



## **Admission Guidelines and Procedures for Non-EU Degree Programme Applicants**

The admission requirements and application process for Non-EU Degree Programme learners conform to all national policies and procedures detailed by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service.<sup>1</sup> Carlow College, St. Patrick's (hereafter Carlow College) is committed to providing our Non-EU learners with a positive learner experience from the first point of engagement through to graduation or exit. As such, the College is committed to conducting its affairs in a transparent and equitable manner that aligns with best practice.<sup>2</sup>

### **Definition of Non-EU Degree Programme Students**

A Non-EU learner is defined as a person whose nationality is from outside of the European Union, United Kingdom, European Economic Area or Swiss Confederation. However, this definition may not be appropriate in every case (e.g. as it relates to residency and / or classification for fee purposes). If any Non-EU learner has a specific query related to their classification, please contact the International Office at Carlow College.

### **Supports for Learners with Disabilities / Learning Differences / Long-Term Health Conditions**

Carlow College offers supports to learners with disabilities, learning differences and long-term health conditions. While every attempt is made to provide reasonable accommodation for learners with physical disabilities, Carlow College is a protected structure with limits imposed on the structural modifications that can be made. As all areas cannot be universally accessed, applicants with restricted mobility are strongly advised to disclose disability information to us and to visit the College to explore its suitability for individual learning needs. It may not be

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<sup>1</sup> [New Immigration Regime for Full Time Non-EEA Students: Guidelines for Degree Programme Students](#) (Dublin: Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, January 2011) and [Criteria for the Inclusion of Higher Education and Professional Programmes in the Interim List of Eligible Programmes for Student Immigration Permission \(Interim List\)](#) (Dublin: Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, 2 June 2015, updated 30 August 2024).

<sup>2</sup> [Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners](#) (Dublin: Quality and Qualifications Ireland, 2024) and the [Statement of Principles for the Ethical Recruitment of International Students by Education Agents and Consultants \(The London Statement\)](#) (19 March 2012).

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feasible for overseas learners to visit, however, if you indicate a disability on the application form, the Academic Resource Office will contact you in respect of the services that it offers and to discuss your situation.

For a complete guide to supports for learners with disabilities / learning differences and / or long-term health conditions, please visit our [Learner Disability Policy](#). Supports that are available for Non-EU learners vary depending on your exact classification (see previous section).

## **Admission Requirements**

### *Selection Criteria*

All Non-EU Degree-Seeking applicants at Carlow College must have:

- successfully completed a second level / high school qualification equivalent to the Irish Leaving Certificate (i.e. level 5)<sup>3</sup> and submit all higher education entrance exam results<sup>4</sup>;
- Please note that all subjects completed must be successfully passed, with good grades. For applicants that apply for the BA (Hons) in Psychology Programme, they will need to take a maths assessment.
- a minimum score of 6.5 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). If English is not the first language of the applicant, the applicant should review Carlow College's [English Language Policy](#) and its associated appendix titled [English Language Requirements for Admissions to Carlow College, St. Patrick's](#); all necessary English language paperwork must be submitted with a completed application form.

As is standard national procedure, learners on programmes with professional placements are required to undergo Garda Vetting Procedures and / or demonstrate to programme staff that they meet the relevant professional standards prior to commencing placements. If an enrolled learner does not successfully meet the above requirements, they will be required to withdraw from their programme. If a learner is forced to withdraw from their programme, fees from previous academic years will not be refunded to the learner (see the [Fees and Refunds Policy](#)).

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<sup>3</sup> If an applicant has only completed 11 years of full-time education or whose High School Completion Qualification comes in at a level 4 on the Irish National Framework for Qualifications, they must complete a Foundation Programme.

<sup>4</sup> For learners from the United States, the minimum score for the ACT is 20 and for the SAT is 1400 – 1440. The equivalency of qualifications for all Non-EU learners is based on information determined by [QQI NARIC Ireland](#). Carlow College also uses the [Entry Requirements Criteria for EU/EFTA/UK Applicants](#), for Non-EU applications, we use appendix II of this Entry Requirements document.

