An admissions scheme for school leavers facing social and economic challenges in accessing college.
What is the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR)?

The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a college and university scheme which offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who are resident in the Republic of Ireland.

HEAR has been set up by a number of colleges and universities as evidence shows that long-term poverty 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.

What are the benefits of filling in a HEAR Application?

**Reduced Points Places:** Each participating college has a reserved number of places to offer eligible HEAR students at lower Leaving Certificate points.

**Extra College Support:** If you get a place through HEAR you will receive a variety of academic, personal and social supports while at college.

**Examples of extra college supports may include:**

- An Orientation Programme to introduce you to college life.
- Extra tuition if required, study skills and exam preparation.
- One to one meetings with student advisors.
- Social gatherings/mentoring.
- Extra financial assistance when available/advice regarding grants and scholarships.

What HEAR is not

HEAR is not your maintenance grant. The maintenance grant is the main source of financial assistance available from the Irish State for students in full-time Post Leaving Certificate Courses (PLCs) and full-time higher education undergraduate courses.

HEAR is an admissions scheme to help students who may not traditionally go on to third level. Students applying to HEAR are encouraged to find out more information on the maintenance grant by logging on to susi.ie. Additional information on financial assistance for third level students is available at www.studentfinance.ie.

Who can apply to HEAR?

HEAR is for school leavers under the age of 23 as of 1 January 2016 who are resident in the Republic of Ireland. HEAR applicants must meet a range of financial, social and cultural indicators to be considered for a reduced points place and extra college support.

How do I fill in a HEAR application?

1. Be under the age of 23 as of 1 January 2016.
2. Apply online to CAO by 17:15 on 1 February 2016.
3. No later than 17:15 on 1 March 2016, indicate in your CAO application that you wish to apply for the HEAR scheme and fully and correctly complete all elements of the HEAR form. Once you have completed the HEAR application form you will get a checklist which tells you which documents you need to supply.
4. Post your supporting documents to arrive in CAO no later than 17:15 on 1 April 2016.

To complete your online HEAR Application you must: Get assistance from your parent(s)/guardian(s).

Use the HEAR 2016 Application Guide to help you answer all relevant questions on your online HEAR application. You can download the HEAR 2016 Application Guide at www.accesscollege.ie.
Should I apply?

HEAR applicants must meet a range of financial, social and cultural indicators (criteria) to be considered for a reduced points place and extra college support. Here is a list of all the HEAR indicators:

1. **Income**: Your family income falls on or below the HEAR Income Limit.
2. **Medical / GP Visit Card**: Your family has a Medical Card / GP Visit Card that was in date on 31 December 2015.
3. **Means Tested Social Welfare**: Your family received a means-tested payment from the Department of Social Protection for at least 26 weeks in 2014.
4. **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). The under-represented groups are the Non-manual Workers Group and the Semi and Unskilled Manual Workers Group.
5. **DEIS School Attendance**: You completed five years in a second level school that takes part in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) scheme run by the Department of Education and Skills.
6. **Area Profile**: You live in an area where there is concentrated disadvantage – in other words an area where, for example, there is high unemployment and poverty and where only a small proportion of adults have attained third level education.

**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**

Indicator 1, the HEAR Income Limit, is calculated by:

→ How many children there are in your family;
→ How many people in your family are in full time education;

Use the table to estimate if your family’s income is less than the HEAR Income Limit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of dependent children* in your family</th>
<th>HEAR Income Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 4</td>
<td>€45,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>€50,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 8</td>
<td>€54,630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add €4,670 to the total family/household income for every sibling/parent enrolled in a full time college, university or post leaving certificate course.

* A dependent includes:
  - a child under the age of 16 years on 1 October 2015.
  - a child over 16 years attending a full time course in FET or higher education or who is medically certified as permanently unfit for work.
  - a parent attending a full time course in FET or Higher Education.

**Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)**

The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is a third level alternative admissions scheme for school-leavers whose disabilities have had a negative impact on their second level education. DARE offers reduced points places to school leavers who as a result of having a disability have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.

You should apply to both DARE and HEAR if they are relevant to you. Applicants who apply and are deemed eligible for both DARE and HEAR will be prioritised by the participating colleges and universities when offering their reduced points places.

For more information on DARE see [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie)
### HEAR Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Education Institution</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of Ireland College of Education</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cice.ie">www.cice.ie</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@cice.ie">info@cice.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin City University</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dcu.ie/students/access">www.dcu.ie/students/access</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@dcu.ie">hear@dcu.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin Institute of Technology</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dit.ie/ace">www.dit.ie/ace</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@dit.ie">hear@dit.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marino Institute of Education</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mie.ie/access">www.mie.ie/access</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@mie.ie">hear@mie.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Immaculate College, Limerick</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mic.ul.ie">www.mic.ul.ie</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@mic.ul.ie">hear@mic.ul.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National College of Ireland</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ncirl.ie">www.ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@ncirl.ie">hear@ncirl.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUI Galway</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ruigalway.ie">www.ruigalway.ie</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@nuigalway.ie">hear@nuigalway.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maynooth University</td>
<td><a href="http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/access-office">www.maynoothuniversity.ie/access-office</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@nuim.ie">hear@nuim.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontifical University, Maynooth</td>
<td><a href="http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/access-office">www.maynoothuniversity.ie/access-office</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@nuim.ie">hear@nuim.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rcsi.ie/admissions_access">www.rcsi.ie/admissions_access</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@rcsi.ie">hear@rcsi.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Angela’s College, Sligo</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stangelas.ruigalway.ie">www.stangelas.ruigalway.ie</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@stangelas.ruigalway.ie">hear@stangelas.ruigalway.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Trinity College Dublin</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tcd.ie/trinity_access">www.tcd.ie/trinity_access</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hear@tcd.ie">hear@tcd.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>University College Cork</td>
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<td>University College Dublin</td>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:hear@ul.ie">hear@ul.ie</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### CAO Helpdesk

| Email CAO by clicking Contact Us at www.cao.ie | 091 509 800 | www.cao.ie |

### From November 2015

- Review the HEAR Application Guide with your parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Make a CAO application at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie).
- Fill in the online HEAR Application at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie). Gather your supporting documents. **Remember, they can take more than 8 weeks to issue.**

### By 1 February 2016
- Apply to CAO by 17:15.
- Complete all elements of the HEAR Application Form by 17:15.
- Gather all supporting documents relevant to your application.

### By 1 April 2016
- Submit copies of supporting documents to CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway by 17:15.
- Put your name, CAO number, and PPS number on all documents.

### April – June 2016
- HEAR Application Assessment.
- Applicants notified of outcome of HEAR Application.

### End June Early July 2016
- HEAR Application Recheck.

### August 2016
- Leaving Certificate exam results.
- HEAR offers made by CAO. Accept CAO offer.
- Accept HEAR offer of extra college supports.
- Attend mandatory HEAR orientation programme.