



# HEAR

Higher Education Access Route

# Handbook 2026

Guiding you through your HEAR application

[www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie)

**HEAR** | HIGHER  
EDUCATION  
ACCESS  
ROUTE

# Key Dates

**Deadline:**  
**Tuesday March**  
**10th 2026**



Send your supporting documents to:

HEAR Applications 2026  
CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway

by Tuesday March 10th 2026.

1. Information on local Higher Education Institute (HEI) DARE and HEAR Application Information events taking place in January 2026 will be published on [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie).
2. Apply to CAO by **17:00** on **Sunday February 1st 2026** on [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie).
3. Complete and submit your online HEAR Application Form by **17:00** on **Sunday March 1st 2026**.
4. Send your supporting documents to HEAR Applications 2026, CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway by **Tuesday March 10th 2026**.
5. Put your name and CAO number on all documents submitted to CAO.
6. Keep the originals of all documents and proof of postage. HEAR will not contact you about missing, incomplete or incorrect documentation, so please ensure that you have supplied all documents requested on your checklist by **Tuesday March 10th 2026**.

Please contact a HEAR advisor if you have any questions in advance of submitting your documentation.



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# Introduction to HEAR

## What is HEAR?

HEAR is a third level alternative admissions scheme for school leavers, resident in the Republic of Ireland, who are under represented at Higher Education due to their socio-economic background.

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.



## What HEAR is not

HEAR is not your maintenance grant (SUSI 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.

## Who can apply to HEAR?

HEAR is for school leavers under the age of 23 as of January 1st 2026 who are resident in the Republic of Ireland.

Mature and Further Educational Training (FET) students have their own admissions routes and should contact college admissions offices for more information.

HEAR applications can only be made online. No means other than by way of online submission of a HEAR application form will be accepted.

For contact details of participating colleges see page 3.



# HEAR Application Timeline

Date	Action to take before deadline
From November 2025	<p>CAO applications open from Wednesday <b>November 5th 2025 at 12 noon.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the HEAR Handbook with your parent(s)/guardian(s).</li> <li>2. Make a CAO application at <b>www.cao.ie</b>.</li> <li>3. Fill in the online HEAR Application at <b>www.cao.ie</b>.</li> <li>4. Gather your supporting documents.</li> </ol> <p><b>Remember, they can take several weeks to issue.</b></p>
By February 1st 2026	Apply to CAO by 17:00 on Sunday February 1st 2026.
By March 1st 2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete all elements of the online HEAR Application Form by 17:00 on Sunday March 1st 2026.</li> <li>2. Gather all supporting documents relevant to your application.</li> </ol>
By March 10th 2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Submit copies of supporting documents to HEAR Applications 2026, CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway by Tuesday March 10th 2026.</li> <li>2. Make sure your copies are clear and can be easily read. Please number each page and write your CAO application number and the date on the front of each page. Emailed documents are not accepted.</li> <li>3. <b>Keep the original of all documents and obtain a certificate of posting from An Post every time you post supporting documents to CAO.</b></li> <li>4. For confirmation that the documents you posted arrived safely in CAO, enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard with details of the documents you have submitted.</li> </ol>
April – June 2026	HEAR Application Assessment.
In late June 2026	Applicants notified of outcome of HEAR Application by email.
End June/Early July 2026	HEAR Review and Appeals Application.
August 2026	<p>Applicants notified of the outcome of their Review and Appeals application by email.</p> <p>Leaving Certificate exam results. CAO offers.</p> <p>Accept CAO offer.</p> <p>Accept HEAR offer of extra college supports.</p>
Late August/Early September 2026	Attend mandatory HEAR orientation programme.

# Colleges that take part in HEAR

Institution	Telephone	Email	Website
<b>Atlantic Technological University</b>			
Donegal Campus	(074) 918 6170	hear@lyit.ie	www.atu.ie
Galway Campus	(091) 742 598	hear.galwaymayo@atu.ie	
Sligo Campus	(071) 915 5433	hear@itsligo.ie	
St Angela's College	(071) 917 9516	hear@stangelas.ie	
<b>Dublin City University</b>	(01) 700 8868 (01) 700 9213	hear@dcu.ie	www.dcu.ie/access
<b>Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology</b>	(01) 239 4628	hear@iadt.ie	www.iadt.ie
<b>Dundalk Institute of Technology</b>	(042) 937 0236	hear@dkit.ie	www.dkit.ie
<b>Marino Institute of Education</b>	(01) 805 7752	access@mie.ie	www.mie.ie
<b>Mary Immaculate College</b>	(061) 204 510	accessoffice@mic.ul.ie	www.mic.ie/access-disability
<b>Maynooth University</b>	(01) 708 4600	hear@mu.ie	www.maynoothuniversity.ie/hear
<b>Munster Technological University</b>			
Cork Campus	(021) 433 5138	HearCork@mtu.ie	www.mtu.ie/access/hear
Kerry Campus	(066) 714 5636	HearKY@mtu.ie	
<b>National College of Art &amp; Design</b>	(01) 636 4200	hear@ncad.ie	www.ncad.ie/students/support-services/
<b>National College of Ireland</b>	(01) 449 8500	hear@ncirl.ie	www.ncirl.ie
<b>Pontifical University, Maynooth</b>	(01) 708 4600	hear@mu.ie	www.mu.ie/hear
<b>RCSI University of Medicine &amp; Health Sciences</b>	(01) 402 2228	hear@rcsi.ie	www.rcsi.ie/study
<b>South East Technological University</b>			
Carlow and Wexford Campus	(059) 917 5600	HEAR.CW@setu.ie	www.setu.ie/study
Waterford Campus	(051) 306 192	hear.wd@setu.ie	
<b>Technological University Dublin</b>	(01) 220 8440	hear@tudublin.ie	www.tudublin.ie/hear
<b>Technological University of the Shannon</b>			
Athlone Campus	(090) 646 8123	hear.midlands@tus.ie	www.tus.ie
Limerick Campus	(061) 293 130	hear.midwest@tus.ie	
<b>Trinity College Dublin</b>	(01) 896 3696	hear@tcd.ie	www.tcd.ie/trinityaccess
<b>University College Cork</b>	(021) 490 4806	hear@ucc.ie	www.ucc.ie/hear
<b>University College Dublin</b>	(01) 716 7123	hear@ucd.ie	www.ucd.ie/all
<b>University of Galway</b>	(091) 493 553	hear@universityofgalway.ie	www.universityofgalway.ie/access-students
<b>University of Limerick</b>	(061) 234 122	hear@ul.ie	www.ul.ie

# What are the benefits of making a HEAR Application?

## How do Reduced Points Work?

If you apply to HEAR and meet the application criteria (that is, are deemed eligible for HEAR) you may be offered a place even if you do not have enough Leaving Certificate points for your preferred course. Each participating college and university has a number of reserved places to offer eligible HEAR applicants at lower or reduced Leaving Certificate points.

