

What is the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR)?

The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a college and university admissions scheme which offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

HEAR has been set up by a number of colleges and universities as evidence shows that socio-economic disadvantage can have a negative effect on how well a student does at school and whether they go on to college.

HEAR Applicants must meet a range of financial, social and cultural indicators to be considered for a reduced points place and extra college support.

Who is it for?

HEAR is for school leavers under the age of 23 as of January 1st 2014, who have completed an Irish Leaving Certificate.

Mature and FETAC students have their own admissions routes and should contact college admissions offices for more information

Applying to HEAR

Procedure

An application to HEAR is made up of 3 parts:

1. Apply online to CAO by 17:15 on 1st February 2014 at www.cao.ie

2. No later than 17:15 on 1st March 2014 you must indicate in your CAO application that you wish to apply for the HEAR scheme and you must fully and correctly complete all elements of the HEAR form (the HEAR form is a part of your CAO application).

3. Submit relevant evidence in support of your application to arrive at CAO no later than 17:15 on 1st April 2014.

To complete your HEAR application you must:

- Get assistance from your parents or guardians and use the application guide and workbook to help you answer all the relevant questions on your online HEAR application.

Remember

- Applications for HEAR can only be made online.
- Closing dates are final.
- Please note that your HEAR application is separate from your standard CAO application which will be processed as normal following your Leaving Certificate results.

How will I know if I'm eligible?

As education disadvantage is a complex issue, HEAR applicants must meet a range of financial, social and cultural indicators to be considered. Here is a list of all the HEAR indicators.

Click on each indicator below for more detailed information:

Financial Indicators

1. [Income](#): Your family income (in the year ended 31 December 2012) falls on or below the HEAR Income Limit.
2. [Medical Card](#): Your family has a Medical Card or GP Visit Card on 31 December 2013.
3. [Social Welfare Payment](#): Your family received a means-tested payment from the Department of Social Protection (formally Department of Social Welfare) for at least 26 weeks in 2012.

Social and Cultural Indicators:

1. Socio-economic Group: You belong to a group that is under-represented in higher education based on the occupation and employment status of your parent(s) or guardian(s). At the moment the group includes non-manual workers; semi & unskilled manual workers and agricultural workers.
2. School: You completed five years in a secondary school that takes part in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) scheme run by the Department of Education & Skills.
3. Area: You live in an area (urban or rural) in which there is concentrated disadvantage and social exclusion - in other words, an area where, for example, there is high unemployment and poverty and very few facilities for the community.

To be eligible for the HEAR Scheme you must meet the Low Income indicator (no. 1) plus a combination of two other indicators.

Combinations that allow you to take part in the HEAR Scheme are:

INDICATOR 1 plus 2 plus 4 or 5 or 6

INDICATOR 1 plus 3 plus 4 or 5 or 6

INDICATOR 1 plus 4 plus 5 or 6

INDICATOR 1 plus 5 plus 6

Supports for HEAR Students

As well as receiving a reduced points place, HEAR Students may also receive a variety of academic, personal and social supports while studying at third level.

Each college and university will decide what supports it can offer depending on its policies, practices and the resources available to it.

Examples of the type of supports available include:

- **Orientation programmes to introduce students to university or college**
- **Extra tuition if needed**
- **Help with study skills and exam preparation**
- **One-to-one meetings with student advisors,**
- **Social gatherings,**
- **Mentoring**
- **Advice about grants and scholarships**
- **Bursaries when available.**

You can find more information about the supports available for HEAR students on the access website of each college or university.

How many places are available?

Each college or university taking part in the HEAR scheme has set aside a quota of places on a reduced points basis for students entering through the scheme.

This quota is different for each third level institution. You can also get details of the quotas on the website of each participating educational institution.

If you are applying for the HEAR scheme, you must:

- provide satisfactory evidence of your socio-economic circumstances
- meet the minimum entry (matriculation) and subject requirements of the colleges or universities to which you are applying, and then
- compete for one of the quota places based on your Leaving Certificate results.

Which Colleges participate?

