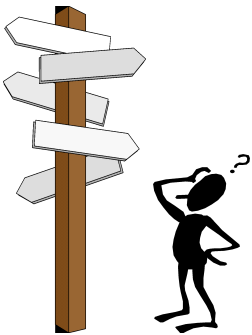




## Guidance Newsletter for Parents and Leaving Cert Students 21/22 on Course & Career Options –



***Your son/daughter is in his/her last year in Secondary School, which is a very difficult year for many reasons and they need your help and support. He/she is about to make the first major decision of his/her life, as school ends and a number of options present themselves in the form of jobs/courses and careers. Whichever route is chosen will affect his/her life in years to come. Therefore it is important to spend some time researching, considering, and choosing wisely now.***

***\*\*\*All leaving certs should be signed up to the Reach+ Career Management programme since 5th year and have been building their career profile in class. Each 6th yr has 1 class per week and will be seen individually by their Guidance Counsellor***

## Options.....

**Apprenticeships:** - SOLAS , ESB, Shannon Aerospace, Iarnoid Eireann, Defence Forces, **new occupational apprenticeships** have been developed in areas such as Computer & ICT, MedTech, Insurance, Finance, Accountancy, Logistics and Hospitality sectors. Careersportal.ie  
**Defence Forces Careers;** - Cadetships (Air Corps, Army, Navy)  
**Courses in Colleges and Schools other than third level:** e.g Beauty Care, Montessori, Hairdressing, SOLAS Courses

Most of these are advertised online (job recruitment sites, careersportal.ie careersnews.ie, jobs.ie, ) It is important to keep a close eye on twitter & facebook also for latest updates.

### A YEAR OUT/A Gap Year

This option is becoming more popular as young people who have completed their leaving certificate take a 'year out' to travel/work, gain some work experience in their chosen field or work for a voluntary organisation in a foreign country. They usually do this with a view to returning after a year to take up their course of training or a place in college.

### POST LEAVING CERT COURSES

These are available all over the country and are usually one or two years in length. **Applications are made directly to the schools and colleges** concerned. On completion of the course the students obtain a QQI/FETAC Award and usually have an *excellent chance of employment*. **The following scheme is in the process of changing and some details may change.** Some may go on to pursue a 3<sup>rd</sup> level course (the colleges reserve a certain number of places annually specifically for graduates of PLC courses in selected areas of study under the Higher Education Links Scheme). Colleges consider the results obtained in the PLC course for entry. Hence PLCs have become regarded as an **alternative route to 3<sup>rd</sup> level**. If students are considering this route to 3<sup>rd</sup> level they need to check well in advance with the PLC College and the 3<sup>rd</sup> level college they have in mind. All details reQQI applicants for 3<sup>rd</sup> level are given in the up to date college prospectus . The CAO website also gives specific information for QQI/FETAC

applicants or those considering a post leaving course as their route to third level. See also [www.gqi.ie](http://www.gqi.ie) , [www.fetchcourse.ie](http://www.fetchcourse.ie)  
**Advantages of PLC courses:**

- Variety of courses available.
- Excellent preparation for 3<sup>rd</sup> level courses
- Very good option for those who need to prepare a PORTFOLIO for entry to Art/Design courses
- grants available under the SUSI (means tested)
- Advertised on social media and most hold Open Days for prospective students.
- Popular ones fill up quickly so contact the school or college in good time.
- Interviews are held for some of these courses.
- Larger colleges eg Senior College Ballyfermot, Senior College Dun Laoghaire are extremely popular as they offer courses not available anywhere else in Ireland.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Level EDUCATION: CAO

- Universities – NUI Colleges (Galway,Maynooth, Dublin, Cork) TCD, DCU and UL, MTU, TUS,TUD
- Institutes of Technology
- Teacher Training Colleges (Primary, Home Economics, Religion etc.)
- Independent and Private Colleges listed on CAO
- Some Agricultural courses.

### Application to CAO

Framework Level	Qualification	Previously known as
Level 6	Ordinary Level Certificate	National Certificate
Level 7	Ordinary Level Degree	National Diploma
Level 8	Honours Degree	Degree hons/pass

CAO handbook is only available digitally from 2021.This will be worked on in class. **It is very important that the student familiarises himself/herself with the contents of the handbook** . Application is online and a demo application will be done with students in class & can be accessed at home.. **\*\*Each course the student applies for must be researched**

thoroughly in the up to date college prospectus/college website before it is put down as a choice. ( the handbook does NOT give details on course content, requirements etc.)

