

A guide to the CAO for mature applicants



Central Applications Office

Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway

Visit: www.cao.ie Tel: 091 509800

Published: January 2018



Introduction

This guide provides a summary of the various stages of the CAO application process for mature applicants; it is not intended as a replacement for the CAO handbook.

All applicants must read the CAO handbook in its entirety.

1 Request a Handbook

A mature applicant is normally 23 years old on or before 1st of January of the year of admission to a HEI.

To request a copy of the CAO handbook simply log on to www.cao.ie, click 'Contact' and email us your postal address with 'Handbook Request' in the subject line.

You can also call us on 091 509800.

When you receive your handbook you must read it carefully, taking special note of the relevant sections on pages 7, 8 and 11 for mature applicants.

You should also log on to www.cao.ie and watch the 'CAO Mature Applicant Video Guide' available from the 'Mature Applicants' page of the CAO website.

2 Research Course Choices

Before you start your CAO application, you should take some time to review the prospectuses and websites of the institutions that you are interested in applying to for more information.

If you have questions, contact the admissions officers in the individual institutions and ask them to explain the entry requirements and if a quota of places applies.

Talk to the Admissions Officers and visit Open Days.

See the CAO handbook for advice on whether to apply through CAO or directly, and by what date you should submit your application. For more information about the courses that you are interested in visit the websites of the institutions. You can find contact details for admissions officers on the CAO website under the HEI contact details link.

3 Apply to CAO

It is extremely important that mature applicants have registered with CAO before 1st February at 17:15 – most HEIs will not consider you on mature grounds if you apply using the ‘Late Application’ or ‘Change of Mind’ facilities. You can register at any stage from early November, and you can go back to your application as many times as you like to introduce or re-order courses up 31st January at 17:15. If you apply online before 20th January at 17:15 you will avail of a discounted application fee of €30 (normal fee €45).

Register early for the discounted rate of €30 to ensure that you do not miss the deadline.

The easiest way to apply to CAO is to use the online facility. Go to www.cao.ie and click on ‘Apply’.

In order to register - and get your CAO application number - you must enter your personal details including name, date of birth, nationality, address, telephone number and email address. You will also be asked to tick the ‘Qualifications and Assessments’ section(s) that is relevant to you (e.g. Mature Applicants) – you may select more than one section if necessary.

You will be prompted to enter your payment details and asked to create a unique password before clicking on ‘Proceed with Application’.

If your application processes successfully, a ‘Receipt of Application’ will appear on the screen; you will also receive a copy of this receipt which will be sent to your e-mail account. Your CAO application number is included in this receipt – it also contains all details held on file for you by CAO, so please ensure that everything is correct and keep this number safe.

If you are sending documents to support your application (see handbook for details), please send these documents to CAO within seven days, writing your CAO application number on the front of each document.

Send all supporting documentation to CAO within 10 days of completing your application.

CAO advises that you obtain a certificate of posting, and if you require confirmation that your documents have been received by CAO you must include a stamped addressed postcard containing details of all documents included in your mailing which CAO will return to you when your documents arrive at CAO offices.

4 Types of qualifications awarded

The courses listed in the CAO handbook are classified with reference to the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

NFQ Level 8 = Honours Bachelor Degree (HD)

NFQ Level 7 = Ordinary Bachelor Degree (DG)

NFQ Level 6 = Higher Certificate (HC)

5 Mature applicant qualifications

When applying for an undergraduate place as a mature applicant HEIs will consider all evidence that you provide that will demonstrate your ability to study at the level required to meet the NFQ requirements.

Include all examination results in your application.

School leaving examinations and QQI FET/FETAC results presented by mature applicants can also be considered in the normal competition for places.

Mature applicant sections of the CAO application form:

HEIs wish to carefully evaluate applications from mature applicants and, therefore, need certain additional information (see the CAO handbook for more information) on your online application:

1. Highest qualification to date
2. Current studies
3. Post-secondary education
4. Second-level education
5. Non-certificate courses
6. Employment or voluntary work
7. English language proficiency (if applicable)
8. References
9. Statement of interest
10. Hobbies/interests
11. Additional information

After completing the online CAO application, including sections 1 – 11 of the Mature Applicant Section, applicants must post the following supporting documentation to CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway:

- Evidence of any qualifications that you have indicated in your online application.
- Supplementary information that you were unable to include in the space provided.
- Any documentation required by each of the institutions to which you are applying. Details of same are available from www.cao.ie/mature.
- If English is not your first language you must provide evidence of competency in the English language.

