



Institiúid na gComhairleoirí Treorach  
INSTITUTE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

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# Taking The Next Step

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A Guide To Further &  
Higher Education  
6<sup>th</sup> Year Parents

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The Institute of  
Guidance Counsellors

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**A Guide To Further & Higher Education 6<sup>th</sup> Year Parents**  
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## 1. What Career Will Suit You?

We all know people who go to work each day and enjoy the challenges and tasks associated with their chosen occupation. These are individuals who, generally, have fulfilling working lives, and for whom work is a meaningful and stimulating experience. However, on the other hand, there are also individuals who, day in and day out, year in year out, struggle to find any real purpose in their chosen field of work other than the financial reward that is necessary for survival. For them, work is a means to an end, something that facilitates meeting their financial obligations. It can be argued that such outcomes do not happen by chance and that various factors have come into play to determine if an individual enjoys or dislikes their work. Those that find themselves in a fulfilling job are said to be in a working environment that matches their interests, aptitudes, and personal characteristics. Those that find themselves in a working environment they do not enjoy, may have to perform tasks that do not match their interests or aptitudes or personal characteristics, or indeed all three.

Those that find themselves in a fulfilling job, or indeed course of study or training, are said to be in a working environment that matches their interests *and* aptitudes. We can have an interest in a particular area but not the aptitudes necessary to perform in that area. Think of all the teenagers you have an interest in becoming a professional football player but do not succeed in doing so because they do not have the necessary aptitudes. Similarly, the seven year old child who has an aptitude for playing the piano may not have the necessary interest to sustain this activity as ability alone is of little use without the adequate interest to back it up<sup>1</sup>. It is therefore necessary for us to have both an interest *and* an aptitude for a job not just to gain enjoyment from that job but also to excel in that job.

However, to guarantee satisfaction from a job, is it sufficient just to have an interest and an aptitude for the task involved in that job? For example, consider the professions of an Actuary and a Maths teacher. Both roles require an interest and an aptitude for the subject of Mathematics. However, the tasks involved in each of these positions goes beyond just having an aptitude and interest in mathematical concepts.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Nathan and Linda Hill, *Career Counselling*, (London: Sage Publications, 2000) p 61.

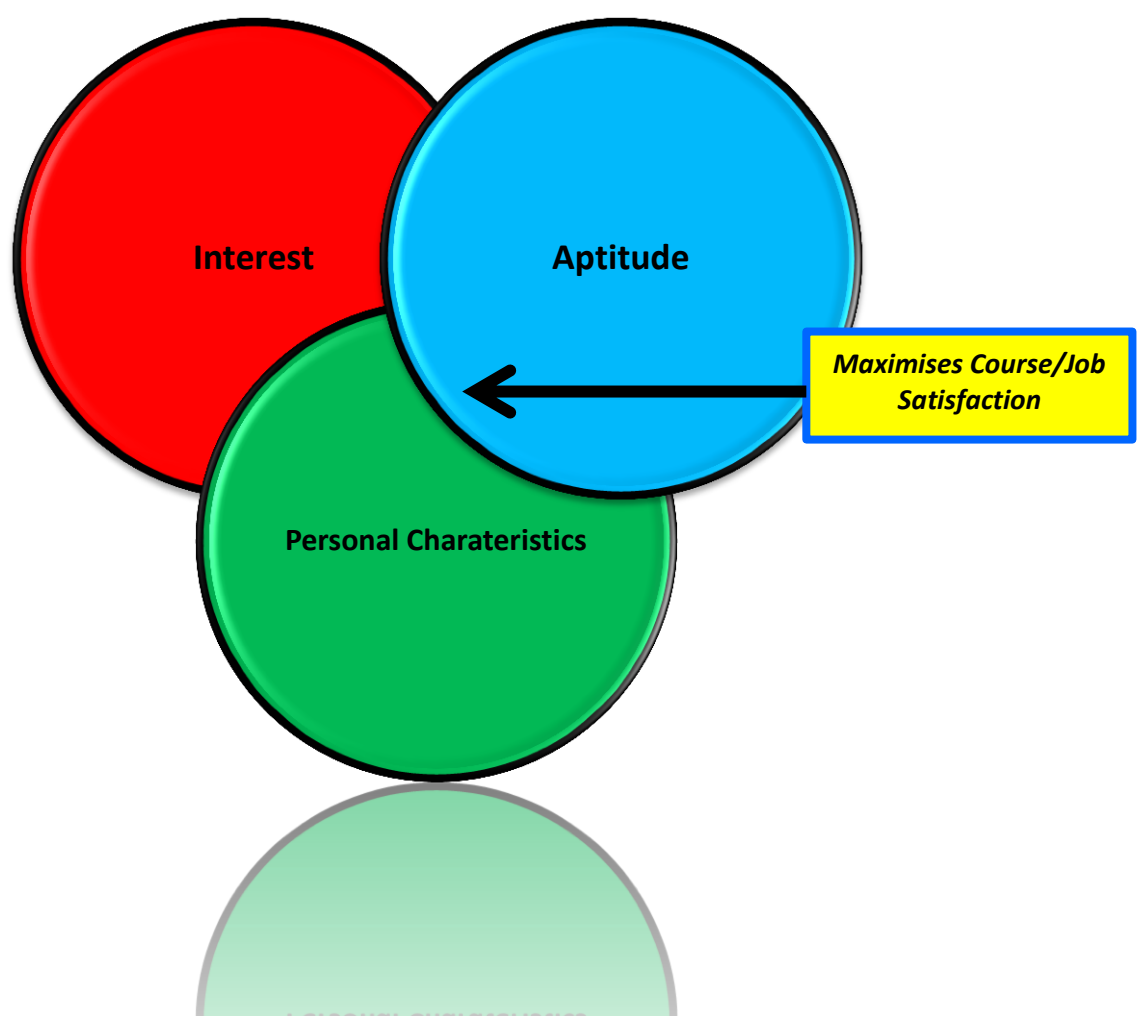
In a classroom setting there is far more social and individual interactions than would be encountered in actuarial tasks. How would an actuary fare in a classroom, and how would the Maths teacher perform in the actuary's office? Would an actuary enjoy teaching; explaining, and re-explaining Mathematical concepts, rather than using them? Would an actuary have the personality traits and flexibility of character to adapt their style to suit differences in students' personalities and learning styles? Would the teacher enjoy the more solitary aspects of work involved in the more clerical and office based actuarial activities rather than continuously engaging with people?

These examples bring into play the idea that the characteristics of the tasks in a job should match, as far as is possible, the personal characteristics of the individual. An accountant performs tasks that are logical, step by step, and requires everything to be in the right place on a balance sheet. Furthermore, what is an accountant's home like? Is it neat and tidy, is the book collection arranged in specific order, is everything in its place? Is this because they are an accountant or is the accountant's mind naturally working that way? Is the accountant's mind neat and tidy with everything in its place and has that accountant then found a working environment that has similar characteristics?

Consider the following. Two individuals may have an aptitude and interest in a working environment that requires them to be up and about, working with their hands and creating things. Landscape gardening and cooking are areas of work that would seem to satisfy these conditions. However, the personality of one individual may dictate that the individual who is more laid back and prefers a less pressured working environment may opt for landscape garden as opposed to being a chef with its highly pressurised and fast paced working environment.

Imagine Rory McElroy and Jonathon Sexton have an equal interest and aptitude for both golf and rugby. Has Rory McElroy chosen golf over rugby because he has personality traits that are more comfortable relying on himself rather than in an environment where Jonathon Sexton is more comfortable relying on others and others relying on him? Imagine the most outgoing, loudest and extrovert person you know, should they become a archivist in a library? Imagine an introvert and quiet person, should they become a stand-up comedian? Imagine the student who resents being told to get their hair cut and having to wear a school uniform. Would they be comfortable in an environment like the Army or Garda?

Therefore, the greater the overlap between our interests, aptitudes, *and* personal characteristics and those required by the job or area of study, the greater the degree of satisfaction when we get. The overlap may be represented as follows.



In order to maximise our ability to make the right choices in terms of courses to study or occupation, or training course, it is necessary to know, as much as possible, about our own interests, aptitudes, and personal characteristics. This requires us to develop a certain degree of self-awareness and be able to read and interpret what makes us *tick*. Once we know as much as possible about ourselves (step 1), step 2 is now necessary, i.e. to find an area of study or occupation that matches, as much as possible, our interests, aptitudes and personal characteristics. A common mistake is to skip step 1 and instead carry out step 2. However, it can be argued that there is no point in knowing all the details about all the courses/jobs that are available if we don't know ourselves first.

Despite us wanting to have a clear, specific career objective<sup>2</sup>, a lot of us have difficulty discovering the type of work for which we are best suited or which we would most enjoy<sup>3</sup>. There is no easy way to know which jobs<sup>4</sup>, course, or further training satisfy us, and it has to be accepted that the best we can do is to strive towards an answer and engage in a *process* rather than search for a single event or action that would give an easy perfect answer.

Our immediate and past environment<sup>5</sup> – whether happy or unhappy – is an essential source of exploration that may provide us with clues to good career direction. Investigating our leisure interests, school performance, experience of work, our imagination, and our psychological disposition – may suggest what type of work or further study or training may provide the optimum person-environment fit.

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<sup>2</sup> Norman A. Sprinthall and W. Andrew Collins, *Adolescent Psychology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc. 1995) p 468.

<sup>3</sup> Nancy J. Cobb, *Adolescence – Continuity, Change, and Diversity*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., (California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2001) p 414.

<sup>4</sup> John J. Conger & Nancy L. Galambos, *Adolescence and Youth*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Longman, 1997) p 243.

<sup>5</sup> Lynda Ali and Barbara Graham, *The Counselling Approach To Careers Guidance*, (London: Brunner-Routledge, 2004) p 106.

## 2. Looking In The Mirror

### 2.1 Our Personality

As we move through the teenage years, there are clearly defined stages of both cognitive growth and social reasoning. During the middle and late stages of adolescence we begin to *think* in a more abstract way. We begin to develop the ability to take on the perspective of others<sup>6</sup> and begin to see how we relate to others. This enables us to think more about ourselves and watch ourselves as from above. This is a very important part of the process of self-analysis that is necessary in order for us to self-evaluative. In addition, our ability to manipulate new information – and critical thinking – make judgments after assessing a situation – also begin to develop and become more pronounced in our way of thinking. Moreover, our ability to deal with a problem that may have many possible outcomes – divergent thinking – begins to be established within our thought processes. All of these changes allow us to see ourselves in a more sophisticated way compared to the insights we had as a child, and gain valuable insights into ourselves in terms of career preferences.

In childhood and early adolescence, we may have viewed ourselves as being tall, short, or sporty. In later adolescence, we developed the ability to recognise more internal characteristics such as brave, intelligent, kind, impulsive shy, loud, witty. Useful avenues that are worth exploring are: *“What personality traits do you most admire in yourself?”* *“What do you think people like about you?”* *“Which talents stand out most?”* *“What type of person do you think you are?”* This deeper form of self-exploration can be relatively easy for some of us. Others find these types of questions uncomfortable or difficult to answer. In such cases, it may be useful to remember that, to an extent, we have already unconsciously answered these questions by choosing certain types of people to be our friends and choosing certain pastimes and hobbies in which to get involved.



<sup>6</sup> John Dacey and Maureen Kenny, *Adolescent Development*, (Wisconsin: Brown & Benchmark Publishers, 1994) p 114.



## 2.2 Pastimes & Hobbies

Our hobbies and pastimes may give a useful marker to future career directions. We may be interested in team sports as opposed to the more solitary sports such as golf or running. Does the former mean we are comfortable relying on others and others relying on us? Does choosing an individual sport mean we are more comfortable relying on ourselves? If we do not like sport, what does this say – in a constructive and informative way - about our personality? Maybe we would not like a job that requires manual labour and moving about? We can find inspiration in reading or chess. Does this mean we prefer more solitary activities? Or do we prefer working in a group setting as illustrated by our involvement in group activities such as the scouts? Do we find satisfaction in performing in the school play or choir or in a debating team? Does this indicate some form of creative expression of our personality? Do we enjoy being creative with our hands as expressed through cooking or fixing things at home? Do we have a preference for the outdoor life as expressed through hobbies such as hiking or fishing? Do we enjoy acquiring new skills as demonstrated by taking a course in life-saving or music lessons? Do television habits also give some clues? For example, have we a particular interest in a certain issues as illustrated by watching news or current affairs programmes or watching wildlife programmes on television? Do we read certain types of books or particular stories in a newspaper? Have we involved ourselves in community activities such as voluntary work or first aid classes? Whatever makes us feel good is always worth considering. The things that are enjoyable, that are special, may provide the best clues to the kinds of work that we can be good at, and enjoy the most<sup>7</sup>.



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<sup>7 8</sup> Louise Welsh Schrank, *How To Choose The Right Career*, (Illinois: VGM Career Horizons, 1991) p 17.

