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OVERVIEW OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY ADMISSIONS ROUTE

What is the supplementary admission route into Higher Education?

The supplementary admission route facilitates access to some Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for applicants with disabilities, who, because of the impact of their disability, may not gain the competitive CAO points for their course.

Who is the supplementary admission route for?

It is for you if:

- You are a student with a disability, **and**
- You may not meet the CAO points for the course of your choice due to the impact of your disability

What kinds of disabilities are considered?

Students with a wide range of disabilities are eligible, including students who:

- Have physical and mobility disabilities
- Are blind or vision impaired
- Are deaf or hard of hearing
- Have significant ongoing health issues
- Experience significant mental health difficulties
- Have specific learning disabilities or dyslexia
- Have disabilities such as ADD, ADHD or Aspergers' Syndrome

What standard of Leaving Certificate is required?

- Each College has set entry requirements to each course
- All applicants must reach minimum entry requirements and any specific course requirements
- Students are encouraged to contact individual Colleges for exact details

Which Higher Education Institutions participate in this scheme?

The following Colleges are participating in 2009:

Athlone Institute of Technology - AL
Dublin City University - DC
Dublin Institute of Technology - DT
Mater Dei - MD
National College of Ireland - NC
NUI Galway - GY
NUI Maynooth - MH
Trinity College Dublin - TR
University College Cork - CK
University College Dublin - DN
University of Limerick - LM

All participating HEIs have agreed common criteria for the assessment of eligibility for this scheme. It is also expected that places available under supplementary admissions are targeted at those experiencing the greatest educational disadvantage in second-level education. All participating HEIs have agreed to review all applications for supplementary admission as a group to ensure all applicants are treated fairly and to ensure consistency across the scheme.

HOW TO MAKE A SUPPLEMENTARY ADMISSION APPLICATION

How do I make a supplementary admission application?

1. Complete the CAO application form like all students
2. You must disclose your disability or specific learning difficulty on the CAO form
3. Complete the Supplementary Information Form – If you submit a CAO application online you will be directed to an online version of the form, if you submit a paper CAO application form a Supplementary Information Form will be posted to you.

What information should I provide on the Supplementary Information Form?

You must provide the following information on the SIF:

- Details of disability
- Supports requested and/or provided in second level education
- Likely supports needed in higher education
- Personal statement outlining the impact of your disability to date
- Disability related documentation from medical consultant/Educational Psychologist's Report
- Second Level Academic Reference

What happens to the Supplementary Information Form?

The forms are sent to participating Colleges, who review all applicants as a group. This means individual applicants are considered for places across all participating colleges.

If I have a language waiver for my Leaving Certificate, is this automatically accepted by participating colleges?

No, if you require an exemption from language entry requirements you must apply directly to the National University of Ireland and to the Admissions Offices of University of Limerick, Dublin City University and Trinity College Dublin.

When is my application considered by colleges under the Supplementary Admissions Route?

Your application is usually considered in the first round of CAO offers. Offers are made with standard CAO First Round offers.

If I make a late application or use the change of mind facility am I still considered under the Supplementary Admissions Route?

Yes, you will be considered under the Supplementary Admission Route for the final course preferences indicated on your CAO Application.

Are mature applicants considered under the Supplementary Admission Route?

No, mature students with disabilities apply via the mature admission entry route.

What documentation must be submitted to be considered under the supplementary admission route?

- A completed CAO Supplementary Information Form is returned to the CAO
- The disability documentation provided must be deemed acceptable (see acceptable evidence below).

For verification of disabilities which professionals/specialists are deemed acceptable?

Type of disability	Accepted
Blind / Vision impaired	Ophthalmologist
Deaf / hard of hearing	Audiologist, ENT Consultant
Physical / Mobility Disability	Orthopaedic Consultant, Neurologist (consultant) Other Consultant specific to condition
Medical Condition	Relevant consultant in area of condition
Mental health condition	Psychiatrist
Dyslexia / specific learning disability	Educational Psychologist – enclose full report not evidence of disability form
ADD / ADHD & Asperger's Syndrome	Psychiatrist
Head/Traumatic Brain Injury	Consultant physicians, neurologists, neuropsychologists,
Other disabilities	Relevant medical consultant / specialist

ASSESSMENT OF DOCUMENTATION

Disability documentation is assessed to determine if students are eligible or ineligible for consideration under the supplementary admission route.

