

Description & Purpose of the Central Applications Office

The Central Applications Office (Universities and other Higher Education Institutions) is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. It was incorporated on 23 January 1976 and is commonly known under the short title 'CAO'. Its membership is representative of the higher education sector and it is governed by a board of directors drawn from the membership. The Office is financed entirely by application fees and does not enjoy any state support.

The CAO facilitates application for first year admission to almost the full range of statutorily-recognised undergraduate higher education in the Republic of Ireland. It offers a high degree of convenience to applicants and their advisors. It also offers considerable economies and efficiencies to higher education institutions in filling their course places. Fairness and transparency are the foundations of the system as well as equality of treatment for both applicants and participating higher education institutions.

Higher education institutions participating in the CAO system retain full control over their admission policies and admission decisions. If they wish, they may delegate certain routine assessment functions to CAO under instruction. Over the years since CAO's establishment, a voluntary code of admission practice has grown

up which has greatly enhanced the value and reputation of the entire system. Higher education institutions, without exception, publish their admission policies in advance and specify the means by which entrants will be chosen. It is also accepted that the position of a particular course in an applicant's order of preference should have no bearing on assessment for admission to that course. These practices have helped to earn a well-deserved reputation for fairness and transparency in the conduct of admission to Irish higher education.





Brief History of the Organisation

CAO owes its origins to the increased participation in higher education which resulted from the free secondary education policy of the 1960s together with the greater availability of student support grants. By 1970 significant difficulties were arising because of multiple application for admission and the introduction of *numerus clausus* in certain professional courses.

A meeting of university representatives was held in Trinity College, Dublin, in 1971 to explore 'the desirability of establishing an Irish Clearing House'. A report was forwarded to the heads of the (five) university colleges who accepted the principle of the establishment of a clearing house for the universities and were " ... prepared to envisage the extension of the system to cover admission to all third-level institutions". A working party was established which drew up proposals for a central applications service.

The project gained momentum in the summer of 1975 with a declaration of support by the Higher Education Authority. Final agreement to the establishment of a central applications service was reached in 1975 at a meeting between the university heads and the HEA. Representatives were appointed to finalise the Memorandum and Articles of Association which were signed on 19/12/1975.

The central applications service was first offered for the autumn 1977 intake. The Office was based in temporary premises at 7 Clare Street, Dublin 2, until the end of 1977 when it moved to Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway, where it has remained since. The service began with 5 participant higher education institutions – the five university colleges. Major growth in CAO participation took place in 1991 (the Regional Technical Colleges – subsequently renamed Institutes of Technology), 1992 (the Colleges of Education) and 1998-99 (NCEA-recognised courses in private colleges). By the year 2001 there were 43 participants.

The clearly-expressed intention of the university founders of the CAO was that it should expand in time to cover all institutions of higher education. In furtherance of this aim, the CAO Board of Directors has shown a consistently-welcoming attitude towards the participation of additional institutions in the central scheme. The only stipulation which the Board makes is that courses for inclusion in the CAO Handbook should have statutory recognition in Ireland. In general, this has meant

that terminal awards are made either by Irish Universities, Institutes of Technology or by the Higher Education & Training and Awards Council.

CAO has seized every opportunity to increase operational productivity in order to maintain a high standard of service while controlling costs to applicants. The growth in applicant numbers has helped by enabling economies of scale. There were also highly-significant operational developments – the computerisation of Leaving Certificate Examination procedures by the Dept of Education in 1989, the development of a computer network in 1995 connecting all CAO-participant institutions and the introduction of a comprehensive website facility in 2000. While affordable computer capacity used to be a constraint on productivity, this is no longer an issue due to developments over the past decade which saw ever-greater power available at a steadily-declining cost. In regard to staffing, the policy has been one of maintaining a small core of well-skilled permanent staff augmented as necessary by seasonal staff.