### 2.3 School Academic Activities

It can be argued that hobbies and pastimes provide more positive clues than compulsory school activities because they are activities we opt to do even though we don't have to. Notwithstanding this, it is always useful to examine our experiences of compulsory activities in school. With this in mind, it is important to examine what subjects within the school curriculum we like/d or dislike/d. What is it about Maths that you enjoy? Is the logical step-by-step approach that Maths requires that is enjoyable? Or was this logical step-by-step the very thing that makes it not enjoyable? Is it the fact that it produces black and white answers as opposed to an essay which has no right or wrong answers? If you have a preference for subjects like English and History, is it because they provide the comfort of knowing that there is a spectrum of acceptable answers and that the construction of answers allows you the freedom of story-telling and the developing of an argument or a personal line of thinking?

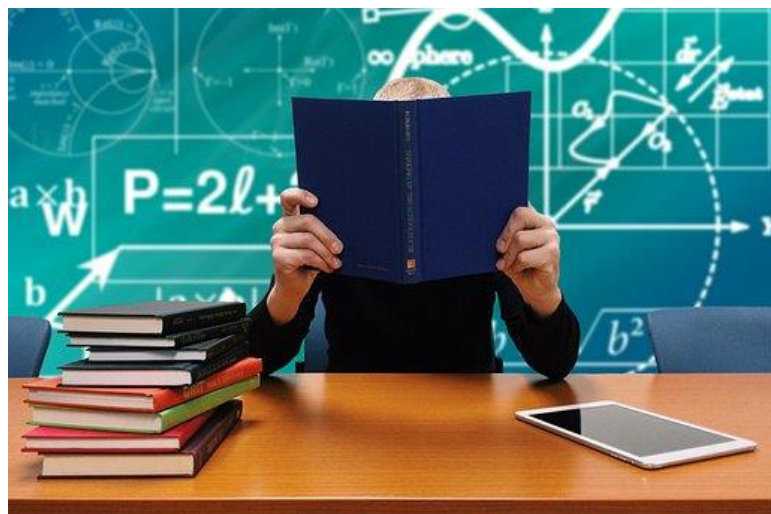
Maybe you have a preference for a subject like Geography and enjoyed the insights this subject provides into the world around us? Is your interest stimulated by the world of business? Is it the insights into how business works, or is it the black and white logic and step-by-step approach of accounting, or the more abstract view provided by economics?



Do you enjoy the world of science? If so, is it how Physics explains how things work, or how Biology explains how living organisms behave and interact with each other, or is it how Chemistry gives an insight into the composition of everything around us and the changes they undergo? Do you find comfort in the creatively expressive activities of drawing, painting, or sculpting in Art, or in playing an instrument in Music? Do you find expression in languages like Irish, French, German or Spanish? Are you intrigued by discussions of social, spiritual, or moral issues in Religion, C.S.P.E. or S.P.H.E.? Do you enjoy being up and about and not confined to a desk when working with your hands or with particular materials in subjects like Metalwork, Technology or Construction Studies? Have you experienced Technical Graphic at Junior Cert. level or Design & Computer Graphics at Leaving Cert. level. If so, did you enjoy this area of practical work that is more computer based?

In other words, discovering whatever gives us a “buzz” can positively contribute to the direction taken for further study of career choice. Even if some of the answers to the above questions point to a negative experience, this can be seen as a positive pointer to future learning.

It should also be remembered that our experiences in school might not have been positive. Indeed, the school environment we experience, or have experienced, may be having a negative or detrimental effect on us. This may have resulted in a poor person-environment fit<sup>8</sup> with regard to the type of school, or the academic demands of an education system that does not suit us. It is always productive to acknowledge such experiences and to work within this frame of reference, and to try and prevent any such negative experiences from hindering or closing off any career options that may be relevant. Always remember *‘don’t let what you can’t do interfere or blind you to what you can do!’*



Examining both non-vocational and academic activities serves to recognise that experiences which were not specifically vocational in content nevertheless exert an important influence on our vocational choice<sup>9</sup>, and can give vital clues to what activities may help us towards greater satisfaction in the world of work or study.

<sup>8</sup> John Conger & Nancy Galambos, *Adolescence and Youth*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Longman, 1997) p 222.

<sup>9</sup> Super, Et al., *Career Development: Self-Concept Theory*, (New Jersey: College Entrance Examination Board, 1963) p 405.

## 2.4 Creativity

*Creativity* is also another area worth exploring. Authors are creative and express their creativity by writing. Musicians are creative and express their creativity through playing an instrument. Singers are creative and express their creativity through singing. A sculptor is creative and expresses their creativity through making things with their hands. An actor or actress is creative and express their creativity through characters. Is a professional football player creative and expressing their creativity on the football field? Is a mechanic as creative as a painting restorer, and do they differ only in the way they express their creativity? Is a barrister is creative and expresses their creativity through the presentation of an argument? Is a teacher being creative when they deliver a class? A painter and decorator is creative in a different way, an architect is creative, a photographer is creative, and a dress designer is creative, a carpenter is creative, a landscape gardener is creative, a chef is creative, a film director is creative, and a person involved in marketing or advertising or public relations, is creative.



By this definition, is an engineer creative? Is an accountant creative? Is a surgeon creative? If yes, all have found different ways to express their creativity. Are we all creative to some degree? Is the challenge to define our own creativity - not just using the restrictive term *artistic* - and to find our own way of expressing our unique form of creativity?

## 2.5 Experience of Work

In addition to exploring our hobbies, and school subjects that may or may not appeal to us, it is important to delve into the area of part time employment that we may have experienced. These activities have the real potential to provide opportunities to investigate and experience learning and work opportunities before choosing them<sup>10</sup>, provide opportunities for *reality testing*, as well as helping us realise what career routes *not* to take.

Partaking in the world of work may help us discover where our interests lie, even if by exclusion – we may discover, for example, that we would not enjoy the same work in a full-time capacity<sup>11</sup>. Work experience that has given us pleasure and may inform us about what activities are enjoyable and rewarding. Holding a job can help us develop a sense of responsibility and give us a feeling of being productive. Work can also develop general skills, ranging from interpersonal ones, such as getting along with co-workers, to personal ones, such as managing time.



This can allow us see and assess other aptitudes beyond those related to academic and hobbies such as, energy to work long hours to achieve objectives, determination to identify and find solutions to problems, commercial and entrepreneurial instinct, creativity, and inventiveness, ability to motivate others, leadership, and forward planning. These attributes are particularly important if we find academics difficult.

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<sup>10</sup> OECD Career Guidance: A Handbook for Policy Makers, Paris: 2004, p 64.

<sup>11</sup> Nancy J. Cobb, *Adolescence – Continuity, Change, and Diversity*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., (California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2001) p 411.

## 2.6 Our Imagination

One other area that can be useful to tap into is our own imagination. Delving into our own imagination may bring forth further avenues to explore or, at the very least, allow us to gain further understanding of the type of person we are. Unleashing an unconstrained imagination can allow us to shift our point of view; to dream up new ideas for things, imagine as many possible solutions to a particular problem as possible<sup>12</sup>. To find the best clues to careers that will bring us fulfilment we should begin with our own imagination.

Imagine that you won the Lotto and had enough money for the rest of your life and that you never had to work again, but you wanted to? What job would you do? Or, if you were leaving school today and starting college tomorrow and could design your own degree, what would it be?



When thinking this through, remember there are no points required for this degree and you have a guaranteed place. Imagine you had total freedom in this choice; you can study whatever subject you like on Monday, and whatever subject you like on Tuesday, and so on, and they can be different subjects each day.



## 2.7 A Positive Asset Search

In well documented research, it is believed that all humans strive to make the most of their existence and that each person possesses the fundamental power to understand themselves and determine their own direction in life. With this in mind, it is always necessary to conduct a positive asset search and seek out our own strong points. This should be done in order to uncover, and tap into, what every individual possesses: that is, a fundamental decency and a talent for some task or activity that makes that individual unique. A positive self-evaluation depends upon us finding some area of success somewhere. It may appear that we have not succeeded at anything; yet, for some of us, there may be activities that are not usually in the foreground of our awareness because these experiences are often taken for granted, or simply never thought about<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> John Dacey and Maureen Kenny, *Adolescent Development*, (Wisconsin: Brown & Benchmark Publishers, 1994) p 124.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Nathan and Linda Hill, *Career Counselling*, (London: Sage Publications, 2000) p 75.



A positive asset search is particularly important if our academic record does not bring to light any area of success and helps us explore beyond this narrow frame of reference. There may be talents that are beyond the scope of conventional academic measures. Sometimes these talents can be a greater indication of success in the world or work than an aptitude test or Junior/Leaving Certificate exam results. Have you a pronounced determination to work hard and succeed despite the outcome not being perfect? Have you enthusiasm and self-confidence? Are you loyal and honest? Have you a high degree of common sense or motivation? Have you a well-developed sense of entrepreneurial instinct or creativity, and inventiveness? Have you the ability to persuade and motivate others? Have you a strong sense of empathy and ability to help others? Have you a strong sense of social responsibility? Can you be realistic, optimistic, tolerate stress, be flexible? Have you an affinity for interacting with children, elderly people, or indeed animals? Do you have good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills? Remember, school based aptitude tests or academic exams cannot measure these very important emotional intelligences<sup>14</sup>.



<sup>14</sup> John W. Santrock, *Adolescence*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005) p 148.

Caution should be taken when digging for personality traits. It may transpire you find some negative attributes or that you do not have certain talents such as public speaking. This should not be seen as a negative, it is just the way people are. We can't all be outgoing and extrovert. Consider the computer programmer who spends all day working alone at their desk or an archivist working on their own in a library. They enjoy their working environment because of the fact that they are more comfortable working on their own. After all, it can be argued that an Olympic long distance runner has more self-discipline than a member of the Olympic basketball team who needs the collective lift from other individuals around them. An individual may be deemed as being not very patient. This should not be seen as a negative, rather a personal trait and accept that that is just the way they are. Indeed, accepting this may provide clues to a future working environment that may match that personality trait. For example, an impatient person may not be suited to working as a research scientist who may have to wait years to discover a new drug. That scientist may enjoy that area of work because they are more comfortable in a working environment that focuses on the process rather than the end product.

Remember, to maximise the fit between you and the world of work or training or further study, it is necessary to look at the *you* first, step one, before looking at the characteristics of the job or courses of study, step two. If step one does not produce sufficient clues to determine step two, then more time needs to be spent researching ourselves. However, this can be difficult and the may be limited because of the lack of experiences you have had.

To further expand on step 1, researching ourselves, it can be useful to explore the interest aptitudes and personal characteristics needed for different working environments. The next section looks at different areas of work, the different types of jobs involved, and the necessary personality traits and interest and aptitudes used in these jobs. When doing the next section you will be learning about different areas of the world of work, however, this learning is secondary, as the primary learning will be comparing and contracting these insights with your own interest, aptitudes and personal characteristics. To help with this, each area of work has a written homework. This homework is not about that area itself, but rather about you as a person. The example '*Life In The Circus*' is used to help to show how you should approach each of the different areas of work. Your teacher will help explain this.



### 3. Selecting A Degree – Some Worked Examples

Following are worked examples that illustrated insights that are useful regardless of the subjects areas mentioned.

#### 3. 1 Misreading Clues

Consider **Student A** who states that they want to do a computer course. When asked why, they talk about their love of Facebook and computer games as their only reasons. They do not mention that they have done a coding course and liked it, they do not mention that they built their own computer, or double the memory on their laptop. They have not said that their academic comfort zone is to think in a mathematical and physics type way – which is what a computer course requires. These would be much stronger clues to indicate that a computer course would be a good match.

Consider **Student B** who states that they want to be a psychiatrist. When asked why they start talking about the workings of the human mind and how people behave. Also, they do not like doing science subjects and have no interest in how the body works. Rather than do medicine followed by psychiatry, do the clues point to studying psychology rather than psychiatry?

**Student C** expresses an interest in doing Law. The reasons they site are based in a television programme they watch. This programme has a sharp, fast moving script, a rich lifestyle, expensive cloths and cars, and good-looking people. There is very little if any details of Law in the television programme. Is this an attraction to a well-produced T.V. programme rather the workings of Law.

Consider **Student D** who states that they want to be secondary school teacher. When asked why, their answers are reminiscences about their time in school. The answers do not contain any mention of subject/s they love, or any mention of working with children. Is this student just getting sentimental as they are nearing the end of their secondary schooling? Are they just trying to hang on to a place they loved? Are they expressing their feelings about their secondary school experiences rather than a desire to actually teach?

As a result of doing work experience in hairdressing, **Student E** expresses an interest in becoming a hairdresser. When asked what they liked about their work experience they do not talk about the tasks a hairdresser does, but rather the camaraderie and craic they had with the other staff in the salon. Did their work experience just make them feel grown up and part of a team? To follow a career in hairdressing a person should be creative with their hands and enjoy, and be stimulated by, the tasks a hairdresser does day in day out.

**Student F** expresses an interest in becoming a physiotherapist. This idea is rooted in their experience as a 12 years old when they had to do physiotherapy for a sports injury. It may transpire that the attraction is based in the fact that the physiotherapist they had was very good at their job and made them feel really good about themselves. Are they attracted to the actual task involved? How would they feel about working with elderly people? How would they feel about working with stroke victims? Do they just want to practice sports physiotherapy?

