



LEAVING CERTIFICATE
AND BEYOND

CBS THURLES

POINTS TO NOTE

- Lots of options - far more than when any of us were in school
- Still time for decision making process
CAO Opens Nov 6th €35
- January 20th (€50)
- February 1st CAO March 1st (DARE)
- March 13th (DARE DOCS) April (SUSI)
- May (CAO OPENS/PLC) June (EXAMS)
- July (CAO FINAL) Aug/Sept (OFFERS)
- Apprenticeship
- PLC May – September

STUDENT OPTIONS

1. Third Level Course:

- CAO course in University/Tech. Universities

- QQI (Post Leaving Cert Course)
PLC and NTO pathway

2. Apprenticeship

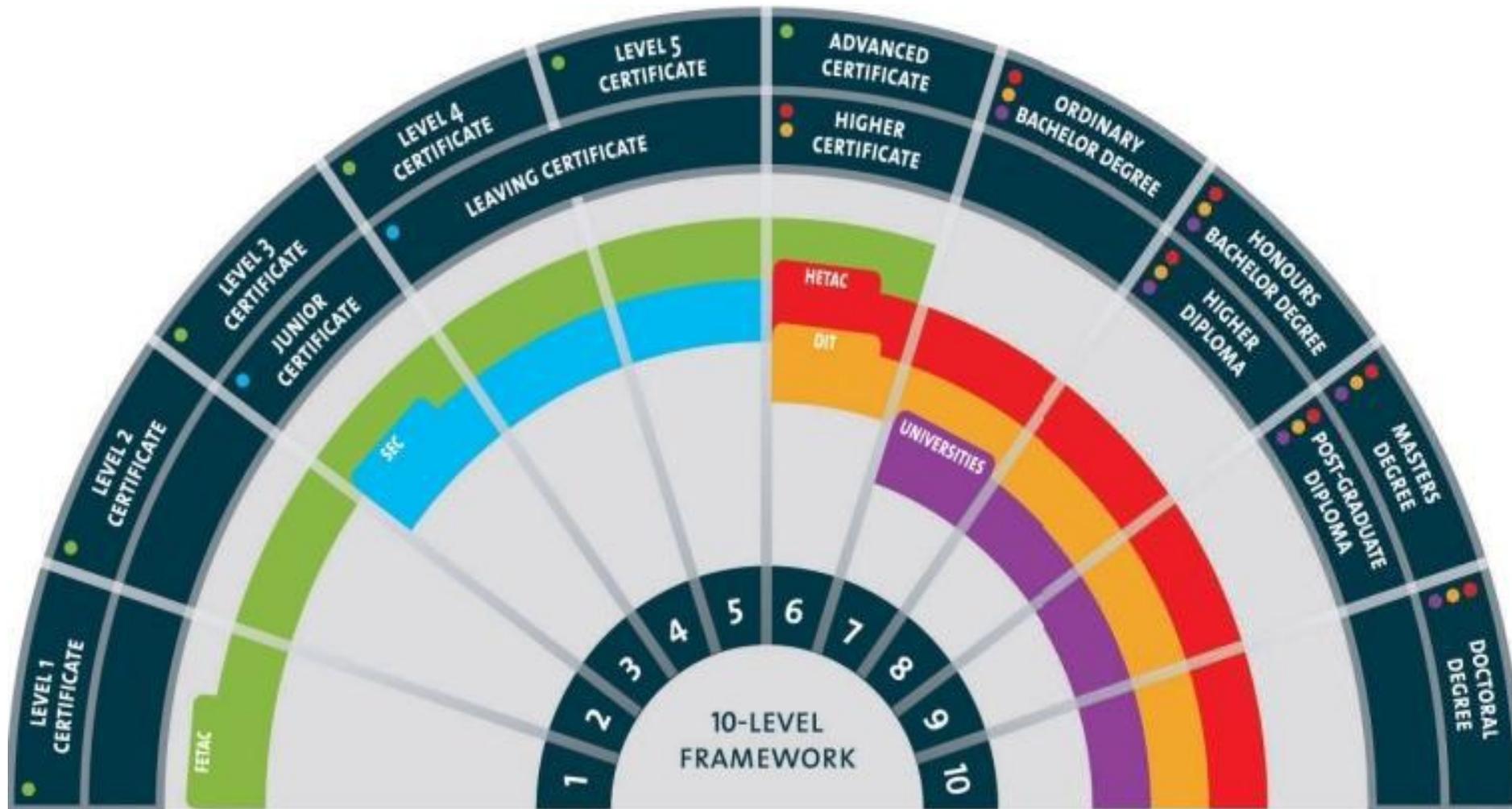
3. Employment



MAKE DECISIONS WITH CHOICES

- APPRENTICESHIP + PLC OR APPRENTICESHIP + CAO COURSE OR APPRENTICESHIP + PLC /EMPLOYMENT GAP YEAR
