

CAO

www.cao.ie

**Handbook
2022**



CAO Timetable of Events*

2021

September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAO 2022 Interactive Handbook available online at www.cao.ie
October	
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAO online application facility opens on 5 November at 12:00 noon • Change of Course Choices (free) facility opens on 5 November at 12:00 noon
December	

2022

January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discounted application fee (€30 fee) available up to 20 January at 5pm
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal closing date for applications (€45 fee) is 1 February at 5pm • Online Change of Course Choices (free) facility closes 1 February at 5pm • Online facility to amend course choices becomes available (€10 fee) on 4 February at noon
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing date for amending course choices is 1 March at 5pm • Most tests and interviews for restricted courses are held in March and April • Closing date for final completion of online DARE/HEAR forms is 1 March at 5pm • Closing date for completion of Mature Applicant section of CAO form is 1 March at 5pm • Late application facility opens on 4 March at 12:00 noon • DARE/HEAR supporting documentation to arrive in CAO before 15 March at 5pm
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most tests and interviews for restricted courses are held in March and April
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing date for late applications is 1 May at 5pm • Online Change of Mind (free) facility becomes available on 5 May at 12:00 noon (expected date) • Statement of Application Record sent to all applicants before end of May. Inform CAO if you do not receive it.
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving Certificate examinations
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of Mind Closes on 1 July at 5pm • Round A offers for certain categories of applicant e.g., mature, deferral, etc. are issued in early July • Exceptional closing date for late applications for those already attending a participating HEI is 22 July at 5pm
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round Zero offers for certain categories of applicant issued in early August • Current year Leaving Certificate results issued (date to be confirmed) • Round One offers (date to be confirmed) • HEIs begin registration
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HEIs begin registration • Results of Leaving Certificate appeals released (date to be confirmed) • Offer season ends (date to be confirmed)

Dates mentioned in the CAO Timetable of Events may be subject to change. For the most up-to-date information please visit the Important Dates section of www.cao.ie

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Tá leagan Gaeilge den Lámhleabhar seo ar fáil.

A SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR STAGES OF THE CAO APPLICATION PROCESS

1. **Register with CAO before 5pm on 1 February.**
2. Edit your application using the '**My Application**' facility, and regularly check the Correspondence section of your account.
3. Provide supplementary information, and any documents required, by the deadlines stated in this handbook and/or the online application form.
4. Introduce your Level 8 and Level 7/6 courses using the 'My Application' facility before 1 February at 5pm to avoid restrictions.
5. Remember to place your course choices in genuine order of preference.
6. Use the free Change of Mind facility from 5 May to 1 July at 5pm to make changes to your application - restrictions apply (see page 3).
7. Carefully check the Statement of Application Record when it is sent to you in May and inform CAO of any errors or omissions immediately.
8. Round One Offers are issued following the release of the Leaving Certificate results. If you are accepting an offer you must do so by the reply date on the offer notification. Other categories of applicant may receive offer notifications before this time in Round A and Round 0.
9. After Round One offers issue, any applicant who does not receive an offer in Round A, Round Zero or Round One will receive a Statement of Application email with instructions to check their CAO account and inform CAO immediately if there are any errors or omissions.
10. Offers are issued to eligible applicants until the offer season closes, or until all of the places have been filled, whichever comes first.

This summary is provided as a reference guide only. All applicants must read this CAO Handbook carefully, and in its entirety.

Updates to the handbook, such as new courses and cancelled courses, may be viewed on the CAO website. Go to www.cao.ie, click on 'CAO Handbook' and see the table with the title 'Important Changes'.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Central Applications Office (CAO) is to process centrally applications for undergraduate courses in Irish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and to deal with them in an efficient and fair manner. The HEIs retain the function of making decisions on admissions.

This handbook has been prepared to provide information about the CAO application process. By reading this handbook carefully you will find out the information that you need to assist you with your application.

There are many avenues to be explored when you decide to make the journey into higher education; for the majority, that journey will involve a CAO application. It is important to note, however, that there are alternative access routes to higher education, other institutions offering further and higher education, and situations where you may have to apply to an institution directly.

You should allow ample time to research your course choices carefully using the websites and prospectuses of the HEIs, and check for matriculation and minimum entry requirements - you will not receive an offer of a place on your chosen course if you do not meet the minimum entry requirements. You can find out more information from the prospectuses and websites of the institutions, at Open Days, and from your guidance counsellor.

Fees or a student contribution may be payable. You should refer to the HEI website for fees information and go to www.studentfinance.ie or www.susi.ie for information about finance and grants.

If you have questions for CAO that are not answered in CAO literature or on the CAO website, or if there's any instruction that you do not understand, please contact us using the Contact form on the website www.cao.ie.

APPLICANT'S RESPONSIBILITY

Before applying to CAO it is important that you note the following information:

- You, the applicant, are responsible for ensuring that an application is complete, correct and on time.
- In any one year, you may not present more than one application.
- You must examine the contents of this handbook carefully.
- You are responsible for the security of the personal data that you may have access to (for example, receive in the mail, write down, store, print, view in a browser, download etc.). You should always ensure that your CAO account password and email passwords are kept safe, as well as logging out once you are finished using your accounts. For more information on data protection go to the Data Privacy section of www.cao.ie.
- The Correspondence section of your account contains a log of all emails sent to you by CAO, and any online queries that you have submitted to CAO whilst logged in to your application. Please make sure to check the Correspondence section regularly for new emails from CAO containing important information and instructions.
- Certain minimum computing facilities are required for online applications (e.g. the latest version of Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome) and applicants are advised to use a personal computer when applying to CAO in order to reduce the potential for applicant error.
- CAO cannot accept any responsibility for loss or hardship arising from your failure to avail of correction opportunities.

RESTRICTIONS

As a CAO applicant you may experience one or more of the following restrictions based on your course choices, your category of application, or restrictions imposed by the HEIs that you wish to apply to. Please read the following sections carefully:

General Restrictions

- 1. Making a late application** – individual HEIs may have restrictions on late applications, for example, some HEIs may not consider late applications from certain categories of applicant. In particular, mature applicants, and those presenting qualifications other than recently taken EU school-leaving examinations, should check the relevant HEI website before making a late application.
- 2. Making changes to your course choices** – there are a number of intervals when you can make changes to your CAO application. However, if you are applying for a restricted course, or if you are a mature applicant, you may not be able to introduce courses using the free Change of Mind facility which opens in May and closes on the 1 July at 5pm. For more information about making changes to your application go to pages 20 and 21.

Restricted Courses

- 3. Applying for a restricted course** – you must have applied to CAO by 1 February 2022 at 5pm if you wish to apply for a restricted course. The restricted course must be included on your course choices list by that date, **or added to your application using the Change of Course Choices facility for a fee of €10 before 1 March at 5pm.**

Restricted courses normally require additional assessment procedures, for example, the submission of a portfolio, an oral assessment or interview, or a written assessment. Restricted courses are identified in the handbook by the words “(Restricted - see page 3)” on the same line as the restricted course’s title. Please make sure to acquaint yourself with the additional requirements, if any, of the restricted course(s) that you have applied for and go to page 17 for more information about interviews and assessments.

Exception: If a restricted course shares the exact same assessment procedures with a course you had applied for by 1 February 2022, you may be permitted to introduce it on a Change of Mind. You should consult with the relevant HEI before introducing such a course.

Mature Applicants

- 4. Mature applicants** – most HEIs will require mature applicants, who wish to be assessed on mature grounds, to have applied to CAO by 1 February 2022 at 5pm, and include course choices by that date or add them using the Change of Course Choices facility for a fee of €10 before 1 March at 5pm. (This restriction does not apply if the applicant wishes to be considered on the basis of school leaving qualifications only.) For more information about applying to CAO on the basis of mature years go to www.cao.ie/mature.

Supplementary Admissions Routes

- 5. Applying for DARE and/or HEAR** – to be considered for DARE and/or HEAR, applicants must have registered on the CAO system by 1 February 2022 at 5pm. To apply to DARE, you must answer YES to Question 1 (‘Do you wish to be considered for DARE?’) on Section A of the fully completed Supplementary Information Form (SIF) by 5pm on 1 March 2022. To apply to HEAR, you must indicate on your CAO application that you wish to apply for HEAR and fully and correctly complete all elements of the online HEAR form by 5pm on 1 March 2022. Supporting documents for DARE and/or HEAR applicants must be sent to CAO offices before 15 March 2022 at 5pm.