**Student G**, who is slightly immature, for their age, did their work experience in a factor where they spent a week driving a forklift truck. They loved it, and it was the best craic ever! They now want to go back to do this work place after school. Is this based in the novelty effect of driving a forklift – something they had never done before – and the feeling of taking part in an adult activity? Be careful of the novelty factor.

Consider **Student H** who expresses a strong desire to turn their hobby into a career. Examples are the student who took part in the school play and wants to be the next Colin Farrell, the footballer who wants to be the next David Beckham, the individual who plays in their own band and wants to be the next Bono. It needs to be remembered that Colin Farrell, David Beckham, and Bono, Katie Taylor, or Saoirse Ronan only one in several thousand – if not more, who made it. For the vast majority of individuals, an interest in acting, sport or music (and most other hobbies and past-times), will remain being expressed through hobbies *only* rather than a fulltime career. On the other hand, if the individual can become the next big thing.

Consider **Student I** whose main reason for pursuing Geography in college is because of the teacher they had in secondary school. In secondary school some teachers have the ability to inspire and ignite a passion in the classroom. This can be seen as a constructive experience if an individual's career decision is positively and genuinely influenced by the subject content. However, care needs to be taken so that the individual does not mistake enjoyment of a teacher and the atmosphere in the class with enjoyment of the subject and its content. Selecting a subject to study at third level based on a certain teacher's style or personality or the atmosphere in that class *only*, are not reasons to select that subject in college.

### 3.2 Having Too Narrow A Lens

**Student J** says they want to do teaching. When asked why, they state they want to help others. The reason they have picked teaching as an outlet to help others may be because it is the only helping activity they have observed to date. Also, they do not mention tasks involved in teaching nor do they mention having a favourite subject or two. Might there be a more fulfilling outlet for helping others? For example, politics, social work, youth worker, nursing, civil rights organisations, charities, or NGOs, which might provide an even better outlet for helping people.

A **Student's K** favourite subject in school is woodwork and, as a result wants to be a carpenter. When pushed further, they state that they love working with their hands. But why considered carpentry only? After all, it may be the only experience to date, they have had of working with their hands. What about a mechanic and looking at the different types available for example, motor, aircraft? What about an electrician or a plastering or hairdressing or jewellery making or dress making? What about product design or some form of engineering? Might there be another hands on area that will provide even greater fulfilment?

Another **Student L** who loves History wants to study this subject in college. When asked why, they discuss how History has impacted on society today, and the politics of today, and how the past has influenced the way things are throughout the world today. Should this student also consider the subjects of Politics, International Relations and Sociology? In other words, there may be other outlets for a student's interest rather than just the subject of History.

**Student M** has a strong interest in working in the business world and logically has opted for a general business degree. However, they have a very strong aptitude for maths and a mathematical way of thinking. Indeed, even though they are very interested in Business, their best results are in Maths and Applied Maths. Should they really do a business degree with a strong written assignment focus? Would they be more suited to a more maths based business course, like accounting or actuary or finance. that will allow for an overlap between both an interest in business and an aptitude for a mathematical way of thinking?

### 3.3 Keeping It Broad

**Student N** states that they are not sure if they should do a marketing course or a general business course. Without realising, they have answered their own question. If they are not sure, they should keep their options open by doing a general business course to begin with. A more general course will allowed them taste all forms of business including marketing and will also allow them to specialise in marketing later on or indeed specialise in another area of business that they may discovered along the way. In other words if there is a degree of uncertainty, keep it broad and general for a year or so to allow a decision about any specialty be more informed.

**Student O** states that they are not sure if they should do a Biology or Chemistry course as they enjoy both equally. Again, without realising, they have answered their own question. If they are not sure, they should keep their options open by doing a general science course to begin with. A more general course will allowed them taste all forms of Biology and Chemistry and allow them to specialise in one or the other at a later stage or indeed, find a new area within these subjects that they may not have encountered at school that maybe even more interesting. Once again, if there is a degree of uncertainty, keep it broad and general for a year or so to allow a decision about any specialty be more informed.

### 3.4 Misinterpreting Course Titles

Consider **Student P** who has an interest and aptitude for Business and is considering pursuing a Business & Language degree to add to their skill level and increase their employment prospects. To study a language in college, a student should have enjoyed, and be relatively good at, the language/s they studied in secondary school. If the language/s taken in secondary school was not relatively easy and was not enjoyable, it is unlikely to be easy or enjoyable to study that language in college. Indeed, if the language in secondary school required a grind, this grind may have to continue in third level. It is not a good idea to be doing a subject in college that required a grind in secondary school. Indeed, if that grind needs to continue in college it might be the wrong subject to pursue. The above points not only apply to the language/s taken in secondary school, but also apply to any new language that might be taken up at beginner's level in college. We would all love to be fluent in another language, *but wanting to, and being attracted by the idea*, does not automatically give us the *ability* to become fluent.

Consider **Student Q** who has an interest and aptitude for Business and who may consider pursuing a degree in Business Computing to add to their skill level and increase their employment prospects. When pursuing such a degree the following needs to be remembered. A lot of computing business courses are actually computer courses. These degrees study how computer applications are applied to the business world. Therefore, to pursue such a degree a student should primarily have an interest in, and aptitude for, computers and then an interest in, and an aptitude for, applying these computer skills to the business world. Having an interest in Business only may not be enough to carry a student through to graduation in this degree.

Consider **Student R** who has a very strong interest and aptitude for their chosen sport. Indeed, this activity may be the only activity that is pronounced compared to all other activities and it may be the activity that makes them feel exceptionally good about themselves. As a result they may wish to pursue this sport as a career either by being directly involved as a player or participant, or indirectly e.g. administration or another activity such as Sport Science. When pursuing a sports science degree the following needs to be remembered. Sports science degrees are primarily science degrees, where science is applied to sport. Therefore, to be successful in this degree, an individual should also have an interest in, and an aptitude for, at least one science and preferably two secondary school sciences. Having an interest in, and an aptitude for, sport only and no - or very little interest in science - may not be enough to carry a student through to graduation in this degree.

Consider **Student S** who wishes to do a degree in Forensic Science. We are all familiar with the three traditional sciences, Biology, Chemistry, & Physics. With the advent of certain T.V. programmes, Forensic Science has become very popular. When choosing a Forensic Science degree, the following should be remembered. Forensic Science should not be seen as a new/different set of experimental techniques that are outside the area of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. In a 'forensics lab' investigative experiments are carried out and these experiments are actually experiments from the three traditional science subjects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. It is these subjects that should be the primary driver behind selecting a Forensics Science degree. Therefore, it might be more useful to see forensic science as a term to representing what the traditional Biology, Chemistry and Physics techniques *are used for*, namely, crime investigation as well as other forensic analysis, such as monitoring pollution.

**Student T** states *'I'm going to get 600 points, so I'll go for a high points course – I don't want to waste my points'*. Image you were given €200,000 to buy a car. You could buy a two seater convertible Porsche with that money. However, does this suit your needs? Image you have three kids and two dogs. Will the Porsche suits your needs. Will a people carrier – that will cost much less than the Porsche - suit your needs better? The points needed for a course have nothing to do with the course suiting a student. The course must match the student's interests and aptitudes. If it doesn't, they will not enjoy the course or may even drop out. There are plenty of people who get 550+ points and do a course that only needs 400 or even 320 because it matches their interests and aptitudes.

**Student U** states *'I'm going to get 600 points, so I'll go for a high points course – I don't want to waste my points, and I want to do a prestigious course'*. A potential medicine student says they want to do medicine because it has high points and will look good and it is a prestigious course. Throughout the conversation, that student never mentions the tasks a doctor carried out by a doctor, and never mentions that they will enjoy those tasks. A career should only be picked if there is an attraction to the tasks that are carried out, day in day out, in that career, and not simply because that course has high points.

### 3.5 What Job Will I Get With That Degree?

**Student V** is very anxious to know what job they will get from a degree they might pick. Some students know what job they want to do after college. As a result, they can pick a job specific degree. For example, they can pick an engineering degree in order to get a job as an engineer, or pick a nursing degree in order to become a nurse. However, prior to starting a degree a lot of people do not know what job they want to end up doing. This is perfectly normal. Before picking a degree, an individual often asks *'what job will I get from that degree'*? The better question might be, *'what job do you want?'*. They often can't answer this. With this in mind it is worth considering the following point.

Imagine a student was asked to pick their Leaving Certificate subjects on the first day of 1<sup>st</sup> year. The answer to this should be, *'I can't pick them now'*. This is because the student needs to experience the subjects in 1<sup>st</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 4<sup>th</sup> year, and needs to experience more of life outside school to be able to decide. Similarly, imagine being asked to pick your degree at the start of 5<sup>th</sup> year. The answer to this should be, *'no, not yet'*. This student has to experience more of the subjects in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year and experience more of life. Similarly, if a student does not know what job they want to do when picking a degree, they should be allowed to experience the subjects in their degree in 1<sup>st</sup> year of college, and 2<sup>nd</sup> year, and 3<sup>rd</sup> year, and experience more of life before picking a job. Therefore, for the majority of individuals, *'what job will I get from my degree'* is better asked towards the last year of their degree. In other words, let the experiences of 1<sup>st</sup> year in college, and 2<sup>nd</sup> year in college and 3<sup>rd</sup> year in college - and indeed outside college - drive the choice of job, or indeed postgraduate studies.

## 4. Block To Career Development

### 4.1 Restricted by Location & Limited Job Openings

One area that may cause a block to our career development is what may be termed external constraints. These are constraints that are out of our control: for example, government economic policy, or the fact that certain jobs are only to be found in specific locations<sup>15</sup>, or the type of job that is wished for are few and far between. These restrictions need to be dealt with openly and honestly so that we are fully aware of all aspects of the situation we may find ourselves in, before making any final decisions. A compromise between reality and our dreams may need to be reached without denying the existence of what may be our life-long ambition.

As a small country, Ireland can have a limited number of job opportunities in certain areas. For example, consider **Student W** who may have a love of animals and wants to become a Zookeeper. The main places that employ zookeepers are Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park in Cork. It needs to be remembered that there are only a small number of such jobs in this country. Indeed, the vacancies in these areas may only arise every few years and when they do so, the number of vacancies may only be in single digits and the number of applicants may be very large.

Consider also **Student X** who is interested in becoming a pilot with the Air Corp. Each year the Air Corp only recruits less than 20 pilots and there are 1000's of applicants and these jobs are based mainly in Baldonnell in Dublin. Indeed, some years, depending on government policy, they may not recruit any pilots.



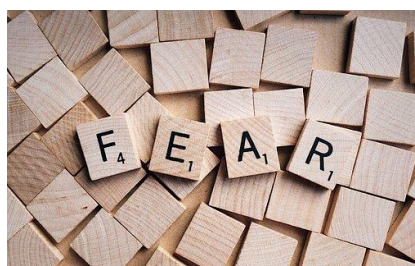
<sup>15</sup> Robert Nathan and Linda Hill, *Career Counselling*, (London: Sage Publications, 2000) p 80.

Consider **Student Y** who wants to pursue a career in the supports structures around sports teams e.g. physiotherapist, strength and conditioning, or a nutritionist. Over the last number of years the number of openings in these areas of sport has increased. However, is there are limit to the number of these jobs in Ireland, regardless of growth in the economy? In Ireland, there will probably only ever be five professional rugby teams, (the four provincial and one national team). Similarly, the number of G.A.A. teams that may provide fulltime paid employment for sports specialist may not increase beyond the number of counties in Ireland. Therefore, full time paid employment for all those physiotherapist, sports scientists, strength and conditioning experts, and nutritionists who graduate each year for all of these courses throughout the country may be limited by the size of the country regardless of the growth in the economy.

There may be other areas within our small country that have limited career opportunities and opportunities that exist only in specific parts of the country only. However, if ambition to have a full time wage from pursuing your dream go for it.

#### 4.2 Fear

Throughout 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year in secondary school a **Student Z** always expressed an interest in doing medicine. In 6<sup>th</sup> year they seem to change their minds. When asked why, they have changed their minds, they talk about how difficult it will be to get a place on the course and the disappointment they will feel if they don't get there. When pushed, the student still expresses a strong interest in the tasks a doctor does. Therefore, are they really changing their minds, or are they simply expressing fears about the process they have to go through to get to where they want to be. Sometimes perseverance and courage is necessary.





### 4.3 Peer Influences

As an individual enters the teenage years they have a strong desire to develop a sense of autonomy and independence. Also, the influence of our peer group will increase, and may be matched by a similar decrease in parental influence. This is perfectly normal. However, given the power of peer pressure our educational and career aspirations can be either strengthened or reduced depending on the values of the peer group in general and of close friends in particular<sup>16</sup>. Therefore, catch yourself making decisions that have been negatively influenced, be it consciously or subconsciously, by your peers.



