



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

WHERE IS UNIVERSITY IS FOR EVERYONE

ACCESS DIPLOMA
PROGRAMMES GUIDE
2020



Welcome to NUI Galway's Access Diploma Programmes Celebrating 20 years of Excellence

This year NUI Galway celebrates twenty years of our Access Diploma Programme, which represents the University's efforts to ensure that higher education is within reach for all members of society. Over 3,000 students have participated in NUI Galway Access courses over the lifetime of the programme, representing 3,000 people whose lives have been significantly changed by educational opportunity. These programmes have been offered in Galway city and county, and throughout our region – addressing economic, social, geographic and other barriers to higher education.

The Access Programmes Office is part of the Access Centre. The Access Centre includes the Disability Support Services, Mature Students Office and Access Programmes Office.

Find out for yourself

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Open Days

Open Days are the perfect opportunity for you and your family to experience life at NUI Galway.

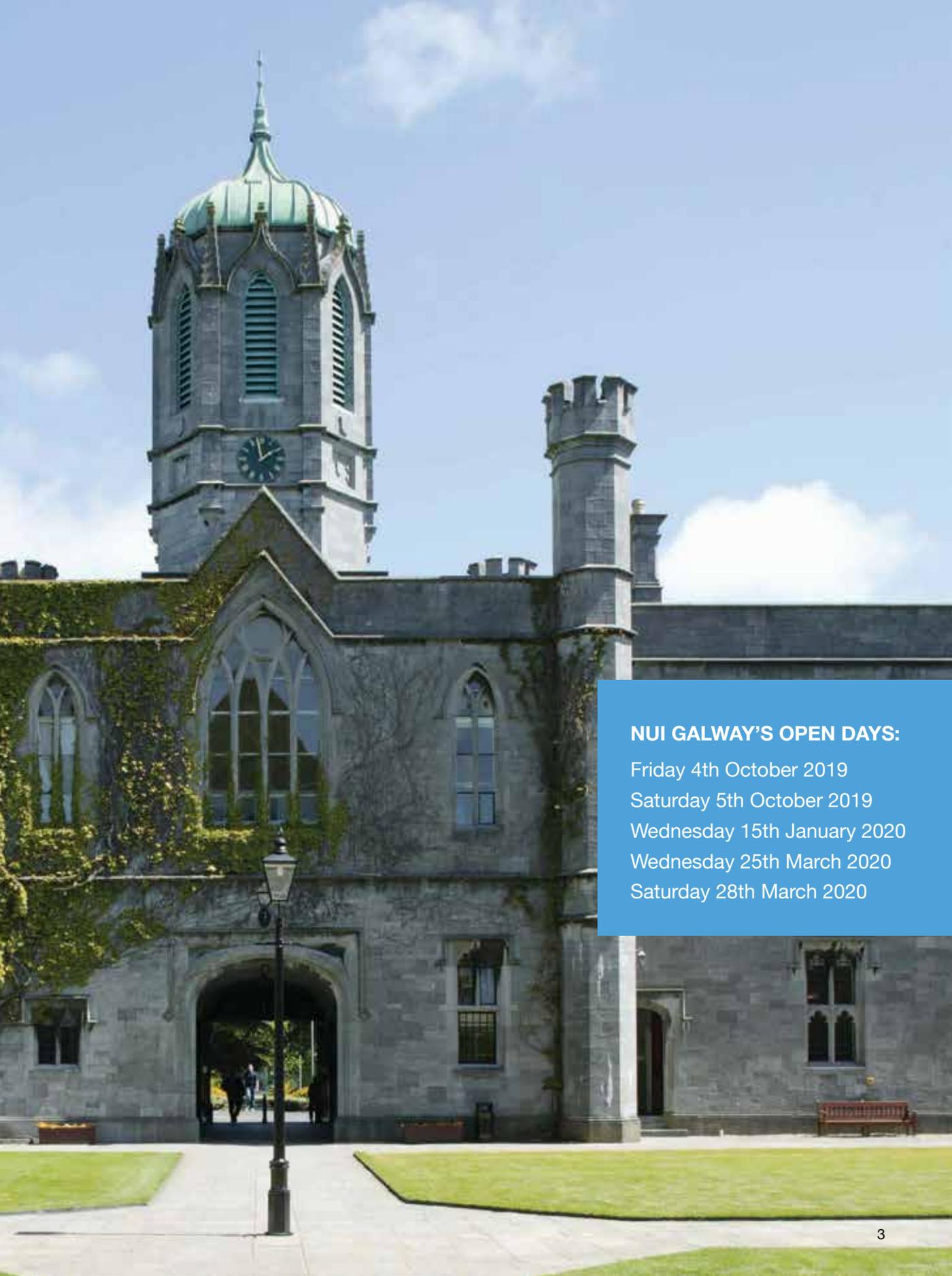
Visit us and immerse yourself in our vibrant and diverse community. Meet our world-leading academics, our current access students and see how they can inspire you.

