

# DCU

Ollscoil Chathair  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City University

## **Mature Student Interview Guide**



# Congratulations!

**What happens next? What should you expect? What can you do to prepare? This information leaflet aims to address these questions for you and to help give you the confidence you need to excel at interview.**

## **The interview process**

At DCU, mature applicants are assessed through their CAO application which may include an interview to assess their suitability for the programme. Mature applicants often have real-life experiential learning and qualifications that can be better understood by the programme coordinators through speaking to you in person. An interview is an opportunity for both parties to discuss your application in detail.

Interest and motivation are key factors of success at third level and are especially relevant to mature students. At interview, DCU staff will be looking for evidence of your commitment, motivation and interest in your chosen area of study, alongside your potential to succeed at third level.

Interviews are usually quite informal and typically last between 15-30 minutes. In most cases, the chairperson of your course and usually one other staff member from the school to which you are applying will interview you.

Remember that the interview for mature applicants is a two-way process, as you can assess at interview if this is the right course and institution for you. The interview also provides you with an opportunity to 'sell yourself' and to further highlight strengths and aptitudes

which you feel make you suitable for your chosen course. By taking time to prepare adequately for interview, you can make a real difference to your chances of securing a place at third level.

## **Prior to interview: be prepared!**

- Review your written application, paying particular attention to your statement of interest, which may form a basis for further discussion at interview.
- Research the content and structure of the course including both optional and mandatory modules. The university prospectus is a good starting point, and more detailed information is available on the [DCU website](#). Be prepared to discuss the various subject areas and why they appeal to you. You may also be asked to talk about the option of work placement or study abroad, where appropriate.
- Talk to Undergraduate Admissions in Registry or faculty members listed as contacts for the programme. It is common for applicants to speak informally with tutors to gain a greater understanding of course content, specific entry requirements and the admissions process.
- Consider the reasons why you have selected this course of study. Are your choices based upon personal interest/career goals?
- Be aware of the mode and duration of study. Most undergraduate courses at DCU are offered full-time over 3 or 4 years. This means a commitment of around 40 hours of

lectures/study time per week. You will need to demonstrate that you can meet these requirements. Childcare, travel and working hours all have to be considered in order to make the most of your studies.

- The interview provides the opportunity to discuss your interests, and any relevant experience or learning prior to application. You may be asked to talk about any relevant literature that you have read to show an understanding of the subject area.

### **At the interview**

- Be confident and be yourself! Smile and shake hands with the interviewer(s). It is important to try and make a good initial impression.
- Show your motivation and enthusiasm for the institution and choice of course.
- Try to enjoy it! If you are called for interview, the staff are interested in your application so relax and enjoy the experience.
- Keep your answers concise and to the point—avoid rambling.
- Listen carefully to the questions being asked and the information given to you. Don't be afraid to pause a moment before answering. A thoughtful answer is more likely to cover everything you wanted to include.
- When finishing, thank the interviewers for their time and shake hands before leaving.

### **After the interview**

- Congratulate yourself on getting through it! Don't get too disheartened if you feel that you haven't done particularly well. Mature applicants are often surprised to find that they have done much better than they thought.
- Don't take it personally if you don't secure a place this time. Often it is just a case that there were more suitable applicants for your chosen programme than places available.
- Contact our Admissions Office in the Registry for feedback, especially if you wish to reapply next year.
- DCU's Admissions Office will contact you to let you know the outcome of your application. Official offers are issued through the CAO in July.

### **For Queries**

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