- GAP YEAR + CAO COURSE OR GAP YEAR + EMPLOYMENT (SKILL SET/FINANCE)
- CAO COURSE - LEVEL 7 (ORDINARY DEGREE) + LEVEL 8 (HONOURS) OR CAO + PLC COURSE

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF QUALIFICATIONS (NFQ)



- Level 3 Junior Certificate
- Level 5 Leaving Certificate/PLC
- Level 6 Higher Certificate
- Level 7 Ordinary Degree
- Level 8 Honours Degree
- Level 9 / 10 Masters/ PhD

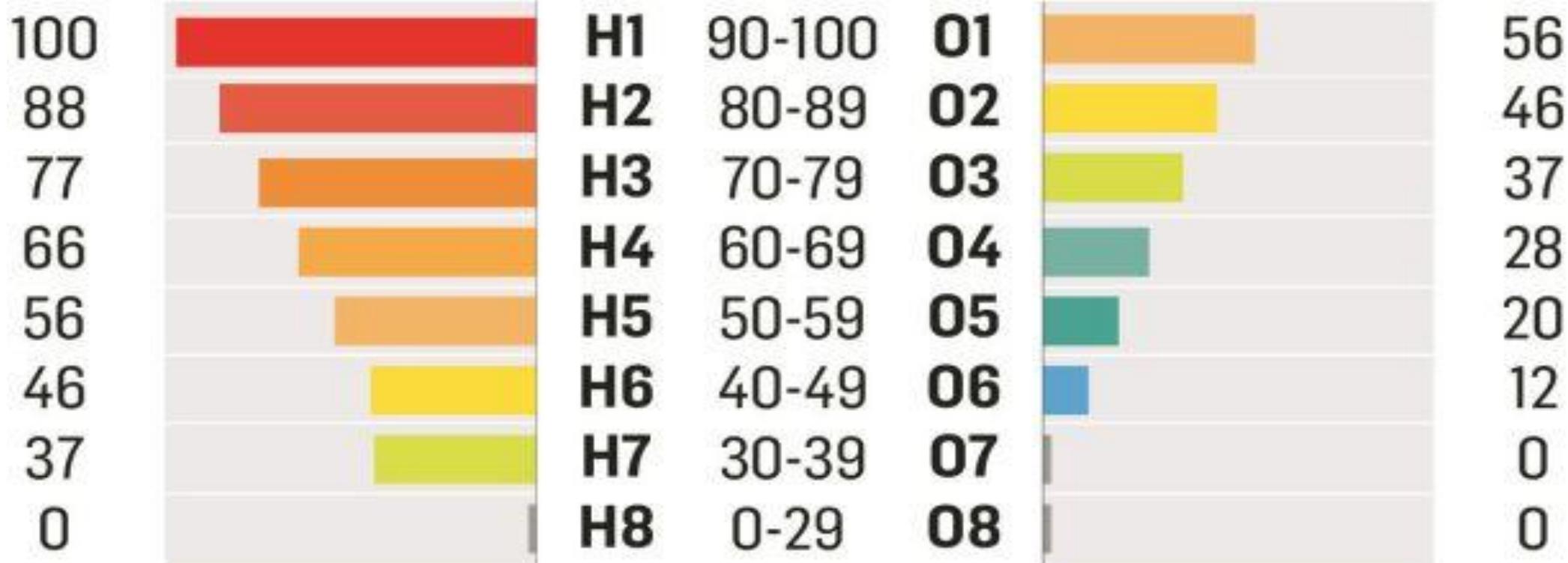

Points

Higher

Your % marks

Ordinary


Points



+25 Bonus points for H1-H6 maths

LCVP link modules

 Distinction 66

 Merit 46

 Pass 28

Students needs to research thoroughly

RESEARCH
IS
ESSENTIAL!