www.nuigalway.ie/access

T: +353 91 493553

E: access@nuigalway.ie





NUI GALWAY'S OPEN DAYS:

- Friday 4th October 2019
- Saturday 5th October 2019
- Wednesday 15th January 2020
- Wednesday 25th March 2020
- Saturday 28th March 2020

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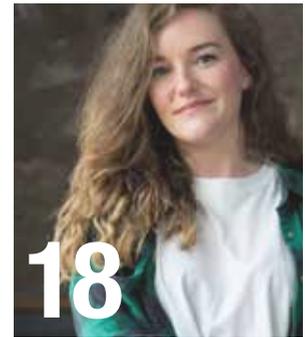
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Disclaimer; whilst every effort is made to ensure contents are accurate, the Access Diploma Programmes Guide is issued only for the guidance of students. It does not impose or infer any legal obligations on the National University of Ireland Galway. Course syllabi, fees, regulations or other information given may be altered, cancelled or otherwise amended at any time. The Access Diploma Programmes Guide does not confer any rights on a student registered for any course of study.



JO HATFIELD

If it wasn't for the access programme, I wouldn't now be finishing my second year of a philosophy/psychology degree. The programme not only gave me the skills that are required to attend university, but it also gave me the confidence that I needed. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I left school at 15 and up to that point had accomplished poor to average grades. I worked in factories most of my life but always wanted to experience the joy of gaining knowledge and earning an education. The access course first accepted me in 2009 and I completed the first semester. However, I was still working at this point and due to personal circumstances had to drop out. In 2015 I took redundancy so that I could apply to the access programme and commit to it full time. Although the access granted me a place again, I was not eligible for funding, so I had to decline their offer. So, as soon as the applications opened up again in 2016, I applied that very day for a place. The joy I felt when I was offered a place is indescribable as the number of places on the programme is limited and I knew I had been blessed by being accepted again.

