642 4588 for application forms, which they should return directly to the Institute.
- **Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects Scheme (ACCS)** - This allows students to follow any subject on an institute course and be awarded a certificate and credits on successful completion of the subject. These credits can count toward the award of Higher Certificate/Ordinary degree.

Post-entry Supports

- Induction Seminars
- Peer Mentoring
- Student Advisor Service/IT
- Disability Liaison Officer and Assistive Technology Tutor
- Access Officer
- Career and Appointments Service
- Mainstreaming – Under the umbrella of Student Services many of the additional supports for mature students are mainstreamed and include counseling, health service, chaplaincy, sports office, students union, library services, etc.

Mature Student Population

- In 2005 the number of mature students who registered as first year undergraduates was 102.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Full-Time Study
Access Officer
Tel: 090 642 4491

Part-Time Study
**Adult and Continuing
Education Office**
Tel: 090 642 4558

About the Institute



The Institute of Technology Blanchardstown opened in September 1999. There are currently over 1,100 full-time and 500 part time students undertaking third level courses at the Institute. The School of Business and Humanities offers courses in the areas of Business, Languages and Social Care. The School of Informatics and Engineering offers programmes in the areas of Electronics, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Mechatronics, Horticulture and Apprenticeships.

The Institute of Technology Blanchardstown is committed to developing and implementing policies, procedures and practices that facilitate equality of access, participation and outcome for all students as an integral part of it's commitment to equality of opportunity in higher education. The Institute welcomes applications from mature students and a number of places on each of our courses are reserved for such applicants. The Institute has a specific objective with regard to mature students and aims to ensure that 30% of places on all our courses are filled by non standard students which includes mature students.

Pre-entry activities/Outreach/Access courses

- The Access Officer has specific responsibility for promoting pathways to, and opportunities for, mature students at the Institute.
- The Access Officer is available to meet individuals and groups of prospective students regarding the opportunities at the Institute, and to offer advice and guidance around the challenges or worries that students may be experiencing regarding the prospect of returning to education.
- The Institute offers careers advice and guidance for prospective mature students through the Careers Service and the Access Office.
- Mature Students Open evening/Student Information Sessions.
- The Institute offers a Foundation Certificate option to students on both a full or part time basis.

Entry Requirements

- All applications from mature students are through the CAO. Mature students may be required to attend an interview/information session in connection with their application. Applicants are not required to meet the minimum entry requirements for courses but are assessed on their prior learning and/or experience. Particular consideration is paid to applicants who demonstrate a special interest in a relevant subject area, or who have demonstrated their commitment by undertaking some preparatory course work and/or examinations.
- The Institute welcomes applications from mature students who have successfully completed FETAC Level 2 courses.

Post-entry Supports

- Orientation information and information sessions specifically for mature students
- Regular meetings/reviews with Student Support Officer
- 2nd, 3rd year and 4th students provide a Mentoring service for first year students.
- Financial support including the loan of laptops and other equipment where appropriate.
- Scholarship programme in collaboration with local industry.
- Provision of academic support including the provision of additional tuition, study clinics and workshops where necessary.
- Provision of a Lifeskills Programme for all students.

Mature Student Population

- In 2004/5, 15% of the undergraduate population were mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Adrienne Harding has specific responsibility for encouraging and promoting access by mature students to courses at the Institute.

Adrienne Harding

Tel: 8851015

Email: adrienne.harding@itb.ie

The Student Support Officer coordinates a range of post entry supports for all students.

Cynthia O Hea

Student Support Officer

Tel: 8851028

Email: cynthia.ohea@itb.ie

About the Institute



MISSION STATEMENT

The Institute of Technology Carlow is dedicated to excellence in higher education through the provision of programmes leading to internationally recognized awards.

The Institute is committed to ensuring that its learners and other members are afforded the opportunity to develop to their full potential in a professional and supportive environment.

The Institute is committed to research and to enterprise related activities, and to advancing the educational, cultural, social and sustainable economic development of South Leinster and the wider community.

Pre-entry Supports

- The Institute hosts an Open Day for mature student on an annual basis.
- The Access Officer is available to discuss any aspect of prospective student's applications.
- Course Directors are available to discuss course content and entry requirements.
- Admissions Office organizes interviews with academic staff where appropriate.
- Advice is available from Access Officer on sourcing financial support.
- All mature applicants are invited to attend an interview in relation to their application.

Entry Requirements

- All applications for first year places are through the CAO
- Applications for non-first year places are by submission of non-first year application form (A3).
- Mature applicants may apply for admission based on achievements other than leaving certificate.
- Appropriate FETAC qualifications are considered for entry purposes.
- Mature applicants are assessed on an individual basis based on work experience, motivation and other relevant information.

Post-entry Supports

- Induction Orientation Programme
- Mature Student Society
- IT Course for Mature Students
- Access Officer
- Career and Appointments Service
- Mainstreaming –Student Services have many additional supports for mature students in the mainstream including counselling, health service, chaplaincy, sports office, students union, library services, etc.

Mature Student Population

- There are approximately 100 first year mature students registered at the Institute in 2005/2006 session.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Aisling McHugh
Access Officer
Tel: 059 9176229
Email: mchugh@itcarlow.ie

CARLOW

About the Institute



Wexford is a county that has traditionally been highly dependent on agriculture and on low-productivity manufacturing industries.

A number of key reports on the county have highlighted an economic and educational deficit where the national figure for third level graduates is 19% while Wexford has a rate of 13%.

IT Carlow has established the first third level campus in the county in the former St. Peter's Seminary building on Summerhill Rd. in Wexford town. A Head of Centre of the Wexford Campus was appointed in March 2002 to deliver 'Reach out' provision of third level education and training appropriate to the needs of the county. The essential core of this approach is for the Reach-out Campus to deliver programmes throughout the Wexford County in partnership with other further and higher education providers.

The Wexford Campus of IT Carlow welcomes and values the contribution that mature students make to college life. We recognise that mature students may have particular queries or special needs of an academic, personal or financial nature when they return to learning.

Pre-entry Supports

- Open Days and Information Evenings
- Talks, exhibitions and visits to groups of adult learners e.g. VTOS, BETI etc.
- 'Explore the Campus' programme for VTOS groups
- Strong links with other education providers, Local Area Partnerships etc. through the Wexford Education Network
- Developing a one-year FETAC accredited Foundation course
- Access Officer and academic staff available to meet students on one to one basis to discuss options at pre-entry.

Entry Requirements

- Normally applicants for sub degree courses must be 23 years of age or over on the 1st January of the year of entry to the course.
- Mature applicants should complete the CAO application form, including pages three and four and indicate mature applicant in the appropriate box. A short CV should be included with the application.
- Each Mature applicant is considered on an individual basis and is usually invited to attend for interview in April/May of each year.
- Mature applicants need not have the normal minimum entry requirements but only those persons who have a reasonable prospect of completing their course will be offered a place.

Post-entry Supports

- Induction programme and student handbook
- Study Skills workshops delivered by Access Officer
- Financial support if necessary from Student Financial Assistance Scheme
- Academic support from Class Tutors and Course Directors
- Advantage of small class groups
- Full range of Student Services including medical, counselling, careers advice, clubs and societies, sport, library, IT, etc.
- Support for students with a disability including dyslexia.

Partnership Courses

- Currently in the Wexford Campus there are between 25%-27% mature students.
- In 2005 28% of 1st year full time undergraduates (total intake 95 of which 27 were matures) were registered as mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Joe Collins
Access Officer
Tel: 053-9155037.
Email: collinsj@itcarlow.ie

WEXFORD CAMPUS

About the Institute



Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) is the largest of the Institutes of Technology (apart from Dublin Institute of Technology) with a total enrolment of over 17,000 registered full-time and part-time learners. It is a significant element of Irish Higher Education; indeed its enrolment exceeds that of three of the seven Universities in the State. CIT is a multi-campus institution operating at several locations throughout Cork City and County.

All the activities of CIT are governed by its mission statement. The mission statement encapsulates and reflects the Institute's core values:

To provide student-centred education with a career focus for the benefit of the personal, intellectual and professional development of the student and for the benefit of the whole of society

Pre-Entry Supports

- Staff from Cork Institute of Technology attend annual Information Sessions held in the local communities to provide information to mature students on the courses available to study and the entry mechanisms.
- All applicants to the National Certification in Business Studies for Mature Students receive educational guidance as part of the informal interview process.
- Presentations on the New Links Scheme between the VEC and CIT are made to students on PLC courses in the local FE colleges.

Entry Requirements

- Mature students must fill out the appropriate section of the CAO Application Form, and should apply by 1st February of the year of entry.
- Such applicants may not be required to have the minimum entry requirement. Relevant work experience, skills gained through experiential learning and other qualifications will be considered in the assessment of these applications.
- The Educational Opportunities Department has the general aim of increasing the participation in higher education by people such as mature students and unemployed adults. Courses include:

- Higher Cert in Business Studies (for Mature Students)
- Higher Cert in Science in Good Manufacturing Practice & Technology
- Bachelor of Business in First Line Management
- Accelerated Technician Courses
- These are courses which are particularly attractive to mature students. They are structured over an eighteen month period, and are offered as part of a national initiative to address skills shortages in industry. Admission is through the Admissions Office in CIT.
- Some Courses are also offered under the ACCS (Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects) mode recognized under HETAC.
- A Memorandum of Understanding exists between Cork Institute of Technology and City of Cork Vocational Educational Committee Further Education Providers.

This memorandum is

- for the admission of students who have successfully completed a FETAC Level 5 award or equivalent into an agreed quota of places in Year One of Higher Education (HE) courses in Cork Institute of Technology.
- and
- for the admission of students who have successfully completed a FETAC Level 6 award or equivalent into an agreed quota of places in Year Two of HE courses in Cork Institute of Technology (CIT).

Post Entry Supports

- Induction Programme for all first year students
- Mature Students Society
- Financial Support available through the Student Assistance Fund
- Weekly Maths Support for Mature Students available through the Learning Support Centre

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Deirdre Creedon
 Access Officer
 Tel: 021 432 6564
 Email: d.creedon@cit.ie

Marese Bermingham,
 Head of Department,
 Educational Opportunities
 Department, is responsible
 for courses aimed at Mature
 Students delivered by the
 Educational Opportunities
 Department.

About the Institute



Dundalk IT is an educational environment that fosters and supports the concept of lifelong learning.

Pre-Entry Supports

- The Access Officer at Dundalk IT is available to assist you at each stage of the application process.
- It is strongly recommended that you meet with the Access Officer at the time that you wish to apply for a full-time course and preferably well in advance of interview.
- The Access Officer can recommend the appropriate members of academic staff with whom applicant should discuss your course choices.

Entry Requirements

- All mature applications must be made through the CAO. (However, all non-EU applicants should contact the Institute's International Office directly).
- Please note that the Access Office does not handle queries relating to nursing applications. The Head of Nursing at Dundalk IT should be contacted in the first instance.
- A mature student is someone aged 23 years or over on 1st January in the year in which they first apply through the CAO.
- It is important to indicate the fact that you are a mature applicant by marking the appropriate section(s) of the CAO form.

- Dundalk IT accepts mature applications up to 1st May CAO deadline.
- All mature applicants are offered an interview for their highest course preference.
- Interviews are held in June.
- In advance of interview, the applicant must supply the following to the Access Officer:
 - current curriculum vitae
 - evidence of qualifications / examination results if referred to in curriculum vitae (good quality photocopies are sufficient, never send original documentation in the post).
- A number of factors are assessed at interview:**
 - education record
 - employment record
 - life experience
 - level of preparedness (both in terms of knowing what the course involves and being ready for full time study in general)
- The result of interview is sent to applicant as soon as possible after interview is completed that same week.
- Offers to successful applicants are made in Round 0 of CAO.

Post-Entry Supports

- The Access Office runs a Welcome Day at the start of each academic year, specifically for first year mature students. A skilled facilitator works with mature students to explore the academic, personal and financial aspects of third level study.
- The Institute's Mature Student Society is a valuable source of support and information for incoming mature students.
- The Access Office undertakes to provide study skills workshops and other such support sessions in response to requests from groups of mature students.

Mature Student Population

- In 2005, 4% of 1st year full time undergraduate students were registered as mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Access Officer

Appointments can be made by telephoning Student Services Reception at **(042) 9370452**.

DUNDALK

About the Institute



The Institute values its unique place within higher education, with its emphasis on the integration between creative, technological and business disciplines.

Pre-entry Supports

- Access Officer available from pre-entry stage onwards
- Annual Information Seminar for mature applicants held on campus in mid January to help and advise on all aspects of returning to study i.e. Foundation Cert, admissions procedures, part-time programmes, financial supports available etc.
- FETAC Foundation Certificate delivered on campus since 2000.
- Pre-entry initiatives through links with local Adult Education Guidance Service, local VEC etc.

Entry Requirements

- Mature applicants are advised to provide all relevant supporting documentation as requested on page 3 and page 4 of the CAO application form.
- A limited number of places are reserved on all our programmes for mature students.
- Places reserved on certain programmes for FETAC Level II award holders.
- Places reserved for Foundation Certificate students on certain programmes
- All applicants, including mature applicants, to programmes in the School of Creative Arts, will be required to submit a portfolio.
- Part-time and ACCS (Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects) Programmes include preparatory and accredited courses and professional development opportunities.

Post-entry Supports

- Induction Days
- Access Working Group meet regularly to develop and consolidate current strategies, policies and guidelines relating to access issues.
- Writing and Research Skills Service provides individual and group tutorials on writing and research techniques; study skills; mathematics and logic; and peer support and mentoring.
- Assistive Technology Tutor
- Library Information Learning Resource Centre (LILRC)
- Maths / Programming interventions.

Mature Student Population

- 17% of students are registered as mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Patricia Byrne

Tel: 01 2144628

Email: patricia.byrne@iadt-dl.ie

DUN LAOGHAIRE

About the Institute



The Galway Mayo Institute of Technology is a multi-campus college, delivering a broad range of courses to almost 9,000 students in Galway city, Castlebar, Mountbellew and Letterfrack. The Institute offers courses at Higher Certificate, Ordinary Degree, Higher Degree and post graduate level and all courses are designed with a strong practical orientation which enhances employability. The Access Office in GMIT was established in 1999 and the Access Officer co-ordinates an alternative entry programme for mature students, in addition to the provision of supports and services required by mature students while attending GMIT.

Pre-entry Activities and Supports

- The Access Officer at GMIT currently co-ordinates a one year accredited Foundation Certificate for adults in both Galway and Castlebar. The aim of the Foundation Certificate is to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary to undertake a full-time third level course of study. It is a recognised entry route onto the Higher Certificate, Ordinary Degree and Higher Degree programmes at GMIT.
- The FETAC Foundation Certificate is suitable for individuals who are some time away from education, or who left school with little or no formal qualifications and would like the opportunity to pursue a full-time third level qualification.
- There are no specific entry requirements for the course, but students must be 21 years of age or over on January 1st of the year of application.
- The Access Office at GMIT is also involved in two Joint Foundation Courses in Engineering and Science and Business Studies with NUI Galway. These programmes are also pre-entry preparation programmes and students that successfully complete the course may progress onto full-time courses at either NUI Galway or GMIT.
- The Access Officer at GMIT provides Adults wishing to apply for a place on full-time third level courses at GMIT with one to one support and guidance with the application process and funding applications. The office also acts as a liaison

between students and funding organisations in accessing information, applications and appeals.

- The Access Office produces a Mature student information handbook and Study Guide
- The Access Office also hosts information sessions for new applicants on Campus, and delivers presentations on returning to education at Adult Education Organisation and Community Education Centres by request.

