



Admissions Process and Timeline

Burren College of Art is committed to providing clear and transparent procedures for student access and the Admissions process based on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications. The procedures are outlined as follows:

Student Access

Applicants for the MFA/MA/PG Dip and the Higher Diploma in Fine Art/Art & Ecology are required to submit the following materials:

- A completed online application form
- A copy of a recent essay on art or a critical review of an exhibition you have recently visited (approx. 1000 words)
- A portfolio comprised of 10-15 works, which may be represented digitally as jpeg or links (video) and sent through GoogleDocs or www.wetransfer.com
- A written statement of approx. 500 words that clearly states what you seek to attain through study on this programme
- A résumé providing details of education, employment history, exhibitions and publications
- Official certificate or transcript for all degree awards received
- Two letters of recommendation (May be emailed directly to lisa@burrencollege.ie and must be sent by your referees)
- A copy of your Passport
- Non-refundable application fee of €50 payable online.

Note: We request official copies of transcripts to be either sent by password-protected email by your college or university, or sent as a hard copy to Admissions, Burren College of Art, Newtown Castle, Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare, Ireland. Portfolio images can be submitted electronically via GoogleDocs or www.wetransfer.com. All other application materials can be emailed to the Director of Admissions, Lisa Newman, at lisa@burrencollege.ie

PhD/MPhil Application Process

Applicants for the PhD/MPhil programmes should have a masters degree in fine art (MFA).

Applicants with an MFA degree may apply directly for the PhD/MPhil programme. Applicants who do not have an MFA may apply for the MFA with the possibility of progression to PhD/MPhil. To apply for the MFA applicants must hold a Bachelors degree with Honours in Fine Art (First class or 2:1, or a GPA of 3.50 or above).

Enrolled MFA students have two options at the end of Year One:

- Research for three more years leading to the award of the PhD
- Research for one more year leading to the award of the MPhil
- Research for one more year leading to the award of the MFA

Formal applications for the PhD/MPhil are in two stages:

Stage 1 - Applicants submit:

- Online Application form
- An outline of your research proposal, including your proposed methodology and reading list (Guidelines listed on Admissions page).
- Portfolio (10-15 jpeg images or 3-4 links to video). Your portfolio may be submitted electronically through GoogleDocs or www.wetransfer.com
- 2 letters of recommendation sent by your referees by email to lisa@burrencollege.ie
- Official transcripts demonstrating evidence of previous degrees. These must be either official hard copies in envelopes stamped and sealed by the university or sent as password-protected e-transcripts.
- Copy of passport.
- Non-refundable application fee of €50 payable online.

We request official copies of transcripts to be either sent by password-protected email by your college or university, or sent as a hard copy to Admissions, Burren College of Art, Newtown Castle, Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare, Ireland. Portfolio images can be submitted electronically via GoogleDocs or www.wetransfer.com. All other application materials can be emailed to the Director of Admissions, Lisa Newman, at lisa@burrencollege.ie

All eligible applicants are then interviewed.

Stage 2 - Shortlisted applicants submit a revised research proposal for discussion and further revision until it is suitable for registration, at which time the applicant is admitted with effect from either September or January.

Application Deadline

The application deadline is February 1 annually. The application portal is opened the prior October 1 through the February 1 deadline.

Review and Notification Process

From October 1 for the 2027-2028 application cycle, applicants will be directed to submit their application form and upload documents through the BCA SIS (Student Information System), Classter. Transcripts and letters of recommendation will continue to be sent directly to the Director of Admissions who will then upload official documents in Classter to the applicant's file.

The Director of Admissions confirms receipt of application materials and completion of the application submission with the applicant by email within 24 hours of receipt (documents and final application).

Once the deadline has passed and all applications are confirmed, they will then be shared with the faculty committee for review through Classter.

Applications are reviewed and scored using an existing template during the week following the deadline by the Faculty committee, and consideration of College capacity for the incoming number of postgraduate students for the entry year. High scoring applicants can proceed to interview. Low scoring applicants are added to a waiting list. Clear rejections are notified. Notifications for progression to interview, rejections and waitlisted students are notified within 2 days of faculty review and decision by email. Waitlisted students are given a realistic timeline for further notification and will be notified of any delays or changes to a timeline.

Dates for interviews are established between the Director of Admissions and the Faculty. Two faculty must be present for each interview.

Faculty will interview applicants and fill out and provide narrative and numerical scoring on the "Interview Form MFA-MA-Post Bac" on the basis of the applicant's performance at interview including faculty appraisal of the submitted application materials.

Faculty will make a decision to Accept/Reject or Add to Waiting List interviewed students on the basis of the evaluation made and documented on the Interview Form and Application Review scoring sheets.

Interview and Application Review Forms are sent to the Director of Admissions to be stored in applicant files. Applicant documents will be kept on file for 2 years, as applicants can reapply within to application cycles within this timeframe with the reduced requirements of sending an updated application form, Statement of Intent, and portfolio without the need to resubmit previous documents.

The Director of Admissions sends letter of acceptance within 5 days after all initial interviews have been completed and decisions submitted by the faculty committee. Clear rejections and interviewed applicants who have been waitlisted will be notified within 5 days of faculty decision. Waitlisted students will be given a reasonable timeline to receive a final decision on their application. This coincides with the date given to accepted students to accept the offer given. This is usually four weeks from the date of the offer letter, with the deadline listed in the offer letter.

Waitlisted applicants not interviewed may be offered an interview or notified that their application was unsuccessful, if there is capacity available within the incoming cohort. If there are no available places by the offer deadline, then waitlisted students will be notified within 5 days of the deadline and encouraged to reapply for future application cycles.

Exceptions, RPL and Deferrals

Faculty may offer a student a place on a programme other than what they've applied for, based on evaluation of their application materials and interview. For example, they may feel that an MFA or MA applicant would instead qualify for the Post Baccalaureate programme, with the goal of gaining the skills and experience to then progress on to the MA or MFA on successful completion of the Post Baccalaureate.

Should alternative qualifications be submitted for consideration in an application to a programme, faculty may refer to our Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy in assisting them with evaluating the application.

For applications from international learners from countries in political or economic crisis, we follow Lisbon Recognition Convention protocols and may accept unofficial or alternative documents for the application process.

Applicants who have been offered a place on a postgraduate programme may choose to defer their acceptance for up to two years without the need to full reapply. They will need to request the deferral in writing to the Director of Admissions prior to the start of the current academic year, and will need to submit an updated application form, portfolio and Statement of Intent to provide current information prior to their deferred entry year by the next application deadline of February 1.