

**08/03/2021**

**CAO Press Release**

**\*\*Embargo until 9 March at 6am\*\***

**CAO release 2021 course choices data**

The Central Applications Office (CAO) has released 2021 application data up to the Change of Course Choices closing date of 1 March.

The data shows applications by course classification, course level and by applicant address.

79,176 applications were received by CAO by the 1 February closing date – an increase of 6,203 applicants on the previous year.

There was a total of 8,727 applications from applicants over 23 years of age - up 1,454 (+20%) applications from 2020.

7,839 applicants indicated that they wish to be considered for the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) – an increase of 587 from last year.

A total of 10,016 applicants indicated that they wish to be considered for the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) – a decrease of 1,050 from 2020.

Final numbers for DARE HEAR applicants will not be known until after the 15 March deadline for receipt of supporting documentation.

The data provided at this stage is interim data and is subject to change when late applications are taken into account and when the Change of Mind facility closes on 1 July at 5:15pm.

Speaking about the application figures, communications officer for CAO, Eileen Keleghan, commented: “The majority of CAO applicants will be permitted to use the Change of Mind facility when it opens on 5 May to add, remove or re-order course choices, which will result in changes to the figures released today.

“Late applications are also being accepted up to 1 May at 5:15pm. To apply to CAO go to [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) and click on Apply.

“All CAO applicants will receive a Statement of Application Record before the end of May. This Statement will contain details of important information held on file for the applicant - including course choices and examination details. Any errors or omissions identified in this document must be communicated to CAO immediately” she added.

Registered applicants can log in to view and edit their account information using the My Application facility. Changes to course choices can be made using the Change of Mind facility between the 5 May and the 1 July at 5:15pm – restrictions apply.

**-Ends-**

For more information email Eileen Keleghan before 4pm on Monday, 9 March.

Email: [ekeleghan@cao.ie](mailto:ekeleghan@cao.ie)

**Notes to the Editor:**

- The CAO uses the International Standard Classification of Education for Fields of Education and Training 2013 (ISCED-F). All CAO courses have been assigned one ISCED-F code. In addition, in order to reflect previous subject categories and particular groups, the CAO has implemented a specialist group classification. This specialist group classification is completely separate to the ISCED-F classification and not all courses will be in a specialist group, however, it is possible for a course to be in two specialist groups.
- There are limitations to the year-on-year data comparisons by course classification due to the introduction or cancellation of courses, and as a result of some courses being re-classified by the HEI. The statistical category for each course is given in the accompanying spreadsheet.
- The address data is broken down by the address given on the application – these are grouped: county in Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, British, Other EU countries and other Non-EU countries.
- 307 of the 79,176 applicants were Advanced Entry applicants only. The CAO processes applications for entry to years 2, 3 and 4 of undergraduate courses in some Irish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This entry route is known as Advanced Entry.
- The final DARE/HEAR completed application numbers will not be known until after all the documents have been received (after 15 March) and the screening of that information is complete.