

**DARE Frequently Asked Questions from accesscollege.ie**

<p><b>What is the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)?</b></p>	<p>The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is a third level alternative admissions scheme for school-leavers whose disabilities have had a negative impact on their second level education. DARE offers reduced points places to school leavers who, as a result of having a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.</p>
<p><b>Who is DARE for?</b></p>	<p>DARE is for school leavers (under 23 years as of 1 January 2025) who have a disability and who may not be able to meet the points for their preferred course due to the impact of their disability. Applicants to DARE can present with an Irish Leaving Certificate, A-Levels and other EU qualifications.</p>
<p><b>Why was DARE set up?</b></p>	<p>DARE was set up to tackle educational disadvantage. Disability can cause people to do less well in school and can prevent some second level students going on to college or university.</p>
<p><b>What does “reduced points” mean?</b></p>	<p>If you apply to DARE and meet the application criteria (that is, are deemed eligible for DARE) 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 reserved number of places to offer eligible DARE applicants at lower Leaving Certificate points or reduced points.</p> <p>An example of a reduced points offer is where the Leaving Certificate points for a particular course is 366 points. An eligible DARE 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 DARE reduced points offer.</p> <p>The amount of points a particular course is reduced by is dependent on a number of factors, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The overall number of places on the course</li> <li>○ The number of reserved DARE places on the course</li> <li>○ The number of DARE eligible applicants competing for these reserved places.</li> </ul> <p>The reduction in points for DARE places can vary every year.</p> <p>Further details can be found at <a href="http://www.accesscollege.ie">www.accesscollege.ie</a>.</p>
<p><b>Why are applicants who are eligible for both DARE and HEAR being prioritised for reduced points offers?</b></p>	<p>Research has shown that applicants with a disability from a socio-economically disadvantaged background are doubly disadvantaged in terms of accessing higher education. Applicants who have applied for and are deemed eligible for both schemes should receive extra benefit as a result.</p> <p>Applicants who are eligible for both DARE &amp; HEAR will be prioritised for reduced points offers in HEIs that participate in both schemes. Applicants must as always meet the following to be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The minimum entry requirements for that course</li> <li>· Meet any specific course requirements</li> </ul>

