

CAO guide for mature applicants

your next step

Advice on how to navigate the CAO application process.

CAO
www.cao.ie

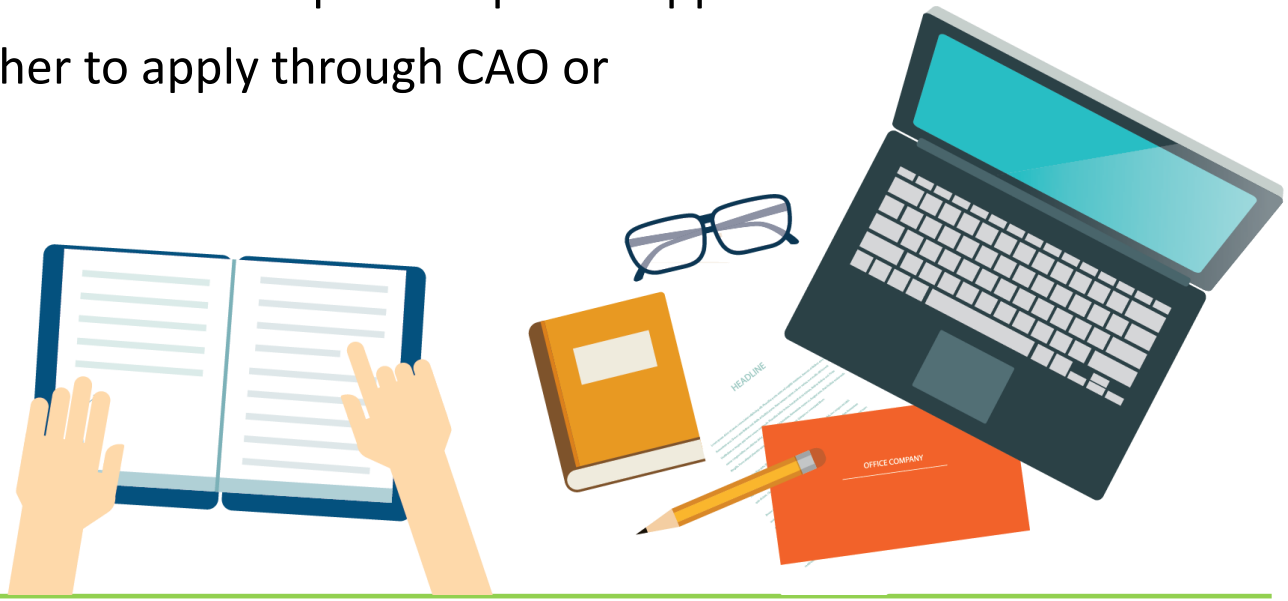
What is a ‘mature applicant’?

A Mature Applicant is normally 23 years old **on or before 1st of January** of the year of admission.



What are the entry requirements for mature applicants?