APPLYING TO CAO

Step 1: Register on the CAO system in advance of the closing date to obtain your CAO application number

1. Go online to www.cao.ie and click on Apply.
2. Enter your personal details carefully.
3. Supply a valid email address - a valid email address is required for security and communications purposes. Failure to provide a valid email address may have serious consequences, for example, you may not receive an offer. Please note that CAO, and the HEIs to which you apply, may wish to communicate with you about your application and they may contact you by email, post or SMS text message.
4. Select the qualifications and assessments section(s) that are relevant to you (there may be more than one relevant section – see page 5 for more information).
5. Select your payment method. If you are paying by credit or debit card you will be redirected to a third party payment facility. No payment card details will be stored on the CAO system. Once your payment has been processed you will be brought back to the CAO website to complete the remaining steps, including indicating that you have read the terms and conditions.
6. Create a password. If you forget your password you can use the forgotten password facility. You will need your CAO application number, your date of birth, and the registered email address for your account to be able to automatically reset your password. If you experience difficulty resetting your password, email CAO using the Contact facility.
7. You must then click on 'Proceed with application' to obtain your CAO application number. Your application details will appear on screen and you will also receive an email containing your CAO application number and your email verification code. If you do not receive an email with your application number your application has not been processed successfully.

Please Note: You should enter your name as it appears on your Birth Certificate or Passport. If you wish to apply under a different name, HEIs will require proof of identification at registration.

APPLICATION DATES AND FEES

Table 1.1 Application dates and fees

APPLICATION TYPE	FEE	CLOSING DATE
Early online application (discounted)	€30	20 January 2022 at 5pm
Normal online application	€45	1 February 2022 at 5pm
Late online application – restrictions apply (see page 3)	€60	1 May 2022 at 5pm
Change of Mind – restrictions apply (see page 3)	Nil	1 July 2022 at 5pm
Exceptional online late application (see page 28)	€60	22 July 2022 at 5pm

Be sure to complete any action well in advance of closing dates. You should avoid making an application close to a closing date. No extensions to closing dates will be allowed and all application fees are non-refundable.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Late applications are those which are received after 5pm on 1 February 2022. The closing date for late applications is 5pm on 1 May 2022, subject to the restrictions listed on page 3 of this handbook. The online facility for late applications opens on the 4 March 2022 at 12:00 noon – a fee of €60 applies.

REAPPLYING TO CAO

If you applied to CAO in a prior year and you wish to re-apply for 2022, you must make a new application. In general, you do not need your old CAO application number as you will be provided with a new CAO number when you apply. In the case of applicants who are carrying forward DARE and/or HEAR eligibility from 2021, if you are unable to locate your 2021 CAO application number please email CAO via the Contact facility.

Step 2: Log in via 'My Application' to provide details of your qualifications and assessments

Go to www.cao.ie and click on My Application. In order to log in you will be asked to enter your CAO application number, your date of birth and the password that you created at the application stage. When you first log in you will be asked to verify the email account that you provided at registration, you will then be brought to the **Qualifications and Assessments** screen where you will be asked to provide additional information about the Qualifications and Assessments section(s) that you selected when you registered on the CAO system.

CATEGORIES OF QUALIFICATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

Some applicants may select one or more of the sections below, and it is important that applicants inform CAO of all qualifications in order to be credited for them at the offer stage. Please follow the instructions for the sections that are relevant to you. Unless these instructions are followed precisely, it may be necessary to suspend processing of your application and to contact you to seek compliance with the requirements. In such cases, an additional processing fee of €10 will be imposed.

For more information on supporting documents go to the inside back cover.

1. IRISH LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMS (1985-2022) If you are applying on the basis of Leaving Certificate results you will be asked to enter the name and address of your second-level school(s) and the years attended. If you are a current year Leaving Certificate candidate you must tick the box provided. Usually, you will not have your Leaving Certificate examination number when you first make your CAO application, but at a later date you will be asked to verify your Leaving Certificate examination number on your **Statement of Application Record** which you will receive in May. If you have previously sat the Leaving Certificate you must provide your examination number(s) and the year(s) in which you sat your examination(s). If you do not know your Leaving Certificate examination number you may contact your school or the State Examinations Commission.

Please note: Leaving Certificate Applied or pre-1985 Leaving Certificate examinations should be recorded under box 5 'Other School Leaving Exams'.

2. QQI FET/FETAC LEVEL 5/6 EXAMS (2002-2022) If you are taking and/or have completed a QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 award between 2002 and 2022, please enter your PPS number in the box provided so that CAO can obtain your examination details directly from QQI. Certificates will need to be provided for QQI FET/FETAC exams taken in conjunction with other bodies e.g. FÁS/Teagasc/Craft Certificates.

Please Note: Specific QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 awards may be required for entry to particular courses. You should check the appropriate HEI literature to ensure that your QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 course is acceptable, and visit the QQI FET page in the Applicants section of www.cao.ie. A full QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 Award is required; a QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 Record of Achievement/Component Certificate is not sufficient.

3. FETAC LEVEL 5/6 (NCVA LEVEL 2/3) EXAMS (2001 OR EARLIER) Mention any pre-2002 examinations which have been fully completed, including the year taken and a brief description. Submit certified A4 photocopies of certificates for any pre-2002 NCVA Level 2/3 examinations.

If you require previous FETAC Level 5/6 examinations to be combined with your current year QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 examinations, you should contact QQI FET/FETAC to ensure that CAO receives the combined results in the current year examination results file.

Please Note: Specific QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 awards may be required for entry to particular courses. You should check the appropriate HEI literature to ensure that your FETAC Level 5/6 course is acceptable and visit the QQI FET page in the Applicants section of www.cao.ie. A full QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 Award is required; a QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 Record of Achievement/Component is not sufficient.

4. GCE/GCSE (ENGLAND, WALES, AND NORTHERN IRELAND EXAMS 2006 - 2022)

If you are applying on the basis of GCE/GCSE exams to be taken this year, you must provide the Exam Board, Centre Number, Candidate Number, Subject(s) and Level in the spaces provided. For any GCE/GCSE examinations which you have already completed, and for which a certificate has been issued, you must post certified A4 photocopies (**certified by a school stamp**) of the appropriate certificates to CAO - these will form part of your eligibility for consideration for entry to courses. Please include your CAO application number on the front of these certificates. If you are presenting previous years' GCE/GCSE examinations, you must tick the box provided on the application form.

Please Note: Certificates or statements of results must be issued by the exam boards (containing the exam board logo). **Documents produced by schools will not be sufficient.**

Boards other than CAIE, CCEA, UCLES, WJEC, OCR, Pearson (Edexcel), AQA, and AEB must be entered under "Other School Leaving Exams".

Candidates for Cambridge Pre-U and Extended Project Qualifications are required to tick both GCE/GCSE and Other School Leaving Examinations. Enter board centre and candidate numbers under GCE/GCSE and enter the examination details under Other School Leaving Exams. Certified copies of these qualifications should be posted to CAO once they are available.

For more information on qualifications and assessments for GCE applicants visit the Applicant Scoring page in the Applicants section of www.cao.ie.

5. OTHER SCHOOL LEAVING EXAMS (e.g. Baccalaureate, Scottish Exams, pre-1985 Irish & pre-2006 UK Exams, Leaving Exams outside of UK & Ireland, Leaving Cert Applied, Level 3 BTEC, GNVQs, VCEs, Irish Matric Exams, Pre-U, EPQ, etc.)

Please provide details of other school leaving exams and the years they were completed. Describe the examinations briefly, including details of the National or European framework level where relevant. Applicants are generally required to supply a certified copy of their final school leaving examination results as soon as they are available. Documents not printed in English must be accompanied by an official translation.

You may also be required to supply proof of English language proficiency. If you have further queries in relation to English Language proficiency, please see HEI websites or contact HEIs directly. HEI contact details can be found on the CAO website.

If you are sitting your examinations this summer, you do not need to supply your documents within ten days of applying, but you must supply the certified photocopies of your results as soon as they are available to you. For entry requirements criteria for EU/EFTA applicants, go to the Applicants section of the CAO website.

Please note: Candidates born and fully educated outside the Republic of Ireland who are presenting qualifications other than the Leaving Certificate for matriculation are automatically exempt from Irish and do not need to make application to the NUI.