Pre-entry Activities and Supports

- GMIT welcomes applications from mature applicants: EU nationals aged 23 before 2 January, 2005. A quota of places is reserved for mature applicants on each course.
- Mature applicants do not have to meet the leaving certificate entry requirements. Applicants are assessed on the basis of their previous formal and informal education, work experience, motivation, ability and confidence to undertake the course.
- Students must apply through the CAO on or before February 1st. Late applicants will only be considered subject to the availability of places.
- Applicants are invited to attend GMIT in May for an information/ advisory session.
- Applicants for the FETAC Foundation Certificate apply directly to the Access Office in September. Interviews are held in late September. Programme commences in October.

Post Entry Supports

- The Access Office provides students with continued support throughout their time in GMIT.

This support includes:

- Study Skills Workshops
- Academic Support
- IT skills programme
- Assistance with funding
- Mentoring
- Assistive Technology

Mature Student Population

- GMIT holds aside a quota of places on all courses for Mature Students and currently over 15% of the full-time students registered on undergraduate programmes are mature.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Deirdre O' Connor
Access Officer
Tel: 091-742129
Email: deirdre.oconnor@gmit.ie

GALWAY-MAYO

About the Institute



LYIT is particularly concerned with the successful access and participation of Mature Students on all courses. Mature students who are thinking of applying for a place at LYIT can contact the Access Officer, Brian Mc Gonagle (who also doubles as 'Mature Students Officer'), to discuss suitable course options and any personal or financial concerns they might have. Make sure that you make contact as early as possible and remember the closing date for CAO applications is 1st February.

Pre-entry Supports

- The 'Mature Student Officer' liaises with VTOS, FAS, ICTU, Adult Guidance Services, Dept. of Social and Family Affairs etc. to find out what supports potential students might need and a subsequent information evening is held in order to help these students complete their CAO application form.
- Every year we co-host an Adult Education Fair in conjunction with Donegal Adult Guidance Service, where adults from around the county are invited to get information on all lifelong learning initiatives happening in the North West.
- LYIT runs a successful Foundation Certificate on campus and in 2 outreach centres. This one year course is specifically for mature students (over 21) returning to education and provides tuition in Maths, It, Communications and Studyskills and students can also choose to study a minimum of two electives in either Nursing, Business Studies, Engineering, Computing or Design.
- LYIT also offers an IT Support 18-month course aimed at adult learners.
- Finally, in conjunction with Donegal VEC, the 'Mature Students Officer' visits all VTOS programmes within the County.

Entry Requirements

- Mature applicants need not meet the minimum educational entry requirements specified for standard applications.
- Mature students will be considered on their merits, taking into account their work and life experiences and their relevance to the courses to which they have applied.
- Interviews for mature students are generally held in April/May.

Post-entry Supports

- The ‘Mature Students Officer’ provides one-to-one confidential advice and support.
- IT and Studyskills classes are provided in the first few weeks of term for Mature Learners who have been out of Education for some time and are lacking the essential skills of basic computing and how to study.
- Individual tuition is available where deemed appropriate in all subjects.
- Specialised Maths Assistance is also a popular choice for mature learners.
- The ‘23 Plus Club’ is a club for mature learners offering mutual support and group outings/events and this club is strongly supported by the ‘Mature Students Officer’.
- The ‘Mature Students Officer’ has compiled a “Mature Students Guide to LYIT”; this guide offers guidance on where to go for advice on any pertinent issues arising.

Mature Student Population

- In 2005, 22% of 1st year full time undergraduates were registered as mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Brian McGonagle
Access Officer
Tel: 074 918 6170
Email: brian.mcgonale@lyit.ie

LETTERKENNY

About the Institute



Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) is a vibrant, modern Institute and is recognised as one of the leading and most innovative institutes in Ireland. Our main campus is located at Moylish Park on the northern side of Limerick City in the shadow of Thomond Park, home of Munster Rugby and the Limerick School of Art and Design (LSAD) is based on the Clare Street campus, nested within the historic walls of Limerick city.

LIT is continually working towards wider participation of adult learners. The hallmark of our educational philosophy is active learning through a fusion of theory and practice. This emphasis coupled with continuous assessment helps to ease the exam pressures for students, while also providing graduates with a competitive advantage, ensuring strong demand for LIT graduates in the workplace.

Entry Requirements

- This Institute welcomes Mature students and will accept applications from persons of mature years (i.e. 23 years of age or over on 1st January for admission in September of that same year). Such applications, together with documentary proof of relevant work experience and/or qualifications which they wish to have considered, should reach the CAO office on or before 1st February of the relevant year.
- Mature students who are without the Normal Academic Entry requirements must satisfy an Admissions Assessment Board that they have the basic ability and academic foundation to follow the course and take the examinations successfully. Interviews for mature students are generally held in May/June.
- Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects Scheme (ACCS) – This allows students to follow any subject on an institute course and be awarded a certificate and credits on successful completion of the subject.

Pre-Entry Activities

- Information Seminars – provided by LIT on and/or off-campus,
- Open Day - LIT host open days showcasing the excellent facilities in the supportive teaching and learning which is offered across our extensive range of courses in Science, Engineering and Information Technology, Business and Humanities, the Built Environment, and Art and Design.

Post-entry Supports

- Induction Programme & Handbook
- Student Support Services including: Access Office, Student Counselling
- Student Health Unit, Chaplaincy Service
- Mature Student Group/ Society
- Career Advice and Guidance
- Mentoring Programme - All 1st Year students are assigned with a mentor.
- Library and Information Service
- Financial assistance with childcare costs
- Students Union / Clubs and Societies
- Financial support if necessary from Student Assistance Fund*
- Support for students with special educational needs and if necessary support from the Disability Fund (funded by the Department of Education & Science under the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006, with assistance from the European Social Fund).
- Learning Support Unit - providing Extra Tuition and Study Skills.

Mature Student Population

- In 2005/06, 7.4% of our first year students are mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Linda Barry
Access Officer
Tel: 061 490103
Fax: 061 208241
Email: Linda.Barry@lit.ie

Entry for places to courses other than Year 1 should be made directly to:
The Admissions Office
Limerick Institute of Technology
Tel: 061 208262 F
ax: 061 208209
Email: admissions@lit.ie
<http://www.lit.ie>

About the Institute



Institute of Technology, Sligo is the largest third level college in the North West and one where students enjoy the opportunity to achieve their goals while developing a desire for lifelong learning. Through the three Schools of Business and Humanities, Science and Engineering a vast array of courses are offered at Higher Certificate, Ordinary Degree, Honours Degree and at Postgraduate levels. IT Sligo is committed to opening up high quality third level education to students from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences.

Pre-entry Supports

- **Preparation for College Workshop:** Many mature student applicants are coming directly from participating in an educational course such as VTOS or FETAC Level 5 programme. The workshop is organised locally with local Adult Education Guidance or VTOS personnel and is tailored to the specific needs of each group.
- **Mature Student Summer School:** The two-week Mature Student Summer School is held in weeks immediately prior to registration as a first year student and aims to develop confidence and competency in a relaxed atmosphere prior to the commencement of courses. It covers Mathematics, Communications, Computers and workshops related to the transition to full time third level studies and is available as a support to all incoming first year mature students.
- **Financial Information Sheet:** All successful mature applicants to Institute of Technology Sligo are provided with a Financial Information Sheet, which provides them with information in relation to the level of funding that they require to participation as a full-time student and possible sources of financial assistance.

Entry Requirements

- All students enter Institute of Technology, Sligo through the CAO system. Mature applicants need not apply separately to IT Sligo and on the basis of information provided to the CAO will be invited to attend for interview (late April / early May) and may gain entry to courses on the basis of interview alone. The interview allows each applicant an opportunity to demonstrate prior education and experience that is relevant to the course for which they have applied and to gain recognition for this in the selection process. Fifteen percent of places on each course are retained for mature applicants.
- The basic requirement is that an applicant be twenty-three on the first of January of the year of application and be successful at interview. For some courses there may be a waiting list formed for vacant mature student places, as there are many more applicants successful at interview than there are places available.

Post Entry Supports

- A series of workshops are offered to mature students in their first year of study to assist their transition to full-time studies, personal organisation and planning and preparation for examinations. The Access Officer is also available for one to one support.
- Where a group of mature students or members of academic staff identify a requirement for additional tuition resulting from the students distance from formal education for a number of years, additional tuition is organised and funded through the Access Office.
- A childcare fund is also available to provide partial support with the cost of childcare. This fund is means tested. A list of childcare providers registered with the HSE is available from the Access Office from June of each year.

Mature Student Population

- Each year in excess of 120 mature students join first year programmes in Institute of Technology, Sligo, other mature students return to education to complete higher qualifications which were not available when they originally attended third level education. Approximately 18% of the college population is aged twenty three or over at any one time.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Catherine McNelis
Access Officer
Tel: 071 915 5381
Email: access@itsligo.ie

SLIGO

About the Institute



IT Tallaght opened in 1992. There are 2,500 full-time and 1,500 part-time students undertaking third level courses on the campus. A large proportion of our students come from the surrounding region - South and West Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare and Meath. All our Higher Certificate and Degree courses are accredited by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC). These courses combine a sound academic grounding with the practical skills required in the world of work.

We also offer courses in the areas of Professional Cookery, and Hospitality Skills, in conjunction with Failte Ireland, which are accredited by the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC).

Pre-entry Supports

- Mature Students Open Evening (November)
- Evening Information Session on Financial Matters for Mature Applicants (May)
- Individual guidance and referral to relevant agencies (contact the Access Officer)

Entry Requirements

- All applications are through the CAO.
- Applicants should make full use of Page 4 of the CAO application form, to ensure that all relevant information and documentation on achievements are included.
- Mature students are not required to meet the minimum entry requirements for courses, but are considered on their merits.
- All applicants are interviewed (May – June).
- Particular consideration is paid to applicants who demonstrate a special interest in a relevant subject area, or who have demonstrated their commitment by undertaking some preparatory course work and/or examinations.

Post-entry Supports

- Mature Students Induction Event (social event on campus with wine and cheese).
- All Mature students are introduced to the Mature Students Society and encouraged to join.
- Student Assistance Fund – Mature students encouraged to apply
- Childcare subsidy – available to all students who pay for childcare
- Free Book Scheme for disadvantaged Mature students
- Access Office – provides information and support for Mature students

Mature Student population

- In 2005, just under 5% of full-time students in IT Tallaght are mature.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Maggie Ryan
Access Officer
Tel: 01 404 2371
Email:
maggie.ryan@it-tallaght.ie

TALLAGHT

About the Institute



Tipperary Institute was established by the Government in 1998 as a specialised institute of higher education with the explicit remit: **To provide education and training for the rural, community, business, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social, artistic and cultural development of the State in a sustainable and inclusive manner with particular reference to the region served by the Institute.**

The Institute is committed to social inclusion and equality of esteem for all stakeholders, as well as positive action for equality. Consequently the provision of educational opportunity to all persons, but particularly those who have not had the opportunity to participate in higher education previously is of paramount importance to the organisation and its staff. Mature students are one such group and the Institute is committed to providing variety of ways for mature students to attend College, a variety of relevant educational programme. TI is also committed to providing comprehensive academic and personal supports for students when they enrol with us.

Pre-entry Supports

- Open Days and Information Evenings
- Talks, exhibitions and visits to groups of adult learners e.g. VTOS, BETI etc.
- Campus Visits for VTOS and other Adult learner groups
- Strong links with other education providers, Local Area Partnerships etc.
- The provision of a FETAC Foundation course for adults returning to learning
- Access Officer and academic staff available to meet students on one to one basis to discuss options at pre-entry.
- At interview all applicants are invited to complete a personal statement which includes a section requesting information on areas where the applicant may feel a weakness or where s/he may request additional assistance on enrolment.

Entry Requirements

- Normally applicants must be 23 years of age or over on the 1st January of the year of entry to the programme.
- Mature applicants should complete the CAO application form, including pages three and four and indicate mature applicant in the appropriate box.
- Each Mature applicant is considered on an individual basis and all applicants are

invited to attend for interview. Interviews are held in March and July and September each year to allow for late applications.

- Mature applicants need not have the normal minimum entry requirements, but persons will be assessed through the interview process to ensure that all those offered a place have a reasonable prospect of completing the programme.

Post-entry Supports

- Induction programme and student handbook
 - Study Skills workshops
 - Financial support if necessary from Student Financial Assistance Scheme and the TI Inclusion Fund.
 - Academic support from Class Tutors and Programme Directors
 - Advantage of small class groups
 - Educational Testing
 - Learning Support Tutor available
 - Where a specific learning difficulty may be an issue students have the opportunity to have a full assessment through the BUA Centre where the learning difficulty can be identified and a range of supports put in place for individual students. This centre also offers the opportunity to obtain advice in relation to learning styles and to have specific literacy support.
 - Full range of Student Services including medical, counselling, careers advice, clubs and societies, sport, library, IT, etc.
 - Assistive Technology
- vSupport for students with a disability including dyslexia and other learning challenges

Mature Student Population

- There is a 33% mature student population, which is well ahead of the Government target of 15%.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Carolann Bargary
Access Officer
Tel: 0504 28066
Email: cbargary@tippinst.ie

The Administrator for Access issues is **Colleen Ryan**
Tel: 0504 28077.

TIPPERARY

About the Institute



The Institute of Technology, Tralee values the contribution that Mature Students make to the Institute and in this era of Lifelong Learning, we are committed to providing flexible and accessible learning opportunities. We reserve places on our courses for Mature Students and we are continually putting supports in place to assist you in your studies.

Pre-entry activities / Outreach / Access courses

- Institute of Technology, Tralee Open Day
- Visits to VTOS, PLC, Community Employment Schemes and FÁS Groups
- Foundation Certificate in Business & Community Studies
- One-to-one meetings with Mature Student applicants
- Mature Student Guide and Website
- Access pre-entry initiatives are developed through links with:
 - RAPID Education and Training Sub-group
 - Tralee Local Employment Services Management Committee
 - South Kerry Development Partnership Management Committee
 - Partnership Trá Lí Community & Youth Based Initiatives Group
 - Kerry Access Network

Entry Requirements

- **Full-time study:** You are a mature student if you are aged 23 years or over on 1st January of the year of entry, and you are applying for a third level course through the Central Applications Office (CAO). Mature applicants are not required to have a Leaving Certificate. Applicants are considered on an individual basis by the Institute,

usually by interview. The interview provides the applicant with the opportunity to demonstrate his/her knowledge, interest and motivation to study and suitability for his/her chosen course(s).

- **Part-time study:** Apply directly to the Institute's Lifelong Learning Department for part time evening courses.
- As part of ITT's commitment to offering mature students flexible learning opportunities, we operate the ACCS (Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects) scheme.
- This scheme allows students to study one or more subjects/modules from approved courses. You can opt to pursue an entire course on a part-time basis through the ACCS mode of study. ACCS students can thus accumulate credits leading to an award of Higher Certificate, Ordinary Degree or Honours Degree. Applications are made directly to the Institute's Admissions Office.

Post-entry Programmes

- Mature student pre-orientation programme
- Grants and Finances
- Study Skills
- IT Skills
- The third level experience
- First year student orientation programme
- Mature Students Society
- Individual student support meetings as required
- One-to-One Orientation and support with Students with Disabilities/Learning Differences/Dyslexia
- ESF Student Assistance Fund
- **Access student retention and progression**
 - Student Support Services
 - Chaplaincy
 - Health Centre
 - Counsellor
 - Graduate Placement
 - Clubs & Societies
 - Accommodation Office

Mature Student Population

- In 2005, 15% of 1st year full time undergraduates were registered as mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Valerie Moore
Access Officer
Tel: 066 7191682
Email: valerie.moore@ittralee.ie

Mary Stritch
Adult Education Co-ordinator
Tel: 066 719 1701
Email: mary.stritch@ittralee.ie

Lucy Fitzell
Academic Affairs Officer
Tel: 066 714 5638
Email: lucy.fitzell@ittralee.ie

About the Institute



Waterford Institute of Technology offers a range of academic programmes covering Humanities, Health and Nursing, Science and Informatics, Engineering and Architecture, Business and Education.

