

POST LEAVING CERTIFICATE COURSE GUIDELINES

There are hundreds of Post Leaving Certificate courses available to Leaving Certificate students. PLC courses are fulltime and consist of a mixture of Practical vocational skills, Academic work and Work Experience. They cover the entire range of subject areas.

These courses offer students an excellent alternative to mainstream Third Level courses. They are designed to meet the needs of the large number of Leaving Certificate pupils who are not catered for within the CAO system. These include:

- Students who don't want to commit themselves to 3 or 4 years of Third level study.
- Students who want to take a year out from study after the Leaving Certificate and before starting their Third Level education.
- Students who want to improve their skills in preparation for further education in courses such as nursing studies, art portfolio preparation, pre-apprenticeship, etc.
- Students who can only find the course they want within the PLC system, e.g. Teleservices, Classical Animation, Music management, Football management etc.
- Finally, while PLC courses prepare students very well for the working world, they also offer an alternative route to Certificates, Ordinary Degrees and Honours Degrees in Ireland and the UK.

There are currently about 150 PLC colleges around the country with over 22,000 places

Areas covered by PLCs include: Business, Secretarial, Art & Design, Computers, Hotel & Catering, Fashion & Hairdressing, Social Care, Sport, Engineering, Marketing, Science, Telesales, etc.

Application

Application for admission is made directly to the college concerned from November. Most colleges have an online application form. Early application is advised as the most popular courses, especially those in the Dublin area, tend to fill up quickly.

PLC courses do not use the points system for entry. Most colleges interview applicants to establish that they are genuinely interested in taking the course they have applied for. Admission requirements are usually a pass Leaving Certificate to include English and Maths. Some of them require 2 HC3's for the Diploma Courses (level 6).

Cost

There is a €500 registration charge for most courses. Those who have a medical card are exempt.

Qualifications

Most PLCs are certified by FETAC, which ensures that certain standards are met. British bodies such as the Royal Society of Arts (RSA), City & Guilds also certify courses. Many PLCs give the option of transferring to Diploma or Degree courses in Ireland and the UK.

Higher Education Links Scheme

After obtaining an FETAC award on a PLC course, many students go directly into the workplace. However it is also possible to progress to Third Level courses in the Institutes of Technology and Universities through the Higher Education Links Scheme.

Under this scheme, the colleges reserve places on National Certificate and degree courses each year for students with FETAC (PLC) awards. This can lead ultimately to a certificates and Degrees.

.

Open Days

Most PLC colleges have Open Days in the second term and these are of great benefit to interested students.

Useful websites

- www.bcfe.ie
- www.crumlincollege.ie
- www.colaisteide.ie
- www.colaistedhulaigh.ie
- www.inchicorecollege.ie
- www.libertiescollege.ie
- www.marinocollege.ie
- www.rathminescollege.ie
- www.whitehallcollege.ie
- portal.meathvec.ie/schools/dcfe/
- www.cdvec.ie (has a list of all colleges and courses)