


Admissions Policy		
	3AD08	File Location:
		Current Revision: 04
		Approved by: 10 th June 2009
	3AD08.06	Document Owner: AA&SAM
		Document Level: 3

Admissions Policy

Revision History

Revision	Date	Revision Description DCRT#	Originator
01	31 July 2003	Conversion from OP176; Incorporation of OP105 (Advanced entry policy)	Diarmuid O'Callaghan
02	3 September 2004	Revised to accommodate new award titles, revised FETAC progression arrangements, entry standard to ab-initio ordinary and honours degrees and add-on Honours degree courses, and an admissions review procedure.	Diarmuid O'Callaghan
03	21 February 2005	Inclusion of two relevant policy statements from Teaching and learning policy 2MP20	Diarmuid O'Callaghan
04	02 February 2007	Revised to accommodate the allocation of points for Leaving Certificate Maths at Foundation level, as agreed by Academic Council on 4 May 2005 and 28 November 2006; the change in title of the Foundation Certificate; changes in entry requirements for Level 9 and Level 10 programmes, as agreed by Academic Council on 16 February 2006; consolidation of closing dates for applications made directly to the Institute.	AA&SAM
05	27 February 2009	Updated to incorporate Garda Vetting policy, and to amend the supplementary admission arrangements to reserve places for Phase 6 Apprentice learners and applicants demonstrating particular sporting prowess.	AA&SAM
06	20 January 2010	Updated to incorporate the acceptance of grade E higher level maths as meeting the minimum entry requirements for certain programmes on a pilot basis as agreed by Academic Council on Thursday 10 th September 2009.	AA&SAM

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to identify Institute policy on admission of students to Institute courses. Admissions policies are the responsibility of the Governing Body of the Institute through recommendations from the Academic Council of the Institute, as determined in section 10 (3) (d) of the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students applying for admission to HETAC-accredited courses at the Institute in full-time, part-time and work-based mode. This policy also refers to admission to students on FETAC accredited courses.

3. Definitions

CAO:	Central Applications Office. See www.cao.ie
HETAC:	Higher Education and Training Awards Council. See www.hetac.ie
FETAC:	Further Education and training Awards Council. See www.fetac.ie
NQAI:	National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. See www.nqai.ie
Mature student:	A student over 23 years of age on 1 st of January of the year of entry on the course (unless otherwise defined).

4. Reference

2MP20	Teaching and learning policy and principles
3AD06	Exemptions from modules based on prior certified or experiential learning
4FAD11	Application for progression with less than 60 credits
4FAD12	Application form for review of admissions decision
4FAD20	International students – assessment of English language competency
3AD15	Procedure for vetting students for placement in environments with children or vulnerable adults

5. Policy

General

It is Institute policy that:

- Fair and consistent admissions procedures are applied

- Procedures are applied to support access, transfer and progression opportunities for learners to facilitate educational opportunity
- Prior certified and experiential learning is considered as part of the admissions process, when relevant information is submitted to the admissions office
- Fees are paid prior to completion of the admissions process and registration on a particular course of study.
- Admission to courses is subject to space availability.
- Admission to courses is subject to budgetary constraints imposed by the Department of Education and Science.
- The Institute reserves the right to refuse admission of an individual at any time.
- The Institute reserves the right to alter the name of courses and award to be conferred at any time.
- The Institute provides a procedure for all applicants to request a review of any admissions decision.
- The Institute reserves the right to refuse admission, remove the student or delay the student's practice placement modules on a specific course where an inappropriate return is received from Garda Vetting.