The Institute comprises of five sites located throughout the city.

We recognise that our student population is drawn from diverse cohorts of society, with mature students comprising a significant proportion of our student intake.

Pre-entry Supports

- Potential students to Waterford Institute of Technology can avail of a variety of pre-entry and post-entry supports. These supports are outlined briefly below and further information can be obtained by contacting WIT directly.
- **REGSA – www.regsa.ie**
The Regional Education Guidance service for adults provides information and educational/career guidance and one-to-one consultations to adults who are making choices about returning to education or retraining or up-skilling for a career change.
- **Mature Student Summer School:** This is a week-long programme run in June for adults who are considering returning to education
- **Adult and Continuing Education Department:** This department co-ordinates a Foundation studies course. This is a one-year course for adult learners who wish to return to study after a significant period of time outside the educational system. For further information see appendix 5.
- **Continuing professional development programmes and hobby courses** are also offered on a part-time basis typically, Monday to Friday from 7pm to 10pm. These courses are subject to fees, however, there are a small number of places available at reduced fees on all courses for mature students experiencing financial difficulties.

For further information you can contact the department of Adult and Continuing Education (see below)

- **Mature Student Society:** It provides advice and guidance, organises informal ‘get-togethers’ and general support to all mature students in the Institute.
- **CHART – www.chart.ie**
The Centre for helping Access, Retention and Teaching co-ordinates a number of activities for registered mature students. These include: mature student induction, additional tuition, study skills, exam technique programmes, distribution of financial assistance and childcare expenses where deemed necessary.
- **A drop-in service** provides advice and support in relation to wider academic and non-academic services, such as course transfers, deferrals, counselling, medical, disability services, and chaplaincy services.
- **Careers Office – www.wit.ie/careerscentre** provides a number of services to mature students.

Entry Requirements

- Applications for mature students are treated as ‘non-standard’. Mature applicants need not have the normal minimum entry requirements, but the Institute will admit only those who have a reasonable prospect of completing their chosen courses of study.
- Applicants must be 23 years of age on or by the 1st January of the calendar year in which he/she seeks admission.
- Mature students should complete the CAO application form. Interviews are held for all mature student applicants in May.

Mature Student Population

- The numbers of mature students attending WIT has increased steadily in recent years. Currently we have 390 (i.e. approx. 8%) mature students registered in full-time undergraduate CAO designated courses in WIT. We welcome and actively encourage mature student application and participation and we are committed to further increasing this cohort of our student population.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

There is no specific mature student officer in WIT. CHART can give you general information regarding any of the above services.

The CHART administrator

Tel: 051-302758 or 051-885513

Adult and Continuing Education

Tel: 051-302040

REGSA Tel: 051-302287

Careers Office Tel: 051-302038

Mature Student Society

Avril Phelan Tel: 087-6685077

SECTION 4



→ Each day I arrive in the grounds of All Hallows with a sense of relief and wonder - relief at having successfully negotiated Dublin rush hour traffic and wonder at the feeling of peace and retreat at being part of this oasis of learning in an otherwise chaotic world. I am 78 years old and started here three years ago with a mixture of fear and excitement. I wondered how I would be accepted by the other (younger!) students. I wondered how I would cope with the assignments, essays, seminars and I even had a little fear of the lecturers!

Now I am amazed that I have come so far and I am thrilled that the college staff and the other students have been so supportive and encouraging about my participation and efforts. It has been a very affirming experience for someone who never made it to Leaving Certificate!

Patrick, Batchelor of Arts Graduate 2004, All Hallows College, Dublin.



OTHER HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs)

- All Hallows College
- Dublin Institute of Technology
- Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
- Mater Dei Institute
- Milltown Institute
- National College of Art and Design
- National College of Ireland
- Pontifical University, Maynooth
- St Angela's, Sligo
- St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

About the Institute



All Hallows College is a third level College founded in 1842. It is committed to the education of people who desire to make a difference and has a strong tradition of encouraging mature students to return to education. We offer a broad range of programmes which cater both for those looking for personal enrichment or for those seeking a qualification. Most programmes are offered part-time and full-time.

Subjects offered range from Theology, Philosophy, Psychology, English Literature to Social Justice & Public Policy, Pastoral Leadership and Management for Community & Voluntary Services. Our academic programmes are accredited and validated by Dublin City University. Grants are available for full-time undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. All Hallows combines a commitment to the achievement of academic excellence with the unique advantages of a small intimate campus.

Pre-entry Supports

- Mature students are welcome to contact the Registry Office should they wish to receive information on any programmes, or should they wish to visit the campus.
- The full-time undergraduate degree programme open-day is usually held in the third week in November.
- Part-time programme open-evenings are held periodically throughout the year.

Entry Requirements

- Mature applicants must be 23 years or over on 1st January of the year in which the course commences and must have EU status.
- Mature applicants applying for undergraduate programmes are not required to meet specific minimum entry requirements; however, they must demonstrate that they have the academic ability, commitment, genuine interest in the subjects and enthusiasm to pursue the programme.
- Postgraduate opportunities are open to candidates who already hold an undergraduate degree, however applications may also be considered for those with substantial relevant experience in the area of study. For further information, please check the relevant programme details on our website.

- Applicants to the full-time programmes can apply directly to the college using the application form on the College website. There is no closing date, but early application is advised.
- Applicants will be invited to the College for an interview, the outcome of which is communicated directly to the applicant within a few weeks. Interviews start in January and are held on a monthly basis until all places are filled. Applicants to the part-time programme can email a request for an application form to **jcleary@allhallows.ie** or call 01-8373745.
- Applicants interested in postgraduate opportunities should check programme contact details on our website for further admissions information.

Post-entry Supports

- All Hallows College is a small, warm and welcoming College. Each student is assigned a personal tutor should they wish to have any academic concerns.
- The Careers Officer, Chaplain and Counsellor are also available to students. The College supports students in any way possible and all staff work to make the experience of students at the College a positive one.
- The College has a new library opening in September.
- The College computer room provides access to word processing, internet, email, presentation, training and statistical analysis programmes.
- There is a student common room where students can avail of tv, music centre, pool table, dart board, tea and coffee making facilities.

Mature Student Population

- Over the past number of years, approximately 50% of 1st year full-time undergraduates have been mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Full-time undergraduate:
Georgina Roberts
 Tel: 01-8373745
 Email: info@allhallows.ie

Part-time undergraduate:
Jean Cleary
 Tel: 01-8373745
 Email: jcleary@allhallows.ie

Contact details for all other programmes: www.allhallows.ie

About the Institute



The Dublin Institute of Technology is a multi-centre third level institution with a long history of supporting adult learners, particularly in part-time and evening modes. We encourage adult learners to return to full-time education and aim to provide practical support to help prospective students make what can sometimes be a difficult transition.

Currently there are almost 600 mature students in our full-time student population (approximately 10,000) and about 4,000 mature students attending evening programmes. DIT greatly values the contribution of non-traditional students to the life of the Institute and we hope to increase their representation substantially over the coming years.

Pre-entry Supports

- A member of staff from Lifelong Learning is available to answer enquiries regarding entry to the Institute and is available to meet with prospective students at their request.
- The DIT Admissions Office offers admissions and applications advice. It also coordinates any programme-specific pre-entry selection procedures such as suitability tests, portfolio assessments. It is very important that interested mature applicants read the current year undergraduate prospectus carefully.
- Programme Co-ordinators are available to speak to students who are interested in specific programmes.
- General information for all mature students, whether prospective students or currently studying at DIT, is available online at <http://www.dit.ie/DIT/study/maturestudents>.
- An open day for all prospective students is held each December. Staff are on hand to specifically deal with mature student enquiries and students can also speak directly with representatives from all DIT Schools.

Entry Requirements

- Consideration for admission to most programmes involves an interview and in the case of a small number of programmes there will be additional selection procedures including suitability tests, auditions or portfolio submissions. The interview panel will be looking for evidence of motivation, previous work/study experience, if any, and an awareness of what third level study involves.
- Mature applicants not required to meet the normal minimum entry requirements.
- Entry applications should be made through the CAO (Central Applications Office) not later than 1 February each year.

Post-entry Supports

The supports specifically tailored to mature students are:

- **Returning to Learning:** This one-day course, facilitated by the DIT Counselling Service, takes place immediately before the start of the academic year.
- **Unlocking your Potential:** This is a series of workshops in learning skills and personal development facilitated by the DIT Counselling Service. It runs throughout the academic year and topics covered include: Learning to adjust to third level; Time management techniques; Stress management; Presentation skills; Dealing with procrastination; Exam preparation.
- **Mature Student Welcome:** An open evening for all new mature students is organised in October of each year, providing the opportunity to meet with staff and continuing students, and to enroll in the mature student society Mature Student Society: Introductory events are organised and publicised through Lifelong Learning.
- **General DIT Supports** available to all students, including mature students are: Careers Services; Counselling Service; Chaplaincy; Disability Liaison Service; Sports and Recreation; Clubs & Societies; Health Services; Accommodation Office; Student Services Office; Student Maths Learning Centre.

Mature Student Population

- 169 first-year full-time undergraduates were registered as mature students in 2005.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Dolores McManus
Lifelong Learning
Tel: 01 4027866
Email: dolores.mcmanus@dit.ie

Vincent O’Hora
Admissions Officer
Tel: 01 4023445
Email: admissions@dit.ie

Jennifer Hughes
Lifelong Learning
Tel: 01 4024120
Email: jennifer.hughes@dit.ie

About the Institute



Mary Immaculate College is a university level College of Education and the Liberal Arts, academically linked with the University of Limerick. It serves the needs of a growing and diverse student population of over 2,500 students, and around 250 staff. Under-graduate programmes for B.Ed., B.Ed. & Psychology and B.A. Liberal Arts and B.A. Early Childhood Care and Education degrees and a range of post-graduate programmes at Diploma, Masters and Doctoral levels are offered in the College.

Mary Immaculate College has a strong commitment to raising its mature student numbers. Since 2000, the numbers of mature students has grown by 80% and most courses are now made up of at least 10% mature students, and in some cases up to 16%. In line with this growth, MIC established a Learner Support Unit (LSU) which is dedicated to support mature students on degree programmes, as well as running pre-entry programmes.

Pre-entry Supports

- In response to the growing numbers of mature students applying to MIC, the Learner Support Unit set up a part-time night course for mature students wishing to return to learning.
- The course offers a sample of first year courses, including: History, English Literature, Geography and Philosophy.
- Participants who are awarded a Certificate with merit will be eligible for direct entry to the BA (Liberal Arts) degree.
- A priority of this course is to equip students with confidence and skills for a degree programme, and so it includes learner training components on essay writing, lecture note taking, study skills etc. as well as Information Technology.
- This is an open access course and no prior educational qualification is required (e.g. Junior or Leaving Cert.). Applicants must be 22 years or over on the year of application.
- The LSU also runs a Pre-University Programme in association with the Co. Limerick VEC.
- This course is also part-time and offers one academic subject, plus academic writing and information technology.

- It is aimed at students who are considering taking the Foundation Certificate programme, or who are interested in applying as a mature student for a degree programme at MIC.

Entry Requirements

- Mature Students have the following options when applying to MIC:-
 - Apply through the CAO only in which case they must have the minimum entry requirements for the Course(s) applied for
 - Apply directly to MIC only
- Apply through the CAO and directly to MIC
- For full details on entry requirements, please contact the college directly.

Post-entry Supports

- In line with the growth in mature student numbers at MIC, the College set up the Learner Support Unit (LSU). Its goal is to provide academic support and improve the quality of learning for mature students by providing core skills and one-to-one support, including:
 - support courses in academic writing, how to structure your essays, how to take lecture notes, how to organise your time, how to prepare for exams, how to give oral presentations etc.
 - a dedicated Adult Learner Support Counsellor who assists students in the design individualised study programmes, setting up study groups, as well as liaising with College authorities and services on their behalf if the need arises.
 - A drop-in one-to-one tutoring support service. Students call to our tutors when they are planning their essays, for example, and the tutor gives them advice on how best to structure it etc.

Mature Student Population

- In 2005 over 11% of first year full time undergraduates (total intake 769) were registered as mature students'.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Anne Marie Hannon
Access Officer
Tel: 061-204929
Email: Anne.Marie.Hannon@mic.ul.ie

MARY IMMACULATE

About the Institute



The Mater Dei Institute, located on the Clonliffe Road, welcomes mature applicants to all undergraduate degree programmes. Detailed information on all programmes can be found in the undergraduate brochure and on the website of the Institute- www.materdei.ie

Pre-entry Supports

- The Mature Student Officer is available to answer all enquiries regarding entry to the Institute and is available to meet with prospective students at their request. Contact details are given below.
- Once a student has accepted a place they will be invited to an Orientation Day for Mature Students. This gives students an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Institute and its facilities prior to registration. It also gives them the opportunity to meet mature students already attending the Institute.

Entry Requirements

- Minimum academic requirements (matriculation) may be waived for mature applicants. Everything a mature applicant has done is potentially relevant: study (to school-leaving level or otherwise), work experience, life experience. Regarding applicants for the B.Rel.Ed. Degree Programme, motivation to teach religion and an Arts subject is most important.
- Following the processing of applications by the CAO each mature applicant will be invited to the college for an interview. This consists of a short comprehension/writing skills exercise lasting about 30 minutes followed by an individual interview of about 20 minutes. The Institute will contact each applicant directly by post informing them of the date and time of the interviews.

Post-entry Supports

- Once a mature student has begun his/her life as a student of the institute any concerns or problems they encounter can be brought to the Student Support Officer. This Officer can assist with any educational or personal issues that may arise during a students studies.
- PAL (Peer Assisted Learning), where first year students are facilitated in their learning in small groups by 2nd year students is also an important support, as is one-to-one academic counselling. All students of the Institute receive training on the Information and Communication Technology facilities at the Institute.
- A dedicated Mature Student Careers Service is also provided.

Mature Student Population

- In 2005 15% of 1st year full time undergraduates (total intake 97) were registered as mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Máire Garvey

Tel: 01 804 0069

Email: [maire.garvey](mailto:maire.garvey@materdei.dcu.ie)

@materdei.dcu.ie

MATER DEI INSTITUTE

About the Institute



Milltown Institute was founded in 1968 and is a thriving third level college specialising in philosophy, theology, spirituality and pastoral care. The characteristic style of Milltown Institute is experienced in the interactive style of teaching, the friendly attitude of staff, the respectful relationships in classroom, library, lounge and restaurant. The College offers a high level

of personal student support due to the generous ratio of staff to students, giving learners the opportunity to discuss their work in detail with course lecturers. Students of all faiths and those with no religious affiliation are welcomed.

Undergraduate Courses:

Bachelor (Honours) in Philosophy

Bachelor (Honours) in Theology

Bachelor (Honours) in Philosophy and Theology

Bachelor (Honours) in Theology and Pastoral care

Bachelor (Honours) in Theology and Cultural Studies

Bachelor (Honours) in Theology, Spirituality and Pastoral Ministry

Pre-Entry Supports: Summer School in Spirituality

Milltown Institute offers a Summer School in Spirituality which runs for three weeks in June. This summer school offers an opportunity to explore religious questions through the lenses of spirituality, theology, philosophy, life cycle studies, sacred texts, poetry and psychology.

Participants will be encouraged to develop a critical appreciation of what is going on in their own lives and in society.

- Week one looks at the meaning and shaping of contemporary spirituality, journaling as personal development and transformational reading.
- The second week deals with the moral experience of the right and the good, issues of good, issues of rights, religion, faith and morality.
- Week three will deal with the interaction between faith and culture in contemporary society.

The Summer school fulfils part of the entry requirements for the:

- Masters in Applied Spirituality
- Masters in Applied Ethics and Theology

■ Masters in Faith and Culture

Enquiries: Summer School Secretary, 01-2776351, manning@milltown-institute.