<p><b>Why are DARE eligible applicants with physical &amp; sensory disabilities being prioritised for reduced points offers?</b></p>	<p>Applicants with physical, blind, deaf disabilities are groups identified by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) as being under-represented in higher education. DARE aims to increase the number of applicants with disabilities in higher education, particularly those with a physical or blind, deaf disability.</p> <p>Eligible Applicants to DARE with either a Physical or blind, deaf Disability will be prioritised for reduced points places. Applicants must as always meet the following to be considered: <b>1)</b> The minimum entry requirements for that course; <b>2)</b> Meet any specific course requirements</p>
<p><b>Which colleges take part in DARE?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atlantic Technological University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Donegal Campus</li> <li>○ Galway Campus</li> <li>○ Sligo Campus</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Dublin City University</li> <li>• Institute of Art, Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire</li> <li>• Dundalk Institute of Technology</li> <li>• Marino Institute of Education</li> <li>• Mary Immaculate College Limerick</li> <li>• Maynooth University</li> <li>• Munster Technological University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cork Campus</li> <li>○ Kerry Campus</li> </ul> </li> <li>• National College of Art &amp; Design</li> <li>• National College of Ireland</li> <li>• Pontifical University, Maynooth</li> <li>• RCSI – University of Medicine and Health Sciences</li> <li>• St Angela’s College Sligo</li> <li>• South East Technological University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Carlow and Wexford Campus</li> <li>○ Waterford Campus</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Technological University Dublin</li> <li>• Technological University of the Shannon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Athlone Campus</li> <li>○ Limerick Campus</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Trinity College Dublin</li> <li>• University College Dublin</li> <li>• University College Cork</li> <li>• University of Galway</li> <li>• University of Limerick</li> </ul>
<p><b>How many places are there for DARE students each year?</b></p>	<p>Each college or university sets aside a number of places for DARE students. This number varies from college to college. You should check with the individual College you are applying to for more details on this. You can find a list of these on <a href="http://accesscollege.ie/dare">accesscollege.ie/dare</a></p>
<p><b>What disabilities are eligible for consideration for DARE?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asperger’s Syndrome/Autism</li> <li>• Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)</li> <li>• Blind/Vision Impaired</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deaf/Hearing Impaired</li> <li>• DCD – Dyspraxia</li> <li>• Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties</li> <li>• Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties</li> <li>• Mental Health Condition</li> <li>• Neurological Condition (incl. Brain Injury and Epilepsy)</li> <li>• Significant Ongoing Illness</li> <li>• Speech and Language Communication Disorder</li> <li>• Physical Disability</li> </ul>
<p><b>Who screens DARE applications?</b></p>	<p>Applications for DARE are screened by professionals employed by colleges and universities that take part in DARE, who have expertise and knowledge of the impact of disability on educational attainment.</p>
<p><b>What criteria are used to assess applications for DARE?</b></p>	<p>Specific criteria have been developed to decide the significance of each disability and its impact on educational attainment. The Disability Advisory Boards, HEI professionals and representatives from expert external organisations developed these guidelines. You must meet <b>the DARE criteria</b> by disability category to be eligible for DARE. (See <a href="https://accesscollege.ie/dare/providing-evidence-of-your-disability/">https://accesscollege.ie/dare/providing-evidence-of-your-disability/</a> for information on DARE criteria)</p>
<p><b>How can I apply to DARE?</b></p>	<p>Applicants applying for DARE must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be under the age of 23 as of 1 January 2025.</li> <li>• Apply to CAO by 17:00 on 1 February 2025.</li> <li>• No later than 17:00 on 1 March 2025, disclose your disability in your CAO application and fully and correctly complete Section A of the Supplementary Information Form (SIF). To apply to DARE, you must answer YES to Question 1 ('do you wish to be considered for DARE?') on Section A of the fully completed SIF by 17:00 on 1 March 2025.</li> <li>• Download Section B (Educational Impact Statement), complete the EIS Checklist and have your school complete the rest of the EIS form, and return to CAO to arrive by 17:00 on 15 March 2025.</li> <li>• Download Section C (Evidence of Disability), have it completed by the appropriate medical professional (only if you do not already have a report verifying your disability) and returned to CAO to arrive by 17:00 on 15 March 2025. In place of Section C, Applicants with Dyslexia / Significant Literacy Difficulties or Dyscalculia / Significant Numeracy Difficulties are asked to provide a full Psychological Assessment Report completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist instead of the Section C Evidence of Disability Form. Where the applicant is applying under the Dyslexia / Significant Literacy Difficulties category, but does not have a full Psychological Assessment Report, they should instead download Section D (School Statement), request the school complete this statement and return it to the CAO to arrive by 5pm on March 15, 2025.</li> <li>• To confirm you have completed your online application correctly (Questions 1-5), please go to <a href="http://www.cao.ie">www.cao.ie</a>, click on 'My Application', enter your login details and check the information you have entered. You can make changes to your DARE application until 1 March 2025.</li> </ul>

<b>How do I know what supporting documents to provide?</b>	<p>You must <u>download</u> Section B (Educational Impact Statement), complete the EIS Checklist and have your school complete the rest of the EIS form, and return to CAO to arrive by 17:00 on 15 March 2025.</p> <p>You must download Section C (Evidence of Disability), have it completed by the appropriate medical professional (only if you do not already have a report verifying your disability) and returned to CAO to arrive by 17:00 on 15 March 2025.</p> <p>In place of Section C, Applicants with Dyslexia / Significant Literacy Difficulties or Dyscalculia / Significant Numeracy Difficulties are asked to provide a full Psychological Assessment Report completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist instead of the Section C Evidence of Disability Form.</p> <p>Where the applicant is applying under the Dyslexia / Significant Literacy Difficulties category, but does not have a full Psychological Assessment Report, they should instead download Section D (School Statement), request the school complete this statement and return it to the CAO to arrive by 5pm on March 15, 2025. All other applicants may submit an existing report completed within the appropriate timeframe by the appropriate professional. The report must contain the same detail as the Evidence of Disability Form. See the form below for a list of the type of documentation, appropriate professional and required age of report for each of the DARE disability groups.</p>
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**Who are the Appropriate Professionals and how old can reports be?**

TYPE OF DISABILITY	TYPE OF DOCUMENTATION	APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL	REQUIRED AGE OF REPORT
Autistic Spectrum Disorder (including Asperger's Syndrome).	Evidence of Disability Form 2025 <b>OR</b> Existing report.	Consultant Psychiatrist <b>OR</b> Psychologist <b>OR</b> Neurologist <b>OR</b> Paediatrician.	No age limit.
Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).	Evidence of Disability Form 2025 <b>OR</b> Existing report.	Consultant Psychiatrist <b>OR</b> Psychologist <b>OR</b> Neurologist <b>OR</b> Paediatrician.	Must be less than three years old i.e. dated after <b>1 February 2022.</b>
Blind/Vision Impaired.	Evidence of Disability Form 2025 <b>OR</b> Existing report.	Ophthalmologist <b>OR</b> Ophthalmic Surgeon.	No age limit.