Entry to first year of HETAC accredited full-time courses

- Application for admission to the first year of full-time HETAC accredited courses must be made through the CAO. A list of courses is provided in the CAO handbook and the Institute prospectus.
- Regulations for admission as determined in CAO publications shall apply.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE GRADUATES

- The minimum entry standard for Leaving Certificate graduates progressing to a Higher Certificate (Level 6) course is an ordinary D3 in five subjects including Mathematics and either English or Irish.
- The minimum entry standard for Leaving Certificate graduates progressing to an ab-initio Ordinary Degree (Level 7) course is an ordinary D3 in five subjects including Mathematics and either English or Irish.
- The minimum entry standard for Leaving Certificate graduates progressing to an ab-initio Honours Degree (Level 8) programme is a pass in six Leaving Certificate subjects with at least two higher C3 grades and the remainder at least ordinary D3 grades. Subjects must include Mathematics and either English or Irish.

- The results of more than one sitting of the leaving certificate examination may be counted towards meeting the minimum entry standard.
- Specific grades in mathematics at foundation level may be acceptable to meet the minimum entry requirements for mathematics in some courses (where mathematics is not considered an essential element of that course). Please refer to specific course details in Institute publications for details as they apply to individual courses. Where results in mathematics at foundation level are deemed to be acceptable, it will be considered as a passing subject provided the student achieves at least a grade B2 result. Grades below a B2 will be deemed not to meet the minimum entry requirement.
- On a pilot basis a grade E in mathematics at higher level may be acceptable to meet the minimum entry requirements for mathematics in some courses (where mathematics is not considered an essential element of that course). Please refer to specific course details on the Institute website for details as they apply to individual courses. Where a grade E in mathematics at higher level is deemed to be acceptable, it will be considered as a passing subject towards the minimum entry requirements, however no points will be awarded for this grade.
- Results from the leaving certificate applied programme or foundation level Irish in the leaving certificate do not meet the minimum entry requirements.
- The results of more than one sitting of the leaving certificate examination may be counted towards meeting the minimum entry standard.
- Available places will be offered based on the academic standard attained as determined by CAO points allocated on the basis of the leaving certificate (or equivalent) examination. Places will be offered on a competitive basis until all places (with the exception of those reserved as described below) have been filled.
- CAO points will be determined from a maximum of six subjects taken in one individual sitting of the Leaving Certificate examination.
- CAO points will be allocated to subjects as listed on the following table:

	A1	A2	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3
Ordinary Level	60	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5
Higher Level	100	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45

- Where a grade of B2 or higher is achieved and mathematics at foundation level is acceptable for entry to a specific course, CAO points will be allocated as listed on the following table:

Mathematics	A1	A2	B1	B2
Foundation Level	20	15	10	5

FETAC LEVEL 5 AND LEVEL 6 (FORMERLY NCVA LEVEL 2 OR 3) GRADUATES

- The minimum entry requirement for graduates of FETAC level 5 and level 6 awards to:
 - Higher Certificate (NQAI level 6) courses is a full FETAC level 5 or level 6 award.
 - Ab-initio Ordinary Degree (NQAI level 7) courses is a full FETAC level 5 or level 6 award.
 - Ab-initio Honours Degree (NQAI level 8) courses is a full FETAC level 5 or level 6 award in a course in a cognate area and including a Distinction grade in at least three modules. Cognate areas are listed in the Institute prospectuses.
- A general specific requirement for mathematics or a language will not apply. Notwithstanding the minimum entry requirements listed above, specific Higher Certificate and ab-initio Ordinary Degree courses may have specific pre-requisite FETAC module or FETAC course requirements. Such pre-requisite requirements are listed in the Institute prospectuses. In the case of entry to Honours degree courses, relevant cognate courses and specific pre-requisite module requirements, where relevant, are specifically listed in the Institute prospectuses.
- A record of achievement does not meet these minimum entry standards. A full FETAC award normally contains 8 modules. A full award may be accumulated over more than one academic year. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the applicant to apply to FETAC for a combination award where courses are taken over more than one year.
- An overall point score is calculated based on the best 8 modules presented. For modules with a credit value of 1, scores awarded are as follows:

