

FULL-TIME COURSES **2016-17**



# MATURE STUDENT GUIDE

...Your Future is Here



**CIT** CORK  
INSTITUTE OF  
TECHNOLOGY  
INSTITIÚD TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA CHORCAÍ

## CIT COURSES CAO LEVEL 7

COURSE CODE	TITLE
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CR001	Applied Physics and Instrumentation
CR006	Applied Biosciences
CR007	Analytical and Pharmaceutical Chemistry
CR010	Agriculture
CR011	Horticulture
CR016	Computing
CR021	Business Studies (Common Entry)
CR022	Business Administration
CR023	Accounting
CR031	Social Care
CR032	Recreation and Leisure Management
CR035	Community Development
CR041	Tourism
CR042	Hospitality Management
CR046	Transport Management and Technology (Automobile Technology)
CR051	Civil Engineering
CR052	Construction
CR053	Interior Architecture
CR055	Environmental Engineering
CR061	Electronic Engineering
CR062	Electrical Engineering
CR071	Mechanical Engineering
CR075	Biomedical Engineering
CR077	Craft Technology (Wood) with Business
CR078	Craft Technology - Mechanical Services
CR090	Architectural Technology
CR094	Nautical Science at National Maritime College of Ireland
CR095	Marine Engineering at National Maritime College of Ireland
CR300	Physical Sciences (Common Entry)
CR620	Early Years Education
CR640	Culinary Arts
CR650	Bar Management
CR805	Marine Electrotechnology at National Maritime College of Ireland
CR888	Information technology

## CIT COURSES CAO LEVEL 6

CR655	Culinary Studies
CR657	Hospitality Studies

## CIT COURSES DIRECT ENTRY

CR_SGMPR_6	Higher Certificate in Good Manufacturing Practice (Level 6)
CR_BBUSE_6	Higher Certificate in Business for Mature Students (Level 6)

## CIT COURSES CAO LEVEL 8

### COURSE CODE TITLE

CR105	Chemical and Biopharmaceutical Engineering
CR106	Software Development
CR108	Mechanical Engineering
CR109	Structural Engineering
CR112	Multimedia
CR116	Software Development & Computer Networking
CR121	Music (at CIT Cork School of Music*)(Restricted)
CR125	Popular Music: Electric Bass Guitar (at CIT Cork School of Music*)(Restricted)
CR126	Popular Music: Drums (at CIT Cork School of Music*)(Restricted)
CR127	Popular Music: Electric Guitar (at CIT Cork School of Music*)(Restricted)
CR128	Popular Music: Keyboards (at CIT Cork School of Music*)(Restricted)
CR129	Popular Music: Voice (at CIT Cork School of Music*)(Restricted)
CR150	Business Information Systems
CR210	Applied Art, Ceramics (at Crawford College of Art & Design*) (Restricted)
CR220	Contemporary Applied Art (at Crawford College of Art & Design*)(Restricted)
CR305	Physical Sciences (Common Entry)
CR310	IT Management
CR312	Web Development
CR320	Biomedical Science - Joint CIT and UCC programme
CR325	Pharmaceutical Biotechnology
CR330	Herbal Science
CR333	Nutrition and Health Science
CR335	Biological Sciences (Common Entry)
CR340	Analytical Chemistry with Quality Assurance
CR360	Instrument Engineering
CR365	Environmental Science and Sustainable Technology
CR400	Accounting
CR420	Marketing
CR425	International Business with Language
CR500	Engineering (Common entry)
CR510	Sustainable Energy Engineering
CR520	Biomedical Engineering
CR560	Architectural Technology
CR565	Interior Architecture
CR570	Quantity Surveying
CR572	Construction Management
CR580	Electrical Engineering
CR590	Electronic Engineering
CR600	Visual Communications (Restricted)
CR700	Theatre and Drama Studies (at CIT Cork School of Music*)(Restricted )
CR660	Tourism

\* Early Assessment Procedures apply

Detailed course information is available at [www.cit.ie](http://www.cit.ie) or in the CIT Full-time Handbook.