- Course Requirements - points, matriculation, grades
- Course Contents - what is studied on the course (subjects, modules, work experience, etc.
- Duration - how long is the course?
- Qualification/Learning outcomes - what will I get out of the course?
- Progression - what job/career/further education opportunities are available after I finish?

HOW CAN STUDENTS RESEARCH?

Guidance Counsellor and careers classes

College Websites/Prospectus'

www.cao.ie

www.careersportal.ie THEIR REACH+ ACCOUNTS

www.qualifax.ie

Visit Open days (virtual)

Contact colleges (online)

Talk to parents/teachers/current students etc

OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS THAT DO NOT WANT COLLEGE

- Apprenticeship
- www.apprenticeship.ie
- Traineeships - similar to Apprenticeships
- Defence Forces/Gardaí - Leaving Certificate
- Employment
- Public Jobs www.publicjobs.ie

KEY FEATURES OF AN APPRENTICESHIP

- LEADS TO LEVELS 5-10 ON THE NFQ
- BETWEEN 2-4 YEARS IN DURATION
- MINIMUM 50% ON-THE-JOB LEARNING
- THE STATE FUNDS OFF-THE-JOB LEARNING
- APPRENTICES ARE EMPLOYED UNDER A FORMAL CONTRACT OF APPRENTICESHIP
- THE APPRENTICE IS PAID FOR THE DURATION OF THE APPRENTICESHIP*

POST 2016 APPRENTICESHIPS/TRAINEESHIPS

- Intake Generally Once a Year
-

- Structure depends on Apprenticeship for example

- **INSURANCE PRACTITIONER:**

NFQ L8 - 3 years: 4 days on the job, 1 day online learning with e.g ATU Sligo

- **ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN:**

NFQ L6 - 2 years: 4 days working, 1 day in college

- **ICT ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONAL SOFTWARE DEVELOPER**

NFQ L6 - 2 years: First 6 months: off-the-job,

3 days per week on-the-job; 2 days per week off-the-job,

NEXT STEPS FOR AN APPRENTICESHIP

- Research the types of Apprenticeships available
See www.apprenticeship.ie for Employer Vacancies
- Talk to a person already working in your chosen Industry, Talk to your local Apprenticeship Team – See 'Contact Us' page on www.apprenticeship.ie
- Search for Apprenticeship opportunities using www.apprenticeship.ie, www.jobsireland.ie, local and national press, Job Search Engines and call to Employers e.g. Kirby engineers, SISK, Johnson & Johnson, Abbott
- Follow Apprenticeship on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn
- Consider taking pre-testing course for e.g. BUS EIREANN, ESB

POST LEAVING CERTIFICATE COURSES

What is a PLC/QQI course? Level 5 and follow-on Level 6

- No Points - Interview & Reference
- Usually one year in duration for a level 5 which leads to Level 6
- Includes work placement
- Provides access to third level through Levels route and points (max 390 points)

Cost:

- No tuition fees*
- Can apply for SUSI (maintenance grant)

* *Application fee in some Colleges and material cost associated with some courses.*



NATIONAL TERTIARY DEGREES

<https://nto.heai.ie/courses/?province%5B%5D=leinster&province%5B%5D=munster&q=>

Attend College of Further Education where PLC courses are held and afterwards you join second year in a specific college.

Application is separate to CAO, Opens 1st February and is done through the Courses page for these degrees

Agriculture
Horticulture

Equine

Forestry

New apprenticeships in Farm Manager and
Farm Technician

www.teagasc.ie

New entry requirements: Over 18 – JCPA; 17 Leaving Certificate 4 OL6/HL7
Passed; 2 OL Passed and 2 Link Modules passed; Passed LCA and other
qualifications



LEAVING CERTIFICATE ACTIONS TO DATE

- Completed Multiple Intelligences Assessments
- Career Interest profiles and Career Sectors
- Occupational Interest Inventories (Rothwell-Miller Profiles)
- Learning Styles test
- Study skills assessment, Study timetable, and StudyTips and access to Studyclix.ie accounts
- Goal setting strategies for mid-term, Mock and L.C. examinations



C.A.O.

Apprenticeships

OPEN

Study Skills

Exam Technique

Job Application

Study Abroad

Choice Organiser

WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?

