

Ó Fiaich Institute Policy Documentation

Admissions Policy

2021/22

Ó FIAICH INSTITUTE



Ó Fiaich Institute
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www.ofi.ie

COVID-19 Advice and Information

We are working to ensure to manage any remaining impact of COVID-19 on students who are interested in pursuing a course with OFI in 2022. We look forward to welcoming a new cohort of students in Autumn 2022 and exact dates will be confirmed when Leaving Certificate students calculated results/CAO offers are confirmed.

Depending on prevailing COVID-19 health advice, changes to the application process may be imposed to ensure the safety and well-being of both prospective learners and staff. In all cases the new systems will be as flexible as possible. While every effort is being made to support applicants, OFI will be guided at all times by advice and instruction from Health Service Executive, Department of Education and Skills, SOLAS and Louth Meath Education and Training Board with regards processing and admissions to the Institute and indeed the commencement of courses in 2021-22.

Policy Statement

Ó Fiaich Institute is committed to ensuring that its admission procedures for learners are transparent and fair and that potential learners are made aware of the process involved. A statement of the entry requirements for each programme is available through the website and in the prospectus.

Applications for full-time PLC courses and higher education courses may be made online at: www.ofi.ie

1. Application Arrangements

The process for gaining access to full time courses at Ó Fiaich Institute consists of several sequential stages:

- Application
- Interview
- Selection and notification
- Garda vetting
- Registration
- Induction

Ó Fiaich Institute produces an annual prospectus that contains details of each course. Course information are also available on our website at www.ofi.ie. Interviews will only be allocated on the basis of the receipt of a completed online application.

2. Entry Requirements

QQI Level 5 Courses

- All our Level 5 PLC courses are open to school leavers (Leaving Certificate/Leaving Certificate Applied Students/A Levels/GCSE or equivalent), QQI Level 4 graduates and mature applicants.

QQI Level 6 Courses

- Learners should have obtained a QQI Level 5 Award or equivalent in the relevant vocational area.
- Entry may be subject to interview.
- In the case of oversubscription to a course, selection of suitable learners may need to reflect the learner's academic performance/attendance at Level 5 entry course.

Places will be allocated on the above criteria and will be dealt with on a first come basis.

Exceptions

- Where applicants present with references or testimonials to support their application for a specific course.
- Mature learners >23 years may apply to all courses without formal qualifications. These applications will be evaluated on previous experience, references and/or testimonials as well as performance at the interview.
- Prior work or academic experience that has provided competence and knowledge, either directly or in a related vocational field will be considered for those who do not hold formal qualifications as identified above.

3. International Learners

Ó Fiaich Institute welcomes applications from international learners, including:

- International learners who are EU nationals
- International learners from Non-EU countries
- International learners with special leave to remain in Ireland

This following information aims to assist international learners who wish to study at the college in the next academic year:

International Learners from Non-EU Countries Currently Resident in Ireland

It is the responsibility of the prospective learner to deal with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Under no circumstances will the college become involved in this process. Learners who are granted a learner visa must provide the college with a copy of this documentation.

International Learners from Non-EU countries, with the exception of applicants who have special leave to remain in Ireland, are obliged to pay a Department of Education & Skills fee of €3,653 plus the relevant course fees. This fee does not include the cost of textbooks, government levy or exam fees. Learners, who do not succeed in acquiring a visa, are entitled to a refund. Those requiring a refund must produce the receipt issued by the college as proof of the fee paid.

Where an international protection applicant, who has permission to work, is accepted onto a PLC course, no international fees will apply.

International Learners from Non-EU Countries with Special Leave to Remain in Ireland

All applicants with special leave to remain in Ireland must produce appropriate documentation to verify that status.

Applicants in this section generally are in one of the following categories:

- Refugee Status.
- Asylum seeker with the right to work.
- Persons with leave to remain on humanitarian grounds.
- Parent of an Irish born child.
- Persons in the State as the spouse of an EU national where the EU national has moved from one country to another within the EU to work.

Those with refugee status, or those who are parents of an Irish born child or those married to an EU national or those with leave to remain on humanitarian grounds or those who are asylum seekers with the right to work are not subject to DES tuition fees.

4. Interviews

Applicants to certain courses may be required to attend an interview. In this incidence, the procedure is:

- Interviews for places on courses are held in March, April and May of the preceding academic year.
- Applicants are called for interview using a standard letter stating the date, time and venue of the interview and outlining where applicable, what documentation applicants are required to bring.
- To minimise disruption this is scheduled, where possible, when normal classes are not in progress.
- Interview boards for each course are composed of two people. On the day of interview, clear signage directs applicants to the interview venue. Staff members are available to assist with queries and directions.
- Applicants are interviewed according to interview criteria and the associated guidelines.

The purpose of the Interview process is:

- a) To assess the applicant's suitability for the course that they are being interviewed for, and whether they can benefit from this particular course.
- b) To guide the applicant to a more suitable option, if necessary.

5. Processing Of Applications

Suitable applicants are allocated a place on their course of first choice. However, if the number of suitable applicants exceeds the number of available places on a particular course, applicants may be offered their second course choice. In this incidence, they will also be placed on a waiting list for their first course choice, and will be offered a place, should a vacancy arise.

Likewise, if a particular course is under-subscribed and cannot proceed, suitable applicants will be offered their second or alternative course choice.

Applicants who do not indicate a further choice on their application form will be contacted directly by the office, in the event that their course is over/under subscribed.

Unsuitable applicants will receive an unsuccessful letter. This letter will include directional advice. Following the processing of applications, Ó Fiaich Institute will issue the appropriate letter to the applicant.

6. Right of Refusal by Ó Fiaich Institute and LMETB

The formation of courses is subject to a minimum enrolment. Ó Fiaich Institute and LMETB reserve the right of admission to any course provided through Ó Fiaich Institute and LMETB. All disputes in relation to admission will be referred to the Chief Executive of LMETB. Appeals against a refusal to admit should be made in writing to the Chief Executive, LMETB, Administrative Offices, Abbey Road, Abbeyland South, Navan, County Meath.

7. Method of Collecting Payment For Course Fees Due

The Institute accepts payment via:

- Online (through credit or debit card)
- Bank Transfer

No cash payments will be accepted.

All student fees are required to be collected by a specified due date. The specific deadlines are as follows for the various fees:

- **Registration Fee** – must be paid in full by registration day in August of each year.
- **Course Materials Fee / Additional Course Fees** – must be paid before commencing your course in September.
- **Government PLC Levy** – payment in full by or proof of exemption must be supplied to the administration before commencing your course in September.
- **Examination Fees** – payment in full on commencement of your programme.

All fees must be paid online with a Credit/Debit card in advance of course commencement. All fees are subject to change. Refunds will not be made by OFI after the first Friday in October. All requests for refunds must be made by emailing info@ofi.ie. Refund of fees will be decided by the Principal of the college on a case by case basis

8. LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES

Ó Fiaich Institute is committed to a policy of equal opportunity in education and to ensuring that learners with a disability have complete and equitable access to all aspects of college life as can be reasonably be provided.

The college will take reasonable steps to ensure that it does not place a learner with a disability at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled learner.

Learners who have a disability and wish to avail of support should contact the Course Coordinator as soon as possible. **Applications for reasonable accommodations must be submitted on the commencement of your programme.** All data supplied by the applicant with respect to special educational needs shall be subject to Data Protection procedures, in line with the Data Protection Policy of LMETB.

9. DATA PROTECTION POLICY OF LMETB

A copy of the full Data Protection Policy for LMETB is available at <http://louthmeath.etb.ie>.