

Mature Student Office Business Process

PURPOSE

The purpose of this process is to describe the procedures associated with the delivery of key services and activities of the Mature Student Office.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Mature Student Officer is responsible for this process. All staff in the Mature Student Office are responsible for implementing the associated procedures.

PROCEDURE

The [Mature Student Office](#) (MSO) provides a range of supports and advice to prospective and current mature students (aged 23+) at both pre-entry and post-entry stages to full-time undergraduate studies in UL. Information on the full range of services provided by the office is available on its [website](#).

The primary procedures associated with delivery of the above services include:

- A. Mature Student Access Certificate Recruitment
- B. Mature Student Access Certificate Administration
- C. Mature Student Welcome Programme
- D. Mature Student Office Support Work
- E. Mature Student Scholarship Scheme
- F. Maths for STEM Certificate

All other procedures required for the regular operations of the Mature Student Office (MSO) are outlined in the MSO's [Working Guidelines](#).

A. Mature Student Access Certificate (MSAC) Recruitment Procedure	
December	1. Review & update brochure & application material.
January - April	2. Advertise the programme as appropriate and within available resources - local radio, local press, MSO website, flyers, posters, open days / evenings, email circulation internally and externally.
Ongoing throughout year	3. Provide information / advice to prospective applicants by phone / email / drop-in.
January - August	4. Send application packs to all interested applicants, as requested.
April - May	5. Applications are received directly into the Mature Student Office (early May deadline). Receipt of all applications is acknowledged by email. Late applications may be accepted throughout the summer, subject to capacity on the programme.
May - August	6. Applicant details are provided to the Admissions Office for inputting to SI after the initial application deadline has passed and thereafter as received. (See MSO Working Guideline A1.)
May	7. Set dates for interviewing applicants and request co-interviewers from MSAC tutors, faculty and divisional colleagues. Schedule some interview

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	slots before the start date of the Leaving Certificate, to accommodate adult learners who are sitting the LC.
May	8. Screen applicants according to programme eligibility criteria and prepare interview schedule. Where applicants have declared a disability on their application form and have requested specific support for the interview process, the Disability Support Services (DSSO) is consulted for further advice, where necessary. A representative from DSSO is requested to sit in on the relevant interview panel(s) if required.
May	9. Inform interviewees by email or phone of the date and time of interview. Request that they confirm attendance.
May	10. Prepare interview criteria, interview evaluation forms and interview assessments.
May / June	11. Hold interviews. Rank candidates based on performance in interview.
June	12. Send letter by email to applicant offering/declining a place on course. Request confirmation of acceptance of place. Enclose information on Back to Education Allowance and course fees in offer pack.
June - July	13. Schedule and prepare MSAC Orientation Programme.
July – August	14. Send MSAC Orientation Programme information to new students.
July-August	15. Send information on RPL exam for IT skills to applicants.
August	16. Hold MSAC Orientation programme (See MSO Working Guideline B1).

Responsibility for the above actions is divided amongst the staff of the Mature Student Office. Further information on the Mature Student Access Certificate is available from the [Mature Student Office website](#).

B. Mature Student Access Certificate Administration

There is no single overall procedure for administration of the Mature Student Access Certificate. All sub-procedures are outlined in [Working Guidelines B1 to B7](#).

C. Mature Student Welcome Programme Procedure

June	1. Review programme content & feedback (where available) from previous year. Revise and update for current year.
June	2. Agree dates and book venues for event.
June - July	3. Arrange speakers for event.
June	4. Develop Welcome Programme brochure & supporting documentation.
July - August	5. Liaise with Admissions Office for sending of Welcome Programme brochure & supporting documentation to new mature students following each relevant round of CAO offers. Invite MSAC repeat exam students to Welcome Programme & send supporting documentation e.g. HeadStart Maths.
July - August	6. Record RSVPs for event.
August	7. Arrange supports (e.g. disability supports), if necessary, for attendees.
August	8. Organise catering for event.