Please note:

Mature applicants to Nursing/Midwifery and/or mature entry to primary teaching are not required to complete Mature Applicant Sections 1-11 unless they are also applying to other course codes and wish to be considered on the grounds of mature years for those courses. Mature Nursing/Midwifery applicants are ranked based on their score in the NCC assessment process. For applicants to Graduate Medicine, qualified applicants are ranked solely on the basis of GAMSAT results. To qualify, applicants must obtain a second class honours grade one (2H1) or better in their first Level 8 Honours Degree.

6 Manage your Application

Once you have received your CAO application number you will be able to log in to your CAO account to edit some of your account details, add your or change your course choices, complete the mature applicant sections and update your qualifications and assessments.

To login, go to the 'My Application' facility at www.cao.ie. You will need your CAO application number, your date of birth, and the password that you created during the registration process. If you have forgotten your password, or if you entered an incorrect date of birth at registration, you will need to email CAO using the 'Contact' form on the website.

Adding or Changing Courses:

If you wish to add, remove or change course choices on your CAO application, you can do so for free up to 31st January at 17:15. After this date you can use the 'Change of Course Choices' facility which is available from early February until 1st March at 17:15 – a fee of €10 applies. You may be able to use the 'Change of Mind' facility which opens in early May and closes on 1st July at 17:15, however, restrictions apply and you must check with the institution(s) in advance.

Watch the Change of Course Choices and Change of Mind video guides in the 'Student Resources' section of www.cao.ie.

Communication from CAO

CAO communicates with applicants at regular intervals throughout the entire CAO process. You should make sure to regularly check the email account that you provided at registration. Any postal correspondence must be read carefully to ensure that all information CAO holds on file is correct, as it will be too late to correct any errors when the offers have been made.

Check all CAO correspondence carefully to ensure that we have all of your information correct. CAO will communicate via email, SMS text and post.

You will receive a 'Statement of Application Record' in the post in late May – any errors identified in this important document must be notified to CAO immediately using the 'Contact' form or by returning form with the changes included to CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway.

7 The Offers Stage

The Offer Rounds

The majority of successful mature applicants, including Mature Nursing/Midwifery applicants, will receive their offer in early July (Round A). In early August, additional mature applicants and applicants presenting QQI FET/FETAC for consideration for entry to courses with a quota for QQI FET/FETAC applicants may receive an offer (Round Zero). Subsequent offers may be made throughout the offer season, up to mid-October.

If you are sent an offer of a place on one of the courses that you have applied for you will receive an 'Offer Notice'. By mid-August, if you have not yet been successful, you will receive another 'Statement of Application Record'. You must check either the 'Statement of Application Record' or the 'Offer Notice' carefully to ensure that all of the information we have on file for you is correct – any errors or omissions should be sent to CAO using the 'Contact' form on the CAO website immediately.

Successful applicants will receive an 'Offer Notice'; unsuccessful applicants will receive another 'Statement of Application Record'.

Accepting an offer

You can accept an offer by logging on to the 'My Application' facility on the website or by returning the Offer Notice by post – do not do both. You must accept your offer by the reply date or your offer will lapse. If you do not accept an offer this does not mean that you will not receive any subsequent offers if deemed eligible; you can accept an offer then choose to accept a subsequent offer in a further round if you receive an offer of a course higher up on your preference list.

8 Financial support available

For information on fees, maintenance grants and financial support available to mature applicants go to www.studentfinance.ie

A reference guide for applicants applying on the basis of mature years for full-time undergraduate courses (excluding applicants for mature entry to primary teaching which must be made through CAO by February 1st at 5:15pm). Applicants who have resided, or are residing, outside the EU should refer to the CAO Handbook to discover if an application should be made directly to the HEI or the CAO.