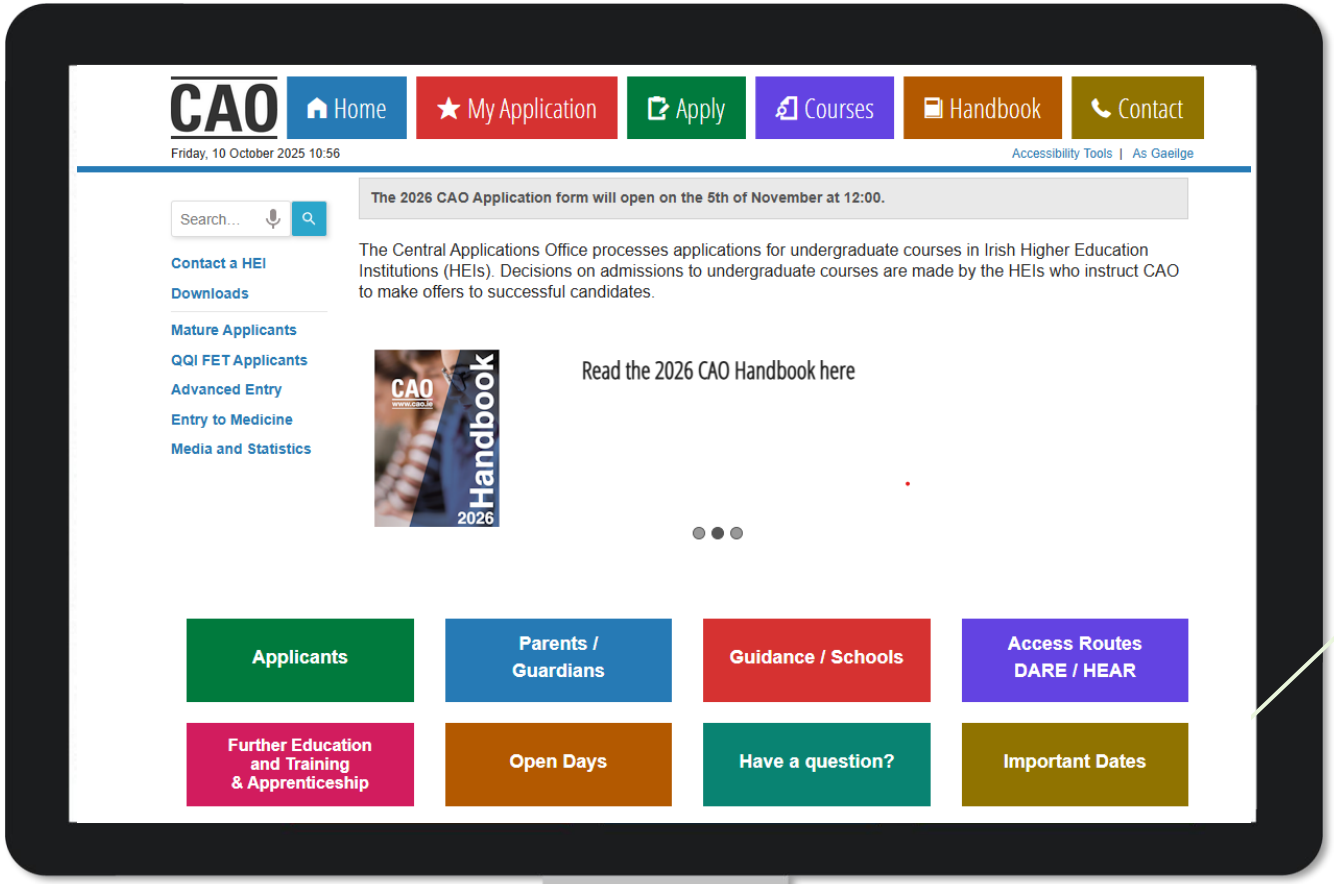
- Before you start your CAO application, you should take some time to review the prospectuses and websites of the institutions that you are interested in applying to for more information – these documents will outline the minimum entry requirements.
- If you have questions, contact the Admissions Officers of the individual institutions and ask them to explain the entry requirements and if a quota of places applies.
- See the CAO Handbook for advice on whether to apply through CAO or directly.



When do I apply?

Apply before 5pm on January 20 and you will avail of the discounted application fee of €35 (normal fee €50)

