

POST SENIOR CYCLE OPTIONS 2026

Guidance Counsellors

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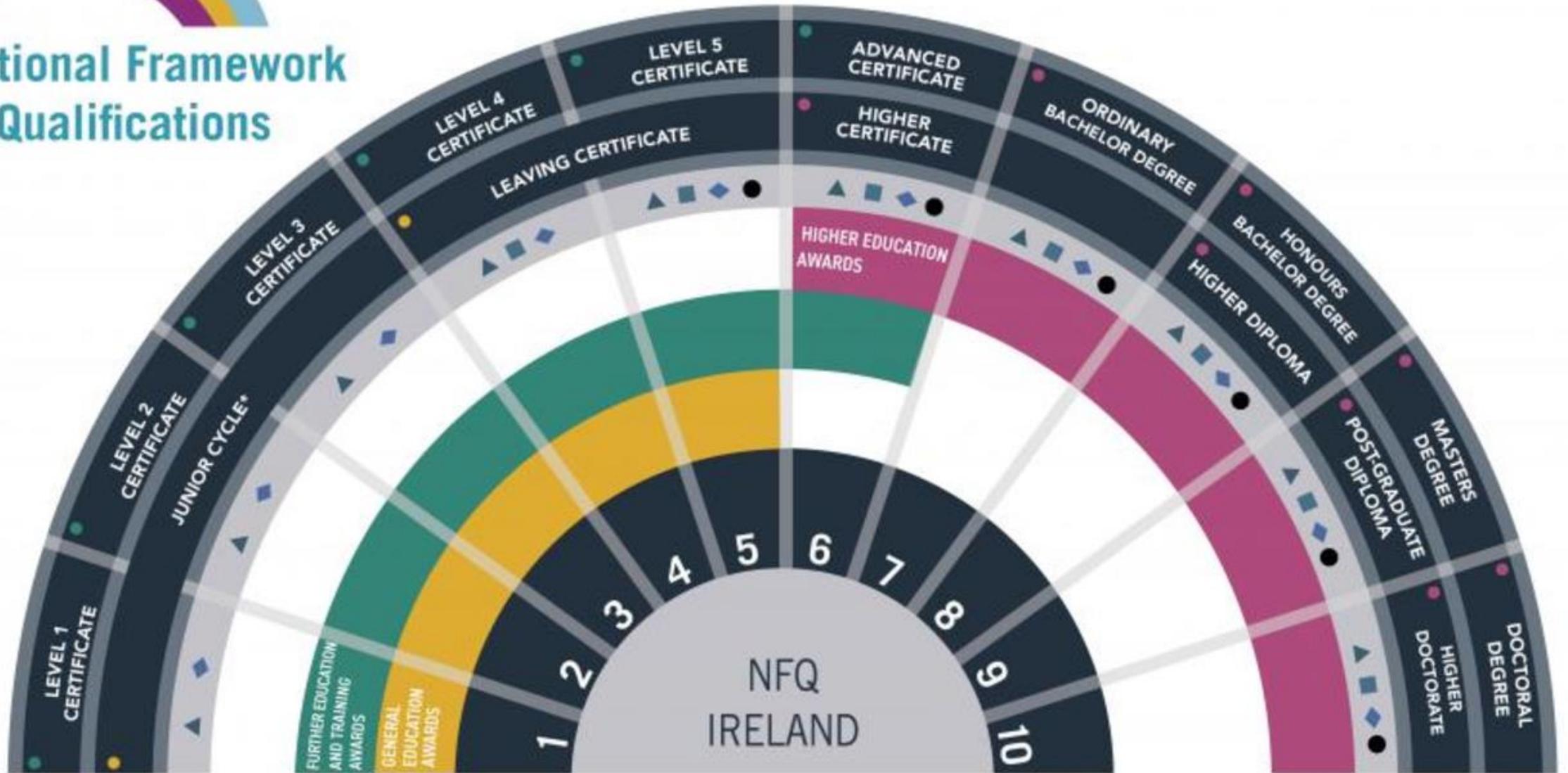
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National Framework of Qualifications



QQI (formerly FETAC) Level
5/6 courses (PLCs)



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

SOLAS

An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority

NON CAO OPTIONS



COLLEGES OF FURTHER EDUCATION

What is a Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) course?

Usually one year (Level 5) in duration (or two years for a Level 6)

Specific to a discipline and gives vocational, personal, and general skills

Includes work placement

Preparation for employment

Provides access to third level

Minimum entry requirements

Cost:

No tuition fees. Student contribution payable. Costs associated with some courses.

Grant available by SUSI

Apply online to colleges of further education through www.fetchcourses.ie

Applications open from December. No fee to apply.

WATERFORD COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION



QQI PROGRESSION ROUTES – FURTHER EDUCATION (PLC) QQI LEVEL 5 OR 6

- Most HEI's offer places to QQI applicants
- Scheme 1 (Linked Courses)

Specific QQI level 5 and 6 courses are linked to reserved places on specific higher education programmes

- Scheme 2 (Common Award System Points – CAS Points)

Most courses are open to students to apply for through the CAO process, having completed a level 5 or level 6 course.

Students can achieve up to 390 CAS points from their QQI level 5/6 course to compete for entry alongside the other Leaving Cert applicants (this is calculated on their best 8 QQI modules).