### 4.4 Shyness Versus Quietness

Some individuals are gifted with the ability to express themselves verbally; while others have somewhat succumbed to the inevitable onslaught of hormones and may suffer from, what could be referred to as a poverty of language<sup>17</sup>. Indeed, others around you might have described you as being *quiet* or *shy*. This is normally said in a negative sense. However, quietness might best be viewed as just another normal characteristic of the individual and, as such, should not be seen as a negative trait. Remember, if you are a quiet person, good, it must be because you are comfortable within yourself, happy with how you are and what you have in your life, and don't feel a need to tell everyone about it. So enjoy, but remember to take this trait into account when selecting a working environment. Maybe you won't enjoy a D.J. in a night club.

Shyness however, is different. We normally display shyness when we are conscious of what others might think of what we say or do. So we hold back for fear of a negative evaluation. This is normal to some degree in the teenage years and usually dissipates as we mature. However, to gain some insights into shyness and determine the source of it, have a look at the section on self-esteem.

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<sup>16</sup> John Dacey and Maureen Kenny, *Adolescent Development*, (Wisconsin: Brown & Benchmark Publishers, 1994) p 262.

<sup>17</sup> Don C. Dinkmeyer, Don C. Dinkmeyer, Jr., and Len Sperry, *Adlerian Counseling and Psychotherapy*, (Ohio: Merrill Publishing Company, 1987) p 36.

## 4.5 Unrealistic Goals



Some of us, for various reasons, may have developed an inaccurate view of ourselves and our abilities and can have unrealistic career goals. We can think we are better than we are, or we can think we are not as good as we are. We can say to ourselves, “*I’m not very smart*”, or “*You have to be self-confident to be a lawyer*”.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, as a result of an overestimation of our abilities and talents<sup>19</sup> we may, for example, dream of becoming a doctor but may never obtain the academic qualifications to enter medical school. Some of us might have the abilities for a particular profession, but have an unrealistic view regarding the amount of work required and are unable to understand the need for a positive attitude towards hard work and learning<sup>20</sup>. Whatever the root cause of our inaccurate view of yourselves, we need to catch ourselves letting it determine our decision making process. This can be helped by seeking out the view of another person who has a realistic view, and will be honest with us.



<sup>18</sup> John J. Pietrofesa and Howard Splete, *Career Development: Theory and Research*, (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1975) p 35.

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth B. Hurlock, *Adolescent Development*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972) p 141.

<sup>20</sup> Edwin Herr and Stanley H. Cramer, *Career Guidance and Counseling Through the Lifespan*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Longman, 2004) p 412.

## 4.6 What We Think Of Ourselves

### 4.6.1 Signs & Symptoms of Low Self-Esteem

Some of us, through previous experiences (be they in the home, school, or in our peer group), may have developed a strategy that results in what is known as self-defeating beliefs<sup>21</sup>. Since self-esteem is important for our motivation towards success and achievement,<sup>22</sup> it is important to be conscious of the sources and symptoms of our low self-esteem and how we act out such perceptions of ourselves. We may have experienced repeated academic 'failure', or we may have suffered negatively from not achieving – as viewed by our parents and/or peers – in other areas such as sport or leisure pursuits. Deliberately or otherwise, we may have had our attempts to be successful mocked or ridiculed by those that matter to us. This may have resulted in our feelings of self-worth being eroded. Whatever the cause of low self-esteem, we can be motivated to protect our self-worth by developing various coping strategies in an effort to protect ourselves from further negative attention and/or prevent further erosion of our own view of ourselves.

These coping strategies or self-handicapping strategies<sup>23</sup>, may include some of the following. Non-performance is one such strategy, where we avoid eye contact with a teacher/parent. Another strategy is a shame effort<sup>24</sup>, where we ask questions we already know the answer in order to make ourselves feel better. We may use procrastination<sup>25</sup> and delay any effort to attempt a task so that we can later blame time management. Another strategy is when we set unreachable goals so that we can use the excuse that nobody could possibly achieve what they had aspired to. Another strategy is known as the academic wooden leg<sup>26</sup> whereby we admit to minor failings such as freezing in exams<sup>27</sup>, or that the exam was too long. This allows us to blame circumstances rather than our lack of ability<sup>28</sup>,

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<sup>21</sup> Robert Nathan and Linda Hill, *Career Counselling*, (London: Sage Publications, 2000) p 75.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas P. Gullotta, Gerald R. Adams, and Carol A. Markstrom, *The Adolescent Experience*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., (California: Academic Press, 2000) p 96.

<sup>23</sup> Lovejoy, C. & Duril, A. (2010). Self-handicapping: The Interplay Between Self-Set and Assigned Achievement Goals, *Motivational Emo*.

<sup>24</sup> John C. Colman and Leo Hendrey, *The Nature of Adolescence*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London: Routledge, 1990.

<sup>25</sup> Duru, E. & Balkis, M. (2017). *Procrastination, Self-esteem, Academic Performance, and Well-Being: A Moderated Mediation Model*, *International Journal of Educational Psychology*, 6), 97-119.

<sup>26</sup> Midgley, A. & Urdan, T. (1996). "If I Don't Do Well Tomorrow, There's a Reason": Predictors of Adolescents' Use of Academic Self-Handicapping Strategies, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 88, 423-434.

<sup>27</sup> Lovejoy, C. & Duril, A. (2010). *Self-handicapping: The Interplay between self-set and assigned achievement goals, Motiv Emo*,

<sup>28</sup> Midgley, A. & Urdan, T. (1996). "If I Don't Do Well Tomorrow, There's a Reason": Predictors of Adolescents' Use of Academic Self-Handicapping Strategies, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 88, 423-434.

and helps us avoid the negative evaluation of others<sup>29</sup>, and indeed ourselves. Also, we can find ourselves adopting negative aspirations<sup>30</sup> or a negative identity<sup>31</sup>, in other words we do the opposite to what is expected of us in order to distract attention from the real issue.

Other protection strategies can include; comparing our exams results to our peers who have achieved lower scores as a way of finding comfort and/or distracting from our own performance, or using misconduct<sup>32</sup>/messing as a way of distracting from our academic work. Do you recognise any of these?

#### 4.6.2 What Is Self-Esteem?

There are several definitions of self-esteem. One definition states that self-esteem is the extent to which we prize, value, approve, or like ourselves<sup>33</sup>. In everyday language the term 'esteem' refers to something positive or admirable. This implies that self-esteem is **purely a positive thing**. Therefore, from this definition, you would think that self-esteem is only derived from the things that make us feel good about ourselves<sup>34</sup>.

Another definition states that self-esteem is the **negative or positive** attitude that we have about ourselves. This definition leads us to believe that self-esteem is binary, i.e. positive or negative, good or bad, black or white. This definition implies that if we focus on our positive attributes only, we will have a positive self-esteem, and if we focus on our negative attributes only we will have a negative self-esteem.

However, there is a more helpful definition of self-esteem. This states that self-esteem is an **overall evaluation** of ourselves<sup>35</sup> or a **global view** we have about ourselves **as a whole**<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Lovejoy, C. & Duril, A. (2010). *Self-handicapping: The Interplay Between Self-Set and Assigned Achievement Goals, Motiv Emot*,

<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth B. Hurlock, *Adolescent Development*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972) p 141.

<sup>31</sup> John W. Santrock, *Adolescence*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed., New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005, p 439.

<sup>32</sup> Michaels, M., Barr, A., Roosa, M. & Knight, G. (2007). *Self-Esteem, Assessing Measurement Equivalence in a Multiethnic Sample of Youth*, *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 27, 269-295,

<sup>33</sup> Blascovitch, J., & Tomaka, J. (1991). *Measures of Self-Esteem*. In J. P. Robinson, P.R. Shaver, & L.S. Wrightsman (Eds.) *Measures of Personality and Social Psychological Attitudes* (Vol 1).

<sup>34</sup> Stets, J. & Burke, P. (2014). Self-Esteem and Identities, *Sociological Perspectives*, 57, 409-433,

<sup>35</sup> Tsaousis, I. (2006). *The Relationship of Self-Esteem to Bullying Perpetration and Peer Victimization Among School Children and Adolescents: A meta-analytic review*. *Aggression and Bullying Behaviour*, 31, 186-199.

<sup>36</sup> Morin, A., Maïano, C., March, H. Nagengast, B. & Janosz, M. (2013). *School Life and Adolescents' Self-Esteem Trajectory*, *Child Development*, 84, 1967-1988.

The use of the terms “**overall**”, “**global**”, and “**as a whole**” implies that it is the **summation** of our positive and negative attributes that produce our overall feelings of self-worth. This allows us take into account that all of us have both positive and negative attributes at the same time. What does this mean for us?

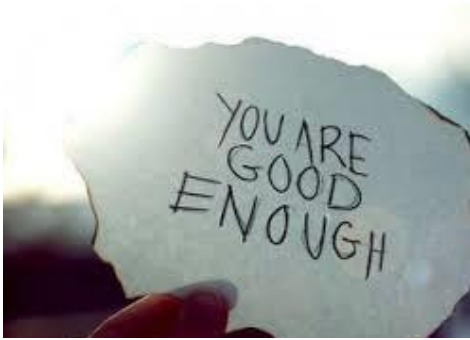
The popular notion to boost our self-esteem and confidence is to tell ourselves how good we are at doing things, or how good we are as a person. While this is useful, is it enough?

We all have shortcomings. We all have flaws. We all have vulnerabilities. We all have things we can't do well. We all have things we can't do at all. We cannot all be brilliant at everything. We cannot be perfect. Nobody can. Therefore, is the trick accepting, and be comfortable with, these shortcomings and vulnerabilities (while strive to improve where possible) and accept them as part of who we are? Should we drop the terms 'self-esteem' and 'confidence' and replace them with **being comfortable with ourselves**?

Consider the following scenario. Two people are called for an interview for the same job. Neither has any experience and both are straight out of college. One interviewer decides to ask a question someone with no experience could not possibly answer. This was done - not to catch them out - but rather to see how they react in a situation where they don't know the answer.

When asked the question, one interviewee resorts to pretending to know the answer and spoofs and does so very confidently. The other interviewee, pauses, and then says, *“I don't have enough experience to answer that question; I would have to ask my co-workers and boss for guidance and help”*. Now who is the more confident interviewee?





The second interviewee is not afraid to admit - to themselves and to others - that they do not know something and they have the ability to ask for help from others. Is this interviewee a more confident person who is not afraid to expose a flaw? This scenario adds an extra meaning to the word 'confident'. Is the word 'confident' an adequate word to describe what we want to strive towards? Would it be more accurate to use the phrase **comfortable with ourselves**?

In other words, being comfortable enough in ourselves to accept our flaws and allow others to see them. Being comfortable enough not to let a negative view of others impact on how we view ourselves. So maybe let's forget about self-esteem and confidence, and strive toward being **comfortable with ourselves**.



## 4.7 Gender Issues

One of the unhealthy restrictions placed on us in terms of career development is gender stereotyping which can act as barriers to our progression<sup>37</sup>. These barriers, while traditionally having a greater impact on women, for example in the field of engineering, can also affect men. For example, in Irish society today, primary teaching and nursing can sometimes be seen as feminine<sup>38</sup>, thereby possibly placing barriers between men and such professions. In addition, we ourselves, whether male or female, may also unconsciously restrict our options because of own prejudices or family prejudices.



As with all issues that can prevent an individual fully exploring all suitable options, it is important not to deselect occupational options because of gender<sup>39</sup>. Women and men should make choices and decisions more according to their authentic interests, talents, values, and preferences and to explore a wide variety of fields, subjects, and activities not labelled by gender<sup>40</sup>. Females can be farmers, train drivers, firefighters, engineers, scientist, and pilots. Men can be Montessori teachers, nurses, make-up artists, and hairdressers, midwives, and indeed house husbands.

<sup>37</sup> L. Sunny Hansen, *Integrative Life Planning*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997) p 30.

<sup>38</sup> Spencer G. Niles and JoAnn Harris-Bowlsbey, *Career Development Interventions In The 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall, 2002) p 107.

<sup>39</sup> Linda Seligman, *Developmental Career Counseling and Assessment*, (California: Sage Publications, 1994) p 190.

<sup>40</sup> Edwin L. Herr and Stanley H. Cramer, *Career Guidance and Counseling Through the Lifespan*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Longman, 2004) p 412.

## 4.8 Disabilities

With 8.2% of the population<sup>41</sup> deemed to have a *disability*, the lack of opportunities imposed by their *disability* should not be compounded by ruling out possible career paths that may be suitable. This can occur if the disability *only* is used to define the person. This serves to ignore what the individual can do and focus only on what they can't. By focusing in on the positive aptitudes and personal characteristics of the individual possible career options can be explored which might otherwise be ignored. The starting point for this process may be to allow the individual themselves list their positive attributes in an open and honest way. After all, it can be argued that we are all good at something – we just need to find it.

## 4.9 Emotional Issues<sup>42</sup>

All of our families have their ups and downs. We may have periods of difficulties with our relationships with our Mum, Dad, brother, sister, or indeed our mates. We may even experience illness, illness of others, or bereavement, or other distressing events. Sometimes we can cope with these difficulties and not let them interfere with our school lives. Sometimes these difficulties can impact on how we do in school and prevent us planning our future or indeed, see anything worthwhile in our future. If this is the case, you may need to reach out for help. Sometimes we cannot change the situation that is causing us stress. But we may be able to change how we react to the situation. The situation you might find yourself in may be causing you to lose out on the present. However, might your reaction cause you to lose out on your future? If you find yourself unable to change how you are reacting to the situation, look for help. Talk to somebody. Talk to a trusted adult. Talk to a teacher. Talk to your Guidance Counsellor.

