



CAO Information

Presentation for
Parents/Guardians

On the CAO Application System

Tuesday November 11th 2025

Guidance Counsellor
Aedín O'Leary



Post Leaving Cert options include....

- Apprenticeships
- Colleges/Universities
- FETs (e.g.Limerick College of Further Education, Central College, Newport & Croom)
- EUNICAS & UCAS
- Agricultural College
- On the job training
- Year Out (Gap Year)
- Work



Central Applications Office (CAO)

Handles all applications to

All Irish Universities

Public and Private



NATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF QUALIFICATIONS

[https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-\(NFQ\).aspx](https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx)

- Level 6

2 year PLC or TU Higher Cert

- Level 7

3 year Ordinary Degree – (10 Choices between 6 & 7)

- Level 8

3 or 4 year Hons Degree (10 Choices)

A student has up to
20 CAO choices

GENERAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR CAO COURSES

- **Level 6 and Level 7**

5 O6s/H7s to include Maths & a Language (Irish or English)

- **Level 8**

2 H5s and 4 O6s or H7s English, Maths and a Language*

*If a student is exempt from the study of Irish and/or European Language, they need to complete an online NUI Language Exemption form <https://www.nui.ie/college/docs/exemption.pdf>

For UL if you have no language you need to fill out a similar exemption form and submit to UL Admissions Office.

<https://www.ul.ie/sites/default/files/academic-registry/%5BForm%5D%20Language%20Exemption%20Declaration%20Form.pdf>

- **College Entry Requirements** (Level 8 courses)

NUI Colleges

English, Irish, Maths, Language plus 2 other subjects

UL & Trinity

English, Maths & Language

Entry

Requirements are separate to course points requirements

- **Course Requirements**

(1) minimum entry requirements

(2) specific subject requirements (e.g H4 in Gaeilge for primary teaching)

- **Points Requirement**

● Change every year

**College
Course
Points**



HIGHER LEVEL

NEW GRADES	% MARKS	POINTS
H1	90 > 100	100
H2	80 > 90	88
H3	70 > 80	77
H4	60 > 70	66
H5	50 > 60	56
H6	40 > 50	46
H7	30 > 40	37
H8	> 30	0



ORDINARY LEVEL

NEW GRADES	% MARKS	POINTS
O1	90 > 100	56
O2	80 > 90	46
O3	70 > 80	37
O4	60 > 70	28
O5	50 > 60	20
O6	40 > 50	12
O7	30 > 40	0
O8	>30	0



Higher Level Grade	Points	Ordinary Level Grade	Points
H1	100		
H2	88		
H3	77		
H4	66		
H5	56	O1	56
H6	46	O2	46
H7	37	O3	37
H8	0	O4	28
		O5	20
		O6	12
		O7	0
		O8	0

25 BONUS POINTS FOR HIGHER LEVEL MATHS FROM H6 TO H1

**THESE BONUS POINTS ARE ATTACHED TO YOUR
MATHS GRADE**

Maths H1 = 125

Maths H2 = 113

Maths H3 = 102

Maths H4 = 91

Maths H5 = 81

Maths H6 = 71

Maths H7 = 37

Maths H8 = 0

NEW GRADES	% MARKS	POINTS
H1	90 > 100	100
H2	80 > 90	88
H3	70 > 80	77
H4	60 > 70	66
H5	50 > 60	56
H6	40 > 50	46
H7	30 > 40	37
H8	> 30	0



LCVP

LCVP

GRADE

POINTS

DISTINCTION

66

MERIT

46

PASS

28

Student A

- 1H2 = 88
- 1H3 = 77
- 3 x H4 = 198
- 1 x O4 = 28
- 1 X O5 = 20
- LCVP M = 46

Total = 407

**USE SIX
BEST
RESULTS
FOR POINTS**

Student B

• Irish	H4	66
• English	H3	77
• Maths	H4	91
• French	H2	88
• Biology	H2	88
• Chem	H2	88
• Acc	H1	100
TOTAL		522

Student C

• Irish	H1	100
• English	H3	77
• Maths	H6	71
• French	H2	88
• Biology	H2	88
• Chem	H2	88
• Acc	H1	100
TOTAL		541

**USE SIX
BEST
RESULTS FOR
POINTS**



Entry to College/University through the FE Sector

- Students must take 10 modules in any PLC FETAC QQI Level 5
- Apply through CAO System in PLC year
- Using the FETAC Links scheme – anywhere you see QQI Pathway available