<p>Deaf/Hard of Hearing Students may apply under one of the following categories:</p> <p>(A) Applicants who have an Audiogram (B) Applicants who attend a School for the Deaf (C) Applicants with a Cochlear Implant.</p>	<p>(A) Applicants who have an audiogram: Audiogram (B) Applicants who attend a School for the Deaf: Letter confirming attendance from Principal of School for the Deaf OR Evidence of Disability Form 2025. (C) Applicants with a Cochlear Implant: Existing report confirming cochlear implant OR Evidence of Disability Form 2025 (DARE does not accept reports from high street retailers).</p>	<p>(A) Applicants who have an audiogram: Diagnostic/ Clinical Audiologist registered with the Irish Academy of Audiologists (IAA) or HSE Audiologist (B) School for the Deaf: Principal of School for the Deaf (C) Applicants with a Cochlear Implant: Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Consultant OR Cochlear Implant Programme Coordinator.</p>	<p>No age limit.</p>
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Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD) - Dyspraxia	Evidence of Disability Form 2025 <b>OR</b> Existing report.	Occupational Therapist <b>OR</b> Neurologist <b>OR</b> Physiotherapist <b>OR</b> Paediatrician.	No age limit.
Mental Health Condition.	Evidence of Disability Form 2025 <b>OR</b> Existing report.	Consultant Psychiatrist on Specialist Register.	Must be less than three years old i.e. dated after <b>1st February 2022.</b>
Neurological Conditions (incl. Epilepsy and Brain Injury).	Evidence of Disability Form 2025 <b>OR</b> Existing report.	Neurologist <b>OR</b> Other relevant Consultant.	No age limit.
Speech and Language Communication Disorder.	Evidence of Disability Form 2025 <b>OR</b> Existing report.	Speech and Language Therapist.	No age limit.
Physical Disability (those with significant mobility difficulties).	Evidence of Disability Form 2025 <b>OR</b> Existing report.	Orthopaedic Consultant <b>OR</b> Other relevant consultant appropriate to the disability/condition.	No age limit.
Significant Ongoing Illness.	Evidence of Disability Form 2025 <b>OR</b> Existing report.	Relevant Consultant/ Specialist appropriate to the disability/condition.	Must be less than three years old <b>1 February 2022.</b>
Dyslexia / Significant Literacy Difficulties Students may apply under ONE of the following categories: (A) Applicants who have a Psychological Assessment Report identifying Dyslexia (B) Applicants who have Significant Literacy Difficulties but do NOT have a Psychological Assessment Report identifying Dyslexia	(A) Applicants who have a Psychological Assessment Report identifying Dyslexia: Psychological Assessment Report (B) Applicants who have Significant Literacy Difficulties but do NOT have a Psychological Assessment Report identifying Dyslexia: Section D School Statement.	(A) Psychologist (B) Special Educational Needs (SEN) Teacher and countersigned by Principal/Deputy Principal.	No age limit.

Dyscalculia / Significant Numeracy Difficulties	Psychological Assessment Report	Psychologist	No age limit
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**\*Important note for applicants with Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties or  
Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties**

A full Psychological Assessment Report OR Section D School Statement must be submitted for applicants with Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties. In addition, applicants with Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties must also have two literacy attainment scores at or below the 10th percentile (Standard Score of 81 or below) from testing carried out on or after 1 February 2023.

A full Psychological Assessment Report must be submitted for applicants with Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties. In addition, applicants with Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties must have one numeracy attainment score at or below the 10th percentile (Standard Score of 81 or below) dated after 1 February 2023.

These attainment scores can be from one (or a combination) of the following sources:

- Scores from school-based attainment testing
- Scores from attainment tests carried out by a psychologist.

Testing must have been carried out on or after 1 February 2023 and all applicants must submit an EIS completed by their school.

**I have a full psycho-educational assessment completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist but some of the information that is needed for DARE is not in the report.**

If you have dyslexia/dyscalculia, you must submit a full psychological assessment report completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist.  
This report must be accompanied by attainment scores from tests administered by your school and/or an appropriately qualified psychologist carried out on or after 1 February 2023.  
If some of the information that DARE needs is not in the full report, an appropriately qualified psychologist can fill out a summary sheet. You must submit both the original psychological assessment report and the summary sheet.

