Candidate Brief for 2021/22

TU699 Access Foundation Programme

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Qualification awarded: Foundation Certificate in Higher Education (Access Foundation Programme).
Special Purpose Award Level 6 – National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).
Duration of programme: 1 academic year (September to May)
Location: TU Dublin Aungier Street

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Frequently asked questions:

1. What is the Access Foundation Programme?

The Access Foundation Programme (AFP) is a preparation for higher education programme. The programme prepares students personally and academically to pursue undergraduate programmes across a range of disciplines in TU Dublin (City, Tallaght and Blanchardstown campuses), including Science and Health, IT and Computing, Engineering and Built Environment, Social Science, Business, Hospitality, Arts and Tourism.

The programme is designed to provide an entry route into TU Dublin for (i) mature students and (ii) young adults who have experienced socio-economic and educational disadvantage.

Students who successfully complete the programme will be offered a place on a suitable undergraduate course at TU Dublin. We will offer support during the year to help students to identify undergraduate options at TU Dublin.

2. What are the entry requirements?

Mature Students (22 years of age or over on the 1st of January 2021):
There are no standard educational requirements, such as the Leaving Certificate, but all applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a mature student. Applicants who are 22 years of age or over on the 1st of January on the year of entry are considered mature students.
- Be able to demonstrate a desire to pursue third level programmes and a level of learning ability suitable to do so.
- Demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively in English at level suitable to commencing the programme.
- Candidates who already hold a higher education qualification (level 6 Higher Certificate award or above) with no evidence of deterioration in academic ability, will be considered ineligible.
- Non-EU/EEA candidates must be ordinarily resident in Ireland and have Visa/GNIB stamp 4 status or have international protection status in Ireland.
- Be ordinarily resident within the EU/EEA/Swiss Confederation for 3 out of the last 5 years.

Young Adults (21 years of age or younger on the 1st of January 2021):
This programme offers opportunities to young adults who have experienced socio-economic disadvantage. To be considered eligible applicants must satisfy three of the following SED indicators:

1. Parents have not gone to college (higher education).
2. Applicant has attended a DEIS school for at least 2 years.

3. Family income thresholds for 2019 are below the following:

Less than 4		€45,790
4-7		€50,325
More than 8		€54,630
Add €4,670 to the total income for every sibling/parent enrolled in a full time college, university or post leaving certificate further education course.		

4. Be from a socio economic group underrepresented in higher education.
5. Live in an area of urban or rural disadvantage.
6. Family received a means tested payment from the Department of Social Protection for at least 26 weeks in the tax year two years prior to the year of application. For example, applicants for 2021 must submit financial documentation for 2019.

Special consideration is given to applicants from the Traveller Community and applicants who are/were in the care of the state.

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- Candidates who already hold a higher education qualification (level 6 Higher Certificate award or above) with no evidence of deterioration in academic ability, will be considered ineligible.
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3. What do I study on the Programme?

Students study 8 modules each semester (6 core modules + 2 option modules). The core modules include Applied Writing, Maths, Study Skills and Research Skills, Information Technology, Communication Skills and Introduction to Higher Education. The programme offers 3 levels of maths modules which students choose from – Fundamental Maths, Intermediate Maths or Advanced Maths.

Through the core modules students will learn how to research and write academic work, and improve their information technology, communication and study skills.

Additionally students choose two modules designed to familiarise students in the academic disciplines they are interested in pursuing. These are:

Programme optional modules: students choose 2 each semester	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Introduction to Humanities	Approaches to Humanities
Introduction to Social Science	Applied Social Science
Introduction to Marketing	Introduction to Management
Introduction to Financial Accounting	Introduction to Economics
Computer Science Fundamentals (Networking Technologies)	Computer Science Fundamentals 2 (Programming)
Engineering (Electronic and Electrical)	Mechanical Engineering
Introduction to Chemistry	Applied Chemistry
Fundamental Physics	Applied Physics
Human Biology	Cell Biology and Genetics
Art Portfolio Preparation (year long)	Art Portfolio Preparation (year long)
Introduction to Irish History	Cultural Tourism

N.B. Modules offered on the Access Foundation Programme are subject to change.

4. What happens after I complete the programme?

Students who successfully complete the programme will be offered a place on a suitable undergraduate course at TU Dublin. We will offer support and CAO advice during the year to help students to identify options at TU Dublin. Offers of TU Dublin undergraduate places are made to students by an Admissions Board (through the CAO) based on students' academic performance on the programme.

Mature students may apply to other Higher Education Institutions through their CAO applications.