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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please visit [www.cit.ie](http://www.cit.ie) and  
[www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) for specific dates

DATE	EVENT	TIME
Mid-end November	Mature Student Information Evening	Evening
Mid-end January	CAO Information Evening	Evening
20th January	Closing date for Online Applications at discounted application fee	5.15pm
	Closing date for online Change Course Choices (free)	5.15pm
1st February	CAO Closing Date	5.15pm
1st March	Closing Date for Change of Mind for Non Standard (Mature) Applicants	
Early July	Round A offers from CAO – 1st round of offers for Mature Students	
Early August	Round 0 offers from CAO – 2nd round of offers for Mature Students	
End of August	Round 1 offers from CAO – Leaving Certificate & QQI (formerly FETAC) points	
Late August/ Early September	Mature Student Orientation Programme Preparatory Maths Programme Registration	



# WELCOME TO CIT

As you embark on your journey towards higher education you may have many concerns about taking up full time study as a mature student. You may lack confidence in your academic ability, you may be worried that it is too late in life for you to return to full time education and much more. Concerns such as these are very common among mature applicants and it is absolutely natural to have them. However, more and more adults are availing of the range of opportunities that are open to them to enter higher education on a full time basis. Thousands of mature students who have shared these concerns have completed full-time courses in CIT and have subsequently pursued very successful progression routes be it in further study or employment. Read about the experience of two of these students at the end of the guide. The mature student brings with him/her life experience along with determination and focus, all of which are conducive to successful learning. There are a whole range of supports available to you as a mature student in CIT to assist you through your

course of study. The Mature Student Support Programme aims to support you in your journey through your studies and strives to ensure that it will be a positive experience for you.

As the Mature Student Officer in CIT I work at a pre-entry, entry and post entry level providing support to full-time undergraduate mature students. Further details of this support are provided throughout the guide.

**Sinéad O'Neill**

T: 021 433 5109

E: [maturestudent@cit.ie](mailto:maturestudent@cit.ie)

The Access Service,  
Ground Floor,  
Student Centre,  
Bishopstown Campus

# 1

## ARE YOU A MATURE STUDENT?

To be eligible under this category, applicants must be 23 years or older by the 1st of January of the proposed year of entry into a full time undergraduate course.

# 2

## HOW TO APPLY FOR COURSES IN CIT AS A FULL-TIME MATURE STUDENT?

- One of the first steps for anybody interested in applying for a place on a full time undergraduate course at the institute is to become familiar with the courses available and the application procedure. A list of full time courses is available at [www.cit.ie/courses](http://www.cit.ie/courses) and information on the application procedure can be found at [www.cit.ie/maturestudent](http://www.cit.ie/maturestudent).
- Most of our full-time courses are offered through the Central Applications Office (CAO).
- Applications can be made online at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) or by paper application.
- Application form and Handbook are available at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) or from:  
The Central Applications Office,  
Tower House, Eglington Street, Galway  
T: 091 509 800 F: 091 562 344  
From 2016, paper application forms will be available on request only.
- Applicants should follow the procedures as laid down in the CAO Handbook paying particular attention to the guidelines for non-standard/special category applicants.
- The CAO closing date is February 1st each year. Late applications are not accepted from applicants who wish to be assessed based on mature status. However, mature applicants can apply up to May 1st using a Leaving Certificate, QQI (formerly FETAC) qualification or equivalent but will not be assessed on the basis of mature status.
- When making an application through the CAO mature students can apply under 3 categories:
  1. Leaving Certificate results and/or
  2. QQI (formerly FETAC) results and/or
  3. Mature Student. Mature applicants are entitled to be assessed on the basis of points but may not be required to have the minimum entry requirements if they apply as a mature student.
- Under this category relevant work experience, skills gained through experience and other qualifications will be considered in the assessment of applications. Applicants will be asked to provide this information by submitting a Statement of Interest as part of the CAO application.
- If a candidate applies under the 'mature/non-standard' category his/her application will be assessed on this basis in the first instance. Offers to such applicants are made in the first two rounds of CAO Offers, Round A and Round O in early and late July respectively.
- If a candidate is not successful in receiving an offer on the basis of mature status then they may still receive an offer based on points if they have submitted Leaving Certificate or QQI (formerly FETAC) results or equivalent. If a candidate has submitted both, the CAO will select the strongest of the two.



- Mature applicants may be interviewed for a place on a course. If you have enquiries about CIT's admissions procedures, please contact:

Admissions Office,  
Cork Institute of Technology,  
Bishopstown, Cork.  
T: 021 433 5037 E: [admissions@cit.ie](mailto:admissions@cit.ie)

Applications for Advanced Entry (post 1st Year of a course) are made directly to the CIT Admissions Office and not through the CAO.

There are a small number of full-time undergraduate courses that require direct application through the Institute and not through the CAO. Please see below.

### 3

## SPECIFIC COURSES DESIGNED FOR MATURE STUDENTS

CIT has a policy of increasing participation in higher education by people such as mature students and unemployed adults. The Institute aims to provide an accessible and supportive route to a higher education qualification. The below named courses are offered with family friendly timetabling, together with on-going support during your time in education. Application for these courses is not through the Central Applications Office (CAO). Direct application to CIT is required.