6.FURTHER EDUCATION (OTHER THAN QQI FET/FETAC LEVEL 5/6 AND NCVA LEVEL 2/3) Please provide information about any other Further Education courses that you have undertaken that do not fall into one of the other sections on this application form, for example, City & Guild awards, SOLAS, FÁS awards, BTEC level 4 or higher etc. Mention any Post-Leaving Certificate courses (Republic of Ireland) - apart from the FE qualifications mentioned in categories 2 and 3 - and describe briefly on additional pages any special experience and/or qualification stipulated in HEI literature as being relevant for the admission process. You can send certified A4 photocopies of certificates to support your application. If relevant, state on additional pages the dates, locations, subjects and (if known) results. Mention any other relevant Further Education/Training qualifications.

7. THIRD-LEVEL HIGHER EDUCATION The following should be submitted to CAO if you are currently studying in higher education or if you withdrew from higher education at any stage:

1. If you have completed a course you should include an academic transcript or a certified photocopy of an academic transcript with your postal documents.
2. If you have withdrawn from a course before completing it you should enclose a certificate of attendance (with your postal documents) showing the relevant dates of entry and withdrawal.
3. If you are still attending an institution of higher education give full details stating institution(s) attended, course(s) taken, dates of attendance, current status and results obtained. Attach these details to your postal documents. You do not need to supply the documentation mentioned in points 1 and 2 above.

This information is required regardless of whether you passed or failed or did not take examinations. Failure to disclose the appropriate information may result in the cancellation of your application. Checks are made to ensure that this information has not been omitted. If you are applying on the basis of your Leaving Certificate or QQI-FET qualifications, this information is required by the HEI's in order to make fees eligibility assessments.

8. MATURE APPLICANTS Normally mature applicants should be 23-years-old on or before 1 January in the year of entry (e.g. 1 January 2022 for admission in Autumn 2022) and must apply by 1 February 2022 at 5pm. The Mature Applicant Form (part of the CAO application form) must be completed by 1 March 2022 at 5pm (please read the instructions below before completing this form).

Please note: some HEIs may have a different age requirement, different definitions of mature applicants, etc., and some will consider applications received after the 1 February closing date. Further details are available on www.cao.ie/mature

Mature Applicant Form

HEIs wish to carefully evaluate applications from mature applicants and, therefore, need certain information to be provided using the Mature Applicant Form as outlined below:

- 1. Highest Qualification to Date:** Please enter details of the highest qualification that you have achieved to date. If you have not received any formal qualification you can enter 'Not Applicable'. Qualifications that should be included in this section range from Level 3 (Group Certificate) to Level 10 (PhD) qualifications, BTEC and School Leaving Certificates.
- 2. Current Studies:** If you are currently studying other courses, please outline details in a separate document and include with the supporting documents being sent to CAO.
- 3. Post-secondary Education:** In this section you must provide all details of higher and further education that you have undertaken, for example, Higher Certificate, National Certificate, Bachelor (Honours) Degree, etc. Other examples of further education studies include NCVA Level 2/3, QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6, Access Course, PLC, City & Guilds, etc.
- 4. Second Level Education:** It is important to provide information and results for any exams that you have taken, e.g. Junior Certificate; Leaving Certificate (pre-1985 only); GC(S)E, etc., and the dates awarded. Leaving Certificate examination results from 1985 onwards are available to CAO from the State Examinations Commission based on the year and examination number supplied by you in the appropriate section of the application form. This information should be supplied under Category 1. LCE 1985 – 2022.
- 5. Non-certificate Courses:** Examples of non-certificate courses include personal interest courses such as Art Appreciation, Film Studies, etc.
- 6. Employment or Voluntary Work:** Starting with your most recent position, please provide details of all employment/voluntary work including the name and address of the employer, position held, period of employment and description of duties.
- 7. English Language Proficiency (if applicable):** If English is not your first language you must provide evidence of English language proficiency and details of the English language qualification(s) that you hold. See HEI websites for specific requirements.

8. **References:** As part of your application you will be expected to provide the names of two referees (e.g. a previous employer or educator) who can be contacted by the admissions officer(s) of the institution(s) that you are applying to, to verify relevant aspects of the information provided on your application form.
9. **Statement of Interest:** In no more than 1,500 characters you will be asked to explain the relevance of your life/educational experience to your application, and state your educational goals and objectives.
10. **Hobbies/Interests:** In no more than 500 characters indicate any hobbies/interests that relate to your proposed study at third level.
11. **Additional Information:** In this section please indicate if there is any additional information of which you wish to advise us that would necessitate special arrangements during the application or assessment process.

If you have queries about the information required in sections 1-11 above please contact the Admissions Offices(s) of the HEI(s) to which you wish to apply.

Supporting documents for mature applicants

As well as completing the online CAO application, including sections 1 – 11 of the Mature Applicant Form, applicants must post the following supporting documentation to CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway, Ireland:

1. Evidence of any qualifications that you have indicated in your online application.
2. Supplementary information that you were unable to include in the space provided.
3. Any documentation required by each of the institutions to which you are applying – details of same are available from www.cao.ie/mature.
4. If English is not your first language you must provide evidence of proficiency in the English language.
5. Please include your CAO application number on all supporting documents being sent to CAO.

The above mentioned documents must arrive in CAO within 10 days of registering online with CAO. Pages 36 and 37 of this handbook contains information on posting supporting documents to CAO.

Important information for mature applicants

Mature applicants to nursing/midwifery and/or mature entry to primary teaching are not required to complete Mature Applicant sections 1-11 unless they are also applying to other courses and wish to be considered on the grounds of mature years for those courses. For more information go to page 11.

If you are applying for mature entry to primary teaching in Dublin City University, Marino Institute of Education, Mary Immaculate College Limerick or Maynooth

University, you must apply to CAO by 1 February at 5pm. In March, those meeting the eligibility criteria will be sent an email (to the email account registered to their CAO account) with instructions for completing and submitting a supplementary form.

If you are applying for entry to primary teaching on the basis of mature years you must apply for these courses through CAO by 1 February 2022 at 5pm.

Mature applicants who wish to be considered on the basis of mature years must make a direct application to the following HEIs (please contact the institutions directly for more information and closing dates):

Table 1.2 HEIs requiring direct application from mature applicants

Direct Applications for Mature Applicants	
American College Dublin	CCT Dublin
Dorset College, Dublin	Dublin Business School
Griffith College	IBAT College Dublin
ICD Business School, Dublin	Irish College of Humanities and Applied Science
National College of Ireland	

However, mature applicants who wish to be considered on the basis of school leaving qualifications for the HEIs listed in Table 1.2 should apply to CAO – you may apply both directly to the HEI and to CAO. The HEIs not mentioned in Table 1.2 require mature applicants to apply through CAO.

APPLYING FOR A MAINTENANCE FEE GRANT (SUSI)

Step 3: Indicate if you wish to be considered for Maintenance Fee/Grant (SUSI)

If you have applied to SUSI for a grant, or if you intend to do so, you may indicate this on your CAO online application. CAO will then provide your identification, contact and offer/acceptance details to the grant authority (SUSI). **Ticking this section of the CAO form does not mean that you have applied to SUSI so please make sure to visit www.studentfinance.ie or www.susi.ie to complete the necessary steps.** Other than providing these details to the grant authority, CAO plays no role in processing grant applications.

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). For more information go to the Applicants section of www.cao.ie.

INTRODUCING YOUR COURSE CHOICES

Step 5: Add your Level 8 and Level 7/6 course choices before 1 February to avoid restrictions

What do levels 6, 7 and 8 mean?

The courses listed in this handbook are classified with reference to the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). Courses are listed by their NFQ level of learning achievement, for example, NFQ Level 6, 7 or 8 and by the NFQ Award-Type to which each course leads e.g. Honours Bachelor Degree.

A small number of courses listed in this handbook lead to what are known as non-major awards. Where applicable, these will be listed as Certificates (CT) or Foundation Certificates (FC) at NFQ Level 6 and as Diplomas (DP) at NFQ Level 7. This table outlines the range of NFQ Levels and Award-Types that are used to classify the courses in this handbook:

Table 1.3 NFQ Levels and Award-Types

NFQ Levels	Major Award-Types
Level 8	Honours Bachelor Degree
Level 7	Ordinary Bachelor Degree
Level 6	Higher Certificate

You are responsible for ensuring that you meet the specified entry requirements and conditions for all courses. The processing of an application at any stage should not be taken as an indication of eligibility for any course.