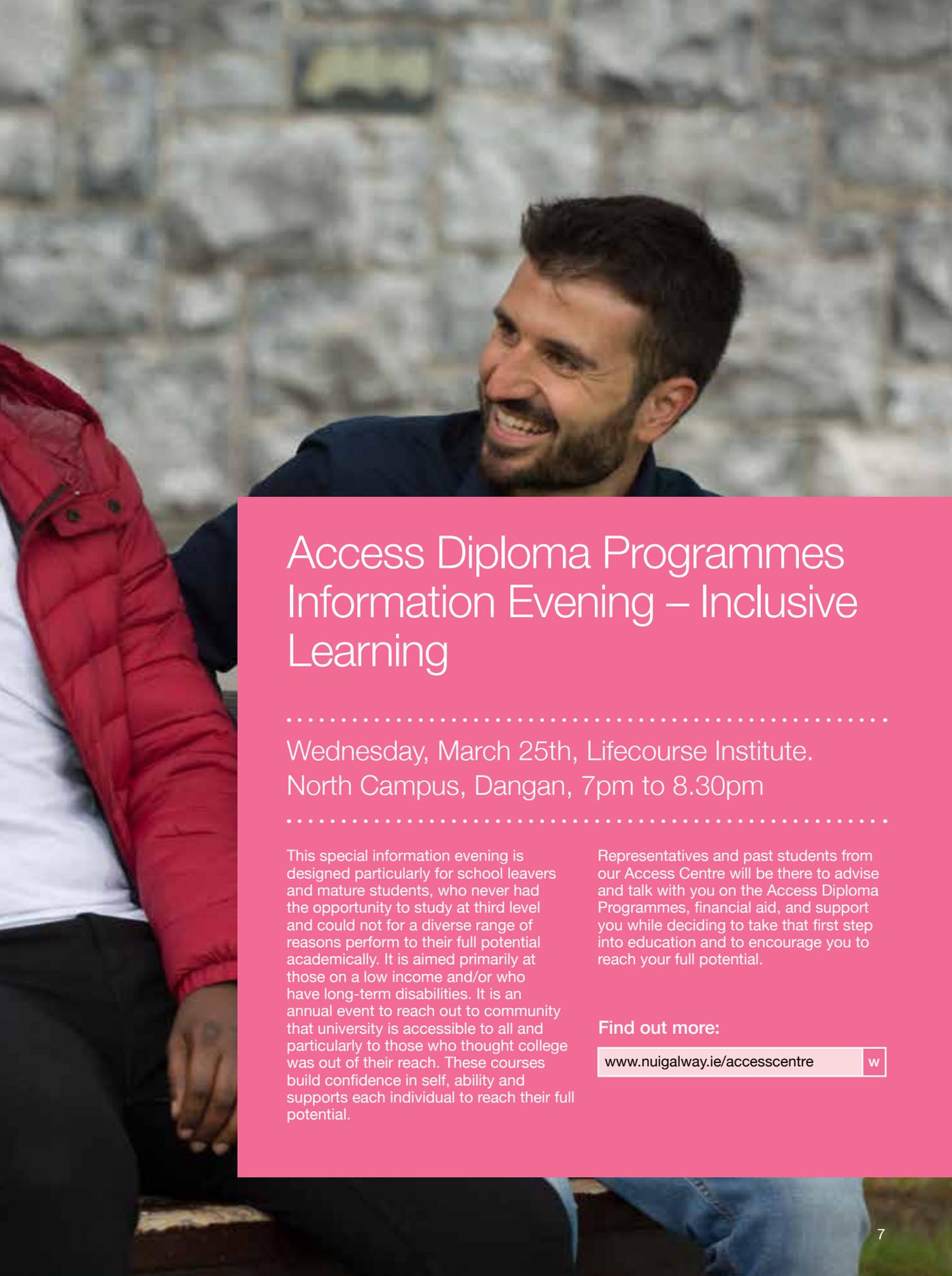
Without the access course, the first year of the BA would have been much harder and stressful than it was. The access laid solid foundations for entering university life from knowing the dynamics of how lectures are presented down to the simple things like finding the lecture halls. It made the first year much easier to cope with as it allowed me to see what my academic skills were and let me know that I wasn't

a failure where learning was concerned. Being an academic failure had been a bad tape that I had played in my head for so much of my life. I genuinely believed that there were only certain types of people that could go on to higher education, but the access proved to me that this was not true, that we are all capable of accomplishing amazing growth if we put our minds to it.

In addition to all this, I have made several great friends young and old from my access journey, some of whom I still spend time with now. My story demonstrates many things some of which are: you are never too old to be taught new things (I am 45), never give up on a dream, if you change the bad tape you have about yourself anything is possible, and as the saying goes third time lucky!







Access Diploma Programmes Information Evening – Inclusive Learning

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Wednesday, March 25th, Lifecourse Institute.
North Campus, Dangan, 7pm to 8.30pm

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This special information evening is designed particularly for school leavers and mature students, who never had the opportunity to study at third level and could not for a diverse range of reasons perform to their full potential academically. It is aimed primarily at those on a low income and/or who have long-term disabilities. It is an annual event to reach out to community that university is accessible to all and particularly to those who thought college was out of their reach. These courses build confidence in self, ability and supports each individual to reach their full potential.