An example of a reduced points offer is where the Leaving Certificate points for a particular course is 366 points, and an eligible HEAR applicant could be offered a place with a lower points score, e.g. 356 points. This applicant would also, like all other applicants applying to college on the basis of their Leaving Certificate results, need to meet the minimum entry requirements and any specific programme requirements before being considered for a HEAR reduced points offer. The reduction in points for HEAR places varies every year.

The amount of points a particular course is reduced by is dependent on a number of factors, such as:

- The overall number of places on the course,
- The number of reserved HEAR places on the course,
- The number of HEAR eligible applicants competing for these reserved places. Further details can be found at [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie).

## 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 university/college – contact participating colleges for the 2026 Orientation dates.
- Extra tuition if required, study skills and exam preparation.
- One to one meetings with student advisers.
- Social gatherings/mentoring.
- Extra financial assistance when available/advice regarding grants and scholarships.

## Should I apply?

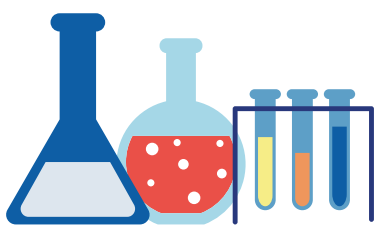
HEAR applicants must meet a range of financial, social and cultural criteria to be considered for a reduced points place and extra college support. Here is a list of all the HEAR indicators:

- 1. Income:** Your family income falls on or below the HEAR Income Limit for the year 2024 (see page 9 for details of the HEAR Income Limit).
- 2. Medical/GP Visit Card:** Your family has a Medical Card/GP Visit Card that was in date on December 31st 2025.
- 3. Means Tested Social Welfare:** Your family received a means-tested payment from the Department of Social Protection for at least 26 weeks in 2024.
- 4. 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 Youth.
- 5. 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. Applicants who experienced homelessness during their post-primary education and are registered on the Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) will meet the Area Profile criteria.
- 6. HEAR Priority Groups:** Applicants who wish to be considered under one or more of the following categories:
  - Care-Experienced
  - Member of the Traveller Community
  - Member of the Roma Community
  - Young Parent
  - HEAR and DARE Eligible Applicant

**You must meet Indicator 1, the HEAR Income Limit, plus a minimum score of 2.5 to be eligible for HEAR. The criteria scores and eligibility criteria are listed in the next section.**

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.



# HEAR Eligibility Criteria and Scoring Framework



## Why is a Scoring System Being Used?

The **Higher Education Access Route (HEAR)** is designed to help students who have experienced educational disadvantage during their post-primary education, such as low family income, social barriers, or living in disadvantaged areas.

By using a **scoring system**, we can make sure that support is given to those who need it the most. This system allows us to assess each applicant's unique circumstances in a fair and structured way.



## How Does this Scoring System Help HEAR Applicants?

- **By Focusing on the Most Disadvantaged**

The scoring system ensures that students facing the greatest disadvantages are prioritised for reduced points places.

- **It Targets those Most in Need**

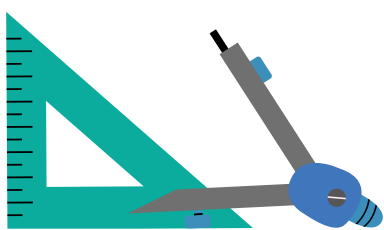
By assigning scores and setting thresholds, we can target our resources where they will have the biggest impact, helping students who are least likely to access higher education without additional support.



## Should I apply?

Below are the scores allocated by the HEAR scheme under each of the criteria.  
HEAR applicants must achieve a criteria score based on meeting these criteria.

Criteria	Score	Where to find more info
<b>1. Income (Mandatory)</b>	All applicants to HEAR need to meet the low-income criteria (no score awarded)	See page 9 for information required on this criteria
<b>2. Medical Card</b> Medical card in date on December 31st 2025	<b>Yes</b> = 1 or <b>No</b> = 0	See page 16 for information required on this criteria
<b>3. Means-Tested Social Welfare Benefits</b>	<b>Yes</b> = 2 or <b>No</b> = 0	See page 23 for information required on this criteria
<b>4. Area (Deprivation Index Score)</b>	<b>Extremely Disadvantaged</b> = 2.5 <b>Very Disadvantaged</b> = 2.5 <b>Applicants who experienced homelessness</b> = 2.5 <b>Disadvantaged</b> = 1.5 <b>Marginally Below Average or higher</b> = 0	See page 14 for information required on this criteria
<b>5. DEIS School Status</b>	<b>Yes</b> = 1.5 or <b>No</b> = 0	See page 15 for information required on this criteria
<b>Maximum Achievable Points</b>	7	



## Eligibility Scores for HEAR

Your total criteria score is added up to see if you are HEAR Priority, HEAR eligible or HEAR Ineligible.

Total HEAR Criteria Score	Eligibility
<b>5.5 - 7</b>	HEAR Priority (Applicant competes for HEAR-reduced points offers via CAO and is prioritised for offers)
<b>2.5 - 5</b>	HEAR Eligible but not HEAR priority status (Applicant competes for HEAR-reduced points offers via CAO)
<b>2 or Lower</b>	Not eligible for HEAR, but still considered for CAO offers.

## HEAR Priority Groups

The HEAR scheme recognises specific groups are particularly disadvantaged. Research has identified that students from the following groups are particularly under-represented in higher education in Ireland. In order to increase the number of HEAR students from these groups progressing to higher education, HEAR has agreed to prioritise the following groups:

- 1. Care-Experienced Applicants.**
- 2. Applicants who wish to be identified as a member of the Traveller Community in their HEAR application.**
- 3. Applicants who wish to be identified as a member of the Roma Community in their HEAR application.**
- 4. Young Parents.**
- 5. Applicants who are both HEAR and DARE eligible.**



## Eligibility and Scoring System

HEAR uses a scoring system to assess for HEAR eligibility and to determine if applicants should be considered for priority HEAR reduced points places. The scoring for each target group is as follows:

Target Group	Criteria	Score	More info
Care Experienced	Letter from Tusla	7	Find on Page 17
Member of Traveller Community	School or Community Reference Letter	7	Find on Page 18
Member of Roma Community	School or Community Reference Letter	7	Find on Page 18
Young Parent	Low-income + DSP Statement =	7	Find on Page 20
HEAR and DARE Eligible	HEAR Eligibility and DARE Eligibility	7	Find on Page 36

Use the table to estimate if your family income is equal to or less than the HEAR income limit.