SOLAS APPRENTICESHIPS (QQI LEVELS 6-8) TRAINEESHIPS (QQI LEVELS 4-6)



- Apprenticeship is a method by which a person works for an employer in a chosen sector and learns the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes for a traditional or an occupational trade
- Follow a specific course of training and undergo a series of assessments (blended learning)
- Entry requirements: aged 16 and 5 passes in JC (**MINIMUM**). Some apprenticeships require LC and lead to Level 7/8 (degree) qualification
- Sponsorship: must be obtained with a registered employer
- Training: approximately 4yrs duration, 7 phases of training
- Training allowances paid for duration of training
- SOLAS currently offer 70+ apprenticeships
Qualification: Level 6-8 (NFQ)

WWW.APPRENTICESHIP.IE

APPRENTICESHIPS BY INDUSTRY GROUP



- Brick and Stonelaying L6
- Carpentry and Joinery L6
- Geo-Drilling L6
- Painting and Decorating L6
- Plastering L6
- Plumbing L6
- Scaffolding L5
- Stonecutting and Stonemasonry L6
- Wood Manufacturing and Finishing L6



- Aircraft Mechanics L6
- Electrical L6
- Electrical Instrumentation L6
- Electronic Security Systems L6
- Industrial Electrical Engineering L7
- Instrumentation L6
- Refrigeration and Air Conditioning L6



- Auctioneering and Property Services L6



- Advanced Healthcare Assistant L6



- Accounting Technician L6
- International Financial Services Associate L6
- International Financial Services Specialist L8



- Civil Engineering Technician L6
- Civil Engineering L7
- Engineering Services Management L7
- Equipment Systems Engineer L9
- Farriery L6
- Industrial Insulation L6
- Lean Sigma Manager L9
- Manufacturing Engineering L7
- Manufacturing Technology L6
- Mechanical Automation and Maintenance Fitting L6
- Metal Fabrication L6
- OEM Engineering L6
- Pipefitting L6
- Polymer Processing Technology L7
- Principal Engineer L10
- Sheet Metalworking L6
- Toolmaking L6
- Wind Turbine Maintenance Technician L6



- Arboriculture L6
- Farm Technician L6
- Farm Manager L7
- Horticulture L6
- Sportsturf Management L6



- Cybersecurity Associate L6
- Network Engineer Associate L6
- Software Development Associate L6
- Telecommunications and Data Network Engineering Technician L6



- Logistics Associate L6
- Supply Chain Associate L7
- Supply Chain Manager L9
- Supply Chain Specialist L8
- Transport Operations and Commercial Driving L6



- Hairdressing L6



- Retail Supervisor L6
- Sales L6



- Recruitment Executive L8



- Agricultural Mechanics L6
- Construction Plant Fitting L6
- Heavy Vehicle Mechanics L6
- Motor Mechanics L6
- Vehicle Body Repairs L6



- Laboratory Analyst L7
- Laboratory Technician L6



- Bar Manager L7
- Butchery L5
- Chef de Partie L7
- Commis Chef L6
- Sous Chef L8



- Insurance Practice L8



TEAGASC AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE, EQUINE, FORESTRY

Offers various education and training courses within the NFQ

Further Education Training courses:

- QQI Level 5/6
- Entry through 8 Agricultural Colleges and at Local Teagasc Centres Nationwide
- Courses can be taken fulltime/ part-time

Higher Education Links Scheme:

- Holders of QQI awards can apply for a quota number of higher education courses
- Apply through CAO

Third Level courses:

- Entry through CAO
- Courses taken at Institutes of Technologies and UCD

Apply online and Further information: www.teagasc.ie



TERTIARY DEGREES (NON-CAO)



-Progress from Level 5 and Level 6 courses to Level 7 and Level 8 degree courses in a multitude of areas such as: Nursing, Business, Arts and Social Work.

-More info at: <https://nto.heal.ie/>

UCAS



EUNiCAS

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
CENTRAL APPLICATION
SUPPORT SERVICE

20160112 12:14:11
CENTRAL APPLICATION



Medical Poland

UCAS FEES

Tuition fees by region for courses starting in 2025 to 2026

Student's home region	Studying in England	Studying in Scotland	Studying in Wales	Studying in Northern Ireland
England	Up to £9,535	Up to £9,535	Up to £9,535	Up to £9,535
Scotland	Up to £9,535	No fee	Up to £9,535	Up to £9,535
Wales	Up to £9,535	Up to £9,535	Up to £9,535	Up to £9,535
Northern Ireland	Up to £9,535	Up to £9,535	Up to £9,535	Up to £4,855
EU and other international*	Variable	Variable	Variable	Variable

*** This will not apply to Irish nationals living in the UK and Ireland whose right to study and to access benefits and services will be preserved on a reciprocal basis for UK and Irish nationals under the Common Travel Area arrangement.**

TWO TYPES OF OFFERS

Conditional Offers

A **conditional offer** means that they will offer you a place if you meet certain conditions, which are usually based on your exams.

Unconditional offers

An **unconditional offer** means that you have met all the entry requirements and the university or college is happy to accept you.

www.ucas.com



Cost of application 2025
£28.95

Students can apply for up to 5 courses through UCAS

Many Degree programmes
in Europe
are taught in **English**



WHAT CAN YOU STUDY **IN EUROPE?** [THROUGH ENGLISH]

- Biosciences
- Business/Management
- Digital Media/Gaming
- Engineering
- Environmental Science
- Hospitality & Tourism
- International Law
- International Relations/Politics
- IT & Software
- Life Sciences
 - Media & Entertainment Management
 - Medicine
 - Performing Arts
 - Physiotherapy
 - Psychology
- Sports Management
- Veterinary Science
- And more

www.eunicas.ie



- ❖ Study in English in Poland
- ❖ The Medical Poland Admission Office represents Polish public medical universities offering the opportunity to study:
 - ❖ Medicine (4 & 6-year MD)
 - ❖ Dentistry
 - ❖ Physiotherapy
 - ❖ Pharmacy
- ❖ Nursing
- ❖ Veterinary
 - ❖ Provide comprehensive information on programmes in Poland
 - ❖ Advise on choosing the programme that is right for you
 - ❖ Assistance in organising university visits
 - ❖ Support when you are living in Poland
 - ❖ Information: <https://medicalpoland.ie/study-in-poland>

CAO – GENERAL INFORMATION

Online Application via www.cao.ie (interactive handbook available online)	Fee	Closing Date
Early Discounted Application	€30	5th November - 20th January at 5pm
Normal Closing Date	€45	1 st February at 5pm
Online Facility to Amend Course Choices	€10	5 th Feb.-1 st March at 5pm
Most tests and interviews for restricted courses are held in March and April		
HEAR/DARE		Online forms: 1 st March at 5pm Supporting Documentation: 10th March at 5pm
Late Applications	€60	5 th March-1 st May at 5pm
Change of Mind	No Fee	5th May – 1 st July at 5pm

- Centralised application system for all Irish 3rd level institutions, including a small number of **fee-paying** colleges.
- Every applicant can view the CAO Handbook on the CAO Website. **It is their responsibility to READ the handbook.** It contains vital information.