Eligible:

- Eligibility is based on the completion of the **Medical Evidence Form** by a relevant specialist or consultant (see above)
- Personal Statement completed
- Second Level Academic reference completed
- All of the above documentation is assessed to determine if there is a significant level of educational disadvantage

Ineligible:

- Medical evidence from a relevant specialist or consultant stating the student has not been, nor will be, negatively impacted
- Evidence from a G.P is not sufficient
- No medical evidence provided
- Application form is incomplete
- Assessment of all the above documentation did not determine a significant level of educational disadvantage

Students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

Applications and evidence of SpLD will be assessed for levels of disadvantage as outlined below. Criteria used to determine levels of disadvantage are consistent with Department of Education and Science guidelines for Irish Language Exemption and State Examinations Commission Reasonable Accommodations in Examinations (RACE). The level of disadvantage is deemed most significant degree where:

- Literacy attainment at or below **10th percentile/SS 81**, significant discrepancy with general ability; two literacy abilities affected. Evidence of deficits in working memory and processing speed.
- Significant level of difficulty experienced by the student, with little or no compensatory strategies in place. Student is unaware of strengths and weaknesses and is struggling to a significant degree to cope with workload.
- Severe impact on ability to succeed. Student may or may not have received specialist tuition but it has been relatively ineffective. Student's written work not reflective of underlying cognitive ability to a significant degree.

How to ensure you can be considered eligible for the supplementary admission route?

It is important to complete the on-line form correctly and include all relevant information so that the participating HEIs can assess this information (see sample forms on the download section of the CAO website). In addition, medical evidence and/or education psychological reports should be provided and should contain specific information as per guidance notes below.

MEDICAL EVIDENCE FORM

Applications will not be considered if the following conditions are not adhered to:

- A relevant Medical Consultant/Specialist who has the training and experience with the particular condition/disability must complete this form.
- This form must be stamped or include a business card/headed paper
- All applicants must complete this form, with the exception of those with Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. Dyslexia), who must provide a recent Educational Psychologist's report
- Evidence from a General Practitioner/family doctor, or support organisation is not accepted as verification of disability.

Guidance notes for Consultants on completing the Medical Evidence Form

Please ensure that the Medical Consultant/Specialist adheres to the following guidelines when completing the Medical Evidence Form.

Please briefly describe the course of the condition:

The first question enquires about the likely course the disability/condition might take over the period of study. Some disabilities/conditions are static and the student will remain at the stage at which they present for the duration of their study. Other disabilities/conditions may remain the same, may have periods of relapse and remission, or may deteriorate. Other disabilities/conditions are progressive with the student requiring greater support as their studies progress.

How does the disability/medical condition impact on the students' ability to study and participate (e.g. fatigue, concentration, pain etc)?

The second question looks at the impact of the disability/medical condition. Please describe the possible impact the disability/medical condition might have on the student's ability to carry out their studies such as:

- Mobility hampered by weakness
- Loss of dexterity
- Inability to control specific movements – steps/stairs could be a problem)
- Pain that makes everyday activities difficult
- Tremors – difficulty writing, holding, manipulating objects
- Fatigue and weakness leading to problems completing exams/lectures
- Difficulty carrying books/props etc for class
- Difficulty reading books, seeing presentations, writing due to visual problems

Measures currently being taken to treat disability (e.g. medication, therapy)

Please outline any medication the student is taking and any possible side-effects. If the student is undertaking any therapies please outline these and time required to participate.

What recommendations would you make for reasonable adjustments to enable equal participation in Higher Education (e.g. examination accommodations, adaptive equipment etc.)?

Please indicate any reasonable accommodations that that you consider necessary for the student to participate effectively in Higher Education (e.g. extra time in examinations, use of assistive technology etc.)