Number of dependent children* in your family	HEAR Income Limit
Fewer than 4	€46,790
4-7	€51,325
8 or more	€55,630
<b>Add €4,785 to the total family/household income for every sibling/parent enrolled in a full time college, university or post leaving certificate course.</b>	

\* A dependent includes:

- a sibling under the age of 16 years on October 1st 2025.
- a sibling over the age of 16 years on October 1st 2025 who is either:
  - attending post primary education.
  - attending a full time course in FET or higher education.
  - medically certified as permanently unfit for work.
- a parent attending a full time course in FET or higher education.

**Is your family income less than the HEAR Limit and do you think you may meet a correct combination of the other HEAR indicators?**

**YES** - Your answer indicates you should consider making a HEAR application.

**NO** - Your answer indicates you should not consider making a HEAR application.

# Essential HEAR Information

## How do I apply to HEAR?

### Applicants applying for HEAR must:

1. Be under the age of 23 as of January 1st 2026.
2. Apply online to CAO by **17:00 on Sunday February 1st 2026**. CAO applications open on **Wednesday November 5th 2025 at 12 noon**.
3. No later than **17:00 on Sunday March 1st 2026**, indicate in your CAO application that you wish to apply for the HEAR scheme and fully and correctly complete all elements of the online HEAR form. Once you have completed the HEAR application form, a checklist will appear on screen telling you which documents you need to supply.
4. Post your supporting documents to arrive in CAO no later than **17:00 on Tuesday March 10th 2026**.



# Completing your HEAR Application

This section is designed to help you and your parent(s)/guardian(s) complete your HEAR application.



The images shown in this handbook, including tables and tick boxes, are for illustrative purposes only - please visit [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) to complete the official online form.

## Important Instructions for your HEAR Application

1. Get assistance from your parents/guardians and use this handbook to help you answer all relevant questions on your online HEAR application.
2. Fill in the application with your parent(s)/guardian(s) particularly question 6.
3. Print off or email your checklist to your email account. The checklist is located at the bottom of your online HEAR application, so you know exactly what documents to submit. Check this handbook for details on how to obtain your supporting documents.
4. After submitting your online application, go to **[www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)**, click on My Account, login and check your application has been filled in correctly.
5. Start to gather your supporting documents early. It can take several weeks to get all documents ready to be sent to CAO.
6. **Only provide documents which have been requested on your checklist. No other documents or information will be considered.**
7. It is your responsibility to make sure all forms have been signed, stamped and completed with the correct information by the appropriate Department of Social Protection personnel.
8. Check that your income documents relate to the correct year.
  - Statement of Liability for **2024** and/or Self-Assessment Letter – Chapter 4 for 2024.
  - Department of Social Protection form or statement for **2024**.

9. Submit all pages of Statement of Liability for 2024 and/or Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 for 2024.
10. Send good quality photocopies of documents, **not originals**.
11. Keep a photocopy of all documents you submit to CAO. **Keep proof of postage.**
12. Submit all information before deadlines:
  - Sunday March 1st 2026 for your online HEAR application.
  - Tuesday March 10th 2026 for your supporting documents.
13. **HEAR will not contact you about missing, incomplete or incorrect documentation, so please ensure that you have supplied all documents requested on your checklist by Tuesday March 10th 2026.** Please contact a HEAR advisor if you have any questions in advance of submitting your documentation.
14. Remember to check your email account regularly for important CAO notifications in relation to your application.

## HEAR Online Application Form

To log-in you must enter your details in the **My Application** section of the CAO website and click **Log-in**. Scroll down and select the **HEAR Form** button under the Higher Education Access Route.

The following sections take information from the online HEAR application form which describes what information HEAR requires. This will help in your preparation for applying to HEAR.

### In this section you must do 3 things:

1. Confirm your family income is within the HEAR Income Limit.
2. Agree to be considered for HEAR.
3. Agree that you have read and accept the HEAR Terms and Conditions.

Before proceeding with your HEAR application you must make sure that your family income is within the HEAR Income Limit. To do this you must tick **YES** or **NO** to the question:

#### Is your family income less than the HEAR Income Limit?

Use the following graphic of the HEAR application form as a guide to complete your HEAR application.



## What is 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, resident in the Republic of Ireland, who are under represented at Higher Education due to their socio-economic background. HEAR has been set up by a number of higher education institutions in Ireland. See [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie) for a list of participating higher education institutions.

## Who can apply?

HEAR is for school leavers under the age of 23 as of January 1st 2026. Mature and FET students have their own admissions routes and should contact the admissions officers of individual HEIs for more information.

## Should I apply?

You must have a low family income to be considered for HEAR. For the purpose of HEAR low family income is determined by:

- How many children there are in your family
- How many people in your family are in full time education
- How much your parents or guardians earned in income during the year ending December 31st 2024. Use the table to estimate if your family's income is equal to or less than the HEAR income limit:

Number of dependent children* in your family	Help?	HEAR Income Limit
Fewer than 4		€46,790
4-7		€51,325
8 or more		€55,630

Add €4,785 to the total family/household income for every sibling/parent enrolled in a full time college, university or post leaving certificate course.

Is your total family income less than the HEAR Limit? Yes ☐ No ☐

**If you tick YES to this question you will then be asked if you wish to be considered for HEAR.**

## Section 1: Your Address

This information is used to determine whether you live in an area of urban or rural disadvantage. Filling in your address carefully using the format below ensures we have the best picture of where you live. Please note, HEAR may contact you and ask you to provide evidence of this address.

Some addresses don't have house names or numbers. If your address doesn't have a name or number, leave the fields blank. Eircode is Ireland's postcode system launched in July 2016. An Eircode can help accurately identify an address. Further information on how to find your Eircode is available from **eircode.ie**.

### Section 1: Address

Enter your current home address.

Please note that you may be contacted and requested to provide proof of your address. For information on filling in your address or to see what evidence of address may be requested. [Click here for help](#).