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Once an application is received, the application will be forwarded to the relevant Programme Director and assessed. If the application makes it through this pre-screening process, the applicant will be invited to a virtual interview conducted via Microsoft Teams; the interview will be conducted by the International Officer and the relevant Programme Director. For transparency purposes, the relevant Programme Director and the International Officer will complete separate Interview Marking Forms (see Appendix 9.2).

## **Application Process**

The application process for applying to Carlow College as a Non-EU Degree Programme applicant follows seven main steps:

- Step 1: Applying to Carlow College;
- Step 2: Reviewing Immigration Requirements;
- Step 3: Preparing and Traveling to Ireland;
- Step 4: Registration and Stage One Orientation / Induction;
- Step 5: Open an Irish bank account;
- Step 6: Register with the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB)

### Step 1: Applying to Carlow College

All Non-EU Degree Programme applicants should complete the *Non-EU Degree Programme Application Form* at: <https://carlowcollege.ie/international/non-eu-undergraduate-application-form/> Please note that applicants are required to pay the Non-Refundable €40 Application Fee via the Carlow College website, applications will not be reviewed until the application fee has been paid. It is very important to contact the International Office at [intloffice@carlowcollege.ie](mailto:intloffice@carlowcollege.ie) if you have any questions regarding entry requirements for your country of origin. The deadline for completed applications is the last working day in May.

### *Processing Applications*

The processing of applications will start 1 February and all applicants will receive notification regarding the status of their application via email, normally within two weeks of receipt (commencing after the 1 February); this will normally be in the form of an invite to a virtual interview. The process for determining whether an applicant meets the admission requirements will be determined by the relevant Programme Director and the International

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Officer. All applicants will need to be interviewed as part of their application to Carlow College.

Following the interview, an admissions decision will be made and communicated to the applicant. There are two possible outcomes:

- **Unsuccessful Application:** The letter denoting an unsuccessful application to Carlow College, St. Patrick's will clearly state the reason(s) for the application not being successful and provide guidance to the applicant on how the decision can be rectified. All applicants have a right to appeal and can use the process outlined in the *Appeals Procedures for Admissions Decision* (Appendix 10).
- **Conditional Offer:** This letter will state that the applicant has received a conditional offer on the programme they applied for. Additionally, the letter will outline key programme-specific information (i.e. title of the programme, programme code, ILEP code, stage and academic year). Applicants will then be directed to pay all programme fees (i.e. programme fees and protection of enrolled learner (PEL)).<sup>5</sup>

### *Paying Fees*

All Non-EU Degree Programme applicants must pay their tuition fees in full, all academic-related fees will be detailed in the Conditional Offer for study.

For more on Non-EU Programme Fees, please click on this link: <https://carlowcollege.ie/media/Non-EUFees.pdf>.

For more on College-wide fees that you may incur during your academic studies at Carlow College, please click on this link: <https://carlowcollege.ie/media/CollegeFees.pdf>.

For the Carlow College Fees and Refunds Policy, click here: <https://www.carlowcollege.ie/media/FeesAndRefundsPolicy.pdf>

### *Formal Offer for Study*

Once all programme fees have been paid and processed by the Accounts Department, the applicant will receive an Unconditional Offer to their programme of study at Carlow College. As part of this letter, the applicant will receive a Pre-Arrival Guide that will provide important information regarding: Immigration; Registration; Programme Induction; Student Cards; Academic Timetables; Attendance Requirements and disclosure of Reasonable Accommodations.

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<sup>5</sup> PEL is a legal requirement of the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*. Carlow College uses a private insurance company to satisfy its PEL requirements.

## Step 2: Reviewing Immigration Requirements

All learners studying in Ireland must comply with all elements of Irish immigration requirements.<sup>6</sup> In the first instance, the Non-EU applicant should determine if they require a visa to enter Ireland as a learner (see Appendix 9.1: *Country-Specific Visa Requirements*). If the applicant is a citizen of a country that is on Schedule 1, the applicant does not require an entry visa for Ireland. However, if the applicant is a citizen of a country that is on Schedule 2 or Schedule 3, they require a visa prior to entering the country.