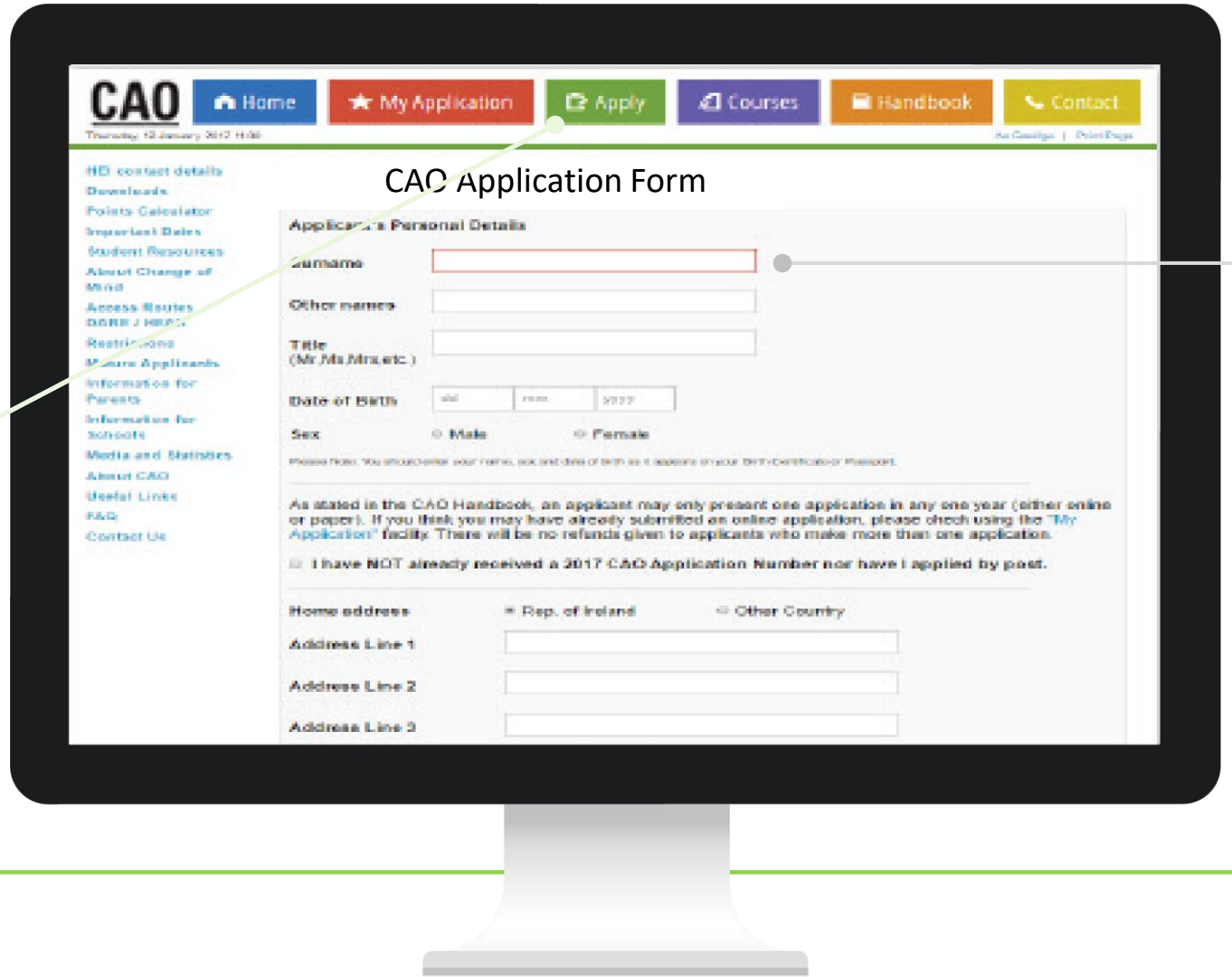
Most HEIs will not consider you on mature grounds if you apply using the 'Late Application' or 'Change of Mind' facilities.



It is extremely important that Mature Applicants have registered on the CAO system before 1 February at 5pm
To view all of the important dates click on the 'Important Dates' link on our homepage.
www.cao.ie

How do I apply?

