





“Options after School” 6th Year Parents Information Meeting Comeragh College





Agenda

- To help parents understand the opportunities available post leaving certificate
- To help parents understand the process of applying for PLCs, Apprenticeships and other training programmes
- To explain the CAO process as well as how to apply for various grants
- To emphasise the importance of student research and their personal responsibility for deadlines and applications



Options after School

Third Level

(I.T./University- C.A.O.)

PLC

Apprenticeships

Other Training

Leaving Certificate Class of 2023



Colleges- SETU Waterford, SETU Carlow, UCC, UL, ATU Letterfrack, ATU Sligo, WCFE, Clonmel CTI, Tipperary ETB FET Centre

What are they studying- Agricultural Science, Engineering, Languages, Arts, Psychology, Teaching, Nursing, Computing, Sports, Journalism, Furniture Making and Design

Apprenticeships- Electrician, Metal Fabrication, Mechanical Fitting, Laboratory Analyst, Hairdresser, Blocklayer, Pipefitting, Tree Maintenance





PLC (QQI Level 5 & 6)

- 1-2 year course, huge variety of courses which can link you straight into employment or to further study in a College of Higher Education
- Apply online, you will then attend an interview, a place is offered and then you may have to pay a deposit to secure your place.
- 5 passes in your Leaving Cert/Pass L.C.A. is required for a place on a PLC course
- Applications are open and students can now apply through www.fetchcourses.ie *need your PPS number to apply
- Courses available include Childcare, Beauty Therapy, Hairdressing, Business, Computers, Animal Care, Psychology, Social Care, Health Care/Pre-Nursing, Art and Design, Journalism, Photography, Media, Construction, Pharmacy Assistant, Sports and Leisure, Travel and Tourism





PLC (QQI Level 5 & 6)

Benefits of a PLC course

- Graduate with qualification
- 'Job Ready'
- 'Testing' a career or industry
- Work Experience
- Middle ground between school and third level
- Back door to third level





Apprenticeships

- To qualify in a trade you undergo an apprenticeship which usually takes 4 years with 4 employer based training parts and 3 college based training parts.
- Currently around 20,000 apprentices- to be increased to 30,000 by 2025.
- There is a wide variety of different apprenticeships available from the traditional craft apprentices such as Carpenter/Electrician/Block Layer to newer apprenticeships in Pharma, Insurance, ICT, Accounting Technician.
- Female participation is increasing and encouraged.
- The apprentice must make sure the employer registers them with SOLAS. Employer will look for your leaving cert results before doing this.
- The qualification is internationally recognised.



Apprenticeships



To find an apprenticeship:

- Talk to family members, neighbours, friends
- Show your interest in the trade you want to do
- Gain experience in the trade
- Look out for national recruitment for ESB, Bus Eireann, Irish Rail etc.
- From Easter start to contact people/ businesses expressing your interest
- Bigger companies will start to recruit from March- Laboratory Assistant/ Mechatronic Engineering
- Ms.Jensen & Ms. O'Neill provide a contact sheet with details of apprentice employers-email mjensen@tipperaryetb.ie
- Follow the jobs board **jobalert.ie** on Facebook for Tipperary/Waterford/Kilkenny to see local job advertisements



Apprenticeships



Benefits of an Apprenticeship:

- Earn as you learn
- Graduate with internationally renowned qualification
- Balance of work and college
- Huge range of careers on offer with attractive salaries
- Equal opportunities- huge increase in female apprentices





Other Training

- Gardaí/Defence Forces
 - National recruitment drives on TV, radio, Facebook, etc.
 - Online application, psychometric testing and interview.
- Lidl, Aldi, Retail, Banks etc.
 - Advertise online and on radio with various application processes





What is the CAO?

- The Central Applications Office (CAO) processes all applications for Colleges of Higher Education in Ireland.
- After the Leaving Certificate results in August, the CAO issues all course offers to students.
- Students accept courses through the CAO.
- Applications are made **online** and cost €30 up to Jan 20th and then €45 until Feb 1st.





How many courses can my son/daughter apply for through the CAO?

- **Students can apply for up to 20 courses**
- 10 Level 8 Honours Degree Courses
- 10 Level 7 Ordinary Degree/ Level 6 Higher Certificate Courses
- **Courses must be put in order of preference!**

After the closing date of Feb 1st, students can change the order of their courses or put in new non-restricted courses when the change of mind facility opens in May until July 1st.



Filling up choices on the CAO Form
Order of Preference is the RULE!

LEVEL 8 (Honours Degree Courses)	LEVEL 6 & 7 (Higher Cert & Ordinary Degree Courses)
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.



What is needed for the application form?