CAO ONLINE HANDBOOK

- The handbook DOES NOT provide any information on courses.
- Each student must research their course choices by studying:
 - Minimum Entry Requirements, Subject Entry Requirements and Points Requirements
 - Course Content/Modules
 - Number of lecture hours on course
 - Qualification
 - Opportunities for study abroad, postgraduate study or employment
 - Accommodation, scholarships, clubs and societies etc...
- This research should be compiled in their online Reach+ Career Portfolio and **UPDATED REGULARLY.**
- ***All of this information is available via Careers Portal. The most detailed information is available via the specific Third Level prospectuses and websites.***



Ollscoil
Teicneolaíochta
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic
Technological
University

OPEN DAYS



**Maynooth
University**

National University
of Ireland Maynooth



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland

Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh



MTU

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan
Munster Technological University



**UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK**
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

**T
DUBLIN**

OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA
BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH

TECHNOLOGICAL
UNIVERSITY DUBLIN



Dublin City University



OLLSCOIL NA
GAILLIMHE

UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR ENTRY INTO THIRD LEVEL VIA CAO? (MATRICULATION)

1. Minimum Requirements

*6 subjects (2 at H5 and 4 at O6/H7) for most Level 8s

2. Subject Requirements

*e.g. H4 in Irish for Primary Teaching, H5 in Chemistry for Veterinary Medicine

3. Points

*Best six subjects in one sitting of the Leaving Certificate

CAO (Higher Education - HET)

Degree - Honours Bachelor

Engineering

★ One of your favourites



University College Cork - UCC

Course Code

CK600 NPF

Zone

1 2 3 4 5



Level

8

NFQ Type

Major

Duration

4 Years

Attendance

Full Time

CAO Points 2025 Round 2

543

Points Change

+44

Course Summary

Language Options

Entry Requirements

PLC Progression Links

The Student

Career Progression

Further Research

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Points History

543[▲]

Minimum Subjects

2 H5 & 4 O6/H7

✓ O6/H7 IN English

✓ O6/H7 IN Irish

✓ H4 IN Maths OR A ✓ H6 IN Maths

AND A ✓ H4 IN Applied Maths

✓ O6/H7 IN Agricultural Science OR Biology OR Chemistry OR Physics

OR Physics/Chemistry OR Technology

COLLEGE PROFILE



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh
University College Cork

Visit College Profile

View Prospectus

View Courses

CONNECT WITH US

CAO (Higher Education - HET)

Degree - Honours Bachelor

Culinary Arts



SETU Waterford Campus

★ One of your favourites

Course Code

SE923

Zone

1 2 3 4 5



Level



NFQ Type

Major

Duration

4 Years

Attendance

Full Time

CAO Points 2025 Round 2

253

Points Change

-16

Course Summary

Language Options

Entry Requirements

PLC Progression Links

The Student

Career Progression

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Points History

253[▼]

Minimum Subjects

2 H5 & 4 O6/H7

✓ O6/H7 IN English OR Irish

✓ O6/H7 IN Maths

COLLEGE PROFILE



SETU - Waterford Campus

Visit College Profile



CAO POINTS SYSTEM

Higher Level	%	Ordinary Level
H1 100	90 – 100	O1 56
H2 88	80 – 89	O2 46
H3 77	70 – 79	O3 37
H4 66	60 – 69	O4 28
H5 56	50 – 59	O5 20
H6 46	40 – 49	O6 12
H7 37	30 – 39	O7 0
H8 0	0 – 29	O8 0

25 bonus points are awarded for Higher Level Mathematics for H6 and above.

LCVP Points

Distinction: 80 – 100% – 66 points

Merit: 65 – 79% – 46 points

Pass: 50 – 64% – 28 points

CAO

CAO courses are applied for on 2 separate lists on a single form on www.cao.ie

Level 6 & 7 Courses

Ordinary Degrees (7)
Higher Certificates
(6)

Up to 10 Course
Choices

Level 8 Courses

Honours Degrees
(8)

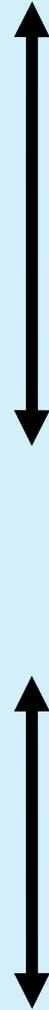
Up to 10 Course
Choices

- Whether an applicant applies for 1 or 20 courses – same fee.
- The courses are clearly labelled in the CAO Handbook, i.e. Level 6, 7 or 8.
- N.B. – Care must be taken with courses marked '**Restricted**'. These courses cannot normally be applied for after February 1st due to extra assessments required.

Order of Preference

**Genuine
Order of
Preference**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10



Dream Courses



Realistic Courses

Safety Net

WHO MAKES THE DECISION?



It is the APPLICANT'S choice

It is the APPLICANT'S responsibility

It is the APPLICANT'S decision

NOT the Guidance Counsellor

NOT parents

NOT friends

Applicants should share their career research with you to ensure good communication. Financial considerations of their preferred destinations need to be communicated clearly.

CAO LANGUAGE EXEMPTIONS



- Students with Irish and/or Language exemption.
- If applying for an NUI college, an exemption form must be filled out and the CAO must be contacted to inform them.
- For all other Universities students must apply directly to the HEI (Higher Education Institute).
- See [Central Applications Office \(cao.ie\)](https://www.cao.ie) and/or www.nui.ie

EXEMPTIONS

Step 4

Seeking exemption from minimum entry requirements

If you wish to seek exemption from minimum entry requirements (e.g. exemptions from Irish or modern language requirements) then you should contact the Admissions Offices of the HEIs for further details (in the case of NUI institutions see www.nui.ie for details).

NUI exemptions, once processed by NUI, will be visible in the Qualifications and Assessments section of applicant accounts from early March.