**What are the application and closing dates for DARE?**

1. By **17:00 1 February 2025** – apply to CAO on [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)
  2. By **17:00 1 March 2025**
    - You must indicate that you have a disability on your CAO application form.
    - You must complete Section A of the Supplementary Information Form.
    - You must indicate your wish to be considered for DARE by ticking ‘Yes’ to Question 1.
  3. By **17:00 15 March 2025** – Submit both the Evidence of Disability Form and the Educational Impact Statement to the CAO.
- If you are unable to complete the online form you must submit the paper application form (distributed by the CAO) by the same date.

**What happens if my application is late?**

DARE will not consider late applications. In the case where a significant difficulty was encountered in gathering and/or submitting DARE supporting documents by

	the 15 March deadline, which was beyond the control of the applicant, and where documentary evidence from a third party is provided to support this, the applicant may appeal the decision not to consider the late documentation.
<b>What happens after DARE applicants are screened?</b>	You will be notified <b>by email</b> of the outcome of your DARE application by the end of June, once the Leaving Cert is over. Applicants can also login to their CAO application by afternoon of <b>24 June(tbc)</b> to see the DARE application outcome. If you are eligible you can compete for one of the reduced points places on offer in the universities and colleges taking part in the DARE scheme. All DARE course offers are made by the Central Applications Office (CAO). You must meet the minimum entry and course requirements to be considered for one of the reduced points places. Details of places available and minimum course entry requirements can be found on <a href="http://accesscollege.ie">accesscollege.ie</a> .
<b>I've been told I'm ineligible but I think there was some mistake in the screening of my application - what can I do?</b>	You can apply to have your application reviewed if you believe there has been an error in the screening of your application. Please see <a href="http://accesscollege.ie">accesscollege.ie</a> ( <a href="http://accesscollege.ie/dare/making-an-application/dare-review-and-appeals/">http://accesscollege.ie/dare/making-an-application/dare-review-and-appeals/</a> ) for further information.
<b>What happens if I am offered a place in college through DARE?</b>	Whether you go to college through DARE or not, if you have a disability you will be offered a variety of educational, technological and personal supports while studying. These supports include an orientation programme (before courses start), learning support, assistive technology, library support, exam accommodations, education support workers, academic tuition. It is up to each college to decide which supports it will offer.
<b>I have a disability but am not eligible for DARE. Will I get any support in college?</b>	Yes. Most students with a disability enter college on merit having met the points needed for their course. They are offered a variety of educational, technological and personal supports even though they did not enter or were not eligible through DARE.
<b>I have a disability but I think I may also be eligible for HEAR - can I apply to both schemes?</b>	<b>Yes, you can apply for both schemes</b> , but you must submit all the documents needed for both schemes. The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a college and university admissions scheme for school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and is a separate process to DARE.
<b>I am a mature student. Can I apply to DARE?</b>	DARE is only for school leavers with disabilities who were under 23 years of age on 1 January in the year of entry. There are different admission routes for mature students. You can find out more about these on the websites of the various colleges and universities.
<b>I am an FET student. Can I apply to DARE?</b>	Applicants to DARE can only compete for reduced points places on the basis of Leaving Certificate results. There are different FET routes for applicants applying on the basis of their FET (Further Educational Training) results.
<b>I have been told that I am eligible to be included in DARE.</b>	Applying to DARE and applying for a language waiver are two separate processes. Therefore, DARE students who require a language waiver but haven't yet applied

**Does this mean that I now have an exemption from doing Irish/ another language in my Leaving Certificate?**

for one need to apply to the relevant authority (e.g. National University of Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, University of Limerick, Mary Immaculate College).

***Applying for language exemptions to National University of Ireland***

University of Galway, Maynooth University, University College Cork or University College Dublin. Students with dyslexia/dyscalculia seeking admission to University of Galway, Maynooth University, UCC or UCD need to apply to the National University of Ireland for exemption from Irish and/or the Third Language requirement. The criteria applied by the National University of Ireland for the granting of exemptions from Irish and/or the Third language are not the same as for DARE. In general NUI will grant an exemption from the Irish/Third language requirements to students who at any stage, whether at primary or second-level school, have qualified for exemption from Irish, under the regulations of the Department of Education and Skills. To qualify under DARE you must fulfil the DARE criteria. For further information on NUI exemptions, look under Entry Requirements or contact NUI at 01 439 2424 or [registrar@nui.ie](mailto:registrar@nui.ie).

If you wish to apply for an NUI exemption, you must contact the NUI (see [www.nui.ie](http://www.nui.ie) for details). Apply to the NUI without delay and no later than 21 days after opening your CAO account. Please note: CAO plays no role in processing exemption applications.

