

Opportunities after Leaving Certificate

An overview for parents and
guardians

Context of this talk

- Overview of main points
- Direction to websites for full information
- PowerPoint to be uploaded to school website
- Students receive the same information in more detail in Guidance classes in both Fifth and Sixth Year and through Edmodo

Parent Information

- Parents can see Edmodo posts if they get a code from their daughter's account.
- Power Points are uploaded to your daughter's TEAMS

Different types of Applications

- Applying to Colleges of Further Education
- Applying to college in the UK including NI
- Applying to the CAO
- Applying to colleges in the rest of Europe
- Applying for apprenticeships

Introduction to the Following

- Finances
- Grants
- DARE Disability Access Route to Education
- HEAR Higher Education Access Route
- Restricted courses in the CAO system
- Applying for Medicine

Colleges of Further Education

- Further Education in Specific areas

Types of courses

Vocational e.g. Beauty Therapy, Hairdressing, Childcare, Office Administration

Qualification: QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) (Fetac) Level 5 (1 year) and QQI (Fetac) Level 6 (2 years)

Other professional qualifications such as CIBTAC for Beauty Therapy are also available (Confederation of International Beauty Therapy and Cosmetology)

Colleges of Further Education

- Entry requirements - Pass five Leaving Cert subjects, Foundation Level is generally acceptable.
- One or two year courses leading to employment or to higher education (University/ Institutes of Technology)

Colleges of Further Education

- College of Commerce Cork
- St. John's Central College Cork
- C.S.N. Cork
- Mallow College
- St. Fanahan's Mitchelstown

How to Apply?

- Directly to the college on-line or by paper application.
- Usually in late January or early February
- First Round Interviews start in March or April. Interview 10-15 minute to assess suitability.
- Work Experience related to the course is a great advantage. Bring a small folder of work if applicable e.g. photos of hairstyles

Fees

- Government fee of €200 a year but Medical Card holders and are exempt.
- Many colleges charge approximately €250 Student Registration Fee to cover clubs and services.
- For some courses students need to buy equipment which can cost around €1000.
- For some courses students must pay exam fees of approx. of €500 to professional bodies

Stepping stone courses

- Applying to Colleges of Further Education can be a stepping stone to Institutes of Technology and Universities

System for using QQI Level 5 to apply to Institutes of Technology

- QQI points for 8 best modules (Students would need to aim for Distinctions)
- Maximum 390 points for any IT course except Nursing
- Apply to CAO using these points just the same as Leaving Cert points

QQI Level 5 Links System (Universities and DIT)

- One must do a “linked” or connected course e.g.
- e.g. Legal Studies Level 5, 5M3789 in College of Commerce links with UCC Law, Government, Arts and Music courses
- Check links on each university website or prospectus.

Places for CFE students in university courses

- There are a limited number of places kept for College of Further Education students
- **For Nursing** there are so many applicants and so few places (20) there is **random selection.**
(A lottery system)

A good insurance policy

- Depending on what they are interested in and which colleges they apply for, students who generally **gain less than 390 points**, would be well advised to apply for Colleges of Further Education Courses as well as CAO courses.

UCAS

- Applying to university in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- www.ucas.com
- Possibility of entry to some courses at somewhat lower grades than in Ireland.

Brexit

- It is possible in the future that EU students would be charged higher fees (International fees)
- The loan system may not be available to non UK students.
- However usually if any changes are made they do not affect students already in the system.

Online Application

- Personal Statement and predicted grades, 5th Year results are very important. Work shadowing is very important for health related careers. Extracurricular activities are very important.
- Students can apply for five courses or only four Medicine and one other. Students need to focus on one type of course for success in UK system.

Interviews

- There will often be an interview in the UK
- Students would need to attend two or three interviews to have a good chance of a course. This involves travel and accommodation costs.

Aptitude Tests

- An aptitude test must be taken for some courses, for example Medicine, Veterinary, but others as well.
- This must be applied for and taken separately from the UCAS application.
- The deadline to **take** the aptitude course is often as early as September of Leaving Cert year.

Deadlines

- Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary and Oxford or Cambridge deadline is 15th October.
- Everything else by 15th January. Early applications are processed first.
- UK colleges start offering places to early applicants as they work through them.

Fees

- For England the fees are £9000 a year approximately and a student loan system is available. This must be paid back when the student is finished the course and is earning £21,00 approx.
- In Wales and N.I. many colleges are subsidised so the fees are £3,500 approx. Loans available.
- In Scotland there are no fees but students make a contribution of approximately £2000 at the end of the course.