In May, you will receive a Statement of Application Record instructing you to log in to your CAO account to check that all of your account and examination information is complete and correct. To check if your NUI or TCD exemption has been recorded, go to the Qualifications and Assessments section of your application. If you have an exemption recorded against your account it will appear here.

AFTER COMPLETING THE CAO APPLICATION

- **Students are advised to log into their CAO account regularly. Use personal email address.**
- Receive CAO number and Statement of Course Choices.
- Receive Statement of Application Record in May – **check thoroughly, ensure L.C. Examination Number is listed.**
- Some students may be asked to attend extra assessments.
- Change of Mind facility becomes available (May 5th)
- Leaving Cert. results are sent to CAO.
- Places are allocated and offered in August.
- Students accept, reject or defer offered places.
- Further rounds of offers are made until all course places are filled.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT



SUSI (Student Universal Support Ireland)



General College Supports

Detailed information on www.susi.ie and www.studentfinance.ie

Student grants are divided into 2 classes:

- 1) Maintenance grants
- 2) Fee grants

Maintenance = day to day cost of living

Fee = college fees

The image shows a large graphic on the right side of the slide. It features a central red banner with the word "SUSI" written in a large, white, stylized, cursive font. The banner is set against a background of blue and white geometric shapes, including a white rectangle at the top left, a blue rectangle at the top right, a blue rectangle at the bottom left, and a white rectangle at the bottom right. The overall design is modern and clean.

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

- **Adjacent grant**
- **Non-adjacent grant (college is 30km from home)**
- **SUSI grant available if household income is up to 115,000 euro.**
- **See www.susi.ie for Eligibility Reckoner and for more information.**



Students doing Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses do not get fee grants, but if you qualify for a maintenance grant you will be exempt from the PLC participant contribution.



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

FEE GRANT

If you qualify for a maintenance grant, you should qualify for all relevant elements of a fee grant.



QUALIFYING FOR A STUDENT GRANT

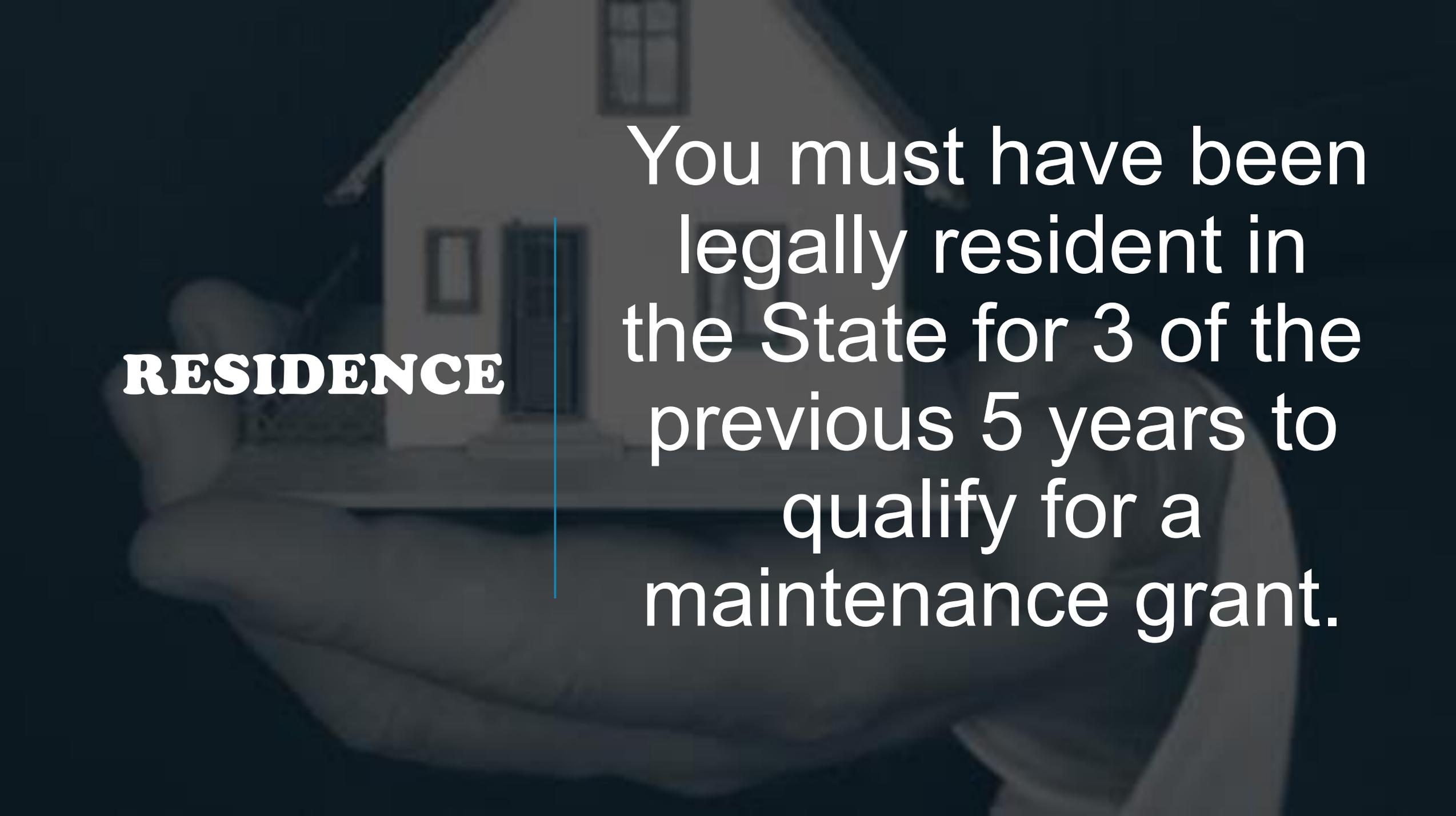


Maintenance grant

To qualify for a maintenance grant, you must fulfil the conditions of the scheme as regards:

- *Nationality and immigration status
- *Residence
- *Means

You must also be attending an approved course in an approved institution

A dark blue background featuring a faint, semi-transparent image of a hand holding a small white house model. The house has a gabled roof and several windows. The hand is positioned at the bottom, with fingers curled around the base of the house.

