

Mature Student Applicant Guide

Mac Léinn Lánfhásta
Treoir d'Iarrthóirí



Ollscoil
Teicneolaíochta
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic
Technological
University





Supporting our Mature Students

Ag Tacú lenár Mic Léinn Lánfhásta

Returning to education takes courage. Whether you want to gain a new qualification for your career or study something you have always been passionate about, we have the supports in place to help you succeed. Throughout this guide, we have outlined some of the common concerns or questions mature applicants have about studying full time at Atlantic Technological University (ATU).

Why Choose ATU?

Atlantic Technological University offers an exceptional higher educational experience. Building on the foundations of applied learning, our university focuses on research-informed teaching. We empower learners to realise their full potential, developing responsible citizens, critical thinkers, innovators, and problem solvers equipped for life-long learning.

Academic Supports

We understand that the first essay, assignment or report can be a challenge. We have invested heavily in our learning facilities to ensure our students are fully supported throughout their academic journey. Some of the supports our students can expect include learning support, maths support, academic writing, technology support, and a tailored induction to ensure the transition to university is a smooth one.

Student Supports

We pride ourselves on the welcoming and supportive environment our team create. Not just a number, our teams across our student services, health, counselling, disability, chaplaincy, and access offices are always on hand to help with any questions you may have. Our access teams are also there to help mature students settle into third level education.





Mature Applications

Iarratais
Lánfhásta

Atlantic Technological University offers its community of students a rich combination of academic and research excellence, quality of life and opportunity.

Mature Student Population

We welcome over 300 new mature students each academic year. This makes up on average 15% of our student population. Our mature student ages range from 23 to 70, with students studying a wide variety of programmes across our nine campuses.

Entry Requirements

The main criterion for qualification as a mature student in ATU is age. Each application is desk assessed by our admissions team. They will take account of your previous studies, work experience and personal interests. Check out individual programme webpages for any additional entry requirements or quotas.

Mature Student Age

To be considered a mature student, you are required to be 23 years or more, on or before January 1st of the year of entry.

Interview Requirements

We do not require mature applicants to attend for an interview unless it is a specific entry requirement on a chosen programme.

Timetable

Full-time students should expect to attend class five days per week, from Monday to Friday. Start times, finish times and hours per day will vary depending on the programme of study. Timetables for all new students will be issued during Induction.



Years of Study

The length of study will vary depending on what programme you choose. They are normally two to four years. We offer CAO undergraduate programmes at Level 6 Higher Certificate, Level 7 Ordinary Degree, and Level 8 Honours Degree. Students may progress through each level of study. We also offer a range of Level 9 and Level 10 Postgraduate options. Our prospectus, quick guides and webpages list the length of study and further details about each programme.

Other Ways to Learn

In addition to full time study, ATU offers over 300 online, flexible, and professional development courses. Built on our expertise and in collaboration with industry partners, our accredited courses support students at all stages, regardless of location, to access and continue lifelong learning, develop new skills, and advance their careers. Visit www.atu.ie/flexible for more. We also have a range of professional and trade apprenticeships www.atu.ie/apprenticeships

More Information

If you would like more information on our programmes or student life, please go to www.atu.ie/cao. We also have a dedicated mature student webpage at www.atu.ie/mature. Alternatively, if you would like to speak with a member of our team, please email cao@atu.ie.





Fees and Funding

Táillí agus Maoiniú

We know that funding studies can often be a concern. We can help support students who need financial assistance and ensure they have the means to succeed.

Fees

The Student Contribution Fee is normally €3,000 per academic year. At registration, students have the option to pay in full or in two instalments. A Tuition Fee is an additional fee. Fortunately, the Department of Education normally covers this fee under the Free Fees Initiative scheme for full-time students who are citizens of a member state of the EU and who meet the residency requirements.

SUSI Grant

SUSI (Student Universal Support Ireland) provides financial support to eligible students. There are two elements to the student grant – a maintenance grant (contribution towards living costs) and a fee grant (cover all or part of the student contribution fee plus the costs of essential field trips). The grant is based on a family's reckonable income. For more information, please go to www.susi.ie

Tax Relief

Students may be able to claim tax relief on paid fees at www.revenue.ie

Financial Assistance Options

There are a variety of funding options available to mature students. These include the 1916 Bursary Fund, Back to Education Allowance and Student Assistance Fund. For more information, please go to www.heai.ie/funding and keep in touch with the access office in the ATU campus you are applying to.

Applications and Offers

Iarratais agus
Tairiscintí

Join our welcoming environment, supportive lecturers and staff, and range of student supports to help make the transition to university life an easy one. The future is here.

How to Apply

Applicants must use the CAO system to apply for full-time undergraduate programmes in ATU. To make an application, please go to www.cao.ie. Applicants can choose to apply for up to twenty programmes on two separate lists, ten at Level 8 and ten at Level 6 or 7. Successful applicants may receive two independent programme offers - one from each list but can only accept one offer.

Key CAO Dates

- **November 6th**
CAO opens for applications.
- **January 20th**
Online discounted application closes (€30)
- **February 1st**
Normal application deadline (€45)
- **March 5th**
CAO re-opens for late applications (€60)
- **May 1st**
Late application closing date
- **May 5th**
Change of Mind opens (Free)
- **July 1st**
Closing date for all application amendments

These dates are subject to change.
For the latest dates visit www.cao.ie

Late Applications

Whilst we encourage applicants to apply as early as possible, ATU accepts late mature student applications on almost all programmes. Mature applicants can use the free CAO Change of Mind facility between May 5th and July 1st.. Please note that individual Higher Education Authorities will have different rules on mature applicants using the Change of Mind Facility.

