

Frequently Asked Questions for Level 2 and Level 3 Horticulture courses at Greenmount Campus - September 2024 intake

Q. How do I apply for a Work-based Level 2 or Level 3 course?

For all CAFRE **Work-based Horticulture** 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:

1. *Registration* – where you record all your personal details and qualifications including predicted grades. Please ensure the contact details you provide are the best contact options – if under 18 years old, it is recommended to the details of a parent or guardian.
2. *Application* – where you apply for up to five courses. You should rank them in order of choice - first choice, second choice etc. You can also provide relevant work experience information and any relevant medical information that CAFRE should be aware of.

Once you have applied you should receive an email acknowledging your application. You will receive an email invitation to participate in a course / career advisory discussion with a member of CAFRE staff. Dates and times will be available for you to choose from for an in-person interview at Greenmount CAFRE. Additional dates and times will become available up until June 2024.

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

Applications are open until the 31st August each year; however, in some years late applications may be accepted after this date (dependant on numbers). Applications received in June or later may not be contacted until August depending on staff availability.

Q2. How do I enrol onto the Apprenticeship Programme?

Our work-based courses are all run as standard courses. Depending on your eligibility, you will be enrolled as an apprentice through the ApprenticeshipNI Framework and the required administration for this is completed by CAFRE Administrative staff. Eligibility has now broadened to include, those working in the private sector, of all ages onto the apprenticeship programme across all the Work-based Horticulture qualifications.

Q3. Are there interviews to get onto a course?

We hold application discussions for all Work-based Level 2 and Level 3 courses. The aim of this discussion is to make sure you have applied for the right course, fully understand the entry requirements, including relevant 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 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.

During this applicant discussion, it is important that students bring all relevant documents with them, including GCSE certification and previous work experience details. It is at this stage, eligibility for the apprenticeship scheme will be determined for each applicant.

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](#)).

All courses will have incidental costs such as obtaining your own personal protective equipment. Some courses will require purchase of a laptop. Please see questions 14 and 20 for more information.

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 along with relevant industry experience.

Applications for the Level 2 course will consider lower grades but students will be required to complete Essential Skills qualifications in the relevant subject as part of the apprenticeship 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, accompanied by relevant industry experience. 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 Work-based Horticulture students is normally the fourth week of September each year. The qualification is taught through to the first week of June the following year before breaking for summer holidays. 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. Work-based Horticulture 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. The nature of our work-based courses allows learners to gain experience and complete assessments in their relevant workplace alongside their study. This can all be contributed towards the learner's portfolio.

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. As a work-based learner, your employer should provide you with the appropriate PPE required to carry out tasks within that industry.

Some elements of your course will involve online learning activities. It is optional to use your own device if preferred, however, desktops with internet access are available for use on Campus.

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. What are the requirements for enrolling onto a work-based course?

Applicants must be employed in the relevant industry at least 21 hours per week. This employment can either be paid or voluntary. This requirement is due to the nature of a work-based qualification, where students not only develop their skills within their studies but also gain invaluable experience and knowledge within their workplace, which can all be used to contribute towards their qualification.

Q16. How many days per week will I be expected to attend Greenmount Campus?

Work-based learners are required to attend Campus one day per week alongside their relevant employment. This is over the course of two years inline with the academic calendar. Please see **Q12** for more 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

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 one-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 and train station 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 along with appropriate PPE which should be in good condition, is expected to be worn as our practical classes are working visibly throughout campus.

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

There are rules regarding clothing on the farm to reflect health and safety requirements – no jewellery or trainers etc.

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](#)

Q22. Is there a monetary incentive for the student or the employer whilst completing the Apprenticeship Framework?

Students do not receive any funding as part of the ApprenticeshipNI Framework. However, the employer will receive a monetary contribution for supporting a learner to complete the qualification. This funding will be awarded to the employer on the student's certification of the qualification. The funding amount varies depending on the course, please contact the Course Manager to discuss eligibility of the learner and predicted funding which may be available.