Applying to College in Mainland Europe

- Courses through English
- Fees vary - often lower than Ireland
- www.eunicas.com – really useful website and service
- Full research needed!
- Make an appointment with Guidance Counsellor
- N.B. Student would need to be quite mature

The CAO

- Central Applications Office processes applications to Higher Education Institutes
- Universities
- Colleges of Education e.g. Mary Immaculate
- Institutes of Technology
- Private fee Paying Colleges e.g. Griffith College Cork

Levels of Courses

- Students have 20 choices
- **Always list courses in order of personal choice.**

Free Fees Initiative

- Participating College (excludes private colleges)
- First Undergraduate Course (Full- time course)
- EU citizen (plus special categories e.g. Refugee Status)
- Have been resident in an EU country for three of the five years before going to college.

State pays the fees families contribute

- A Student Contribution of €3,000 a year must be paid.
- However those who qualify for a Third Level Education grant have this paid for them
- Families who pay for more than one child may claim tax relief.

Grants

- www.susi.ie
- The student grants application system is called Student Universal Support Ireland, SUSI
- Apply for the student grant in April of Leaving Certificate year .
- Deadline usually late July.

Income eligibility for grants

- <https://susi.ie/undergraduate-income-threshold-and-grant-award-rates/>
- Some families may not be entitled to the maintenance part of the grant but may be entitled to have all or part of the Student Contribution paid by SUSI.
- Students who study outside Ireland are entitled to the maintenance part of the grant.

Make Life Easier!

- Tick the box on the CAO application that allows SUSI to collect information from CAO and from Revenue.
- Collect the documentation needed in advance
- Late or incorrect applications may mean the student will delay the payment.

Be prepared!

- Sometimes students may be charged the Student Contribution if their grant has not been processed but it will be refunded when the grant comes through.

Documents which may be Needed

- Long form of Birth Certificate
- Junior Certificate Results
- Possibly P60, P45, P21 for tax year ended Dec of Sixth Year
- Statement re Social Welfare payments (This is on a form which is only available from April of Sixth Year)
- Documents re separation or divorce

Documents needed by the self-employed

- <https://susi.ie/quick-links/self-employment-farming-or-rental/>

Advice

- If you have a particular query SUSI have a helpline which is very helpful.
- emailing support@susi.ie or phone the support desk (Tel: 0761 087 874).
- If in doubt whether you are eligible it is better to apply.

C.A.O. Application

- Application opens in November
- Students should register as soon as possible.
- Discounted online rate of €30 by 20th January
- €45 to apply online after 20th Jan up to 1st Feb
- **Latest** date to apply is 1st May (Late fee applies)
- **Change of Mind is free from May to 1st July.**
- All deadlines 5.15p.m. on the day

Supply and Demand

- Points can go up or down.
- The points published are the points of the last student to gain a place.

Leaving Certificate Points

- Points are allocated for each grade from 12 points for an O6 to 100 points for an H1 (students have handout and table in journal)
- The **6 highest point scores** are added together.
- 25 points is added to the Honours Maths score **and if this is one of the highest 6 points it is included.**

Foundation Level Subjects

- Some colleges award points for Foundation Level Maths but other colleges do not.
- Some colleges accept Foundation Level (Maths or Irish) for entry requirements and others do not.
- Students need to check each website and make an appointment with the guidance counsellor to discuss the implication of taking this level.

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)

- Distinction 66
- Merit 46
- Pass 28
- Automatically included if one of six highest points.

Entry Requirements

- Basic entry requirements must also be fulfilled e.g. 2 or 3 H5s and 4 or 5 O6s/H7s for Honours Degree (Level 8) courses
- 5 O6s/H7s for Higher Certificates or Ordinary Degrees (Level 6 or 7 courses)
- New since 2017, H7 (30 to 39%) is considered a pass, receives 37 points and qualifies for college entry

Specific Entry Requirements

- There are also specific subject requirements for certain courses e.g.
- H4 in Chemistry and in either Biology or Physics for Pharmacy in UCC
- Minimum H4 in a science subject and a language other than English for Speech Therapy in UCC

Making the most of her opportunities

- Always list CAO courses by personal choice
- Keep track of her points (Summer and Christmas tests) and list some suitable courses which have generally been lower points. It is fine to aim high so long as they also cover their options.
- Students should research all the courses they list. Also apply to Colleges of Further Education if relevant.

Repeat Leaving Certificate

- Only one sitting of the Leaving Certificate may be counted for points.
- Entry requirements may be accumulated over more than one year except for Medicine.
- HPAT must be repeated as results only last for one year.

Restricted Courses

- Courses which require a portfolio, audition or aptitude test. e.g. Art, Music, Drama or Medicine
- These courses must be entered on the CAO application by 1st February.
- Note the aptitude test for Medicine should be booked by 20th January or there will be a late fee.

Small window of opportunity

- Between 1st February to 1st March late applications to some restricted courses may be made.
- This should not be necessary if students do their research.

Applying for Medicine

Minimum points in Leaving Certificate

480 + all entry requirements in one sitting
of Leaving Certificate for points.

