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CAO Press Release

Applicants for HEAR and DARE scheme urged to apply early

Students wishing to apply through restricted supplementary admission for a place at an Irish higher education institution are urged by CAO to start their online application early.

The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) and the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) are college and university admissions schemes which offer places at reduced points to school leavers with disabilities, or students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds

The CAO application deadline is February 1st and the deadline for completion of the HEAR and DARE sections of the online application form is March 1st.

A number of supporting documents are required from HEAR and DARE applicants, and these documents must be received by CAO by April 1st at 17:15 - documents received after this date cannot be accepted.

CAO advises students that the compilation of supporting documents can take between eight and ten weeks, or in some instances even longer.

“Applicants wishing to be considered for the HEAR and DARE scheme should start their CAO application in advance of the Christmas break.

“The time that it takes to get supporting documents together can be longer than expected, and in order to be fair to all applicants strict deadlines apply. If you do not submit your documents by the April 1st deadline you will not be considered for HEAR or DARE” said Joe O’Grady, Operations Manager of CAO.

Applicants for the HEAR or DARE scheme can register on the CAO system now and complete their HEAR or DARE form; they then have up to January 31st to introduce, reorder or remove courses using the ‘My Application’ facility.

“Registering on the system early allows students the opportunity to become more familiar with the system, and getting the registration and supplementary information prepared in good time will allow students more time to focus on their course choices and order of preference” added Mr O’Grady.

The supporting documents required to complete a DARE application include a ‘Second Level Academic Reference’ which must be completed by a school teacher/Guidance Counsellor or a school principal.

An ‘Evidence of Disability’ form must also be completed by an accepted Medical Consultant/Specialist, and in some instances a full psycho-educational assessment completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist is required.

HEAR applicants must submit a number of financial documents, for example a P21 for a parent/parents that were in paid employment in 2012, or a Department of Family and Social Protection (DSP) Form for a parent or guardian who was receiving social welfare payments in 2012.

For a full list of supporting document requirements and more information about how to complete the application process students should visit www.accesscollege.ie. Information about how applicants are assessed and how offers are determined can be obtained from Access and Disability Offices in higher education institutions and not CAO. CAO plays no part in making decisions on admissions.

The CAO Application Facility is available at www.cao.ie.

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For more information contact Eileen Keleghan, communications officer, CAO on ekelghan@cao.ie or via 091 509800