- **Personal Details:** Name, date of birth, address, phone number
- **Qualifications:** for students sitting their Leaving Certificate only tick Irish Leaving Certificate 2024 (1st box)
- **Email:** do not use school email
- **Payment:** via debit or credit card
- **Password:** to create and keep safe
- **School name and address**
- **Course choices:** add Level 8 and Level 7/6 course codes
- **Additional information:** SUSI grant, NUI exemptions, disability or specific learning difficulty/ DARE application, HEAR application





How does the CAO choose who to offer a course to?

- Colleges tell the CAO how many places to offer on each course
- The CAO then checks that applicants have made the entry requirements for the course. Applicants are then put in a queue in order of their results or Leaving Certificate points.
- Some courses also add on points for portfolios/auditions etc.
- Offers go out to the applicants that make the cut
- Students will receive an offer for the highest numbered course on their application where they made the cut
- Students can receive a maximum of 2 offers-
1 Level 8 and 1 Level 7/6





What happens in August?

- CAO offers come out a few days after the Leaving Cert results
- Students will receive a maximum of 2 offers- 1 Level 8 Offer and 1 Level 7/6 Offer
- Students can accept 1 offer
- If accepting an offer, they must do so by the reply date on the offer notice
- If you are not accepting an offer, ignore it





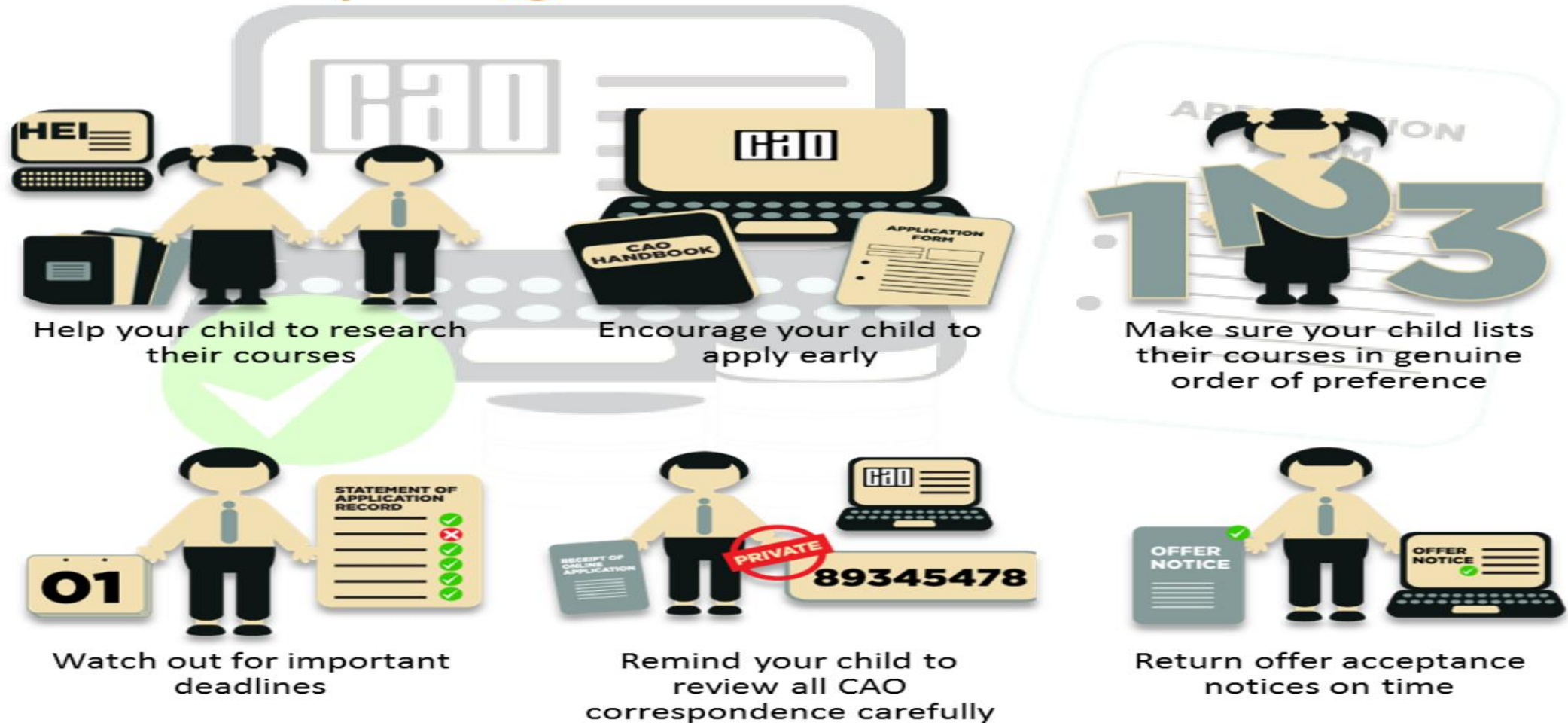
Researching Courses

- Keep an open mind- write down the name of any course on a college website/prospectus that sounds vaguely interesting and look into it.
- Use Careersportal to find similar courses in different colleges.
- Look at courses that involve your favourite school subject and general interests.
- Do look at the subjects/modules you will study on the course.
- Do not be put off by a couple of subjects you don't like.
- Put courses in genuine order of preference.
- Have a variety of courses including aspirational, realistic and safety net.
- There is no such thing as the 'perfect course' but there are courses out there that you are most suited to



How can a parent/guardian help?