### CIT Courses

- **Higher Certificate in Business for Mature Students – Level 6**

This course is designed to equip mature students with skills and knowledge to avail of new business-related employment opportunities and an opportunity to progress to degree level following completion of the course. For further information and an application form, contact Louise Byrne, Dept of Management & Enterprise, T: 021 433 5806 or by E: [louise.byrne@cit.ie](mailto:louise.byrne@cit.ie).

- **Higher Certificate in Science in Good Manufacturing Practice & Technology – Level 6**

This is a 17-month accelerated technician course which emphasises Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) & Technology targeting the Food, Pharmaceutical, Biopharmaceutical and Medical Devices manufacturing sectors. The principal aim of this course is to provide a nationally accredited educational programme in Good Manufacturing Practice and Technology for people keen to work in production, quality assurance or validation roles within leading Food, Pharmaceutical, Chemical, Biotechnology and Medical Devices manufacturing companies. For further information and an application form, contact Elaine McCarthy, Dept of Process, Energy & Transport Engineering, T: 021 433 5150 or by E: [elaine.mccarthy@cit.ie](mailto:elaine.mccarthy@cit.ie).



Each year a range of information events are held to provide information to prospective mature students. One of these is the CIT Mature Student Information Evening. Representatives from the various academic disciplines in CIT are also available to speak to prospective mature students about course requirements and content.

For further information please contact

**Christine Nolan** T: 021 433 5138 E: christine.nolan@cit.ie or

**Sinead O'Neill** T: 021 433 5109 E: sinead.oneill@cit.ie

It is important to consider the financial implications of becoming a full time student. Early preparation is key to minimising financial issues that may arise during the academic year. This involves researching the cost of fees and other expenses associated with college life and familiarising yourself with any financial supports that you may be entitled to. The information below provides guidance on financial assistance available to students. It is important however that you engage in further research on this in relation to your own individual circumstances.

## STUDENT FEES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

- Higher Education Student Contribution
- Union of Students in Ireland (USI) Levy
- Tuition Fees

### Higher Education Student Contribution

The Student Contribution Charge for the academic year 2016/17 is €3,000. This is an annual charge which is set by the Government for all full-time students in higher education.

Students can apply to Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) for a grant which, if approved, may cover 100% of the Student Contribution Charge. For information on grants please visit [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie).

### Union of Students in Ireland (USI) Levy

The USI membership levy of €7.00 has been introduced as a result of a referendum where students opted to affiliate to the national Students' Union. This Levy is not covered by a SUSI grant and must be paid in September before the start of Semester 1.

## **EU Tuition Fees**

Many undergraduate students attending publicly funded higher education courses do not have to pay tuition fees. Under the terms of the Free Fees Initiative, the Government will pay these fees to the colleges instead.

Students undertaking a second undergraduate course, non-EU students, students studying by ACCS mode and students taking a year of a course for a second time (i.e. repeating a year/ level) may be liable for tuition fees.

## **Non-EU Fees**

Any student who does not meet the conditions of Free Fees or EU Fees will be liable for Non-EU Fees, regardless of nationality or citizenship. Students classified for fee purposes as Non-EU will not be permitted to change their fee status following admission.

## **Payment of Fees**

Students are notified of their fees by e-mail to their CIT student e-mail account, therefore it is important that students check their e-mail accounts regularly. Students who are awaiting grant approval can apply to pay their fees in monthly instalments pending the outcome of their SUSI application. Simply go to [www.mycit.ie/susi](http://www.mycit.ie/susi) and complete the instalment application form.

To make payments, students should logon to the online payments facility [www.cit.ie/pay](http://www.cit.ie/pay). You will need your student ID number (R000XXXXX), date of birth, and your Debit/ Credit card details if you have one. If not please contact the Fees Office in CIT at [fees@cit.ie](mailto:fees@cit.ie).

A receipt will be sent to your CIT e-mail account once the payment is made. You may also query your account balance from this link.

For further information on tuition fees please visit [www.cit.ie/coursefees](http://www.cit.ie/coursefees)

## **REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT**

All students who are successful in obtaining a place are required to complete the official CIT Registration Form before commencing or continuing their studies.

## **STUDENT GRANTS**

The student grant is the main source of financial assistance available from the Irish State for students in full-time higher education courses. The grant may cover 100% of the Student Contribution Charge (€3,000 in 2016/17) as well as providing a monthly Maintenance Grant which is paid directly into the student's bank account.

For eligible students, the grant is intended to assist with the various costs of participating in higher education. Students on part-time courses, access or foundation

courses (in higher education institutions) and short courses are not eligible to apply for a student grant.