Website: www.milltown-institute.ie/soulpaths

Entry Requirements

- Mature students are those who are 23 years of age on January 1st of the calendar year of entry. Such candidates may apply directly the registrar at Milltown Institute by completing an application form.
- Admission to each programme is subject to an interview. Mature Students without the Leaving Certificate may present other forms of learning for assessment.
- The BA in Theology, Spirituality and Pastoral Ministry is designed exclusively for Mature Students and second chance learners.

Post-entry Supports

- **Student Life:** European Exchange Programme / Accommodation Listing / Computer Course (ECDL) / Student Representative Council / Computer Assisted Support
- **Academic and Personal Support:** Class Assistants / Exam Skills Seminar / Careers officer / Academic Counsellor / Chaplin / Postgraduate Advisor / Essay Preparation Seminars / Personal Counselling Service
- **Student Facilities:** Computer Room / Student Lounge Areas / Meditation Space / Restaurant / Parking / Assive Technology for Dyslexia
- **Student Activities:** Football / Subsidised Gym Access / Hill-Walking Club / Debating / Film Club Choir
- **Mature Students:** Mature Student Support Officer / Mature Student Staff Link Tutor / Access officer

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Sorcha Woods

Admissions Officer
Milltown Park, Dublin 6

Tel: 01 2776352

Email: swoods

@milltown-institute.ie

Web: www.milltown-institute.ie

MILLTOWN INSTITUTE

About the Institute



The National College of Art & Design occupies a unique position in art and design education in Ireland. It offers the largest range of art and design degrees in the State at undergraduate and postgraduate level. In the past many of the most important Irish artists, designers and art teachers have studied or taught in the college. It has long been the central and most important art and design educational institution in Ireland. The college has over seven hundred and fifty full-time students and a further eight hundred students who are taking non-award evening classes. The college has four faculties; Design, Education, Fine Art and Visual Culture. With the exception of Industrial Design, First Year (Core) provides the first year for all undergraduate courses. It is an intense visual education not only for artists but for others who may build careers in related directions. The college has been a recognised college of the National University of Ireland since 1996.

Students attending NCAD range in age from 17 to over 60 years of age. Of the current full-time student population of over 700, more than 200 students are aged over 23.

Pre-entry Supports

- Mature Students are welcome to contact the Student Support Officer should they wish to access more detailed information on any course on offer.
- The College Open Day is always held on the first Thursday in December, however a College visit can be scheduled with the Student Support Officer throughout the year.
- Orientation Days will take place as part of Registration for new students. This will give students an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the college faculties and facilities.

Entry Requirements

- Mature students are those who are 23 years of age or older on 1 January of the year of application.
- Intending applicants should note that being over 23 years of age does not give an automatic exemption from the minimum entry requirements for any course. Please check the website for further details: www.ncad.ie/admissions/entry
- Intending students who do not hold the minimum entry requirements in the Leaving Certificate may matriculate on FETAC Level 5 (see prospectus or website for details) or may apply to be considered for matriculation on mature years.
- Such applications will be considered on an individual basis and criteria in addition to second level school examinations will be taken into account to establish their suitability for the course.
- The standard of portfolio work required from a mature applicant is the same as that required from other applicants. A leaflet on Portfolio Guidelines is available on request or can be downloaded from the Admissions pages of the website at www.ncad.ie.
- Mature students apply in the same way and at the same time as other applicants. All applicants to Year 1 courses, First Year (Core) AD111 and Industrial Design AD012, apply through CAO.

Post-entry Supports

- Student Medical Service
- Student Counsellor
- Writing and Research Skills Service
- Careers Advisory Service
- Students Union
- Disability Support Service
- Childcare Fund
- Student Assistance Fund

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Finola McTernan
Student Support Officer
National College of Art & Design
100 Thomas Street
Dublin 8
Tel: 01- 636 4217
Email: mcternanf@ncad.ie

NCAD

About the Institute



The National College of Ireland, in the IFSC, Dublin and at 40 Off-Campus locations throughout Ireland, offers a diverse range of full-time and part-time courses from foundation through certificate, diploma, degree and postgraduate degree level .The College's academic structure currently comprises two schools- the School of Business and Humanities and the School of

Informatics. We in NCI are committed to enabling learners to avail of leading edge programmes in Business, Management, Financial Services, Technology, Computing, Maritime Management, Humanities and related fields, in a flexible and accessible manner that meets their needs. Current student enrolment is 6,000, comprising both school leavers and mature students.

NCI has a long tradition of learner-centred education and we place a strong emphasis on supporting the holistic development of our students so that they acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to succeed, not just while in College, but throughout their lives and careers. A key focus for NCI is also to develop students as lifelong learners who will have the abilities, experience and enthusiasm to meet the challenges of a fast-changing global society.

Pre-entry Supports

- Provision of advice and guidance to prospective mature students
- Open days on campus and off campus
- Orientation Programme
- NCI Foundation Certificate in Social and Cultural Studies

Entry Requirements

- Mature students apply directly to NCI before the 31st May for full-time undergraduate courses.
- Applications for part-time course are accepted up until course commencement.
- Applicant assessed on basis of interview, life experience/ employment and academic preparation.

Post-entry Supports

The following services are available to all full-time students:

- Orientation and Induction Programme
- One-to-One Student Service Support
- Study Skills seminar
- Academic development workshop
- Personal development workshop
- One-to-one Careers advisor
- Specialist tuition for students with learning difficulties
- Disability support
- Support for students with learning or health difficulties.
- Academic Advisory Service
- Counselling Service
- Medical Service
- Sports facilities
- Crèche Service

Mature Student Population

- In 2005, 15% of students were registered on full-time undergraduate programmes and 85% on part-time courses.
- 70% of those registered on part-time courses were mature students and 8% of those on full-time courses were mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Niamh McAuley
Director of Student Life
NCI
Tel: 01- 449 8544
Email: nmcauley@ncirl.ie

About the Institute



St Patrick's College Maynooth opened its doors as an educational institution in 1795 and, over the intervening two centuries, it has established for itself an impressive reputation for scholarship and learning. In 1896 the Pontifical Charter empowered the College to confer degrees in Theology, Philosophy and Canon Law.

With just under 400 students registered in the college, making it the smallest university in the country, the Pontifical University shares the same campus as the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Situated 25km west of Dublin in North Co. Kildare, the campus is close to the borders of Dublin and Meath. Today it preserves much of the rural ambience and provides easy access to large tracts of peaceful countryside. At the same time it is close to the high-technology industrial parks on the western edge of Dublin city. It is home to a vibrant local community and offers students abundant opportunities to enjoy a busy and varied social life.

Pre-entry Supports

- Provision of advice and guidance to prospective mature students
- Open Days (last weekend in November) on campus
- Summer Programmes
- Mature Student Orientation Programme
- Return To Learning Programme offered at NUI Maynooth. (Centre for Adult & Community Education)

Entry Requirements

- Mature Students apply through CAO and also make a direct application to the Pontifical University, Maynooth (Closing date: 1st February)
- Applicants are assessed on the basis of interview, life experience/ employment and academic preparation.
- Late applications may be considered up to 1st May.

Post-entry Supports

- Full-time dedicated Mature Student Support Officer
- Mature Student Orientation Programme
- One-to-one Advisory Service
- Regular meetings with former (Mature) graduates to discuss pre exam techniques.
- Study Skills seminars
- Essay Writing Course for Mature Students
- Ongoing essay writing support
- Computer Training Workshops
- Mature Student Careers Advisor
- Mature Student Society – social events
- Disability Officer
- Learning Support worker (for students with specific learning difficulties)
- Academic Advisory Service
- Counselling / Chaplaincy Service

Mature Student Population

- Approximately 12-15% of our overall undergraduate numbers are comprised of mature students.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

The Admissions Office

St Patrick's College

Maynooth

Tel: 01-708 3307

Email: emer.sheerin@nuim.ie

PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY

About the University



St. Angela's College is founded on over 400 years of education tradition that values both Christian ideals and academic excellence. As a recognised College of NUI (Galway), there is a strong community environment which is recognised for its friendly atmosphere characterised by respect for the individual.

St. Angela's College is the sole provider of Teacher Education in Home Economics in the Republic of Ireland. It provides the 4 year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Degree in Home Economics. This degree programme is a professional and academic qualification for teaching Home Economics and either Biology, Religious Education, Gaelge or Economics and Consumer/Business Studies. The Nursing and Health Studies Department in the College, offer a four year Bachelor of Nursing Science Degree in both General and Intellectual Disability Nursing. The Nursing and Health Studies Department also offer a range of postgraduate programmes.

In 1998, the College offered for the first time, a full time BA in Economics and Social Studies in association with the National University of Ireland, Galway.

Pre-entry Supports

- Provision of advice and guidance to prospective mature students
- Open Day (in November) on campus
- Participation in college induction day
- Personal Tutors system in operation

Entry Requirements

Undergraduate Courses:

- B.Ed Programme: Application should be made in the normal way to the CAO office by Feb 1st of the proposed year of entry.
- B.A. Programme: Application should be made in the normal way to the CAO office by Feb 1st of the proposed year of entry (a number of places reserved for mature student entry)
- BNSC programme: Application should be made in the normal way to the CAO office by Feb 1st of the proposed year of entry.

Post-entry Supports

Student Services Coordinator provides mature students with the following support and services:

- Student welfare, health and accommodation advice
- Counselling by arrangement
- Chaplaincy
- Disability support
- Ongoing support

The Student's Union compliments these services and also offers a calendar of informative, social, sporting and entertainment events.

Mature Student Population

- Undergraduate mature students in 2005-06:
8 B.Ed students, 52 B.NSc. students and 10 B.A. students

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Please contact the departmental secretary for the course you wish to apply for.

Tel: 071-914 3580
Further details on
www.stacs.edu.ie

About the Institute



St Patrick's College of Education was established in 1875 as a Catholic teacher training college. It is located in Drumcondra, just north of the city centre, on the main Dublin Belfast Road and is very well serviced by public transport. Since 1993, the College has been a College of Dublin City University and all courses are accredited by the University.

The College currently has a student body of 2,400 students, taking courses in Education and Arts/Humanities at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Students enjoy a high level of informal as well as formal support from academic staff and student support services. Mature students feature amongst the many success stories of St Patrick's. When our BA degree was introduced in 1993, the College authorities decided at the outset to reserve up to 30% of places for mature students, 10% of places are reserved for mature students on our B.Ed. degree (this percentage is determined by the Department of Education and Science). Between 1996 and 2005, 422 mature students graduated from the College, 92% with an honours degree. The College participates in the European Erasmus/Socrates Programmes and in exchange programmes with a number of North American Colleges.

Pre-entry Supports

- Pre-entry guidance and information is available from the Admissions Office and the Mature Student Advisory Service.
- Open Day held in November each year for all intending students.
- Dedicated web site for mature applicants and students at www.spd.dcu.ie/adultweb
- Information booklet for mature applicants.
- Outreach activities: the Mature Student Officer is available to visit adult education and VTOS centres to speak with prospective students about our courses and application procedures.
- Mature Student Open Evening - the College participates in the Mature Student Open Evening held in DCU.

Entry Requirements

- Applicants must be 23 years or over on or before January 1st in year of entry.
- Applicants must apply directly to the College to be considered for entry on mature grounds (deadline 2nd April in year of entry).
- B.Ed. direct applicants are interviewed and must also attend an oral Irish examination in May.
- B.A. direct applicants are interviewed and sit a short written test in May.
- Where applicants are sitting exams, the results may be sought before arriving at a final decision.

- Qualified applicants may also apply through the CAO (deadline 1st February in year of entry) but selection of CAO applicants is based on Leaving Certificate points, there is no interview for CAO applicants.

Academic Entry Requirements

■ B.A. Direct Applicants

Applicants who make a direct application to the College for entry into the BA on mature grounds do not compete with school leavers in terms of prior academic achievement and points but may have completed a recent course of study, such as one of the university foundation or VTOS courses. Others have no formal qualifications. Work and life experience is taken into consideration, but recent evidence of study is advantageous.

■ B.A. CAO Applicants

Leaving Certificate (or approved equivalent) with:

- Grade C3 in two Higher Level subjects and
- Grade D3 in four Ordinary or Higher Level subjects (which must include Mathematics and either Irish or English). Ordinary Alternative or Foundation Mathematics is accepted for matriculation purposes but the College does not award points for this level in Mathematics.

■ B.Ed. (primary) CAO and Direct Applicants

Leaving Certificate or approved equivalent with a minimum of:

- Grade C3 in 3 Higher Level subjects, and a Grade D3 in three other subjects at either Higher or Ordinary Level. **Essential subjects include:**
- Grade C3 in Honours Irish.
- Grade C3 in Ordinary Level or Grade D3 in Honours Level English.
- Grade D3 in Ordinary or Higher Level Mathematics.
- Mature applicants may combine Leaving Certificates to satisfy these requirements.

Post-entry supports

- An Induction Programme
- A Mature Student Advisory Service
- Student Counselling Service
- Careers Service & Disability Liaison Officer
- Free Medical Service & Personal Tutor Scheme
- Study Workshops & Computer Training
- College Crèche & Writing Workshops
- Student accommodation services
- Social evening for mature students and partners/ guests.

Mature Student Population

- In 2005/06 there were 58 mature students registered as first year full-time undergraduate students. In total, 202 mature undergraduate students were registered.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Cora Cregan

Mature Student Officer

Tel: 01-884 2280

Email: cora.cregan@spd.dcu.ie

SECTION 5

Access/Foundation Courses have been established in a number of institutions to prepare mature students for the challenges of third level education. These pre-entry courses can be full time or part-time, depending on your requirements. Some access/foundation courses prepare you for specific courses such as science, commerce or engineering while others provide a more general preparation for courses in arts and social sciences.



➔ **My name is Susan Kelly. I left school after my Intermediate certificate which was not unusual for that time and after finishing a secretarial course worked for the next 13 years in administration.**

After having two children, I decided to re-train. I applied for a place on a Return to Education two year part- time course in Inchicore College of Further Education. It was during my time in Inchicore College I heard about the Trinity Access Programme. I applied and was lucky enough to secure a place. I then applied for a place on the Sociology and Social Policy degree course and was accepted.

I found my first year in Trinity a little overwhelming but the other mature students were a great support to me. I passed all my exams and continued on to my second year. I feel as a mature student I need a great deal of support from college and family as it is difficult to juggle student life and home life. There can also be the financial strain of only one income in a household. On a positive note my overall experience in Trinity College has been good. I have learned quite a bit about myself as well as the subjects I am studying. If someone was to ask my advice about returning to college as a mature student I would definitely recommend it but I would also stress the huge amount of commitment and motivation needed.

Mature Student, TCD



ACCESS/FOUNDATION COURSES

- Athlone Institute of Technology
- Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology: Foundation Course
- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology: Fetac Foundation Course
- Institute of Technology Blanchardstown: Foundation Course
- Institute of Technology Tipperary: The Highway Programme
- Institute of Technology Tralee: Foundation Certificate
- Institute of Technology Waterford: Access Programme
- Letterkenny Institute of Technology
- Mary Immaculate College Limerick: Adult Education Access Programmes
- NUI Galway: Access Course Mature Students
- NUI Galway and Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
- NUI Maynooth: Science and Engineering Foundation Year
- NUI Maynooth: Return to Learning
- St Angela's College Sligo: Access Course
- Trinity College: Trinity Access Programme (TAP)
- University of Limerick: Mature Student Access Certificate Course
- University College Dublin: Access/Foundation Course

→ FOUNDATION CERTIFICATE



About the Course

The Foundation Certificate is a one year course that prepares adults with no prior experience of higher education to enter third level education.