Code	Course Name	Course Specific Requirements	QQI	Points 2025 Round 1
LM050	Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS)	O4/H7 Maths. If selecting to study a language, refer to the language options table.	Y	444
LM056	BA International Business	O4/H7 Maths. If selecting to study a language, refer to the language options table.		544

Science & Engineering

Code	Course Name	Course Specific Requirements	QQI	Points 2025 Round 1
LM058	BSc Financial Mathematics	H3 Maths	Y	457
LM063	BSc Technology Management	O3/H7 Maths O4/H7 Science	Y	387
LM066	BSc Environmental Science	O3/H7 Maths H4 Science	Y	415
LM068	BSc Food Science and Health	O3/H7 Maths H4 Science	Y	407
LM076	BSc Product Design and Technology	O3/H7 Maths O4/H7 Science Portfolio	Y	464#
LM077	BE/ME Aeronautical Engineering	H4 Maths O6/H7 Science	Y	556
LM082	BSc Construction Management and Engineering	O3/H7 Maths O4/H7 Science	Y	451
LM093	BSc Equine Science	H4 Science	Y	369
LM099	Bachelor Architecture	Portfolio	Y	520#
LM113	BSc Interaction Design	O3/H7 Maths	Y	373
LM114	BSc Music, Media and Performance Technology	O3/H7 Maths	Y	350
LM115	BE/ME Chemical and Biochemical Engineering	H4 Maths O6/H7 Science	Y	455

CAO Registration

- **To apply to any CAO Course you have to register with the CAO**
- **On-line procedure (€15 discount if registered before Jan 20th) cost €35/50**
- **Closing date FEB 1ST 2026**



Points for Medicine

- Leaving Cert Points 480 - 550
- Maximum of 565
- HPAT – Health Professionals Aptitude Test 2.5hrs
 - online 13th – 22nd February 2026
- HPAT worth 300 points
 1. Logical Reasoning and Problem Solving 40%
 2. Interpersonal Understanding 40%
 3. Non-verbal Reasoning 20%
- CAO points plus HPAT points, total used to allocate places.
- Student must have CAO Number to register for HPAT
- Students must register for HPAT by January 16thⁿ.



CAO Handbook

- Handbook – on CAO website
 - <https://www.cao.ie/apply.php>
 - Application Form
 - Level 8 up to ***10 choices***
 - Level 6 & 7 up to ***10 choices***
- IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE**



HEAR

● HEAR – Higher Education Access Route. Eligibility Criteria

HEAR applicants must meet a range of financial, social and cultural criteria to be considered for a reduced points place and extra college support. Here is a list of all the HEAR indicators:

Income: Your family income falls on or below the HEAR Income Limit for the year 2024.

Medical/GP Visit Card: Your family has a Medical Card/GP Visit Card that was in date on December 31st 2025.

Means Tested Social Welfare: Your family received a means-tested payment from the Department of Social Protection for at least 26 weeks in 2024.

DEIS School Attendance: You completed five years in a second level school that takes part in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) scheme run by the Department of Education and Youth.

Area Profile: You live in an area where there is concentrated disadvantage – in other words an area where, for example, there is high unemployment and poverty and where only a small proportion of adults have attained third level education. Applicants who experienced homelessness during their post-primary education and are registered on the Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) will meet the Area Profile criteria.



HEAR Priority Groups: Applicants who wish to be considered under one or more of the following categories:

- *Care-Experienced*
- *Member of the Traveller Community*
- *Member of the Roma Community*
- *Young Parent*
- *HEAR and DARE Eligible Applicant.*

You must meet Indicator 1, the HEAR Income Limit, plus a minimum score of 2.5 to be eligible for HEAR. The criteria scores and eligibility criteria are listed here

<https://accesscollege.ie/hear/how-do-i-apply/eligibility-criteria/>

DARE — Disability Access Route to Education

- Asperger's Syndrome / Autism
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Blind/Vision Impaired
- Deaf/Hearing Impaired
- Dyspraxia
- Mental Health Condition
- Neurological Conditions (incl. Brain Injury, Speech and Language Disabilities)
- Significant Ongoing Illness
- Physical Disability
- Specific Learning Difficulty (incl. Dyslexia)
- Other Disabilities



DARE cont.....

- **Section A** – Personal Statement
- **Section B** – Educational Impact Statement completed by their school. This form provides background information on the applicant's educational experience and helps to determine appropriate supports at third level.
- **Section C** – applicants must return the Evidence of Disability Form completed by the accepted Medical Consultant/Specialist or GP.
 - Applicants with specific learning difficulties (incl. Dyslexia), must provide a full psycho-educational assessment completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist and/or the results of recent school based tests.
 - for students with Dyslexia only, if no educational psychological report is available **Section D** must be printed off by the candidate and completed by the school.

