

# DARE Review 2025–2027

## Public Consultation Survey

Preview of Survey Questions

**PLEASE NOTE:** The text below is a preview of the survey questions only and is not the survey itself.

If you wish to complete the survey, please go to the end of this document and click the link to access the online survey form.

Irish Universities Association (IUA) | Survey closes: Friday 10 July 2026 at 4:00 pm

## About this document

This document shows you every question in the DARE Review Public Consultation Survey before you fill it in online. It is provided so you can read through the questions at your own pace, discuss them with others if you wish, and prepare your answers in advance.

You do not need to answer any questions in this document. All responses are collected through the online survey only.

### What is DARE?

The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is an alternative admissions scheme that allows students whose disability has negatively affected their second-level education to be considered for reduced-points entry to higher education institutions in Ireland. DARE has been a national admissions scheme since 2009.

The DARE Review is examining how the scheme works, who it reaches, and what reforms may be needed for a revised scheme from 2028. This consultation is a key part of that evidence-gathering process.

## How the survey works

The survey has 8 sections and 41 questions in total. Not all questions will appear for everyone — a small number are shown only if you select a specific answer earlier (for example, Question 5 about school type only appears if you said you work in a school). The survey takes approximately 15–20 minutes.

Questions marked ★ Required must be answered. All other questions are optional — skip them if they do not apply to you.

Your responses are anonymous. You will not be asked for your name. If you choose to provide contact details at the end, these are held separately from your survey answers and will never be linked to them.

## Question type guide

Type	What it means
Single choice	Choose one answer from a list.
Multiple choice	Choose as many answers as apply.
Rating scale 1–5	Select a number from 1 to 5. Labels for 1 (lowest) and 5 (highest) are shown with each question.
Open text	Type your own answer in your own words. No minimum or maximum length.
Ranking	Order items from most important (1) to least important (6) by dragging in the online survey.

## Section 1: Consent and About You

This section helps us understand who is responding. You do not need to identify yourself by name.

**Question 1** Single choice ★ Required

**Do you consent to your anonymised responses being used as evidence in the DARE Review 2025 to 2027 and in any published outputs of the review?**

Your data is processed by the Irish Universities Association (IUA) under GDPR Article 6(1)(a) — consent. You can withdraw consent at any time by contacting the DARE Review Secretariat.

Select one:

- Yes — I consent to my anonymised responses being used as evidence in the DARE Review
- No — I do not consent (selecting this will close the survey)

**Question 2** Single choice ★ Required

**Which of the following best describes your relationship to DARE?**

Select the option that best describes your primary role. If more than one applies, choose the most relevant.

Select one:

- I am a current or recent student who applied to DARE
- I am a student who considered applying to DARE but did not apply
- I am a parent or guardian of a student who applied to or is considering DARE
- I am a guidance counsellor
- I am a teacher or learning support or special education teacher
- I work in disability or access services in a higher education institution
- I represent a disability organisation, advocacy body, or DPO
- I am a healthcare or allied health professional who provides assessments for DARE
- I work in another sector-related role such as HEA, NCGE, CAO, AHEAD, or NGO
- Other

**Question 3** Single choice ★ Required

**How would you describe your familiarity with the DARE scheme?**

Select one:

- Very familiar — I have direct personal or professional experience of DARE
- Fairly familiar — I know how DARE works and have some experience with it
- Somewhat familiar — I have a general understanding but limited direct experience
- Not very familiar — I know it exists but have limited knowledge of how it works

**Question 4** Single choice

**What province are you based in?**

Helps us understand geographic representativeness.

Select one:

- Leinster
- Munster
- Connacht
- Ulster — Republic of Ireland counties
- I am based outside the Republic of Ireland

**Question 5** Single choice

**If you work in a second-level school, what type of school is it?**

Leave blank if this does not apply to you.

Select one:

- DEIS school
- ETB or Community school
- Secondary school — non-fee-paying, non-DEIS
- Fee-paying or Independent school
- Other

## Question 6 Multiple choice

**This question is for students, parents or guardians: which of the following disability categories best describes your own or your child's disability?**

Optional. Helps us understand whether responses represent the full range of disability types.

*Select all that apply:*

- Specific Learning Difficulty — for example dyslexia or dyspraxia
- Autism spectrum — including Asperger syndrome
- ADHD or ADD
- Mental health condition — for example anxiety, depression, or eating disorder
- Physical or mobility disability
- Chronic illness or medical condition
- Hearing impairment or Deaf
- Visual impairment or Blind
- Intellectual disability
- Speech and language or communication difficulty
- Multiple disabilities
- Not applicable to me
- Other

## Section 2: Your Experience of DARE

This section asks about your direct experience of DARE, whether as someone who applied, supported an application, or worked with the scheme professionally. If you have no direct experience of DARE, you may skip to Section 3.