- It provides the student with exposure to a number of different academic disciplines in an environment that meets the needs of the adult learner.
- It provides a guaranteed entry route to the Athlone Institute of Technology.
- It enable students to made informed choices about further study in their elective areas.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

- **Subjects:** Maths, Sciences, Engineering, Business and Finance, Communications, Social Care, Information Technology
- **Assessment:** Continual Assessment is a key element of the course, however final examinations are also essential.
- **Award:** On successful completion of the Course, students are guaranteed entry to a course of their choice at Athlone Institute of Technology.

Pre-entry Supports

- Access Officer available from pre-entry stage onwards
- Open Evening for all adult learners takes place annually to help and advise on all aspects of returning to study i.e. Foundation Cert, admissions procedures, part-time programmes, financial supports available etc.

Entry Requirements and Application to the Course

- There are no formal entry requirements, except that applicants must be 21 years or over by January 1st of year of entry.
- Applicants are selected on the basis of information provided on the application form and a short, informal interview.

Post-entry Supports

- Welcome Event
- Induction
- Regular meetings with Access Officer
- Specific designated peer mentor
- All supports offered to full-time registered students, including counselling, medical, library, computers etc
- Seminars in CAO application filling, careers advice, available funding and applying for funding

Time Involved

- It is delivered Monday to Friday from 9.30am –1.30pm over the academic year.

Costs

- Participants on the course are eligible to apply for the Back to Education Allowance

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Access Officer
Tel: 090-642 4593

ATHLONE IT

→ FOUNDATION CERTIFICATE



About the Course

The Foundation Certificate is a one year course that prepares adults with no prior experience of higher education to enter third level education.

- It provides the student with exposure to a number of different academic disciplines in an environment that meets the needs of the adult learner.
- It increases the student's self-confidence in their ability to advance within third level education.
- It enable students to made informed choices about further study in their elective areas.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

- **Core Subjects:** Study Skills, Communications, Mathematics and Information Technology
- **Elective subjects:** students must choose three subjects from: Business Studies, Psychology, Literature and Science

The Foundation Certificate offered by IADT is awarded by FETAC.

Costs

- There are no course costs

Pre-entry Supports

- Access Officer available from pre-entry stage onwards
- Annual Information Seminar for mature applicants held on campus in mid January to help and advise on all aspects of returning to study i.e. Foundation Cert, admissions procedures, part-time programmes, financial supports available etc.

Entry Requirements

- There are no formal entry requirements, except that applicants must be over 21 years, have good basic literacy skills and wish to further their education at a third level institution.
- Applicants are selected on the basis of information provided on the application form and a short, informal interview.

Post-entry Supports

- Welcome Event
- Induction
- Regular meetings with Course Co-Ordinator / Access Officer
- Term review
- Access to Library Information Learning Resource Centre (LILRC)
- Free book loan
- Careers advice and guidance offered by the Careers Service

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Patricia Byrne
Access Officer
Tel: 01-214 4628
Fax 01-214 4700
Email: patricia.byrne@iadt.ie

DUN LAOGHAIRE IADT

→ FETAC FOUNDATION COURSE



About the Courses

Galway Mayo Institute of Technology offers a one-year accredited FETAC Foundation Certificate for adults in both Galway and Castlebar. The aim of the course is to provide participants with the skills and knowledge necessary to undertake a full-time third-level course of study.

It is a recognised entry requirement for progression onto the mainstream courses offered at GMIT.

The FETAC Foundation Certificate is suitable for individuals who have been away from formal education for some time, or who left school with little or no formal qualifications and would like the opportunity to pursue a full-time third-level qualification.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

- The FETAC Foundation Certificate involves approximately 2 days of lectures a week over the academic year, but can be taken on a more part-time basis.
- Students who enrol on the FETAC Foundation Certificate take four core subjects and two electives. The four core subjects are:
 - Communications and study skills
 - Information Technology
 - Mathematics
 - Project
- Students also choose two subjects from a range of electives. The electives on offer are Electronics, Business Studies, Legal Studies and Science.
- Students who successfully complete the FETAC Foundation Certificate will be supported in their application for submission onto the mainstream Higher Certificate, Ordinary Degree and Higher Degree programmes offered at GMIT, subject to the availability of places.

Cost

- The course is free of charge.

Entry Requirements and Application

- There are no specific entry requirements but students must be 21 years of age or over on January 1st of the year of application.
- The application process consists of completion of an application form. Application forms are available from the Access office in May each year. The closing date for receipt of completed application forms is generally the second last Friday in September each year.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Access Officer
GMIT
Dublin Road
Galway
Tel: 091-742129
Email: accessoffice@gmit.ie

GALWAY-MAYO IT

→ CERTIFICATE IN GENERAL STUDIES*



About the Course

The Certificate in General Studies is designed for adult students who may not have benefited from, or had access to, educational opportunities in the past.

The course is designed for participants who have been out of the formal education system for some time and who now wish to

enter 3rd level studies.

The course will:

- Provide the participants with an opportunity to experience the satisfaction that can be gained from learning in an academic environment
- Enhance participants' knowledge to the level expected of an undergraduate student
- Build up the participants' confidence in their academic ability;
- Equip the participants with skills to benefit from, and participate in a 3rd level education course.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

■ The course covers the following subject areas:

- Mathematics
- Communications and Study Skills
- Personal Development and Career Planning
- Information Technology
- Engineering
- Introduction to Social Care
- Business Studies
- French or German or Spanish or English for Academic Purposes

■ This course leads to the award of a FETAC Level 5 Certificate in General Studies.

■ The certificate is designed as a means of satisfying the minimum entry requirements for admission to HETAC approved Higher Certificate and Ordinary Bachelor Degree courses and may be accepted by some Universities.

■ Participants who then wish to be admitted to full time third level courses at the Institute or other third level institutions must apply through the CAO before February 1st of year of entry to third level.

Time Involved

- The Certificate in General Studies course can be completed in one year if taken on a full-time basis.
- The course is presented in semesterised format, divided into two separate 15-week semesters.
- The course may also be taken on a modular part-time basis. Classes are held daily.

Entry Requirements and Application

- The course is open to those of 21 years of age and over.
- Applicants are required to take an assessment and to attend for interview as part of the selection process.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Adrienne Harding
Access Officer
Tel: 01-885 1015
Email: adrienne.harding@itb.ie

IT BLANCHARDSTOWN

→ THE HIGHWAY PROGRAMME



About the Course

This course is primarily aimed at adults who, having been away from formal education for a number of years, would like to improve their knowledge, skills and confidence in order to access a third level course. In the past, this course has attracted participants from a diversity of backgrounds including women and men returners, lone parents, part time farmers, those in receipt of employment assistance or disability allowance and those wishing to change career.

The course prepares participants for higher education in a number of ways by:

- Enabling participants to develop a range of skills - study skills, communication and personal development skills, computers and basic maths skills.
- Introducing participants to broad subject areas and career guidance allowing them to make an informed decision about future courses and college choices.
- Allowing participants to experience the higher education environment first hand, including classrooms and lecture halls, library facilities, clubs and societies and mixing with the general population of TI students.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

- Module One: Communications and Personal Development
- Module Two: Learning and Study Skills
- Module Three: Computer Applications
- Module Four: Mathematics
- Elective Modules:
Participants may choose another two modules from the following:
 - Introduction to Social Studies
 - Business Studies
 - Environmental Studies
- The course is assessed throughout the year and end of year examinations.
- On successful completion of this course, a Certificate will be awarded. This course is accredited by FETAC.
- The HighWay Programme is recognised as fulfilling a minimum entry requirement for application to Certificate/Diploma/Degree courses offered in Tipperary Institute and other HETAC third level institutions.
- Successful completion of the course provides participants with increased

opportunities to a wide range of higher education courses and disciplines. The knowledge and skills developed on the course are also transferable to the workplace.

- Past graduates from this course have gained entry to a variety of higher education institutions and courses.

Time Involved

- One academic year - September to May.
- 20 hours per week (Monday-Friday)

Cost

- €200

Entry Requirements and Application

- There are no formal entry requirements to this course.
- Applicants must be 23 or over.
- There is an application form and an interview.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Edel O'Grady
Administrator
Tipperary Institute
Nenagh Road
Thurles
Tel: 0504 28117
Fax 0504 28111
Email: eogrady@Tipplnst.ie

IT TIPPERARY

→ FOUNDATION CERTIFICATE IN BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY STUDIES



About the Course

This course is offered primarily to women from RAPID areas who wish to avail of a third level education and training opportunity.

It proposes to equip students with the necessary skill set to better facilitate equality of opportunity in:

- securing employment in the public, private or community sectors;
- pursuing further studies at a third level institute
- commencing the process of self-employment

It has been designed to provide the student with an appreciation and understanding of concepts, issues and insights in the business and community fields.

Subjects, Assessment and Certification

- **There are six modules to be completed:**
 - Business Information Technology (including Text Processing)
 - Office Management
 - Community and Enterprise Studies
 - Business Management
 - Public Administration
 - Communications & Personal Effectiveness.
- Subjects are examined by a combination of Continuous Assessment and Year End exams
- The course is a Foundation Certificate accredited by FETAC at Level 5.

Time Involved

- This is a one year course that starts in October and finishes in early June the following year.
- The programme is delivered in a part-time flexible manner.

Cost

- There is no fee payable by the student.

Post-entry Supports

- The course is managed by a Steering Group who comprise a number of representatives from statutory and community agencies.
- Information, advice and encouragement is offered to would- be participants by these representatives and by previous participants.

Entry Requirements

- The target group is defined as women over the age of 18 and residing in/adjacent to the three Rapid areas of Tralee town.
- Applicants are requested to complete an application form and attend at the Institute for an interview.

Mature Student Population

- Particular focus will be on women who are unemployed, traveller women, refugee women (with status), women who are in low paid unsustainable employment, lone parents, women working in the home and women working in a voluntary capacity in their communities.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Valerie Moore
Access Officer
Institute of Technology
Tralee
Tel: 066-719 1682
Email: Valerie.moore@ittralee.ie

IT TRALEE

→ ACCESS PROGRAMME



About the Course

This is a one-year course for adult learners who wish to return to study after a significant period of time outside the educational system.

It is also designed for people seeking a change in direction in terms of employment or study.

The course aims to build adult learner's self confidence, study skills and knowledge to enable them to go onto certificate, diploma, and degree level courses at Third Level, however they are not guaranteed a place and must apply through normal CAO procedures

Subject

- All students study the following core subjects:
 - Communications
 - Information Technology
 - Study Skills and
 - Personal Development.
- In addition students choose one of the following specialised subject areas: Business and Humanities, Science and Technology or Art.

Time involved

- The course is delivered Monday to Friday 9.15am-1.15pm on either a full-time or part-time basis

Costs

- Participants on the course are eligible to apply for the Back to Education Allowance

Entry Requirements

- There is no formal entry requirement but participants must be over 22yrs of age on 1st January of the year of entry.
- Places are offered on the basis of an informal interview following an Induction Week in September of year of entry.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Michael Lanigan
School of Education and
Professional Development
Tel: 051-302885
Email: mlanigan@wit.ie

**WATERFORD
IT**

→ FOUNDATION CERTIFICATE



About the Course

The course is intended for adult learners who have little or no formal education qualifications e.g. Inter or Leaving Certificate and who would like to ultimately continue to third level.

Accreditation

- The course is accredited by FETAC at level 5. This in effect means that successful students gain a qualification that is recognised both in the Republic and in the North of Ireland.
- Students who successfully complete the course qualify for admission onto any third level course at LYIT, except Nursing which must be applied for through the CAO.

Structure of the Course

- The course is one academic year long i.e. September – May.
- The course will be twenty contact hours per week in duration – this facilitates adult leavers to return to Higher Education without losing any Social Welfare entitlements provided they have been in receipt of a payment for at least six months prior to the commencement of the course.

Course Design

- There are both core and optional subjects. All students must complete the core subjects as competence in these subjects is seen as being necessary, regardless of what subject students want to study in the future.
- The optional subjects are designed as taster courses of what is on offer at Letterkenny Institute of Technology. Two optional subjects have to be chosen by each student.

Subjects

The subjects are as follows:

■ Core Subjects:

- Communications
- Study Skills
- Information Technology
- Maths

■ Optional Subjects:

- Introduction to Business Studies
- Introduction to Design
- Introduction to Engineering
- Introduction to Nursing
- Introduction to Science
- Introduction to Computing

Timetable

- Local arrangements are made to facilitate the timing of the course for participants e.g. 9.30 –1.30, five days a week.
- Course must be 20 hours per week to be considered fulltime and eligible for the Back to Education Allowance.

Advertisements

- The course will be advertised primarily through the local papers in June 2006.

Entry Application

Application forms for 2006 will be available from
Brian Mc Gonagle
Tel: 074-918 6170
Email: **Brian.McGonagle@lyit.ie**

The course will commence in September 2006

LETTERKENNY IT

→ ADULT EDUCATION ACCESS PROGRAMMES



About the Course

The Foundation Course for Higher Education has been running since 2001 and is designed for mature students who wish to continue their education with a view to progressing to third level.

The objectives of the course are to:

- Equip students with the necessary skills to participate in, and benefit from, a third level course
- Provide students with a sample of some of the subjects available on a degree course
- Provide students with an opportunity to experience the satisfaction that can be gained from learning
- Build up confidence in a supportive learning environment
- Provide a direct access route to the MIC BA in Liberal Arts for those who attain a merit
- Provide an alternative to the Leaving Certificate as a route to third level for mature students.

Subjects, Assessment and Awards

- **Subject choices may include:** History, Philosophy, Psychology, Geography, Mathematics, English Literature and Language and Linguistics, English as a Second Language, Gaelilge Labhartha (oral Irish)
- **Core subjects:** Study Skills, Writing Skills, Information Technology
- All participants will be assigned a personal tutor who will be available to provide one-to-one support.
- All courses are assessed, usually by essay or assignment.
- On successful completion of the course participants are awarded Foundation Certificate: Higher Education at Mary Immaculate College
- Participants who are awarded a Foundation Certificate with merit will be eligible for direct entry to the BA (Liberal Arts) degree in Mary Immaculate College.
- For entry to the BEd (Primary Teaching) degree, participants must apply to Mary Immaculate College and attend interviews in both English and Irish.
- Participants who do not achieve a Foundation Certificate with merit may apply for direct entry as mature students to Mary Immaculate College.

Time Involved

- Monday and Wednesday, 19.30 – 21.30
- One Saturday per semester (dates to be confirmed)

Costs

- The course fee is €300 to be paid in two instalments of €150 on the first evening of each semester.
- Fees may be reduced for applicants holding means-tested medical cards.

Entry requirements and Application

- Anyone who was at least 22 years of age on 1st January in the year of application.
- There are no specific entry requirements such as a leaving certificate or junior certificate.
- Applicants must complete an application form.
- Applicants may be requested to attend for interview where the interest of applicants in continuing education may be assessed.

Partnership Course

- A Pre-University Programme (PUP) is a 40 hour course run over ten weeks by the County Limerick VEC in co-operation with Mary Immaculate College.
- For further details see appendix 7

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Elaine Vaughan
Course Co-ordinator
Tel: 061-204964
Email: elaine.vaughan@mic.ul.ie

**Applications from
Martina Curtin**
Admissions Office
Tel: 061-204348
Email: martina.curtin@mic.ul.ie

MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE

→ ACCESS COURSE FOR MATURE STUDENTS



About the Course

The Access Course for mature students is intended for adults whose background education was limited by socio-economic circumstances and/or educational disadvantage, but who have a deep desire and determination to complete their education at third level.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

- **Core Subjects:** include Study Skills, Applied (Essay and Report) Writing, Information Technology, and Educational Guidance.
- **Academic subjects:** Students generally study four options (two per semester) from the following subjects during the course:
 - Arts: Philosophy, Sociology, History, Irish, English, Mathematics, Legal Science, Classical Civilization and Spanish.
 - Science/Engineering/IT: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology
 - Commerce: Economics, Mathematics
- Students are assessed on satisfactory attendance and performance in all elements of the programme, which include written / oral assignments and essays. Academic progress is measured through a process of continuous assessment and end of term examinations.
- Participants who successfully complete the Access Course will receive a Certificate of Completion from NUI, Galway, and will be eligible to apply for direct entry (via the CAO) to full-time University degree courses in the faculties of Arts (Galway and Sligo), Commerce, Celtic Studies, Science, Engineering, and Law and the B.Ed (Home Economics) at St Angela's College, Sligo

Time Involved

- The course is a one-year part-time evening course running over the academic year (approximately 28 weeks).
- Classes are held on two / three evenings per week from 6.00 p.m. – 10.00 p.m. and one Saturday per month (6 –7 hours).
- Private (home) study is an integral and important part of the course, and students have the opportunity to attend some undergraduate lectures on campus (by arrangement).