Adding courses to your application

To add your course choices, log in to the My Application facility and click on Add Level 8 course choices or Add Level 7/6 course choices. You are given the option to introduce 10 course choices on each list, and the choices that you make on one list will not affect the choices on the other list – the only time you have to choose between the lists is if you receive an offer of a course from both lists.

You will have opportunities to make changes to your course choices lists using the Change of Mind facility – restrictions apply (see page 3). For more information on changing course choices go to page 20.

When can I change/add my courses?

5 November – 1 February at 5pm Free of charge

4 February – 1 March at 5pm* €10 fee

5 May – 1 July at 5pm Free of charge

*The February window to change/add courses can be used by mature applicants or those who wish to add a restricted course to an application. If you are not a mature applicant or the courses that you want to add are not restricted, you can wait to make your changes during May and June

Order of Preference

When entering your course choices it is extremely important that you list your courses based on your genuine order of preference and not on assumptions about examination performance or what you think the points will be for a course.

At the offer stage, you will receive an offer of the course highest up on your course choices list(s) that you are deemed eligible for, if any. For example, if you receive your first preference Level 8 course in Round One you will not receive an offer for a lower Level 8 preference in subsequent rounds. If you receive an offer of your third preference course you may still receive an offer of your second or first preference course in a subsequent round of offers, but you will not receive an offer of your fourth preference course or lower.

For more information about how offers are issued and order of preference watch the CAO video guides in the Applicants section of the CAO website www.cao.ie.

APPLYING FOR HEAR AND DARE

Step 6: Indicate if you wish to be considered for the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and apply for HEAR

The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a third level alternative admissions scheme for school-leavers resident in the Republic of Ireland, who are underrepresented at Higher Education due to their socio-economic background. Before submitting a HEAR application you should read the HEAR Handbook on the CAO website and discuss this with your parents, guardians or guidance counsellor. There are other admissions routes for mature and QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 applicants; further information is available on HEI websites.

Table 1.4 HEIs participating in the HEAR scheme

HEIs participating in the HEAR Scheme		
Athlone Institute of Technology	Limerick Institute of Technology	RCSI University of Medicine & Health Sciences
Dublin City University	Marino Institute of Education	St Angela's College, Sligo
Dundalk Institute of Technology	Mary Immaculate College	Technological University Dublin
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology	Maynooth University	Trinity College Dublin
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	Munster Technological University	University College Cork
Institute of Technology Carlow	National College of Ireland	University College Dublin
Institute of Technology Sligo	NUI Galway	University of Limerick
Letterkenny Institute of Technology	Pontifical University Maynooth	Waterford Institute of Technology

Table 1.5 Other HEI entry routes for school-leavers from socio-economically underrepresented backgrounds

Other HEIs operating entry routes for school-leavers from socio-economically underrepresented backgrounds	
NCAD	

Applicants applying for HEAR must:

1. Be under the age of 23 as of 1 January 2022.
2. Apply online to CAO by 5pm on 1 February 2022.
3. No later than 5pm on 1 March 2022, indicate in your CAO application that you wish to apply for HEAR, and fully and correctly complete all elements of the HEAR form (the HEAR form is part of your CAO application). Once you have completed the HEAR application form a checklist will appear on-screen telling you which documents you need to supply.
4. Post your supporting documents to arrive in CAO no later than 5pm on 15 March 2022.
5. Submit A4 photocopies of your supporting documents. Do not send originals. HEIs may require you to supply the original documents at a later date and any offers made are subject to this condition.

Instructions for submitting supporting documents to CAO can be found in the HEAR Handbook and on the inside back cover of this handbook.

For more information about HEAR go to www.accesscollege.ie and/or visit the websites of Access Offices in the participating institutions. Instructions for submitting

a HEAR application may be found in the HEAR Application Handbook at www.accesscollege.ie and www.cao/hear.

Please Note: A separate application for financial assistance needs to be made via www.susi.ie.

Carrying forward HEAR eligibility

If you were deemed eligible for HEAR in 2021, it carries forward for one year provided that you apply to CAO by 1 February 2022 at 5pm and indicate that you wish to apply to HEAR and enter your correct CAO 2021 application number in the box provided by 5pm on 1 March 2022. You are still required to complete all relevant sections of the 2022 HEAR application form, however you do not need to supply supporting documents as part of your application.

Step 7: Indicate if you wish to disclose a Disability/Specific Learning Difficulty and apply for the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)

Table 1.6 HEIs participating in the DARE scheme or operating schemes for school-leavers with disabilities

HEIs participating in the DARE Scheme		
Athlone Institute of Technology	Letterkenny Institute of Technology	RCSI University of Medicine & Health Sciences
	Limerick Institute of Technology	St Angela's College Sligo
Dublin City University	Marino Institute of Education	Technological University Dublin
Dundalk Institute of Technology	Mary Immaculate College	Trinity College Dublin
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology	Maynooth University	University College Cork
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	Munster Technological University	University College Dublin
Institute of Technology, Carlow	National College of Ireland	University of Limerick
Institute of Technology, Sligo	NUI Galway	Waterford Institute of Technology
	Pontifical University Maynooth	

Table 1.7 Other HEIs operating admission schemes for school-leavers with disabilities

Other HEIs operating admission schemes for school-leavers with disabilities*	
NCAD	* These HEIs do not apply the closing dates set out in the next sections

If you wish to disclose a disability or specific learning difficulty, click on the 'Modify Disability/SLD (and DARE Application) Status' button on the online application form and follow the instructions provided - **for most institutions, you must complete**

this part of your application before 1 March at 5pm. If you would like to provide more information on your Disability or Specific Learning Difficulty, please complete the **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)** before 1 March at 5pm. This will allow the HEIs to consider any specific support needs you may have in a HEI. You will be instructed to complete the SIF form when you select 'Modify Disability/SLD Status' on the online application form. Instructions for completing the form and submitting documents are included in the online form.

Some HEIs take account of the impact of your disability and/or specific learning difficulty on your educational performance through the provision **of alternative admissions schemes**. If deemed eligible for these schemes applicants may receive a reduction in points for entry to courses in participating HEIs. To be considered for entry to a course applicants must satisfy matriculation/minimum entry and subject requirements. Full details on the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) and instructions for submitting a DARE application may be found in the DARE Application Handbook, at www.accesscollege.ie and at www.cao/dare.

There are other admissions routes for mature and QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 applicants; further information is available on HEI websites.

Applicants applying for DARE must:

1. Be under the age of 23 as of 1 January 2022.
2. Apply to CAO by 5pm on 1 February 2022.
3. No later than 5pm on 1 March 2022 you must 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)** (the SIF is part of your CAO application).

If you wish to be considered for DARE you must answer yes to question 1 on Section A of the fully completed SIF by 5pm on 1 March 2022.

4. Download Section B of the SIF (Educational Impact Statement), have it completed by your school and returned to CAO to arrive by 5pm on 15 March 2022.
5. Download Section C of the SIF (Evidence of Disability), have it completed by the appropriate medical professional (only if you do not already have a report verifying your disability) and returned to CAO to arrive by 5pm on 15 March 2022. In place of Section C, applicants with a specific learning difficulty are asked to provide a full psycho-educational assessment completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist.

Please Note: There are particular requirements for Section C of the SIF when applying for alternative admissions schemes in relation to the Medical Consultant/Specialist who must verify your disability, the age limit on reports and the documentation required. Please see www.accesscollege.ie for more information about what these requirements are.

Instructions for submitting supporting documents to CAO can be found in the DARE Handbook and on the inside back cover of this handbook.

You are not obliged to disclose a disability and/or specific learning difficulty unless you are applying for an alternative admissions scheme (e.g. DARE or another scheme offered by HEIs operating admission schemes for school-leavers with disabilities). If you do not wish to disclose your disability and/or specific learning difficulty on the application form, you may do so at any time on entering a HEI and reasonable accommodation will be made at that stage if possible. Please note that disclosure of a disability and/or specific learning difficulty will not adversely affect your application in any way.