House Name:	
Number of House:	
Address Line 1:	
Address Line 2:	
Address Line 3:	
Address Line 4:	
Area or Town:	
County:	
Eircode:	

**Please note HEAR may contact you and ask you to provide proof of this address. You only have to provide this if HEAR contacts you and requests it. If you are asked to provide evidence of this address HEAR will accept any of the following documents as evidence of your address:**

- Utility bill (gas, electricity, telephone, mobile phone).
- Letter from house or car insurance companies.
- Statement from a Bank, Building Society, Credit Union, Credit Card Company.
- Correspondence from a Government Department, Local Authority or the Revenue Commissioners.
- Correspondence from the HSE.

## Section 2: Second Level School

This information is used to determine if you attended a DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) school for 5 or more years of your second level education. The DEIS school list was compiled by the Department of Education. In order to assess your application, HEAR seeks your permission to contact the Department of Education directly to verify your DEIS school(s) attendance. In order to do that you must enter your Personal Public Service (PPS) Number. If your information cannot be verified by the Department of Education, you may be asked to provide documentation from your secondary school(s) detailing your DEIS school attendance.

### Section 2: Second Level School

Use the drop down menus to select which county you went to second level school in and what second level school you attended. If your school is not listed select: My School is Not Listed. Click here for help.

Select County ▼

DEIS School ▼

#### Selected School:

Marian College, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 No. of years attended

5

Remove school

If you went to more than one second level school, use the drop down menus below to enter details of your previous schools. If your previous school is outside the Republic of Ireland select: School Outside Republic of Ireland.

Select County ▼

DEIS School ▼

#### Selected School:

Breifne College, Cootehill Rd., Cavan No. of years attended

1

Remove school

HEAR verifies your attendance with the Department of Education. In order to do that you must enter your PPS Number in the box below. If your attendance at the school(s) selected above cannot be verified with the Department of Education, HEAR will be in contact with you to seek alternative evidence to confirm attendance.

Please enter your PPS number:

By entering my PPS Number above I give permission to HEAR to directly verify it with the the Department of Education.

- Check the official name of your school.
- If your previous school was outside the Republic of Ireland, select: School Outside of Republic of Ireland.
- If you attended more than one second level school, enter the details of the previous school(s) you attended.

## Section 3: Medical Card/GP Visit Card

In order to assess your application, HEAR seeks permission to contact the HSE directly to verify that you or your parent(s) or guardian(s) have a medical card or a GP Visit card that is in date on December 31st 2025. You can supply us with the information for yourself or your parent(s)/guardian(s). If you have a medical card in your own name you should enter your own PPS number in the box.

If you do not have a medical card/GP Visit card in your own name but your parent/guardian does, you should enter their name, date of birth and PPS number in the box below. Please remember to insert your own PPS number also.

### Section 3: Medical Card/GP Visit Card

Do you or your parent(s) or guardian(s) have a HSE medical card/GP Visit card that is in date on December 31st 2025?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please enter your PPS number:

I have a medical card/GP Visit card valid on December 31st 2025. By ticking yes and entering my PPS number above I give permission to HEAR to directly verify the above statement with the HSE.

Yes ☐ No ☐

My parent/guardian has a medical card/GP Visit card valid on December 31st 2025. By ticking yes and entering my parent(s) or guardian(s) information below and my PPS number above we give permission to HEAR to directly verify the above statement with the HSE.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Parent/Guardian's Name:

Parent/Guardian's Date of Birth:

(Year/Month/Day)

Parent Guardian's PPS number:

## Section 4.1: Care-experienced/Tusla

Some applicants are foster children or separated children and/or in the care of Tusla (the Child and Family Agency). Please answer the question below to indicate if you are, or have been, in care.

### Section 4.1: Care-Experienced Applicants to HEAR

Are you currently in the Care of the State/Tusla (the Child and Family Agency) or were you previously in Care of the State/HSE?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If **No** please continue to the next section of the handbook.

If **Yes** you do not need to complete Sections 5-6, but you must supply:  
a letter from Tusla on Tusla headed stationery detailing the date you were taken into care.

A foster child is any child who is looked after by someone else other than the parents, by an order of the court or Tusla, without a formal adoption of the child by the person.

A separated child is any child under 18 years of age who is outside his/her country of origin and separated from both parents or his/her previous legal primary caregiver.



You can get the Tusla letter from your social worker or project worker. See [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie) or call **01-7718500** if you have any questions. See [www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments](http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments) for a sample of this letter and for further information.



## Section 4.2 and 4.3: Members from the Traveller and Roma Communities

### Who is this section for?

This section is for **HEAR applicants who wish to be identified as members of the Traveller or Roma community in their HEAR application**. If you are not a member of either of these communities, this section does not apply to you.

**Applicants who wish to be identified as member of Traveller or Roma Community must answer Yes to Questions 4.2 or 4.3.**

**You are not required to disclose that you are a member of the Traveller or Roma Community in your HEAR application if you do not wish to do so. If you do not disclose that you are a member of the Travelling Community or Roma Community HEAR will not be able to provide you with targeted support via Priority Status.**

If you do not wish to disclose that you are a member of the Traveller or Roma Community in your HEAR application, select No and continue to complete the rest of the online HEAR application form.

**If you select No**, your HEAR application will be assessed based on the other HEAR criteria and you will be considered for HEAR reduced points places through the normal HEAR competition. You will then need to provide evidence of household income for 2024 by Tuesday March 10th 2026.

**If you select Yes**, you are not required to complete the rest of the online HEAR application and you will need to provide a School or Community Reference letter by Tuesday March 10th 2026. Your application will be considered for HEAR priority reduced points places.

- **Complete the online application:** Answer Yes to Questions 4.2 or 4.3 and submit your online HEAR application by 17:00 on Sunday March 1st 2026.
- **Complete the School and Community Reference Letter:** this is a reference letter for your school or community group to support your application to HEAR.
- **Submit documentation:** submit the School and Community Reference Letter to CAO by Tuesday March 10th 2026. See [www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments](http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments) for a sample of this letter and for further details.

## Section 4.4: Applicants Who Experienced Homelessness

### Who is this section for?

This section is for applicants who have experienced homelessness or became homeless while in second-level education from January 1st 2024 to March 1st 2026. To meet this indicator, you or the parent/guardian that you live with must be registered on The Pathway Accommodation and Support System. PASS is an online homeless database used by all Local Authorities (LA) and homeless services in Ireland.