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<sup>41</sup> <http://www.cso.ie>

<sup>42</sup> Liam Murphy, *Counselling the Adolescent In A Changing Ireland: National Survey of Second Level Schools In Ireland*, 1993, p 23.



#### 4.10 Being Ready

Some of us may simply not be ready to decide on a particular career or course of study. A sense of readiness may not become apparent until our early, or indeed, late twenties. However, it should always be remembered that to force a decision when not ready to do so, can be detrimental in the long run and negate against a more accurate selection in the future. Also, sometimes we can narrow down our choices to one/two particular areas but may still be unwilling to make a commitment. This reluctance to commit to any path may be because the decision is seen as too momentous to risk making a mistake. This can sometimes be the case when we continue to find fault with every idea or tend only to focus on the negatives of each choice.



If we reach the end of their secondary education without discovering one area that interests us, it is sometimes useful to forget about finding a course that will result in a job/career. Instead, we should just focus on what would be interesting to study/train for the next 3/4 years and select a broad ranging degree/training course and hope that during those years something will come to light that might give clues to a future career. This can also be a useful approach for students who have several areas of equal interest but are unable to select a specific one.

## 5. The Labour Market

### 5.1 Swings In Employment Numbers

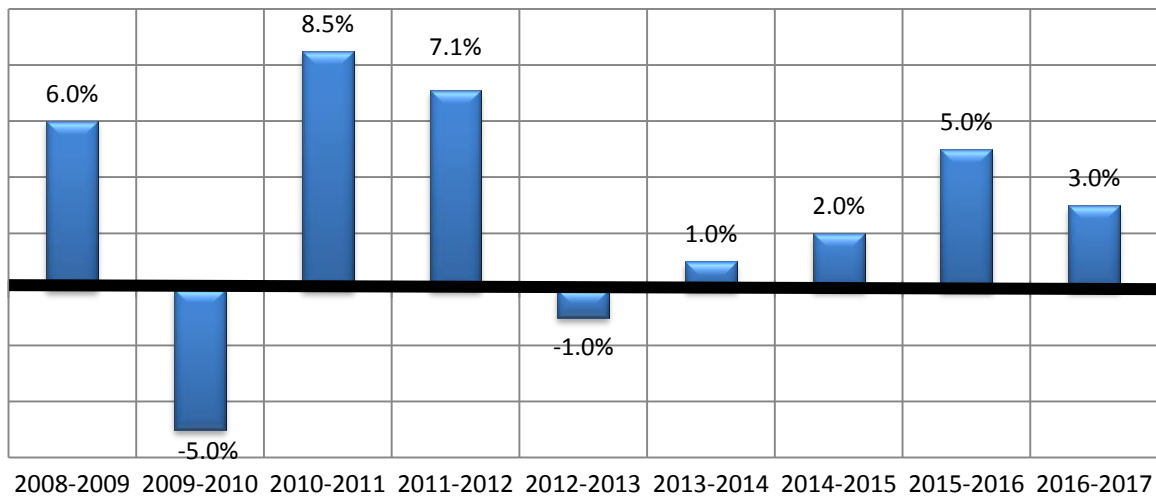
The table below<sup>43</sup> shows the year on year increases or decreases in employment growth in the construction, I.C.T., Hospitality, and Financial Services sector. In 2008-2009 the employment in the construction sector decreased by 37%. Consider an individual who, at that time, wished to pursue an Architecture degree and may have been reluctant to do so because employment prospects were poor. However, six years later in 2013-2014 employment in the construction sector started to increase again just as that potential Architecture student would have been graduating. Similarly, consider an individual who wished to take on an apprenticeship may have, at that time, found it difficult to find an employer and therefore, gave up on their dream of becoming a carpenter.



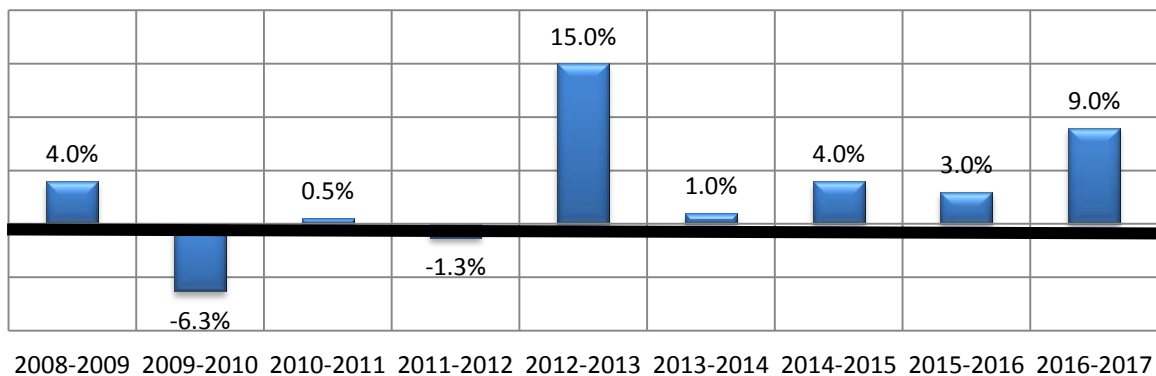
As the chart shows employment growth is very seldom constant and can go up and down with changes in the economy. This fluctuation can also be seen in the I.C.T. sector, the Hospitality sector and the Financial Services sector.

<sup>43</sup> *National Skills Bulletin, Solas, Dublin, Employment Growth by Sector (%) Year on Year Comparisons (Q.4).* 2018, p. 31, 2017, p. 29, 2016, p. 29, 2015, p. 28, 2014, p. 25, 2013, p.29, 2012, p. 22, 2011, p. 22, 2010, p. 22.

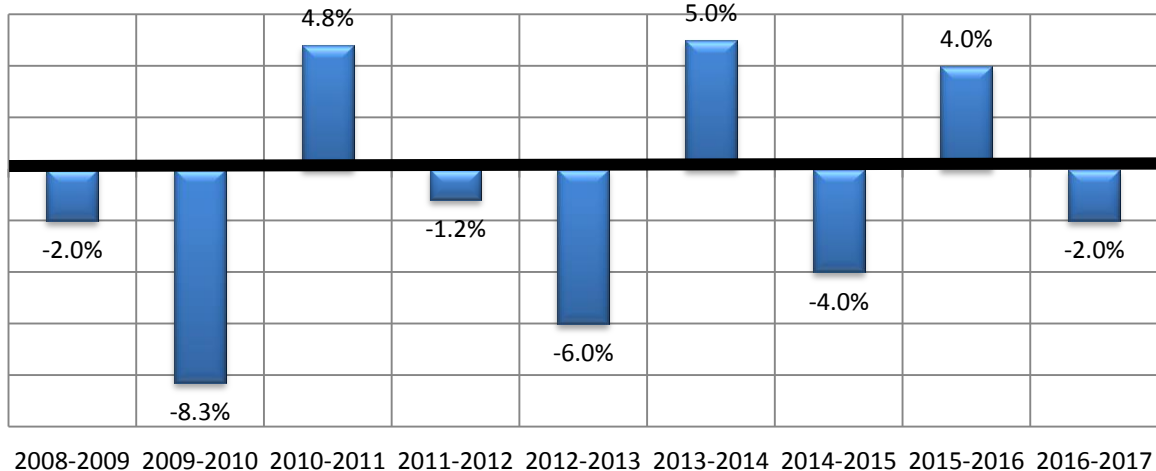
### Employment Growth ICT Sector 2008-2017



### Employment Growth Hospitality Sector 2008-2017



### Employment Growth Financial Services Sector 2008-2017



If can be a useful exercise to observe these employment trends in any given sector. However, these trends are not necessarily a predictor for job growth in four, five, or six years' time after an individual has finished training, or further or higher education. If there was a particular employment sector with continuous growth that could guarantee employment throughout an individual's working career – there is none - and if this area matches an individual's interest, aptitudes, and personal characteristics, then this avenue might be worth pursuing.

However, if employment growth figures are the only indicator used for career selection an individual might end up working in an area doing tasks each day that they may not be interested in, or doing task that are above or below their aptitude levels. Moreover, an individual might end up working in an environment that has characteristics that do not match the person's characteristics, e.g. outdoors when the person is better suited to indoor work, and visa-verse, or working in an area where the main task are interacting with people when the individual might be better suited to working on their own or in small groups or on a computer. Think of your most hated subject in school. Think of the feelings that this class brought about. Nobody wants to end up having those same feelings – all day, day in day out - in their working environment, no matter how much they get paid or how easy it is to get a job.

## **5.2 Employer Skills Needs Versus Being Authentic**

A number of organisations and individuals state that what is needed from employees in today's working world are people who can work as a team, have the ability to speak in public, have another language and have sophisticated I.T. skills. These are very valuable and attractive attributes to prospective employers and indeed some individuals have these skills or the potential to acquire these skills. However, what about those who might prefer to work on their own or in small groups? What about someone who would prefer to carry out tasks that are not primarily I.T. based?

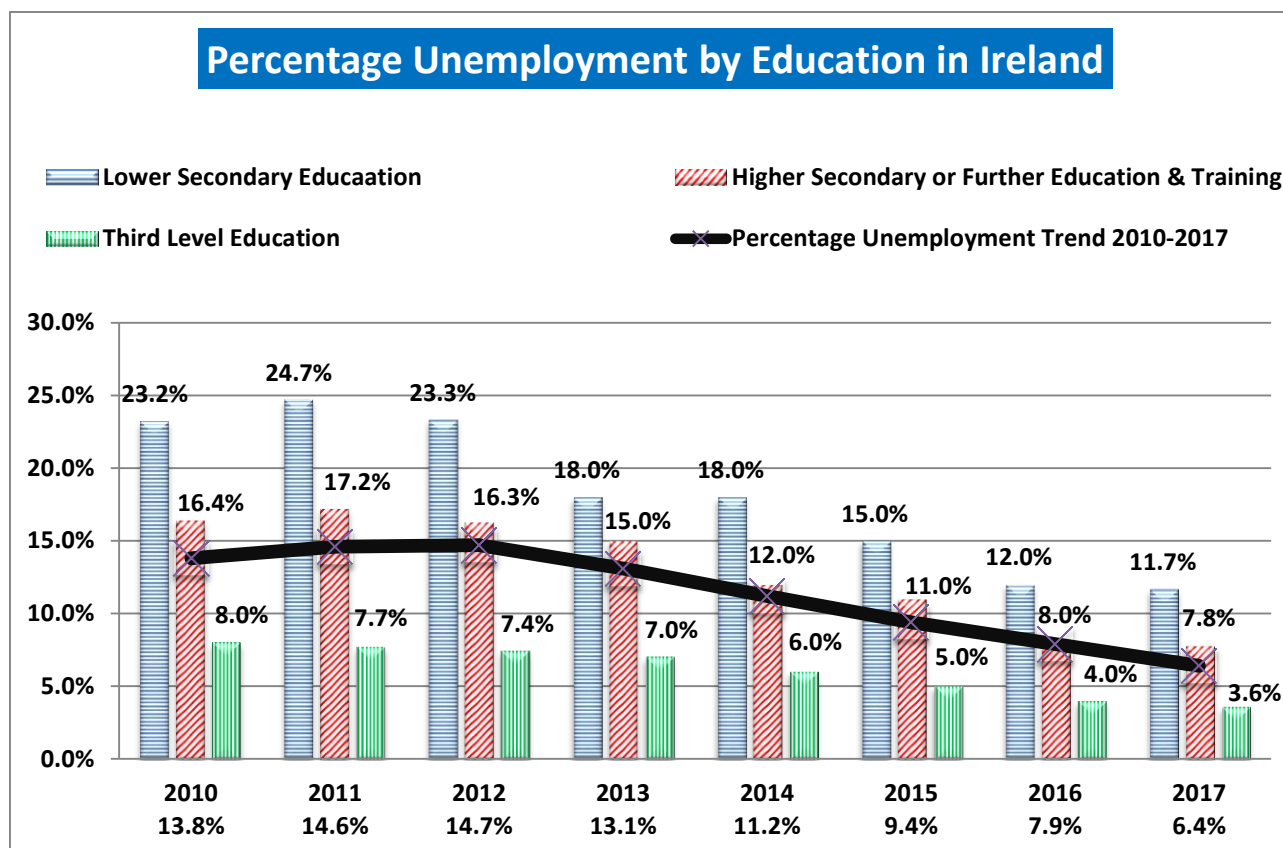
In other words, if an individual is an extrovert, maybe they should pursue a job that requires this trait. If an individual is an introvert, maybe they should pursue a job that accommodates this characteristic. If an individual prefers to carry out tasks that are not primarily I.T. based, maybe they should find a job whose tasks accommodate this trait. Imagining the physical discomfort in trying to change our height. Would an individual suffer the same internal discomfort if they try and change our internal personality traits?