Carrying forward DARE eligibility

If you were deemed eligible for DARE in 2021 it carries forward for one year provided that you apply to CAO by the 1 February 2022 at 5pm and indicate that you wish to apply to DARE by 5pm on 1 March 2022; disclose your disability by 5pm on 1 March 2022 in your CAO application; and fully and correctly complete Section A of the Supplementary Information Form. Indicate that you wish to be considered for the DARE scheme by indicating this on Section A of the fully completed SIF by ticking 'Yes' to Question 1 and enter your correct CAO 2021 application number at Question 1(b) of the SIF by 5pm on 1 March 2022. You are still required to complete all relevant sections on Section A of the 2022 SIF form, however you do not need to supply supporting documents as part of your application.

SUMMER 2022 EXAMINATION RESULTS

If you have provided CAO with your correct examination details (or PPS number for QQI FET applicants), CAO automatically receives the following examination results: Leaving Certificate, QQI FET, CCEA (Northern Ireland) GCE, British GCE. For all other examining bodies, you must supply certified photocopies of results of summer 2022 examinations to CAO as soon as they become available. To be considered in the competition for places in Round One, these results must arrive in CAO at least 10 days before the issue of Round One offers, otherwise they will be considered for subsequent rounds.

INTERVIEWS AND ASSESSMENTS

For some courses you may need to sit additional assessments, provide supplementary information (e.g. a portfolio or a statement), or attend for an interview. Some of these courses will be marked as "(Restricted – see page 3)" in the CAO Handbook, but you should consult the websites and prospectuses of the HEIs for more information.

GAMSAT, HPAT and MSAP

You are advised to apply online, before 1 February at 5pm, if you need to apply for the 2022 GAMSAT, HPAT and/or MSAP tests. Mature applicants applying for Graduate Medicine only are not required to complete the Mature section.

Check your email inbox regularly as CAO communicates via email with such applicants.

If you have a 2021 MSAP score you wish to use you must supply to CAO a copy of these results with your application, or within 10 days of applying online. Current year MSAP results will be obtained directly from ACER.

In order for your GAMSAT results to be forwarded to CAO by ACER, you must indicate on any of your current GAMSAT registrations (September 2020, March 2021, September 2021, March 2022) that you are an applicant to an Irish program. Your correct 2022 CAO application number must be recorded in your GAMSAT registration. Results from these sittings only will be considered for 2022 Graduate Medicine entry.

Current year HPAT results will be obtained directly from ACER. Consult the appropriate HEI literature regarding their validity. For more information go to the Applicants section of www.cao.ie and click on the Entry to Medicine tab.

Graduate Medicine

Qualified applicants are ranked solely on the basis of GAMSAT results. To qualify, applicants must obtain a second class honours grade one (2H1) in their first Level 8 Honours Degree. For more information go to the Applicants section of www.cao.ie and click on the Entry to Medicine tab.

Mature Nursing/Midwifery

Mature Nursing/Midwifery Mature applicants for nursing/midwifery are ranked based on their score in an assessment test which is required by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI). For entry to programmes in 2022, full details about the assessment will be publicised on the NMBI website www.nmbi.ie. It is expected that the test will take place in March/April 2022 but this is subject to change. For further information, please email careersinformation@nmbi.ie.

AFTER APPLYING

INTERACTING WITH YOUR CAO ACCOUNT

Applicants are advised to log in to their CAO Account at different intervals to verify that all of their information has been recorded completely and correctly.

The Correspondence section of your account contains a log of all emails sent to you by CAO, and any online queries that you have submitted to CAO whilst logged in to your application. Please make sure to check the Correspondence section regularly for new emails from CAO containing important information and instructions.

IMPORTANT CORRESPONDENCE

CAO will communicate with applicants by post or email, and in some instances by telephone or SMS text message, at various intervals throughout the application process. All CAO correspondence must be read carefully and any errors or omissions notified to CAO immediately via the Contact form on our website www.cao.ie.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all relevant correspondence is received and dealt with appropriately. If an applicant is going to be absent at any stage between February and October, they should arrange for someone to deal quickly with their correspondence. Failure to respond may have very serious consequences, for example, you may not receive an offer. **Please make sure to check the email account provided at the application stage and carefully read the Statement of Application Record issued to all applicants in May.**

At the offer stage, applicants will receive an offer notification if they are deemed eligible for an offer, or a Statement of Application email if they have not been deemed eligible for an offer by Round One.

Some HEIs will also contact applicants directly by post, email or SMS text message. You should periodically check your spam, bulk, promotional or junk mail folders, etc. If you find emails from CAO or HEIs are being directed to these folders you should consider adding these email addresses to your contacts or email address book.

STATEMENT OF APPLICATION RECORD

Before the end of May, you will be sent a Statement of Application Record email. The purpose of this e-mail is to instruct you to log in and verify that all of your information has been recorded completely and correctly on your CAO account. There may be very serious consequences for your application if you do not follow these instructions immediately. When you receive the email you must do the following:

1. Read the instructions on the Statement of Application Record page at www.cao.ie
2. Log in to your CAO Account to review your account information, including your personal details, the qualifications and assessments section (examination and exemption information) and your course choices. Do not delay.
3. If there are any errors or omissions inform CAO immediately (follow the instructions provided). Failure to correct errors or omissions at this stage may have very serious consequences and lead to the loss of a place.
4. You must click the 'Confirm' button to indicate that you have checked your account information is present and correct, and have followed the instructions in the Statement of Application Record e-mail and the instructions on the Statement of Application page at www.cao.ie

If you have not received the Statement of Application Record email by 1 June you must contact CAO immediately. Failure to do so may have very serious consequences, for example, you might not receive an offer.

Changes that you make after you receive your Statement of Application Record email will be reflected in your online CAO account. Please log in to your CAO account via the My Application facility to check that all of your updated information is recorded completely and correctly before the Change of Mind closing date of 1 July at 5pm.

CHANGING COURSES/CHANGE OF MIND

You can make changes to your course choices up to 1 February at 5pm for no extra charge. In early February, a Change of Course Choices facility becomes available online for a fee of €10. This facility can be used by registered applicants to add any restricted courses not already listed on an application, or by mature applicants who need to add or make changes to their course choices, up to 1 March 2022 at 5pm.

The CAO online Change of Mind facility opens in early May and closes on 1 July at 5pm – restrictions apply (see page 3). You can use the online facility as many times as you like to add, remove or re-order your courses free of charge until the 1 July at 5pm.

To change course choices, log in to your CAO Account via the My Application facility and click on Change Level 8 Course Choices or Change Level 7/6 Course Choices. You can then use the New Courses list to enter new courses, disregard existing course

choices, or re-order your existing course selection. You must list **all** of your courses in your order of preference on the new list. If you change courses online, an acknowledgement will be sent to your email address - please check this email carefully and inform CAO of any errors or omissions. You should also check that your courses have been updated by using the My Application facility before 5pm on 1 July.

Please Note: You cannot introduce restricted courses using the Change of Mind facility. **Exception:** In the case of a restricted course which shares the exact same assessment procedures with a course you had applied for by 1 February 2022 at 5pm, you may be permitted to introduce it on a Change of Mind. You should consult with the relevant HEI before introducing such a course.

If you make a Change of Mind it cancels and supersedes all previous course choices in any category in which changes are made.

CHANGES TO YOUR PERSONAL AND EXAMINATION INFORMATION

You may change some of your personal information (e.g. postal address, telephone number and email address) online using the My Application facility. To change your name, date of birth or to add examination information to your application, you must email CAO via the Correspondence Section of your account. If you change personal information online, an acknowledgement will be sent to your email address (a copy of this email will also be available to view in the Correspondence section of your account). Please check that your change has been updated by using the My Application facility. You must do so at least 10 days prior to the issue of an offer round. Contact CAO immediately if there are any errors or omissions.

IMPORTANT:

If you have applied for any restricted courses and/or you are a mature applicant and you change your contact details, please contact the institutions you have applied to in order to ensure that they have your most recent details on file.

THE OFFER STAGE

There are three main rounds of offers: Round A, Round Zero and Round One. After the reply date for Round One offers has passed, CAO then issues Round Two offers for remaining places. Subsequent offers are issued by CAO, as necessary, to fill any vacancies that may arise.

THE OFFER ROUNDS

Table 1.8 The Offer Rounds

Round	Category of Applicant
Round A (early July)	Deferred applicants; mature applicants; mature nursing/midwifery applicants; some graduate entry pathways; applicants who may be required to make visa arrangements; applicants who have completed an Access course.
Round Zero (early August)	Graduate entry medicine applicants; additional mature, deferred and Access applicants; and applicants presenting QQI FET/FETAC for consideration for entry to courses with a quota for QQI FET/FETAC applicants.
Round One (mid-August)	All applicants applying on the basis of school leaving examination results, regardless of year completed; QQI FET applicants who have applied for a course where there is no quota for QQI FET applicants; and additional mature applicants.
Round Two and subsequent offers (late-August to end-September)	Offers are issued until the offer season closes, or until all of the places have been filled, whichever comes first.

