



BLACKWATER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Committed to quality education

September 2024

Dear 6th Year Students/ Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to back to the new academic year, we are looking forward to working with you and guiding you through the maze of career options.

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

CAO

CAO opens for applications on the 5th of November. The closing date for **CAO applications** is 1st February 2025. Register before 17.00 on 20th 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>



DARE is the Disability Access Route to Education, types of disability include: dyslexia, dyspraxia, mental health condition, medical condition, ASD, ADHD – for a full list of the you can visit the DARE website for more information. Students applying for **DARE** must fill out the relevant sections **online** on their CAO by **February 1st 2025**.

Supporting DARE Documents must be sent to CAO headquarters by **15th March 2025**. Please make sure all of the supporting documents meet the eligibility criteria, for example if you are applying for DARE under an ADHD diagnosis the psychological report must be no less than 3 years old. A list of these requirements can be found on the following document [DARE-2024-Handbook-WEB-NEW.pdf \(accesscollege.ie\)](#)

An Educational Impact Statement (completed by student and guidance counsellor) and the relevant reports/ medical documents must be sent CAO by 15th March – it is a good idea to send these registered post so as to have a record of postage. 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 and <http://accesscollege.ie/dare/>

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

6th Year students applying for post leaving certificate FETAC courses in: Waterford College of Further Education, Dungarvan College etc. should apply to the colleges through the FETAC website.

<https://www.fetchcourses.ie/>

It is important to note that some Further Education Colleges now offer degree progression routes for course such as business and nursing. This is a very viable alternative for students, the first year of these degree courses are done in the Further Education College and then there is a direct guaranteed pathway to the degree courses in the participating university.

SUSI GRANT

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.

UCAS & EUNICAS

<https://www.ucas.com/> Any students interested in studying in the UK or the EU should make a careers appointment with Ms. Landers or Ms. Higgins to talk through the options.

UCAS applications for veterinary medicine, medicine or dentistry need to be completed by the 15th October 2024. Closing date for other UCAS degree courses is the 29th January 2025.

EUNICAS <https://www.eunicas.ie/> supports students who want to apply to university in Europe, closing dates vary depending on the course.

APPRENTICESHIPS

Students looking to do an apprenticeship should look at the following website: <https://apprenticeship.ie/>
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/emailing HR departments/following on social media.

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.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 begin getting together a list of courses they are interested in – be it university courses, FETAC courses, apprenticeships etc. Encourage your child to research the courses thoroughly – looking at the different modules etc. If your child is interested in an apprenticeship, start to research the companies and different types of apprenticeships on offer.

The CAO will close on the 1st February 2025 (reduced fee deadline 20th Jan).

CAO will open again in May 2025 and will remain open until 1st July 2025. Choices can be changed and re-arranged in May if the student wishes. **(please note restricted entry courses can only be added before the 1st February deadline)**. The final date for CAO change of mind is July 1st 2025.

Please email marianne.landiers@blackwatercs.com or luvie.higgins@blackwatercs.com should you have any queries. Students are free to book appointment with Ms. Higgins or Ms. Landiers should they wish to talk through their options!

Kind regards,

Marianne & Lucie