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Final week August	9. Hold event.
August - September	10. Record any feedback (formal or informal) received from attendees on the programme.

Responsibility for the above actions is divided amongst the staff of the Mature Student Office. Further information on the Mature Student Welcome Programme is available from the [Mature Student Office website](#).

D. Mature Student Office Support Work

There is no single overall procedure for the general support work of the Mature Student Office. All sub-procedures are outlined in [Working Guidelines D3 to D7](#).

E. UL40 Mature Student Scholarship Scheme Procedure

Ongoing throughout year	1. Promote scheme via MSO website, MS handbook, talks, external and internal e-shots, open days / evenings, MS Welcome Programme.
June	2. Review and reconfirm Scholarship Committee membership.
July / August	3. Advise ITD of any changes to assessors for workflow system. Liaise with ITD with respect to any recommended changes to application & assessment system as per Service Level Agreement. This includes changes to the date on the online application form and to links to updated documentation, if ready.
August	4. Pay annual fee to ITD for Service Level Agreement for maintenance and updating of workflow system.
August / September	5. Hold Mature Student Scholarship Committee meeting to review & agree assessment and allocation procedures for the current year. Review the online application form with the Committee and advise ITD of any final changes to the form and/or links to documentation before it goes live. Arrange training on workflow system if required.
September	6. Promote scheme directly to registered first year mature students via MSO website & weekly e-shots. Circulate information to relevant colleagues and departments in UL.
September	7. Applicants apply online for scholarship via SharePoint (Weeks 2 – 5)
September	8. Alert committee members to opening of system for applications and circulate final assessment guidelines.
October – November	9. Assessment of eligible applications is undertaken by relevant committee members as per assessment guidelines.
October – November	10. Liaise with committee members on any issues arising during the assessment process.
October / November	11. Nominated recipients are advised to MSO by assessors. MSO nominates two Mature Student Access Certificate (MSAC) recipients. MSO re-confirms eligibility of nominated recipients.
November	12. Hold committee meeting to sign off on nominated recipients for the current year and to review process.

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November	13. Inform President's Office of nominated recipients. After recipients are formally informed by the President's Office, MSO writes to all applicants - congratulate successful applicants and thank all applicants for applying.
December	14. Scholarships are awarded as part of annual UL Scholarship Awards Ceremony. Date is set and arrangements made by President's Office. Mature Student Officer, or nominee, attends ceremony.
January	15. Prepare final report on operation and allocation of scholarships for current year & disseminate to committee members.
February/March	16. Approx week 6, check on continued registration of scholarship recipients for the current year. Where a recipient is no longer registered, the MSO contacts the person to ascertain reasons for non-continuation of studies. MSO contacts the Scholarship Committee for decision on request for repayment of all or part of the scholarship. If repayment is agreed to be requested, MSO liaises with the President's Office regarding procedure for repayment.

Responsibility for the above actions is divided amongst the staff of the Mature Student Office. Further information on the Mature Student Scholarship Scheme is available from the [Mature Student Office website](#).

F. Maths for STEM Certificate Procedure

December	1. Review & update brochure & application material, in collaboration with LCETB.
January - April	2. Advertise the programme as appropriate and within available resources - local radio, local press, MSO website, flyers, posters, open days / evenings, email circulation internally and externally.
Ongoing	3. Provide information / advice to prospective applicants by phone / email / drop-in.
January - July	4. Send application packs to all interested applicants, as requested.
April - June	5. Applications are received directly into the Mature Student Office (early June deadline). Receipt of all applications is acknowledged by email. Late applications may be accepted throughout the summer, subject to capacity on the programme.
June	6. Set dates for interviewing applicants and request co-interviewer from Maths Department in UL.
June	7. Screen applicants according to programme eligibility criteria and prepare interview schedule. Where applicants have declared a disability on their application form the Disability Support Services (DSSO) is consulted for further advice, where necessary.
June / July	8. Inform interviewees by email or phone of the date and time of interview. Request that they confirm attendance.
June / July	9. Prepare interview criteria, interview evaluation forms and interview assessments.
June / July	10. Hold interviews. Rank candidates based on performance in interview.