RESIDENCE

You must have been legally resident in the State for 3 of the previous 5 years to qualify for a maintenance grant.



Click to add text

BASIS OF MEANS TEST

The means test for a student grant is based on the household income for the previous full tax year.

However, if you or your family have a change of circumstances (which is likely to be permanent) by 31 December, your changed circumstances may be taken into account.

INCOME THRESHOLDS

- The income thresholds change in accordance with the number of dependent children. It is worth checking out the eligibility reckoner to see if you might be eligible for full or partial financial support.
- More details available from www.susi.ie



BUDGET 2026/2027

Third level student contribution

The annual student contribution fee will be permanently reduced by €500. This means the maximum contribution any student will pay is €2,500 (previously €3,000). The Government announced that the reduced fee will benefit students in 2025-2026.

Apprentices in higher education will also have their contribution reduced by up to 17%, on a pro-rata basis.

Third level student grants

From 1 September 2026, the income threshold for the student contribution grant of €500 will increase from €115,000 to €120,000. This means more students will qualify for it than before.

Students who live more than 30km from their third level institution, and who meet the other criteria for the SUSI maintenance grant, will get an increased grant:

Of between €111 and €239 in January 2026 (for academic year 2025-2026)

Of between €200 and €430 in September 2026 (for academic year 2026-2027)

Your increased grant rate depends on which student grant band you're in.

AVERAGE COST OF COLLEGE

Average monthly cost:

Rent (Shared House/Flat)

Light/Heat/Power

Food

Travel

Books/Stationery

Clothes/Laundry/Medical

Social Life/Mobile/Miscellaneous

Total: ?????



AVERAGE COST OF COLLEGE

Full Academic Year Student Accommodation Fees 2025-26

Period of Residence - 31st August 2025 - 20th May 2026

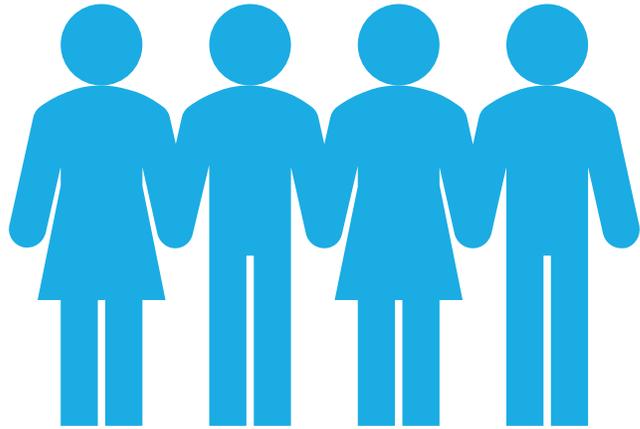
Village and Room Type	Full Year Fee*	Total Deposit**
Plassey Village 8 Bed House	€5,416	€500
Plassey Village 4 Bed House	€6,116	€500
Kilmurry Village 8 Bed House	€6,108	€500
Kilmurry Village 6 Bed House	€6,579	€500
Thomond / Cappavilla 6 Bed Apartment	€7,226	€500
Thomond / Cappavilla 4 Bed Apartment	€7,486	€500
Thomond / Cappavilla 2 Bed Apartment	€7,905	€500
Dromroe 6 Bed Apartment	€7,164	€500
Dromroe 2 Bed Apartment	€7,764	€500
Troy Village Off Campus 5/6/7 Bed Apartment (Ensuite)	€5,793	€500
Troy Village, Off Campus 5/6/7 Bed Apartment (Standard)	€5,159	€500
Troy Village, Off Campus 3/4 Bed Apartment (Ensuite)	€6,116	€500
Troy Village, Off Campus 3/4 Bed Apartment (Standard)	€5,838	€500
Goody Village Off Campus 6 Bed Apartment (Ensuite)	€6,152	€500
Goody Village, Off Campus 3 Bed Apartment (Standard)	€6,050	€500



The average cost of third level per annum is between €15,000 and €20,000. Costs in Dublin are greater than other cities.

Registration fee: €3,000
Government refund: €500

ACCOMMODATION MUST BE RESEARCHED EARLY



- ❖ On Campus accommodation- provided by the college, mostly on campus. Cost varies depending on the standard i.e. ensuite/shared bathroom/shared room/single room/double room/catered accommodation. Approximately €4,000-€8,000 payable in 2/3 instalments.
- ❖ Digs -lodging with a family usually from Sunday evening until Friday. Includes bills and can also include meals. (approx. €180 per week) www.collegecribs.ie you can search for digs available close to each college
- ❖ Houses/Flat Shares- renting a room in a house or obtaining a lease, with friends, for a house or an apartment www.rent.ie shows private accommodation near each 3rd level institution
- ❖ Student Complexes-designated apartment complexes for students from any college in the area, provided by private landlords
- ❖ Staying with a relative.

TIPS

Contact College Accommodation office **as soon as possible.** They will provide you with information of all types of accommodation available in the above categories.

Early application will help to avoid students paying more than they intended or possibly living some distance from the college.

The college websites provide excellent information on both on campus and off campus accommodation – this may be accessed by entering the main website and clicking on student services.

Check out the virtual tours of the Campus Accommodation.





WWW.ACCESSCOLLEGE.IE Click to add text



SUPPLEMENTARY ENTRY SYSTEMS



HEAR – Higher Education Access Route - third level admissions scheme for school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.



DARE – Disability Access Route to Education - third level admissions scheme for school leavers with disabilities.



Very important to indicate on CAO form the applicants wish to be considered for either/both of the above schemes.

WHAT IS DARE?



DARE | **DISABILITY
ACCESS
ROUTE TO
EDUCATION**

The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is a supplementary admissions scheme which offers college places on reduced points to school leavers with disabilities.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

DARE | **DISABILITY
ACCESS
ROUTE TO
EDUCATION**



Applicants whose disability had a significant impact on educational performance in school



Applicants who may not be able to meet the points for their preferred course due to the impact of disability.