**Question 7** Single choice ★ Required

**What is your direct experience with DARE?**

Select one:

- I or my child applied to DARE and was successful — offer received via DARE
- I or my child applied to DARE but was unsuccessful
- I or my child applied to DARE and am or are awaiting a decision
- I or my child considered applying but decided not to
- I support students or families through the DARE process professionally
- I have no direct experience of DARE

**Question 8** Rating scale 1–5

**Overall, how would you rate your experience of the DARE application process?**

1 = Very poor experience — 5 = Very positive experience. Skip if not applicable.

**Very poor experience** ◀ ——— Scale 1–5 ——— ▶ **Very positive experience**

*(1 is the lowest, 5 is the highest)*

**Question 9** Open text

**What, if anything, did you find straightforward or positive about the DARE application process?**

Share anything that worked well or was easier than expected. Leave blank if not applicable.

*Open text box — respondents type their own answer here*

**Question 10** Multiple choice

**Which, if any, of the following did you find challenging about the DARE application process?**

Select all that apply. Leave blank if not applicable.

*Select all that apply:*

- Understanding whether I or my child was eligible
- Finding out about DARE in the first place
- Gathering the required medical or professional assessment documentation
- The cost of obtaining required assessments or reports
- Completing the DARE section of the CAO application form
- Getting support or guidance from my school
- Understanding the outcome or decision received
- The emotional stress or anxiety associated with the process
- I did not find any part particularly challenging
- Other

**Question 11** Open text

**In your own words, please describe your experience of the DARE application process.**

Share what went well, what was difficult, how it made you feel, or any specific moments that stood out. No minimum length.

*Open text box — respondents type their own answer here*

**Question 12** Rating scale 1–5

**How clearly was the outcome of your or your child's DARE application explained to you?**

1 = Not at all clearly — 5 = Very clearly. Skip if not applicable.

**Not at all clearly** ◀ ——— Scale 1–5 ——— ▶ **Very clearly**

*(1 is the lowest, 5 is the highest)*

**Question 13** Rating scale 1–5

**For guidance counsellors and school staff: How confident do you feel in your ability to advise students and families on DARE?**

1 = Not at all confident — 5 = Very confident. Skip if not applicable to your role.

**Not at all confident** ◀ ——— Scale 1–5 ——— ▶ **Very confident**

*(1 is the lowest, 5 is the highest)*

**Question 14** Open text

**If you considered applying for DARE but decided not to, what was the main reason?**

Skip this question if it does not apply to you.

*Open text box — respondents type their own answer here*

## **Section 3: Eligibility and Documentation**

This section asks about the eligibility criteria for DARE, who qualifies, what evidence is required, and whether the current requirements are fair and workable.

**Question 15** Rating scale 1–5 ★ Required

To what extent do you feel that DARE's current eligibility criteria are fair to all students with disabilities?

1 = Very unfair — 5 = Very fair.

Very unfair ◀ ——— Scale 1–5 ——— ▶ Very fair

*(1 is the lowest, 5 is the highest)*

**Question 16** Open text

Are there any disability types, conditions, or student circumstances that you believe are currently excluded from DARE but should be included?

Be as specific as you can. You can describe a situation without naming a specific diagnosis.

*Open text box — respondents type their own answer here*

**Question 17** Rating scale 1–5

How reasonable do you consider the documentation requirements for DARE?

1 = Very unreasonable or burdensome — 5 = Very reasonable and proportionate.

Very unreasonable or burdensome ◀ ——— Scale 1–5 ——— ▶ Very reasonable and proportionate

*(1 is the lowest, 5 is the highest)*

**Question 18** Multiple choice

**Which of the following, if any, have you experienced or witnessed when obtaining required DARE documentation?**

Select all that apply.

Select all that apply:

- The cost of a professional assessment or report
- Long waiting lists for assessments in the public sector
- Difficulty finding an assessor who covers the relevant disability type
- Documentation requirements that the school or family could not meet
- Outdated or age-restricted assessments that no longer qualify
- No difficulties experienced
- Other

**Question 19** Open text

**We want to make DARE easier to navigate for students. What evidence of educational disadvantage due to disability do you think would be easy for students to provide?**

For example: school records, GP letters, SEC reasonable accommodation records, or other evidence. No wrong answers — all suggestions are welcome.