5. How many places are available?

There are a maximum of 150 places available.

6. Are there any fees for the programme?

The programme is free of charge. However students on the course are not eligible to apply for a Further Education / Higher Education grant. Students may be eligible for the Back to Education Allowance (see http://www.welfare.ie for more information).

7. What is the time commitment?

The programme is full-time with approximately 24 hours of class time per week and we expect about a further 20 hours of independent study. The programme runs from September to May each year.
Classes take place between the hours of 9am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

8. What expectations should students be aware of?

Participation: This programme requires a high degree of participation. Regular attendance at lectures, tutorials and student support sessions is expected. Showing up to classes prepared and participating in in-class discussion and debate are an important part of being successful on the programme.

Time Management: Students will develop their time management and planning skills in the Study Skills module. Students are expected to manage their workload across all modules and to meet assessment deadlines as they arise. Students are provided with an Assessment Schedule, detailing the dates of all assessments, at the beginning of each semester.

Assessments: Students are assessed through a variety of methods including essays and reports, online multiple choice questionnaires, in-class presentations and assessments, formal exams and group work activities. Much of this work is done outside of class and requires an ability to work independently.

Stay connected: Students should regularly check their TU Dublin email and Brightspace for updates. We will help set you up and get you started using your college email and other online resources in the Information Technology module.

Engagement: Where appropriate students are expected engage with programme and college supports including one-to-one and group support meetings with the programme coordinator.

Successful completion: Students are required to pass **all** of their assigned modules to successfully complete the programme and move on to undergraduate study through the AFP route.

Respect: We work to promote a positive teaching and learning environment based on respect for the individual learner and the diversity of the student body. Students are expected to respect their fellow peers and college staff.

9. How do I apply?

Applications are made directly to TU Dublin by way of an online application form available on the programme website. You do not apply through the CAO.

There are separate application forms for mature students and young adults. Please ensure you complete the correct form.

The application form requires the following:

a. A personal statement outlining your motivation for going to college and the reasons for choosing the Access Foundation Programme.
b. A copy of your qualifications, where possible.
c. Proof of identity for all applicants. If you are a Non-EU/EEA citizen please include a copy of your GNIB card showing stamp 4 status or proof of international protection status.

Applications are made directly to the Access Foundation Programme. Applicants are assessed for eligibility and suitability and those shortlisted will be called for interview. Offers are made to candidates based on the application form and interview and/or assessment.

You can find applications on TU Dublin's website at:
https://tudublin.ie/study/undergraduate/courses/access-foundation-programme-tu699/

Alternatively please email accessadmissions@tudublin.ie.

10. What are the closing dates for applying?
Please see the TU Dublin Access Foundation Programme website for details of closing dates.

11. Who should I contact for more information?

You may contact the Programme Coordinator at:
Email: accessadmissions@tudublin.ie

Or the Admissions Office at:
Email: admissions@tudublin.ie
Phone: 01-402 3445

If you are interested in the programme we recommend that you join the mailing list for updates regarding the application process and upcoming events. To join the mailing list, please email accessadmissions@tudublin.ie.

Watch a video about our students and programme at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbFz9D2NguE

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12. What our former students say

<u>Nioiclín Ní Mhurchú</u>

This programme changed my life for the better. The course gave me the confidence and the skills to progress with my studies. I was taught by some of the most talented and warm natured lecturers I have ever met. They will nurture, help and support you.

<u>Funmilayo Olajumoke Olalere</u>

If you have a dream for a career and a brighter future but you have been rejected for one reason or another, never give up. The TU Dublin Access Foundation Programme is a stepping-stone to a greater future. The best teachers I have ever met.

<u>Dee Poole</u>

A fantastic stepping-stone for anyone who wants to go to university. It gave me confidence in my abilities and some good friends. I couldn't have asked for more helpful lecturers and staff.

<u>Paul McManus</u>

Words cannot express how wonderful the Access Programme is. For myself, it allowed me to complete a Bachelors degree in Chinese and International Business. This journey has taken me all over Asia, it has provided me with the tools to continue in education and I am now in the process of completing my PhD in Knowledge Management.

<u>Katerina Gaydova:</u>

I was impressed with the design of the programme and the support I received during the whole course and afterwards. The lecturers are very helpful and supportive, giving lots of information and advice.

<u>Dee Conway</u>

The team found what I was interested in and guided me to a few possible career choices. Now with a degree under my belt, I managed to bag myself a job and am currently a software engineer, designing and coding HR software. The access programme changed my life, and that of my family.