

Leaving Cert Class of 2026

2nd June 2026

Dear Students and Parents / Guardians,

We hope you are all keeping well. We have outlined here some important information that you may find useful over the coming months. You may find it helpful to refer back to it from time to time. If you have any queries or worries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

GRANTS

The online application system is now open and students are advised to apply as soon as possible on www.susi.ie. You must register your details online with SUSI and then complete the application form. You will need your PPS number, an email address, a password and a PIN to register. **KEEP YOUR PASSWORD AND PIN IN A SAFE PLACE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE AND FOR RENEWING YOUR GRANT EACH YEAR.** It is not necessary to have received an offer of a college place or to be enrolled in college in order to apply online. **Closing date for new applications will be 9th July 2026.** Any applications after this date may not be processed in time for the start of the college year and funds may be delayed. The SUSI Support Desk will be available to deal with any queries from 9:00 am to 17.30pm Monday to Friday. All grant queries should be directed to the SUSI Student Support Desk on:

Tel: 0818 888777

Email: support@susi.ie

HEAR/ DARE APPLICATIONS

At the end of June, you will receive correspondence from HEAR/DARE stating whether **you are eligible or ineligible** to be considered for a HEAR/DARE place. If you are deemed eligible for HEAR/DARE, you will now compete for one of the places on offer in the participating colleges. This means you **MAY** receive points added to your own total at the end of August.

If you are deemed **ineligible in June**, this decision can be appealed.

CAO CHANGE OF MIND

It is important to sit down and consider your CAO choices. We suggest that you carefully consider the choices for yourself, and only apply for courses you genuinely want to do. **GENUINE ORDER OF PREFERENCE IS CRUCIAL WHEN ENTERING YOUR CHOICES. The “Change of Mind” facility is open until July 1st at 5 pm.** You can change your mind as many times as you wish, free of charge. You cannot enter a course that has restricted entry at this stage. Remember new courses become available all the time, but also courses are withdrawn so keep an eye on the **“Alert List”** in the Applicant Resources section of the CAO website.

LEAVING CERT RESULTS / CAO OFFERS

Leaving Cert results will be available on Friday 21st August 2026 through the Candidate Self-Service Portal (CSSP)

CAO offer schedule:

Offer Round	Issue Date	Reply Date
Round 1	26th August at 2pm	1st September at 3pm
Round 2	7 th September at 2pm	9 th September at 3pm
Round 3	15 th September at 10am	17 th September at 3pm
Round 4	22 nd September at 10am	24 th September at 3pm
Round 5	29 th September at 10am	1 st October at 3pm

ACCEPTING YOUR CAO OFFERS

You will be offered the highest course on your lists, that you have enough points for. All choices below the one offered will be deleted.

Therefore, you could have an offer from Level 8 and another offer from Level 6/7.

You will have 6 days to make up your mind in Round 1.

- **Treat your offer as your only offer and accept it if you are happy to do the course.**
- Do not presume/hope that you will get another (higher listed) offer in Round 2/3/4 etc.
- If you do get another offer in a later Round, you can then decide to accept the new offer or ignore it and stick with your original offer.

AVAILABLE PLACES in AUGUST

Where courses are not full, Colleges will advertise the vacant places on the CAO website, www.cao.ie under the heading of **AVAILABLE PLACES**.

All CAO applicants can apply for one of these places, FREE of charge through the 'My Application' facility on the CAO website. **'AVAILABLE PLACES' becomes available at offer stage and this year will open on 27th August.** These are courses that have not been filled during offer stage and **if a student isn't happy with their offer or do not receive any offer**, they could look at the 'Available places' list and check to see if there is another course they would prefer from it. **New applicants can apply at this stage also. When adding an 'Available Places' choice, you must add it above the course you have been offered but still adhere to GENUINE ORDER OF PREFERENCE with any other choices existing on your list at that stage. MAKE CONTACT IF YOU NEED HELP IN DECIDING.**

UCAS

For those of you with reply deadlines on June 3rd, please make your decision ASAP and accept your Firm and Back Up/Insurance courses.

The State Exams Commission issues your results to UCAS in August and your place will be confirmed if you meet the conditions. Even if you do not fully meet the conditions of your Offer, it is worth contacting them as courses may not be full.

Contact us if you need assistance. Don't forget about **UCAS EXTRA** (if you have

no offers or did not use all of your choices) and **CLEARING** (to apply for courses that still have places). New applicants may also apply in CLEARING. Final date for adding a courses through EXTRA is July 1st and CLEARING opens on July 2nd.

POST LEAVING CERT COURSES (PLCs) / QQI Level 5

A number of students have already applied to PLC courses. If you have not already done so, please apply ASAP on www.fetchcourses.ie. We have been informed by Finn Valley College that there will be a limited number of places available and they are filling up fast. They advise you apply by June 1st 2026.

As soon as the results come out on Aug 21st, you should send/drop off a copy of your results to the PLC provider if you are still interested in taking your place.

Donegal PLC providers are Finn Valley College Stranorlar, Errigal College Letterkenny and Donegal ETB FET Centre in Letterkenny and Donegal Town. There are also many more PLC providers available throughout Ireland.

Students apply directly to the college or on www.fetchcourses.ie. PLC courses can be searched at www.qualifax.ie. Click on 'course finder' and then click on 'PLC'.

APPRENTICESHIPS/ TRAINEESHIPS/ SHORT COURSES

The advice from SOLAS remains the same as every year: if you want to do an apprenticeship, start looking for a registered employer who is willing to take you on as an apprentice. Make contact with SOLAS/ Donegal ETB and register your interest with them.

You can also consider Traineeships and other short courses available on www.fetchcourses.ie or www.donegaletb.ie.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE

A number of students have already applied to NWRC. If you have not already done so, please apply ASAP. Their courses usually start in early September, so as soon as you receive your results, send them in to secure your place.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Some scholarships are still open for applications. **ALWAYS CHECK ELIGIBILITY BEFORE APPLYING**

- Sports Scholarship at ATU Donegal has re-opened for next round of applicants, closing date 6th June (If you have already applied, do not apply again)
- 1916 Bursary at ATU Donegal and many other colleges throughout the country worth €5000 per year. Closing date varies from college to college

- INTEL Women in Technology Scholarships available from various colleges...some only available once you secure your place there, so keep eyes on college websites
- And many many more
- Naughton Scholarship Closing Date June 29th 2026

YEAR OUT AND DEFERRALS

Some students intend taking a year out from education next year. For some, they will be hoping to defer a College place until 2027. Just to point out that some of last year's Leaving Certs found it very difficult to defer places and the decision is at the discretion of the college.

Reminder on how to defer a college place:

1. Do **NOT** accept the offer through CAO in August/September.
2. Contact the Admissions Office of the College immediately, informing them of your request to defer
3. They will guide you from there in the process

If you defer a place, you must apply again for that place next year through the CAO. Essentially you are claiming back your previously allocated place on a course. **You should ONLY enter the deferred place on your CAO application.**

However, if you apply for other courses as well, then you are back in the system as a standard applicant and lose the privilege of your deferred place.

REPEATING

A number of students may consider repeating their Leaving Cert. in 2027. At this stage it is important to know that it is an option, but consider Leaving Cert. 2026 as the only time you will complete the Leaving Cert. for now when you are making your choices for after school. Anyone wishing to repeat will fill out an Application Form available from the school office in September.

We will be available by appointment at the Results/Offer stage for students wishing to discuss their options.

If in the future you need any help with applications, please get in touch.

We wish all of you the very best of luck in your exams, future lives and careers!

Kind regards,

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