Family and/or personal income is a key factor that will be assessed when applying for a student grant but there are also some other conditions. There is a facility on the SUSI website that can assist you to assess your eligibility and guide you through the application process.

If you think you are eligible for the student grant, you should apply for it as soon as possible. You do not need to wait until you receive an offer of a place or enrol in college. Only when your application has been completed in full and submitted to the grant-awarding authority can your eligibility be determined.

All new grant applications should be made online to Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI). Students can access the online system through [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie), [www.studentfinance.ie](http://www.studentfinance.ie); or [www.grantsonline.ie](http://www.grantsonline.ie).

## SUSI SUPPORT DESK

The SUSI Support desk is the single contact point for all e-mail and telephone queries. For opening times visit [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie).

- Email [support@susi.ie](mailto:support@susi.ie)
- Telephone 076 108 7874
- Facebook: Susi Support
- Twitter: Susi Helpdesk

## CONTINUING STUDENTS - GRANT RENEWALS 2016/17

Students who are currently in receipt of a grant and are progressing to the next year of their course will have their grant record reapplied to their account. Therefore, you will only be liable to pay the €7 USI Levy in September if SUSI are funding 100% of your fees. SUSI will notify the college directly if your grant has been renewed.

If your grant is not renewed by 31st October you will then become liable for the Semester 1 Fees of €1,500.

The Student Fees Office is located on the ground floor of the Administration Building adjacent to the Admissions Office, Bishopstown Campus.

### Opening Hours

Monday - Friday 9.30am - 12.30pm & 2.00pm - 4.00pm

T: 021 433 5440.

E: [fees@cit.ie](mailto:fees@cit.ie).

## BACK TO EDUCATION ALLOWANCE

The Back to Education Allowance (BTEA) allows people in receipt of certain social welfare payments to retain those payments whilst participating in approved full-time courses.

- Approved programmes range from foundation courses to postgraduate courses. You can work part-time without affecting your BTEA payment.
- Students entering a new course who are in receipt of the Back to Education Allowance can apply for the fees element of the Student Grant but will not be eligible for the maintenance element of the grant. Such students can apply under the Student Grant Scheme to have the Student Contribution Charge and any tuition fees payable for the course paid on their behalf. Visit [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie).
- Although you are not entitled to the maintenance component of the student grant, you must still submit a student grant application form to be assessed for a fee grant to pay your Student Contribution Charge, field trip costs and tuition fees (if payable).
- If you are getting a One Parent Family Payment or a Disability Payment (Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension or Illness Benefit) you can choose to stay on your current social welfare payment and apply for a student grant or you can choose to transfer to the BTEA, depending on which option benefits you most. In general, people who are studying full-time are not entitled to Rent Supplement unless they are getting BTEA.

For further information visit [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie) or contact your local Social Protection Office.



## STUDENT ASSISTANCE FUND

As part of an initiative to tackle educational disadvantage, the European Social Fund aided Student Assistance Fund has been made available to CIT by the Department of Education and Skills.

The objective of the fund is to provide financial assistance to full time undergraduate/post graduate students in need of such support. The fund is intended to support students whose participation in higher education would otherwise be at risk as a direct result of financial difficulties.

### Who can apply?

Applicants must be students registered with CIT participating on a higher education course of not less than one-year duration leading to an under-graduate or post-graduate qualification. Applicants on the Back to Education Allowance will also be considered.

Application forms are available from the Accommodation Office, 1st Floor, Student Centre, Bishopstown Campus and are available to pick up at various other locations across the Institute.

For further information see:

[http://www.mycit.ie/access\\_disability/student-assistance-fund/](http://www.mycit.ie/access_disability/student-assistance-fund/)

T: Deirdre Falvey 021-4335750 or E: [student.assistance@cit.ie](mailto:student.assistance@cit.ie).

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### STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES/HEALTH CONDITIONS/DISABILITIES

If you are a new student or are already studying in CIT and feel like you may need some extra support due to your learning difference, disability, or health condition, you may need to contact us and register with us for supports. As part of the Access Service, the CIT Disability Support Service (DSS) is fully committed to students' equal access to an inclusive education. We can guide and support you to access your courses and achieve your academic goals. We work hard to ensure that the DSS is a place that students can go to in confidence to look for support and help.

Please see the Student Guide to the DSS which is available on our website - [www.mycit.ie/access\\_disability/disability-support-service/dss-handbook](http://www.mycit.ie/access_disability/disability-support-service/dss-handbook).