Costs

- Course costs for those selected are borne by the University, contingent on funding.

Entry Requirements and Application

- There are no specific entry requirements, such as Leaving Certificate or Aptitude tests, but typically candidates will have a keen interest in reading and learning in general, and will aspire to continue their education to degree level and/or beyond.
- Applicants must be 22 years of age or over on 1st January of year of application.
- Applicants complete an application form, forward a questionnaire to two referees, attend an interview and write a short piece (on day of interview).

Partnership Courses

- Currently there are courses running at three Access centres:
 - ➔ Galway (NUI Galway, Campus)
 - ➔ An Cheathrú Rua (Outreach Bi-lingual Course)
 - ➔ Sligo (St. Angela's College*)

*An additional option of Home Economics is available at this college for entry to B.Ed: Home Economics at the college.

Main Contact Persons

Galway Campus:
Rita O'Donoghue
Access Co Ordinator
Tel: 091-492971
Email: rita.odonoghue@nuigalway.ie

An Cheathrú Rua:
Alma Uí Fhlannchadha
An Cúrsa Rochtanna do Mhic Léinn Lánfhásta
Tel: 095-33402 / 087-7998675
Email: cillchiarain@eircom.net

St. Angela's, Sligo:
Karen Kennedy
Access Programme Co-ordinator
Tel: 071-9143580 Ext 223
Email: kkennedy@stacs.edu.ie

- ➔ **FOUNDATION COURSE IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING**
- ➔ **FOUNDATION COURSE IN BUSINESS/COMMERCE**



About the Courses

These courses are designed for participants who have been out of the formal education system for some time and who now wish to enter 3rd level studies in Science, Engineering, Technology or Business.

The courses will:

- ➔ Provide the participants with an opportunity to experience the satisfaction that can be gained from learning in an academic environment;
- ➔ Enhance participants' knowledge to the level expected of an undergraduate student;
- ➔ Build up the participants' confidence in their academic ability;
- ➔ Equip the participants with skills to benefit from, and participate in a 3rd level education course.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

- The Foundation Courses are joint courses offered by GMIT and NUI, Galway and focus on four specific subject areas within Science, Technology and Engineering:
 - ➔ Physics
 - ➔ Chemistry
 - ➔ Biology
 - ➔ Mathematics
 and on three specific subject areas within Commerce/Business:
 - ➔ Accountancy
 - ➔ Economics
 - ➔ Mathematics
- The aim of these teaching programmes is to foster confidence and enthusiasm for each subject within the students and to introduce them to the conceptual framework and language of each subject area.
- These courses are a recognised entry requirement for the full-time Science, Engineering Technology and Business courses at GMIT and NUI, Galway.
- Participants gain entry to both institutions through the normal CAO mature students

route. Applicants must apply through the CAO before February 1st of year of entry to third level.

Time Involved

- The Foundation Courses are introductory part-time programmes running over the academic year from October to May (25 weeks duration).
- Classes are held twice a week from 7-9pm and 7-10pm. There will also be occasional Saturday laboratory and study skills sessions involved in the programmes.

Costs

- €250 (subject to yearly review)
- Social welfare recipients should contact the Access Officer in either GMIT or NUI, Galway.

Entry Requirements and Application

- There are no specific entry requirements but Leaving Certificate standard would be desirable.
- The application process consists of completion of an application form.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Ms. Mary Liddy
Mature Students Officer
NUI Galway
Tel: 091-492695
Email: mary.liddy@nuigalway.ie

NUI GALWAY & GALWAY-MAYO

→ SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, ECONOMICS, FINANCE AND VENTURE MANAGEMENT FOUNDATION YEAR PROGRAMMES



About the Foundation Programmes

The aims of the NUI Certificate in Science, Engineering, Economics, Finance and Venture Management are:

- To reintroduce adults to study and learning and to give them the background they will need to embark on a course for a degree in science, engineering or finance /business;
- To provide an access route for students who wish to take science, engineering or finance/business when their secondary education did not offer the necessary subjects.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

The course has a strong academic content but will also focus on study skills, personal development, information technology, effective communication and career guidance.

■ For Science/Engineering students study:

- Study Skills and Basic Computer Skills
- Mathematics (basic or advanced)
- Chemistry
- Experimental Physics
- Mathematical Physics
- Biology or Electronic Engineering/ Computer Programming

■ For Economics, Finance and Venture Management students study:

- Study Skills and Basic Computer Skills
- Mathematics (basic or advanced)
- Microeconomics
- Foundation in Economics (Macroeconomics)
- Introduction to Accounting
- Venture Management

- Successful completion of one of the NUI Foundation Certificates will guarantee entry into a number of NUI Maynooth degree courses in related disciplines.

Time Involved

- The course is delivered over two, twelve-week semesters.

Costs

- Fees for this Foundation Course are currently €800.00.
- Students eligible for the Back to Education Allowance do not have to pay fees (contact Local Social Welfare Office).

Entry Requirements and Application

- Applicants must be aged 22 years or more on 1st January of the year of entry
- Applicants must be educated to Junior Certificate level (or its equivalent) to include mathematics. A higher level of mathematics is generally required for the Engineering Certificate.
- Applicants must complete and submit an application form
- Applicants are also interviewed.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Emer Sheerin

Mature Student Officer

Tel: 01-708 3307

Email: emer.sheerin@nuim.ie

Gerard McMahan

Course Coordinator

Tel: 01-708 3552

Email: gerard.mcmahan@nuim.ie

NUI MAYNOOTH

→ RETURN TO LEARNING COURSE



About the Course

This part time Certificate level course is designed as a stepping stone for those who wish to return to study, but have not studied in any formal way for a number of years. Participants will be given an opportunity to sample a number of academic subjects so that they will be able to make a more informed choice when selecting subjects later.

Students who obtain a First Class Honours or Second Class Honours Grade 1 may access a Bachelor of Arts degree programme in this university.

The course aims to familiarise people with the structure and requirements of third level education; to equip them with some of the necessary skills required and help them identify the subjects or courses that they may later wish to undertake.

Course Content

- Motivation and goals
- Taking notes
- Writing skills
- Reading skills
- Library skills
- Coping with examinations
- Introduction to degree subjects

Assessment Requirements

- 85% minimum attendance
- Participation in class
- Essays
- Research project
- Essay based on Learning Journal
- Participants will be expected to submit ongoing work throughout the year.
- Individual attention and support will be given to help individuals cope with course requirements.

Time Involved

- 100 hours part-time over 1 year
- Two mornings per week 10.00am - 12 .30pm

Entry Requirements

- Participants must be 23 years or over
- Have the capacity to complete a course at NUI Certificate level
- Contact the Department of Adult and Community Education, NUI Maynooth on (01) 708 4500.

Costs

- €700

Location of Course

- Maynooth, NUI Campus or Kilkenny Campus (056 777 5910)

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Emer Sheerin
Mature Student Officer
Tel: 01-708 3307
Email: emer.sheerin@nuim.ie

NUI MAYNOOTH

→ ACCESS PROGRAMME: MATURE STUDENTS AND SCHOOL LEAVERS



About the Course

The course provides access to third level to mature students and school leavers who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged in the BMW region. In particular this course will be of benefit to students from the North-West region as it is located in Sligo.

The course aims to:

- Prepare the students with the necessary skills/knowledge required to benefit from, and participate in a third level educational course.
 - Build relationships with academic tutors in the College.
- Enhance knowledge and understanding in various subject areas.
- Build student's confidence in themselves and in their academic abilities.
 - Assist the student in identifying and choosing the third level course that best suits their abilities and interests.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

- **Core Subjects:** include Study Skills, Applied Writing, Information Technology, and Educational Guidance.
- **Academic Options:** Students generally study four options (two per semester) from the following subjects:
 - Arts: Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Irish, English
 - Science: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology
 - Commerce: Economics, Mathematics
 - Home Economics.
- Students are assessed on satisfactory attendance and performance through a process of continuous assessment and end of term examinations.
- Participants who successfully complete the Access Course will receive a Certificate of Completion from St Angela's College, and will be eligible to apply for direct entry (via the CAO) to full-time University degree courses in the faculties of Arts (Galway and Sligo), Commerce, and Law and the B.Ed (Home Economics) at St Angela's.

Time Involved

- The course is a one-year part-time evening course running over the academic year (approximately 28 weeks) on two/three evenings per week.
- Students may have the opportunity to attend some undergraduate lectures.

Costs

- Course costs for those selected are borne by the University, contingent upon funding.

Pre-entry Supports

- Information sessions in the local Community
- Information on Grants and BTEA
- Individual meetings arranged with co-ordinator and tours of the College
- Interview procedure
- Information on Access at College Open Day
- Links with local Guidance Counsellors.
- Links with the Adult Learner Guidance Service

Entry Requirements and Application

- There are no specific entry requirements.
- Aged 22 years or over on 1st January of the year of application to the Access Course.
- Applicants complete an application form, forward questionnaires to two referees, attend an interview and write a short piece (on day of interview).

Post Entry Supports

- Individual support and mentoring
- Financial Support (Subject to funding)
- Academic support
- Regular group meetings/social events

Mature Student Population

- 2005/2006 – Fourteen Mature Students (Note school leavers also participate on the Access Course).

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Karen Kennedy
Access Programme Co-ordinator
Tel: 071-9143580 ext 223
Email: acep@stacs.edu.ie

→ TRINITY ACCESS PROGRAMMES (TAP) FOUNDATION COURSE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION: MATURE STUDENTS



About the Course

The course prepares mature students for entry to undergraduate studies at Trinity College and other third level Colleges. The course aims to increase the participation rates of mature students who because of socio-economic reasons are underrepresented in third level education.

Subjects, Examinations and Certification

- Students can choose from two broad areas: Arts and Social Sciences or Science. In addition, core modules are provided on Study Skills, Educational Guidance, Information Technology and Mathematics (introductory, intermediate or advanced).
- Students are assessed through a combination of continuous assessment and final examinations in May.
- On successful completion of the course students receive a Certificate in Foundation Studies for Higher Education from Trinity College.

Time Involved

- The Foundation Course is full time and runs throughout the academic year (September to May).

Costs

- There are no course costs.

Pre-entry Supports

- An Information morning
- Visits to adult education centres
- Opportunity to 'shadow' a foundation course student
- Pre course preparation with suggested activities and reading lists
- IT course for beginners in September
- Assessment of learning needs and learning styles.

Entry Requirements and Application

- Applicants must be over twenty-three years of age on 1 January of year of application.
- There are no standard educational entry requirements but evidence of a particular interest in education and strong motivation is essential.
- Application forms are available from the co-ordinator and must be submitted before the deadline each year.
- Applicants may be asked to attend an interview.

Post-entry Supports

- Orientation week
- Free book loan for the year
- Exploratory fortnight to decide on course options
- Review at end of each term
- Individual pastoral care
- Dedicated room for access to computers
- Financial support
- Attendance at college lectures (Broad Curriculum Initiative) and undergraduate lectures
- Access to TAP Representatives in College Depts.
- Access to all college student services
- Social events and Mature Student Society.

Mature Student Population

- Twenty five places are offered each year.

Partnership Access Courses in the Liberal Arts

- TAP supports three VEC who deliver FETAC Level 5 Liberal Arts courses to young adults and mature students. For further details refer to appendix 7.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Irena Boydell
Course Co-ordinator
Tel: 01-896 2754
Email: iboydell@tcd.ie

➔ MATURE STUDENT ACCESS CERTIFICATE COURSE



About the Course

The Mature Student Access Certificate Course is offered to those students who, for reasons of social, financial or cultural circumstances, did not have an opportunity to avail of a third-level education.

This is a one-year pre-university course aimed at preparing students for entry to undergraduate studies.

Subjects, Assessment and Award

- It offers the opportunity to learn/refresh key learning skills (study skills, computer skills, foundation maths)
- Modules in educational and career guidance
- **Students may choose one of the following streams:**
 - ➔ Business Studies (Economics, Accounting and Finance)
 - ➔ Electronic and Computer Technology (Electricity and Magnetism, Electronic devices and circuits, Computer architecture, Programming model of a computer, etc.)
 - ➔ Engineering (Introduction to Engineering, Manufacturing Technology and CAD)
 - ➔ Humanities (English Literature, History, Sociology, Politics and Public Administration)
 - ➔ Science (Foundation Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

Time Involved

- It is delivered Monday to Friday from 10.00am –2.00pm over the academic year.

Costs

- There is a course fee, which may be waived for those on low income (financial documentation required).

Entry Requirements and Application

- There are no standard educational entry requirements but evidence of a particular interest in education and a strong motivation are essential
- The application is comprised of an application form, the writing of a short essay on a topic of choice (one page), the endorsement of a referee, and may include an interview.

Here's how one student described her experience of the Access Course

"I heard about this course through Career Guidance at the Limerick Employment Service. I have always known that education is the key to furthering employment prospects and have wanted to do a Bachelor of Arts in Law and Accountancy. I saw the Mature Student Access Course as a means of bridging my education from where I was to where I wanted to be. The access course is like any other course on campus, for each module there are assignments with deadlines and exams at the end of each semester the only difference perhaps is the level of support from tutors.

The tutors are handpicked and they were mostly mature students themselves, this is of great benefit as they are very aware of any difficulties and anxieties mature students face.

The access course is well structured to provide participants with all the skills needed to go on and do a degree course. This year has been a fantastic experience. The access course has benefits far beyond academia.

My goals have not changed and I have applied for a place in the Bachelor of Arts in Law and Accountancy degree programme. I feel that the access course has given me the skills and confidence to survive it and has facilitated my goals and motivation from being a pipe dream to a possibility".

MATURE ACCESS STUDENT (2003/2004)

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

Noreen Coveney O'Beirne
Mature Student Officer
Tel: 061-213481
Email: noreen.coveney@ul.ie

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

→ ACCESS/FOUNDATION COURSES



About the Courses

UCD's Adult Education Centre is a leader in the field of Lifelong Learning and in the support of adult learners.

Currently UCD offers three pathways into a degree programme through its Adult Education Centre:

- Access to Commerce
- Access to Science & Engineering
- Access to Arts and Human Sciences course (formerly Return to Learning).

Entry Requirements and Application to the Access Courses

- There are no formal educational entry requirements into the Access to Commerce course.
- Applicants may apply using prior educational qualifications or life experience.
- Adult learners are invited to submit their life experience and individual strengths as evidence of their suitability.
- All applicants must be over the age of 22 on 1st January of year of entry to the course.
- Candidates are required to complete an application form, attend an interview and be assessed on a sample of written work (and mathematical ability for Commerce course).
- Please note that 80% minimum attendance is required.