Institution/Address	CAO Application	Direct Application	Website	E-mail
ATHLONE				
Athlone Institute of Technology, Dublin Road, Athlone	✓		ait.ie	nocallaghan@ait.ie
CARLOW				
Carlow College, College Street, Carlow	✓		carlowcollege.ie	admissionscc@carlowcollege.ie
Institute of Technology, Carlow, Kilkenny Road, Carlow	✓		itcarlow.ie	admissions@itcarlow.ie
CORK				
Cork Institute of Technology, Bishopstown, Cork	✓		cit.ie	admissions@cit.ie
University College Cork (NUI), Western Road, Cork	✓		ucc.ie	admissions@ucc.ie
Griffith College Cork, Cove Street, Sullivan's Quay, Cork		✓	gcc.ie	admissions@gcc.ie
DUBLIN				
American College Dublin, 2 Merrion		✓	amcd.ie	degree@amcd.ie
College of Computing Technology, 30-34		✓	cct.ie	info@cct.ie
Marino Institute of Education, Griffith	✓	✓	mie.ie	mairin.nichonghaile@mie.ie
Dorset College, 7/8 Belvedere Place,		✓		
Dublin Business School, 13/14 Aungier		✓	dbs.ie	admissions@dbs.ie
Dublin City University, Dublin 9	✓		dcu.ie	registry@dcu.ie
Dublin Institute of Technology, 143	✓		dit.ie	admissions@dit.ie
Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and	✓		iadt.ie	admissions@iadt.ie
Griffith College Dublin, South Circular		✓	gcd.ie	admissions@gcd.ie
ICD Business School, 84-88 South Great George's Street, Dublin 2		✓	icd.ie	admin@icd.ie
Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15	✓		itb.ie	info@itb.ie
Institute of Technology, Tallaght, Dublin 24	✓		ittdublin.ie	admissions@ittdublin.ie
National College of Art and Design, 100 Thomas Street, Dublin 8	✓		ncad.ie	fios@ncad.ie
National College of Ireland, IFSC, Mayor Street, Dublin 1		✓	ncirl.ie	admissions@ncirl.ie
Portobello Institute, 43 Dominick Street Lower, Dublin 2		✓	portobelloinstitute.ie	info@portobelloinstitute.ie
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Dublin 2	✓		rCSI.ie	admissions@rCSI.ie
St Nicholas Montessori College Ireland, 16 Adelaide Street, Dun Laoghaire	✓			
Trinity College Dublin, College Green, Dublin 2	✓	✓	tcd.ie	admissions@tcd.ie
University College Dublin (NUI), Belfield, Dublin 4	✓		ucd.ie	admissions@ucd.ie
DUNDALK				
Dundalk Institute of Technology, Dublin Road, Dundalk	✓		dkit.ie	admissions@dkit.ie
GALWAY				
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, Dublin Road, Galway	✓		gmit.ie	admissions@gmit.ie
National University of Ireland, Galway	✓		nuigalway.ie	admissions@nuigalway.ie
Galway Business School, The Prom, Salthill	✓		Galwaybusinessschool.ie	admissions@galwaybusinessschool.ie
LETTERKENNY				
Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Port Road, Letterkenny	✓		lyit.ie	irene.heavey@lyit.ie
LIMERICK				
Mary Immaculate College, Limerick	✓		mic.ul.ie	admissions@mic.ul.ie
Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences, Limerick		✓	ichas.ie	info@ichas.ie
Griffith College Limerick, 31/32 Upper William Street, Limerick	✓		gcl.ie	admissions@gcl.ie
Limerick Institute of Technology, Moylish Park, Limerick	✓		lit.ie	admissions@lit.ie
University of Limerick, National Technological Park, Limerick	✓		ul.ie	admissions@ul.ie

Institution/Address	CAO Application	Direct Application	Website	E-mail
MAYNOOTH				
Pontifical University, Maynooth, Co. Kildare	✓		maynoothcollege.ie	admissions@spcm.ie
Maynooth University, National University of Ireland Maynooth, Co. Kildare	✓		nuim.ie	admissions@nuim.ie
SHANNON				
Shannon College of Hotel Management, Co. Clare	✓		shannoncollege.com	joanmarkham@shannoncollege.com
SLIGO				
St Angela's College, Lough Gill, Sligo	✓		stangelas.nuigalway.ie	admin@stangelas.nuigalway.ie
Institute of Technology, Sligo, Ash Lane, Ballinode, Sligo	✓		itsligo.ie	info@itsligo.ie
TIPPERARY				
Limerick Institute of Technology(Tipperary), Thurles, Co. Tipperary	✓		lit.ie	tippadmissions@lit.ie
TRALEE				
Institute of Technology, Tralee, Co. Kerry	✓		ittralee.ie	info@ittralee.ie
WATERFORD				
Waterford Institute of Technology, Waterford	✓		wit.ie	admissions@wit.ie

This reference guide may be subject to change. For more information on application deadlines and requirements please read the CAO Handbook, visit the Mature Applicant section of the CAO website, and contact the Admissions Office of the institution(s) that you are applying to.

Evening and part-time courses

Most part-time and evening courses are not offered through the CAO and direct application must be made for them.

Application direct to HEIs

You should apply direct to the appropriate HEI in the follow cases:

- Any course not mentioned in the CAO handbook (or CAO website).
- Entry to courses at post-initial-year level.
- Short duration, one-term, part-time and occasional courses.
- Re-admission to Mary Immaculate College, Trinity College and University of Limerick.
- Follow-on courses at the Institutes of Technology.
- Certain mature applicants (see table above).
- Postgraduate courses.
- If you have at any time resided, or are at present resident, outside the EU, then you may be required to apply direct to some HEIs – check with the admissions officer of the institution.

Late Applications

CAO advises all mature applicants to submit their application well in advance of the normal application closing date of 1st February at 17:15. Some HEIs will accept late applications – please check with the admissions officers in the institutions that you wish to apply to before submitting a 'Late Application' through CAO.