

## What is the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)?

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DARE is a college and university admissions scheme that offers places on reduced points to school leavers with disabilities.

### Who is DARE for?

Dare is for school leavers (Under 23yrs as at 1 January 2013) who have a disability and who may not be able to meet the points for their preferred course due to the impact of their disability.

### Why was DARE set up?

DARE was set up to tackle educational disadvantage.

Disability can cause people to do less well in school and can prevent some second level students going on to college or university.

### What does "reduced points" mean?

Students who are eligible for DARE may get a place in college with less than the full CAO points.

For example, a course which needs 450 Leaving Certificate points through the CAO may be offered to a DARE student with 410 points.

***However, DARE students must still meet the enrolment (matriculation) and specific course entry requirements where they apply.***

## **Which colleges take part in DARE?**

- Athlone Institute of Technology
- Cork Institute of Technology
- Dublin City University
- Dublin Institute of Technology
- Mater Dei Institute
- National College of Ireland
- NUI Galway
- NUI Maynooth
- Pontifical University, Maynooth
- Trinity College, Dublin
- University College Dublin
- University College Cork
- University of Limerick

Students can apply through DARE for the 'reduced points' places in any of these colleges.

## **How many places are there for DARE students each year?**

Each college or university sets aside a number of places for DARE students.

This number varies from college to college.

For more information on the number of places available in a particular college please look at the quota table [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie)

## **What disabilities are eligible for consideration for DARE?**

- Asperger's Syndrome / Autism
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Blind/Vision Impaired
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- DCD - Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia
- Mental Health Condition
- Neurological Conditions (incl. Epilepsy, Brain Injury, Speech and Language Disabilities)

- Significant Ongoing Illness
- Physical Disability
- Specific Learning Difficulty (incl. Dyslexia and Dyscalculia)

### **Who screens DARE applications?**

Applications for DARE are screened by professionals in colleges and universities that take part in DARE, who have expertise and knowledge of the impact of disability on educational attainment.

### **What criteria are used to assess applications for DARE?**

Specific criteria have been developed to decide the significance of each disability and its impact on educational attainment.

The Disability Advisory Boards, HEI professionals and representatives from expert external organisations developed these guidelines.

You must meet [the criteria](#) to be eligible for DARE.

### **How can I apply to DARE?**

If you are a school leaver and you want to be considered for the DARE scheme you must follow the 3 steps below:

#### **• Step 1**

Apply to the CAO at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) by **17:15 on 1st February 2013**.

#### **• Step 2**

No later than **17:15 on 1st March 2013** you must disclose your disability and/or specific learning difficulty in your CAO application and fully and correctly complete Section A of the Supplementary Information Form (the SIF is a part of your CAO application).

If you wish to be considered for the DARE scheme, you must indicate this on Section A of the fully completed SIF by ticking “Yes” to Question 5 by **17:15 on 1st March 2013**.

- **Step 3**

You must return the fully completed Second Level Academic Reference (Section B) and Evidence of Disability (Section C) to the CAO by **17:15 on 1st April 2013**.

**How do I know what supporting documents to provide?**

When you fill out your DARE application online, you will get online prompts asking you to submit certain documents.

You must complete a Supplementary Information Form. This should be completed by you, your school and an acceptable medical consultant or specialist.

***The Supplementary Information Form contains the following sections:***

- **Section A** – you must complete a Personal Statement which gives your opinion on the academic impact of your disability or specific learning difficulty.
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- **Section B** – you must return a Second Level Academic Reference completed by your school. This form provides background information on your educational experience and helps to determine appropriate supports at third level.
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- **Section C** – this is an evidence of disability form which an accepted [Medical Consultant/Specialist](#) must complete. This form verifies your disability and helps to determine which supports you need at third level.
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- All applicants must complete this form with the exception of the following:
  - Applicants with specific learning difficulties (Dyslexia or Dyscalculia), and applicants with DCD-Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia, who must provide a full psycho-educational assessment completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist.
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  - **The report must be less than 3 years old i.e. must be dated after 1st February 2010.**
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- Please note verification from an Occupational Therapist or Neurologist is also needed for applicants with DCD-Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia.
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- **All other applicants may submit an existing report completed within the appropriate timeframe by the accepted [Medical Consultant/Specialist](#). The report must contain the same detail as the Evidence of Disability Form.**