Representatives and past students from our Access Centre will be there to advise and talk with you on the Access Diploma Programmes, financial aid, and support you while deciding to take that first step into education and to encourage you to reach your full potential.

Find out more:

www.nuigalway.ie/accesscentre

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What is an Access Student

NUI Galway's Access students can be either school leavers or mature students who are generally part of under-represented groups in higher education.

They are mainly from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, students with disabilities and mature students including adults who may be in low paid employment. You must be resident in the Border, Midlands and Western (BMW) region or in County Clare for at least six months prior to the commencement of the course.

You will not be eligible to participate on an Access diploma course if you already hold a third-level qualification (Level 8 or higher), but you may apply if you commenced, but did not complete, a third-level course in the past. Your family income should be low enough for you to qualify for a student maintenance grant when you progress to third-level.

The financial and social reasons considered for eligibility for the programme include:

- Long-term unemployment
- Low family income
- Little or no family tradition of progression onto higher education
- Family stresses (particularly those related to family finance)

Access diploma programmes are designed to provide a supportive educational environment which prepare students academically and personally for an undergraduate programme at third level. NUI Galway currently deliver a number of Access diploma programmes for school leavers (22 or under) and mature students (23 or above) on campus in NUI Galway, as well as in our Outreach centres in St. Angela's College, Sligo and the Ballinasloe College of Further Education.

The preparatory programmes are student centred and are delivered in a very supportive environment by experienced tutors and staff.

The overall aim is to give the chance of college to everyone and to provide an opportunity to progress to full-time or part-time degrees once the year is completed. Each year over 200 students progress to university and excel in their new degrees. Continued support is provided to all students by the Access Centre.

Find out more:

www.nuigalway.ie/access/faqs/

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NUI GALWAY CAMPUS ACCESS PROGRAMME

for School Leavers and Mature Students

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The Access Course for School Leavers (under 22) and Mature Students (over 23) is a 21 week full-time free course specifically designed for students who have a real desire to study at third level but are unable due to financial or social reasons. This scheme facilitates school-leavers from all schools in the Border Midlands and Western (BMW) region and County Clare. School Leavers who have completed a Leaving Certificate OR completed a QQI Level 5 or Level 6 qualification OR its equivalent can apply. Students who have gained access to a third level institution, post-leaving cert course or who are in a QQI course are ineligible to apply. Mature Students should be highly motivated and interested in studying at an undergraduate level in their chosen area.

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ALL APPLICANTS ARE INTERVIEWED FOR A PLACE ON THE ACCESS PROGRAMMES.

COURSE CONTENT

The course content consists of two supporting elements: core subjects and academic options. Core subjects include Academic Study Skills, Academic Writing, Academic Technology, and Engage- Skills for College and Career.

Academic Options: provide students with introductory university courses as a prelude to continuing their studies to a higher level within the colleges at NUI Galway. Students generally study four options from the following subjects:

- College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies: Philosophy, Sociology, History, English, Mathematics, Geography
- College of Science: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology
- College of Engineering & Informatics: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology
- College of Business, Public Policy and Law: Economics/ Mathematics

The requirement for successful completion of the Access Course involve an 85% attendance and performance in all elements of the programme,

which include semester examinations written / oral assignments and essays.

AWARD

Participants who successfully complete the Access Programmes will receive a Diploma in Foundation Studies from NUI Galway, and will be eligible to apply for direct entry (via the CAO) to full-time University undenominated degree courses in the College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies; College of Science; College of Engineering & Informatics; College of Business, Public Policy and Law and the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. Application to denominated degrees are not guaranteed and are ranked according to grades and possibly other criteria.