- 45 3rd Level institutions
- More than 1800 Courses
- 3 types of courses –
 - Level 6 – higher diploma
 - Level 7 – ordinary degree
 - Level 8 – higher degree

CENTRAL APPLICATIONS OFFICE (CAO)

- Is a business that links applications to undergraduate courses in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) throughout Ireland
- Processes Offers and Acceptances
- Does not make decisions on number of places, points or offers (HEIs make these decisions)
- CAO WEBSITE: [PARENTS SECTION](http://www.cao.ie/index.php?page=parents)
<http://www.cao.ie/index.php?page=parents>

BASIC ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Level 6 Higher Certificate (usually 2 years) Require: Leaving Certificate

Level 7: Ordinary Degree (Technological Universities)

Require:

- 5 passes (O6's) in Ordinary level subjects:
- Must pass Maths, English or Irish + 3 others
- Have the minimum points needed.

Level 8 : Honours Degree (All Higher Education providers)

Require:

- 2 H5's on Higher level papers (occasionally H4) Trinity 3 H5's
- + 4 passes (O6's) on 4 other papers

- have the minimum points needed.
- if you plan to apply to a N.U.I. college many courses require a 3rd language *e.g.* Irish, English and French though this depends on the course - *e.g.* Science, Engineering and Business

(NOT UL, TUs, MIC. Trinity, other non-NUI colleges)



SPECIFIC FACULTY REQUIREMENTS

- Nursing – O6 or H7 in a science subject
- Pharmacy – H4 chemistry (UCC)

ALWAYS CHECK THE COLLEGE PROSPECTUS FOR THE REQUIREMENTS OF EACH COURSE YOU APPLY FOR e.g. 60 hours work in Veterinary settings, a portfolio



RESTRICTED COURSES

- Some courses are *restricted*
- These courses require: Interviews, Tests, Auditions, Assessment. Portfolios or Projects.
- Restricted courses are noted in the CAO Handbook.
- Restricted courses cannot be added to your application after February 1st.
- HEIs notify applicants of requirements after 1st February – Interviews, Tests, Auditions, Portfolios or Projects.

If you are not an EU applicant or have lived outside the EU for a significant time, please read the relevant section of the CAO Handbook.

EXEMPTIONS,
CONSIDERATIONS,
ETC...

If exempt from Irish and/or a third language and you want to attend an NUI (UCD, UCC, NUIG, MU), you must complete an “*NUI Exemption Form*” to ensure you meet the entry requirements for the specific course and the college.



CAO - HOW DOES IT LOOK?

- 2 Course Choice lists - Level 8 and Level 6/7

10 selections can be made in each list

Choices are made using a Code: e.g. Arts in NUI Maynooth = MH 101

It is possible to receive an offer on both lists

Only one offer can be accepted

HOW DOES THE OFFER PROCESS WORK?

1. CAO checks **Minimum Entry and Matriculation Requirements for a course**
2. Calculates **points** (best 6 subjects)
3. Receive offer if you meet Entry Requirements and Points
4. Places are allocated and offered online
5. Students may *accept*, *reject* or *defer* offered places
 1. NOTE – TO DEFER YOU DO NOT ACCEPT YOUR PLACE!
6. Further rounds/offers are made (up to round 5 in October)

HOW THE ROUNDS WORK

- Want Physio LM100
- Sports Science SE905
- 1. LM100 (Phys) – 530
- 2. SE905 (S.Sc.) – 500
- Get 520 points
- Round 1 offer Sports Science (accept) Now in queue for Physio
- Round 2 Points drops to 520 – offered it and can decide which

BOX CLEVER WITH LEVEL 7 AND LEVEL 8

- Want Level 8 Honours Degree in Engineering in TUS Midwest (Limerick) but worry about points. Put a Level 7 Engineering in TUS Midwest down as top choice. If you don't get the points you qualify with Level 7 after 3 years and apply to join the 4th year of the Level 8
- If there isn't an exact match of Level 7 and Level 8, see what courses have close to your interests in another college in same city
- If you are slightly unsure whether you like Science or Food Science then have your top choice in one column for Level 8 and the other in a Level 7 column in an area you will get to.

PLACE YOUR COURSE CHOICES IN
GENUINE ORDER OF PREFERENCE!