Offers

Successful mature applicants normally receive their offers in Round A which takes place in early to mid-July. The CAO will release exact dates closer to the time. Please check www.cao.ie for these.





Transition to University

An tAistriú chun
na hOllscoile

Welcome to the start of your university experience. It's an exciting time for new students. ATU have several supports in place to help you enjoy these first steps on the journey that will lead to your education and future career.

Induction

Induction is the first step in settling into university life. New students are encouraged to attend induction where they will be shown how to access university facilities, learn about the many supports available, and meet their new lecturers and classmates.

Timetable Detail

You will receive your timetable alongside a campus tour at induction, so you know the exact location of your lecture theatres, labs, and classrooms. You will also learn more about the assessments and exams on your programme.

Accessing Student Information

We will help you get your student ID card, access university networks and WIFI, navigate the student hub, access student welfare and learning supports, library services and lots more.



Connect for Success – Your First Five Weeks

Our student support team will keep in close contact for the first five weeks to ensure you settle into university life and get to know the various supports available to you.

The Students' Union

Find out about clubs and societies, becoming a class rep and lots more when you are introduced to the Students' Union at induction. The team will also have fun events organised plus insider hints and tips for starting out in university.

Clubs and Societies

University life is more than just study. It is also about experiences and friendships. Joining a club or society is a great way to meet people with similar interests, try out something new or pursue your passion.



What our Mature Students Say

Cad a Deir ár Mic Léinn Lánfhásta?

Some of our Mature students and graduates tell us about their experiences of studying at ATU. They discuss programmes, supports, friendships and much more.



Sandra Lally

BSc (Hons) in Forensic Science and Analysis
ATU Galway

As an early school leaver, with no Leaving Cert, I felt I had a mountain to climb. I found the 1st year programme at ATU Galway to be well laid out. The fundamentals of the main subjects are taught Maths, Chemistry, Biology and Physics. Thankfully, there is a tremendous amount of support offered to students by all lecturers. ATU also offers more hours doing practical exercises in the laboratory. This hands-on experience is an essential element of learning and gaining real-world experience.

Student Services helped make life as a student a lot easier. They supported my childcare needs, which allowed me to remain at college longer when needed for lectures, laboratories, and study time. They helped me get a replacement laptop when my old one failed on me.



Ricky Small

BEng in Software and Electronic Engineering
ATU Galway

It had been some time since I was in formal education, so I did not know what to expect starting a course but rest assured, ATU Galway has many different support processes to help any applicant find the right course. There was so much to learn about the application process. Thankfully, the Open Day was great for supplying the information that I needed and helped clear up any questions and concerns that I had regarding the course I wanted to pursue.

I knew undertaking an engineering course involving maths would be a challenge. Thankfully, there is a Maths Support Centre on campus that is run by staff. I found this to be of great help in getting me back into the way of doing maths again.



Jackie O'Mahony

BSc (Hons) in Computing with Computer Security & Digital Forensics ATU Donegal

Communication was an unexpected skill that Computer Security and Digital Forensics graduate Jackie O'Mahony is grateful she learned at ATU Donegal. "Within 6 months of graduating, I was in court as a technical witness. I hit the ground running."

Life at college isn't all about studying though, joining clubs and societies is a great way to make friends and broaden your college experience. Jackie was involved in the group that founded ATU Donegal's first-ever Camogie club and was a peer mentor for the first years, as well as a member of the Ethical Hacking Club. "If you've an idea and want to try it, you'll be supported. That's typical of the ethos at ATU Donegal. Learning is in the DNA of the place," she adds.



Thomas Kissane

BEng in Mechanical Engineering ATU Donegal

Never did Thomas Kissane think when he graduated from Mechanical Engineering that he would find himself working in Western Sahara. Thomas is a Quality Inspector in wind turbine renewable energy. It's a career that has taken him from his native Gweedore to some of the most spectacular places in Europe and Morocco.

Thomas played for ATU Donegal's rugby team (and has a few concussions to prove it). He encourages students to get involved in college life. "You feel part of the place." Mature students are a welcome part of life at ATU Donegal. "The lecturers really do care about you succeeding." He says his class formed a strong bond. "We worked hard and had the craic. We still meet up at Christmas." ATU Donegal has strong links with industry and listen to what companies want. "Our course tapped into what actually happens in mechanical applications and management. I was using the skills the minute I graduated."



Karen Keaney

BA (Hons) in Interior Architecture and Design ATU Sligo

I returned to university as a mature student in 2019 after taking 'a year out' that turned into many years. Following a corporate career, owning my own business, and teaching cake design, I decided to return to education and get my degree. I am a very creative and practical person, so the Interior Architecture and Design degree really appealed to me.

I know it can be scary returning to education. University can be busy with lots of deadlines for assignments. Just be sure to schedule your time wisely and it will make everything so much easier. Don't leave things until the last minute and don't put starting assignments off. Also, be sure to ask questions. The lecturers are there to support you and are always extremely helpful.



Seamus Bannon

BA (Hons) Sociology and Politics ATU Sligo

In 2017, at the age of 31, I decided to return to education. I was recently married, and we had just had our first child. I had spent the previous 10+ years working in various jobs from retail to the probation service, but I knew to have the best possible career for me and my family, I needed to improve on my qualifications. Sociology and Politics allowed me to study an area that I am passionate about.

The lecturers in ATU Sligo are amazing. Their interaction with students, their willingness to create a fun learning environment, their understanding of my specific circumstances being a father of two baby girls, and their expertise in our fields of study, are just some of the areas worth highlighting. Since graduating, my family and I have moved to the USA and bought our first home. I now work as a Program Director in the City of Flint's Mayors Office in Michigan.



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