

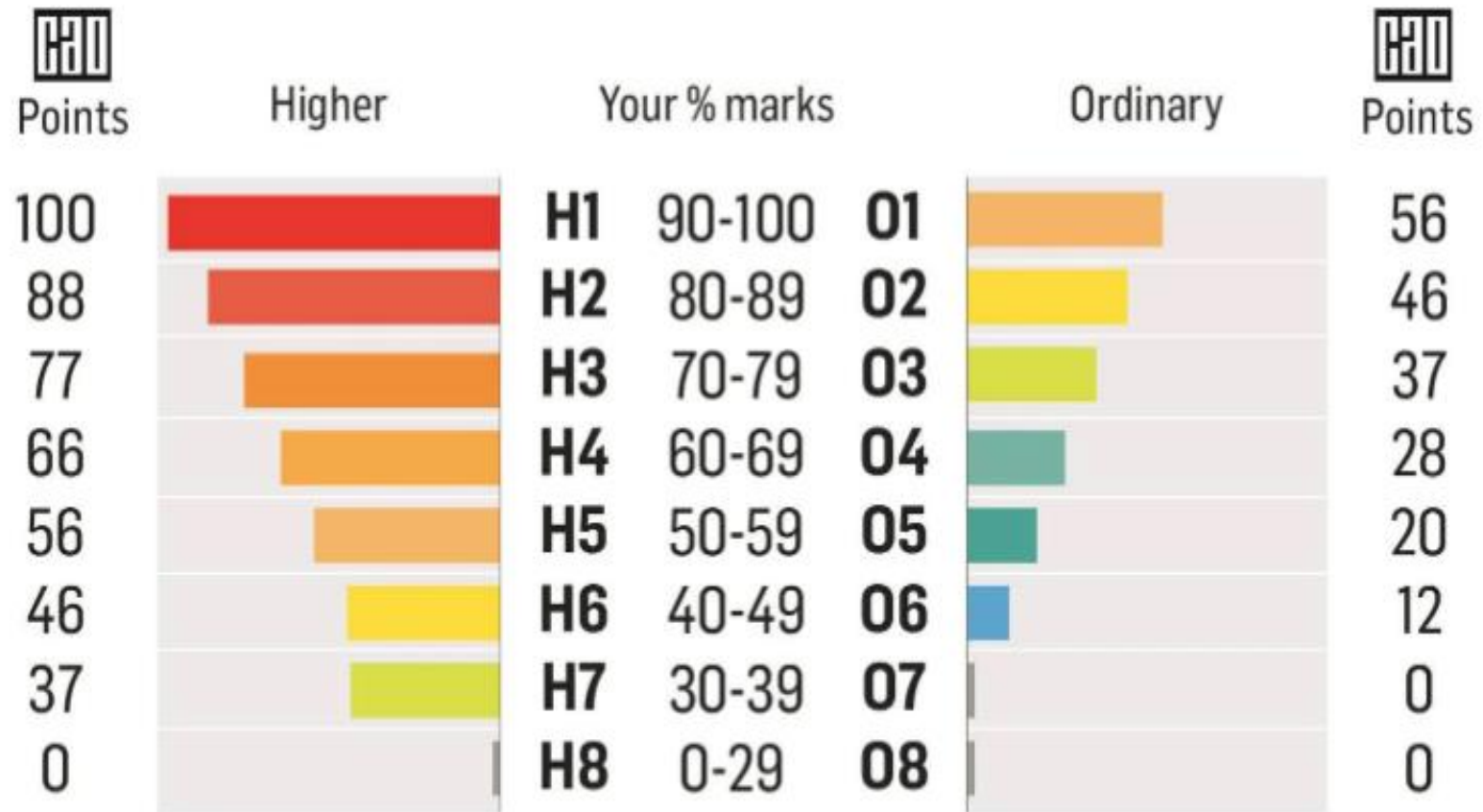


6th year Progression Options
Guidance Department

Outline of Session

- Points system & Entry Requirements
- Applying to CAO – key stages
- Choosing Careers & Courses
- Allocation & Acceptance of Places
- SUSI, HEAR & DARE
- Other options (PLC, Apprenticeships, Studying Abroad)
- How you can help
- Useful Websites

Points System



+25 Bonus points for H1-H6 maths

LCVP link modules Distinction 66 Merit 46 Pass 28

Entry Requirements

These must be satisfied before “points” are considered.