Find out more:

www.nuigalway.ie/access/school-leavers/

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www.nuigalway.ie/access/mature-students

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BALLINASLOE ACCESS PROGRAMME

for School Leavers and Mature Students

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This Outreach Access Course delivered in the College of Further Education, Ballinasloe is a 1-year free part-time daytime/evening course that aims to provide school leavers (22 and under) mature students, aged 23 or over, with the opportunity to prepare, personally and academically, for an undergraduate course of full-time study of at least three years duration at NUI Galway have a real desire to study at third level but are unable due to financial or social reasons. This scheme facilitates mature students resident 6 months or more in the Border Midlands and Western (BMW) region and County Clare.

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ALL APPLICANTS ARE INTERVIEWED FOR A PLACE ON THE ACCESS PROGRAMMES.

COURSE CONTENT

The course content consists of two supporting elements: core subjects and academic options. Core subjects include Academic Study Skills, Academic Writing, Academic Technology, and Engage- Skills for College and Career.

Academic Options: provide students with introductory university courses as a prelude to continuing their studies to a higher level within the colleges at NUI Galway. Students generally study four options (two per semester) from the following subjects:

- College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies: Philosophy, Sociology, History, English, Mathematics, Geography
- College of Science: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology
- College of Engineering & Informatics: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology
- College of Business, Public Policy and Law: Economics/ Mathematics

The requirement for successful completion of the Access Course involve 85% attendance and

performance in all elements of the programme, which include semester examinations, written / oral assignments and essays.

AWARD

Participants who successfully complete the Access Course will receive a Diploma in Foundation Studies from NUI Galway, and will be eligible to apply for direct entry (via the CAO) to full-time undenominated University degree courses in the College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies; College of Science; College of Engineering & Informatics; College of Business, Public Policy and Law and the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. Application to denominated degrees are not guaranteed and are ranked according to grades and possibly other criteria.

Find out more:

[www.nuigalway.ie/access/
ballinasloeaccesscourse/](http://www.nuigalway.ie/access/ballinasloeaccesscourse/)

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ST. ANGELAS, ACCESS PROGRAMME

for School Leavers and Mature Students

The St. Angela's College, Sligo Access Programme is a free, part-time programme of one academic year in duration delivered in St. Angela's College, Sligo. The programme is designed for school leavers (22 and under) and mature students (23 or above) who have a desire to study at third level but are unable due to financial and social reasons.

ALL APPLICANTS ARE INTERVIEWED FOR A PLACE ON THE ACCESS PROGRAMMES.

The financial and social reasons considered for eligibility for the programme include:

- Long-term unemployment
- Low family income
- Little or no family tradition of progression onto higher education
- Family stresses (particularly those related to family finance)

This programme is also suitable for students with disabilities, whose background education has been affected by long-term absenteeism due to their illness.

COURSE CONTENT

The course content consists of two supporting elements: core subjects and academic options.

Core subjects include Academic Study Skills, Academic Writing, Academic Technology, and Engage: Skills for College and Career.

Academic Options: provide students with introductory university courses as a prelude to continuing their studies to a higher level. Subjects include: Sociology, Politics, Economics, Maths, Philosophy, Home economics, education, Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics), Nursing.

The criteria for successful completion of the Access Course involve 85% attendance and

performance in all elements of the programme, which include semester examinations, written / oral assignments and essays. Participants who successfully complete the Access Course will receive a Diploma in Foundation Studies from NUI Galway, and will be eligible to apply for direct entry (via the CAO) to full-time University degree courses in NUI Galway and St. Angela's College Sligo. Application to denominated degrees are not guaranteed and are ranked according to grades and possibly other criteria.

Find out more:

[www.nuigalway.ie/access/
stangelascollegesligoaccesscourse/](http://www.nuigalway.ie/access/stangelascollegesligoaccesscourse/)

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Joint Diploma in **FOUNDATION STUDIES SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING, NUI GALWAY**

While this programme is part of the Access Programme listings, it differs in that it is a fee paying course jointly run with GMIT and aimed at all Mature Students (22 and over) either employed or unemployed to prepare them academically for university degrees at either NUI Galway or Galway Mayo Institute of Technology.