HEAR/DARE Information will be available on the January 17th UL Open Day

Please do not confuse RACE and DARE



Deadlines

- 16th Jan. - registration for HPAT
- 20th January – CAO discount
- **1st February** – CAO - restricted applications
- 10th March HEAR & DARE supplementary info submitted
- **6th May** – change of mind (no fee)
- **late June** – HPAT result
- **1st July** – last day change of mind
- Leaving Cert results published



CAO Place Offers

- All offers sent
 - by text
 - e-mail (school email active until January 2027)
 - also available on-line log into account after 2pm
- **Round 1 – main body of offers a few days after LC results**
- Round 2 – early to mid September
- Round 3 – up to October
- Any further rounds are aimed at filling any remaining vacancies
- To accept offer, follow instructions carefully and reply within deadline.
- Deferral



Leaving Cert. Grade Appeals

- Form to **View Scripts** application made through **SEC student portal**
- Viewing Script late Aug or early Sept (dates tbc) most viewed online through the SEC student portal
- Appeals should be based on whether or not the paper was marked according to the marking scheme.
- **Grades can go down as well as up!**

Important Points

- Remember to fill out CAO course choices **in order of preference.**
- Check it before sending.
- Print out record of application – record your password and CAO number.
- **Statement of Application Record** is sent to all applicants in May, please double check
- Keep all CAO information together in one safe place. (MOBILE PHONES & active email address)
- Study – class work, homework and study.



Useful Websites

- www.cao.ie
- www.careersportal.ie
- www.qualifax.ie
- www.ul.ie
- www.tus.ie
- www.universityofgalway.ie
- www.studentfinance.ie
- www.accesscollege.ie



Additional Information arising from last night.

Scholarships - Mary I offers up to 40 points discount

Best to check the college websites re specifics

Tertiary Degrees - year 1 of the degree in an FET then move on to University into year 2 of the programme <https://nto.heia.ie/courses/>



6th Year Parents 2025-2026

Supporting Student Success



Supports for your LC son/daughter.



1) **Supervised study** is now available Monday-Saturday.

Mon- Friday: 2 hours after school.

Saturday: 9am - 1pm **NEW**



2) **Free StudyClix Plus** account under our school licence.

(advanced flashcards, spaced repetition, quizzes, and customisable practice sets, personalised study schedules based on your goals and deadlines, additional practice exam questions, tutorial videos, and subject-specific content, study groups, shared notes, teacher feedback integration).

(Note: All 6th years have logged into their studyclix plus account).



3) Access to their **Athena Tracker Personal Profile**.

(Clear snapshot of progress, see their current academic status at a glance; on track, at risk, or needs attention).

NEW



6th Year Oct Mid-Term

4/7 subjects above potential

6th Year Oct Mid-Term

Subject	Result	Grade	Target grade
Accounting	88 (H)	H2	H1
Applied Mathematics	94 (H)	H1	H1
English	75 (H)	H3	H1
French	89 (H)	H2	H2
Irish	83 (H)	H2	H1
Mathematics	96 (H)	H1	H1
Physics	91 (H)	H1	H1
Average	88.0		
Total CAO points		589	625

 Above Potential

 In line with Potential

 Below Potential

Student Profile on Athena Tracker.

Green: Your child is meeting or exceeding expected academic goals. No immediate concerns. Regular study habits and progress seem steady

Yellow: Slower progress than expected. Indicates the need for a bit more support (e.g. regular study routines, reviewing key topics).

Red: Action needed. Significant gap or drop in performance. Review recent assessment and feedback from teacher. Establish a consistent study schedule for this subject. Student should also engage with his/her teacher for advice and support. Set a realistic goal for the next assessment in this subject.

Target set during a 1:1 meeting with guidance.

6th year students can adjust their target via Athena tracker.

Athena Tracker shows students their progress in a subject over time.

Click on the drop down menu to change subject.

English



8/10 exams above potential



English

Exam

Result

1st Year Christmas

100

1st Year Summer

88

2nd Year Christmas

85 (H)

2nd Year Summer

86 (H)

3rd Year Oct Mid-Term

86 (H)

3rd Year Mocks

63

3rd Year Junior Cycle Exam

Higher Merit (H)

5th Year Christmas

90 (H)

5th Year Summer

88 (H)

6th Year Oct Mid-Term

75 (H)

BOOK CLUB



NEWSLETTER