### How does HEAR help Applicants who have experienced homelessness?

Applicants who have experienced homelessness from January 1st 2024 to March 1st 2026 while attending second-level education will meet the HEAR disadvantaged area indicator and receive a score of 2.5.

### Completing the online application form

In order to assess your application, HEAR seeks permission to contact the PASS (Pathway Accommodation Support System) office directly to verify that you or your parent(s)/Guardian(s) whom you live with were homeless during the period of **January 1st 2024 to March 1st 2026**.

**Please note, to be considered for this indicator, you or your parent or guardian must be registered as homeless on the PASS system.**

HEAR may not be able to verify your application under these criteria if you have not accessed homeless services or emergency accommodation (e.g before January 1st 2024).

### What else do applicants need to do for their HEAR application?

- Applicants need to indicate that they wish to be considered for this section and complete the HEAR online application by **17:00 on Sunday March 1st 2026**.
- Applicants must submit documentation to ensure they meet income criteria 1 **to be considered for HEAR eligibility**.
- All supporting documents must be sent to the CAO by **17:00 on Tuesday March 10th 2026**.



## Section 4.4: Applicants Who Experienced Homelessness

Did you experience homelessness during the period of January 1st 2024 to March 1st 2026 while in post-primary education and wish to be considered under this category?	<b>Yes</b> <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
Please enter your PPS number:	
I experienced homelessness during the period January 1st 2024 to March 1st 2026 while in post-primary education. I wish to be considered under this category. By ticking yes and entering my PPS number above I give permission to HEAR to directly verify the above statement with the PASS Office.	<b>Yes</b> <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
My parent/guardian that I lived with experienced homelessness during the period January 1st 2024 to March 1st 2026 while I was in post-primary education. By ticking yes and entering my parent/guardian's information below and my PPS number above we give permission to HEAR to directly verify the above statement with the PASS Office.	<b>Yes</b> <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
Parent/Guardian's Name:	
Parent/Guardian's Date of Birth:	(Year/Month/Day)
Parent Guardian's PPS number:	

## Section 4.5: Young Parents

### Who is this section for?

This section is for a person who has become a young parent while in post-primary education and who is currently in receipt of child benefit payment for the year 2025. The HEAR scheme recognises the impact having a child has on your own educational pathway. Please note, HEAR is for school leavers under the age of **23 as of January 1st 2026**.

### Who does this section help?

This section identifies the applicant as a young parent and therefore a priority group for targeted supports on the HEAR scheme. Applicants who are eligible under this category can compete for HEAR reduced points places in participating HEIs. You can also avail of supports once you begin to attend higher education such as orientation, mentoring and additional resources.

## Who else do I need to complete this section?

- A young parent needs to fill out Part 1 of a Young Parent Request for Information Form. A Department of Social Protection Official must complete Part 2 of this form. A copy of this form can be found on [www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments](http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments). Keep a photocopy and proof of postage. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that this form is filled in correctly and submitted to CAO by Tuesday March 10th 2026.
- **Answer Section 4.5 and submit evidence of your parent/guardians' household income for 2024, meaning you still need to qualify for criteria 1 to be considered as a priority group for HEAR.**

## Who should fill out this section?

Please note that this section is relevant only to the applicant and not the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the applicant who may themselves have been young parents.

Please answer the question below to indicate if you are a Young Parent.

### Section 4.5: Young Parents

I became a parent while attending Post-Primary School and I was in receipt of Child Benefit during 2025.

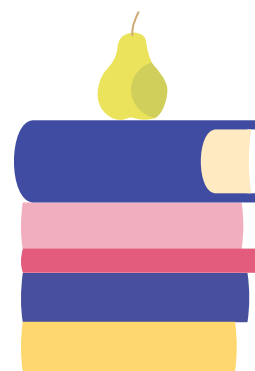
**By ticking this box in this section, you have identified yourself to the HEAR scheme as a Young Parent and therefore a priority group for targeted supports on the HEAR scheme.**

**The applicant must meet the low-income criteria (criteria 1) and Young Parent Verification process to be considered eligible for HEAR.**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If this section does not apply to you, please continue to the next section of the handbook.

If you ticked this box you must supply the completed Young Parent Request for Information Form. A copy of this form can be found on [www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments](http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments).



# Section 5: Family Dependants


To determine your HEAR income limit we need to know the number of dependants in your family.

## Section 5: Family Dependants

A dependant is anyone in your family who is:

- a sibling under the age of 16 years on October 1st 2025.
- a sibling over the age of 16 years on October 1st 2025 who is either:
  - attending post primary education.
  - attending a full time course in FET or higher education.
  - medically certified as permanently unfit for work.
- a parent attending a full time course in FET or higher education.

Do not include (count) yourself in this section.

Choose no. 

- Make sure to count any parent/guardian attending a full time course.
- Do not count yourself as a dependant.

Enter each dependant’s name, date of birth, and the name of school or college they are attending (if any).

Name	Date of Birth	School/College Attending

## Section 6: Family Financial Circumstances

This question asks you to tell us who contributed to your family's income in 2024. Your family income may come from:

- Employment
- Social Welfare
- Pensions
- Rental Property
- Farming

### Section 6.1: Who contributed to your family's income in 2024?

**Fill in section 6 with your parent(s)/guardian(s). Entering inaccurate information in this section will affect the outcome of your HEAR Application.**

Tick who contributed financially to your family's income in 2024. If your parent(s)/guardian(s) are separated/divorced only fill in the income of the parent that you live with most of the time.

#### Section 6.1. Family Financial Circumstances

Please note this section relates to the year 2024 only.

Warning: Complete Section 6 with your parents or guardians. Entering incorrect information or failure to answer all questions in this section will affect the assessment of your HEAR application.

Select who contributes to your family's income.

☒ Mother    ☒ Father    ☐ Guardian 1    ☐ Guardian 2

Enter your Mother's Full Name:

Enter your Father's Full Name:

## Section 6.2: Family financial circumstances

Please list all sources of income your parent(s)/guardian(s) received in 2024 excluding child benefit. You must tick yes or no to all types of income.

