

Frequently Asked Questions for Level 2 and Level 3 Horticulture & Floristry courses at Greenmount Campus - September 2026 intake

Q1. How do I apply for Level 2 or Level 3 course?

For all CAFRE **Further Education** courses i.e. Certificate and Diploma programmes after GCSEs, you must apply through the CAFRE website www.cafre.ac.uk

Visit the page on the website you want to apply for and click on 'Apply for this course' button which will take you into an 'application basket' area.

The application process is in two stages:

Registration – where you record all your personal details and qualifications including predicted grades, then

Application – where you apply for up to five courses. You should rank them in order of choice - first choice, second choice etc.

Once you have applied you should receive an email acknowledging your application. Within a couple of weeks, you will be invited to participate in a course / career advisory discussion with a member of CAFRE staff. This discussion usually takes place face to face on campus.

If you do not hear from us, you should contact CAFRE on cafreenquiries@daera-ni.gov.uk

Applications are open until the 30th June each year however late applications may be accepted after this date.

Q2. Where do I get my Unique Learner Number (ULN)?

You will have received your Unique Learner Number through your school. The Unique Learner Number (ULN) is a 10-digit reference number which is used to access the Personal Learning Record of anyone over the age of 13 involved in UK education or training. If you do not remember it or have mislaid it, please contact your school who will be able to give it to you.

Q3. Are there interviews to get onto a course?

We hold application discussions for all Level 2 and Level 3 Further Education courses. The aim of this discussion is to make sure you have applied for the right course, fully understand the entry requirements, including work experience, and answer any questions you may have. It is preferable for the discussion to take place on campus; however, alternative arrangements can be made on request via telephone or video call.

If you are under 18 years of age you should have a parent(s) or guardian with you. You will receive a letter afterwards with an update on your offer – either conditional, unconditional or a decline. Firm offers will only be made when all exam results are available.

If you are a mature applicant (over age 18) and already have GCSE results (or equivalent), a firm offer can be made as soon as you provide evidence of your GCSE (or equivalent) results.

Q4. What if I don't come to the application discussion can I still get on a course?

Attendance at the application discussion is not compulsory but highly recommended. An alternative format (ie telephone or video call) can be offered if it is not possible for an applicant to attend a face-to-face applicant discussion. As long as you fully meet the academic requirements of the course including any additional prerequisites such as relevant industry experience then you may still be accepted on the course

Q5. How much does it cost to study at CAFRE?

There are no tuition fees for Level 2 and Level 3 Further Education programmes. Applicants living in Northern Ireland can apply for a means tested grant to help towards accommodation and living costs ([Further Education Funding Support | Funding Support | CAFRE](#)).

Q6. Can I get on a course if I don't have a GCSE Grade C in English and/or Maths?

Grade Cs in GCSE English Language and Mathematics or equivalent are essential for entry on to the Level 3 course.

Applications for the Level 2 course will consider lower grades but students will be required to complete Essential Skills qualifications in the relevant subject in order to bring up their grades during their programme. Where an applicant has never undertaken English Language and/or Mathematics, they may need to attempt these subjects prior in order to receive an offer at CAFRE (ie achieve a minimum of Level 1 Essential Skills / grade D).

Q7. What equivalent qualifications does CAFRE accept instead of GCSEs?

CAFRE accepts a range of qualifications from other awarding bodies as equivalent to GCSEs. However, remember that Grade Cs in English Language and Maths or equivalent are essential for entry on to all of CAFRE Level 3 courses. If you have a specific enquiry about equivalent qualifications, please contact the relevant Course Manager.

Q8. How will CAFRE make offers?

CAFRE will make conditional offers to students based on their predicted grades provided by their schools. Depending on your results which are released in August, CAFRE will offer you a place on the first choice course or on your second choice or another course or decline your application if you do not meet the minimum entry requirements.

Q9. Will CAFRE accept other qualifications, such as BTECs?

Schools now offer a wide variety of qualifications and CAFRE will consider these courses on an individual basis subject to their relevancy to our courses.

