

# Blackrock Further Education Institute: Application and Admissions Procedures

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## Introduction

Blackrock Further Education Institute (BFEI) is an open access College of Further Education, which welcomes all learners.

The Institute provides a range of educational programmes which support lifelong learning opportunities for all members of the community. It is envisaged that these programmes and services will enable students to develop to their full potential and to participate fully as members of society and thus contribute to the social, economic and cultural development of the community locally, nationally and internationally.

These procedures are applicable to all applicants who apply for a place on a full-time course.

## Entry Requirements

The entry requirements for each course are outlined in the Institute's brochure and on the Institute's website [www.bfei.ie](http://www.bfei.ie). In some cases, entry requirements are determined solely by the Institute and in others in conjunction with professional bodies. Applicants who do not meet entry criteria should make direct contact with the Institute to explore their application on an individual basis. Mature students may be exempt from standard entry requirements.

## Application Process

1. The Institute opens for applications in January each year. While applicants are advised to apply early, applications will be accepted up to the end of September subject to places being available.
2. Applications are made online at [www.bfei.ie](http://www.bfei.ie). Applicants are not charged an application fee.
3. The Institute endeavours to provide appropriate supports for applicants with disabilities, physical or mental health conditions, and/or specific learning difficulties within the limits of available resources. **Applicants, requiring supports, are required to complete a Supplementary Application Form.** They may be entitled to support under the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Fund for Students with Disabilities. Applicants who require very specific support may not be able to commence a course if the supports are not or cannot be put in place before course commencement. Further information is available from the Admissions Office or on the Institute's website.
4. Additional information for international applicants and applicants who are funded under the Vocational Education Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) or in receipt of the Back to Education Allowance (BTEA) is available from the Admissions Office and on the Institute's website.
5. The provision of false or inaccurate information by applicants will render an application null and void.

6. Applicants will initially receive an email acknowledgement of their application.
7. Places will be offered, on a first come basis, subject to the applicant meeting the entry requirements for the course and subject to a place being available. Courses are delivered in English, therefore, applicants whose first language is not English may be required to take an English Language Competency test to ascertain their English language competency before an offer will be made.
8. Applicants are required to fully inform themselves about the course for which they have applied. To assist with this, applicants will be invited to attend an advisory meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to offer guidance and to ensure course suitability. Applicants will also be advised about course costs and the registration process at this meeting.
9. Applicants will be required to confirm acceptance of their place by paying a non-refundable €40 acceptance fee. Fees can be paid online using a debit or credit card. Alternatively, fees can be paid by cheque, postal order or bank draft made payable to BFEI (Blackrock Further Education Institute). Cash will not be accepted.
10. Early acceptance of an offer is advisable in order to ensure a place. Failure to confirm acceptance of a place will result in the place being offered to another applicant where courses are over-subscribed.
11. Where there are more applicants than places on a course, a waiting list will be formed. Alternatively, an applicant may be offered a place on a different course, subject to a place being available and subject to meeting the entry requirements. Where an applicant declines a place on the alternative course, the applicant will be placed on a waiting list for their original choice.
12. In the event that an applicant does not meet the entry requirements or is deemed unsuitable for a course, an alternative course within the Institute may be offered, subject to a place being available.
13. In the event of the cancellation of a course (due to insufficient enrolment, resourcing difficulties etc.) the enrolled applicant/s will be notified of the cancellation of the course as soon as is practicable. Applicants may be offered a place on a different course, subject to a place being available. Where an applicant declines a place on the alternative course, the acceptance fee paid will be refunded to the applicant on request.

## **Registration Process**

1. Applicants who have accepted their place will be provided with details, in writing, of the registration process in August.

## **2. Course Fees**

Applicants must pay all course fees on or before the date of the registration meeting. Full details of all fees and exemptions are issued in writing to applicants. Fees include:

- a. PLC Government Levy (€200) - some applicants may be exempt\* from this fee
- b. Institute Student Services Charge (€150)
- c. Exam fees (vary from course to course) - some applicants may be exempt\* from this fee
- d. Product fees (applicable on some courses)
- e. Non-EU tuition fee, if applicable (€3,653)

Failure to complete the registration process by paying all course fees on or before the date of the registration meeting will result in the place being offered to another applicant where courses are over-subscribed. It may be possible to pay fees in instalments.

*\*Details of exemptions and refunds are outlined in BFEI's Fee Payment and Refund Policy.*

### **3. Registration Meeting**

Applicants will be required to attend a registration meeting in late August. Applicants who cannot attend this meeting should send a family member/friend in their place or notify the Institute immediately by email at office@bfei.ie so that an alternative arrangement can be made.

The following documentation should be supplied at the registration meeting:

- a. The original and a photocopy of relevant educational certification e.g. Leaving Certificate Results, QQI results etc.
- b. Proof of identification (birth certificate **or** passport **or** driving licence).
- c. The original and a photocopy of a medical card for fee exemption purposes.
- d. Documentation detailing a disability, a physical or mental health condition, and/or a specific learning difficulty, if applicable, and if not previously submitted.
- e. Documentation detailing VTOS/BTEA eligibility, if applicable

Note: Non EU/EEA applicants are required to provide proof of Irish Residence Permit (IRP) (formerly called a GNIB card) - stamp 4 unless they have completed the Leaving Certificate in Ireland.

4. Letters confirming registration on a course and student ID cards will only be issued to students who have fully completed the registration process.
5. Only those who have fully completed the registration process will be considered registered BFEI students.

### **5. Induction**

Students will be required to attend an induction meeting in early September prior to course commencement.

## **Deferral Applicants**

1. Applicants who have been offered and have accepted a place on a course may defer this place for one year.
2. Applicants should submit a written request to defer to the Admissions Office as soon as possible but no later than the date of course commencement except in exceptional circumstances.
3. Applicants who do not accept their place in the subsequent year will forego their acceptance fee and the right of deferral.
4. Deferral prior to Course Commencement  
For agreed deferrals the acceptance fee, paid by the applicant, will be carried forward to the following year. Other fees paid will be refunded in full.
5. Deferral after Course Commencement  
In exceptional circumstances, a student may submit a written request to the Principal to defer a place after course commencement. It may also be necessary for a student to apply directly to an examining body in order to defer a place. The PLC Government Levy will not be refunded as this levy is not transferrable to the following year. Examination fees will only be refunded if the student has not been registered for exams. Other fees paid will be refunded, where applicable, on a pro rata basis, in accordance with our Fees and Refund policy.

## **Repeating Students**

Repeat students must re-apply and pay all relevant fees. A repeat application will be treated as a new application.

## **Returning Students**

Returning students should not assume automatic entitlement to enrolment in a subsequent year. An application to a second or subsequent year of a course or to another course will be treated as a new application. In addition, the applicant's previous punctuality, attendance and performance record may be taken into consideration.