**Who are the accepted Medical Consultant/Specialists and how old can reports be?**

Type of Disability	Accepted Medical Consultant/Specialist	Age of Report
<b>Asperger's Syndrome</b>	Appropriately qualified Psychiatrist OR Psychologist OR Neurologist OR Paediatrician who is a member of his or her professional or regulatory body	No age limit
<b>Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</b>	Appropriately qualified Psychiatrist OR Psychologist OR Neurologist OR Paediatrician who is a member of his or her professional or regulatory body	Must be less than three years old i.e. must be dated after <b>1st February 2010</b>

<p><b>Blind/Vision Impaired</b></p>	<p>Ophthalmologist OR Ophthalmic Surgeon</p>	<p>No age limit</p>
<p><b>Deaf/Hard of Hearing</b></p> <p><b>Students may apply under ONE of the following categories:</b></p> <p><b>(A) Applicants who have an Audiogram</b>  <b>(B) Applicants who attend a School for the Deaf</b>  <b>(C) Applicants with a Cochlear Implant</b></p>	<p>(A) Applicants who have an audiogram: Professionally Qualified Audiologist</p> <p>(B) Applicants who attend a School for the Deaf: Principal of School for the Deaf</p> <p>(C) Applicants with a Cochlear Implant: Ear, Nose &amp; Throat (ENT) Consultant OR Cochlear Implant Programme Coordinator</p>	<p>No age limit</p>
<p><b>DCD - Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia</b></p>	<p>Applicants with DCD - Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia must provide a full psycho-educational assessment completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist AND a report from an Occupational Therapist OR Neurologist who is a member of their respective professional or regulatory body.</p>	<p>Report from Psychologist must be less than three years old i.e. must be dated after 1st February 2010.</p> <p>There is no age limit on the report from the Occupational Therapist/Neurologist</p>

<p><b>Mental Health Condition</b></p>	<p>Psychiatrist</p>	<p>Must be less than three years old i.e. must be dated <b>after 1st February 2010</b></p>
<p><b>Neurological Conditions (incl. Epilepsy, Brain Injury, Speech &amp; Language Disabilities)</b></p>	<p><b>Neurological Conditions:</b> Neurologist OR other relevant Consultant.</p> <p><b>Speech &amp; Language Disabilities:</b> Speech and Language Therapist</p>	<p>No age limit</p>
<p><b>Physical Disability</b></p>	<p>Orthopaedic Consultant OR other relevant Consultant appropriate to the disability/condition.</p>	<p>No age limit</p>
<p><b>Significant Ongoing Illness</b></p>	<p><b>Diabetes Type 1:</b> Endocrinologist</p> <p><b>Cystic Fibrosis (CF):</b> Consultant Respiratory Physician or Paediatrician</p> <p><b>Gastroenterology Conditions:</b> Gastroenterologist</p>	<p>Must be less than three years old i.e. must be dated <b>after 1st February 2010</b></p>

	<b>Others:</b> Relevant Consultant in area of condition or Consultant Registrar/Registrar	
<b>Specific Learning Difficulty (incl. Dyslexia and Dyscalculia)</b>	Appropriately qualified Psychologist.	Must be less than three years old i.e. must be dated <b>after 1st February 2010</b>

**I have a full psycho-educational assessment completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist but some of the information that is needed for DARE is not in the report.**

**Do I need to get a full report completed again?**

If you have a specific learning difficulty, you must submit a **full psycho-educational assessment** completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist.

This report must have been completed since 1 February 2010. If some of the information that DARE needs is not in the full report, an appropriately qualified psychologist can fill out a summary sheet.

You must submit both the original full psycho-educational assessment and the summary sheet.