Open text box — respondents type their own answer here

**Question 20** Open text

**Please explain your answer to the previous question or share further thoughts on eligibility and evidence requirements.**

Open text box — respondents type their own answer here

## Section 4: Process and Communication

This section focuses on how DARE is communicated and administered, from how students first hear about it to how the outcome is explained.

### Question 21 Single choice

**How did you, your child, or the students you work with first find out about DARE?**

Select one:

- From a guidance counsellor at school
- From a teacher or SEN or learning support teacher
- From a parent or family member
- From the CAO website or application materials
- From accesscollege.ie or an HEI access office
- From AHEAD or another disability organisation
- From social media or online search
- From a peer or friend
- I or they found out too late in the process
- Other

### Question 22 Rating scale 1–5

**How clearly is DARE explained in the information available to students and families?**

1 = Very unclear — 5 = Very clear.

**Very unclear** ◀ ——— Scale 1–5 ——— ▶ **Very clear**

*(1 is the lowest, 5 is the highest)*

**Question 23** Multiple choice

**Where, if anywhere, do you think information about DARE could be made more available?**

Select all that apply.

Select all that apply:

- Second-level schools — during junior cycle or transition year
- Second-level schools — during senior cycle, 5th and 6th year
- On the CAO application website and materials
- Via social media targeting Leaving Cert students
- At HEI open days and information events
- Through healthcare providers such as GPs, psychologists, or OTs
- Through disability organisations and advocacy groups
- In dedicated parent or guardian information resources
- Other

**Question 24** Rating scale 1–5

**How timely is information about DARE? Do students find out early enough to prepare their application?**

1 = Far too late — 5 = Well in advance.

**Far too late** ◀ ——— Scale 1–5 ——— ▶ **Well in advance**

*(1 is the lowest, 5 is the highest)*

**Question 25** Single choice

In your view, does the DARE application process place an unreasonable administrative burden on students and families?

Select one:

- Yes — significantly
- Yes — somewhat
- No — the burden is reasonable given the purpose of the scheme
- I do not have a strong view

**Question 26** Open text

What single change to how DARE is communicated or administered would make the biggest difference?

Open text box — respondents type their own answer here

**Question 27** Rating scale 1–5

For school staff: How well supported do you feel by the information and guidance available from CAO, HEIs, and sector bodies in advising students on DARE?

1 = Very poorly supported — 5 = Very well supported. Skip if not applicable to your role.

Very poorly supported ◀ ——— Scale 1–5 ——— ▶ Very well supported

(1 is the lowest, 5 is the highest)

## Section 5: Equity and Access

This section asks about whether DARE is equitable, meaning whether it reaches all students who should benefit, and whether some groups face more difficulties than others.

**Question 28** Rating scale 1–5 ★ Required

To what extent do you feel DARE is equitably accessible to all students who need it, regardless of background?

1 = Very inequitable — 5 = Very equitable.

Very inequitable ◀ ——— Scale 1–5 ——— ▶ Very equitable

*(1 is the lowest, 5 is the highest)*

**Question 29** Multiple choice

In your experience, which groups of students with disabilities face the greatest difficulties accessing DARE?

Select all that apply.

*Select all that apply:*

- Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds
- Students from rural areas
- Students with mental health conditions
- Students with non-visible or newly diagnosed disabilities
- Students from the Traveller or Roma community
- Students from DEIS schools
- Students who are first in their family to apply to higher education
- Students whose first language is not English or Irish
- I do not believe any particular group faces greater difficulties
- Other

**Question 30** Open text

**Are there students you have known who may have been eligible for DARE but did not apply? What do you think influenced that decision?**

*Open text box — respondents type their own answer here*

**Question 31** Single choice

**In your view, does stigma associated with disclosing a disability affect whether some students apply for DARE?**

*Select one:*

- Yes — significantly so
- Yes — to some extent
- No — I do not believe stigma is a significant factor
- I do not know

**Question 32** Single choice

**Does DARE, as currently designed, reflect a model of disability that you feel is accurate and fair?**

DARE currently requires evidence that a disability negatively impacted on second-level education, sometimes called a functional impact model.

*Select one:*

- Yes — the current model is appropriate
- Partly — but it excludes some people who should qualify
- No — DARE should be redesigned around a different understanding of disability
- I do not have enough information to answer this

**Question 33** Open text

What would make DARE a fairer and more equitable scheme for all students with disabilities?