The course is taught at NUI Galway with laboratories held in GMIT. The course is aimed at those interested in applying for entry to full-time Science, Engineering and I.T. degrees at either GMIT or NUI Galway and who need the academic subjects in order to meet the entry criteria. An aptitude for math's is required.

The course begins in September, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings 6.30 pm to 9.30pm and some Saturdays 10am to 5pm. The duration of the course is 26 weeks.

The course includes Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, IT, Engage -Skills for College and Career, Academic Study Skills and Academic Writing.

COURSE FEE

The fee is 380 euros for those in employment and 60 euros for those in receipt of Social Welfare.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications to Diploma in Foundation Studies Science, Technology and Engineering are completed on-line from July. No interviews apply.

Find out more:

www.nuigalway.ie/mature/part-time/

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Joint Diploma in **BUSINESS STUDIES** **NUI GALWAY OR** **GMIT CASTLEBAR CAMPUS**

While this programme is part of the Access Programme listings, it differs in that it is a fee paying course jointly run jointly with GMIT and aimed at all Mature Students (22 and over) either employed or unemployed to prepare them academically for university degrees at either NUI Galway or Galway Mayo Institute of Technology.

The course is taught parallel in both NUI Galway or GMIT Castlebar. This intensive part-time course is for mature applicants aged 22 or over interested in applying for entry to full-time or part-time business courses at either GMIT or NUI Galway. An aptitude for maths is required.

The programme run in the NUI Galway campus runs Tuesday and Thursday evenings 6.30 pm to 9.30pm and some Saturdays 10am to 5pm.

The programme run in GMIT Castlebar Campus runs Mondays 6pm to 9.15pm, Wednesdays 6pm to 9.45pm and Thursdays 6pm to 8.30pm.

The duration of the course is 26 weeks. The course includes Accountancy, Economics, Mathematics, Business Skills, Information Technology, Skills for College and Career, Academic Study Skills and Academic Writing.

COURSE FEE

The fee is 380 euros for those in employment and 60 euros for those in receipt of Social Welfare.