-  [Dublin City University](#)
-  [Dublin Institute of Technology](#)
-  [NUI Galway](#)
-  [NUI Maynooth](#)



• [Trinity College Dublin](#)



• [University College Cork](#)



• [University College Dublin](#)



• [University of Limerick](#)



• [Church of Ireland College of Education](#)



• [National College of Ireland](#)



• [Pontifical University Maynooth](#)



- [Marino Institute of Education](#)



- [Mary Immaculate College,
Limerick](#)



- [Mater Dei Institute of
Education](#)



- [St. Angela's College, Sligo](#)



- [St. Patrick's College,
Drumcondra](#)

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HEAR TIMELINE

- From November 2013** Fill in the HEAR Workbook with your parent(s)/guardian(s).
Make a CAO application at www.cao.ie. Applications are open from November 5th.
Fill in the online HEAR Application at www.cao.ie.
Prepare your supporting documents. **They can take more than 8 weeks to issue.**
- By 1 February 2014** Apply to CAO indicating that you wish to be considered for the HEAR scheme.
- By 1 March 2014** Complete all elements of the HEAR application form.
Gather all supporting documentation relevant to your application.
- Before 1 April 2014** Submit copies of supporting documents to

CAO, Tower House,
Eglinton Street,
Galway.
- Make sure your copies are clear and can be easily read.
Put your name, CAO number, and PPS number on all documentation.
Faxed/emailed documents are not accepted.

Keep the original of all documents and obtain a certificate of posting from An Post every time you post supporting documents to CAO.

For confirmation that the documents you posted arrived safely in CAO, enclose a stamped*, self-addressed postcard with details of documents you have submitted.

*Stamp not required in the case of applicants from outside Republic of Ireland.

April – June 2014 HEAR Application Screening.

In Late June 2014 Applicants notified of outcome of HEAR Application.

July 2014 HEAR Application Recheck.

August 2014 Leaving Certificate exam results.
CAO offers.
Successful HEAR Applicants notified by letter.
Accept CAO offer.
Accept HEAR offer of extra college supports.
Late August/Early September attend [mandatory orientation programme](#).

How do I contact HEAR?

For questions about completing your online HEAR Application contact CAO Helpdesk:

CAO Helpdesk

Email CAO by
clicking **Contact Us** 091 509800 www.cao.ie
at www.cao.ie

To speak to a HEAR expert in the Access Office of each of the participating institutions please use the following contact details:

Higher Education Institution	Website	Contact	Telephone
Dublin City University	www.dcu.ie/students/access	hear@dcu.ie	01 700 8869
Dublin Institute of Technology	www.dit.ie/ace/access	hear@dit.ie	01 4027625 / 4027605
NUI Galway	www.nuigalway.ie/access	hear@nuigalway.ie	091 494 053
NUI Maynooth	http://access.nuim.ie	hear@nuim.ie	01 7086025 / 708 6614
Trinity College Dublin	www.tcd.ie/trinity_access	hear@tcd.ie	01 8963590 / 8962751
University College Cork	www.ucc.ie/uccplus	hear@ucc.ie	021 4902002 / 4903282
University College Dublin	www.ucd.ie/openingworlds	hear@ucd.ie	01 716 1653
University of Limerick	www.ul.ie/access	hear@ul.ie	061 234 122

COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

Church of Ireland College of Education	www.cice.ie	info@cice.ie	01 4970033
Marino Institute of Education	www.mie.ie/access	hear@mie.ie	01 805 7744
Mary Immaculate College, Limerick	http://www.mic.ul.ie	hear@mic.ul.ie	061 204 927

Mater Dei Institute of Education	www.materdei.ie	hear@materdei.ie	01 808 6584
National College of Ireland	www.ncirl.ie	hear@ncirl.ie	01 449 8548
Pontifical University, Maynooth	http://access.nuim.ie	hear@nuim.ie	01 708 6025
St. Angela's College, Sligo	www.stangelas.nuigalway.ie	hear@stangelas.nuigalway.ie	071 919 5575
St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra	www.spd.dcu.ie/access	hear@spd.dcu.ie	01 884 2169