Applicants being assessed on the basis of qualifications other than school leaving qualifications or QQI FET/FETAC Level 5/6 (2002 – 2022), may receive an offer in Round A or Round Zero.

Applicants applying on the basis of school leaving examination results/grades, regardless of the year completed, will compete for an offer in Round One.

After Round One offers issue, any applicant who does not receive an offer in Round A, Round Zero or Round One will receive a Statement of Application email with instructions to check their CAO account and inform CAO immediately if there are any errors or omissions.

ACCEPTING AN OFFER

If you receive an offer and you choose to accept this offer, you must do so online. If you choose to accept your offer you must do so by the reply date indicated on the Offer Notice. If you receive an offer from both lists you must choose between them - **you can only accept one offer, in any one round, from either the Level 8 or the Level 7/6 list.**

Accepting a lower preference course in an earlier Offer Round will not prevent you from receiving an offer in a subsequent round of a course higher up on your course choices list if you are deemed eligible. Should a place become available in a later round, and if you are entitled to this place, you may receive an offer which you can choose to accept or ignore. Accepting the new offer will automatically cancel the previous acceptance.

If you accept your offer online you will receive an acknowledgement email, and you can check that your acceptance has been recorded online at www.cao.ie via the My Application facility.

AVAILABLE PLACES

Available Places are places that remain unfilled in particular courses after all offers have been made and waiting lists have been exhausted. When considering applying for Available Places courses applicants should ignore previously published points in earlier offer rounds. Applicants must, however, check that they meet the normal **minimum entry requirements** for the course(s) in question.

Available Places courses are advertised on the CAO website for part of July and after Round One offers are issued in August – go to www.cao.ie and click on the Available Places tab. This facility is open to new applicants for a fee of €45, and is free for existing applicants. For more information on the Available Places facility visit the CAO website www.cao.ie.

POINTS CALCULATION FOR LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLICANTS

Round One offers are issued as soon as possible after the current year Irish Leaving Certificate examination results become available. The results are input into the CAO system and, for each course that you have applied for, the CAO system will first check that you meet the minimum entry requirements.

If you meet the eligibility criteria for the course(s) that you have applied for, the system then calculates a points score using the HEI Common Points Scale*:

HEI Common Points Scale

Table 1.9 HEI Common Points Scale

Higher Level Grade	Points	Ordinary Level Grade	Points
H1 (90 – 100)	100		
H2 (80 < 90)	88		
H3 (70 < 80)	77		
H4 (60 < 70)	66		
H5 (50 < 60)	56	O1 (90 – 100)	56
H6 (40 < 50)	46	O2 (80 < 90)	46
H7 (30 < 40)	37	O3 (70 < 80)	37
H8 (0 < 30)	0	O4 (60 < 70)	28
		O5 (50 < 60)	20
		O6 (40 < 50)	12
		O7 (30 < 40)	0
		O8 (0 < 30)	0

Maths Bonus Points

25 bonus points will be awarded for Higher Level Mathematics for H6 grades and above. For example, if an applicant receives a H6 grade an additional 25 points will be added to the 46 points already awarded for a H6 grade i.e. Higher Level Mathematics now carries a points score of 71 for this applicant.

LCVP Grade	LCVP Points
Distinction	66
Merit	46
Pass	28

Foundation Level Maths Grade	Foundation Level Maths Points
F1	20
F2	12

Points*

Foundation Level Maths Points*

LCVP

***Please see accompanying conditions on pages 25 and 26.**

Accompanying conditions

1. The six best scores, in recognised subjects, in one Leaving Certificate Examination will be counted for points computation. If you receive a H6 grade or higher in Higher Level Mathematics then you include the additional 25 bonus points first, and then identify your best six scores. The bonus points are included in the overall points calculation only when Mathematics is one of the applicant's best six subjects following the addition of the bonus.
2. Only one sitting of the Leaving Certificate Examination will be counted for points purposes.
3. In the case of certain subjects, e.g. Home Economics General (this subject was discontinued in 2003), Alternative Ordinary Level Mathematics, Foundation Level Mathematics or Foundation Level Irish, some HEIs may not award the points indicated on the points grid. If in any doubt, check with the Admissions Office of the appropriate HEIs.
4. Remember, you must first meet the minimum entry requirements in order to be considered for entry to a course.

We will use an example to calculate a points score, including bonus points for Higher Level Mathematics.

Table 1.10 Example of a points score calculation

An applicant has the following seven results in 2022:

Subject	Level	Grade	Score
Irish	Higher	H2	88
English	Ordinary	O2	46
Maths	Higher	H5	56 +25= 81
French	Higher	H6	46
Biology	Higher	H3	77
Geography	Ordinary	O3	37
History	Higher	H5	56
Add the best six scores, shown in bold.			Points = 394

How offers are issued

After the points have been calculated, applicants are placed on a list in order of merit for each course for which they are eligible. For example, if you have the highest points score you go to the top of the list and the applicant with the second-highest points score goes second on the list, and so on.

The HEIs then instruct CAO on how many offers to make for each course. If you are in 20th position for a chosen course, and the institution instructs CAO to offer 25 places, then you will receive an offer of a place on that course, unless you have received an offer of a course higher up on your preference list. You will not be offered a lower preference course if you receive an offer of a course higher up on your preference list.

For some courses **random number** selection may also be a factor. Before applicants are placed on the Order of Merit lists for courses they are assigned a random number for each course choice. If there are five applicants with an identical points score competing for one remaining place, random number selection applies and the place will be offered to the applicant with the highest random number.

If an applicant does not receive an offer in the first round of offers they may receive an offer in subsequent rounds.

Please Note: NCAD does not award points for Leaving Certificate or other examinations in the case of their restricted courses. Consult NCAD literature for details.

Applicants for undergraduate medicine courses should consult the Applicants section of the CAO website and click on the Entry to Medicine tab.

All HEIs award points for results in Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Link Modules, in place of a sixth Leaving Certificate subject. However, not all HEIs count LCVP as meeting eligibility requirements in regard to passing subjects. Applicants should refer to HEI literature for full details.

POINTS CALCULATION FOR OTHER EXAMINATIONS

For information about how points are calculated for QQI FET/FETAC qualifications, GCE Examinations (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and guideline entry requirements for EU/EFTA, please visit the Applicants section of the CAO website www.cao.ie and go to Applicant Scoring.

DEFERRING A PLACE

If you wish to defer an offer of a place you **do not accept your offer**. Instead, you must email the Admissions Office of the appropriate HEI immediately. You must give your name as it appears on your CAO application, quote your CAO application number and the course code of the offer you wish to defer, and set out the reason(s) for the request. Applicants must mark "DEFERRED ENTRY" clearly in the subject line of the email. You can also check the website of the relevant HEI to see if they have a deferral policy available online that you can refer to.

The email must arrive in the Admissions Office of the institution at least two days before the reply date shown on the Offer Notice. The HEI will communicate their decision to you directly. If the deferral is not granted, you may then accept the offer for the current year, providing you accept the offer by the reply date.

You must send all communications about deferrals to the appropriate Admissions Office **and not to CAO**.

TAKING UP A DEFERRAL

In order to take up a deferred place you must:

1. Re-apply through CAO in the succeeding year and pay the appropriate application fee. You must complete the application form in full and follow all of the instructions carefully;
2. Place the deferred course as your first and only preference on the application form;
3. Indicate your deferral by ticking the Deferred Applicant indicator box in the Course Choices section on your application.

It is important to read the letter granting you the deferred place for further instructions. You will breach the conditions of your deferred place if you enter more than the single deferred course code on your application. In that event, you will forfeit the guaranteed place and enter the competition for places in the normal way.

When reapplying in the succeeding year you must complete an application fully. In other words you must include again any personal information and documentation, etc., which you provided with the original application (unless instructed otherwise by the institution offering the place).

THE LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPEALS PROCESS

If you have requested to appeal some of your Leaving Certificate examinations, and if your results are changed on appeal, your position on the Order of Merit list will be altered to reflect your new points score.