Type of Income	Mother/ Guardian 1	Father/ Guardian 2	Document Required
Was your parent/guardian in paid employment in 2024 on a full, part time or temporary basis?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	<b>Statement of Liability for 2024</b> from Revenue Commissioners. <b>See Page 27</b>
Was your parent/guardian self-employed, engaged in farming, or receiving rent from rental properties in 2024?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	<b>Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 for 2024</b> from Revenue Commissioners or Tax Exemption Letter. <b>See Page 27</b>
Did your parent/guardian receive any social welfare payments in 2024 other than child benefit?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	<b>Department of Social Protection (DSP) Form or DSP Statement for 2024.</b> <b>See Page 29</b>
Did your parent/guardian receive any lump sum payments in 2024 from his/her former employer as a result of being made redundant?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Form <b>RP50</b> Notification of Redundancy OR Letter from Employer. <b>See Page 30</b>
Was your parent/guardian retired in 2024?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Retirement Lump Sum Letter</b> from Employer (Page 30) and/or</li> <li>• <b>Statement of Liability for 2024/Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 for 2024</b> (Page 27) and/or</li> <li>• <b>Department of Social Protection (DSP) Form or DSP Statement for 2024.</b> (Page 29)</li> </ul>

## Section 7: Carrying Forward HEAR eligibility from 2025 to 2026

This section is only relevant to applicants who made a HEAR application and were eligible in 2025 (e.g. applicants who are now repeating the Leaving Certificate or taking up a deferral from 2025).

Eligibility for HEAR carries forward for one year provided that you:

- apply to CAO by 17:00 on Sunday February 1st 2026 and indicate that you wish to apply to HEAR by 17:00 on Sunday March 1st 2026.
- supply your correct CAO 2025 application number.

The outcome of your 2025 HEAR application was communicated to you by email in June 2025. If you applied to CAO in 2025 and you were deemed eligible for HEAR in 2025, then your HEAR eligibility can be carried forward to your application for entry in 2026. You must enter your correct CAO 2025 application number in the box provided. You are still required to complete all relevant sections of the 2026 HEAR application form, however you do not need to supply supporting documents as part of your application. You can contact the CAO helpdesk if you require information about your 2025 HEAR eligibility.

In the event of being offered and accepting a HEAR place in 2026, you may be required to provide the supporting documents which accompanied your 2025 HEAR application.

You must be under the age of 23 as of January 1st 2026 to carry forward HEAR eligibility from 2025 to 2026.

**Please do not complete this section if you did not apply to or were not eligible for HEAR in 2025.**

**Deadline:**  
**February**  
**1st 2026**

**By 17:00**  
- apply to CAO

**Deadline:**  
**March 1st**  
**2026**

**By 17:00**  
- apply to HEAR  
and complete all  
sections of form

**Insert 2025  
CAO application  
number under  
Section 7 if deemed  
eligible for HEAR  
in 2025**

# Supporting Documents Section

## Supporting Document Checklist

See [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie) for further information on what types of documents you may need to supply. Sample documents and letters can be found on [www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supporting documents](http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supporting-documents).

Review each question on the online form and answer Yes/No to each. Where you answer Yes, check the “Document Required” column. This tells you what documents you must send to the CAO by Tuesday March 10th 2026.

If you have indicated income from both parents you must submit documents detailing both their incomes. HEAR requires evidence of a full year’s income for 2024 (i.e. 52 weeks).

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## How to request supporting documents from the Revenue Commissioners.

If your parent(s)/guardian(s) received income from employment, self-employment, land, farming or rent from rental properties:

- You must submit your parent(s)/guardian(s) Statement of Liability or a Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 for 2024.
  - If they are exempt from paying tax provide a tax exemption letter from Revenue.
  - Supply documents for both parent(s)/guardian(s). If they are jointly assessed one document is sufficient.
  - Submit all pages of a Statement of Liability including front and back. If only one page is submitted, it cannot be assessed.
  - In all cases where you are submitting a Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 or Notice of Assessment all pages are required.
-

## What is a Statement of Liability?

A Statement of Liability is the new name for the Revenue statement that was previously called a P21. A Statement of Liability is a statement of total income, tax credit and tax paid for a particular tax year for people in paid employment who pay all of their income tax under PAYE (Pay As You Earn). You do not automatically receive a Statement of Liability from Revenue; you must request this document.

**Your Employment Detail Summary will not be accepted.**

**Request your Statement of Liability online at [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie)**



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## How do I request a Statement of Liability for 2024?

The quickest and easiest way for your parent(s)/guardian(s) to get their Statement of Liability is by clicking on the myAccount link on the Revenue website at **[www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie)**. There is a simple registration process and a PIN will be issued by post in 5-8 working days. Your parent/guardian should log in using this PIN and request the Statement of Liability. If your parent(s)/guardian(s) have chosen to receive correspondence electronically, the Statement of Liability will be available by clicking on the My Documents tab, otherwise the Statement of Liability will be posted to them.

Your parent(s)/guardian(s) may also request a Statement of Liability by submitting a paper Income Tax Return.

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## What is a Self-Assessment – Chapter 4?

A Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 is a statement of total income or profits, tax chargeable and tax paid for a particular tax year for people who are: self-employed, directors, and/or receiving income of any kind where some or all of the tax cannot be collected under the PAYE system. Do not submit Form 11 as this is not a required document and will not be accepted.

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## How do I request a Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 for 2024?

A Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 will be in your parent(s)/guardian(s) Revenue On-Line Service (ROS) inbox after they have completed their return and self-assessment for 2024.

## What if parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot get a Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 document?

A Notice of Assessment – Chapter 4 will be issued by Revenue to parent(s)/guardian(s) who file a paper tax return to Revenue and who do not complete a self- assessment on that return. The majority of self-employed Revenue customers receive a Self-Assessment – Chapter 4.

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## What if my parent(s)/guardian(s) have a ‘Notice of Amended Assessment (Chapter 4)’ or ‘Notice of Amended Assessment (Chapter 5)’ for 2024?

If your parent(s)/guardian(s) have a ‘Notice of Amended Assessment - Chapter 4’ or ‘Notice of Amended Assessment – Chapter 5 for 2024’ from Revenue you should send this document to the CAO. Where a Notice of Amended Assessment – Chapter 4 or Notice of Amended Assessment – Chapter 5 for 2024 is received, HEAR will not require a Self-Assessment - Chapter 4 or Notice of Assessment – Chapter 4.

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## How long will it take for Revenue to issue a Statement of Liability or Self-Assessment – Chapter 4?

It is essential that you apply for a Statement of Liability early. Statement of Liabilities can take several weeks to issue. If your parent(s)/guardian(s) do not have a Self- Assessment – Chapter 4 (or a Notice of Assessment) for 2024 they need to complete their Tax Return and Self-Assessment for 2024 on ROS as soon as possible.

If one parent/guardian was PAYE and one parent/guardian was self-employed what document do I submit?

