CAO Applications and Selection procedures

For stage 1 undergraduate programmes, all applicants with EU/EFTA/UK fee-status must apply via CAO.

Leaving Certificate applicants

Applicants who are applying on the basis of Irish Leaving Certificate are assessed on a Points System points system provided eligibility requirements are met.

Applications are then assessed in accordance with CAO procedures (see CAO handbook for full details). After the points have been calculated applicants are placed on a list in order of merit for each course for which they are eligible by CAO.

UCD Registry – Admissions then instruct CAO how many offers to make for each course based on anticipated acceptance rates. If you are in 20th position for a chosen course, and UCD is offering 25 places, then you will receive an offer of a place on that course, unless you have received an offer of a course higher on your preference list.

For some programmes random number selection may also be a factor. Before applicants are placed in order of merit they are assigned a random number for each course choice. If there are five applicants with an identical points score competing for one remaining place, random number selection is used; the place will be offered to the applicant with the highest random number. While UCD tries to avoid random selection wherever possible, in some cases it is unavoidable.

If an applicant does not receive an offer in the first round of offers they may receive an offer in subsequent rounds. However, an applicant will never be offered a course which is a lower preference course than a course already offered.

In line with the Admissions Policy of students not joining UCD after the third week of a 12-week trimester (or pro rata if the trimester is a different length), UCD will make offers up to and including the last round of CAO offers prior to this.

Leaving Certificate amendments

When amended results issue, CAO will advise UCD of applicants who are now eligible for a place in UCD i.e. applicants who have met the points and entry requirements and the course is the highest preference on their CAO form to which they are entitled when the amended result issues. In cases where the cutoff for the course is on random selection the applicant's random number must be greater than or equal to that of the last candidate offered (see CAO handbook for details of random selection).

UCD will try to accommodate such applicants wherever possible. However, this will not always be possible e.g.

- There may be no spare capacity, particularly in laboratories;
- The programme may already be at or over-quota;
- The amended result may be received after the last round of CAO offers.
- In accordance with our Admissions Policy, offers will not be made after the third week of a 12-week trimester.

In such cases the applicant will be offered a deferred place for the following year.

EU Selection

EU applicants are assessed for eligibility and awarded a points score in accordance with the Agreed Entry Requirements Criteria. They are then included in the allocation of places as for Leaving Certificate Students above.

Access Routes

DARE (Disability Access Route to Education)

Applicants who have a disability, and wish to be considered via the DARE programme, must indicate this at time of CAO application. They will then be required to supply supporting documents (see www.accesscollege.ie for details).

Applicants deemed eligible for the DARE programme and who meet entry requirements in terms of their school-leaving examinations, are considered for admission with reduced points in accordance with the following criteria:

- They must have a minimum of 300 points
  (for DN400 Medicine minimum is 480 points)
- They must have met all the entry requirements for the course.
- They must be within 20% of the points required

Priority is given to applicants with physical and sensory disabilities and those who are both DARE and HEAR eligible. Any places remaining are assigned on points ranking.

There is a quota for DARE applicants in all undergraduate programmes*. Applicants should note that the number of eligible DARE applicants often exceeds the number of places in the quota so eligibility for the DARE programme does not guarantee admission. As a guide the minimum entry points for last year are shown on the DARE/HEAR webpage

HEAR (Higher Education Access Route)

Applicants who are from a socio-economically disadvantaged background, and wish to be considered via the HEAR programme, must indicate this at time of CAO application. They will then be required to supply supporting documents (see www.accesscollege.ie for details).

Students deemed eligible for the HEAR programme and who meet entry requirements in terms of their school-leaving examinations, are considered for admission with reduced points in accordance with the following criteria:

- They must have a minimum of 300 points
  (for DN400 Medicine minimum is 480 points)
- They must have met all the entry requirements for the course.
- They must be within 20% of the points required

Priority is given to applicants with physical and sensory disabilities and those who are both DARE and HEAR eligible. Any places remaining are assigned on points ranking.

There is a quota for HEAR applicants in all undergraduate programmes*. Applicants should note that the number of eligible HEAR applicants often exceeds the number of places in the quota so eligibility for the HEAR programme does not guarantee admission. As a guide the minimum entry points for last year are shown on the DARE/HEAR webpage

*except graduate entry pathway programmes DN301 (Veterinary Medicine), DN401 (Medicine) and DN411 (Radiography)

Application on Grounds of Mature Years

Applicants, who are at least 23 years of age on 1 January prior to proposed entry, may be considered on grounds of mature years.

Full details of the application procedure, including Programme Specific Information and Access Routes can be found on the mature student application webpage.

Applications to UCD on the grounds of mature years are made via the Central Applications Office (CAO) by 1 February. **There is no separate application to UCD, althou**gh some courses require specific additional information or assessments.

QQI-FET

Applicants with the relevant and appropriate QQI-FET (formerly known as FETAC) Level 5/6 awards and modules, with a minimum of distinctions in five modules, may be admitted on a competitive basis to certain UCD courses. The list of relevant courses is on the Admissions webpage.

Applicants are offered the quota of places reserved for QQI-FET applicants. Places are limited and are allocated based on the applicant's score only. Please click here to visit the CAO website for details of the scoring scheme. The best 8 Modules in a single award will be used for the calculation of points. Where more than one student has the same score, students will be ranked by the CAO on a random basis.

Other Progression Routes

There are a number of other progression routes available from specific programmes.

Late starts

The university cannot make special provision for students who miss the start of term, regardless of the reason. Applicants receiving an offer after the teaching term has begun should consider all the implications before accepting.

UCD Registry Admissions

April 2025

Clárlann UCD | UCD Registry
www.ucd.ie/registry