If you are deemed entitled to a place on a course based on your upgraded Leaving Certificate results you will receive an offer. If all of the places for that course have already been allocated, you will receive a deferral of the offer for the following academic year. The decision to offer a place is made by the HEI in question and not the CAO.

REGISTRATION ON YOUR ACCEPTED COURSE

An applicant to CAO, having been offered a place and accepted it, only becomes a student of the HEI once they have completed the HEI's

DIRECT APPLICATIONS AND EXCEPTIONAL LATE APPLICATIONS

APPLICATIONS TO BE MADE DIRECT TO HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

(A) General:

In general, you should apply direct to the appropriate HEI (and **NOT** through CAO) in the following cases:

1. Any course not mentioned in this handbook.
2. Entry to courses at post-initial-year level. You must ask HEI Admissions Offices about application procedures.
3. Short duration, one-term, part-time and occasional courses. See Section C below.
4. Re-admission to Mary Immaculate College, Trinity College, University of Limerick, Maynooth University, and Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology.
5. Follow-on courses at TU Dublin and the Institutes of Technology. You must ask HEI Admissions Offices about application procedures.
6. Certain mature applicants - see www.cao.ie/mature and Section D below for information about mature applicants.
7. Postgraduate courses.

(B) Residence outside the EU: (past or present)

If you have at any time resided, or are at present resident, outside the EU, then you may be required to apply direct to some HEIs.

You must contact the Admissions Office of each HEI in which you are interested to enquire whether you should apply through CAO or direct to the HEI. Different HEIs may have different policies. You should make such enquiries well in advance of the closing date of 1 February 2022 at 5pm. You may be able to view HEI policies on HEI websites. Failure to check the proper application procedure may have serious implications.

(C) Evening and part-time courses:

Most part-time and evening courses are not offered through the CAO application system and direct application must be made for them. The HEIs offer a wide variety of such courses and, if you are interested in these modes of study, you should make enquiries direct to the HEIs.

(D) Mature applicants:

1. Certain restrictions may apply in the case of mature applicants.
2. Normally mature applicants should be 23 years old on or before 1 January 2022 for admission in Autumn 2022, and must apply by 1 February 2022 at 5pm. However, some HEIs may have a different age requirement, different definitions of mature applicants, etc., and some will consider applications received after 1 February 2022, but not for mature entry to primary teaching.

3. Before applying you should refer to www.cao.ie/mature and view the information for mature applicants on HEI websites. In particular, you should note HEI requirements for the provision of supplementary application information. If you have any questions you must contact the Admissions Office or mature students officer of the appropriate HEIs well in advance of closing dates.
4. If you are applying for entry to primary teaching on the basis of mature years you must apply for these courses through CAO by 1 February 2022 at 5pm.

For more information on direct applications for mature applicants go to www.cao.ie/mature.

EXCEPTIONAL LATE APPLICATIONS (EXCEPTION TO THE TIMETABLE)

Exceptional Late Applications (Exception to the timetable)

The exceptional closing date of 22 July at 5pm applies only to applicants who are registered as an undergraduate student on 1 May 2022 in any year in any one of the participating HEIs (subject to the exclusions listed below). In order to avail of the Exceptional Late Application facility you must have entered the HEI through the CAO system.

If you did not enter your current course through the CAO system, you must first contact the Admissions Office of the HEI to which you wish to apply, and they will inform you if you may submit an application direct to the institution.

Exclusions:

You may submit a late application only for entry to courses other than your existing course. If you wish to repeat the year in the same course, you must arrange this within your HEI.

Mary Immaculate College Limerick, Marino Institute of Education, Trinity College Dublin, University of Limerick, Maynooth University and Galway Mayo Institute of Technology have special procedures in place in the case of current or previous students who wish to apply for entry to another course in the same HEI. Such applicants must contact their Admissions Office to determine the application procedure. However, if you are a student in another HEI and you wish to apply to any of these six HEIs, you should apply through CAO.

To make an Exceptional Late Application you must:

1. Make your CAO application before 22 July at 5pm.
2. Go to www.cao.ie, click on Apply, and follow the instructions for Exceptional Late Applications. This facility opens on the 5 July at noon. Do not enter course choices online.
3. Download the Course Choices Form from the Downloads section of www.cao.ie

4. Email the Admissions Office of the institution that you are attending to inform them that you wish to apply to CAO, asking them for an email to verify that you were an undergraduate student on 1 May 2022. In the subject line type "Exceptional Late Application". Please allow sufficient time for the institution to fulfil this request. Contact details for all institutions can be found here: <http://www.cao.ie/index.php?page=hei&type=admissions>
5. Complete the Course Choices Form, including your full list of course choices in genuine order of preference.
6. Post the completed Course Choices Form and a printed copy of the email provided by your current institution to CAO. Include your CAO application number on the front of the form and the email. The form and email must arrive in CAO no later than 22 July at 5pm. Please note: the printout of the email must show the sender's details and the date and time that the email was sent.

CAO will email a Statement of Application Record to you after the 22 July closing date, once your application has been recorded. If you have not received this statement by 5 August, please contact CAO immediately.

CHANGE OF MIND (EXCEPTION TO THE TIMETABLE)

The exceptional Change of Mind closing date of 22 July at 5:15pm applies only to applicants who are registered as an undergraduate student on 1 May 2022, in any year in any one of the participating HEIs (subject to the exclusions listed above), and who previously made an application through CAO for 2022 entry. In order to avail of the Exceptional Change of Mind facility you must have entered the HEI through the CAO system.

Applicants must download a paper Change of Mind Form from the Downloads section of www.cao.ie and, once completed, this form needs to be sent to CAO with your application number and a copy of the email you received from the institution (verifying your attendance up to 1 May 2022) – see point 4 above. The form and the email must then be returned to CAO by 22 July at 5:15pm. There is no fee for this service.

FURTHER INFORMATION

There are a number of valuable resources available on the CAO website, including an online demo application form, a course search facility, video guides, schedules, information on the points-scoring system, and answers to frequently asked questions. The dedicated section for applicants is the 'Applicants' page. There is also a section for schools, and for parents and guardians. **Please take the time to become familiar with the website and the resources provided.**

The information in this handbook is correct at time of going to press.

PAPER APPLICATION FORMS

If you wish to apply to CAO using the paper application form please contact CAO well in advance of the closing date and a copy of the paper application form will be posted to you. The application fee is €45 for paper applications received by the 1 February at 5pm, or €90 for paper applications received after 1 February deadline and before 1 May at 5pm.

Paper applications submitted to CAO by the 1 February at 5pm will be sent a Statement of Course Choices before the 15 February. If not received, you must contact CAO immediately.

Late paper applicants will be sent a Statement of Course Choices before the 15 May. If not received, you must contact CAO immediately.

DATA PROTECTION

CAO respects the privacy of your personal data. By making an application to CAO, your data will be made available to all the HEIs to which you have applied. In addition, application data will be used to obtain and verify examination data from the State Examinations Commission, QQI FET/FETAC and examination authorities in Britain and Northern Ireland, as required.

Paper applications and supporting application documents are retained for two years and then confidentially destroyed. Electronic data is retained for a period of seven years. No documents will be returned to applicants.

The EU General Data Protection Regulation (Number 2016/679) came into force on the 25 May 2018. Please see the CAO website for data protection information.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Applications for admission in Autumn 2022 will be processed in accordance with the regulations, procedures and timetable described in the CAO Handbook 2022 ('the Handbook'), in the CAO Application Form 2022 ('the Form') and in the other documents mentioned in the handbook. Other such regulations and procedures in relation to online application, Change of Mind, and acceptance of offers will appear on the CAO website.

The intention is to provide fair and equal treatment for all applicants and to minimise expense for the applicant-body as a whole. CAO is purely an administrative facility and does not endorse or recommend any course. It is your responsibility to determine the status and the suitability of any course chosen. It is important to remember that this handbook does not in any way remove the fundamental need for you to consult the appropriate HEI literature or HEI website. Only the official HEI material will give you the essential information about the content of courses, minimum entry requirements, course duration, career prospects, etc.

CAO is agent for the HEIs participating in the application system. These bodies agree annually the application regulations, procedures and timetable. CAO has no discretion to set them aside so as either to afford special treatment to any applicant over another, or to deprive any applicant of their entitlement in favour of another.

Any attempt by an applicant or by any person(s) acting on the applicant's instigation, directly or indirectly by means of written communication or otherwise, to canvass or otherwise influence in the applicant's favour, or to hinder a fellow applicant, may disqualify the applicant from the competition.

