



Admission Guidelines and Procedures for Mature Applicants

New Entrants – Mature Applicants

Mature applicants must be 23 years of age or over on the 1st January of the year of entry to their programme of study. There is no upper age limit. The normal minimum entry requirements do not apply to mature applicants, however, the criteria for determining eligibility for the 'Free Fees Initiative' apply. Further details are available in *Fees and Refunds Policy*.

In order to make an application as a mature student the following procedures must be adhered to:

1. Application to the Central Applications Office (CAO)

Mature applicants must apply through the CAO. Application forms are available from the CAO directly (Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway) and online at www.cao.ie. The closing date for receipt of applications (without a fee) is the 1st February each year. The closing date for receipt of applications (with a fee) is the 1st May each year. The full application procedure is detailed in the CAO Handbook.

It should be noted that Carlow College, St. Patrick's (hereafter Carlow College) will not receive information from the CAO until later in the summer on any mature applicants who apply to CAO after the 1st February deadline. Therefore, late mature applicants should contact the Admissions Office once an application has been made to the CAO to ensure that they are invited to interviews.

2. Application to Carlow College

Each mature applicant is considered on the basis of an application form and an interview. In some instances, a written assessment may be required. Application forms are posted by the College to the applicants immediately on receipt of their details from CAO. Completed application forms are usually required to be returned to the college in advance of the interviews. Once the completed application forms are received, interview details are issued by email/post to applicants. Interviews are generally held in March and May/June of each year. At present Carlow College does not apply a quota to the numbers of mature applicant places available on its programmes.

'Positive ratings' will only be given to applicants who achieve at least the minimum programme threshold requirement on the combined application process and demonstrate that he/she has a reasonable chance of completing a programme of study. The CAO is subsequently notified by the Admissions Office of applicants who have received a positive rating in the selection process.

Successful applicants are notified by the CAO in early July of the relevant year via Round A offers.

Advanced Entry – Mature Applicants

Applications for advanced entry to programmes of study should be made directly to the Admissions Office, Carlow College. Each applicant is considered on the basis of an application form and an interview. The interview is conducted by the relevant Programme Director and another member of the programme board. Supporting documentation (certified examination transcripts, module descriptors of completed courses and academic references) is also required. Consideration of an application is subject to availability of places on the programme. Successful applicants are notified directly by the College in July (see also *Admission Guidelines and Procedures for Recognition Prior Learning*).

Applicants with Disabilities / Learning Differences

Where an applicant has a disability or specific learning difficulty and requires accommodations to the interview/assessment process, the applicant must indicate this on their application form. Accommodations cannot be guaranteed once the application deadline has passed.

Garda Vetting

Carlow College offers a number of programmes that require students to undertake placements with external agencies. In such placements, students will assume positions of trust and be in contact with the public. To ensure the protection of the public, and justify public trust and confidence, the College is committed to ensuring that only suitable candidates are allowed to undertake these programmes. Garda Vetting takes place after students have registered. Programmes for which Garda Vetting is required are:

PC404 B.A. in Applied Social Studies (Professional Social Care);

PC405 B.A. (Honours) in Social, Political and Community Studies;

PC06 B.A. (Honours) in Applied Social Studies (Professional Social Care);

PC402 B.A. in Arts and Humanities (if enrolled in the Catechetics & Placement Module); and

PC410 B.A. (Honours) in Arts and Humanities (if enrolled in the Catechetics & Placement Module).

PC411 B.A. (Honours) in English and History (if enrolled in the Career Practice Module).

The list of programmes are reviewed on an annual basis and may be updated to include new and/or existing programmes. Students on research programmes where they are engaging with children and/or vulnerable adults will require Garda Vetting.

Carlow College uses the Garda Síochána National Vetting Bureau (GSNVB) which, where applicable, may liaise with the Police Service of Northern Ireland Vetting Service to assess the suitability of applicants for admission to such programmes. Garda Vetting includes Police Vetting in respect of other jurisdictions.

Research Ethics

Learners undertaking research where they are engaging with other humans and/or animals will require full approval from the Carlow College Research Advisory Ethics Committee for their research.

Enquiries and Queries

The Admissions Office welcomes enquires from prospective learners on any aspect of the admissions process and will respond to queries from the public via phone, fax, email and in person. The Admissions Office is located in the Front Hall of the College and the contact details are: 059 9153243 or 059 9153268 (Phone); 059 9140258 (Fax) and admissionscc@carlowcollege.ie (Email).

Mature applicants who wish to review their interview and/or assessment performance, should contact the Admissions Office for an appointment with the relevant Programme Director.

Updated 06 March 2019