**Minimum Entry
Requirements**

**Specific Subject
Requirements**



If all Entry Requirements are met → applicant is deemed 'Qualified' to apply.

“Minimum Entry Requirements”

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS -Must be satisfied before “points” are considered.

UL: Level 8: 2H5 & 4O6/H7 – English, Maths, 1 other language (**for some, not all**)

TUS (LIT): Level 8: 2H5 & 4O6/H7 Level 6/7: 5O6/H7

FET: Pass Leaving Certificate

UoG: Level 8: 2H5 & 4O6/H7 – English, Maths, Irish, 3rd lang (for some but not all)

Specific Subject Requirements

Engineering(UL): H4 Maths

Veterinary Medicine(UCD): H5 Chemistry (plus 15hrs)

Business with French (UL): H4 French

Journalism & Digital Communications (UL): H4 English

Primary Teaching H4 Irish

***If all Entry Requirements are met applicant is deemed ‘Qualified’ to apply and only then are points looked at.**

Qualifax: every course explained

**Search**

Useful Tools

[CAO subject requirements](#)[CAO Points Calculator](#)[Saved Courses](#)

Calendar of Events

Subject Requirements Tool

Planning to make application to the CAO? This tool will help you choose the right subjects and levels at Leaving Cert.

Subject

- Select -



Advanced filters



Please select a subject from the subject dropdown on the left.

All courses referred to in this section are Third Level CAO entry. The Course Data in this section is for the CAO entry in 2025

CAO – When?



- **5th November 12 noon**
 - Online application facility opens
- **20th January, 2026 5pm (€35 fee)**
 - Closing date for receipt of early online application on www.cao.ie
- **1st February, 2026 5pm (€50 fee)**
 - Closing date for receipt of normal application (**Restricted entry**)
- **1st May, 2026 5pm**
 - Closing date for receipt of late applications
- **5th May, 2026 12 noon**
 - Change of mind facility becomes available
- **1st July, 2026 5pm**
 - Latest date for receipt of change of mind form in CAO
- **Late August/Early Sept 2026**
 - First round of offers will commence

DARE & HEAR

Online forms completed by **1st March 5pm, 2026**

Supporting documents to arrive with CAO before **10th March 5pm, 2026**

The Change of Mind Facility

- You may use this facility to change the order of your courses or add new courses (restrictions may apply, always consult CAO handbook)
- The change of mind opens in early May and closes on July 1st 2025 at 5pm



Statement of Application Record

- Before the end of May you will be sent a Statement of Application Record.
- You will need to log into your account and check/verify information, you need to follow the instructions carefully or it could result in your application becoming null and void
- Check the following

Are your exam numbers correct? (do not assume that they are)

Are all exams mentioned?

Are all exemptions listed?

Are all the courses shown and in the correct order?