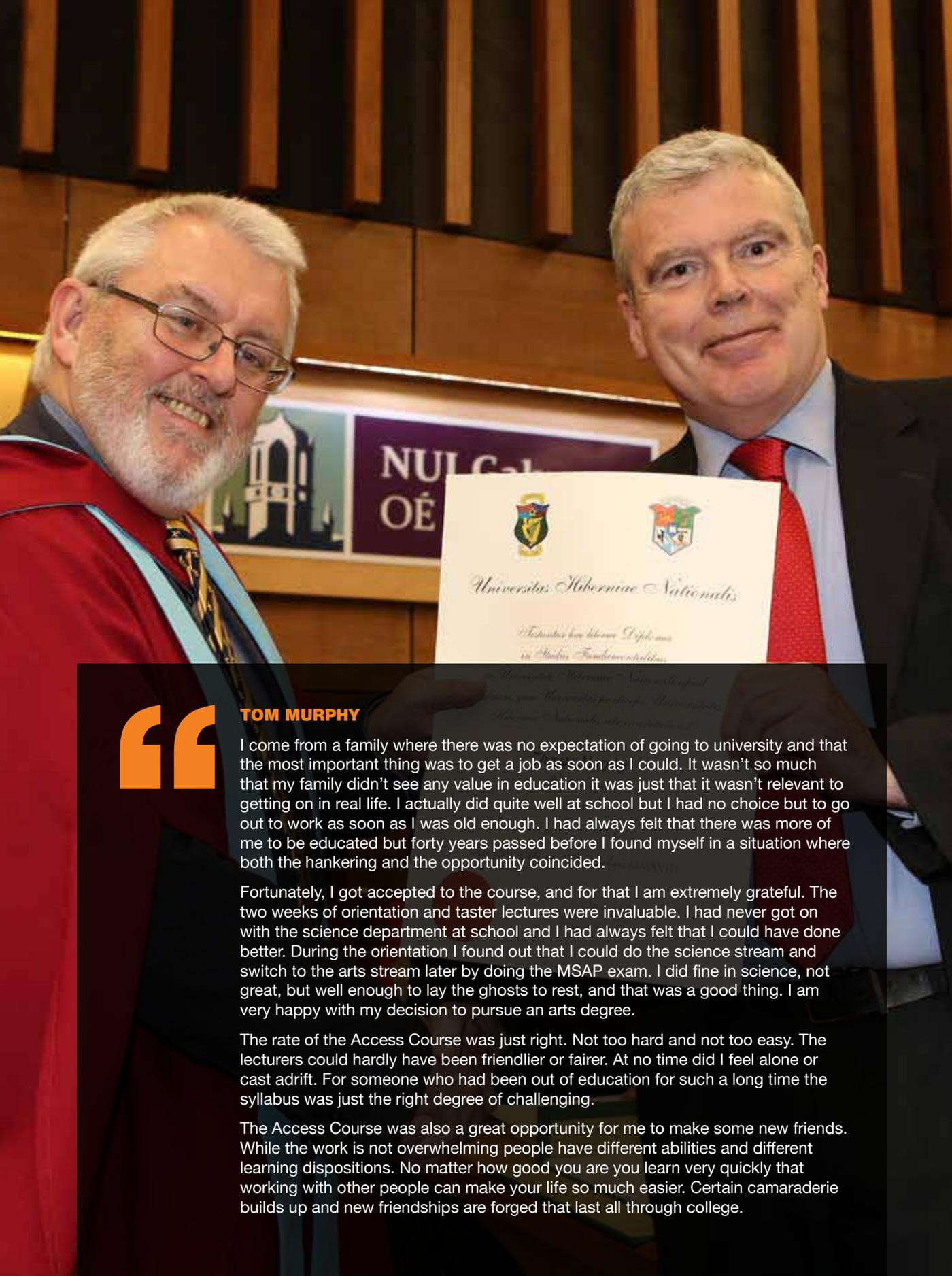
HOW TO APPLY

Applications to Diploma in Foundation Studies Business are completed on-line from July. No interviews apply.

Find out more:

www.nuigalway.ie/mature/part-time/

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TOM MURPHY

I come from a family where there was no expectation of going to university and that the most important thing was to get a job as soon as I could. It wasn't so much that my family didn't see any value in education it was just that it wasn't relevant to getting on in real life. I actually did quite well at school but I had no choice but to go out to work as soon as I was old enough. I had always felt that there was more of me to be educated but forty years passed before I found myself in a situation where both the hankering and the opportunity coincided.

Fortunately, I got accepted to the course, and for that I am extremely grateful. The two weeks of orientation and taster lectures were invaluable. I had never got on with the science department at school and I had always felt that I could have done better. During the orientation I found out that I could do the science stream and switch to the arts stream later by doing the MSAP exam. I did fine in science, not great, but well enough to lay the ghosts to rest, and that was a good thing. I am very happy with my decision to pursue an arts degree.

The rate of the Access Course was just right. Not too hard and not too easy. The lecturers could hardly have been friendlier or fairer. At no time did I feel alone or cast adrift. For someone who had been out of education for such a long time the syllabus was just the right degree of challenging.

The Access Course was also a great opportunity for me to make some new friends. While the work is not overwhelming people have different abilities and different learning dispositions. No matter how good you are you learn very quickly that working with other people can make your life so much easier. Certain camaraderie builds up and new friendships are forged that last all through college.





How do I Apply

Applications to the Access Programmes are on-line and generally open in March and closes shortly after. Places are competitive each year with more demand than supply. It would be wise to check the website regularly for updates and to start gathering required documentation so as to have your application submitted on time. Late applications cannot be facilitated. Application instructions and deadlines are available on the access website.

You will need two referees. A referee cannot be a family member. Preferably, your referee would be someone who knows you in an educational or work capacity, e.g. a past principal, teacher, tutor, employer, or manager. They should be able to comment knowledgeably and honestly on your academic ability. Please read through the application guidelines on the access website for more information on references.