All courses in the handbook are categorised as Higher Certificates (Level 6), Ordinary Degrees (Level 7), Honours Degrees (Level 8)-

**CAO Dates:** Early application Jan 20th 5pm  
1<sup>st</sup> Feb 5pm Closing Date  
1st July 5pm Change of Mind

**\*\*WE CANNOT STRESS ENOUGH THE IMPORTANCE OF READING THE HANDBOOK AND FILLING IN THE APPLICATION CAREFULLY\*\*** Regularly check the ALERT LIST on cao.ie for changes

#### NOTES: WHEN CHOOSING A COURSE LOOK AT:

- Career aspirations/hopes\*\*\*N.B (what kind of job/career will the course lead to? And how does this suit the skills, abilities and personality of the young person?)

- Higher/Ordinary level/points/
- Course and College Subject requirements – level of award
- Course content and subjects studied each year of course.
- When and how to apply
- Location
- Job prospects
- Prospects for further study
- Funding/grants
- Any pre-tests, interviews, portfolios to be completed.

#### The CAO Form

After considering the aforementioned and reading the handbook and college prospectus/literature

#### Apply online on www.cao.ie

- choose **up to a maximum of 10** on each list (Level 8/ Level 6 & 7
- **Place in genuine order of preference**(1 is favourite, 2 is 2<sup>nd</sup> favourite and so on)
- Do **not base order of choice on present expectation of examination performance/POINTS.**
- **Retain printout of on-line application and any subsequent changes in order of preference**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Feb is deadline - Closing Date, Change of mind 1<sup>st</sup> July – discount fee of 30 euro online by 20<sup>th</sup> Jan or 45 euro by 1<sup>st</sup> Feb**

**Public Health Guidelines permitting, the Guidance team will have a parents CAO information evening in Dec/Jan. (details will be texted to parents).**

#### UCAS -

**Applying to college in N.Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales**

Completed forms (application details, personal statement, details for reference) **should be in the school office by mid-term break\*\*** as colleges begin to process these forms as soon as they receive them. Please note that fees are payable in the UCAS system(except Scotland). Irish maintenance grants be issued for UK colleges **under certain circumstances only** .Students and parents are advised to check with SUSI re financial help available.

Students should apply by 15<sup>th</sup> January at the latest for majority of courses except some courses in Medicine, Dentistry, Vet Medicine, Vet Science for which 15<sup>th</sup> October was the closing date. **However it is advisable to send in completed applications earlier. Hence we asked students to have applications completed by mid-term break(Oct)**

Application details & procedure regarding UCAS application has been discussed with students in class in more detail.

#### EUNICAS

Application to courses through English in Europe can be accessed through [www.eunicas.ie](http://www.eunicas.ie) .

All colleges have unique and individual application processes so it is advisable to do your research and then register with eunicas to receive help with an application.

Benefits of going to college in Europe include \* Lower fees \* less stringent entry requirements due to more available places \*enhanced cultural experience

#### APTITUDE TESTS FOR 3<sup>RD</sup> LEVEL ENTRY

UKCAT, HPAT, BMAT etc apply for some courses this has already been discussed with students in class.

#### STUDY:

A **sensible attitude to study** is vital at this time for leaving cert students. **Students are advised to make out a work plan to maximise time and work efficiently. Study skills are addressed in many classes as well as one off workshops to aid efficient study.**

**Plenty of study advice & aids** are available from class teachers or on [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie) & [careersnews.ie](http://careersnews.ie)

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

##### **REACH+ Profile:**

All students have been set up and have access to an online career management programme that if used correctly will aid them in managing their career research and decision making. This will help them record and save careers and courses they are interested in and guide them towards further research options.

##### **COLLEGE OPEN DAYS**

These take place throughout the year and give students a chance to make a more informed choice re their choice of college. Most are virtual at present but whether online or in person, booking is essential. Events are listed on the calendar on [careersportal/Reach](http://careersportal/Reach) and on school guidance webpage

Subject to time and availability, speakers from various colleges will visit us here in PCH (either virtually or in person)

#### **Virtual resource access:**

All information can be accessed online- prospectus/open days/forms etc

[www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie)

[www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie)

[www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)

[www.careersnews.ie](http://www.careersnews.ie)

[www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie)

[www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie)

[www.fetchcourses.ie](http://www.fetchcourses.ie)

[www.apprenticeships.ie](http://www.apprenticeships.ie)

## Guidance Department PCH

Students receive information in class and are taught to develop skills in self-directed research. REACH+ online profile & website, Notice Boards, Google Classroom are used to supplement classroom instruction.