If you have any queries or want to make an appointment at any time during the year, please email [dss@cit.ie](mailto:dss@cit.ie) or ring/text us:

#### **Laura O'Rourke**

Disability Support Officer

T: 021 433 5107

Text: 087 177 6755

#### **Ruth Murphy**

Disability Projects Officer

T: 021 433 5137

Text: 087 138 9772

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is where formal recognition is given for what you already know prior to starting on any CIT accredited programme or module. Programmes which are accredited by professional or any external awarding bodies may have their own procedures for RPL which you should refer to.

The RPL system allows for learning to be measured and recognised regardless of where it was gained. This means that credits and/or exemptions from modules on CIT courses can be granted where you can show that you have achieved sufficient prior learning.

### **There are two main categories within RPL**

1. The recognition of learning which has already had formal certification within the higher education system in Ireland or abroad, often referred to as formal learning;
2. The recognition of learning which has been gained through experiences in the workplace, in voluntary work or elsewhere, usually referred to as experiential learning.

In CIT RPL can be used to gain:

- An exemption or mark for a module or for a number of modules;
- Entry to a course in first year where an applicant may not meet the standard entry requirements;
- Advanced entry to a course at a stage other than first year.

Support for the application process is provided through the RPL Coordinator in CIT.

### **Enquiries can be made to**

T: 021 433 5132

E: [RPL@cit.ie](mailto:RPL@cit.ie)

RPL Coordinator,

CIT Extended Campus,

Cork Institute of Technology,

Bishopstown.

[www.cit.ie/rpl](http://www.cit.ie/rpl)

CIT operates a scheme called the Cork Colleges Progression Scheme (CCPS) which in addition to the general QQI (formerly FETAC) entry arrangements, allows for the admission of students who successfully complete courses in Further Education (FE) Colleges in Cork. Under the CCPS a number of courses in CIT are linked to certain courses in the FE colleges. CIT reserves a number of places on its linked courses for applicants achieving specified levels and other requirements in their awards. Ask at your Cork Further Education College for more details, or refer to the following web link [www.cit.ie/prospectivestudents/ccps/](http://www.cit.ie/prospectivestudents/ccps/).

- Complete your CAO application in plenty of time. **DO NOT LEAVE IT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!**
- Don't put all your eggs in one basket! Keep your options open when applying for courses. Applying for one course does not necessarily mean that you will be successful in securing a place on that course.
- Establish your interest in a course.
- Research the course(s) that you are applying for, so that you know exactly what you are undertaking. Talk to current students or graduates about subjects and courses which you have an interest in and consider where your strengths lie. Become familiar with the application process. Visit the CAO website and read the information carefully relating to mature student applications.
- If submitting a Statement of Interest as part of a CAO application, ensure that it provides a comprehensive account of your skills and qualifications and their relevance to the course(s) being applied for. If you are applying to more than one college or for more than one course then you will need to provide a more general Statement of Interest.
- Contact the Course Coordinator or Head of Department about your course of interest and discuss with them what information they seek in an application from a mature applicant.
- Check the following:
  - ✓ Is there a requirement to have a background in specific subjects for entry to the course?
  - ✓ How many hours a week will the timetable require?
  - ✓ See <http://modules.cit.ie>
- Be aware of the implications that returning to full time education will have on your life, particularly in the following areas:
 

✓ Financial	✓ Work
✓ Family	✓ Social outlets



This will allow you to organise and prioritise commitments prior to beginning your course. Where applicable, it is strongly advisable to apply for financial assistance in advance of taking up a programme of study.

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## MATURE STUDENT SUPPORT

The Mature Student Officer is located in the CIT Access Service, Ground Floor, Student Centre, CIT which is open Monday - Friday from 9am - 5pm. Prospective students and current students are welcome to make an appointment to speak with the Mature Student Officer during these times.

### PRE-ENTRY SUPPORT FOR PROSPECTIVE MATURE STUDENTS

**Mature Student Open Evening** – see page 7 for more information. Each year an Information Evening is held in mid-end November in CIT which provides information on; the variety of courses available in CIT, the application process, supports available to mature students, fees and financial support etc.

**CAO Information Session** – In January each year an evening workshop is held which provides a practical guide to the CAO application process for mature students.

**Information Sessions** – the Mature Student Officer visits Further Education Colleges, Community & Training Organisations, and participates in adult education events to provide information on educational opportunities for mature students in CIT.

### Maths for Matures Programme

CIT delivers a Maths for Matures Programme to provide prospective mature students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability in mathematics when applying for science/engineering courses in CIT. The programme, which is typically delivered over 6 evenings, consists of an elementary mathematics course followed by a brief exam on the work covered and a feedback session. Students who undertake the programme can include the results of the exam with their CAO application for CIT courses.