Applicants under 23 years as of 1st January 2025.

DISABILITIES ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION

DARE | **DISABILITY
ACCESS
ROUTE TO
EDUCATION**

ADD/ADHD

Autistic Spectrum Disorders (including Asperger's Syndrome)

Blind/Vision Impaired

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

DCD - Dyspraxia

Dyslexia/Significant Literacy Difficulties

Dyscalculia/Significant Numeracy Difficulties

Mental Health Conditions

Neurological Condition (including Brain Injury, Epilepsy).

Physical Disability

Significant Ongoing Illness

Speech and Language Communication Disorder

HOW TO APPLY FOR DARE



1. Be under the age of 23 as of 1st January 2026
2. Apply to the CAO by 17:00 by 1st February 2026.
3. Disclose your disability and/ or specific learning difficulty in your CAO application and fully and correctly complete Section A of the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) by 10th March 2026
4. Guidance Counsellor completes Section B: Educational Impact Statement (EIS) and returns form to student. Student returns EIS to CAO to arrive by 17:00 on 10th March 2026
5. Section C or D: Evidence of Disability. Student returns Section C or D to CAO to arrive by 17:00 on 10th March 2026.

Evidence of Disability

Provides verification of your disability and helps to determine 3rd level supports.

- You can provide an **existing report** **OR**
- Complete Section C **Evidence of Disability form.**

Get form **completed, signed and stamped** by the **appropriate professional** or accompanied by their **business card or headed paper.**

GP Verification

Your GP may be in a position to complete Section C Evidence of disability, if they have the appropriate information on file from the consultant/specialist.

EVIDENCE OF DISABILITY — DYSLEXIA/DYSCALCULIA



Applicants with **Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties** must submit a full Psychological Assessment Report completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist OR Section D School Statement and an Educational Impact Statement.

In addition, applicants with Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties must also have two literacy attainment scores at or below the 10th percentile (SS of 81 or below) from testing carried out on or after 1st February 2024.

Applicants with **Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties** must submit a full Psychological Assessment Report completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist and an Educational Impact Statement.

In addition, applicants with Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties must have one numeracy attainment score at or below the 10th percentile (SS of 81 or below) from testing carried out on or after 1st February 2024.

EVIDENCE OF DISABILITY



Age of Reports

It is important to note that applicants applying under the following disability categories must **provide a report that is less than 3 years old**, i.e. dated after **1 February 2023**.

- ADD/ADHD
- Mental Health Condition
- Significant Ongoing Illness

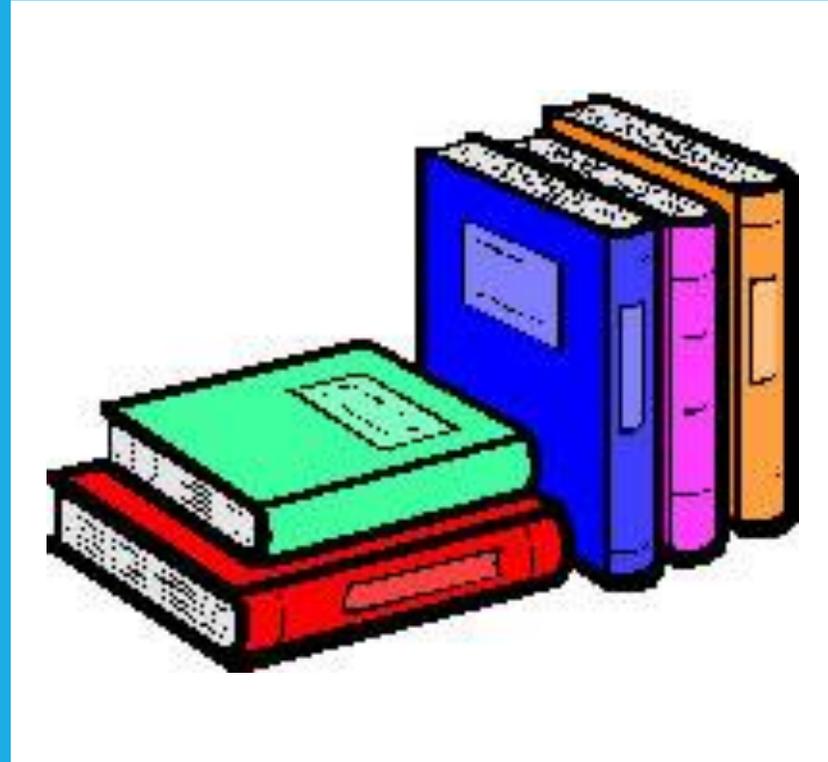
DARE SUPPORTS IN COLLEGE

You don't have to be eligible for DARE to get support in college

A needs assessment is conducted to identify your specific support requirements.

Supports may include:

- Orientation Programmes
- Learning Support
- Assistive Technology
- Library Support
- Exam Support
- Educational Support Worker
- Academic Tuition



HEAR — HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS ROUTE

HEAR | HIGHER
EDUCATION
ACCESS
ROUTE

An admissions route for school leavers who for social, financial or cultural reasons are under-represented at third level education.

It was set up to ensure that all Leaving Certificate students have a fair and equal opportunity to progress to third level education.

Step 1: Tick the box on the CAO form

Step 2: Complete the HEAR form and submit all relevant supporting information (e.g. P60)

- www.accesscollege.ie
- www.cao.ie

Why apply to HEAR?

- **Reduced points CAO offers** in the participating colleges provided you meet the minimum entry requirements.
- **Post-entry supports** such as financial, academic, social and personal.



You must meet the **HEAR income limit plus the right combination of 2 other indicators to be eligible**

1. Household income (see next slide)
2. Do you or your family have a Medical Card/GP Visit Card? In date on December 31st 2025
3. Did your parents/guardians receive a Means-Tested Social Welfare payment for at least 26 weeks in 2024?
4. HEAR Priority Groups: Care Experienced, Member of the Traveller Community, Member of the Roma Community, Young Parent, HEAR and DARE Eligible Applicant
5. Have you attended a DEIS second level school for five years?
6. Area Profile: Do you live in an area of concentrated disadvantage?