Assessment and Progression

■ Commerce Course

Students will be *guaranteed* a place in the Diploma in Foundations of Business or the B.Comm degree course at UCD if they:

- Obtain an average mark in excess of 60% and score over 65% in Maths
- Follow appropriate application procedures via the CAO

■ Science and Engineering

Students will be *guaranteed* a place in UCD, on either the BSc (Bachelor of Science), B Agr Sc (Bachelor of Agricultural Science), BSc Computer Science degree courses or on the Diploma in Safety and Health at Work if they:

- Achieve an overall mark of over 60% on the Access Course
- Follow appropriate CAO application procedures

■ To obtain a guaranteed place on the Bachelor of Engineering degree course, students will need to obtain:

- An overall mark of at least 60%.
- An addition mark in excess of 60% is required in the subject module 'Mathematics for Engineering'.
- Over 70% required in this subject for entry to Electronic and Electrical Engineering.
- Follow appropriate CAO application procedures

■ Students will be eligible for a place on the new BSc in Structural Engineering with Architecture course, providing they obtain:

- An overall mark of at least 60%,
- An additional mark in excess of 60% required in the Mathematics for Engineering module.
- Follow appropriate CAO application procedures

■ BA Arts Degree in UCD

Students will be *guaranteed* a place if they:

- Obtain an average mark in excess of 60% in the overall course assessment
- Are eligible to apply on grounds of mature years,
- Follow appropriate CAO application procedures

■ BA Social Science Degree in UCD

Students will be *eligible* for a place if they:

- Obtain 60% or over
- Have met the academic requirements for entry to Human Sciences
- Student's motivation and relevant work/life experience will be taken into account
- Follow appropriate CAO application procedures.

Main Contact Person for Mature Students

UCD Adult Education Centre
UCD Belfield
Dublin 4
Tel: 01-716 7123
Email: Adult.education@ucd.ie

In all cases prospective students should talk to the relevant Departments for advice in advance of their application.

SECTION 6



APPENDICES

- **APPENDIX 1:** NIMSO
- **APPENDIX 2:** Types of Higher Education Institutions
- **APPENDIX 3:** Contact Details
 - Universities
 - Institutes of Technology
 - Other Higher Education Institutions
 - Access and Foundation Courses
- **APPENDIX 4:** Adult Education and Guidance Links
- **APPENDIX 5:** Qualifications
- **APPENDIX 6:** Financial Supports
- **APPENDIX 7:** Partnerships with Vocational Education Committees (VECs)
- **APPENDIX 8:** Glossary of Terms

Appendix 1

NIMSO

In 2003 the Network of Irish Mature Student Officers (NIMSO) was formally established. It is comprised of both Mature Student Officers and Access Officers with responsibility for mature students from all of the Universities and Institutes of Technology within the higher education sector in the Republic of Ireland.

The Network meets regularly with the specific aim to increase the successful participation of mature students in third level education. It aims to

- improve access to information about opportunities for mature students in higher education
 - promote and share research on mature students
 - act as a lobby group
 - share best practice
 - initiate joint projects
 - co-operate with all the stakeholders in the promotion of lifelong learning in Ireland
- inform policy at both institutional and national level regarding mature students.

Types of Higher Education Institutions

The third level education system in Ireland is broad in scope and encompasses the university sector, the technological sector, the colleges of education and private, independent colleges. The institutions which fall within the first three groupings are autonomous and self governing, but substantially state funded.

Universities

- There are seven universities in the Republic of Ireland and two in Northern Ireland. Universities offer degrees at Bachelors, Masters and Doctorate levels and undergraduate and postgraduate diplomas over a full range of disciplines. In addition research is undertaken in many areas and the universities are also involved in continuing and distance education programmes.
- Teaching at undergraduate level is normally by way of a programme of lectures supplemented by tutorials and where appropriate, by practical demonstrations and laboratory work.
- Universities award their own degrees using external examiners to ensure consistency of standards. There is also a Higher Education Authority (HEA) which oversees the work of universities on behalf of the Department of Education and Science.
- For a full list of universities and their contact details of universities see Section 2.

Institutes of Technology

- There are 14 institutes of technology located throughout the Republic offering programmes at degree, national diploma and national certificate levels in a wide variety of subjects from craft to professional level. Many also run postgraduate and degree programmes, both taught and by research. Most have schools of Science, Engineering & Technology and Business.
- The qualifications awarded by the Institutes of Technology are internationally recognised by academic, professional, trade and craft bodies. In addition most colleges also have courses leading directly to the examinations of the many professional institutes. Section 3 contains details of all Institutes of Technology.

Colleges of Education

- There are several Colleges of Education for primary school teachers in Ireland. These colleges offer three year full time courses leading to a Bachelors of Education degree which is the recognised qualification for primary school teaching.
- Proficiency in the Irish language is currently an entry requirement for courses in primary teacher education though accommodations can be made in certain instances.
- Teachers at second level schools normally take a university degree followed by a one year Higher Diploma in Education, though there are a number of Colleges of Education for secondary teachers offering teaching qualifications in specific subjects.

Other Higher Education Institutions

- These are third-level institutes that provide courses in very specific subject areas, such as theology, business or art.
- They are state funded, and often have links with one of the universities.
- Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) also falls into this category.

Appendix 3

Contact Details

UNIVERSITIES			
NAME	TEL	WEB	MATURE STUDENT OFFICER
Dublin City University	01-7005504	www.dcu.ie	→ 01-7007755
NUI Galway	091-5244111	www.nuig.ie	→ Mary Liddy 091-492695 mary.liddy@nuigalway.ie
NUI Maynooth	01-7083822	www.nuim.ie	→ Emer Sheerin 01-7083307 emer.sheerin@nuim.ie
Trinity College Dublin	01-6772941	www.tcd.ie	→ 01-8961386 mature.student.officer@tcd.ie
University College Cork	021-4903571	www.ucc.ie	→ Dr. Carmel Quinlan 021-4903571 c.quinlan@ucc.ie
University College Dublin	01-7167777	www.ucd.ie	→ Ronan Murphy 01-7168245 ronan.murphy@ucd.ie
University of Limerick	061-202700	www.ul.ie	→ N. Coveney-O'Beirne 061-213481 noreen.coveney@ul.ie

Appendix 3: Contact Details

INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY			
NAME	TEL	WEB	MATURE STUDENT OFFICER
Athlone	090-6424400	www.ait.ie	→ Access Officer 090-6424491
Blanchardstown	01-8851000	www.itb.ie	→ Adrienne Harding 01-8851015 adrienne.harding@itb.ie
Carlow	059-9170400	www.itcarlow.ie	→ Aishling McHugh 059-9176229 mchugha@itcarlow.ie
Carlow (Wexford Campus)	053-22992	www.itcarlow.ie	→ Joe Collins 053-9155037 collinsj@itcarlow.ie
Cork	021-4326100	www.cit.ie	→ Deidre Creedon 021-4326564 d.creedon@cit.ie
Dundalk	042-9370200	www.dkit.ie	→ Eileen McMahon 042-9370541 eileen.mcmahon@dkit.ie
Dun Laoghaire Insitute of Art, Design & Technology	01-2144600	www.iadt.ie	→ Patricia Byrne 01-2144628 patricia.byrne@iadt-dl.ie
Galway-Mayo	091-753161	www.gmit.ie	→ Deirdre O'Connor 091-742129 deirdre.oconnor@gmit.ie
Letterkenny	074-9186000	www.lyit.ie	→ Brian McGonagle 074-9186170 brian.mcgonagle@lyit.ie
Limerick	061-208208	www.lit.ie	→ Linda Barry 061-490103 linda.barry@lit.ie
Sligo	071-9155222	www.itsligo.ie	→ Catherine McNelis 071-9155381 access@itsligo.ie
Tallaght	01-4042000	www.it-tallaght.ie	→ Maggie Ryan 01-4042371 maggie.ryan@it-Tallaght.ie
Tralee	066-7125711	www.ittralee.ie	→ Valerie Moore 066-7191682 valerie.moore@ittralee.ie
Tipperary	0504-28000	www.tippinst.ie	→ Carolann Bargary 0504-28066 cbargary@tippinst.ie
Waterford	051-302000	www.wit.ie	→ 051-302000

OTHER HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

NAME	TEL	WEB	MATURE STUDENT OFFICER
All Hallows	01-8373745	www.allhallows.ie	→ Georgina Roberts 01-8373745 info@allhallows.ie
D.I.T	01-2144600	www.dit.ie/dit	→ Dolores McManus Ext. 7604 dolores.mcmanus@dit.ie
Mary Immaculate Limerick	061-204300	www.mic.ul.ie	→ Anne Marie Hannon 061-204929 Anne.Marie.Hannon@mic.ul.ie
Mater Dei Institute	01-8376027	www.materdei.ie	→ Maire Garvey 01-8040069 maire.garvey@materdei.dcu.ie
Milltown Institute	01-2698388	www.milltown-institute.ie	→ Sorcha Woods info@milltown-institute.ie
N.C.A.D	01-6364200	www.ncad.ie	→ Finola McTernan mcternanf@ncad.ie
National College of Ireland	01-4498500	www.ncirl.ie	→ Niamh McAuley 01-4498544 nmcauley@ncirl.ie
Pontifical University Maynooth	01-7084772	www.maynooth-college.ie	→ Emer Sheerin Emer.sheerin@nuim.ie
St Angela's Sligo	071-9143580	www.stacs.edu.ie	→ The Co ordinator Ext. 223 acep@stacs.edu.ie
St Patricks College Drumcondra	01-8842000	www.spd.dcu.ie/main/index.html	→ Cora Cregan 01-8842169 Cora.cregan@spd.dcu.ie

ACCESS AND FOUNDATION COURSES			
NAME	TEL	WEB	MATURE STUDENT OFFICER
Athlone IT	090-6424400	www.ait.ie	→ Access Officer 090-6424491
Blanchardstown IT	01-8851000	www.itb.ie	→ Adrienne Harding 01-8851015 adrienne.harding@itb.ie
Dun Laoghaire IADT	01-2144600	www.iadt.ie	→ Patricia Byrne 01-2144628 patricia.byrne@iadt-dl.ie
Galway-Mayo IT	091-753161	www.gmit.ie	→ Access Officer 091-742129 accessoffice@gmit.ie
Letterkenny IT	074-9186000	www.lyit.ie	→ Brian McGonagle 074-9186170 brian.mcgonagle@lyit.ie
Mary Immaculate College Limerick	061-204300	www.mic.ul.ie	→ Eileen Vaughan 061-204964 elaine.vaughan@mic.ul.ie
NUI Galway	091-5244111	www.nuig.ie	→ Rita O'Donoghue 091-512210 rita.odonoghue@nuigalway.ie
NUI Galway & Galway-Mayo IT	091-753161	www.gmit.ie	→ Mary Liddy 091-492695 mary.liddy@nuigalway.ie
NUI Maynooth	01-7083822	www.nuim.ie	→ Emer Sheerin 01-7083307 emer.sheerin@nuim.ie
St Angela's Sligo	071-9143580	www.stacs.edu.ie	→ Karen Kennedy Ext 223 acep@stacs.edu.ie
Tipperary IT	0504-28000	www.tippinst.ie	→ Edel O'Grady 0504-28117 eogrady@tippinst.ie
Tralee IT	066-7125711	www.ittralee.ie	→ Valerie Moore 066-7191682 valerie.moore@ittralee.ie
Trinity College Dublin	01-8962751/4	www.tcd.ie	→ Irena Boydell 01-8962754 iboydell@tcd.ie
University of Limerick	061-202700	www.ul.ie	→ N. Coveney-O'Beirne 061-213481 noreen.coveney@ul.ie
UCD	01-7167123	www.ucd.ie/ adulted	→ 01-7167123 adult.education@ucd.ie
Waterford IT	051-302000	www.wit.ie	→ Michael Lanigan 051-302885 mlanigan@wit.ie

Appendix 4

Adult Education and Guidance Links

Adult Education Guidance Initiatives

The Adult Educational Guidance Initiative consists of twenty-five guidance projects throughout the country with the aim of providing a quality adult educational guidance service to participants in VTOS, literacy and other adult and community education programmes nationwide.

Contact details are available on www.ncge.ie/adult_guidance.htm

FÁS Employment Services

There are 63 FÁS Employment Services Offices throughout the country. All offices provide a registration, information, guidance and advice, referral and placement service for jobseekers. Jobseekers register with FÁS by completing a registration form www.fas.ie/regions/placement_Services_Offices.html and meeting an Employment Services Officer.

The Employment Services Officer compiles a profile of the jobseeker's educational qualifications, work experience, aptitudes and interests. Jobseekers have access to careers information, self help, career guidance, information on training and further education, working abroad, and job vacancies. www.careerdirections.ie

Through the FÁS Employment Services Offices jobseekers may apply for FÁS Training Courses, www.fas.ie/services_to_jobseekers/community_employment.html Community Employment and Job Vacancies.

Further information available on www.fas.ie/services_to_jobseekers/placement_services.htm

Private Guidance Practitioners

There are a number of private practitioners located throughout the country (for people who are not eligible to receive free guidance). A current list is available from The Institute of Guidance Counsellors on www.igc-edu.ie

Vocational Education Committees (VEC)

There are 33 Vocational Education Committees throughout Ireland, who provide a range of services within the vocational education and training sector. To contact your local VEC, log on to www.ivea.ie for a full listing of all VECs in Ireland.

Qualifax

Qualifax is a comprehensive courses database that provides information on all known courses available, CAO and non-CAO, PLC, full-time and part-time. It also lists information on careers events, grant agencies, qualification descriptions, etc. it can be contact on **www.qualifax.ie**

Careers World

Careers World is a careers development website, which provides information on developing a career, including relevant course information.

Contact on **www.careersworld.com**

Other Useful Contacts

- AONTAS National Association of Adult Education
www.aontas.com
- Institute of Guidance Counsellors
www.igc-edu.ie
- Irish Vocational Education Association
www.ivea.ie
- National Centre for Guidance in Education
www.ncge.ie
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
www.education.ie
- Irish Council for International Students (ICIS)
www.icosirl.ie
- Night Courses – Directory
www.nightcourses.ie
- Information on Government Services
www.oasis.gov.ie

Qualifications

Third-Level Qualifications

- The new system of recognition of third-level qualifications which is provided for in the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999 is now in place. Three new bodies were established in 2001. They are:
 - the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI)
 - the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) and
 - the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC)

Universities

- The existing state-supported universities all award their own degrees and other awards.

Institutes of Technology

- The Dublin Institute of Technology makes its own awards.
- All other Institutes of Technology grant degrees, diplomas and certificates, which are validated / awarded by either the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) or the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC).

Other colleges

- The other state-supported colleges generally grant awards that are validated by HETAC or FETAC.

Private colleges

- The private colleges make awards, some of which are validated by foreign universities and some of which are validated by HETAC or FETAC.
- Some of their awards are not validated by any outside body.

Description of Awards

■ Higher Certificates – Level 6 (HC)

AWARDING BODY: DIT, HETAC or FETAC

DESCRIPTION: Broad foundation courses which are practically and professionally oriented. They are designed to prepare students for employment or further study and are of two years duration.

Appendix 5: Qualifications

■ Ordinary Bachelor Degrees – Level 7 (DG)

AWARDING BODY: DIT, HETAC or Universities

DESCRIPTION: Usually undertaken by students following a satisfactory level of completion of a Higher Certificate programme. However, also offered as ‘ab-initio’ programmes, i.e. without having to complete earlier certificate programmes.

■ Honours Bachelor Degrees – Level 8 (HD)

AWARDING BODY: DIT, HETAC or Universities

DESCRIPTION: An Honours Bachelor Degree may, in certain cases, also be a professional qualification. The length of study generally varies between three and four years. In Veterinary Medicine, Architecture and Dentistry studies last for five years. Medicine usually takes six years.

■ Post-Graduate Diplomas

AWARDING BODY: DIT, HETAC or Universities

DESCRIPTION: Courses that lead to postgraduate certificates and diplomas generally last for one academic year. Highly vocational in content, they are often taken as conversion courses by those who have no prior knowledge of the subject matter.