Your role as a parent/guardian



What is HEAR?

The **Higher Education Access Route** is an admissions route for school leavers who for **social, financial or cultural** reasons are **under-represented** in **third level education**.

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

Why apply to HEAR?

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

Should I apply?

HEAR Indicators

1. Was your household income on or below €46,790 in 2022?
2. Do you or your family have a **Medical Card/GP Visit Card**?
3. Did your parents/guardians receive a **means-tested social welfare** payment for at least 26 weeks in 2022?
4. Is your parents' or guardians' **employment status under-represented** in Higher Education?
5. Have you attended a **DEIS** second level school for five years?
6. Do you live in an **area** of concentrated disadvantage?

What is DARE?

The **Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)** is a third level alternative admissions scheme for school-leavers whose disabilities have had a negative impact on their second level education.

DARE offers reduced points places to school leavers who as a result of having a disability have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.

Disabilities eligible for consideration

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (including Asperger's Syndrome)
- ADD/ADHD
- Blind/Vision Impaired
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- DCD – Dyspraxia
- Dyslexia/Significant Literacy Difficulties
- Dyscalculia/Significant Numeracy Difficulties
- Mental Health Condition
- Neurological Condition (Incl. Brain Injury & Epilepsy)
- Physical Disability
- Speech & Language Communication Disorder
- Significant Ongoing Illness



- Students can apply for a SUSI grant if they are doing a CAO or a PLC course
- Grant applications will open April 2024
- In order to be eligible for a grant your household income needs to meet certain criteria
- The amount the student receives depends on the household income and if the college is above or below 30km from the household address
- Top tips:
 - Organise all tax/income documentation early in 2024
 - Use the 'eligibility reckoner' on www.susi.ie to get an indication of whether the student is eligible
 - Deadlines are important
 - Instructional videos on the website are excellent



- To receive a full 100% rate the household income for 2022 must be less than **€40,875** (*income bands increase with dependent children*)
- The student will receive **€1,702.43** per academic year if they live within 30 km of the college
- The student will receive **€4,018.69** per academic year if they live over 30 km of the college
- The student will also receive the **€3,000** student contribution



- Where the Household Income is less than €25,000 and includes an eligible long-term Department of Social Protection Payment (list of eligible payments found on www.susi.ie- includes payments such as One Parent Family payment, Disability, Carers Allowance)
- You may be eligible for the **Special Rate** of Maintenance.
 - The student will receive €3,099.33 per academic year if they live within 30 km of the college
 - The student will receive €7,312.69 per academic year if they live over 30 km of the college

The amount a student receives depends on household income up to €100,000. For example, a household income of less than €50,840 will receive the full student contribution fee.



Financial Assistance /Grants-SUSI

- Means tested -Parents income- Tax year 2022
- Register SUSI April 2024
- Student needs to disclose if they have a part-time job
- If the part-time job is within school holidays they can earn up to €6,552 without it being counted as 'household income'
- Must /can reapply each year as family circumstances may change.
- Grant for 1 PLC and one 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year, 4th year on a CAO course
- Students can drop out by 31st October if unhappy in their course. A full refund will be given of the student contribution.
- SUSI will have to be informed
- Organise tax documents early

Final Thoughts



- The Leaving Certificate is a difficult year. Motivation and perspective are key.
- A regular study plan needs to start early to avoid unnecessary stress and to achieve potential.
- Having a supportive parent/guardian is really helpful in keeping them motivated and keeping stress at bay.
- Encourage them to do the work now, not leave things to the last minute
- Encourage them to talk to you/guidance counsellor/teacher if they are feeling stressed or confused.
- Course research is essential and is their responsibility- focus on the subjects they will study in each year not just the course title!
- Deadlines are strict and are the students' responsibility.
- Students should have a Plan A,B & C!





Some helpful websites:

- www.cao.ie
- www.careersportal.ie
- www.military.ie
- www.garda.ie
- www.jobalert.ie
- www.recruitireland.ie
- www.apprenticeship.ie
- www.fetchcourses.ie
- www.sus.ie
- www.accesscollege.ie

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