## **What are the application and closing dates for DARE?**

1. By **17:15 1st February 2013** - apply to CAO on [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)
2. By **17:15 1st March 2013** - You must indicate that you have a disability/specific learning difficulty on your CAO application form .
3. By **17:15 1st March 2013** - You must complete Section A of the Supplementary Information Form .
4. By **17:15 1st March 2013** - You must indicate your wish to be considered for DARE by ticking 'Yes' to Question 5.
5. By **17:15 1st April 2013** - Submit both the Evidence of a Disability Form and the Second Level Academic Reference to the CAO

If you are unable to complete the online form you must submit the paper application form (distributed by the CAO) by the same date.

## **What happens if my application is late?**

DARE will not consider late applications.

## **What happens after DARE applicants are screened?**

You will get a letter telling you if you are eligible for the scheme or not. If you are eligible, you will compete with other DARE applicants for one of the reduced points places in the DARE college to which you apply. If you are not eligible, you must compete for places in college in the usual way.

## **I've been told I'm ineligible but I think there was some mistake in the screening of my application – what can I do?**

You can request to have your application rechecked if:  
you believe there was an administrative error in the screening of your application

OR

your supporting documents were not received by the CAO. You must however have proof of postage and photocopies of the documents to prove that you sent them on time and to the correct location.

If you would like to recheck your application, you will complete an online Recheck Form under the My Application section of the CAO website at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) and outline where you believe an administrative error occurred when your application was processed. You must request a recheck before the closing date indicated in the ineligible letter which you received at the end of June.

No means other than by way of online submission of a Recheck Form will be accepted. A Recheck Form is not considered to have been received until the applicant receives an email from CAO confirming receipt.

### **What happens if I am offered a place in college through DARE?**

Whether you go to college through DARE or not, if you have a disability you will be offered a variety of educational, technological and personal supports while studying. These supports include an orientation programme (before courses start), academic guidance and assistance, and access to appropriate assistive technology. It is up to each college to decide which supports it will offer. .

### **I have a disability but am not eligible for DARE. Will I get any support in college?**

Yes.

Most students with a disability enter college on merit having met the points needed for their course. They are offered a variety of educational, technological and personal supports even though they did not enter or were not eligible through DARE.

### **I have a disability but I think I may also be eligible for HEAR - can I apply to both schemes?**

The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a college and university admissions scheme for school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and a separate process to DARE.

You can apply for both schemes but you must submit all the documents needed for both schemes.

### **I am a mature student. Can I apply to DARE?**

DARE is only for school leavers with disabilities who were under 23 years of age on 1 January in the year of entry. There are different admission routes for mature students. You can find out more about these on the websites of the various colleges and universities.

## **RECHECK PROCESS**

### **I am ineligible for DARE - can I request a recheck of my application?**

To ask for a recheck of your application, you must complete the online recheck form on the CAO website.

Log onto [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie), click on 'My Application' and then click on the link for the recheck form. You must complete the online recheck form **by 17:15 on July 5th 2013**.

The Recheck Board will not consider a request for a recheck after this deadline. No means other than by way of online submission of a Recheck Form will be accepted. A Recheck Form is not considered to have been received until the applicant receives an email from CAO confirming receipt.

### **What are the grounds for requesting a recheck?**

You can ask to have your DARE application rechecked for **two** reasons:

**1. If you believe that it was unsuccessful because of an administrative error.** An administrative error can involve, for example, failure to take account of one or more documents or stating that a form was not stamped when it was.

**2. Your supporting documents were not received by the CAO.**

However, you have proof of postage and photocopies of the documents to prove you sent them on time and to the correct location.

If you have evidence that you submitted documents to CAO by 1st April 2013 e.g. a certificate of postage, please contact the CAO by **17:15 on July 5th 2013**, by clicking 'Contact Us' on the CAO website ([www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)) or by phoning 091 509800.

**Can I submit new information to support my recheck?**

No. The Recheck Board will only consider documents you provided as part of your original DARE application **and** will not consider any change in your circumstances..

**I made a mistake in my original application – can I fix the incorrect details?**

No changes can be made to the application form after the deadline of March 1st 2013.