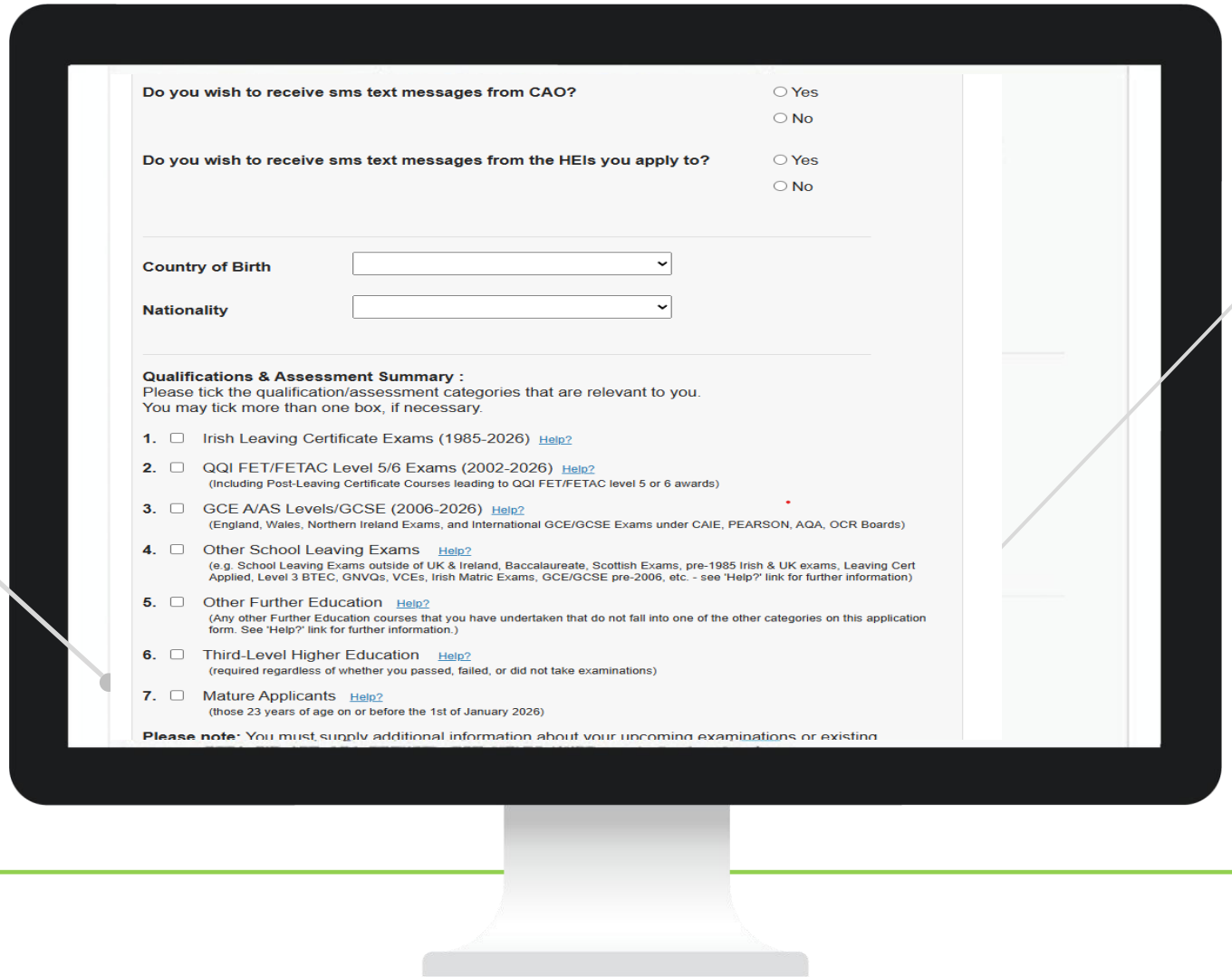
Go to www.cao.ie and click on ‘Apply’.



In order to register on the system and get your CAO Application Number, you must enter your personal details

What Qualifications and Assessments do I mention?