You must meet Indicator 1 The Hear Income Limit, plus a score of 2.5 to be eligible for HEAR	By using a scoring system we make sure that support is given to those who need it most	Medical Card- 1 or 0 Means Tested Social Welfare 2 or 0 Area- marginally 0-2.5 extremely	SCORES 5.5-7 HEAR Priority 2.5-5 HEAR Eligible 2 or lower not
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HEAR INCOME LIMIT

To meet this criteria your family income falls on or below the HEAR Income Limit.

Number of dependent* children in your family	HEAR Income Limit
Fewer than 4	€46,790
4 to 7	€51,325
More than 8	€55,630

Add €4,785 to the total income for every sibling/parent enrolled in a full-time college, university or Post Leaving Certificate further education course.

DARE AND HEAR TIMELINES



DARE & HEAR closing date:	1st March 2026 at 17:00
Supporting documents closing date:	15 March 2026
Notification of outcome:	Late June 2026
Review and Appeals Application:	Early July 2026
HEAR/DARE Appeals offers:	August 2026
College Orientation:	Late Aug /Early Sept 2025

MORE INFORMATION...

www.cao.ie

Application Guides on
www.accesscollege.ie

Individual college
websites

REACH PROGRAMME (SETU WATERFORD ONLY)

- This is an access programme run by SETU Waterford.
- Its objective is to increase participation rates at SETU by students who may lack economic or social supports.

Criteria:

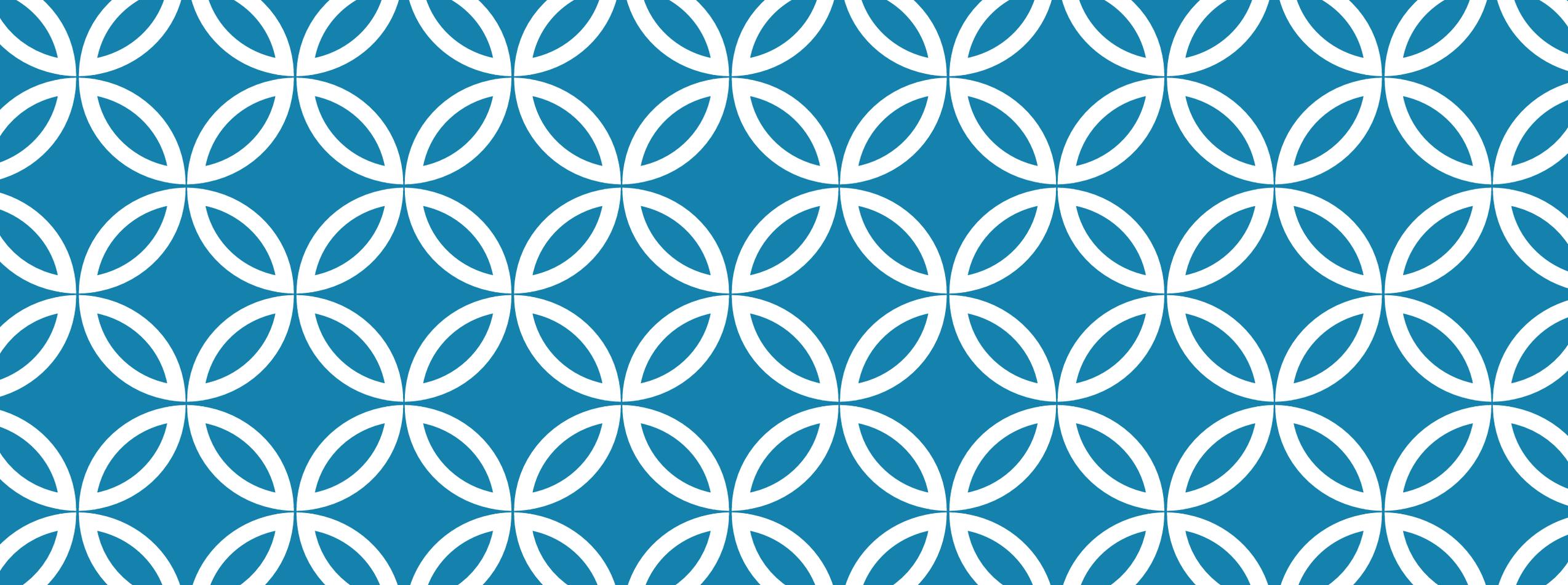
- Applicant has experienced the State care system (e.g. foster/residential/ward of court/under care of HSE)
- Applicant is a lone or a teen parent
- Applicant/applicant's family is a member of an ethnic minority (e.g. Irish Traveller, Roma, migrants, refugees etc.)
- Applicant/applicants family has experience of homelessness
- Applicant/applicants family has experience of the criminal justice system
- Applicant/applicants family is a survivor of domestic violence
- Applicant's income or applicants family income is supplemented by a social welfare payment/s
- Applicant is the first member of their immediate family that will progress to higher education (3rd level)
- Other extenuating circumstances i.e. any circumstances that the applicant believes has had an adverse impact on their education to date e.g. the applicant takes on a caring role in the family home



SETU WATERFORD REACH PROGRAMME

- Student Supports:
- Induction course
- Additional tutorials
- Mentoring
- Educational guidance
- Financial assistance – books, travel, childcare
- **Students must list SETU Waterford course as their 1st choice on their CAO application by 1st February 2026**
- **REACH Applications available from Guidance Counsellor from 3rd February 2026**
- **Closing date for applications: 3rd April 2026**
- Students must fulfil the entry requirements for the course of choice.
- Students must be eligible for application to SUSI for financial support.