Open text box — respondents type their own answer here

## Section 6: DARE Purpose and Fitness for Purpose

This section asks fundamental questions about the purpose and ongoing relevance of DARE. Your views here will feed directly into the review's reform recommendations.

**Question 34** Single choice ★ Required

In your view, is DARE fit for purpose in its current form?

Select one:

- Yes — fit for purpose in its current form
- Partially — works well for some students but needs reform
- No — requires significant reform
- No — should be replaced with a different mechanism entirely
- Unsure

**Question 35** Single choice ★ Required

How appropriate do you consider a reduction in the CAO points threshold as a way of addressing the educational impact of disability for students applying to higher education?

Select one:

- Very appropriate — a points reduction is the right mechanism
- Partially appropriate — works for some students but not others
- Not appropriate — a different mechanism would be better
- Not appropriate — improving second-level supports would be more effective
- Unsure

**Question 36** Single choice ★ Required

DARE currently operates on the assumption that eligible students have experienced educational disadvantage as a result of disability. Do you think this assumption is appropriate?

Select one:

- Yes — disability generally results in disadvantage for eligible applicants
- Partially — true for some but not all eligible applicants
- No — many eligible applicants have not experienced significant disadvantage
- Unsure

**Question 37** Single choice ★ Required

**In your view, has the level of disability support available in secondary schools changed since DARE was introduced in 2009, and if so, what does this mean for DARE in its current form?**

Select one:

- Yes — changes in second-level supports mean DARE is no longer needed in its current form
- Partially — some changes but DARE is still needed for some students
- No — second-level supports have not changed enough and DARE is still needed
- Too variable — some schools have excellent supports, others do not
- Unsure

## Section 7: Forward-Looking Recommendations

This final section asks for your views on what a better DARE scheme might look like from 2028. Your recommendations will feed directly into the evaluation process and inform the reform of DARE.

### Question 38 Ranking

Please rank the following areas that the review could consider, from what you consider most important (1) to least important (6).

In the online survey, drag to reorder. You may wish to note your preferred order here before completing the survey.

*Order from most important (1) to least important (6) by dragging in the online survey:*

1. Making DARE eligibility criteria clearer and more consistent
2. Reducing the documentation burden for applicants
3. Improving information and communication about DARE to schools and families
4. Ensuring DARE reaches the most disadvantaged and underrepresented groups of disabled students
5. Reviewing how consistency of DARE application assessment is maintained
6. Aligning DARE with rights-based models of disability, for example the UNCRPD

### Question 39 Open text

If you could make one change to DARE that would have the greatest impact for students with disabilities, what would it be?

*Open text box — respondents type their own answer here*

### Question 40 Open text

Are there aspects of DARE that are working well and should be preserved in any reformed scheme?

*Open text box — respondents type their own answer here*

### Question 41 Open text

**Is there anything else about DARE that you would like the review team to know?**

This is your opportunity to share anything not covered above. All contributions are valued.

*Open text box — respondents type their own answer here*

## Section 8: Thank You and End of Survey

After submitting your responses you will see a thank-you message. The DARE Review team is grateful for every contribution.

## Next steps and how to respond

Thank you for reading through the survey questions. Your views are important to the DARE Review team and will help shape how the scheme is reformed for students with disabilities from 2028 onwards.

All responses are anonymous. The survey is open to anyone with a connection to DARE — students, parents and guardians, guidance counsellors, teachers, school support staff, disability professionals, and sector organisations. There are no right or wrong answers. Every contribution counts.

To complete the survey online, click or follow the link below:

[Have Your Say on the DARE Review — Fill out the form](#)

The survey takes approximately 15–20 minutes. It closes on Friday 10 July 2026 at 4:00 pm.

## What happens to your responses

Your responses will be analysed alongside evidence from an academic literature review, CAO data analysis, and Town Hall consultation sessions held in June 2026. These four evidence streams together will inform the reform recommendations presented to the DARE Review Strategic Oversight Group.

A public Consultation Report summarising the findings will be published in autumn 2026. Reform recommendations are due in 2027, with a reformed DARE scheme planned for the 2028 CAO cycle.

Contributions are recorded as themes and patterns — you will never be identified or quoted by name in any published output.

If you have any questions about the review or this survey, please visit [accesscollege.ie/dare-review](https://accesscollege.ie/dare-review).

## Take the survey online

[Have Your Say on the DARE Review — Fill out the form](https://forms.office.com/e/5dr8xFCCFd)

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