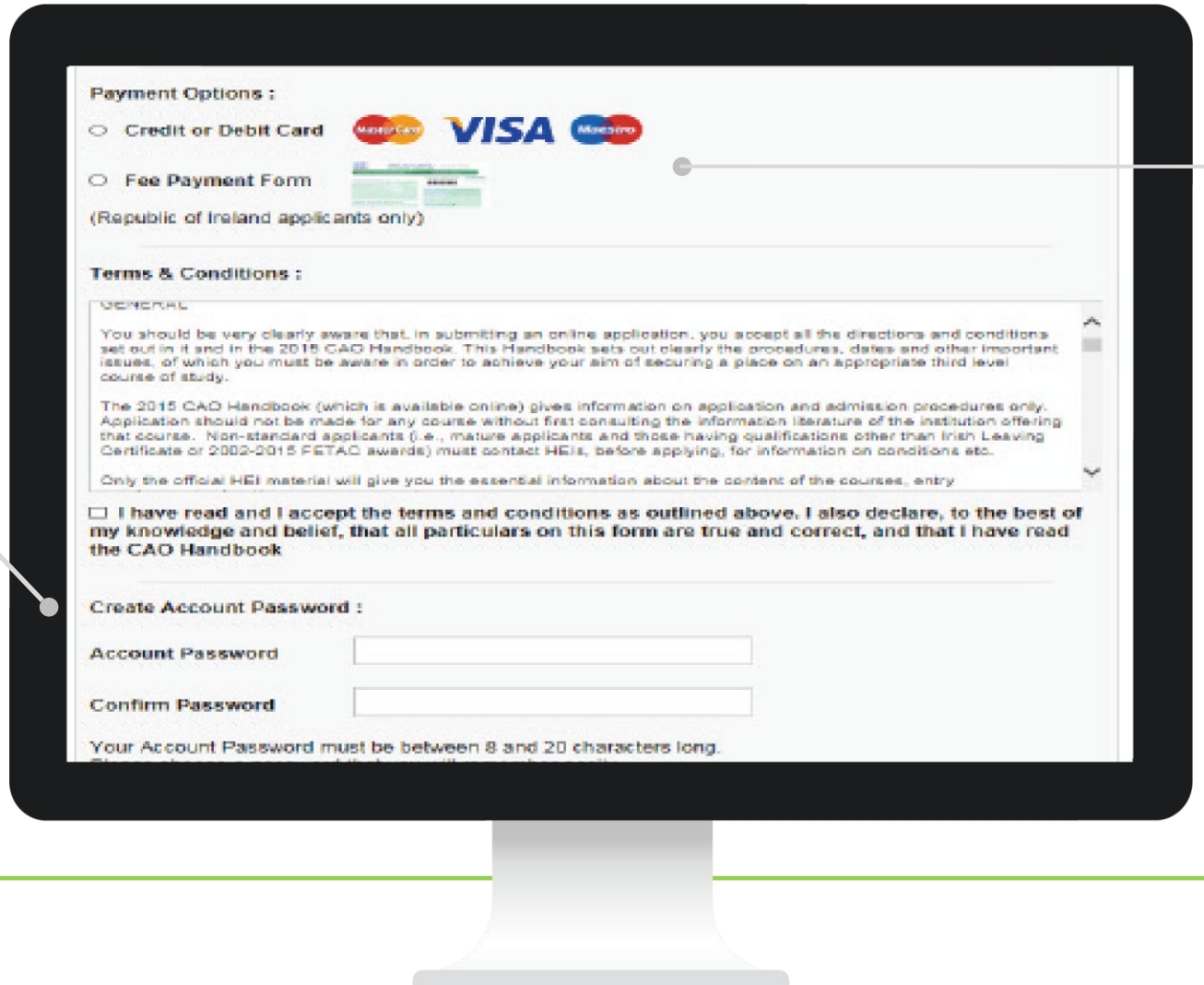
You will be asked to tick the sections of the ‘Qualifications and Assessments’ section that are relevant to you – you may select more than one section if relevant.



Mature Applicants can also be considered on the basis of school leaving exams, but applicants must indicate this by ticking the relevant section(s) and providing the information required in the sections provided.

Final steps to obtain a CAO application number

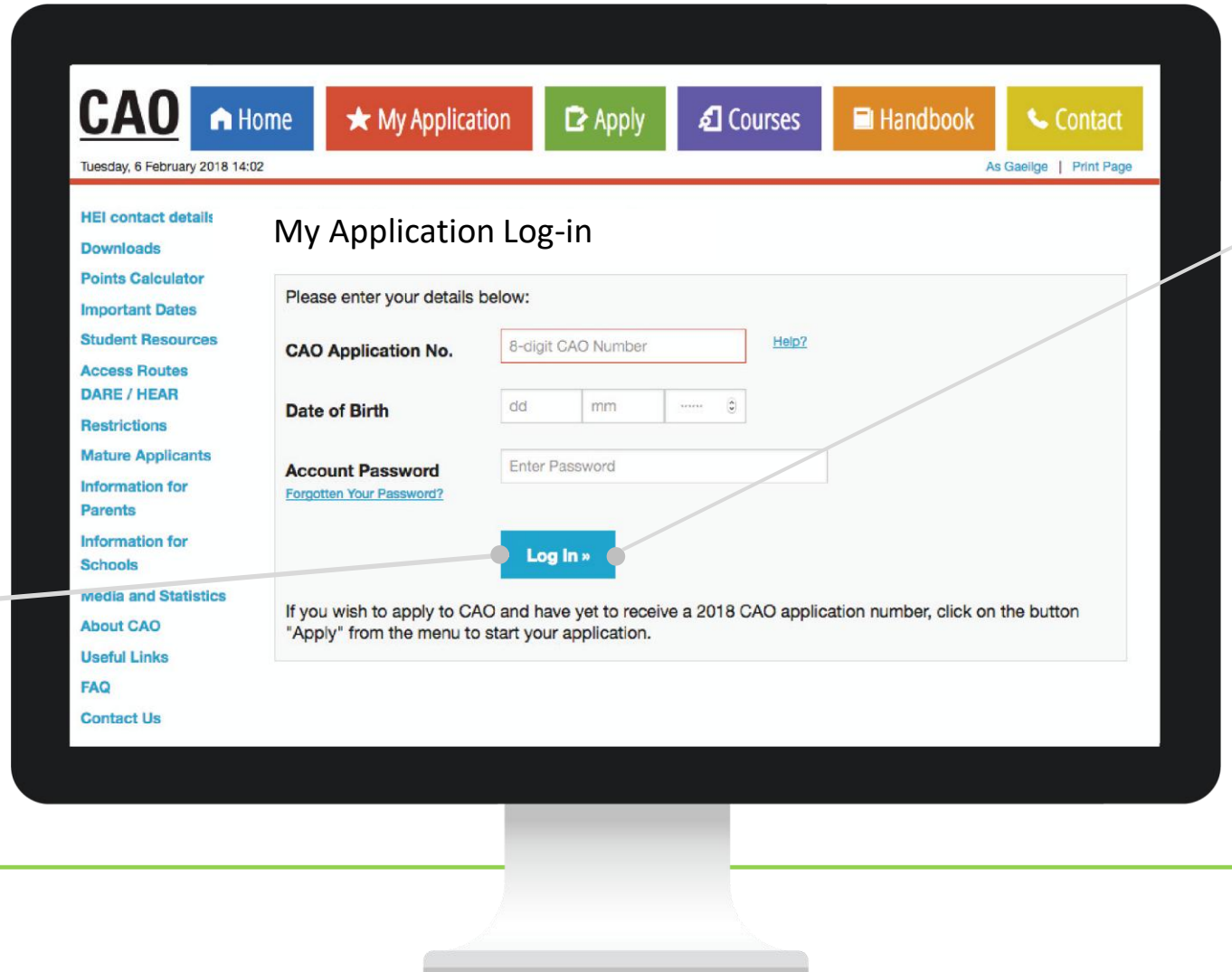
Create an Account Password and click on ‘Proceed with Application’