WARNING: The HEIs participating in the CAO system reserve the right not to consider applications and to cancel any offers of places in cases where requested information has not been provided or where falsified or misleading information has been supplied. A HEI may require sight of your original documentation before registration can be finalised.

Applications will be assessed on the basis of the information supplied. Neither CAO nor the HEIs will accept any responsibility for any loss or hardship arising from failure to supply correct and complete information at the appropriate time.

INDEPENDENT APPEALS COMMISSION

CAO: The CAO has an Independent Appeals Commission to which recourse may be had by applicants who believe that they have been treated unfairly by CAO, and whose complaints have not been resolved by CAO. The function of the Appeals Commission is to ensure that the rules are applied fairly. The Appeals Commission cannot set the rules aside for applicants who appeal for special treatment. Appeals should be addressed to: The Secretary, CAO Independent Appeals Commission, c/o Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway, Ireland.

Appeals must be made in writing, be signed by the applicant and must describe the alleged unfair treatment. Appropriate supporting documentation should accompany the appeal.

DARE/HEAR:

Appeals relating to missing DARE HEAR application deadlines

Appeals relating to 1 March and 15 March and all other DARE and HEAR application deadlines, i.e. appeals relating to making a valid application, should be directed to CAO Independent Appeals Commission as above. Further information on appeals

relating to missed DARE HEAR application deadlines is available on www.cao.ie and www.accesscollege.ie.

Appeals relating to DARE HEAR assessment outcomes

DARE/HEAR uses a Review and Appeals process to ensure that all DARE/HEAR applicants are treated fairly and the assessment criteria have been applied consistently. This process is open to applicants who have made a valid application to DARE/HEAR and received an ineligible assessment outcome. Review and Appeal applications must be made online through the CAO 'My Application' facility by the published deadlines. Details on the Review and Appeals process, including instructions on making a Review and Appeal application, deadlines and the grounds for Review and Appeal, are available on www.cao.ie and www.accesscollege.ie.

There is no charge for this service. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your appeal you may make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman.

CONTACTING CAO

Please Note: Office contact hours are 09:30 to 13:00, and 14:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday.

The best and most effective way of communicating with CAO is via the Contact form on our website www.cao.ie.

If you have a CAO application number please include it in all communication – this will allow us the opportunity to view your application and reply to your query, usually within one working day. When logged in to your CAO account you can send an email from the Correspondence Section. The Correspondence Section contains a record of all online correspondence linked to your account.

When posting items to CAO you should obtain a certificate of posting from the post office. If you wish to receive confirmation from CAO that your documents have been received, you must include a self-addressed and stamped postcard (you will not require a stamp for the postcard if you are living outside of the Republic of Ireland). CAO will then return this postcard to you if your documents have been received.

Address:

Central Applications Office,
Tower House,
Eglinton Street,
Galway,
Ireland, H91 X25V

Tel. +353-(0)91-509800

Fax +353-(0)91-562344

If your query is in relation to eligibility, exemptions, restrictions and course-related requirements, you should contact the HEIs directly.

ONLINE APPLICANT CHECKLIST

Before Applying

- I have read the CAO Handbook.
- I have researched the courses that I am interested in applying for.
- I am familiar with the minimum entry requirements for each course and any restrictions that apply.

The Application

- I have obtained the online receipt of my application and have printed it off for future reference.
- I have checked the email sent to me by CAO (on receipt of my online application) for any errors or omissions, and I have verified my email address using the verification code provided by CAO.
- I have checked the email sent to me by CAO after entering my course choices to make sure that all of my courses are correct and in my order of preference.
- I have included all examination details, including current year exams, and have checked that they are correct.
- I have checked any subsequent correspondence received from CAO.
- For applicants who must send supporting documents as part of their application:
I have read the Qualifications and Assessments section that is relevant to me (pages 5-9) and the inside back cover of the CAO Handbook which provides instructions for submitting supporting documents to CAO.
- I intend to get a Certificate of Posting when I post the envelope containing my supporting documents to CAO.

After the Normal Application Closing Date

- I have received my Statement of Application Record (sent to all applicants before the end of May).
- I have notified CAO of any errors or omissions contained in my Statement of Application Record/ CAO account within 7 days of receiving the Statement email.
- I have made my changes, if any, via the Change of Mind facility before 1 July at 5pm.
- I have taken note of any restrictions to the introduction of courses after the 1 February deadline.

The Offer Rounds

- I have checked my email account and the My Application facility to find out if I have received an offer.
- I have received my offer notification OR Statement of Application email and checked my account for any errors or omissions.
- If accepting an offer: I have accepted my offer online via the My Application facility.
- If no offer was received: I have checked the Statement of Application email to make sure that the details held on file for me by CAO are correct and I have notified CAO immediately of any errors or omissions.

2022 COURSES

You can search for courses by going to www.cao.ie/courses from 5 November, 2021

Course lists are correct at time of going to press/publication online.

Additions or cancellations may occur subsequently. The relevant institutions will circulate notice of these to Post-primary schools.

Changes to the course lists and CAO Handbook can be viewed in the Handbook section of the CAO website www.cao.ie/handbook

The "Progression" column indicates, in bold, the initial qualification awarded, together with follow-on opportunities, if any are available, and which may be in the same or a related discipline. Follow-on opportunities may also be available in another institution. You **MUST** consult the institution literature.

CT = Certificate; FC = Foundation Certificate; DP = Diploma;

L6 = Higher Certificate; L7 = Ordinary Degree; L8 = Honours Degree.

In general, FC courses are 1 year-long; CT/L6 courses are 2 years long and DP/L7 courses are 3 years long (in total).

REFERENCE LIST OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

A reference list and contact details for all participating Higher Education Institutions can be found in the Contact section of www.cao.ie

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

WHAT DOCUMENTS DO I NEED TO SEND?

As part of your application, you may be required to supply additional documentation – see pages 5-9 of this handbook for further instructions. Such documents must arrive in CAO within 10 days of registering online with CAO. Documents must be posted to CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway. It is not possible to upload, e-mail, fax or send external storage devices of documents to CAO.

In respect of examinations already completed, you must supply to CAO certificates for all qualifications which you mention on your application form:

- Certificates/transcripts should be supplied in their original language and should show dates, subjects and results. They should NOT be originals (except for Graduate Medicine where original transcripts of results for all years are required); they should be A4 photocopies, certified typically by a school stamp, a HEI Admissions Office stamp, or by a notary. (CAO will not return original documents.)
- A certified English translation is required in the case of qualifications not issued originally in English or Irish, in addition to the certified A4 photocopies of the documents themselves.
- If your documentation is in a different name from the name used on your application, then a certified copy of your official name change document must also be provided.
- If English is not your first language you must provide evidence of English language competence and details of the English Language Qualification(s) that you hold – contact the HEIs directly for requirements.

For further instructions on sending documents go to the Supporting Documents page in the Applicants section of cao.ie.

CAO will not check that the documents supplied meet with the requirements of the institutions.

DARE and/or HEAR applicants should refer to pages 13 - 17 of this handbook and the DARE and/or HEAR Handbooks for instructions on the submission of supporting documents to CAO by 15 March at 5pm.

SENDING DOCUMENTS TO CAO

When sending supporting documents to CAO please:

- Number and date the top of each page.
- Write your CAO application number on the top of each page.
- Put your documents in an envelope ensuring the envelope contains only supporting documents for your CAO application.

- If you wish to receive confirmation from CAO that your documents have been received you must include a self-addressed and stamped postcard in your envelope (you will not require a stamp for the postcard if you live outside of the Republic of Ireland).
- Seal the envelope and include your return address on the back of the envelope.

All documents should be sent to:
CAO,
Tower House,
Eglinton Street,
Galway,
Ireland.

You should obtain a Certificate of Posting from the Post Office. Please do not register your post; a Certificate of Posting will suffice.

EVIDENCE OF POSTING

Please note that if there is any loss or delay of an item in the post, CAO will require proof of postage. Please ensure that the date and office of issue is clear and readable. You must indicate what was sent to CAO which relates to the specific Certificate of Posting, e.g. application form, Change of Mind, additional documents, DARE documents, HEAR documents.

Every time you post something to CAO you should have a Certificate of Posting verified at a Post Office. Please do not register your post; a Certificate of Posting will suffice.