

Dear Principal/Guidance Counsellor,

November 2020

**1 Points scores, offers and acceptances data, and specific statistical information**

To view the above information, please go to the 'Info for Schools' page and click into 'Schools Correspondence'. Go to the 'Dec 2020' tab and you will find all of the information that you usually receive in the November postal mailing. The charts will show the minimum points scores that were required for entry to courses in 2020. In addition, for each course we also show the mid-point score of those who were offered places. Summary data about 2020 offers and acceptances is also included.

As requested at the recent Autumn Conferences, the points charts are in Excel format to allow you to sort and filter the information. This will allow you to filter by subject area, level, institution, round, etc. We hope you find this information helpful.

If you wish to have data on the destinations of your students, please see letter included in the Dec 2020 tab.

**2 Important Changes to courses in the 2020 Handbook**

Since the publication of the 2021 Handbook, some institutions have made changes to the courses on offer. This information is available on the CAO website in the Downloads section and will be updated as we receive new information from HEIs.

**3 Additional information available on the CAO website**

We ask you to encourage applicants to visit the CAO website and become familiar with the services on offer, particularly in the 'Student Resources' section. Applicants should also be encouraged to regularly interact with their CAO account, particularly the 'Correspondence Section' which will contain a log of all of the emails from CAO containing important updates and instructions.

We have prepared and placed on the website the following information which Guidance Counsellors have requested (this will be updated as more information comes to hand from HEIs): Calendar of test and interview dates for 2021; Details of HEI Open Days; Contact details for Admissions Officers, School Liaison and Access Officers (in the **HEI contact details** section); and a Demo Application facility. In the 'Info for Schools' page you will find a link to 'Guidance Counsellor Resources' which contains a slideshow presentation on the CAO process, a presentation and guide for parents and guardians, posters and video guides for sharing on social media.

**4 Supplementary Entry Routes**

The Supplementary Information Form for applicants with a disability or specific learning difficulty has two purposes: to facilitate applicants in alerting HEIs of any special needs and any facilities that might be required; and to supply information to be considered for supplementary admission routes including the DARE scheme. The HEAR form should be completed by applicants who wish to be considered on the basis of socio-economic disadvantage. DARE and HEAR online application forms must be completed by 17:15 on 1 March. Information is available on the website [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie) and in the HEAR/DARE/SIF section of the CAO website. We ask that you encourage students interested in applying for either scheme to start the process early and ensure that they have their documentation submitted to CAO well in advance of the published deadline of 5:15pm on 15 March 2021. **Applicants should allow for potential delays in gathering documentation from third parties - particularly in light of Covid-19 restrictions - and remember that CAO deadlines are final.**

**5 Exemptions**

It is important to note that exemptions are a separate matter to supplying HEIs with information about a disability or specific learning difficulty. If an applicant, for any reason, is seeking exemptions from minimum entry requirements (e.g. exemptions from Irish or modern language requirements) then they should contact the Admissions Offices of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) they are applying to (or, in the case of NUI institutions, they should apply to the NUI without delay and no later than 21 days after opening their CAO account - see [www.nui.ie](http://www.nui.ie) for details). Applicants must make arrangements for exemptions each year they apply.

**6 Changes to the CAO Application Form for 2021**

Applicants are no longer asked to tick the NUI exemption indicator box on the CAO application form. Detailed instructions on seeking exemptions from minimum entry requirements are provided in the Qualifications and Assessments section of the applicant's account.

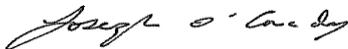
**7 Offers and Acceptances Schedule for 2021**

We intend to publicise details of the 2021 Offers and Acceptances Schedule as soon as the Leaving Certificate resulting date is provided by the State Examinations Commission.

**8 Advice for candidates who sat the Leaving Certificate examinations in November**

A dedicated FAQ sheet has been prepared for Leaving Certificate candidates who sat the examinations in November. This FAQ can be accessed from the Contact page at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie).

Yours sincerely,



Joseph O'Grady  
General Manager