COLLEGE SUPPORTS

SCHOLARSHIPS



- In recent years there has been an increase in the number of Scholarships available to students. Scholarships are awarded for high academic achievement, sporting excellence, music, active citizenship etc.
- There are some scholarships that you must apply for but there are others that are awarded to students who fulfill certain criteria;

Further Information:

https://careersportal.ie/parents/index.php?ed_sub_cat_id=56&menu_parent_id=16&parent=16

SETU RISING STARS

Applicants to SETU can earn additional CAO points through their achievements and participation in the following categories:

- **Sports**
- **Active citizenship**
- **Creative arts**
- **Innovation and entrepreneurship**

Apply online on SETU website.

Closing date for applications is 1 May, 2026



KEEP IN TOUCH WITH G.C. UPDATES

*We request that students
keep an eye on the
6th Year
Guidance Counselling
Team*



ACC LC Guidance 2026 ...
AT, MF, CL

IN SUMMARY...



- ❖ Research courses/options thoroughly
- ❖ Explore ALL avenues...do not ignore the option of blended learning
- ❖ **Talk to your designated Guidance Counsellor**
- ❖ Do not miss a deadline
- ❖ Apply online through CAO/directly to CFEs
- ❖ Tick the SUSI/DARE/HEAR box, where applicable
- ❖ **Put CAO courses in genuine order of preference**
- ❖ Obtain / retain proof of application
- ❖ Research financial supports
- ❖ Be careful with change of mind (CAO)
- ❖ Students must keep their career research updated on the Reach+ Career Portfolio.

USEFUL WEBSITES

<https://www.apprenticeship.ie/> (APPRENTICESHIPS)

<https://www.fetchcourses.ie/> (POST LEAVING CERTIFICATE COURSES)

<https://www.solas.ie/programmes/traineeship/> (TRAINEESHIPS)

<https://www.cao.ie/> (CAO)

<https://www.qualifax.ie/> (COURSE FINDER)

<https://careersportal.ie/> (COURSE FINDER)

<https://www.eunicas.ie/> (STUDY ABROAD)

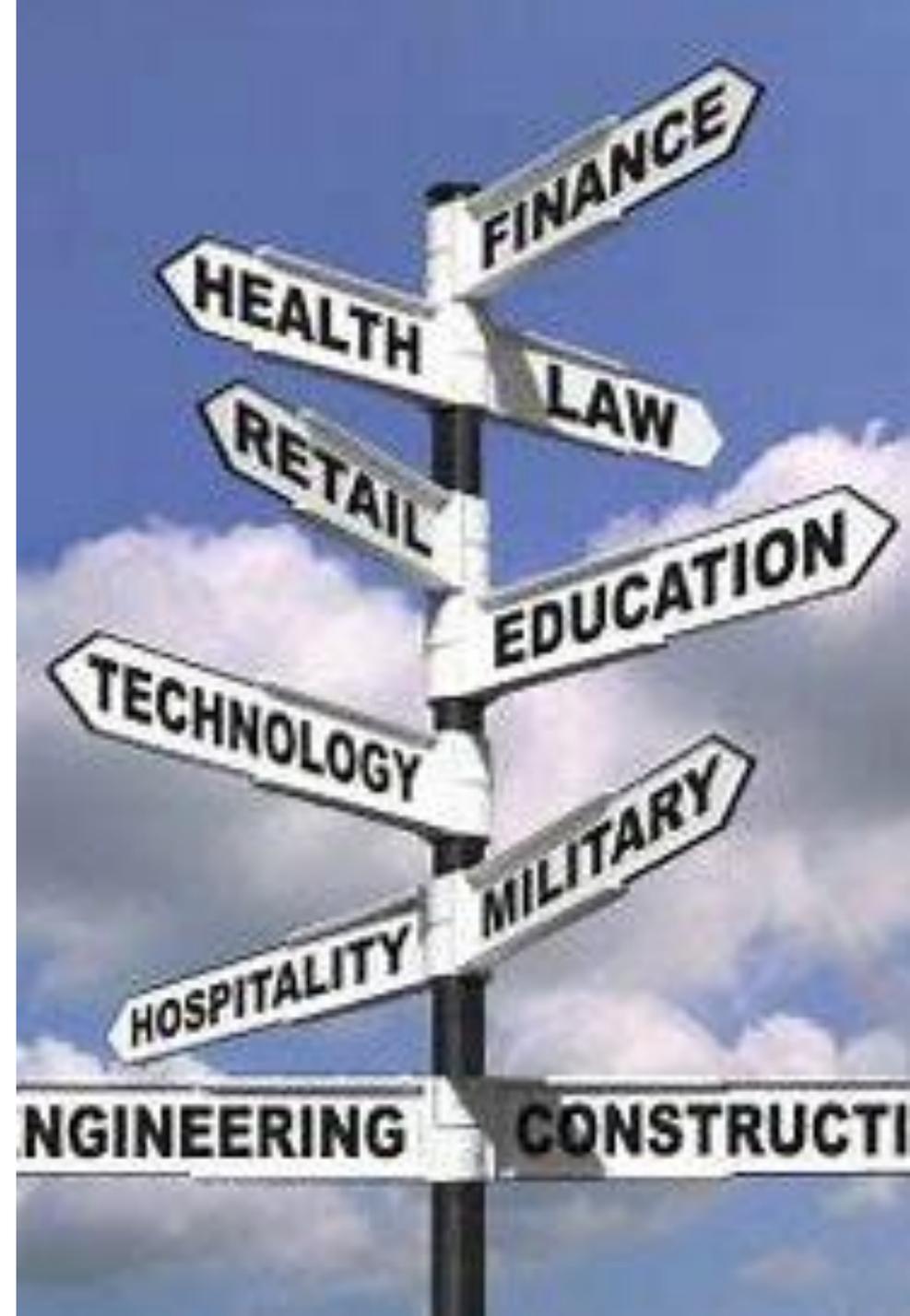
<https://www.ucas.com/> (STUDY IN THE UK)

<https://www.teagasc.ie/> (AGRICULTURE)

<https://accesscollege.ie/> (DARE/HEAR)

<https://www.susi.ie/> (GRANTS)

<https://nto.heai.ie/courses/> (TERTIARY DEGREES)



Go Raibh Maith Aгаibh



Questions- Contact Guidance Counsellors:

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