Pass	20 points
Merit	35 points
Distinction	50 points

- Scores are adjusted pro rata to take account of credit values other than 1 for the module. Scores are also adjusted pro rata to take account of the module level; level 1 scores are multiplied by 0.5, level 2 scores are multiplied by 1.0, and level 3 scores are multiplied by 1.25.
- In some courses, a specific module such as a mathematics or language module is a mandatory component of the FETAC award being presented. This requirement may be waived if the applicant has evidence of equivalent achievement from other examinations (such as previous Leaving Certificate award). It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide such evidence directly to the admissions officer of the Institute.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS

- A number of places will be reserved annually for applicants from categories specifically identified within the mission of the Institute. These places will be filled outside those offered based on the competitive CAO points, but applicants must initially apply for these places through the CAO. Specifically places will be reserved for:
 - a) Mature students,
 - b) Students without Leaving Certificate or equivalent qualifications who can meet the entry requirements in other ways,
 - c) Students with special needs,
 - d) Students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, and
 - e) Students progressing from the Institute Certificate in General Studies (Level 5) and other specific access initiatives.
 - f) Apprentices who have successfully completed Phase 6 (at pass or merit level) in a recognised FAS National Craft Certificate apprenticeship programme provided they meet minimum Leaving Certificate requirements (or equivalent) in mathematics and either English or Irish
 - g) Students applying for Sports Management and Coaching who display particular sporting prowess.
- The number of places offered in any particular category will be determined in response to overall targets as determined by the Governing Body of the Institute. Current targets for admission of categories of student are as follows:

	% of All students	% of Non-standard students
Leaving Certificate (LC) admissions	70%	
Admissions to support Institute mission	30%	
of which		
– FETAC level 5 and 6	10.5%	35%
– Mature students	12%	40%
– Students from socio-economically disadvantaged background	4.5%	15%
– Students with special circumstances	1.5%	5%
– Students progressing from Institute Certificate in General Studies (Level 5)	1.5%	5%

- Mature applicants will be allocated scores based on an assessment of documentation provided (all mature students will be contacted individually and given detailed information on the type of documentation required by the Institute

for this assessment process). Mature students may choose to compete solely on leaving certificate points.

- Applicants presenting results from Leaving Certificate examinations in 1992 and earlier years will be allocated points as listed in the following table

	A	B	C	D
Ordinary Level	55	40	25	10
Higher Level	95	80	65	50

OTHER GRADUATES

- A number of places may be filled for specific categories of students to support specific cultural and other Institute interests. Students taking these places will be required to pay tuition fees as appropriate for their country of origin. These students are offered places above the normal quota of places for the Institute and will not affect the intake of students through the CAO system. The following categories of students may be considered

– Non-EU Nationals*	– Up to 20 places per year
– Industry-sponsored	– Up to 10 places per year

* In the case of Non-EU Nationals, a restriction will be placed on the number of students entering a particular class and a restriction will be placed on the number of students presenting from individual countries.

COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH

- Competency in spoken English is necessary in order to be accepted and to complete registration on any course. Applicants who do not have leaving certificate English must provide evidence of equivalent competence through other school leaving or matriculation examinations, or by reference from employer (form 4FAD20 is completed in these circumstances) or achievement of a minimum standard in recognised tests of English. (Achievement of the minimum standard in such recognised tests of English satisfies the English minimum entry standard, but is not used to compute points). The minimum standard in recognised tests of English is as follows:

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Examining Body</i>	<i>Minimum standard</i>
General English	ARELS	Credit
	University of London	Grade C
	Oxford	Credit
	Pitman	Higher Intermediate
	Trinity College (UK)	10
	UCLES	Grade C
	IELTS	6
	TOEFL	560
Academic English	AEB	3
	British Council/UCLES/IDP	6
	JMB	Pass

OTHER

- Admission on the basis of other equivalent minimum levels of knowledge, skill and competence will be considered.
- Additional requirements in individual subjects above the minimum entry requirements may be specified for specific courses as documented in the CAO handbook and Institute prospectus.