Applicants must make arrangements for exemptions each year they apply.

You will receive a Statement of Application Record in May. You must check this document carefully and inform CAO immediately if there is any error or omission. If you have been granted exemption from the NUI Irish (and/or third language) requirement and there is no reference to it on the Statement of Application Record you must notify CAO immediately.

It is important to note that exemptions are a separate matter to supplying CAO and HEIs with information about a disability.

***TCD Language and Mathematics Waiver***

Students with dyslexia/dyscalculia, sensory or communication disabilities may apply for a waiver of the modern language requirement, provided that the study of a language does not form part of their chosen course of study. In addition, students with dyscalculia, sensory or communication disabilities, may be eligible to request exemption from the minimum entry requirement of a pass in maths, where maths does not form any component of their intended course. This is a separate application to DARE. To apply for a Language Waiver write to the Admissions Office in Trinity College by 1 July, and include a copy of your disability evidence. If you have an exemption from studying Irish, and you have not been studying a modern foreign language in school, you need to apply to Trinity for a 'waiver' for the language part of matriculation. Further details are available here (<https://www.tcd.ie/study/assets/pdf/tcd-application-exemption-modern%20language%20and-or-mathematics.pdf>).

Even if you have an NUI waiver you still need to apply to the Trinity Admissions Office.

***Applying for language exemptions to University of Limerick (UL)***

Students seeking to enter the University of Limerick are required to present six Leaving Certificate subjects, including English, Mathematics and Irish or one other modern language. Students with significant specific learning difficulties and hearing disabilities may apply for a waiver of the modern language requirement. Students may receive a waiver of the Irish or modern language requirement if they:-

1. function intellectually at average or above average level and who have a specific learning difficulty of such a degree of severity that they fail to achieve expected levels of attainment in basic language skills in English, or
2. have a significant hearing impairment, or are deaf, and are also failing to attain adequate levels in language skills in English.

The evidence of such a level of disability must be furnished by providing a copy of the Certificate of Exemption from Irish (Revision of Rule 46 "Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools" in relation to Irish - Circular Letter M10/94 - Department of Education and Skills). The Certificate should be forwarded directly to the University's Admissions Office.

The granting of a language waiver does not mean that a student is eligible for the DARE supplementary admissions process as the criteria used are different. For further information, please see [www.ul.ie/disabilityservices](http://www.ul.ie/disabilityservices).

***Applying for language exemptions to Mary Immaculate College, Limerick***

Students should apply directly to Mary Immaculate College for a waiver from the language requirements. Language exemptions are not accepted for programmes which require a specific language requirement. Applying for a Language Waiver is a separate application to the DARE supplementary admissions process.

**What is fitness to practice?**

Students on most professional health/teaching courses are required to complete a medical declaration form confirming they do not have a disability/significant ongoing illness that may delay or prevent them starting or completing the professional programme. If you are applying for these type of courses, it is useful to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with the Disability/Access Office in the college you are interested in.

**I'm being home-schooled, do I need to submit an Educational Impact Statement?**

If you are being home-schooled, you should provide at least one or more of the following:

- The EIS completed by your post primary school (if you attended one for any length of time)
- A letter from the Child & Family Agency (formerly the National Educational Welfare Board) or your Educational Welfare Officer
- A letter from the Department of Education sanctioning home tuition.

**HOW TO CARRY FORWARD DARE ELIGIBILITY**

To carry forward DARE eligibility from 2024 to 2025, you must complete Questions 1 and Questions 1(b) of Section A Supplementary Information Form. You are not required to submit documents. Please see full details below:

Eligibility for DARE carries forward for ONE year provided that you:

- Apply to CAO by 17.00 on 1 February 2025,

- No later than 17:00 on 1 March 2025, disclose your disability and/or Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties or Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties in your CAO application and fully and correctly complete Section A of the Supplementary Information Form (SIF). You must answer YES to Question 1 ('Do you wish to be considered for DARE?') on Section A of the fully completed SIF by 17:00 on 1 March 2025,
- Supply your correct 2023 CAO number under Question 1(b).

The outcome of your 2024 DARE application was communicated to you by email in June 2024. If you applied to CAO in 2024 and you were deemed eligible for DARE in 2024, then your DARE eligibility can be carried forward to your 2025 application. You must enter your correct 2024 CAO number in the box provided. You are still required to complete all relevant sections of the 2025 SIF form (Section A), however you do not need to supply the Educational Impact Statement (Section B) or Evidence of Disability (Section C) as part of your application.