The growth of the CAO system over the 25 seasons 1977 – 2001 is illustrated in Table One overleaf. Tables Two, Three, Four and Five illustrate some of the main parameters of the 2001 season. Additional Tables at the end of the Report show comparisons over time. The term 'Degrees' implies direct entry to degree courses. 'Dip/Cert' refers to direct entry to diploma or certificate courses many of which have subsequent transfer routes to degree awards. 'Nett Acceptances' refers to final acceptances – relevant where applicants have two or more successive acceptances.

The 2001 season saw the introduction of application for Nursing Courses into the CAO system in line with the recommendations of the Carroll Commission on Nursing. A special transitional arrangement obtained for 2001 admission in that Nursing application was effected in terms of three separate additional choice lists – General, Psychiatric and Mental Handicap Nursing. These operated side-by-side with the usual Degree and Dip/Cert lists. This arrangement will continue for 2002 admission before Nursing application is amalgamated into the Degree list for 2003 admission. A summary of 2001 Nursing application statistics is given at the end of the Report.



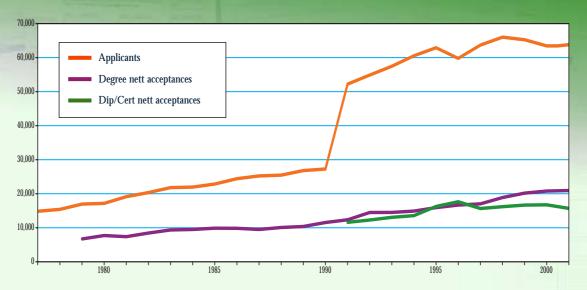


TABLE	ONE: THE	E GROWTH OF	THE CAO SYS	ΓΕΜ 1977 - 20	001	
Year	Applic- -ants	Deg.nett acceptances	Dip/Cert nett acceptances	Total nett acceptances	HEIs	Courses
1977	14845	(not avail).	(not avail.)	(not avail)	5	69
1978	15401	"	"	"	7	82
1979	16955	6709	-	6709	7	75
1980	17165	7714	-	7714	7	71
1981	19130	7380	-	7380	8	76
1982	20339	8443	-	8443	9	95
1983	21799	9349	-	9349	9	97
1984	21949	9495	-	9495	9	99
1985	22851	9872	-	9872	9	102
1986	24421	9838	-	9838	9	104
1987	25229	9496	-	9496	9	104
1988	25464	10076	-	10076	9	107
1989	26806	10367	-	10367	10	109
1990	27259	11540	-	11540	10	117
1991	52212	12341	11594	23935	23	152/233
1992	54877	14488	12274	26762	31	176/244
1993	57465	14506	13061	27567	31	188/258
1994	60548	14900	13559	28459	31	203/270
1995	62913	15923	16268	32191	34	225/285
1996	59778	16667	17644	34311	34	246/297
1997	63677	17021	15655	32676	35	261/337
1998	66012	18872	16189	35061	38	325/338
1999	65253	20179	16663	36842	41	365/352
2000	63451	20786	16739	37525	44	387/374
2001	63810	20934	15691	36625	43	369/343

NOTES:
(i) (i) HEIs = no. of higher education institutions participating.
(ii) Courses = no. of course choices available; after 1990 = Degrees/Dip Certs.
(iii) Figures for 1996 and 1997 perturbed by introduction of L.C. transition year.



TABLE TWO DEGREE LIST 2001						
Applications, first preferences, offer	rs, nett accej	ptances, %	acceptance	es.		
SUBJECT AREA:	A	В	С	D	E	F
	(no.)	(no.)	(no.)	(no.)	(%)	(%)
01 Arts/Social Science	94018	14308	9952	6535	66	52
02 Science/Applied Science	46577	5262	5611	3283	59	54
03 Agric./Horticulture	1459	387	289	157	54	63
04 Education	18430	4126	2054	1569	76	70
05 Admin./Business	84579	12561	7929	4562	58	57
06 Engineering/Technology	60370	9460	5653	3080	54	63
07 Architecture	1612	643	111	84	76	87
08 Art & Design	946	371	124	60	48	88
09 Law	12164	2674	974	762	78	67
10 Human Medicine	5048	1486	496	341	69	78
11 Veterinary Medicine	728	497	87	7384	100	
12 Dentistry	845	204	101	64	63	78
13 Pharmacy	848	342	95	76	80	99
14 Physiotherapy	2697	682	170	114	67	64
15 Other Healthcare	2929	617	292	174	60	55
TOTAL	333250	53620	33938	20934	62	58