**If you do not
receive a
Statement by**

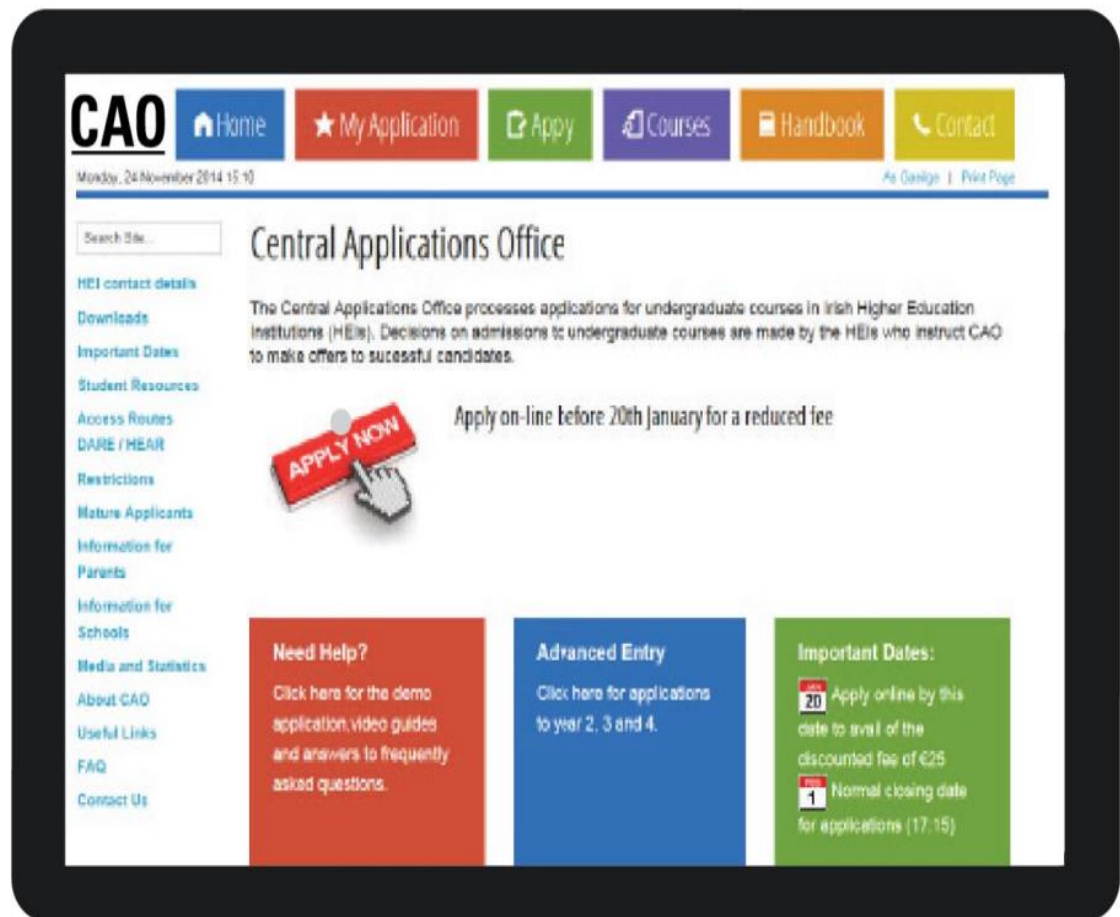


**contact CAO
immediately.**

Applicants apply online at
www.cao.ie/apply

Carefully enter details such as your name, address, date of birth, schools attended, examination information, etc.

Make sure you inform CAO about all relevant qualifications and exemptions – select the relevant section(s) on the application form.



Applicant's Personal Details

Surname

Other names

Title

(Mr, Ms, Mrs, etc.)

Date of Birth

dd	mm	yyyy
----	----	------

Sex

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ I'd prefer not to say

Please Note: You should enter your name and date of birth 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.

Home address

☒ Rep. of Ireland

☐ Other Country

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Address Line 3

Address Line 4

Select City or County...



Postal Code

(e.g. H91 X25V)

Postal Address: (created from name and address entered above)

Tick the following box if the postal address looks correct.
Otherwise, change your name and address above.

☐ **The postal address is correct.**

e-mail address

e-mail address

Confirm e-mail

Contact Telephone

Do you wish to receive sms text messages from CAO?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you wish to receive sms text messages from the HEIs you apply to?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Country of Birth

Nationality

Qualifications & Assessment Summary :

Please tick the qualification/assessment section(s) that are relevant to you.

1. ☐ Irish Leaving Certificate Exams (1985-2022)

Payment Options :

☐ Credit or Debit Card



☐ Fee Payment Form



(Republic of Ireland applicants only)

Terms & Conditions :

TERMS & CONDITIONS WILL APPEAR HERE ON THE REAL FORM

☐ I understand this form is for practice only and that no details will be sent to CAO.