The purpose of the programme is to:

- (1) acquaint prospective mature students who are applying for entry into Year 1 of a full-time undergraduate programme of study in CIT, with some of the elementary mathematics that they will encounter in the first year of an engineering/science programme;
- (2) provide an opportunity to prospective mature students to demonstrate their ability and aptitude in mathematics;

- (3) provide the Head of Department with a test result which would demonstrate if the prospective student has a suitable aptitude for mathematics in relation to the course(s) being applied for.

For further information please visit:

<http://www.cit.ie/prospectivestudents/maturestudents1/mathsformatures> or contact

Sinéad O'Neill, Mature Student Officer, T: 021 433 5109 E: [maturestudent@cit.ie](mailto:maturestudent@cit.ie) or  
Dr Áine Ní Shé, Head, Department of Mathematics, CIT, E: [aine.nishe@cit.ie](mailto:aine.nishe@cit.ie).

## ENTRY SUPPORT FOR MATURE STUDENTS

### **Preparatory Maths Programme**

This programme is open to mature students who have accepted a place on a course in CIT. It is an interactive taught programme run over several days prior to the commencement of the academic year. The aim of this programme is to offer an introduction in the following topics to mature students embarking on a course in CIT:

- Algebra
- Statistics and Probability
- Functions
- Trigonometry
- Calculus

These topics form a good base for students starting Mathematics in first year. The programme is intended to familiarise students with the basic mathematics required for their programme of study and to increase confidence in engaging with maths in a classroom environment.

### **Mature Student Orientation Programme**

In early September an Orientation Programme is delivered to incoming mature students, which provides the opportunity to:

- Meet fellow mature students
- Hear the experiences of current & past mature students in CIT
- Become familiar with the CIT Campus
- Be introduced to the CIT email and IT system
- Receive information and advice on student supports and meet student support staff.

A general Induction Programme is provided to all students in CIT at the beginning of the academic year.

## **Get off to a Good Start at CIT**

The Good Start programme is delivered during the first 5 weeks of Semester 1 and offers a range of academic and social activities and events which aim to ensure that you successfully make the transition into third level education. Good Start aims to help you find your way by focusing on belonging, success, motivations and independence; the whole student experience. The Good Start programme of fun, social, sporting, study and support sessions and events will help you become familiar with the campus, settle in, meet people, get prepared for study and find out who's here to help. Look out for the Good Start Ambassadors; they are here to help you settle in. For more information check out the Good Start website: [www.mycit.ie/goodstart](http://www.mycit.ie/goodstart).

## **POST ENTRY SUPPORT**

### **Mature Student Support Network**

This is a support programme for mature students. A specific programme of events is organised annually to provide relevant supports to mature students in CIT.

Examples of support workshops include:

- Academic Writing Skills
- Use of the Scientific Calculator
- Financial supports
- Specific subject areas

### **Mature Learning Support Service**

The aim of the Mature Learning Support Service is to provide support for undergraduate, full-time mature students regarding research, reports, and assignments for their course of study in CIT. The service provides a tutor to work with students on a one to one basis or with small groups, assisting students to develop sound research, planning and writing skills, proofread, edit and organise course work, and manage deadlines and priorities required for their course of study.

For further information please visit:

[http://www.mycit.ie/access\\_disability/mature-students/](http://www.mycit.ie/access_disability/mature-students/)

or contact Sinéad O'Neill, Mature Student Officer, T: 021 433 5109

E: [maturestudent@cit.ie](mailto:maturestudent@cit.ie).

## **Student Services**

- Access & Disability Support Service
- Student Health Centre
- Careers Service
- Counselling Service
- Academic Learning Centre
- Academic Success Coaching
- PALS (Peer Assisted Learning & Support), PALS Study, PALS Peer Mentoring
- Students' Union
- Clubs & Societies including Mature Student Society
- Chaplaincy
- Accommodation Office

Further information on all of the above can be found at [www.mycit.ie](http://www.mycit.ie).



## LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

If full time study is not an option for you there are hundreds more courses offered on a part-time or evening basis, which are described in the "CIT Continuing Education Courses Handbook". Applications for part-time and evening courses is directly to the college not through the CAO.