We buy a book based on our own preferences rather than one that is one the best seller's list and we listen to music based on what we like rather than what is at the top of the charts. Therefore, while it can be useful to take into account the external needs of employers, this needs to be balanced with our own internal needs and personal characteristics. Imagine walking around all day in shoes that do not fit.

## 6. Staying In Training Or Education For As Long As Possible

### 6.1 Employment and Unemployment

The table<sup>44</sup> below show the percentage unemployment rates by education level.



In 2010 the overall unemployment rate was 13.8%. During that year 23.2% of those with a lower secondary education (did not finish secondary school) were unemployed, and 16.4% of those who finish secondary school or had some further education were unemployed, and 8% of those with third level education were unemployed. The same relative pattern can be seen from 2011 to 2007. The conclusion from these figures is that the lower the level of education and training the greater the chances of being unemployed and the higher the level of education and training the lower the chances of unemployment. In other words, when the economy is performing poorly, the lower the level of education or training, the greater the chances of being made unemployed.

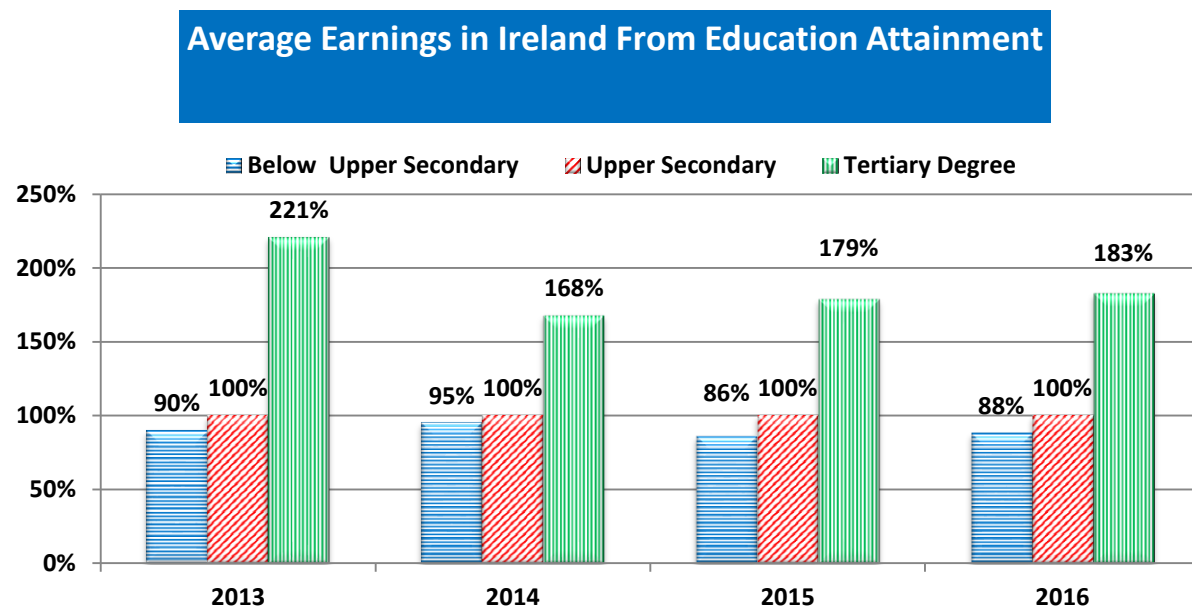
<sup>44</sup> *National Skills Bulletin, Solas, Dublin*, Unemployment & Earning by Education (Q4 of each year).

2018 p. 51, 2017, p. 45, 2016, p. 46, 2015, p. 45, 2014, p. 44, 2013, p. 134, 2012, p. 131, 2011, p. 109.

<sup>45</sup> *Education at a Glance, OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing Paris, 2018 p. 98, 2017 p. 114, 2016 p. 125, 2015 p. 125.

## 6.2 Earning Potential

The table below<sup>46</sup> shows the average earnings in Ireland according to educational attainment. In 2016, compared with those with an upper secondary education (those who finish secondary school are given 100%), those with a degree earned 83% more, and those who did not finish secondary school earned 12% less than those who finish secondary school.

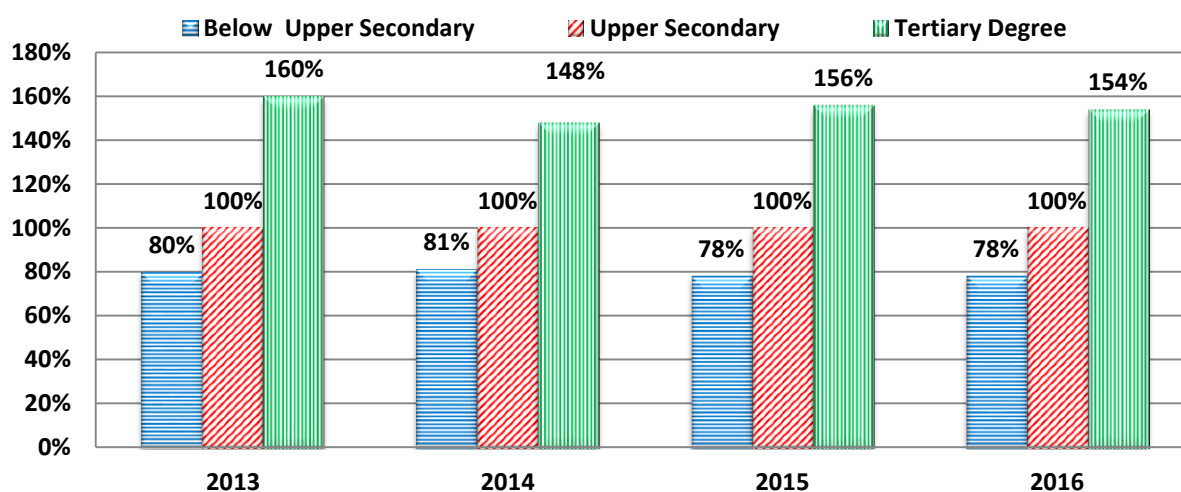


A similar trend exists for 2015, 2014 and 2013. This pattern of earning potential is repeated internationally. The table<sup>47</sup> below shows the average earnings in 35 O.E.C.D. countries. This table shows that in 2016, compared with those upper secondary education (those who finish secondary school are given 100%), those with a degree earned 54% more, and those who did not finish secondary school earned 22% less than those who finish secondary school. A similar trend exist for 2015, 2014 and 2013.

<sup>46</sup> Education at a Glance 2018, OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing Paris, 2018 p. 98, 2017 p. 114, 2016 p. 125, 2015 p. 125.

<sup>47</sup> Education at a Glance, OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing Paris, 2018 p. 88, 2017 p. 104, 2016 p. 114 & p.116, 2015 p. 116.

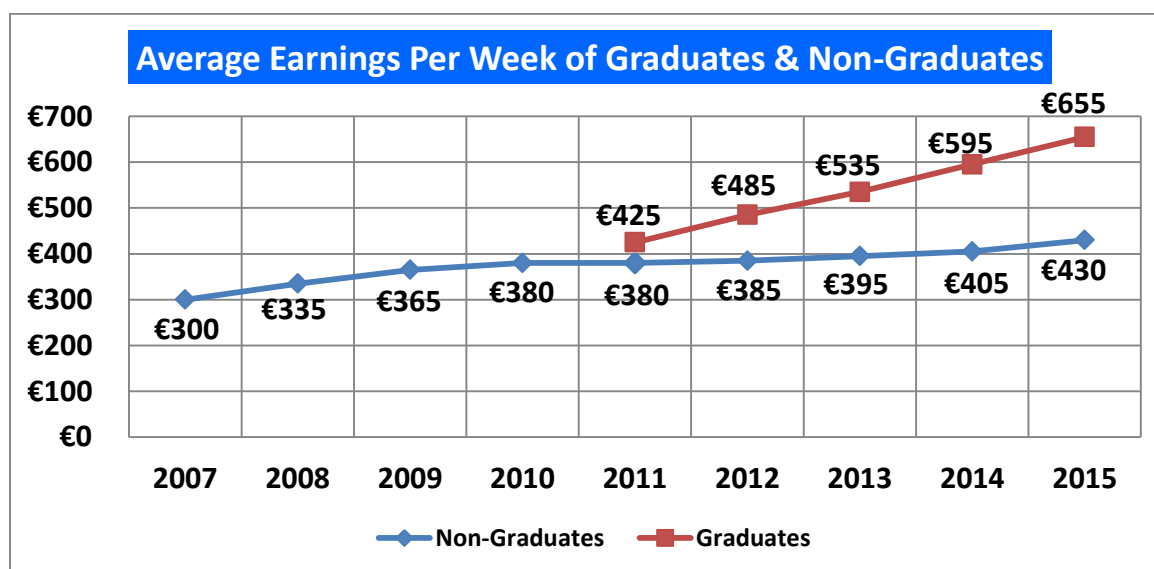
### Average Earnings in 35 OECD Countries From Education Attainment



The graph below<sup>48</sup> shows the average weekly earnings of those without a degree (non-graduates) and those with a degree (graduates).

The group studied did their Leaving Certificate in 2007. Some went to college and some when into the work force. Four year later in 2011 the group that went to college graduated, and started working. At this stage, those that went straight to work after their Leaving Certificate had been working for 4 years.

At that point, their earnings were compared. In 2011, the non-graduates were earning €380 per week, having been working for 4 years. The graduates, now in their first year of work, were earning €425 year. In 2015 eight years after doing their Leaving Certificate, the non-graduate group were earning €430 per week and the graduates were earning €655 per week.

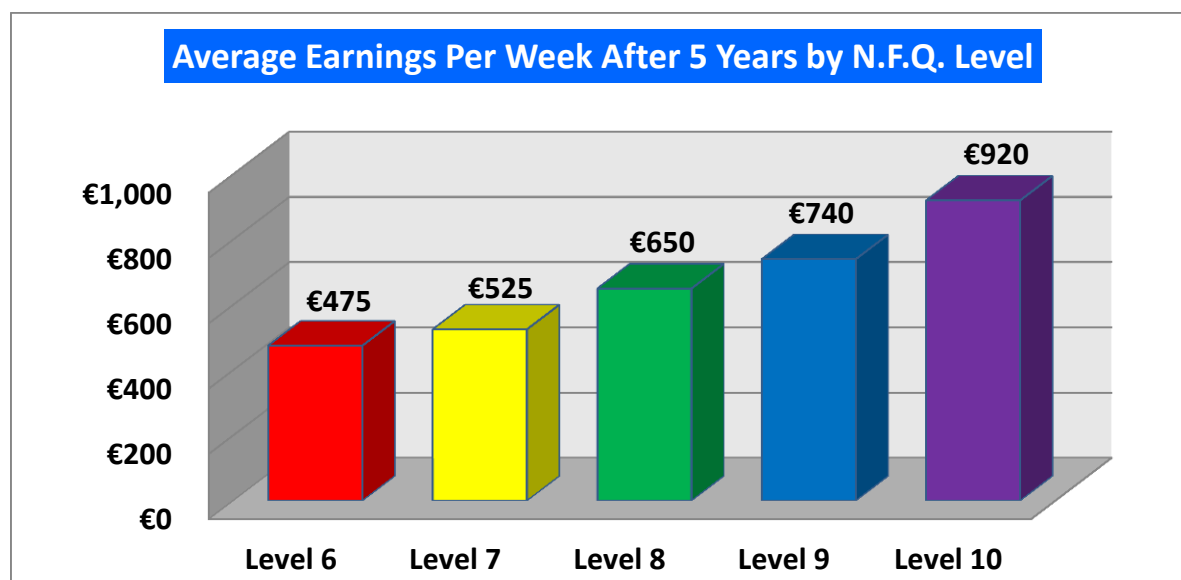


<sup>48</sup> Higher Education Outcomes, Central Statistics Office & Higher Education Authority, p. 74, 2018.



The graph below<sup>49</sup> shows the average weekly earnings of graduates 5 years after graduation.

Those with a Level 6 qualification earned €475 per week, those with a Level 7 earned €525 per week, Level 8, €650 per week, and those with a Level 9, €740 per week, and Level 10 €920 per week.



The conclusion from these figures is that the greater the level of education and training the greater the earning potential and the lower the level of education and training the lower the earning potential. In other words, the greater the skill level – be it through formal education or training – the greater the earning potential.

These unemployment and earning figures are averages. Therefore, there may be individuals who left school early and have never been unemployed and who earn more than someone with a degree. However, these individuals may have a pronounced talent or aptitude in their chosen area, and/or have a pronounced interest in, and aptitude for, a very specific and unique area, and/or are simply very lucky. Knowing someone like this does not necessarily mean another person can copy this unless they have their own pronounced aptitude or talent in a particular or unique area, or are very lucky.

<sup>49</sup> <sup>49</sup> *Higher Education Outcomes*, Central Statistics Office & Higher Education Authority, p. 65, 2018.

