

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. 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. 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.
3. Applicants are required to fully inform themselves about the course for which they are applying. Information on our courses is available in our College Brochure and on our website. Information is also provided at our Open Days.
4. Additional information for applicants with disabilities, physical or mental health conditions, and/or specific learning difficulties, 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. Applications are made online at www.bfei.ie. Applicants are not charged an application fee.
6. 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 SOLAS 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.

Please note: BFEI welcomes assistance dogs that are trained by an organisation accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and guide dogs trained by an organisation that is accepted by, and affiliated to, the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF). In order to protect the welfare of the animal and the safety of students and staff, no other animals or pets may be brought to the college.

7. The provision of false or inaccurate information by applicants will render an application null and void.
8. Applicants will initially receive an email acknowledgement of their application. This email will contain a username and password which allows access to BFEI's online admissions system eNROL. Access to eNROL is required to proceed with an application.
9. 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.
10. Applicants will be required to confirm acceptance of their place by paying a non-refundable €40 acceptance fee. Acceptance of an offer implies adherence to the regulations and requirements of the certifying body. Fees can be paid online using a debit or credit card. Cash will not be accepted.
11. Early acceptance of an offer is advisable. Failure to confirm acceptance of a place will result in the place being offered to another applicant where courses are over-subscribed.
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, any fees paid will be refunded to the applicant on request.

Registration Process

1. All applicants who have accepted their place will be provided with details, in writing, of the registration process in August and will be invited to register.
2. Applicants will be required to register for their course online. Registration will open in late August or early September.

3. Applicants who complete the registration process will secure their place on their chosen course. Early registration is advisable.
4. Applicants must pay all course fees at registration. Full details of all fees and exemptions are issued in writing to applicants. Fees include:
 - a) Institute Student Services Charge (€100)
 - b) Exam fees (vary from course to course) - some applicants may be exempt from this fee
 - c) Product fees (applicable on some courses)
 - d) Non-EU tuition fee, if applicable (€3,653)
5. **Failure to pay course fees will result in the place being offered to another applicant where courses are over-subscribed.**
6. In the event that a course becomes over-subscribed, it will be deemed that places will have been secured by applicants paying their course fees on a first come basis. A waiting list will be formed and over-subscribed applicants will be advised of their place on this waiting list. Waiting list applicants may be offered a place on an alternative 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 or will be refunded any fees paid.
7. It may be possible to pay fees in instalments – any such arrangement must be agreed in writing with the College. Details of exemptions and refunds are outlined in BFEI's Fee Payment and Refund Policy.
8. Medical card holders who wish to claim an exemption from QQI exam fees are required to provide a copy of their medical card.

Applicants may also be required to provide the following documentation at registration:

- a) Proof of identification (such as a valid passport or a current Irish driving licence or a National Age Card (issued by An Garda Síochána) or an identification form with a photograph signed by a member of An Garda Síochána)
- b) Leaving Certificate results (if under 21 years of age)
- c) 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. Non-EU/EEA nationals may also be required to provide proof of eligibility to participate in a PLC course.

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

Student ID Card

Registered students will be provided with a student ID card. As well as providing identification, this card allows contactless access to the building and to printing services on photocopiers. It can also be used to avail of a range of student discounts. Further information will be provided to students at induction.

Induction

Induction will take place in 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.