Total course applications. First preferences (= no. of applicants). Total offers issued.

Col. A: Col. B: Col. C: Col. D: Col. E: Col. F:

Nett acceptances.
% of offers finally accepted.
% of nett acceptances which were first preferences in the Degree List.

TABLE THREE				DIP/C	CERT LIS	T 2001
Applications, first preferences, offe	rs, nett accep	otances, %	acceptance	s.		
SUBJECT AREA:	A (no.)	B (no.)	C (no.)	D (no.)	E (%)	F (%)
01 Arts/Social Science	23595	5868	3166	808	26	72
02 Science/Applied Science	26310	3981	4793	1282	27	70
03 Agric./Horticulture	2434	641	505	201	40	86
04 Education	-	-	-	-	-	-
05 Admin./Business	126437	20872	18989	5756	30	67
06 Engineering/Technology	93674	15034	13952	5866	42	68
07 Architecture	4678	1161	689	311	45	77
08 Art & Design	17955	3980	2441	1068	44	76
09 Law	4321	870	841	244	29	75
10 Human Medicine	-	-	-	-	-	-
11 Veterinary Medicine	-	-	-	-	-	-
12 Dentistry	-	-	-	-	-	-
13 Pharmacy	-	-	-	-	-	-
14 Physiotherapy	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 Other Healthcare	5392	2066	1302	155	12	93
TOTAL	304796	54473	46678	15691	34	69

Total course applications. First preferences (= no. of applicants). Total offers issued.

Col. A: Col. B: Col. C: Col. D: Col. E: Col. F:

Nett acceptances.
% of offers finally accepted.
% of nett acceptances which were first preferences in the Dip/Cert List.



(Ref. AGEGEN)

Number of nett acceptances for 2001 admission by age at 1st January 2001.

(Figures in brackets are percentages)

TABLE FOUR

DEGREES			
AGE AT 1st JAN:	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
23 or more	409 (5)	558 (5)	967 (5)
22	58 (1)	40 (1)	98 (1)
21	89 (1)	91 (1)	180 (1)
20	186 (2)	217 (2)	403 (2)
19	541 (6)	643 (5)	1184 (6)
18	3016 (34)	3707 (31)	6723 (31)
17	3867 (42)	5499 (45)	9366 (44)
16	816 (9)	1197 (10)	2013 (10)
TOTAL	8982 (100)	11952 (100)	20934 (100)

DIP/CERTS			
AGE AT 1st JAN:	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
23 or more	428 (5)	319 (5)	747 (5)
22	79 (1)	46 (1)	125 (1)
21	117 (1)	78 (1)	195 (1)
20	312 (4)	212 (3)	524 (3)
19	868 (10)	669 (10)	1537 (10)
18	2528 (29)	2130 (30)	4658 (30)
17	3480 (40)	2781 (39)	6261 (39)
16	874 (10)	770 (11)	1644 (11)
TOTAL	8686 (100)	7005 (100)	15691 (100)

TABLE FIVE

Nett acceptances for 2000 admission by stated home address.