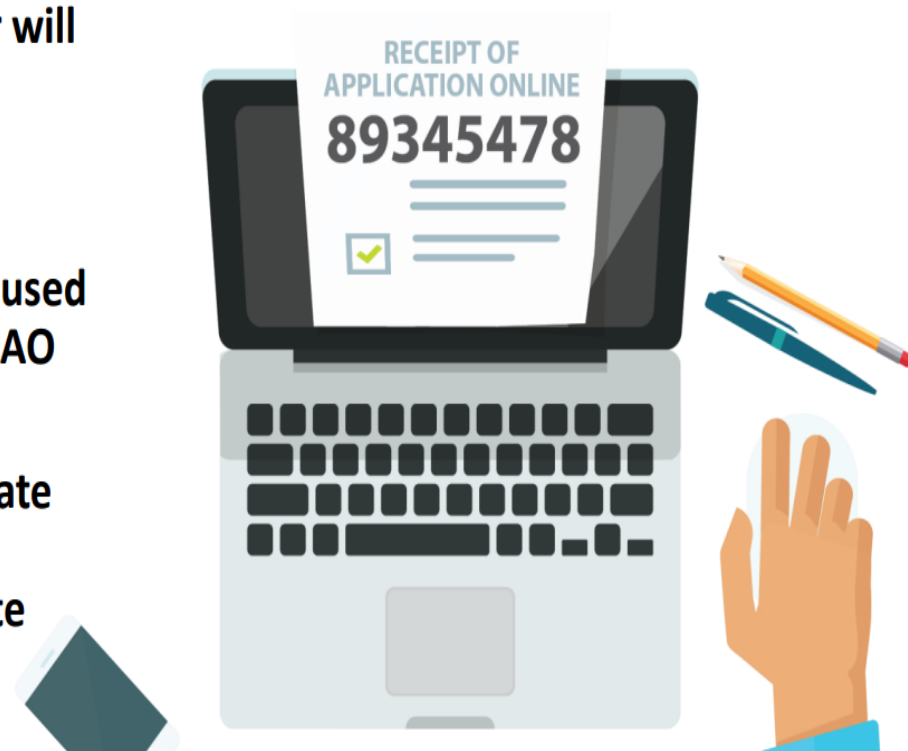
Create Account Password :

Account Password

.....

CAO Application Number

- When you apply online your application number will appear on screen. You will also receive an email containing your CAO application number and an email verification code.
- Your application number is private and it will be used in every correspondence between you and the CAO for the rest of the year.
- You will require your CAO application number, date of birth and password when you log in to your account via the 'My Application' facility to update your application.



Please enter your details below:

CAO Application No.

8-digit CAO Number

[Help?](#)

Date of Birth

dd

mm

yyyy

Account Password

Enter Password

[Forgotten Your Password?](#)

Log In »

2 applications in 1



- There are 2 course choice lists (L8 and L7/6) and each applicant may make up to 10 choices on each list.
- Your choices on one list do not in any way affect your choices on the other list. They are considered two separate applications on one form.
- It is possible to receive an offer on both lists. You may then decide to accept either your L8 or L7/6 offer.

The image shows two identical application forms side-by-side. Each form has the word 'APPLICATION' at the top. Below the title, there are several horizontal lines for text entry. A large red circle with a black number inside is positioned in the center of each form: a '1' on the left form and a '2' on the right form. At the bottom of each form, there are more horizontal lines and a small rectangular box.



Level 8 Course Choices

[Courses](#)

No courses selected.

Please enter all your course choices below, in order of preference. When you are ready to update your choices, click on the 'Continue with Course Choices' button below.

You may type the course codes directly into the boxes below or click on the `Courses` button to select course codes.

N.B. Enter all courses for which you wish to apply.

New Choices

Enter your new list below

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Genuine Order of Preference



You do not need to guess what the points are going to be for the courses you are interested in

Simply list your courses in genuine order of preference from the highest preference 1, to the lowest preference 10.

If you are entitled to an offer, you will be offered the highest preference that you are entitled to.