### *Applying for a Visa (Applicants only from a country listed on Schedule 2 or Schedule 3)*

If the applicant is from a country listed on Schedule 2 or Schedule 3, then the applicant must apply for a visa (i.e. Long Stay 'D' visa) before travelling to Ireland. For all information pertaining to this visa, please visit the following link: <https://www.irishimmigration.ie/coming-to-study-in-ireland/what-are-my-study-visa-options/how-to-apply-for-long-term-study-visa/>

## Step 3: Preparing and Traveling to Ireland

Living and studying abroad can be an exciting and apprehensive time.<sup>7</sup> The International Office at Carlow College is committed to working with all international learners to make this transition period go as smoothly as possible. Applicants are asked to provide the International Office with their travel itinerary so that a member of staff can liaise with them to source appropriate travel to Carlow. When you arrive at the airport, you will be processed at Immigration where they will review your required documentation and stamp your passport for thirty days, for more on entry into the State click on this link: <https://www.irishimmigration.ie/at-the-border/entry-for-non-eu-non-eea-and-non-swiss-nationals/>; you will then be required to register with your local Immigration Office.

For those residing in Carlow, the local Immigration Office is located at the Kilkenny Garda Station and can be contacted at: [KilkennyCarlow.Immigration@garda.ie](mailto:KilkennyCarlow.Immigration@garda.ie).

## Step 4: Registration and Stage One Orientation / Induction

Stage one orientation and induction will commence on the first Monday of the Academic Year which will provide a comprehensive orientation to the College and learner supports. Learners will also officially register as a full-time learner at Carlow College. From Tuesday to Friday of the first week academic induction will take place, which will provide a comprehensive

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<sup>6</sup> [\*New Immigration Regime for Full Time Non-EEA Students: Guidelines for Degree Programme Students\*](#) (Dublin: Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, January 2011).

<sup>7</sup> Here are some useful websites that can assist in learning more about living in Ireland: [Eurodesk Ireland](#), [Citizens Information](#) and [Education in Ireland](#).

induction to the relevant academic programme. All Non-EU Degree Programme learners are required to attend all elements of the orientation and induction programme.

#### Step 5: Open an Irish Bank Account

All Non-EU Degree Programme students will need to open a bank account in Ireland. As part of the registration process with the Immigration Officer, the learner must demonstrate proof of sufficient funds, either €4,500 per year of studies (Schedule 1 countries) or €10,000 per year of studies (Schedule 2 and 3 countries). This will also enable the learner to apply for a Personal Public Service (PPS) Number if they plan to work part-time.<sup>8</sup>

#### Step 6: Register with the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB)

Once you have fully registered, you will receive an official Letter of Registration from Carlow College, this letter is required for visa registration. It is the responsibility of the learner to ensure that they register with the GNIB. At your appointment, you will need to provide the necessary documentation for the student visa application. The Immigration Officer will clearly list what documents are required.

In addition to providing the relevant documents to the Immigration Officer, you will be fingerprinted and pay a fee of €300; the registration will be for one year and will be renewable on an annual basis, up to a maximum of seven years.

Learners are required to register with the GNIB Office on an annual basis (the date for renewal is provided on the issued Irish Residence Permit (IRP) and contained on the relevant immigration passport stamp). Learners may be granted a renewal of registration if:

- they can demonstrate that they are engaging in fulltime education on a course;
- the learner can show verifiable academic progress;
- evidence that fees have been paid to the College; and
- evidence of private medical insurance cover.

A person will only be able to renew their immigration permission where there are no concerns about that person in terms of an adverse Garda record or other concerns related to national security, public order or public policy.

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<sup>8</sup> Non-EU learners can work up to 20 hours per week during term time. During June, July, August and September, and between 15 December and 15 January, Non-EU learners can work up to 40 hours per week.

## **Maintaining Full-Time Status**

Carlow College is committed to complying with all immigration statutory regulations. Part of this compliance is taking steps to ensure that Non-EU Degree Programme learners are maintaining their full-time status. All lecturers in the College keep module attendance which is reported on the Student Records Management System (SRMS); Non-EU Degree Programme learners must maintain a minimum attendance of 80%.

### *Unexcused Absences*

The International Officer, Academic Advisor and Learner Information and Retention Officer (LIRO) will receive attendance reports at Week 4 and Week 8 of each semester. If the learner is below the 80% threshold at the Week 4 returns, they will be contacted and a meeting to discuss attendance will be called with the International Officer. At this meeting a verbal warning will be issued.

