

Higher Education For All – Full Time Online CAO Courses

Authors

IT Sligo - Louise Kearins, Prof Jacqueline McCormack, Dr Ellen McCabe, and Ciara McBride.

Aims

To provide three flexible, full-time, online/blended degree programmes, listed via the CAO, for students who would find it too challenging to attend an on-campus courses.

Findings

The Full-Time Online model of learning can facilitate equality of opportunity and access to higher education across Ireland. However, Full-Time Online students can sit between two established learning models, i.e. campus full-time and online part-time online. A universal approach to supporting students is required; where possible, the supports need to be accessible through the college website to make them easy to find without logging in to the college services. Moreover, the supports should be accessible at any time to promote student support independence. Additionally, Universal Design for Learning can reduce the need for students to seek out services to address their own educational needs.

Impact

1. To have 3 programmes are on the CAO (2 on the CAO to date) by the project end in June 2022.
2. To create another FT Online programme.
3. To mainstream the Full Time Online Programmes on the CAO to extend the access to full time higher education.
4. Explore if hybrid delivery of campus and online delivery could expand and sustain the Full Time Online model of learning.

Visuals

3 PROGRAMMES

(From 3 Faculties)

L8 - Writing & Literature

L7 / L6 - Health & Medical Information Science

L6 - Business

Student intake

2020-21

- Round A - 8
- Round 0 - 0
- Round 1 - 10
- Direct Entry - 14
- Transfers - 0
- Vacant Places - 2
- 5 Project bursaries

2021-22

- Round A - 24
- Round 0 - 3
- Round 1 - 11
- Direct Entry - 4
- Transfers - 6
- 12 Project bursaries

Issues

Students assume they can "work in their own time" rather than on campus day time schedules. The workload is bigger than some students expected. Online access courses need to prepare some students for higher education-entry maths supports required for some courses. Funding issues, waiting to become SUSI recognised. Flexibility required for students with medical issues or caring commitments.

Project Partners IT Sligo, Disability Federation Ireland, Family Careers Ireland, Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim ETB, Donegal ETB.

Project timeline <https://bit.ly/3b0n1xD>