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July	11. Send letter by email to applicant offering/declining a place on course, along with information on HeadStart Maths, course fee and draft schedule of classes. Request confirmation of acceptance of place.
August	12. Applicants attend HeadStart Maths course. Mature Student Officer consults with applicants at the end of HeadStart about progressing to classes.
August	13. Book classrooms for Semester One.
September	14. Course starts on the first Wednesday evening of Semester One. Hold welcome event for students with LCETB colleagues that evening. Students complete registration with LCETB before first class commences.
January	15. Book classrooms for Semester Two.
Sept – May	16. Mature Student Officer stays in touch via email with students and tutor.
May	17. Conduct an evaluation of the programme and implement any recommendations for changes, where possible, for next year.

Responsibility for the above actions is divided amongst the staff of the Mature Student Office and work is carried out in collaboration with colleagues in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. Further information on the Maths for STEM Certificate is available from the [Mature Student Office website](#).

DOCUMENTATION

[MSO Working Guidelines](#)

RECORDS

Any student records created within the Unit are stored in accordance with UL's [Records Management and Retention Policy](#).

PROCESS VERIFICATION

Evaluation of the Mature Student Office Process effectiveness is carried out using internal audits. Changes to the process are put in place as required and as appropriate.

REVISION HISTORY

Revision No.	Date revised	Approved by:	Approval date & meeting	Details of Change	Process Owner
1	Sept '13	Quality Team		<i>Initial Release</i>	Mature & Adult Learner Co-ordinator
2	June '14	Quality Team		<i>Removal of Guidance Service procedure and references. Update of MSAC Recruitment, Welcome Programme & Peer Mentoring Procedures. Inclusion of MSAC Administration and MSO Support Work Procedures, with links to relevant MSO Working Guidelines.</i>	Mature & Adult Learner Co-ordinator
3	Nov '14	Quality Team		<i>Inclusion of Mature Student Scholarship Scheme procedure and references.</i>	Mature & Adult Learner Co-ordinator
4	Sept '15	Quality Team	<i>QT meeting, 07/10/15</i>	<i>Minor changes made to Procedures A, C, E & F</i>	Mature & Adult Learner Co-ordinator

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				<p>Documentation links removed from KBP as these are updated regularly and all relevant documentation is available on MSO website or on SharePoint.</p> <p>Inclusion of approval date and meeting in Revision History.</p>	
5	May '16	Quality Team	QT meeting, 01/06/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor text changes throughout for clarification. • Removal of specific application deadline for MSAC in A. Step 7 – reminder to set dates for interviews before LC. • Change of date for Peer Mentor training in E. • Inclusion of 'UL40' in title in F. Inclusion of Step 5 & opening of system changed to Weeks 2-5. Change and clarification to Step 12. Inclusion of Service Level Agreement in Step 15. 	Mature & Adult Learner Co-ordinator
6	March '17	Quality Team	QT meeting, 01/03/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor text changes throughout for clarification • Adjustments to Procedure F: Step 3 - alerting ITD to changes; inclusion of Step 4 – payment of SLA fee; Step 6 – inclusion of circulation of information to colleagues 	Mature & Adult Learner Co-ordinator
7	Sept '17	Quality Team	QT meeting, 04/10/17 & by email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor text changes throughout for clarification 	Mature Student Officer
8	Nov '18	Quality Team	QT meeting, 05/12/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of Peer Mentoring Procedure • Change to Step 6, Procedure A • Change to Step 5, Procedure C re sending info to incoming MS • Removal of Steps 7 & 17 in UL40 Scholarship Procedure. • Inclusion of Maths for STEM Certificate Procedure 	Mature Student Officer