If the learner continues to fall below the 80% threshold at the Week 8 returns, the International Officer will send a letter to the learner requesting a meeting. Following this meeting, a written warning will be documented and sent to the learner. Any further unexcused absences will result in expulsion from their programme of study by the Vice President for Academic Affairs / Registrar. In accordance with the *Instrument of Governance* 2017, Section 6.1(d), appeals concerning the expulsion of a learner in accordance with regulations of the College will be heard by the Governing Body. The GNIB Officer will be notified if the expulsion takes effect.

### *Excused Absences*

All excused absences must follow the correct College procedures governing excused absences. The procedures governing excused absences can be found at: <https://www.carlowcollege.ie/media/RegulationsInRelationToAssessmentAndStandards.pdf> (see Section 3.1.4). If there are any queries regarding other absences, please make contact with your Academic Advisor or the International Office.

## **Communication**

The International Office at Carlow College is an important resource for all registered international learners. As such, it is expected that all international learners, including Non-EU Degree Programme learners, keep the International Office informed of any important changes to their circumstances, these might include: change of address; significant changes to financial; significant changes to their health; instances of bereavement that require a prolonged absence; etc.

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If you wish to obtain a letter from the International Office, you must request a letter from the International Office at: [intloffice@carlowcollege.ie](mailto:intloffice@carlowcollege.ie). You may need an official letter from the College for the following:

- Visa Renewal;
- Bank Account Letter;
- PPS Number;
- Attendance Confirmation Letter.

The letter will be ready for collection within three working days after the learner has made the request.



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**Appendix 9.1: Country-Specific Visa Requirements****Country-Specific Visa Requirements****Schedule 1**

Andorra	Guatemala	Portugal
Antigua and Barbuda	Guyana	Romania
Argentina	Honduras	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Australia	Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region)	Saint Lucia
Austria	Hungary	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Bahamas	Iceland	Samoa
Barbados	Israel	San Marino
Belgium	Italy	Seychelles
Belize	Japan	Singapore
Bolivia	Kiribati	Slovak Republic
Botswana	Latvia	Slovenia
Brazil	Lesotho	Solomon Islands
Brunei	Liechtenstein	South Africa
Bulgaria	Lithuania	South Korea
Canada	Luxembourg	Spain
Costa Rica	Macau (Special Administrative Region)	Swaziland
Croatia	Malaysia	Sweden
Cyprus	Maldives	Switzerland
Czech Republic	Malta	Taiwan
Denmark	Mexico	Tonga
Dominica	Monaco	Trinidad and Tobago
El Salvador	Nauru	Tuvalu
Estonia	The Netherlands	United Kingdom, British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies
Fiji	New Zealand	United States of America
Finland	Nicaragua	Uruguay
France	Norway	Vanuatu
Germany	Panama	Vatican City
Greece	Paraguay	Venezuela
Grenada	Poland	

**Schedule 2**

Bahrain	Montenegro	Serbia
Belarus	Oman	Turkey

Bosnia Herzegovina	People's Republic of China	Ukraine
India	Qatar	United Arab Emirates
Kazakhstan	Russian Federation	Uzbekistan
Kuwait	Saudi Arabia	

**Schedule 3**

Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Moldova
Albania	Ghana	Nigeria
Cuba	Iran	Somalia
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Iraq	Sri Lanka
Eritrea	Lebanon	Zimbabwe

**Policy:** *Learner Admission, Progression and Recognition Policy* **Owner:** Office of the Registrar

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## Appendix 9.2: Non-EU Interview Marking Scheme



### Non-EU Applicant Interview

**Applicant's Name:**

**Name of the Programme the applicant has selected:**

**Date of Interview:**

**Time of Interview:**

**Duration of Interview:**\_\_\_ minutes via Teams

**Questions for the applicant:**

1. Knowledge of programme applied for	/ 25
2. Explanation of how the applicant believes they will benefit from undertaking the programme	/ 40
3. Reflections on the challenges the applicant may face in undertaking the programme.	/ 25
4. Questions the applicant has regarding the programme / college / application process / living in Ireland	/ 10

**Notes:**

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
Interviewer