Enter your payment details.

Managing your application?

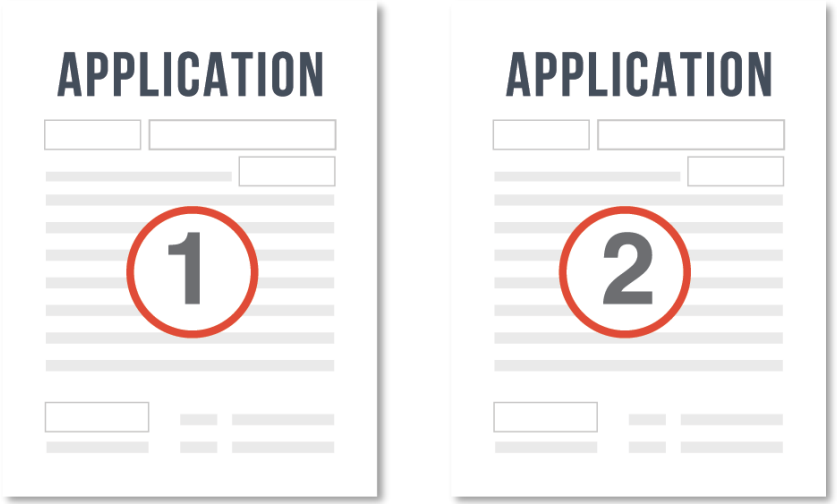
This is also where you will add your Level 7/6 and Level 8 courses. You can also use this facility to make changes to your application using the 'Change of Mind' facility, however, as a Mature Applicant restrictions apply.



You can log in to your account to edit some personal Information. You cannot change your date of birth or name - you must contact CAO if you wish to make changes to this information.

2 Applications in 1

- There are 2 course choice lists (Level 8 and Level 7/6) and applicants may make up to 10 course choices on each list.
- Your choices on one list do not in any way affect your choices on the other list. They may be considered two separate applications on one form.
- It is possible to receive an offer on both lists. You may then decide to accept either your Level 7/6 or your Level 8 offer.
- Alternatively, you might not wish to accept either offer.



NFQ levels	Major Award-Types
Level 8	Honours Bachelor Degree (HD)
Level 7	Ordinary Bachelor Degree (DG)
Level 6	Higher Certificate (HC)

What additional information will I need to provide as a mature applicant?