- **A Self-Assessment** – Chapter 4 for 2024 if parent(s)/guardian(s) are jointly assessed by Revenue.
  - **OR**
  - **A Statement of Liability for 2024 and a Self-Assessment** – Chapter 4 for 2024 is required if parent(s)/guardian(s) are separately assessed by Revenue.
- 

## What if my parent(s)/guardian(s) earned income from outside the Republic of Ireland in 2024?

HEAR requests that you provide the Revenue equivalent of supporting documents for the tax year January 1st 2024 to December 31st 2024.  
See [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie) for details.

A certified English translation by a professional translation service is required in the case of documents not issued originally in English or Irish, in addition to the certified A4 photocopies of the documents themselves.

You can also contact a member of the HEAR team for further information. Contact details are listed on page 3 of this handbook.

## What if my parent/guardian is self-employed and is also in receipt of a Social Welfare payment?

Submit a copy of a Self-Assessment – Chapter 4 for 2024, plus a Department of Social Protection form or statement for 2024 as outlined on page 27.

**Please do not submit original documents. Documents will not be returned by CAO. Send good quality photocopies including front and back of all pages.**



## How do I complete the Department of Social Protection (DSP) form or statement?

If your parent(s)/guardian(s) received income from the DSP in the year ending December 31st 2024, you must provide the following four pieces of information from the DSP:

- The total amount of social welfare income received in 2024.
- The name of the person(s) receiving the payment.
- The name of the payment(s) received.
- The date the payment started and the date the payment stopped (if applicable). **The DSP form is included at the back of this handbook** or you can download it from your online HEAR Application.

Ask your parent(s)/guardian(s) to have the local DSP Office Complete, Sign and Stamp your DSP Form. Alternatively your parent(s)/guardian(s) can request a copy of their DSP payment statement online at **[www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)**.

You can submit the DSP form or a statement from DSP. Remember HEAR requires evidence of a full year's income for 2024 (i.e. 52 weeks). Some applicants, depending on their parent(s)/guardian(s)' circumstances in 2024, may need to submit Revenue documents and/or evidence of other income as well as evidence of DSP income.

## Important Instructions

- You can find your local Social Welfare Office at [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie).
- If you misplace your form you can download it again from your online HEAR application or find it at [www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments](http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments). It is your responsibility to make sure all forms have been signed, stamped and completed with the correct information by the Department of Social Protection.



## Lump Sum Redundancy/Retirement Payments

If your parent(s)/guardian(s) received any lump sum payments in 2024 from his/her former employer as a result of being made redundant or retiring from employment, you must submit:

- All pages of Form RP50 Notification of Redundancy, **OR**
- A letter from your parent(s)/guardian(s)' last employer or body administering pension showing:
  - Date employment ceased.
  - Gross amount of lump sum received in the year ending December 31st 2024.
  - Number of years in that employment.
  - Gross annual pension.
- Sample documents and letters can be found on [www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments](http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments).

## Supporting Documentation for HEAR Priority Groups:



### Traveller and Roma Community Applicants

Applicants who identify as a member of the Traveller or Roma community must submit a School and Community Reference Letter. This is a short letter written by a school or community group representative who has been personally involved in teaching, providing services, or working alongside the applicant. The letter should be on official letterhead (school or community organisation). This reference letter must be signed and dated by the person providing it. A sample letter is available at [www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments](http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments).

### Care-Experienced Applicants

If you are care-experienced—meaning you were in the care of the State, HSE, or Tusla, or engaged with their services—you must provide documentation confirming your care experience. You are required to submit a letter from Tusla confirming that you are care-experienced. This letter must be printed on official Tusla letterhead, be dated and signed by the relevant staff member, and confirm your care status and the type of care received.

## Young Parent Applicants

To apply under this category, you must complete the official Young Parent Information Request Form from the Department of Social Protection. Applicants complete Section 1 of the form, while Section 2 must be signed and stamped by a Department of Social Protection official at your local Intreo office. Submit the completed form as part of your supporting documentation.

Submit all documents to the CAO by Tuesday 10 March 2026. Please keep the originals and send clear copies.

Sample documents and letters are available at [www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments](http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear-supportingdocuments).

# HEAR Terms and Conditions of Application

**Ticking YES that you want to be considered for HEAR, also means that you have read and accept the HEAR terms and conditions.**

**To apply to HEAR you must agree to the HEAR terms and conditions below.**

**By ticking yes, I confirm that I have read and I accept the terms and conditions as outlined. I consent to the use of my data as detailed in the HEAR Terms and Conditions.**

1. I have read, understood and will comply with the rules and requirements of application as detailed in the HEAR Application Handbook.
2. I understand that it is my responsibility (and not that of my parents, guardians, teachers, or anyone else) to ensure that all parts of my HEAR application are submitted in a complete and accurate manner, within the specified HEAR deadlines. Failure to do so will negatively affect the outcome of my HEAR application.
3. I understand that:
  - a. information provided on my HEAR application form by Sunday March 1st 2026,
  - b. documentation received by the CAO by Tuesday March 10th 2026 and, where relevant,
  - c. any further additional documentation requested by HEAR received within the specified deadline,
  - d. and any further information considered relevant by HEAR, will be considered when determining the outcome of my HEAR application.
4. Neither the CAO nor the participating HEAR higher education institutions will accept any responsibility for any loss or hardship arising as a result of an applicant's failure to supply correct and complete information at the appropriate time.