ORDER OF PREFERENCE

- Want Construction Studies SE708
– was 350 pts

Think Architecture MT860 is my
next preferred – was 410 pts

- If place in order of points

- 1. MT860 (Architecture)
2. SE708 210 (Construc)

and in August I get 370 points and Arch. falls
to 365 and Cons is still 350 – cannot get an
offer for Construction

STUDENTS RESEARCH FACILITIES

1. Complete the assessments on Careersportal or other)
2. Think about subjects taken for L.C.
3. Use the filters to help you narrow choices
4. Broaden your searches, put in Food/Nutrition/Diet/Bio

HOW TO APPLY TO THE CAO

Apply online

www.cao.ie

Only make **one**
**application (in
any academic
year)**

**CAO Timetable
2025 – 2026**

Before 20 January 5 pm	Discounted Fee – €35
Before 1 February 5 pm	<u>Closing</u> application date – €50
1 March 5 pm	Closing date for final completion of DARE/HEAR forms
13 March 5 pm	Closing date for receipt of documentation for DARE/HEAR forms
1 May 5pm	Closing date for late applications – FEES apply
Early May End of May	Online CHANGE OF MIND – free Statement of Application Record sent to applicants
1 July 5 pm	CLOSE of CHANGE OF MIND

CHANGE YOUR MIND?

- Possible to change course choices online (until 1st Feb and from early May until 1st July)
- A Change of Mind Form reminder with the Statement of Application Record (May)
- No limit on changes
- Final decision by 1 July (no changes after this date)



SCHOLARSHIPS

- Sports and Elite Sports
- Academic –1916 Bursary
- Entrance (550 +)
- Music
- Active Citizenship
- Quercus UCC
- AD Astra UCD
- Naughton (STEM)
- Trinity Schools
- www.sportsscholarshipsireland.com
- *SEARCH their Reach+ accounts under World of Education on careersportal.ie*



— WHAT IS SUSI? —

SUSI offers funding to **eligible** students in approved full-time third-level education in Ireland and, in some cases, funding for students studying outside the State

www.susi.ie



Nationality: Irish, EU, EEA, Swiss nationals or have specific leave to remain in the State.

Residency: 3 of last years in Ireland, EU, EEA or Switzerland.

Progression in education - NFQ levels 5-10 in Approved College/Course

‘Reckonable’ Income (Class - Dependent/Independent) [Applicant Class SUSI](#)
Use the Eligibility Reckoner to see if your eligible [SUSI Eligibility Reckoner – Get Started](#)

CAO form: Tick the SUSI option to share your college acceptance

Apply early: **April** (processed on first come first served basis)

Return requested documentation: complete and on time

EQUALITY OF ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN IRELAND

HEAR

HIGHER
EDUCATION
ACCESS
ROUTE

**ACCESS
COLLEGE**

DARE

DISABILITY
ACCESS
ROUTE TO
EDUCATION



HEAR -WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Higher Education Access Route is a third level admission scheme for school leavers from lower socio-economic backgrounds
- Information from www.cao.ie and www.accesscollege.ie
- **Reduced points CAO offers**
- **Post-entry supports** e.g. financial, academic, social and personal.
- **Meet entry and programme requirements to be considered for a HEAR reduced points offer.**
- The reduction in points for HEAR places can vary every year and from college to college.



HEAR - SHOULD I APPLY?

CONDITIONS FOR APPLICATION:

- 1. Was your household income on or below the income rate of €46,790 for 2024** (Less than 4 children, increase)
- 2. Medical Card/GP Visit Card?**
- 3. Means-tested social welfare** payment for at least 26 weeks in 2024?
- 4. Have you attended a DEIS** second level school for five years?
- 5. Do you live in an area** of concentrated disadvantage?

If you answered yes to number 1 and a key number of other indicators, you could be eligible.



Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is for school leavers with condition/disabilities or specific learning difficulties and can mean reduced points and supports in college

You will require proof of disability including consultant's report and school reference

Parents/guardians and students are responsible for completing and sending the application

Information on www.cao.ie and www.accesscollege.ie



DARE | **DISABILITY ACCESS ROUTE TO EDUCATION**

- Attention Deficit Disorder / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Vision impairment
- Hard of Hearing
- Developmental Co-ordination Disorder
- Mental Health Condition
- Physical Disability
- Neurological Condition
- Significant ongoing illness
- Speech and Language Communication Disorder
- Specific Learning Difficulty (Dyslexia and Dyscalculia)

QUESTIONS?



Sarah Feehan

- Contact sfeehan@cbsthurles.ie

Note: information can change. CBS Thurles accepts no responsibility for omissions or errors due to this. Please forward queries to the relevant institutions, bodies or individuals

Acknowledgements: resources of guidance counsellors/IGC