The careers page on [www.presheadford.ie](http://www.presheadford.ie) & the twitter account @careerspch is also used to pass on information from educational institutions, industry partners & college campuses.

## \*INDIVIDUAL CAREERS INTERVIEW WITH GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR

Each year we endeavor to **see each student on an individual basis** at least once and this policy will continue this year time permitting. However **it is important that students follow up on any advice given** and get queries and questions sorted out in good time for applications to various colleges and courses. **Personal responsibility for career development is vital.**

The following things may be discussed at this interview

- Relevant personal details
- Junior cert subjects and grades
- Favourite school subjects
- Hobbies and interests
- Any work experience paid/unpaid
- Interpretation of Results of Aptitude and/or Interest Tests
- Careers research completed so far
- Ideas/expectations students have about work/college
- Focus on particular careers / courses
- Provision of course/career information (using computer or literature)
- Follow up\*\*\*\*\*

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Higher Education Grants Scheme is **means tested** – based on parent's income. **Apply online through Student Universal Support Scheme(SUSI) on [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie).** A video guide to application is available on this site. Classes will be given on this later in the year. Parents can begin collecting income information & documentation in the meantime.

**ACCESS –\*\*\* The HEAR Scheme(Higher Education Access Route)**

'Access' is about helping students who for a variety of financial or social reasons may have difficulties going onto 3<sup>rd</sup> level education. It could involve getting into a course on reduced points, or getting extra help with mentoring/ financial help with accommodation or books etc. Some colleges require students to do a special Access course while others take in students and organize specific arrangements when students start college. Some run their own application scheme while others are part of an overall application scheme which applies to a number of colleges.

**HEAR (Higher Education Access Route)- scheme which covers the publicly funded colleges including NUIG & GMIT. If students are applying they should tick the HEAR box on the bottom of their CAO Form and complete the form that appears subsequently. All this is covered in class and info uploaded to classroom See [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie) for details or the download section of the CAO website. [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)**

All 3<sup>rd</sup> level colleges have an Access Officer and their contact details are available on the college website or college prospectus.

## SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY DISABILITY/ONGOING MEDICAL CONDITION – \*\*\*\*\* DARE Scheme (Disability Access Route)

A student who has any form of specific learning difficulty, disability or medical condition which might affect their performance at 3<sup>rd</sup> level is advised to tick the box marked disability/SLD on the form when applying to CAO.(*Specific learning difficulties may include Autism/Aspergers, ADD/ADHD, Blind/vision impaired, Dyspraxia, Mental Health condition, Neurological conditions, Physical disability or significant ongoing conditions*)

They will then be asked to give more details, consultants reports etc. It is advisable to do it now – the colleges need time to make appropriate arrangements for the student. Student should talk to guidance counsellor asap

**All colleges now also have a Disability Officer and colleges not part of the DARE scheme make their own arrangements with students – it is important to contact colleges Disability Officer well in advance. –**

see prospectus or college website for contact details.

**\*\*The DARE Scheme – Disability Access Route to Education – covers all publicly funded colleges. It aims to promote equity of access to higher education for school leavers with disability/ongoing medical condition which might affect their access to & performance in third level. See [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) - download section for details**

**If you son/daughter may be eligible for DARE, ensure they alert the Guidance Counsellor so arrangements can be made to fill out the school EIS section. All other sections are the responsibility of the student.**

## FINAL NOTE:

*Your son/daughter had one class per week in 'guidance' and . General information relating to careers is covered such as – application procedures( UCAS, CAO, Apprenticeships, PLCs etc), Study Techniques, 3<sup>rd</sup> level Access Schemes, talks from 3<sup>rd</sup> level and PLC colleges, Skills, Talents, Interests etc. Attendance and follow up on topics covered is vital and it might be only next summer or autumn or later that items covered in these classes become relevant to the individual student.*

**It is also vital that students continue to update their Reach+ profile.**

*We hope this newsletter will go some way in helping you help your son or daughter.*

*Joanne Whitney/John Slattery/Cathy Costello  
PCH Guidance Dept.*

**The Road to success begins with the first step**

