



# BLACKWATER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

*Committed to quality education*

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January 2024

Dear 6<sup>th</sup> Year Students/ Parents/Guardians,

Please find below important information regarding CAO, DARE, SUSI GRANTS, FETAC COURSES, APPRENTICESHIPS and Student Accommodation.

## **CAO**

The closing date for **CAO applications** is 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024. Register before 17.00 on 20<sup>th</sup> January for reduced entry fee of €30.

The CAO handbook has all of the information you need in relation to the CAO:

<https://www2.cao.ie/handbook/handbook2024/hb.pdf>

There is a very informative slideshow and videos on the following website.

<https://www.cao.ie/index.php?page=video>



Students applying for **DARE** must fill out the relevant sections online on their CAO by **February 1<sup>st</sup> 2024**.

Supporting DARE Documents must be sent to CAO headquarters by **15th March 2024**.

DARE Part: Completed by School – Guidance Counsellor

DARE Part C: Completed by Health Care professional

It is recommended to send DARE documents earlier than this to allow CAO adequate time to process the application. CAO Information for parents/guardians and relevant documents can be found on [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) and <http://accesscollege.ie/dare/>

## SUSI GRANT (susi.ie)

Parents/Guardians can check if they are eligible for the SUSI Grant by completing the eligibility reckoner test on <https://susi.ie/eligibility-reckoner-app-irish/index.html>.

SUSI generally opens in March/April. Students applying for a SUSI grant must also ensure to tick the relevant box on their CAO form, this simply allows transfer of information between CAO and SUSI. To apply for the grant you must complete the process on the SUSI website.

## LANGUAGE EXEMPTIONS

**Step 1:** Any student exempt in Irish/French/German, please contact the SEN Department to ensure that a Department of Education & Skills Exemption Form has been filled out.

<https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Information/Irish-Exemption/>

**Step 2.** Any student with an Irish/French/German exemption, applying for an NUI University needs to be granted an NUI exemption. Please find attached below a link for an NUI exemption online form for NUI colleges. NUI Colleges are: UCC,UCD, Maynooth, NUIG. <https://exemptions.nui.ie/>

**NOTE:** A separate exemption form must be filled out for Non NUI Colleges such as Trinity, UL, DCU etc...All forms are available online.

Step 3. If an exemption has been granted, CAO needs to be aware of this. Please do not assume that the school or CAO will know this information. It is advised that students and/or their parents/guardians contact NUI/relevant college and CAO directly.

## FETAC COURSES

6<sup>th</sup> Year students applying for post leaving certificate FETAC courses in; Waterford College of Further Education, Dungarvan College, Cork College of Commerce etc. should apply to the college directly. It is important to keep an eye on the college website to see when applications open, they generally open in January. If you apply online as soon as you can, you will be in the first round of interviews. Round 1 interviews usually take place in February/March. Round 2 interviews will take place in May. For anyone applying, you can avail of a practice interview by contacting Ms. Higgins.

## APPRENTICESHIPS

Students looking to do an apprenticeship should look at the following website: <https://apprenticeship.ie/>  
The best way to source an apprenticeship is through local contacts! There are over 70 different types of apprenticeship now available in Ireland. Applications for ESB apprenticeships generally open in February. It is good practice to have your CV ready so that you are ready to apply when the opportunity arises. Companies such as Radley Engineering, Dungarvan Transport, Suir Engineering, The Dornan Group are always looking to take on apprentices. Students wishing to pursue an apprenticeship should be gathering a list of companies they are interested in and applying online or emailing HR departments. If students would like assistance with this, they can contact Ms. Higgins.

## COLLEGE ACCOMMODATION – MUNSTER

Please keep an eye out on the following websites to find current information on campus accommodation options.

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/accommodation/campusaccommodation/>

<https://studentliving.ul.ie/index.jsp?p=116&n=127>

[https://www.wit.ie/current\\_students/student-accommodation/](https://www.wit.ie/current_students/student-accommodation/)

<https://www.mic.ul.ie/study-at-mic/accommodation>

<https://www.cit.ie/studentlife.accommodation>

For all other colleges simply type the college name with accommodation after it into google and it should bring you to the college accommodation pages.

The main types of accommodation include: on campus accommodation, private student complexes, private housing, digs (living with a family) and for apprenticeships you may consider Airbnb, B&Bs or hostels as you may not require accommodation for the full academic year.

Most student unions will be able to give you information on housing options outside of campus accommodation.

## WHAT TO DO NOW?

Please ask your son/daughter to log on to their CAO to ensure they are happy with their choices!

The CAO will close on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 (reduced fee deadline 20<sup>th</sup> Jan).

CAO will open again in May 2024 and will remain open until 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024. Choices can be changed and re-arranged in May if the student wishes. **(please note restricted entry courses can only be added before the 1<sup>st</sup> February deadline)**. The final date for CAO change of mind is July 1<sup>st</sup> 2024.

Please email [lucie.higgins@blackwatercs.com](mailto:lucie.higgins@blackwatercs.com) should you have any queries. Students are free to book appointment with Ms. Higgins should they wish to talk through their options!

Kind regards,

Lucie Higgins