The Access Office requires a copy of your P21 for the previous calendar (tax

year as part of your application. You can request your P21 from your local Revenue Office. More information is available from Revenue.

If you, your spouse, or your parent(s)/guardian(s) are self-employed, Revenue will issue a Notice of Assessment once they have received your/your spouse's/your parent(s)/guardian(s)' tax return. This document confirms your tax position for the relevant calendar (tax) year. More information is available from Revenue.

Find out more:

www.nuigalway.ie/access

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What Our Access Centre Students Say

Formerly self-employed for many years in an industry severely affected by the economic crisis. I completed the 'Mature Access Programme' at NUI Galway in 2013, this course left me well prepared for a BA degree. I was awarded a 'Mature Student Scholarship' and achieved an Honours BA degree in Legal Studies, Sociology and Politics. As a Mature Student, I availed of opportunities on and off campus to expand my skill set. I completed 'Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training' and 'Child Protection Awareness Programme'. I recorded over 900 hours of volunteering in the last four years with the university's 'ALIVE Programme'. Being a Mature Student has given me confidence to recognise my abilities and to use them to help others. Thus, I committed successfully to the role as Mentor and Class Representative. In final year, I facilitated 1st year Legal Studies students with my role as 'CEIM Student Leader' on a hugely successful pilot programme. Ultimately, choosing to be a Mature Student at NUI Galway has advanced me both academically and personally. It has taught me, learning is truly endless regardless of age. Barriers are only those which we create for ourselves but with true determination anything is possible. My ambition is to study a Masters in Social Work at NUI Galway and so my journey will continue at this wonderful University.

BA LAW Mary Butler- Walsh

I have just accepted a college offer for NUI Galway. I am so delighted that I got my first choice course. Thank You for everything you did over the year. The access course overall was a great experience and hopefully will make 1st year a little easier. On a personal note, I know that I would not have gotten any offer if it had not been for your help a few weeks ago. I really, really appreciate the help you gave me and wouldn't forget anytime soon. Looking forward to seeing you in September!

Sandra (B Comm Accountancy)

I found out recently that I have been approved for CoS funding to start a PhD in September in NUIG and I am absolutely delighted! I just wanted to thank you for all your help over the years. I didn't imagine when starting the Diploma in Foundation Studies Science, Technology and Engineering 5 years ago meant that I would graduate with 1st class honours, and be able to start studying for a PhD too. So thanks a million! I'm sure we'll see each other around the canteen come September!

Crystal Bachelor of Science (Physics with Astrophysics)



Disability Support Service

Support for students with a disability, ongoing physical or mental health condition, or specific learning difficulty

Students with a disability, a long-term health condition (physical or mental), or a specific learning difficulty, you are encouraged to register with NUI Galway's Disability Support Service (DSS). Approximately one in twenty students at NUI Galway is registered with the DSS. You can find out more about this service and how to register at www.nuigalway.ie/disability/.

Most of the students who register with the DSS present with one or more of the following:

- Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- Attention deficit disorder (ADD)/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Blind/vision impaired
- Deaf/hard of hearing
- Neurological condition, including epilepsy and brain injury
- Speech and language communication disorder
- Physical disability, including mobility issues
- Developmental coordination disorder (DCD) - Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia
- Mental health condition
- Significant ongoing illness

- Specific learning difficulty (SLD), including dyslexia or dyscalculia

Register for DSS support

To register for support, you will need to complete our online registration form at www.nuigalway.ie/disability/ and provide evidence of your disability, ongoing health condition, or specific learning difficulty. Once submitted students will be contacted to arrange a needs assessment appointment with a Disability Advisor. Supports and reasonable accommodations will be determined through an individual needs assessment; taking into account the nature and impact of your disability, evidence of disability, and course requirements.

Contact Us

Disability Support Service
Room AUC 1004, First floor
Áras Úi Chathail
NUI Galway

T: +353 91 49 2813
E: disabilityservice@nuigalway.ie
Website: www.nuigalway.ie/disability



Access Centre

Access Diploma Programmes



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