DEGREES			
ADDRESS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Rep. of Ireland	8794	11646	20440
N. Ireland	93	162	255
Rest of UK	64	81	145
Rest of EU	23	46	69
Non-EU	8	17	25
ALL	8982	11952	20934

DIP/CERTS			
ADDRESS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Rep. of Ireland	8666	6976	15642
N. Ireland	5	8	13
Rest of UK	5	11	16
Rest of EU	4	9	13
Non-EU	3	4	7
ALL	8683	7008	15691





NETT ACCEPTANCES 2001 BY SECTOR (2000 figures in brackets)				
Type of institution:	Total	%		
Colleges of Education	1184 (1203)	3.2 (3.2)		
Dublin Institute of Technology	3253 (3345)	8.9 (8.9)		
Other Institutes of Technology	15046 (15722)	41.1 (41.9)		
Universities (excl. Colleges of Education)	15642 (15714)	42.7 (41.9)		
Other institutions (*)	1500 (1541)	4.1 (4.1)		
TOTAL	36625 (37525)	100.0 (100.0)		

^(*) Colleges of Philosophy & Theology (All Hallows, Carlow, Milltown), independent colleges (American College Dublin, Burren College of Art, Dublin Business School, Griffith College Dublin, Portobello College), Natl College of Art & Design, Natl College of Ireland, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Shannon College of Hotel Management, Tipperary Institute.

NETT ACCEPTANCES BY TYPE OF QUALIFICATION 2001				
(2000 figures in brackets):				
Degrees	20934 (20786)	57.2 (55.4)		
Diplomas/Certificates	15691 (16739)	42.8 (44.6)		
TOTAL	36625 (37525)	100.0 (100.0)		



STAFFING AND FINANCES

CAO derives its income from application fees and, since its inception, has maintained a policy of keeping fees at the lowest level consistent with an appropriate standard of service. This policy has led to a steady reduction in the real value of fees over the years as the Office availed of every opportunity to increase its productivity. At their meeting of June 2001, the CAO Board of Directors established fees for 2002 application at the rates of 20 euro for website application and 30 euro for paper application. These rates represent 41% and 62%, respectively, of the 1982 basic application fee in real terms.

Under its constitution, the company may not remunerate its Directors nor distribute any surplus to its Members. Any operating surpluses go towards a contingency reserve and a provision for equipment replacement.

The CAO has a permanent staff of 10, a number which has remained constant since 1981. Up to 30 seasonal staff are engaged for about 3 months of each year to deal with peaks in clerical work.

The audited Financial Statements of the company are published separately. A summary of provisional results for the year ended 31/12/2001 is shown here in Tables Six and Seven as well as a comparison with the previous year. The 2001 results have yet to be approved by the CAO Board and Annual General Meeting.

The 2001 financial year was unusual in that, after 25 years occupation of Tower House, a complete refit of premises and computing equipment was undertaken, funded from reserves. A new 25-year lease was agreed dating from 1/1/2002. The computing equipment involved c. £115,000 capital expenditure. The premises refit came to c. £430,000 divided between capital costs of £250,000 and refurbishment expenses of £180,000. These are reflected in the 2001 Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet figures.



DIRECTORS OF THE CENTRAL APPLICATIONS OFFICE

At 31 December 2001 the list of Directors was as follows:

Prof. Patricia Barker,

Prof. James Browne,

Mr Leo Colgan,

Dr Sheila Greene,

Mr Paul Hannigan,

Mr John L. Hayden,

Dr Caroline Hussey,

Mr James P. MacDonagh,

Dr Frank McMahon,

Prof. Aidan Moran, (Chair),

Dr David Redmond,

Dr Pauric Travers.

Company Secretary: Dr Martin Newell.



TABLE SIX		
BALANCE SHEET		31 December 2001
Current Assets	2001 IR£	2000 IR£
Cash on hand	NIL	3,924
Bank current accounts	23,115	32,062
Bank deposit accounts	209,748	326,897
Debtors	36,531	102,069
Subtotal	269,394	464,952
Current liabilities		
Creditors	(207,916)	(89,243)
Nett Current Assets	61,478	375,709
Tangible Assets(*)	467,886	77,373
TOTAL	529,364	453,082
Represented by:		
Accumulated surplus	529,364	453,082