5. I understand that all information supplied as part of my HEAR application may be subject to verification or clarification and that HEAR can request additional documentation from me in relation to any aspect of my application. Failure to supply additional documentation within the specified deadlines will result in my ineligibility for HEAR.
6. I understand that HEAR uses my address information to determine whether I live in an area of urban or rural disadvantage and that HEAR may contact me and ask me to provide proof of this address. Failure to provide proof of address within the specified deadline will mean that I will not be awarded the HEAR Area Profile indicator.
7. I understand that, if I have indicated on my HEAR application form that I have attended a Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) School for 5 years or more of my second level education, that HEAR will verify this information with the Department of Education directly based on the PPS number provided in Section 2 of my application form. If my information cannot be verified by the Department of Education, I understand that I may be asked to provide documentation from my secondary school(s) detailing my DEIS school attendance. Failure to provide verification from my school(s) within the specified deadline will mean that I will not be awarded the HEAR DEIS School indicator.
8. I understand that, if I have indicated on my HEAR application form that either I or my parents/guardians have a Medical Card/GP Visit Card in date on December 31st 2025 and if I provided my/their PPS number(s), that this will be verified directly with the Health Service Executive (HSE). If I provide inaccurate or incomplete PPS number(s) I understand that this will mean that I will not be awarded the Medical Card indicator.
9. I understand that, if I accept a HEAR place, a condition of acceptance is that I must attend the HEAR Orientation Programme in the participating higher education institution in which I have accepted the place. Failure to attend without prior permission from the Access Office or other relevant office of that higher education institution, could result in my HEAR place being withdrawn or in the withdrawal of other potential post-entry supports (e.g. financial supports).
10. I understand that data contained in my HEAR application will be used for research and analysis purposes by participating HEIs, agents acting on behalf of the HEIs or the CAO, but that this data will be anonymised and none of my personal data will be identifiable should it be published.
11. Where I am found to have made false declarations, or it is found that anyone else has made false declarations as part of my HEAR application, I understand that I will be ineligible for HEAR. I also understand that the participating HEAR higher education institutions reserve the right not to consider my application, and/or to cancel any offers of places in cases where it is found, during or post-admission to higher education, that false or misleading information was supplied in my HEAR application.
12. I certify that all information I have supplied in my HEAR application is accurate and true.

# Next Steps in the Application Process

<b>I have completed my online HEAR application and submitted supporting documents, what happens next?</b>	After the Leaving Certificate ends in late June 2026, you will receive notification from HEAR about the outcome of your HEAR application and whether you are eligible to be considered for a HEAR place. You can view the outcome of your HEAR application by logging into your CAO account under the My Application section on <b><a href="http://www.cao.ie">www.cao.ie</a></b>
<b>What does it mean if I am eligible for HEAR?</b>	If you are eligible for HEAR, you will now compete for one of the reserved places on offer in the participating colleges. If you are successful you will receive a HEAR course offer through CAO on receipt of your Leaving Certificate results in August 2026. You must meet the minimum entry and course requirements to be considered for a HEAR place. Details of places available and minimum course requirements can be found on <b><a href="http://www.accesscollege.ie">www.accesscollege.ie</a></b>
<b>What happens if I receive a HEAR offer?</b>	If you are successful, you will be notified by CAO and by the college or university which makes you the HEAR offer. Accept your place through CAO and the college or university. If you accept the place you must attend the mandatory orientation programme before the first term. Details of orientation dates can be found on <b><a href="http://www.accesscollege.ie">www.accesscollege.ie</a></b>
<b>What does it mean if I am ineligible for HEAR?</b>	Being ineligible for HEAR means that you cannot compete for one of the reduced points places. Applicants are ineligible because they did not meet criteria or they failed to meet the terms and conditions of application. It does not affect any application you have made for courses through the CAO. In other words, you may still be offered a place on a course if you meet the entry requirements. It does not affect any application you may make to Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) for a maintenance grant.
<b>I am ineligible, can I have my application reviewed?</b>	HEAR uses a Review and Appeals process to make sure that all HEAR applicants are treated fairly and the assessment procedures have been applied consistently. Further information on the review and appeals process is available at <b><a href="http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear/reviews-and-appeals">www.accesscollege.ie/hear/reviews-and-appeals</a></b>
<b>HEAR Policy on Correspondence</b>	HEAR will only discuss your application with you, your parent(s)/guardian(s) or a person nominated by you. Any unsolicited correspondence from a third party will not be taken into account.

Your parent(s)/guardian(s) must complete Part 2 and submit this form at their local DSP Intreo Centre. Keep a photocopy and proof of postage. Submit all documents to CAO by 10 March 2026. It is the responsibility of every applicant to ensure both pages of this form are filled in correctly.

### Part 1: To be completed by HEAR Applicant

HEAR Applicant's Name:

Address:

CAO Number:

Date of Birth:

PPS Number:

### Part 2: To be completed by applicant's Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

I authorise the release of information outlined below for the purposes of assessing a HEAR application.

Parent 1/Guardian 1 Signature

Parent 2/Guardian 2 Signature

PPS Number (Parent 1/Guardian 1)

PPS Number (Parent 2/Guardian 2)

### Part 3: To be completed by DSP Official

Parent 1/Guardian 1 Name:

Please do not alter the year for which information is required on this form.

Total Social Welfare Income on all social welfare schemes\* previously paid to this PPS number in the year 2024?

In receipt of means-tested social assistance payment(s) for at least 26 weeks or 6 months in the year 2024?

☐

YES

☐

NO

Name of Payment(s):

Payment 1:

Payment 2:

\* Excluding Child Benefit and certain supplements paid under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance schemes.

Parent 2/Guardian 2 Name:

Please do not alter the year for which information is required on this form.

Total Social Welfare Income on all social welfare schemes\* previously paid to this PPS number in the year 2024?

In receipt of means-tested social assistance payment(s) for at least 26 weeks or 6 months in the year 2024? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Name of Payment(s):  
Payment 1:   
Payment 2:

\*Excluding Child Benefit and certain supplements paid under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance schemes.

Additional Payment Information

1. Is there an Adult Dependant on payments listed on this form? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Name of Adult Dependant:

2. Are means deducted for payments? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
If yes, please enter amount of weekly means deducted

Weekly means deducted for Parent 1/Guardian 1 in 2024   
Weekly means deducted for Parent 2/Guardian 2 in 2024

All forms must be completed, signed and stamped by a DSP official.  
Forms that are not signed and stamped are invalid.

Name of DSP Official (BLOCK CAPITALS):

Signature of DSP Official \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

DSP Official Stamp

HEAR is a college and university admissions scheme for school leavers, resident in the Republic of Ireland, who are under represented at Higher Education due to their socio-economic background.

## Advice and support

All participating colleges have a staff member who can advise you on how to apply to HEAR. If you wish to speak to someone about your HEAR application, or have questions relating to a specific college or university, contact any member of the HEAR team listed on page 3. For Questions about completing your HEAR application contact CAO Helpdesk: Email CAO by clicking “Contact Us” at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) or phone: 091 509 800.



# Have you considered...

## Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)

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).

## Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI)

For detailed information on financial support and student grants when going to third level, log on to [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie).

- Use the **Grant Eligibility Reckoner** to indicate if you meet SUSI's criteria to receive student grant funding.
- Apply early and return requested documentation as soon as possible.
- **Tick the SUSI option on your CAO application to share your college course details with SUSI.**



Send your supporting documents to:

HEAR Applications 2026  
CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway

by Tuesday March 10th 2026.