## 7. Researching Third Level Courses

*'The most frequent reason third-level students give for leaving a course is that they either did not know enough about the course or had a poor understanding of what was involved in the course.'*

**Aiming Higher – A Guide for Parents by Higher Education Authority & U.L.**

*'The most frequent reason stated by students for leaving a course was a mismatch between themselves and their course'*

**An Inquiry into Withdrawal from College -A Study Conducted by T.C.D.**

*'Poor choice of a course is a major reason for withdrawal and 'students often fail to understand the content, scope or depth of the course selected' and 'relying on friends' opinion rather than information available directly from university sources'*

**A quantitative investigation into the reasons why students exit from first year of their programme – A Study Conducted by U.C.D.**

When researching third level courses, students are confronted with information about clubs and societies, sports facilities, social events and stories about current and past students etc. However, this type of information gives very little indication about the likelihood of a student enjoying the most important thing about being in college - enjoying the material being covered in lectures. With this in mind, the following is worth noting.

To finish any year of any degree in any college a student has to clock up 60 credits of learning. This total of 60 is usually composed of individual units of 5 or 10 (or sometimes 7.5) credits of material. To gain these **credits** a student has to cover a certain number of **modules** of material. This is effectively the syllabus. This 'syllabus' is available on line from the third level institution concerned. Students should not just look at the modules available in 1<sup>st</sup> year, but also the modules available in each year of the degree. Students should also check out what modules are compulsory and what modules optional and compare these with the modules for the similar courses in other third level colleges. This research is vitally important for all courses but is also essential when students are choosing new subjects that they may not have studied in school, e.g. Sociology, Law, Philosophy, Linguistics, Politics etc. Therefore, the most productive research can be to determine the answers to the following three questions.

***What will I study and what skills will I have to use in 1<sup>st</sup> year?***

***What will I study and what skills will I have to use in 2<sup>nd</sup> year?***

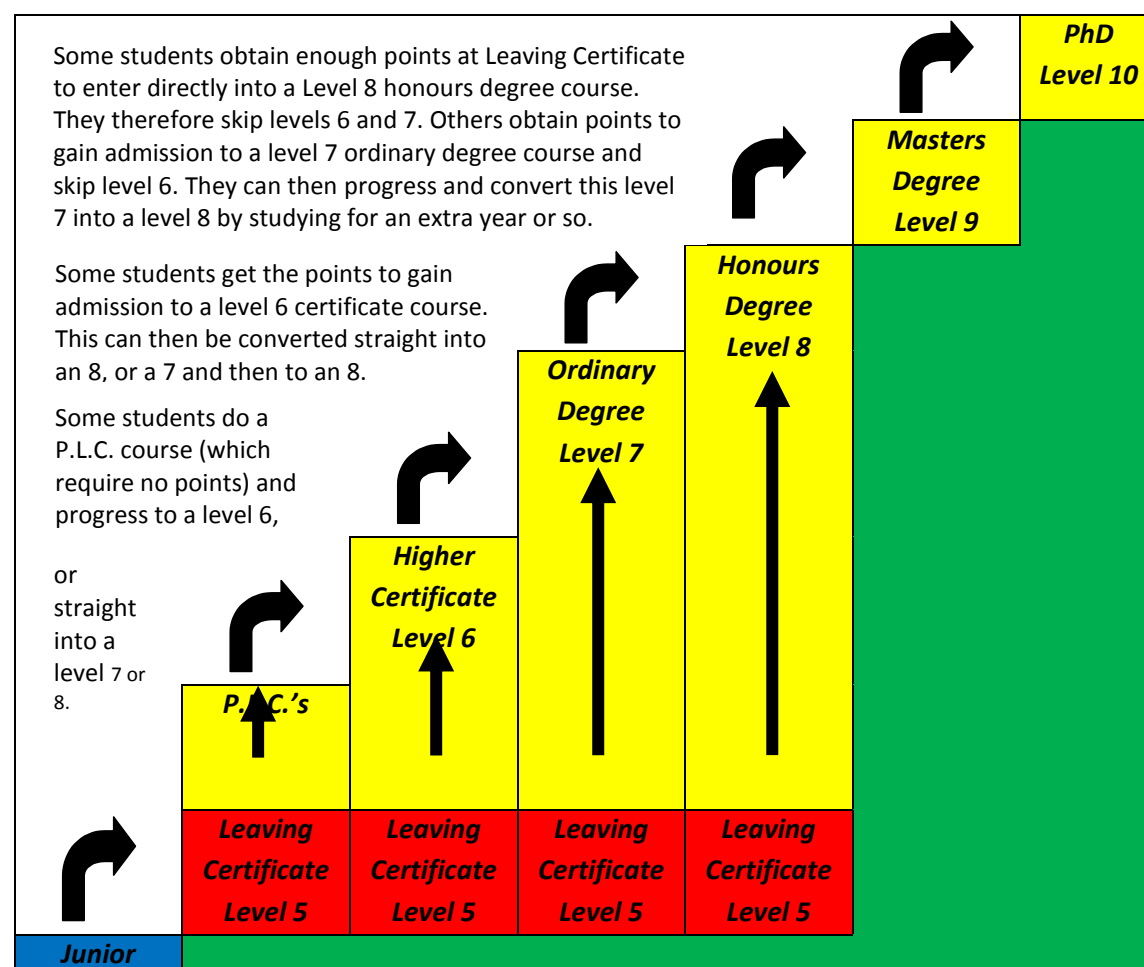
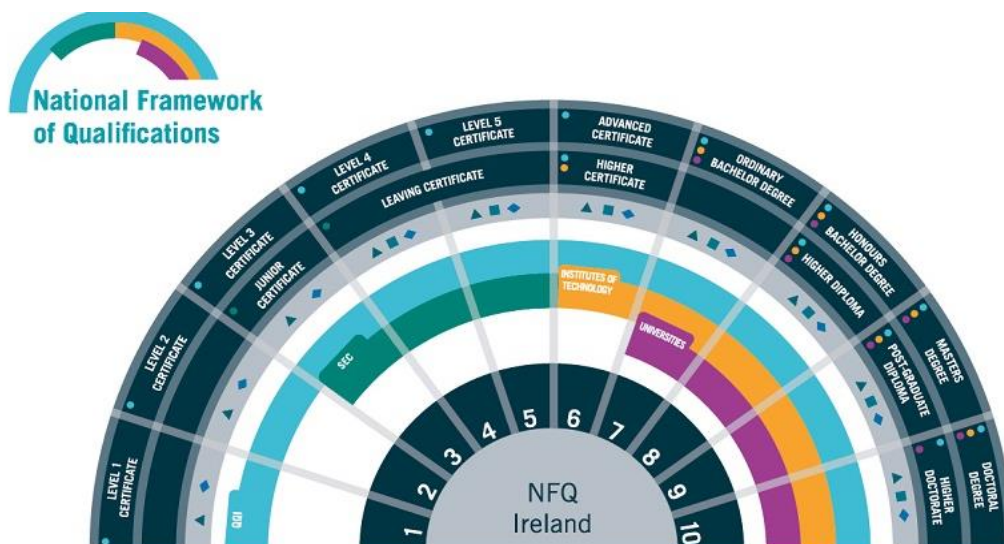
***What will I study and what skills will I have to use in 3<sup>rd</sup> year?***

***Be motivated by the content of the course and the skills used to study the content.***

***Remember, students study MODULES (the content) to gain 60 CREDITS every year.***

## 8. National Framework Of Qualification (N.F.Q.)

The National Framework of Qualifications works from levels 1 to 10. If a student has completed the Junior Certificate they are deemed to have reached level 3. If a student completes the Leaving Certificate they are deemed to have reached level 5. Level 6 is a Higher Certificate (normally 2 years), level 7 is an Ordinary Degree, and level 8 is an Honours Degree (normally 3 /4 years). Level 9 is a Masters and level 10 is a PhD. More details on [nqf.ie](http://nqf.ie).



## 9. The Points System

Percentage	Honours Level Grade	Honours Level Points	Ordinary Level Grade	Ordinary Level Points
90% - 100%	H1	100	O1	56
80% - 89%	H2	88	O2	46
70% - 79%	H3	77	O3	37
60% - 69%	H4	66	O4	28
50% - 59%	H5	56	O5	20
40% - 49%	H6	46	O6	12
30% - 39%	H7	37	O7	0
0% - 29%	H8	0	O8	0
L.C.V.P.	Points			
Distinction	66			
Merit	46			
Pass	26		No points for L.C.A.	

### Honours Maths

- All students achieving a H6 or higher will have 25 points added to their total score for honours Maths. The Maths grade itself does not change. There are no bonus points for Ordinary level Maths.
- This is a standard 25 points regardless of the grade achieved.  
The same points are awarded for an H1 as a H6.
- There are no bonus points for a H7 in Honours Maths.
- If Maths is not included in the top six subjects counted, the bonus points are not included.

Example 1				Example 2			
Subject	Level	Grade	Points	Subject	Level	Grade	Points
Irish	Honours	H4	<b>66</b>	Irish	Honours	H3	<b>77</b>
English	Ordinary	O1	<b>56</b>	English	Honours	H2	<b>88</b>
Mathematics	Honours	H5	56+25= <b>81</b>	Mathematics	Honours	H6	46+25=71
French	Honours	H3	<b>77</b>	French	Honours	H2	<b>88</b>
Biology	Honours	H4	<b>66</b>	Biology	Honours	H1	<b>100</b>
Geography	Ordinary	O2	46	Geography	Honours	H1	<b>100</b>
History	Honours	H3	<b>77</b>	History	Honours	H3	<b>77</b>
<b>Top 6 in bold</b>			<b>= 423</b>	<b>Top 6 in bold</b>			<b>= 530</b>
Maths included				Maths NOT included			

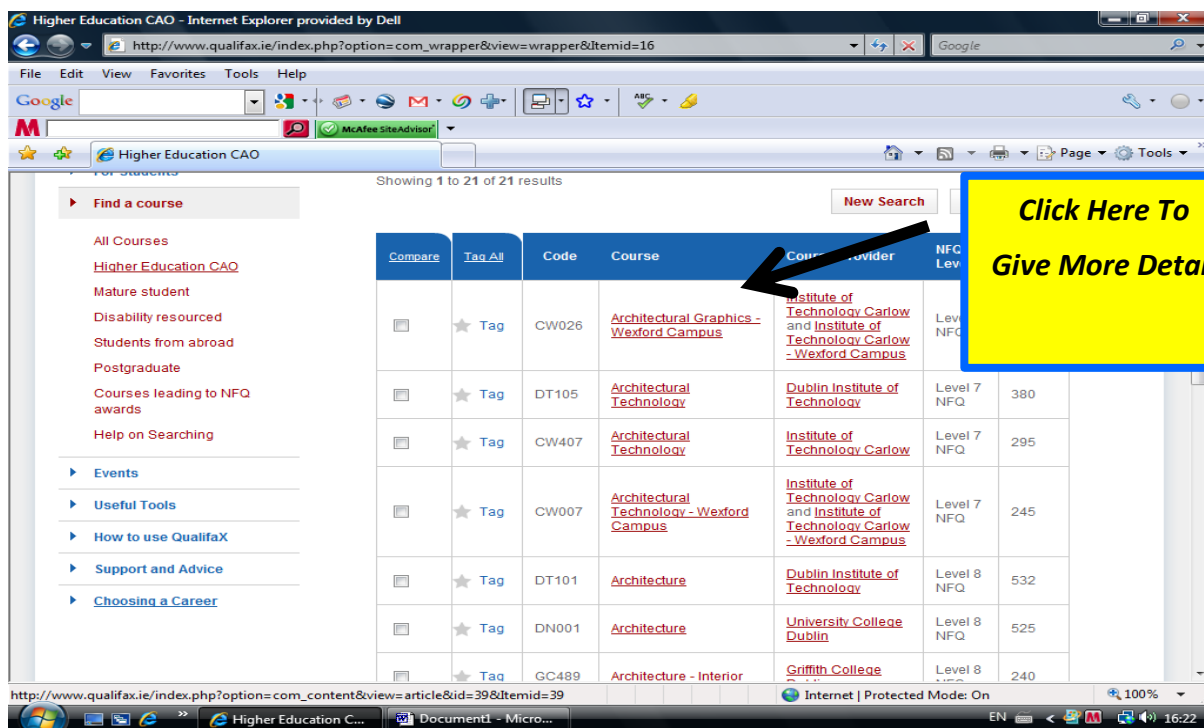
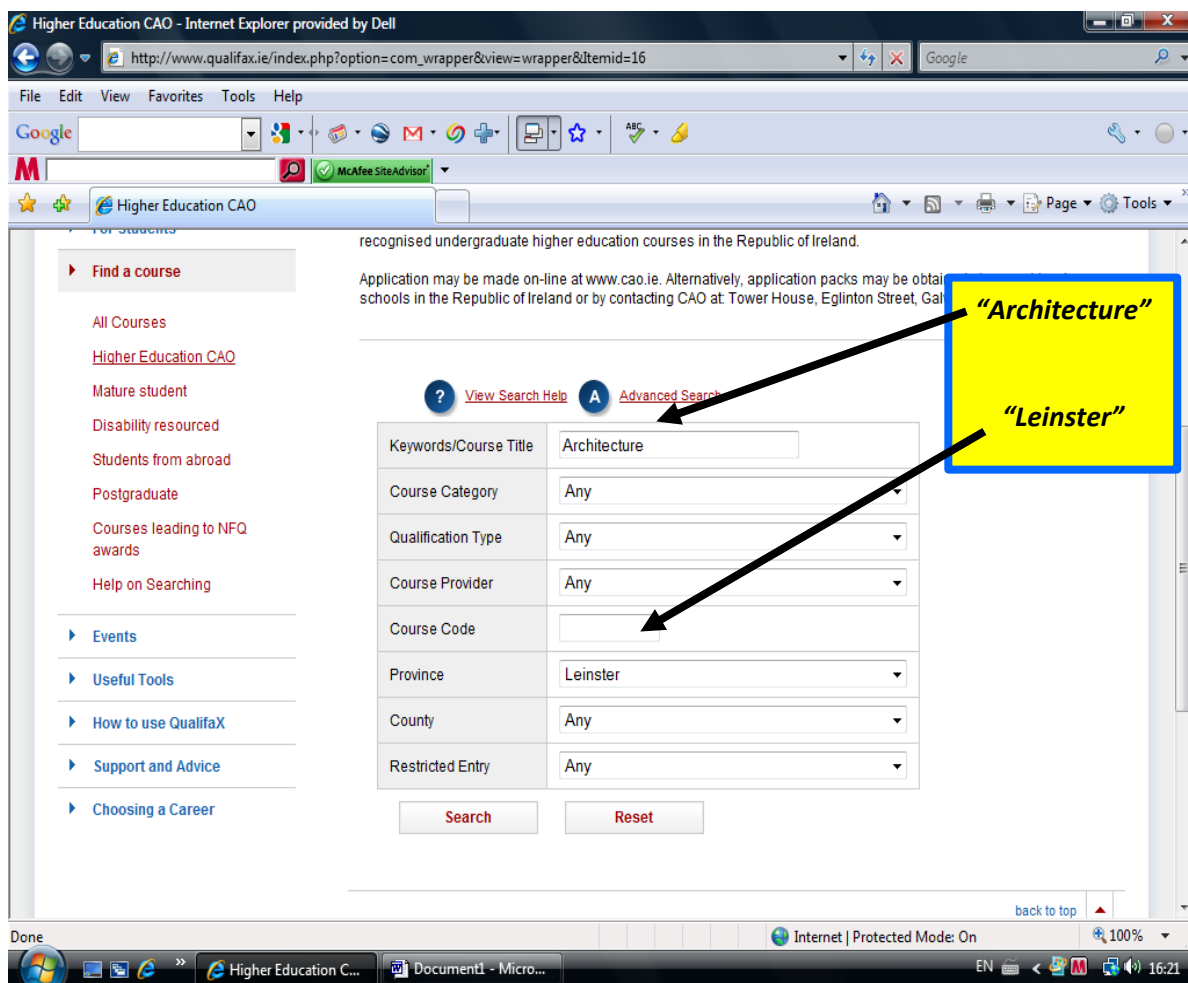
- When counting the Leaving Cert. point for medicine, points above 550 are adjusted to a maximum of 565 points. Therefore, for every 5 points above 550 add 1 point.