REPORTS FROM EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Each year a large number of applications are assessed as ineligible, as documentation is either incomplete, inappropriate or insufficient. To assist applicants in gathering correct documentation, an Educational Psychologist's report should contain the following core components. Reports must be **no older than 3 years** by the 1 February in the year of application to the CAO.

1. **Cover sheet**, including the student's name, date of birth, age at assessment, date of assessment, university attended, degree course and year of course. Assessments should be no more than three years old.
2. **Introduction**. Referral information; family, developmental and educational history; any relevant medical information and the student's perceptions of his/her difficulties. Any previous assessments should be summarised. Where English is spoken as a second or additional language, details of the student's language history and current levels of competence should be included.
3. **Test behaviour**, i.e. behaviour during the assessment that may have affected the results.
4. **General Level of Intellectual Ability**. Measures of verbal and non-verbal ability should be reported. Students' profiles of scores should be discussed, with particular reference to any significant discrepancies between verbal and non-verbal ability. Results should be reported in both standard scores and percentile points. Age equivalent scores are not sufficient. Tests should be age appropriate as described by the test publisher.
5. **Cognitive Processing**, including working memory, phonological processing and speed of processing. A full IQ test (WAIS III UK, or WISC IV) will have been administered and reported in the previous section, so some of these aspects may have been covered. Performance in other tests, such as numeracy, motor control and/or attentional functioning, may be included. Tests should be age appropriate as described by the test publisher. For example, where the limit of a test is set at 16.11 years, the applicant should be no older than this age when the test is administered.

6. **Attainments in Literacy**, including single word reading, non-word reading, text reading and reading comprehension. Results should cover qualitative analysis of errors, evidence of strategies being used, fluency, reading speed and ability to extract information from text. Information about spelling will come from a graded spelling test and from a piece of free writing, which will also yield information about ability to write grammatically, the complexity of sentence structures, the coherence of writing, use of vocabulary, writing speed and legibility of handwriting. Results should be reported in both standard scores and percentile points. Age equivalent scores are not sufficient. Tests should be age appropriate as described by the test publisher. For example, where the limit of a test is set at 16.11 years, the applicant should be no older than this age when the test is administered.
7. **Attainments in Arithmetic**, should be included if the student will have any mathematical content in their course of study.
8. **Attainments in Language**, and if the student will have difficulty studying a modern continental language.
9. **Conclusion**. It should be stated whether or not the student has an SpLD and whether their condition is disabling in the context of studying at Third level. The effects of SpLD on the students' literacy and study skills should be outlined, taking account of compensatory strengths.
10. **Recommended Support**. As students are likely to have an Assessment of Need it is not necessary or appropriate to make detailed recommendations about technical support. A brief statement about the type of support which might help the student should be made here, particularly in relation to study skills tuition.
11. **Appendix**, including a list of tests used in the assessment (with references) and scores achieved in the tests.

12. Summary.

A list of suitable tests is available from:

http://www.texticweb.com/patoss/downloads/STEC_DfESGuidelines_200708.pdf

Reports are only acceptable where they have been provided by qualified psychologists; this does not include educational consultants or specialist teachers.

An educational psychologist would normally be expected to hold:

- a primary degree in psychology at Honours level, which is recognised by the PSI
- a teaching qualification
- professional training in educational psychology, preferably at Masters level.

Summary of Evidence of a Specific Learning Difficulty

You are strongly advised to review the contents of your report to ensure that it meets the above criteria. If the information outlined above is not available in the psycho-educational assessment, applicants should contact the report author and request any missing information.

To assist you in obtaining additional or missing details, a Summary of Evidence of Specific Learning Difficulty form is available below. This document should be forwarded to the educational psychologist for completion, and should be attached to your application.