Entry to HETAC accredited add-on courses

- Application for admission to add-on Ordinary Degree (Level 7) courses will be considered from graduates of a relevant Higher Certificate (Level 6) course at pass level with a GPA of 2.0 or above.
- Application for admission to add-on Honours Degree (Level 8) courses will be considered from graduates of a relevant Ordinary Degree (Level 7) course at pass level with a GPA of 2.0 or above.
- Determination of relevance of courses for progression purposes will be the responsibility of the Academic Council of the Institute through its admissions sub-committee.
- Places will be allocated in the first instance to qualified applicants who have completed prior courses of study in the Institute. Where the number of places available is limited relative to eligible applicants, places will be allocated in order of merit. Any remaining places will be allocated among all other qualified applicants based on an order of merit determined by results achieved in previous relevant courses of study.

Entry to HETAC accredited part-time courses

- The minimum entry standard for applicants to HETAC accredited courses or modules is a grade D3 (ordinary level) in the leaving certificate examination in five subjects including mathematics and either English or Irish.
- Specific grades in mathematics at foundation level may be acceptable to meet the minimum entry requirements for mathematics in some courses (where mathematics is not considered an essential element of that course). Please refer to specific course details in Institute publications for details as they apply to individual courses. Where results in mathematics at foundation level are deemed to be acceptable, it will be considered as a passing subject provided the student achieves at least a grade B2 result. Grades below a B2 will be deemed not to meet the minimum entry requirement.
- The results of more than one sitting of the leaving certificate examination may be counted towards meeting the minimum entry standard.

- Mature applicants may be admitted without meeting these formal entry requirements.
- Applicants progressing from the Institute Certificate in General Studies (Level 5) can be considered for entry.
- Applicants progressing from FETAC level 5 and level 6 courses can be considered for entry.
- Competency in spoken English is necessary in order to complete registration on any course. Applicants who do not have leaving certificate English must provide evidence of equivalent competence through other school leaving or matriculation examinations, or by reference from employer (form 4FAD20 is completed in these circumstances) or achievement of a minimum standard in recognised tests of English. (Achievement of the minimum standard in such recognised tests of English satisfies the English minimum entry standard, but is not used to compute points). The minimum standard in recognised tests of English is as follows:

Standard	Examining Body	Minimum standard
General English	ARELS	Credit
	University of London	Grade C
	Oxford	Credit
	Pitman	Higher Intermediate
	Trinity College (UK)	10
	UCLES	Grade C
Academic English	IELTS	6
	TOEFL	560
	AEB	3
	British Council/UCLES/IDP	6
	JMB	Pass

- Application is made directly to the Institute.

Entry to HETAC accredited work-based courses

- Application for admission to work-based Higher Certificate (Level 6) and Ordinary Degree (Level 7) courses is as described for first year of courses above, but application is made directly to the Institute.
- Application for admission to specific courses may be restricted to applicants currently employed in specific occupations as described in the prospectus for the relevant course.

Entry to second and subsequent years of HETAC accredited full-time, part-time or work-based courses

- Entry to second and subsequent years of all programmes is by successful completion of the previous year of the course. In certain circumstances, students may apply to progress from a non-award year of a course without all required credits having been accumulated. Form 4FAD11 is used for this purpose.
- Application is made directly to the Institute.

Entry to postgraduate courses

- Application for admission to Higher Diploma (Level 8) courses will be considered from graduates with an Honours Degree (Level 8) qualification.
- Application for admission to Postgraduate Diploma (Level 9), Masters (Level 9) and PhD (Level 10) courses will be considered from graduates of a relevant Honours Degree (Level 8) course, with 2nd class honours or higher award classification (or equivalent, or for awards prior to 2006 a Pass award with a GPA of 2.50 or above).
- Application for admission to specific courses may be restricted to applicants currently employed in specific occupations as described in the prospectus for the relevant course.
- Application is made directly to the Institute.