HEIs wish to carefully evaluate applications from mature applicants and, therefore, need certain additional information (see the CAO Handbook for more information):

1. Highest Qualification to Date.
2. Current Studies
3. Post-secondary
4. Second Level Education
5. Non-certificate Courses
6. Employment or Voluntary Work
7. English Language Proficiency (if applicable)
8. References
9. Statement of Interest
10. Hobbies/Interests
11. Additional Information

School leaving examinations and QQI FET/FETAC results presented by mature applicants are also considered in the normal competition for places at Round One and subsequent rounds.

Mature entry to Nursing/Midwifery/Primary Teaching/Graduate programmes

- Mature applicants to: **- Nursing/Midwifery**
  - Primary teaching
  - Graduate programmes

  are not required to complete Mature Applicant Sections 1-11 UNLESS they are also applying for other courses and wish to be considered on the grounds of mature years for those courses.
- **Nursing/Midwifery:** Applicants applying for entry to nursing/midwifery on the basis of mature years are ranked based on their score in the NMBI assessment process.
- **Graduate Medicine:** Qualified applicants are ranked solely on the basis of GAMSAT results. To qualify, applicants must obtain a second-class honours grade one (2H1) or better in their first Level 8 Honours Degree.

What documents do I need to supply to CAO to support my application?

- Evidence of any qualifications that you have indicated in your online application (within 10 days of applying to CAO).
- Supplementary information that you were unable to include in the space provided.
- Any documentation required by each of the institutions to which you are applying - details of same are available from **www.cao.ie/mature**.
- If English is not your first language, you must provide evidence of competency in the English language.
- You can upload or post your documents to CAO. Do not do both. For more information go to www.cao.ie/upload or www.cao.ie/post



Important Correspondence from CAO



- CAO may communicate with applicants via post, email and SMS text (if this option is selected) throughout the application process. Check all CAO correspondence carefully.
- Before the end of May, all applicants are sent a '**Check and Confirm email**' as a final acknowledgement and to enable them to verify that all information has been recorded completely and correctly - if there is any error or omission inform CAO immediately.

The Offer Stage

- The majority of successful Mature Applicants, including Mature Nursing/Midwifery Applicants, will receive their offer in early July (Round A).
- In early August, additional Mature Applicants and Applicants presenting QQI FET/FETAC for consideration for entry to courses with a quota for QQI FET/FETAC Applicants may receive an offer (Round Zero).
- Subsequent offers may be made throughout the offer season.
- By mid-August (at Round One), if you have not yet been deemed eligible for an offer you will receive a 'Check and Confirm' email. You must check your account carefully to ensure that all of the information we have on file for you is correct – any errors or omissions should be notified to CAO immediately.



The Offer Process



There can be no delays at the offer/acceptance stage.

- Offers can be accepted online.
- Any offer not accepted by the closing date for receipt of acceptance of offers in CAO will be offered to another applicant in the next round of offers.
- You will receive an e-mail acknowledging your acceptance if you accept online.

Common Pitfalls!

- Applicants wishing to be considered on the basis of mature years must remember to tick the '**Mature Applicant**' box on the '**Qualifications and Assessments**' section of the application form. (Do not tick this box if you do not meet the minimum age requirements)
- Do not forget to send in your supporting documents to CAO within **10 days** of making an application. Listing qualifications on your application is not sufficient without supplementary evidence.
- List ALL qualifications and relevant work/life experience on your application and do not forget to complete the personal statement.



Common Pitfalls (Part 2)!

- Applicants should always check with the Admissions Office of the institution to discover if they need to apply through CAO or directly to the institution
- Always remember to list your course choices in order of preference. Receiving a conditional offer from an institution does not guarantee you a place on that course if, for example, you receive an offer of a course higher up on your preference list.
- Take note of restrictions when making changes to your CAO Application.

PLACE YOUR COURSE CHOICES IN GENUINE ORDER OF PREFERENCE!



To do otherwise is a grave mistake.

Where can I find more information?

- You can find all the information about the application process that you need in the CAO Handbook. To view and/or download the handbook go to www.cao.ie/handbook
- You must read the CAO Handbook carefully, taking special note of the relevant sections for Mature Applicants.
- A Demo Application facility is also available on the CAO website at www.cao.ie/demo
- Dedicated web pages are available for Mature and QQI FET applicants at **www.cao.ie/mature** and **www.cao.ie/qqi**