Plus

Result of Health Professionals Admissions Test
(HPAT). Max HPAT points 300

Websites

- www.cao.ie Entry to Medicine
- www.hpat-ireland.acer.edu.au
- Buy a sample test online and practise
- ukcat@ac.uk for sample tests which would be helpful though not exactly the same.
- Courses are expensive and are not necessary if the student practises the sample papers.

Disability Access Route to Education

- Students who have a disability which has affected them academically **may be accepted on lower points and will be supported in college.**
- Categories are physical, mental/emotional, learning disability and long-term illness
- www.accesscollege.ie has detailed information

Evidence

- A specialist's report of the disability on a DARE form is needed (These forms will be available on website.) A GP can fill the form **based on** the consultant's report.
- In the case of learning disability a psychologists report is needed.
- Student complete a form with the guidance counsellor indicating how the disability has impacted on her education.

Rules for applying

- Apply to CAO by 1st February, tick DARE box
- Complete Section A online by **1st March**. This states the nature of the disability.
- Send Academic Reference (Section B) completed with guidance counsellor and Evidence of Disability (Section C) **or** psychologists report CAO by 15th March
- Forms may be downloaded from www.accesscollege.ie
- Section B is completed in school with Guidance Counsellor.
- Section C is completed by a medical specialist

Deadlines

- It is necessary to start organising these documents in November of Leaving Cert as consultants and GPs may not be able to complete them at short notice.
- Students post all documents to the CAO to reach them by 15th March

Higher Education Access Route (HEAR)

- Students who come from backgrounds of socio/economic disadvantage **may be considered for places at lower points.**
- They will also be **mentored** and **supported** in college and given a special orientation week.
- www.accesscollege.ie
- This is not a financial grant though some financial assistance may be given.

How to know if a student might be eligible?

- If you have a Medical card and family income is:
- Less than €45,790 for fewer than 4 dependents.
- Or €50,325 for 4 to 7 dependents
- Or €54,636 for more than 8 dependents
- Then it is worth applying

How do I apply?

- Apply to CAO by 1st Feb, tick HEAR box
- Complete Hear questions online by 1st March
Questions about family and income. Do this in November.
- Send all documents to CAO by 15th March
- HEAR uses the tax year ending the **December of Fifth Year so having tax documents for that year is recommended.**

Accepting the CAO offer.

- If students apply for both Level 8 and Level 6/7 courses they may be offered **two courses**. It is then up to them which one to accept.
- Anyone who is offered their 1st choice will not get another offer that year.
- **My advice always accept Round 1 offer, a Round 2 offer could still be made.**

Second Round Offers

- Students may be offered a place on a course which was listed as a higher preference than the one they were offered in Round One in Round Two in early September.
- However there is no guarantee that a student will receive any Round Two offers.
- **Accepting a Round Two offer automatically means that the First Round offer has been given up.**

Vacant Places

- Some courses may have more places than applicants. If so they will be displayed on the CAO website usually at **12.00 noon on the Tuesday after the CAO First Round offers come out.**
- Anyone who has the minimum entry requirements may apply for one of these courses
- Accepting a vacant course means any earlier offers no longer apply. But a Round Two offer may still be made **if the student put the vacant place last on her list.**
- .

Deferring a place

- The student should immediately check the college website in case to see if there is an online Deferral form.
- If not email the admissions office of the college immediately stating the reason for requesting the deferral.
- College generally do not accept requests made at the last minute.

The request for deferral

- Must be done within 3 working days of receiving the offer.
- Colleges have the right to refuse.

Deferrals continued

- Do not accept the CAO course in August 2020 as to do so means the student will start in September 2020.
- In November 2020 apply to the CAO but list the deferred course **and no other**.
- Then the student is guaranteed to get a place on that course.

Postgraduate conversion courses

- The opportunity to become qualified in something completely different once one has a degree.
- An Honours degree is needed.
- Fees are payable.
- Selection is by interview/ aptitude test and competitive.
- There are such courses in Law, Accounting, Primary Teaching, Medicine, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Computing and many more.

Apprenticeships

- Traditional construction apprenticeships
- New apprenticeships leading to a degree (earn and learn e.g. Insurance, Accounting Technician)
- www.apprenticeships.ie

Contact Solas Directly

- Cork Training Centre
- Rossa Avenue,
- Bishopstown,
- Cork.
- Phone: 021 4856200
- Email: info@corktrainingcentre.ie

What Parents can do now

- Collect financial documents such as tax documentation for the year ending December of Fifth Year for HEAR and of Sixth Year for the SUSI grant.
- Organise the documents mentioned for DARE if they apply to your daughter.

What Parents can do as well!

- Encourage students to research every course carefully.
- Encourage students to follow their interests.
- Encourage students to **list some lower points** courses that they would also be interested in.
- Encourage students to apply to Colleges of Further.

Most Important for parents!

- Encourage the attitude that if someone is doing their best that is all anyone can expect and that everyone must follow her own route.

Thank You!

- Thank you for your time and attention.