Summary of Evidence of Specific Learning Difficulty

Name of Psychologist	
Title	
Address	
Contact Details	
Qualifications	

Name of Student	
Institution Attending	
Home Address	
Contact Details	
Specific Learning Difficulty	

Cognitive profile:	Processing Speed		Psychomotor Speed		
	Auditory Processing		Visual Processing		
	Test used:	Visual Short-Term Memory		Auditory Short-Term Memory	
		Long-Term Memory		Working memory	
	Receptive Language		Expressive Language		
	Visual-Motor Coordination		Vocabulary		
	Coordination (fine/gross)		Perceptual Organisation		
			Other		

Literacy and numeracy attainments:	Reading Comprehension		Reading Accuracy		
	Reading Speed		Spelling		
	Tests used:	Reading Accuracy		Writing Speed	
		Numerical Operations		Written expression	
	Phonological Processing		Handwriting		
	Other		Other		

Signature and stamp of Psychologist

CONTACT DETAILS FOR DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Dublin City University - Disability & Learning Support Service

Tel: 01-700 5927

Email: disability.service@dcu.ie

Admissions Policy Information for students with disabilities – web link:

<http://www.dcu.ie/students/disability/applying.shtml>

Eligibility criteria: Students are deemed eligible for inclusion in the supplementary admissions procedure for students with disabilities if the following criteria are met:

- a completed CAO Supplementary Information form is returned to the CAO
- specific disability documentation provided is deemed acceptable.
- students must meet University Minimum Entry Requirements (Grade C3 in TWO Higher Level subjects and Grade D3 in FOUR Ordinary or Higher Level subjects including Maths and English or Irish) and meet the course requirements.
- Achieve minimum 300 points - It must be noted that these are minimum entry requirements and students cannot always be guaranteed entry at this level for high demand courses
- where demand for places exceeds the number of places available, places are awarded on merit

Trinity College Dublin - Disability Service

Phone – 01-896 3111

Email – disab@tcd.ie

Admissions Policy information for students with disabilities – web link:

<http://www.tcd.ie/Admissions/undergraduate/apply/eu/disability/>

Eligibility criteria: Students are deemed eligible for inclusion in the supplementary admissions procedure for students with disabilities if the following criteria are met:

- a completed CAO Supplementary Information form is returned to the CAO
- specific disability documentation provided is deemed acceptable.
- students must matriculate (three honours and three passes, six Leaving Certificate subjects, including English, Mathematics and one other modern language) and meet the course requirements and be above the minimum entry levels
- where demand for places exceeds the number of places available, places are awarded on merit

University College Dublin - Disability Support Service

Phone: 01 716 7565

E-Mail: dss@ucd.ie

Admissions Policy information for students with disabilities – web link:

<http://www.ucd.ie/access/downloads/Pre%20Entry%20Handbook.pdf>

Eligibility Criteria:

- If you have enough points and have the matriculation requirements for your chosen programme, you will receive a place on that course in line with CAO procedures.
- If you didn't get enough points for your chosen programme you can become eligible for inclusion in the supplementary admissions procedure if
- you return your Supplementary Information Form on time and in full to the CAO,
- Late applications or applications without an up-to-date (no more than three years old) consultant's/educational psychologist's report are not considered. Check www.cao.ie if you have any questions.
- Your Supplementary Information Form is reviewed carefully using strict guidelines.
- Applicants must matriculate and meet the course requirements to be considered for admissions to all programmes.
- If you have any exemptions to matriculation, like a foreign language waiver, you need to contact the [NUI Registrar](mailto:registrar@nui.ie) at registrar@nui.ie

University of Limerick - Disability Support Service

Phone: 061 202346

E-Mail: Disabilityservices@ul.ie

Text: 086 0487825

Admissions Policy information for students with disabilities – web link:

<http://www.ul.ie/disabilityservices/Admissions>

Eligibility criteria: Students are deemed eligible for inclusion in the supplementary admissions procedure for students with disabilities if the following criteria are met:

Eligibility Criteria:

- If you didn't get enough points for your chosen programme you can become eligible for inclusion in the supplementary admissions procedure if
- a completed CAO Supplementary Information form is returned to the CAO
- specific disability documentation provided is deemed acceptable.
- your Supplementary Information Form is reviewed carefully using strict guidelines.
- you must meet University Minimum Entry Requirements (Grade C3 in TWO Higher Level subjects and Grade D3 in FOUR Ordinary or Higher Level subjects including Maths or another language and English) and any relevant specific programme requirements. Where there is no specific maths requirement foundation level maths is acceptable in fulfilling general - minimum entry requirements, except for Nursing Programmes.