For information on part-time courses at CIT visit <http://www.cit.ie/parttime> or contact

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Secretary

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**CIT Admissions Office**

T: 021 433 5037 / 5042 E: [admissions@cit.ie](mailto:admissions@cit.ie)

**Course Fees**

T: 021 433 5440 / E: [fees@cit.ie](mailto:fees@cit.ie)

**Grants**

T: 021 433 5442 E: [grants@cit.ie](mailto:grants@cit.ie)

**Recognition of Prior Learning**

T: 021 433 5132 E: [rpl@cit.ie](mailto:rpl@cit.ie)

[www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)

[www.cit.ie](http://www.cit.ie)

[www.cit.ie/access](http://www.cit.ie/access)

[www.cit.ie/maturestudent](http://www.cit.ie/maturestudent)

[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

[www.mycit.ie/access\\_disability/mature-students](http://www.mycit.ie/access_disability/mature-students)

[www.mycit.ie/careers](http://www.mycit.ie/careers)

[www.mycit.ie/counselling](http://www.mycit.ie/counselling)

[www.qqi.ie](http://www.qqi.ie)

[www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie)

[www.studentfinance.ie](http://www.studentfinance.ie)

[www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)

Level 6	Higher Certificate
Level 7	Bachelor Degree
Level 8	Honours Bachelor Degree
Level 9	Masters
Level 10	PhD
ACCS	Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects
BTEA	Back to Education Allowance
CAO	Central Applications Office
CCPS	Cork Colleges Progression Scheme
FE	Further Education
QQI	Quality & Qualifications Ireland
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning



**We hope that many of your questions have been answered in this publication and through the web links provided, particularly in relation to the application process, financial support etc. However many people often have very practical questions relating to the day to day college experience some of which are answered below.**

### **Will I be the oldest mature student on campus?**

This is a common concern. The likelihood is that you will not be, however even if you are, do not let this discourage you. One of our eldest mature students entered CIT at 65 years old and loved every minute of his experience here! The reality is that you will be part of a mature student group that constitutes over 12% of the total student population. Close to 1000 mature students study on a full time basis every year here in CIT.

### **What about childcare while I am studying?**

Unfortunately CIT does not have a childcare facility on campus. However, there are some childcare providers in the area. The Student Assistance Fund (referred to on page 11 of this booklet) can provide some financial support towards the cost of childcare. Funding is awarded on a case by case basis.

### **What will my timetable be like?**

Timetables vary between courses but entering Year 1 of a full time undergraduate course of study in CIT will require commitment for class contact time from Monday to Friday and generally from 9.00am-5.00pm. You will also need to set aside study time for coursework outside of these hours.

### **How will I manage college work and family life?**

There is no doubt that beginning a full time course in higher education is a big commitment. Time management is key. Use your time wisely and ensure to reserve time to relax and spend time with family. There are a range of supports available that will help you to manage your workload and optimise your time. One such support is the Mature Learning Support Service. It is highly recommended that you avail of these supports particularly in the early stages of your course to enable you to gain the skills necessary to undertake academic work as efficiently as possible and to maximise these skills in helping you to get course work submitted.



## I am worried about my ability in maths and some other subjects, will there be assistance available to me while studying in CIT?

Yes. The Academic Learning Centre provides free academic support sessions across a broad spectrum of disciplines including Science, Engineering, Computing, Business, and Building & Architecture. Students can drop-in to the Academic Learning Centre at allocated times where a lecturer will be available to discuss any queries they might have on a subject. Many students have difficulty with mathematics hence there are several academic support sessions provided in mathematics every week. Specific subject support sessions are provided where feasible, in response to students' learning needs and demand. If you have specific needs in relation to subject support you may contact the Mature Student Officer to discuss this.

## Is there any assistance with using computer packages?

Many mature students may not have strong IT (Information Technology) Skills when entering college. There are short courses in IT skills offered specifically for mature students through the Mature Student Officer. These offer assistance with packages such as WORD, Excel, PowerPoint. It is advisable however that you develop your IT Skills as much as possible before embarking on a full time course in CIT be it through a short course or seeking help from a friend, relative or other resource.

## What is a module?

A module is a unit of learning covering a particular subject. Students studying a full time undergraduate course in CIT typically study 6 modules in one semester.

## What is a semester?

A semester is a term in the academic year. It is worth 30 credits and typically consists of six modules. Students are assessed on these six modules during that semester and begin six new modules in the next semester.



# MATURE STUDENT EXPERIENCES

**Bernadette Lehane, Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Marketing, Year 4, talks about her experience of being a mature student in CIT.**

I am a mature student in CIT going into my 4th year of Marketing and I am thoroughly enjoying it. If you had asked me years ago what I thought of school, I more than likely would have rolled my eyes and groaned! It wasn't for me and I didn't really have an interest in any of the subjects apart from Art.

After leaving school while working part time, I did a couple of Post Leaving Cert courses but they never really came to much. I travelled for a bit, living in Paris, London and Dublin for a few years but decided to come back to Cork when my eldest son was about to start preschool.