Choosing a Course

Compare:

- Career focused vs. broad subject area (which will suit you?)
- Course content : Subjects & electives (know what they are)
- Class sizes
- Opportunities for work placement & studying abroad
- Assessment-Continuous, exams, projects, terminal exams etc.
- College facilities, clubs and societies
- Location/Travel/ Public transport
- Overall Costs

Choosing a Career

Research options and make decisions by:

- Assess Aptitudes, Skills & Qualities, Favourite Subjects, Hobbies, Career Interests, Values (eg. security, family, pay).
- Talk to family members, guidance counsellor, teachers, present students, graduates, course co-ordinators.
- Information- Open days, college websites & prospectus.
- Explore options on Career websites
- Consider skills shortages for the future.
- Remain open minded – Be willing to consider courses outside of Limerick if financially possible.
- Have a Plan B!

It is about making smart, informed decisions.

The Offer Process



- Offers will also be available on the CAO website.
- You may check for and accept offers on the website.
- If you are entitled to an offer, you will be sent an email with details of your offer(s). You may receive more than one email if you have received an offer off both your Level 8 and Level 7/6 lists.
- You will also receive an SMS text message if you have selected this option.
- You should check that all of the details in your CAO Account are correct and that there are no errors or omissions.

Course preference/Offer Process

1	2	3
LM000	LM000	LM000
600	560	560
595	555	555
591	551	551
587	547	547
585	543	543
**	**	**
**	**	**
**	**	**
**	**	**
**	**	**
470	460	445
468	457	444
465	450	443
460	445	441
458	439	439
454	435	435
450	431	431
448	427	427
445	423	423
441	419	419
**	**	**
**	**	**
**	**	**
**	**	**
363	363	363
357	357	357
NO	NO	YES

All Lower
Preference
Courses
Disappear
From Students
Preferences

Students
Points
Total= 445

Cut off
Points
for
course

The Offer Process



There can be no delays at the offer/acceptance stage

- Any offer not accepted by the closing date for receipt of acceptance of offers in CAO may be offered to another applicant in the next round of offers
- You will receive an email acknowledging your acceptance



Common Errors

- Not enough research into courses AND career
- Listing courses in order of points instead of genuine preference
- Underestimating / overestimating Leaving Certificate results
- Targeting low point courses in hope of getting college place
- Targeting Level 8 courses only and ignoring Level 7 & 6 courses thereby Ladder of Opportunity
- Not considering courses outside certain geographic areas



Additional Supports: HEAR

The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a college and university scheme that offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from low income families who are resident in Ireland.

www.accesscollege.ie

Information Sessions for HEAR & DARE will be held live in early Jan.

Additional Support: DARE

College admissions scheme which offers some places at reduced points and extra college supports to school leavers who, as a result of having a disability or specific learning difficulty, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.

www.accesscollege.ie

ALL students applying for DARE need to contact their guidance counsellor



Additional Supports: SUSI

- SUSI is the central application system for grants for full time Higher Education. Not all colleges are included eg. Private Colleges
- For reckonable income levels, all other info. regarding eligibility and to register for the grant for 2026 go to www.susi.ie
- Apply from April - August. Earlier you apply, earlier you get it.
- Can prepare accounts from 2025
- Self employed: Full set of Accounts, Self Assessment Statement
 - PAYE Worker: P20 or P60
 - Unemployed: SUSI have direct link to Revenue
- Monthly instalments Sept- May.