^(*) Increase due to leasehold improvements

 $Price waterhouse Coopers, \ Limerick, \ Auditors.$

TABLE SEVEN		
CAO INCOME &	EXPENDITURE ACC	COUNTS. (IR £)
YEAR	2001	2000
Income (Application fees and bank inter	est): 1,575,121	1,312,602
Less Expenditure:		
Human resource costs	675,550	662,443
Consumables	179,297	173,453
Facilities and services	444,764	411,808
Depreciation	41,407	37,521
Projects (*)	145,273	(2,189)
Surplus/(Deficit) before taxation	88,830	29,566
Taxation Charge	12,548	(4,358)
Nett operating surplus/(deficit)	76,282	25,208

^(*) Office refurbishment expenses





ENTIRE SYSTEM (Deg. & Dip/Cert.) 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001					_	
Applicants accepting one or more offers 32676 35061 36842 37525 36625 Applicants offered but not accepting 16165 16867 17378 15583 15334 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 8245 7177 4744 4092 5045 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 6591 6907 6290 6251 6806 Total Applicants 63677 66012 65254 63451 63810 DEGREE LIST 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 Applicants accepting one or more offers 17021 18872 20179 20786 20934 Applicants offered but not accepting 7886 9623 11218 10521 11072 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 12025 10033 9077 8041 7587 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 14103 15662 14594 14409 14027 Total Applicants 51035 54190 55068 53757 53620 DIP/CERT LIST 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 Applicants accepting one or more offers 15655 16189 16663 16739 15691 Applicants offered but not accepting 28569 30410 31509 29991 28653 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 6822 6059 3807 3946 4114 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 5750 6053 5505 5730 6015	OFFER/ACCEPTANCE figures					
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but receiving no offer 8245 7177 4744 4092 5045 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 6591 6907 6290 6251 6806 Total Applicants 63677 66012 65254 63451 63810 DEGREE LIST 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 Applicants accepting one or more offers 17021 18872 20179 20786 20934 Applicants offered but not accepting 7886 9623 11218 10521 11072 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 12025 10033 9077 8041 7587 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 14103 15662 14594 14409 14027 Total Applicants 51035 54190 55068 53757 53620 DIP/CERT LIST 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 Applicants accepting one or more offers 15655 16189 16663 16739 15691 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 6822	* *	16165	16867	17378	15583	15334
Total Applicants 63677 66012 65254 63451 63810		8245	7177	4744	4092	5045
DEGREE LIST 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001	Ineligible or unassessed applicants	6591	6907	6290	6251	6806
Applicants accepting one or more offers 17021 18872 20179 20786 20934 Applicants offered but not accepting 7886 9623 11218 10521 11072 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 12025 10033 9077 8041 7587 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 14103 15662 14594 14409 14027 Total Applicants 51035 54190 55068 53757 53620 DIP/CERT LIST 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 Applicants accepting one or more offers 15655 16189 16663 16739 15691 Applicants offered but not accepting 28569 30410 31509 29991 28653 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 6822 6059 3807 3946 4114 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 5750 6053 5505 5730 6015	Total Applicants	63677	66012	65254	63451	63810
Applicants accepting one or more offers 17021 18872 20179 20786 20934 Applicants offered but not accepting 7886 9623 11218 10521 11072 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 12025 10033 9077 8041 7587 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 14103 15662 14594 14409 14027 Total Applicants 51035 54190 55068 53757 53620 DIP/CERT LIST 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 Applicants accepting one or more offers 15655 16189 16663 16739 15691 Applicants offered but not accepting 28569 30410 31509 29991 28653 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 6822 6059 3807 3946 4114 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 5750 6053 5505 5730 6015						
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Total Applicants 51035 54190 55068 53757 53620 DIP/CERT LIST 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 Applicants accepting one or more offers 15655 16189 16663 16739 15691 Applicants offered but not accepting 28569 30410 31509 29991 28653 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 6822 6059 3807 3946 4114 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 5750 6053 5505 5730 6015		12025	10033	9077	8041	7587
DIP/CERT LIST 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 Applicants accepting one or more offers 15655 16189 16663 16739 15691 Applicants offered but not accepting 28569 30410 31509 29991 28653 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 6822 6059 3807 3946 4114 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 5750 6053 5505 5730 6015	Ineligible or unassessed applicants	14103	15662	14594	14409	14027
Applicants accepting one or more offers 15655 16189 16663 16739 15691 Applicants offered but not accepting 28569 30410 31509 29991 28653 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 6822 6059 3807 3946 4114 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 5750 6053 5505 5730 6015	Total Applicants	51035	54190	55068	53757	53620
Applicants accepting one or more offers 15655 16189 16663 16739 15691 Applicants offered but not accepting 28569 30410 31509 29991 28653 Applicants eligible but receiving no offer 6822 6059 3807 3946 4114 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 5750 6053 5505 5730 6015						
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but receiving no offer 6822 6059 3807 3946 4114 Ineligible or unassessed applicants 5750 6053 5505 5730 6015	* *	28569	30410	31509	29991	28653
		6822	6059	3807	3946	4114
Total Applicants 56796 58711 57484 56406 54473	Ineligible or unassessed applicants	5750	6053	5505	5730	6015
	Total Applicants	56796	58711	57484	56406	54473