■ Master’s Degrees

AWARDING BODY: DIT, HETAC or Universities

DESCRIPTION: Taking a Masters degree involves studying an academic subject in depth, either through a taught course or by research. You can choose to take a Masters in an area that is related to your primary degree or opt for a subject that you have never studied before.

■ Doctoral Degree

AWARDING BODY: DIT, HETAC or Universities

DESCRIPTION: Most doctorates are completed by research and candidates are generally required to produce substantial dissertation, which must make a definite contribution (however modest) to human knowledge.

Potential Progression Routes

■ Higher Certificate/Ordinary Bachelor Degree/Honours Bachelor Degree/Masters

2 Years → 1 year → 1 Year → 2 Years Level 6 / 7 / 8 / 9

The majority of HEIs have progression or transfer pathways, which are designed to facilitate students who have taken a relevant HETAC recognised course at higher certificate or ordinary bachelor degree level.

Appendix 6

Financial Supports

Free Fees (Government Free Fees Initiative)

If you are in any doubt as to your eligibility for free fees contact the Student Support Unit in the Department of Education and Science and they will help to clarify your position. Tel: 0506- 21363 01-873 4700 or www.irlgov.ie/educ/

Local Authority Grant (The Higher Education Grants Scheme)

You can check if you are eligible for a Local Authority Grant by contacting the Grant Section in your Local Authority. Alternatively, you could contact the Student Support Unit in the Department of Education. Tel: 0506-21363 or www.oasis.gov.ie

Back to Education Allowance

If you are in receipt of a Social Welfare Payment before starting College, you may be able to transfer your payments to the Back to Education Scheme. The Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs run this Scheme. For further information, contact your local employment exchange and ask for a BTE 1 Form and a copy of the information leaflet on Back to Education.

You can also access this information on www.welfare.ie

Area Based Partnerships

If you live in a partnership area you may be eligible for funding. You can find out more about the Partnerships by calling ADM (Area Development Management) on 01-240 0700 or alternatively www.adm.ie or enquiries@adm.ie.

Bank of Ireland Millennium Scholars Trust

The Bank of Ireland has allocated €12.5 million to this Trust. It will provide some 60 scholarships each year for the first decade of the millennium. The Trust welcomes applications from individuals who, because of economic circumstances or other barriers such as disability, are prevented or held back from reaching their full potential. This fund is open to all Irish residents. Closing date for those entering third level study is usually March of the year of entry. For further information contact:

Appendix 6: Financial Supports

The Millennium Scholars Trust Office, National College of Ireland,
Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin 1.

Tel: 01-449 8500/1850-221 1721

Email: boischolars@ncirl.ie

Web: www.ncirl.ie

SIPTU Third Level Scholarships for Members

SIPTU allocates up to €8,000 per annum to this fund, which may be divided amongst successful candidates on the advice of the Scholarship Committee.

Closing date: 31st May prior to the academic year for which the scholarship is sought.

Applications are available from your local SIPTU branch.

Society of St. Vincent DePaul: Educational Scholarship Scheme

The SVDP operates an Educational Scholarship Scheme. In order to apply, you need to forward a letter, outlining what you are studying and what factors are inhibiting your studies, to:

Louise McEvon, Education Officer, Society of St. Vincent de Paul,
18 Nicholas Street, Christchurch, Dublin 8.

Tel: 01-8198409

Guinness Scholarships

Guinness fund scholarships for students living in the Dublin 8 area. Applications are normally made in late spring for the following academic year. Further information can be got from:

Yvonne O'Sullivan, Guinness Ireland Group Ltd., St. James's Gate, Dublin 8.

Tel: 01-4537600

DDD Third Level Higher Education Scheme

This Scheme is open for residents living in Dublin Docklands Development Authority's catchment area. Grants of €1,270 for degrees and €635 for Diplomas are awarded. Grants are via application forms and interview. Further information can be obtained from:

Barbara Ward, Employment & Training, DDDA, Custom House Quay, Dublin 1.

Tel: 01-818 3353

Web: [www.docklands.ie/community/education and employment](http://www.docklands.ie/community/education_and_employment)

Foundation Course/Access Partnerships with VEC

1. Dublin City University and City of Dublin VEC

FETAC Certificate in Education and Training

- One-year course delivered collaboratively by DCU with Whitehall College of Further Education and Dun Laoghaire College of Further Education.
- Provides a foundation for students who wish to progress to the B.Sc. in Education and Training degree programme in DCU.
- Students get first-hand experience of university life and are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to engage and succeed at third level.

■ Course Content

Students get first-hand experience of university life and are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to engage and succeed at third level.

■ Certification/Progression

- Graduates obtain a FETAC Level 5 award in Education and Training
- In the first year of their degree programme, students are exempt from the two modules taken at DCU on the Certificate in Education and Training
- May lead to careers in teaching or training in adult, further and continuing education, or in public or private sector training.

■ Further Information

Whitehall College of Further Education,

Swords Road, Dublin 9

Tel: 01-8376011

www.whitehallcollege.com

Dun Laoghaire College of Further Education,

Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Tel: 01-2809676

www.dlcf.ie

Coláiste Dhúlaigh Pre-University Science Programme

- One-year course delivered by Coláiste Dhúlaigh College of Further Education, designed to meet the needs of students who wish to study science to degree level at university.
- Prepares students for direct entry to first year of one of a number of degree courses offered by the Faculty of Health and Science at DCU.

■ Course Content

Students study topics such as Laboratory Techniques, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, ECDL, Study Skills, and Communications.

■ Progression

→ Students will be guaranteed a place on the 1st year of one of a number of programmes run by the Faculty of Science and Health at DCU, provided they meet the stipulated programme requirements and the required final result in the Pre-University Science Programme.

→ All efforts are made to accommodate preferences. However, access to a particular programme may be restricted, depending on the number of preferences received. A maximum number of places may apply.

■ Further Information

Coláiste Dhúlaigh College of Further Education,
Coolock Campus, Barryscourt Road, Dublin 17.

Tel: 01- 848 1337 / 847 4399

www.colaistedhulaigh.ie

2. Mary Immaculate College and Limerick VEC

Pre-University Programme (PUP)

The Pre-University Programme is:

- 40 hour course, over ten weeks
- A co-operative partnership between County Limerick VEC with Mary Immaculate College
- A preparation for adults returning to full-time third level study.
- It consists of two two-hour sessions, run over two nights per week.

■ Course Content

There are nine academic lectures on one subject area (e.g. Psychology), three Learner Support Seminars (e.g. study skills, essay writing, note-taking) six sessions of IT (one of which includes an IT exam)

■ Assessment

Participants are required to complete a course assignment which is usually an essay

■ Course Venue

- course runs at venues around County Limerick depending on sufficient numbers to date courses have run at Newcastlewest and Killmallock
- We are interested to hear from any groups who might like to set the course in their area in the county

■ Award

Mary Immaculate College awards a certificate of attendance on successful completion of the course

■ Fees

The course fee is around €100

■ Main contact person

Bernadette Cullen, Community Education Facilitator, County Limerick VEC,
Tel. 061 442100.

3. Trinity Access Programmes

Liberal Arts Courses for Mature Students

- The Liberal Arts courses, run in Pearse College Crumlin, and Plunket College Whitehall in conjunction with the Trinity Access Programmes, are one-year pre-university courses aimed at mature students, who for financial, social or cultural reasons have not yet realised their full educational potential.
- This partnership between TCD and the CDVEC Colleges was established in 2004.

Entry Requirements

- You must be at least 22 years of age on 1st January in year you apply.
- There are no standard educational requirements, such as the Leaving Certificate or Aptitude Test. The application is composed of an essay, the endorsements of two referees, an application form and an interview. By these means the student will have to demonstrate a real desire to pursue a third level course and that he/she has the ability to do so.
- Students can apply for these courses on the same application as for the Trinity College Foundation Course for Mature Students. For application deadline please contact the colleges listed below.

Course Objectives

- To provide the students with an opportunity to experience the satisfaction that can be gained from learning in an academic environment
- To increase the student's vocabulary and knowledge to the level expected of an undergraduate student
- To build up the student's confidence in his/her academic abilities
- To equip the students with the skills that they will need to benefit from and participate in a third level educational course
- To assist the students find the 3rd level course that best suits his/her abilities and interests
- To prepare the student to compete equally for entry to third level.

Subjects

The Course is divided into five areas:

- Arts, Social & Human Sciences

Appendix 7: Foundation Course/Access Partnerships with VEC

- Educational Guidance
- Information Technology
- Study Skills
- Mathematics

■ Time Involved

The Liberal Arts courses are full-time and run from September to May each year. An average of 25 hours per week is required for assignments and a further 15 for study outside the classroom. Being part of these courses is definitely a full-time commitment.

■ Assessment

By continual assessment and final examinations.

■ Certification

On completion of the Liberal Arts Course the successful students receive a FETAC Certificate in Liberal Arts (NCVA Level 2), which can be used to apply directly to CAO places reserved for FETAC qualifications in a broad range of third level institutions. Students can also apply to third level colleges (including Trinity) through the CAO and the supplementary mature student application form.

■ Cost

- There are no fees and access to Trinity College's libraries is available to all course participants. Students who meet with the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs' criteria can retain their social welfare entitlements (Back to Education Allowance).
- Students can also apply for a local authority maintenance grant.

■ Contact Details

Plunket College, Swords Road, Whitehall, Dublin 9. Tel: 01 837 1689/1680

Web: www.plunketcollege.ie **Email:** info@plunket.cdvec.ie

Pearse College, Clogher Road, Dublin 12. Tel: 01 453 6661/454 1555

Web: www.pearsecollege.ie **Email:** information@pearse.cdvec.ie

Appendix 8

Glossary of Terms

Access Programmes: specifically targeted programmes and courses for mature students who come from backgrounds that are under-represented at 3rd level institutions.

Academic Programme: the set of courses that comprise a programme of study which leads toward a particular degree.

Academic year: usually from September to May, but this can vary so always check with the institution/ admissions dept. or faculty.

Academic disciplines: subjects or areas of study within institutions e.g. sociology, history.

Assessment: evaluation of a student's potential / or performance by whatever means the Faculty Board/ Admissions Board has determined.

Bachelor's Degree: a first degree, usually termed undergraduate degree. It normally requires at least three years of full-time study.

Calendar: the official publication of important dates, regulations and degree schedules for each academic year.

Campus: any property owned or managed by an institution. Encompasses all buildings whether for teaching , leisure or accommodation Some colleges have more than one campus areas.

CAO (Central Applications Office): the office delegated by the Higher Education Institutions with the task of processing centrally all applications to their first year undergraduate /certificate/diploma courses

Certificate: a qualification at a non-degree level, usually after one year of study.

Certificate of Completion: verification that a student has completed a course of study.

Class: lecture, tutorial, laboratory session, field trip, practicum, supervisory session and other contexts in which teaching is occurring

College: A general term for post-secondary education. It often now refers to any institution that offers undergraduate programmes, or to units of a university grouped together based on related disciplines.

Continuing Education: educational programmes offered by any institution to adults in the community during the evening and on weekends. It usually refers to non-credit course work although increasingly, credits can be gained for courses successfully completed and used towards studying for further qualifications.

Deadline: a date by which specific actions/applications must be submitted to or received by an institution.

Appendix 8: Glossary of Terms

Dean: a Dean provides academic leadership within a Faculty or School.

Department: a branch of a faculty concerned with a specific area of study.

Diploma: a qualification at the undergraduate or non-degree level, usually after two years of study.

Direct Application: a student must apply for specific courses directly through the college and not through the CAO.

Direct Entry: a student may be exempt from usual criteria and may be able to apply to a college on a variety of grounds (eg. via an Access Course at NUI, Galway), or if they satisfy certain criteria as outlined by the institution. (Check with individual institutions).

Distance Learning: opportunities to follow a course primarily from one's home environment or local community. Classes can sometimes be taken at week-ends, or part-time and may involve online, televised, or on campus lectures.

Elective: course of your choice, as opposed to a required or mandatory course.

Faculty: 1) parts of the University that are grouped together based on related disciplines. 2) the professors and instructors who teach University courses.

FEI: Further Education Institute

Fine Arts: have come to mean subjects that include painting, architecture, sculpture, graphic arts, writing and music.

Foundation/ Access / Bridging Courses: courses which are designed to enable students to gain the necessary background knowledge and skills in order to undertake study at 3rd level. Check with each institution regarding specific requirements and /or criteria.

Graduate: a graduate is someone who has had a qualification conferred on him/her by a 3rd level institution following the successful completion of an undergraduate course of study.

HEI: Higher Education Institute.

Honours: a degree programme in which a student takes a more intensive concentration in their major study area (as opposed to an ordinary degree).

Humanities: a traditional body of artistic and intellectual disciplines including philosophy, literature, history, as well as social sciences and other such subjects (see Arts/ Liberal Arts).

Independent Colleges: side by side with the publicly funded tertiary sector are a number of independent institutions and a wide range of institutions mainly involved in the provision of business and professional educational training. Courses on offer include; Accountancy and Business Studies, Law, Humanities, Hotel and Catering, Tourism Studies and Art. Many of the programmes offered by these colleges are

Appendix 8: Glossary of Terms

validated by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) and some have links with universities and/or professional associations through which the courses on offer are accredited.

Liberal Arts: refers to the humanities, the study of philosophy and literature, language and sometimes also the ‘fine arts.’ Generally all subjects (other than the scientific, technical or professional) that emphasise the development of cultural awareness and critical skills rather than practical training for a career or profession.

Option: a course of study / module/ subject chosen by the student within the academic programme

Post-graduate: a person who has obtained a bachelors degree.

Post –graduate study: a course of study further to a degree.

Prospectus: a publication produced by a college or institution which outlines all available courses and detailed course information. It can include information about admissions requirement, staff and general and administrative information.

Syllabus Prospectus: a publication produced by an academic school/discipline/ faculty which provides detailed course information.

School: operational units of the University which carry out teaching, research and scholarship functions.

Semester: the academic year is usually divided into semesters or terms (two but sometimes three = trimester).

Social Sciences /Human Sciences: subjects concerned with human behaviour, or pertaining to human development, human societies and communities.

Social Sciences: the scientific study of society and social behaviour, or any science that examines an aspect of society or social behaviour, such as anthropology or psychology.

Undergraduate student: a student who is studying /reading for a Bachelor’s degree in any subject area or discipline at a 3rd level institution.

Acknowledgements

NIMSO wishes to thank all those third level colleges who contributed financially to the publication.

This Directory could not have been compiled without the support, advice and enthusiasm of the members of NIMSO. In particular I wish to thank the following for their assistance in editing and proof-reading:

- Dr Carmel Quinlan, University College Cork
- Maggie Ryan, Institute of Technology Tallaght
- Maire Garvey, Mater Dei Institute Dublin

Irena Boydell,

Editor,

October 2006

Extra copies

For further copies of this publication please contact your nearest Mature Student Officer.

PDF on the Website

This publication can also be viewed at

http://www.tcd.ie/Trinity_Access/directory_maturestudents2006.pdf

Please Note

NIMSO is not bound by errors in, or omissions from, this Directory.

DIRECTORY



MATURE STUDENT

Entering college for the first time as a mature student, or returning after many years in the workplace or raising a family, can be a daunting prospect. The wide variety of courses, at certificate, diploma and degree level, along with choices of foundation, access and preparatory courses, with different entry criteria, course options and outcomes can be overwhelming. How do you know if you need a foundation course? How do you choose between a diploma and a degree? What difference will it make to your career prospects? Do you apply through the CAO or directly to the college? What is the CAO?

It is this gathering of information, deciding which courses suit, and then applying for them, which can be most confusing and daunting. And this is the reason this publication exists. We hope it is of value to you and wish you every success in your journey to third level learning, where we are confident you will enjoy yourself at the same time as developing your unique skills and talents in whatever field you choose to enter.



OF IRISH THIRD LEVEL INSTITUTIONS