Scholarships

- Sport



- Discipline of study

- Low family income



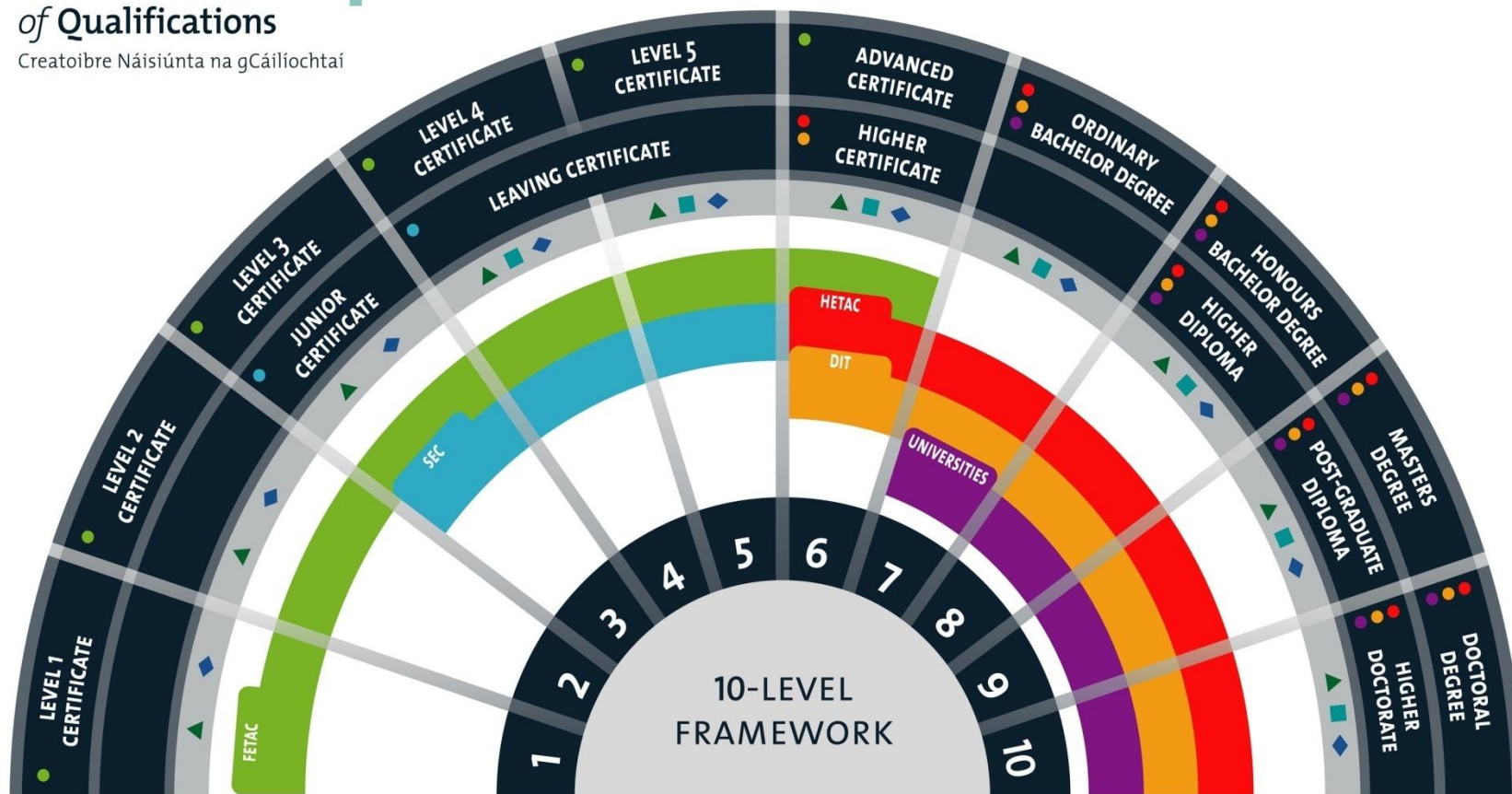
- Academic





Options other than CAO

- PLC (Post Leaving Cert. course)
- Apprenticeships (www.apprenticeship.ie)
- Studying Abroad
- On the job training (Army, Gardaí, Marines)
- Year out/ Travel/ Volunteering/ Work to earn & PLC combined



KEY

- FETAC - Further Education and Training Awards Council
- SEC - State Examinations Commission (Department of Education & Science)
- HETAC - Higher Education and Training Awards Council
- DIT - Dublin Institute of Technology
- Universities

AWARDS IN THE FRAMEWORK

There are four types of award in the National Framework of Qualifications:

- Major Awards:** are the principal class of awards made at a level
- Minor Awards:** are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award
- Supplemental Awards:** are for learning that is additional to a Major Award
- Special Purpose Awards:** are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement

1 year Post Leaving Cert. (PLC) Route

- Apply from February, Eligible for Maintenance Grant
- Leaving Cert + Interview, maybe specific subject required
- Progression possible to many Level 6, 7 and 8 courses
- Some colleges require specific PLC courses, others don't mind which you do. Some require minimum number of distinctions. All are competitive.
- Chosen by those who a) maybe young, b) perhaps didn't get the points for course they wanted, c) financial reasons, d) confirm interest in specific area, e) hope of recognised qualification and employment after 1 year, f) alternative route to college





Local PLC providers

Ennis College of Further Education

Choose from Nursing Studies, Medical Secretary, Childcare w/ Special Needs, Community Health, Business Studies, Accounting Technician, Music, Food Science, Laboratory Techniques, Social Studies.

Others providers in Co. Clare

Ennistymon, Lisdoonvarna, Kilrush

Limerick College of Further Education

Extensive range from I.T., Beauty, Culinary Skills, Emergency Care Personnel, Event Management, Fashion Design, Music Technology, Art Portfolio, Laboratory Techniques, and many more.



Studying Abroad

- Europe (EUNICAS)

- UK (UCAS)

Degree Programmes taught through English in European & UK Universities

Especially popular for high pointed courses in Ireland

Veterinary Medicine, Medicine, Physiotherapy, Radiography,
Dentistry, Pharmacy etc.

Things to consider:

Entry requirements (specific and general), Application process & deadlines,
Travel, Fees, Cost of living.



An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority

Apprenticeships

7 Phases- 4 years

- Phase 1 – With Employer
- Phase 2 – In SOLAS Centre
- Phase 3 – With Employer
 - Phase 4 – TUS
- Phase 5 – With Employer
 - Phase 6 – TUS
- Phase 7 – With Employer



An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority

Apprenticeships

- Must find employer (personal contacts, SOLAS, advertisements) to take you on who must register with SOLAS within 2 weeks.
- Potential apprentices join Employers on a regular basis. (Often after exam results) Employer must be approved by SOLAS, Employer registers apprentice (Phase 1) who then goes on a waiting list for Phase 2.
- Rates vary from trade to trade
Average Phase 2 Rate is €200.00 p.w.
Average Phase 4th Year Rate is €475.00 p.w.
- Big demand for Tool Makers, Jobs also for Refrigeration & Air Conditioning, Instrumentation, Electronic Security Systems.
www.solas.ie www.apprenticeship.ie
- Other Apprenticeships through ESB, Eir, Shannon Aerospace etc.



Accounting Technician



Advanced Craft Welder



Baker



Butchery & Fresh Food Retail



Chef de Partie



Commis chef



Craft Welder



Engineering Technician



Executive Chef



HGV Driver



IFS Advanced Specialist



IFS Generalist



IFS Specialist



Industrial/Electrical Engineer



Insurance Practitioner



Manufacturing Engineer



Manufacturing Technician



Network Engineer



Polymer Processing Technician



Software Developer



Sous Chef



Telecoms Field Technician



Travel professional



Warehouse Distribution Operative



How you can help your son or daughter

- (1) Encourage to attend school & participate
- (2) Encourage to do homework to best of ability
- (3) Take an interest in their school work
- (4) Encourage to Revise, daily and at weekend
- (5) Quiet place to study
- (6) Exercise, eat well, sleep well
- (7) Discuss their plans for next year & career



Important Websites

- www.qualifax.ie (Courses)
- www.careersportal.ie (Careers)
- www.cao.ie (CAO Application)
- www.eunicas.ie (Studying in Europe)
- www.ucas.com (Studying in UK)
- www.apprenticeship.ie (Apprenticeships)
- www.susi.ie (Maintenance Grant)
- www.studentfinance.ie (Other finance options)
- www.accesscollege.ie (HEAR & DARE)