Q10. I have an unconditional offer. What does that mean?

If your offer is unconditional and if you firmly accept it, your place on a course is confirmed at CAFRE. An unconditional offer can only be allocated once you have provided CAFRE with evidence of your GCSE (or equivalent) results. If you are a mature student and already have these results, bring them to your applicant discussion and/or email a copy of the document to the programme manager as evidence. If you have lost your GCSE results, please see question 21.

Q11. Can I apply to CAFRE after my Junior Certificate?

No. Students must be studying for or have their Leaving Certificate (Ordinary or Higher, not Foundation) before they can apply to CAFRE. Applied Leaving Certificate is not considered but applicants should contact the Course Manager for further information on alternative qualifications.

Q12. When do courses begin?

The first teaching week for most Further Education students is normally the second week of September each year. The first teaching week for all other courses is normally the third week in September. The academic calendar is available on the college website under the '[Student Life](#)' tab.

Q13. How are courses delivered?

All CAFRE courses include both classroom and practical learning opportunities. Level 2 and Level 3 students will have a higher percentage of practical compared to degree students. As CAFRE's ethos is "learning by doing" we want to make sure that you can enjoy the benefits of learning in our state-of-the-art, modern facilities and make the most of your time as a CAFRE student

Q14. Do I need to purchase anything in advance if I get an offer on a course?

Yes, some courses will require that you purchase specific Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) before you come to CAFRE. However, do not purchase anything until you have a definite offer for a place on the course. Once you have accepted the offer you will be informed exactly what PPE you need to purchase.

Some elements of your course will involve online learning activities. Although desktops with internet access are available for use on campus we recommend that you bring your own device (BYOD). Further device information is available on the '[Student Life – Learner Policies](#)' tab on the website.

You will receive further details when your place on a CAFRE course is confirmed. Again we strongly advise you not to purchase any equipment until you get an official confirmation of a place on a CAFRE course.

Q15. When will accommodation bookings become available for 2026-2027?

[Accommodation booking](#) will open in early summer 2026. Applications will be made online on the CAFRE website under the 'Student Life' tab.

Q16. How much does accommodation cost?

Accommodation cost varies depending on the type of accommodation and if you are on a catering package. Please visit [accommodation pages](#) for detailed information.

Q17. Can I apply for a grant to study at CAFRE?

Further Education Grants are available for students from Northern Ireland who have applied for full time and part time Level 1, 2 & 3 courses.

See link below for information and the FE grant application form
<http://www.eani.org.uk/fegrants>

Q18. Is transport assistance available?

yLink is a free smartcard for all 16-23 years olds using Translink services within Northern Ireland. You get third off Translink bus travel in Northern Ireland.

Apply for a free card using this link <https://www.translink.co.uk/ylink>.

Students travelling on bus Eireann can receive up to 15% off fares, and the yLink card is suitable to use for this.

Q19. How far away is the bus station from the college/ how much does a taxi cost from the station?

The bus depot is approximately 2 miles away from the campus. Taxi transfers cost approximately £10.

Ulsterbus operate service 108c to and from the campus, term-time only, Monday-Friday.

Q20. Is there a 'uniform' for students? Are there any rules for what you can wear?

There is no uniform for Horticulture students. However, tidy workwear is expected to be worn as our practical classes are working visibly throughout campus.

Floristry students must purchase a CAFRE Floristry apron, which is worn during practical classes. This can be ordered via the link below.

CAFRE branded clothing is available to order online. The items offer good value for money and can be viewed using this [link](#).

Q21. I am aged over 18 years of age with a university degree. Do I need to provide my GCSE results (or equivalent)?

Yes. CAFRE courses require evidence of GCSE grade C or above in English Language and Maths. Some degrees do not require this as entry criteria; therefore, a degree is not a guarantee that an applicant meets these criteria. If you have lost your GCSE results, you may be able to obtain a copy from your school or by contacting CCEA at the following link. A small fee may apply. [Obtaining, replacing and updating certificates | CCEA](#)