I worked for many years in semi-skilled jobs which I enjoyed and gave me the chance to meet many people but I always knew I could do better. By 2012, I found myself in the position of being a single parent of two boys and in a job where my hours were being cut drastically. I was worried that I would end up with no job and I didn't have any qualifications that I could fall back on.

So I decided to do a FETAC Level 5 General Studies course in a Further Education College. I really didn't think I would be able to do it and was very anxious about going back to education. To my surprise, I was definitely well able for it and my 'inner nerd' was released after being suppressed and totally ignored for decades! I had the bug for learning and continued on to CIT, in 2013, through a link from my FETAC course and I began a two year Level 6 Higher Certificate in Business Studies course.

When I completed the Higher Certificate in Business Studies, I was determined to get a degree. We were given a choice of either going down the routes of Management, Accounting or Marketing. I chose Marketing as I felt I could use my creative side in this field. I have just completed my Ordinary Degree (3rd) year and I am now determined to get my Higher Degree.

I have been given so many opportunities since I began in CIT and I have thrown myself into various roles such as Student Leader and Class Rep. These roles have given me the chance to work with various



staff members in different departments and students that were years younger than me. As a mature student, I was initially worried about mixing with younger students, that I would have nothing in common with them and that I would not be at the same level as them but I soon realised that I had plenty of life experience and age is not a barrier between friends.

There have been obstacles along the way such as managing financially and being a parent at the same time as being a student. Financially, I had to make a few sacrifices but I am looking at it as short term slump. As for my two boys, they always come first and they are my inspiration to continue to better myself. I have been known to be studying in the car at the side of a pitch while one of them is playing a match; one of my solutions to mixing family and college life!

Looking back, I can't believe I have come so far in my educational journey and the time seems to have gone so fast. I have enjoyed every minute of it and if I had to do it all again, I would.



# MATURE STUDENT EXPERIENCES

John Dunlea, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Care Graduate, talks about his experience of returning to full time education.

I graduated from CIT in October 2014 with a Bachelor of Arts, First Class Honours Degree in Social Care. I came to CIT via a FETAC Level 5 course in Social Studies at the tender age of 48. Before applying for the course at CIT I had put a lot of serious thought and research into what I really wanted to do. Social Care ticked all the boxes for me.

The first challenge at college was accepting that of all of the mature students, I was the 'most mature', in age at least! It did not stop at that, the challenges just kept on coming. But college is just like everything else in life, what one puts into it, one gets out of it. Other challenges faced were the volume of work, and the quality that work needed to be to achieve the grades I wanted to record. I always bore in mind that I was not going to get another swing at this. This was my one shot at this degree, and I wanted to give it my best. With six modules in a semester the assignments are issued at a steady rate and the best way to get them done is by not procrastinating. Hit the ground running and you stay on top of things.

There are many supports at the college to assist any student who identifies that they need them. The trick is to recognise the need early enough and go seek it. Personally I utilised many of them; I found the supplementary academic writing skills classes for mature students to be invaluable; I visited the wonderful people in Chaplaincy for a cuppa and a natter; I attended counselling to gain the skills to help me manage when balancing college, work and home life was becoming a challenge. Joining one of the many societies is a great way to socialise. And before I left college, the CIT Careers Service educated me in how to prepare a CV and cover letter; I have never been short of work since. Bear in mind the staff in the Access Service are only too willing to try and put in place supports to assist students if they are identified and reported.

The greatest resource for any student though is the lecturers. The lecturers at CIT want students to flourish. They will readily assist any student who shows commitment. That means, turn up for lectures and tutorials and engage.



Although I found the work very challenging at times, I loved my course and never doubted that attending CIT was exactly where I was supposed to be at that time in my life. What I liked about the college is that it is not an impersonal place, even with so many students it is so easy to get to know a vast amount of people, staff and students. Although I was never short of company within my own group of classmates, the monthly coffee mornings arranged for mature students was a fantastic opportunity to meet fellow matures and trade stories.

I am grateful to CIT for the education that I received there and the employment I was afforded due to it, which commenced following practice placement in year one. Today I am employed as a Youth Worker with Cloyne Diocesan Youth Services and I am also employed by Cork Education and Training Board as an Assistant Coordinator with a Local Training Initiative based in Mallow.

Truthfully, I have made some dodgy choices in my life (be honest, haven't we all) but choosing to attend CIT was not one of them. If I had to go around again it would be my first choice! If you choose to go there I have no doubt that you will enjoy the experience that Cork Institute of Technology is.



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