FIRST PREFERENCE APPLI	CATIONS B	Y SUBJE	CT ARI	EA De	gree List
Subject Area	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
01 Arts/Social Science	13491	13247	13391	13116	14308
02 Science/Applied Science	5411	6027 555	9 5241	5262	
03 Agric./Horticulture	557	525	457	396	387
04 Education	4710	4903	4224	4414	4126
05 Admin./Business	10880	12340	14053	13458	12561
06 Engineering/Technology	8219	8952	9515	9743	9460
07 Architecture	774	689	663	663	643
08 Art & Design	122	361	370	356	371
09 Law	2126	2476	2483	2502	2674
10 Human Medicine	1988	1940	1910	1650	1486
11 Veterinary Medicine	675	642	528	512	497
12 Dentistry	271	253	240	194	204
13 Pharmacy	438	430	393	325	342
14 Physiotherapy	675	625	632	608	682
15 Other Healthcare	698	780	650	579	617
All Courses	51035	54190	55068	53757	53620

FIRST PREFERENCE APPLICAT	IONS BY	SUBJE	CT ARI	EA Dip/0	Cert List
Subject Area	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
01 Arts/Social Science	6264	6510	4847	4887	5868
02 Science/Applied Science	4649	4352	4538	4242	3981
03 Agric./Horticulture	433	374	258	220	641
05 Admin./Business	20772	21235	22642	22529	20872
06 Engineering/Technology	15910	18200	17473	16199	15034
07 Architecture	1142	1251	1281	1078	1161
08 Art & Design	2965	2857	2853	3056	3980
09 Law	722	874	917	909	870
15 Other Healthcare	3939	3058	2675	2471	2066
All Courses	56796	58711	57484	55591	54473





NETT ACCEPTANCES BY SUB	Degree List				
Subject Area	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
01 Arts/Social Science	5455	5859	6080	6140	6535
02 Science/Applied Science	2963	3258	3306	3477	3283
03 Agric./Horticulture	223	218	209	200	157
04 Education	951	1115	1257	1526	1569
05 Admin./Business	3535	3966	4520	4550	4562
06 Engineering/Technology	2419	2870	3258	3160	3080
07 Architecture	103	95	103	115	84
08 Art & Design	20	49	57	52	60
09 Law	650	694	655	763	762
10 Human Medicine	325	336	323	330	341
11 Veterinary Medicine	64	67	68	72	73
12 Dentistry	66	64	69	66	64
13 Pharmacy	74	72	72	72	76
14 Physiotherapy	63	70	68	110	114
15 Other Healthcare	110	139	134	153	174
All Courses	17021	18872	20179	20786	20934