**I wish to have my application rechecked but I don't have computer access?**

As no means other than by way of online submission of a Recheck Form will be accepted please contact the DARE HEI access office closest to you and they will be able to assist you.

**Who will decide on the merits of my recheck?**

A formal Recheck Board will examine your application at a meeting at the end of July.

**When will I know the outcome of my recheck?**

You will be informed in writing of the Recheck Board's decision during the first week of August 2013. This decision is final.

**I am eligible for DARE. What happens next?**

All of the colleges that take part in DARE have reserved a number of places at lower Leaving Certificate points for eligible DARE students. You can now compete for one of these reduced points places. Please note that you must meet the minimum course entry requirements to be considered for one of the reduced points places.

**What happens if my Recheck Application is unsuccessful?**

Your eligibility status does not affect any application you have made for courses through the CAO. In other words you may get an offer of a place if you meet the points requirements, thereby gaining your place on merit.

The HEAR & DARE Independent Appeals Commission considers appeals received which arise as a result of the HEAR and DARE application and recheck processes.

**Can I get support from the Disability Support Service at college if I am not eligible for DARE?**

Yes. You should register with the Disability Support Service at your institution as soon as you have registered for your course.

## LANGUAGE EXEMPTIONS

**I have been told that I am eligible to be included in the DARE scheme. Does this mean that I now have an exemption from doing Irish/another language in my Leaving Certificate?**

Applying to DARE and applying for a language waiver are two separate processes.

**Therefore DARE students who require a language waiver but haven't yet applied for one need to apply to the relevant authority**

Students with specific learning difficulties (incl. dyslexia) seeking admission to NUI Galway, NUI Maynooth, UCC or UCD need to apply to the National University of Ireland for exemption from Irish and/or the Third Language requirement.

The criteria applied by the National University of Ireland for the granting of exemptions from Irish and/or the Third language are not the same as for DARE: in general NUI will grant an exemption from the Irish/Third language requirements to students who at any stage, whether at primary or second-level school, have qualified for exemption from Irish, under the regulations of the Department of Education and Science.

To qualify under DARE you must fulfil the DARE criteria. See questions 13 and 14. For further information on NUI exemptions, look under Entry Requirements at <http://www.nui.ie> or contact NUI at 014392424 or [registrar@nui.ie](mailto:registrar@nui.ie).

### **Applying for language exemptions to Trinity College Dublin (TCD)**

Students with significant learning difficulties and hearing disabilities may apply for a waiver of the modern language requirement during the second level school senior cycle.

In addition, students with dyscalculia may be eligible to request exemption from the matriculation requirement of a pass in mathematics, where mathematics does not form any component of their intended course.

This is a separate application to the DARE supplementary admissions process and written application must be made to the Admissions Office, Trinity College Dublin before 1st July of the year of entry.

Students should be aware that the criteria for waiving the language or mathematics requirement are different to that required for the supplementary admissions process.

**Therefore the granting of a language waiver does not mean that a student is automatically eligible for the DARE supplementary admissions process.**

### **Applying for language exemptions to University of Limerick (UL)**

Students seeking to enter the University of Limerick are required to present six Leaving Certificate subjects, including English, Mathematics and Irish or one other modern language. Students with significant specific learning difficulties and hearing disabilities may apply for a waiver of the modern language requirement.

Students may receive a waiver of the Irish or modern language requirement if they:-

(i) function intellectually at average or above average level and who have a specific learning difficulty of such a degree of severity that they fail to achieve expected levels of attainment in basic language skills in English, or

(ii) have a significant hearing impairment or are deaf, and are also failing to attain adequate levels in language skills in English.

The evidence of such a level of disability must be furnished by providing a copy of the Certificate of Exemption from Irish (Revision of Rule 46 "Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools" in relation to Irish - Circular Letter M50/93 - Department of Education). The Certificate should be forwarded directly to the University's Admissions Office.

The granting of a language waiver does not mean that a student is eligible for the DARE supplementary admissions process as the criteria used are different.

For further information, please see [www.ul.ie/disabilityservices](http://www.ul.ie/disabilityservices)