Entry to Certificate in General Studies (NFQ Level 5) course (formerly Foundation Certificate)

- Application for admission to the Institute Certificate in General Studies will be considered from applicants over 21 years of age who have demonstrated suitability for third level study at interview and/or other suitability assessment.
- Application is made directly to the Institute.

Entry to Apprenticeship programme

- A person entering employment as an apprentice shall meet the requirements as determined in section 3, 4 and 5 of S.I No. 168/1997. Labour Services Act 1987 – Apprenticeship Rules.
- Application for admission to the Apprenticeship programme at the Institute is made in the first instance to FAS, with recommendations for entry to phase 4 and 6 of apprenticeship programmes made by FAS to the Institute.

Advanced entry policy

- The Institute is prepared to approve arrangements whereby applicants for admission to a course may be exempted from an entire year or more of the course.
- Advanced entry is only offered where entry routes are not available without repeating prior certified learning.
- This provision enables students holding examination results or awards of other bodies to enrol on courses without being required to repeat studies substantially similar in content and standard to those that they have already successfully completed.
- Admission to advanced levels of programmes will only be considered for courses that have similar curricular content to the Institute course, where prior academic performance of the candidate is considered acceptable and where space is available in classes.
- Please refer to Advanced Entry Application Form 4FAD03.

Eligibility for Exemptions

- Exemptions may be granted from specific individual modules in a particular year of a course based on prior certified or experiential learning. Please refer to procedure 3AD06.
- Exemptions may be granted only to applicants in good academic standing with the institution on the basis of whose examination or awards the application is made.
- In the case of an application for exemptions in respect of examinations taken under the aegis of an institution other than HETAC, exemptions may be granted only in respect of examinations which the applicant has passed in their entirety; any such exemptions may be granted only on a subject-to-subject basis.
- In the case of an application for exemption/progression, the Institute reserves the right to seek any relevant information from any institution or person in relation to an applicant's examination result and academic standing. The making of an application by or on behalf of an applicant implies acceptance by the applicant of this right.

6. Procedure

- For entry into first year of Higher Certificate (Level 6), ab-initio Ordinary Degree (Level 7) and ab-initio Honours Degree (Level 8) full-time courses, application must be made to the CAO.
- For entry to add-on Ordinary Degree (Level 7) or Honours Degree (Level 8) courses or Postgraduate courses (Levels 8, 9 or 10), applicants should apply in the

first instance to the Admissions Office of the Institute, using the appropriate form published on the Institute website. Applications should be made before 1st June for courses starting in September and 1st December for courses starting in January.

- For entry to the Institute’s HETAC accredited part-time courses, applicants should apply in the first instance to the Admissions Office of the Institute, using the appropriate application form published on the Institute website. Applications should normally be made before 1st June for courses starting in September; relevant closing dates are published on the website each year.
- For entry to the Institute’s HETAC accredited work-based courses, applicants should apply in the first instance to the Admissions Office of the Institute, using the appropriate application form published on the Institute website. Relevant closing dates are published on the website each year. .
- For advanced entry to Higher Certificate (Level 6) and ab-initio Ordinary Degree (Level 7) courses in year two or year three, applicants should apply in the first instance to the Admissions Office of the Institute, using the appropriate form published on the Institute website. Applications should be made before 1st June for courses starting in September.
- For entry to the Institute’s FETAC accredited Certificate in General Studies (Level 5), applicants should apply in the first instance to the Admissions Office of the Institute, using the appropriate application form published on the Institute website. Applications should be made before 1st June for courses starting in September.
- For the procedure for application for exemptions from modules based on prior certified or experiential learning, refer to procedure 3AD06.

7. Reason for Admissions Decisions

- It is Institute policy to inform all applicants in writing of the outcome of each application for a place on any course offered by the Institute. This is done on behalf of the Institute by the CAO for courses where application is made to the CAO.
- Applicants may seek information on the reasons for any admissions decision, or may request a review of a previous admissions decision from the Admissions Office of the Institute, by completing the relevant form published on the Institute website (4FAD12).

//ends