NETT ACCEPTANCES BY SUBJECT AREA					Dip/Cert List	
Subject Area	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	
01 Arts/Social Science	627	629	546	751	808	
02 Science/Applied Science	1740	1591	1533	1500	1282	
03 Agric./Horticulture	60	40	52	41	201	
05 Admin./Business	5379	5830	6673	6557	5756	
06 Engineering/Technology	6206	6549	6080	6231	5866	
07 Architecture	250	302	377	300	311	
08 Art & Design	1006	886	949	948	1068	
09 Law	256	235	271	273	244	
15 Other Healthcare	131	127	182	138	155	
All Courses	15655	16189	16663	16739	15691	



NURSING APPLICATIONS 2001

Under the transitional arrangements agreed for 2001 (and 2002), Nursing application is effected via three choice lists with up to ten choices in each. These refer to General, Psychiatric and Mental Handicap Nursing. Also, application is made for admission via particular higher education institutions to associated hospital-based Schools of Nursing. When Nursing application is amalgamated into the Degree list in 2003, the allocation of Nursing students to Schools of Nursing will become an internal matter for the higher education institutions.

Obviously, any system allowing up to fifty choices in five lists was going to pose serious challenges for admissions officers in estimating offer ratios for the three new Nursing lists and this proved to be the case. The lack of precedent was a huge handicap. Indeed, it is a tribute to the admissions officers that, faced with an almost impossible task, they managed to achieve the required quotas. Difficulties of estimation are at their most intense when the number of places and the anticipated acceptance rate are both very low. In the case of Nursing applications these difficulties were clearly compounded by "box-ticking" as illustrated by the low offer-acceptance percentages shown in column E of the table below, particularly for Psychiatric and Mental Handicap Nursing.

In 2001 a total of 6578 people applied for one or more of the Nursing branches. Of these, 4062 applied also for Degrees and/or Dip/Certs. Some 1735 of the total applied on grounds of mature years (at least 23 years of age on or before 1/1/2001). The following table summarises the 2001 outcome.



NURSING APPLICATIONS 2001							
SUBJECT AREA:	A (no.)	B (no.)	C (no.)	D (no.)	E (%)	F (no.)	G (no.)
General	43048	6150	3115	1183	38	14	21
Psychiatric	20071	3540	2345	361	15	10	12
Mental Handicap	13060	2778	1923	181	9	6	8

Col. A: Col. B: Col. C: Total course applications. No. of applicants. Total offers issued.

Col. D: Nett acceptances.
Col. E: Percentage of offers finally accepted.
Col. F: No. of HEIs offering this branch of Nursing.
Col. G: No. of associated hospital-based Schools of Nursing.



Institutions participating in the CAO System in 2001

LOCATION INSTITUTION

Athlone Athlone Institute of Technology

Ballyvaughan Burren College of Art

Carlow College

Institute of Technology, Carlow

Cork Cork Institute of Technology

University College Cork (NUI)

Dublin All Hallows College

American College Dublin

Church of Ireland College of Education

Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Dublin Business School

Dublin City University

Dublin Institute of Technology

Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology

Froebel College of Education Griffith College Dublin

Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown

Institute of Technology, Tallaght

Mater Dei Institute of Education

Milltown Institute of Theology & Philosophy

National College of Art and Design

National College of Ireland (NCI)

Portobello College

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland St Catherine's College of Education

St. Patrick's College of Education, Drumcondra

Trinity College Dublin

University College Dublin (NUI)

Dundalk Dundalk Institute of Technology

Galway Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

National University of Ireland, Galway

Letterkenny Institute of Technology

Limerick Limerick Institute of Technology

Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

University of Limerick

Maynooth National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Pontifical University, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth

Shannon College of Hotel Management

Sligo Institute of Technology, Sligo

St. Angela's College of Education

Tipperary Tipperary Institute

Tralee Institute of Technology, Tralee

Waterford Institute of Technology





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