## 10. Qualifax

This is the national database for all courses in the county.

Here are some examples of how this website can be used .







Higher Education CAO - Internet Explorer provided by Dell

http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=16

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Google

Higher Education CAO

For Students

Find a course

All Courses

Higher Education CAO

Mature

Disability

Students from abroad

Postgraduate

Courses leading to NQF awards

Help on Searching

Events

Useful Tools

How to use Qualifax

Support and Advice

Choosing a Career

recognised undergraduate higher education courses in the Republic of Ireland.

Application may be made on-line at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie). Alternatively, application packs may be obtained at second-level schools in the Republic of Ireland or by contacting CAO at: Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway, Ireland.

View Search Help Advanced Search

Keywords/Course Title

Course Category

Qualification Type

Course Provider

Course Code

Province

County

Restricted Entry

Search

Reset

back to top

Done

Internet | Protected Mode: On

100%

16:21

**Narrow search to Leinster**

**Can be used to find courses in a particular college**

**Can be used to find course with restricted entry**

**Narrow search to Dublin**

All Courses - Internet Explorer provided by Dell

http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=15

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Google

All Courses

For Students

Find a course

All Courses

Higher Education CAO

Mature student

Disability resourced

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Postgraduate

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Choosing a Career

Any

Adult Literacy

BTEI Part Time

Faite Ireland Tourism and Hospitality

FAS

Higher Education CAO

Higher Education Direct Entry

Lifelong Learning

Music

National Learning Network

Northern Ireland

Open University

Palliative Care and End of Life

PLC Post Leaving Cert

Postgraduate

Short Courses

Teagasc

Traveller Education

UCAS

VTOS

Youthreach

View Search Help

Keywords/Course Title

Course Type

Qualification Type

Institution Type

Course Provider

Restricted Entry

Points

Course Code

Career Area (alphabetical)

Search

Reset

back to top

Internet | Protected Mode: On

100%

16:27

**Using ALL COURSES**

**PLC Courses**

**Postgraduate Courses**

**UCAS U.K. Entry**

Higher Education CAO - Internet Explorer provided by Dell

http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=16

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Google

Higher Education CAO

Higher Education CAO

Mature student

Disability resourced

**Restricted Search Leinster**

**Courses that need more than points**

Compare	Tag All	Code	Course	Course Provider	NFQ Level	Points
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	DL041	<a href="#">Animation</a>	<a href="#">Dun Laoghaire Inst of Art Design &amp; Technology</a>	Level 8 NFQ	635
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	DT101	<a href="#">Architecture</a>	<a href="#">Dublin Institute of Technology</a>	Level 8 NFQ	532
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	AD111	<a href="#">Art &amp; Design - Core</a>	<a href="#">National College of Art &amp; Design</a>	Level 8 NFQ	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	DC212	<a href="#">Composition at the Royal Irish Academy of Music</a>	<a href="#">Dublin City University</a>	Level 8 NFQ	335
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	TR802	<a href="#">Dental Hygiene</a>	<a href="#">Trinity College Dublin</a>	Level 7 NFQ	425
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	TR803	<a href="#">Dental Technology</a>	<a href="#">Trinity College Dublin</a>	Level 7 NFQ	320
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	DT544	<a href="#">Design - Interior &amp; Furniture</a>	<a href="#">Dublin Institute of Technology</a>	Level 8 NFQ	500
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	DT545	<a href="#">Design - Visual Communication</a>	<a href="#">Dublin Institute of Technology</a>	Level 8 NFQ	690
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	DT515	<a href="#">Design Display</a>	<a href="#">Dublin Institute of Technology</a>	Level 6 NFQ	350
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	DT529	<a href="#">Drama - Performance</a>	<a href="#">Dublin Institute of Technology</a>	Level 7 NFQ	355

http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=20

Internet | Protected Mode: On

100%

16:32

All Courses - Internet Explorer provided by Dell

http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=15

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Google

All Courses

Find a course

All Courses

Higher Education CAO

Mature student

Disability resourced

Students from abroad

Postgraduate

Courses leading to NFQ awards

Help on Searching

Events

Number of Courses Tagged : 6

**Courses can be TAGGED (saved)**

Compare	UnTag All	Code	Course	Course Provider	Points
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Untag	A1	<a href="#">Art Portfolio Preparation</a>	<a href="#">College of Further Education</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Untag	Various	<a href="#">Portfolio Preparation</a>	<a href="#">Dun Laoghaire Inst of Art Design &amp; Technology</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Untag	MA4 MA5 FA32 FA33 SA41	<a href="#">Portfolio Preparation</a>	<a href="#">Dun Laoghaire Inst of Art Design &amp; Technology</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Untag	SA46 SA48 SA49	<a href="#">Portfolio Preparation</a>	<a href="#">Dun Laoghaire Inst of Art Design &amp; Technology</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Untag	PR701A PR701B	<a href="#">Portfolio Preparation</a>	<a href="#">National College of Art &amp; Design</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Untag	SA42	<a href="#">Portfolio Preparation - Animation</a>	<a href="#">Dun Laoghaire Inst of Art Design &amp; Technology</a>	

**Portfolio courses. Evening & holiday time. Found under ALL COURSES**

Internet | Protected Mode: On

100%

16:40



All Courses - Internet Explorer provided by Dell

http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=15

Secure Search

McAfee

All Courses

1 2

New Search Refine Search

Career Events

Choosing a Career

Course Finder

All Courses

Courses leading to NFQ

Courses outside Ireland

Disability resourced

Higher Education CAO

Mature student

P6C Post Leaving Cert

Postgraduate

Students from abroad

LEARN and HEAR

Frequently Asked Questions

How to use QualifaX

Support and Advice

Useful Tools

Compare	Tag All	Code	Course	Course Provider	NFQ Level	Points
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	44962	<a href="#">Cooking - Indian - Practical</a>	<a href="#">Newpark Adult &amp; Continuing Education Centre</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	16332	<a href="#">Cooking - Italian</a>	<a href="#">Palmerstown Community School</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	6745	<a href="#">Cooking - Joy of</a>	<a href="#">Hartstown Community School</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	11	<a href="#">Cooking - Joys</a>	<a href="#">Holy Family Community School</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	32097	<a href="#">Cooking - Oriental</a>	<a href="#">Colaiste Ide College of Further Education</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	13	<a href="#">Cooking for all - You Cook</a>	<a href="#">Marino College of Further Education</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tag	21092	<a href="#">Cooking for Beginners</a>	<a href="#">Riversdale Community College</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	5603	<a href="#">Cooking for Special Occasions</a>	<a href="#">Cabinteely Community School</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	43330	<a href="#">Cooking on a Shipboard</a>	<a href="#">Castleknock Community College</a>		

Internet | Protected Mode: On

100%

14:04

**Use ALL COURSES to find Gaisce courses e.g. Portfolio, cookery, creative writing.**

**Narrow search to "Dublin" & "Evening Attendance"**

All Courses - Internet Explorer provided by Dell

http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=15

Secure Search

McAfee

All Courses

Compare	Tag All	Code	Course	Course Provider	NFQ Level	Points
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	W3	<a href="#">Creative Card Making</a>	<a href="#">Donahies Community School</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	611	<a href="#">Creative Digital Imaging</a>	<a href="#">Institute of Technology Blanchardstown</a>	Level 6 NFQ	
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	D603	<a href="#">Creative Embroidery - Introduction</a>	<a href="#">National College of Art &amp; Design</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	102	<a href="#">Creative Textiles</a>	<a href="#">Portmarnock Community School</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	BN747	<a href="#">Creative Website Design</a>	<a href="#">Institute of Technology Blanchardstown</a>	Level 6 NFQ	
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	8873	<a href="#">Creative Writing</a>	<a href="#">Ballsbridge College of Further Education</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	13866	<a href="#">Creative Writing</a>	<a href="#">Coolmine Community School</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	CW11 CWJ2	<a href="#">Creative Writing</a>	<a href="#">Crumlin College of Further Education</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	M8	<a href="#">Creative Writing</a>	<a href="#">Donahies Community School</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	WA24	<a href="#">Creative Writing</a>	<a href="#">Dun Laoghaire Inst of Art Design &amp; Technology</a>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag		<a href="#">Creative Writing</a>	<a href="#">Dun Laoghaire Inst</a>	Level 8	

## 11. Minimum Subject Requirements

### 11.1 Minimum Subject Requirements

To gain admission to college the points requirement is the second hurdle that needs to be cross. The first is want is called minimum requirements. Generally, as most students will do Irish, English, Mathematics, and a third language this will cover the minimum entry requirements for most, but not all courses. However, there are different rules for different colleges and courses. T.C.D. only requires English, Maths, and Irish or a third language. Most of the I.T's require Irish or English, and Maths. Some UCD, U.C.C & U.C.G. courses do not require a language and some do not require Maths. In addition, some courses have additional requirements.

For example, all level 8 engineering courses require a H4 in honours Maths. A H4 in Honours Irish is a requirement for primary teaching. A H5 in Chemistry is a requirement for Veterinary in U.C.D., Human Nutrition & Dietetics in D.I.T., Pharmacy in T.C.D., Medicine and Dentistry in U.C.C. Physics is a requirement for Theoretical Physics in T.C.D. One laboratory science (Chemistry/Biology/Physics) is required for many science courses. Two science subjects are required for Physiotherapy and Human Genetics in T.C.D. Commerce in U.C.D. requires an O2 or H6 in Maths. Two science subjects are required for Physiotherapy and Human Genetics in T.C.D. Most U.C.D. courses require 2H5 and 406/H7 while most T.C.D. courses require 3H5 and 306/H7.

Other courses require a portfolio and/or aptitude test and/or an interview. In addition, the Defence Forces require a 3H5 in three honours subjects and three 306 in ordinary level subjects. These must include Maths, Irish, English, and a third language. An Garda Síochána also has specific subjects requirements.

These examples illustrate how complicated this process is, therefore it is vital to check the complete list in the ***Directory Of Leaving Certificate Entry Requirements*** published by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors. The third level institutes adhere to a two-year rule as regards essential subjects and grades, so there is no possibility that any new requirements will be added once a student has started the two-year leaving cycle.

## 12. C.A.O. – How It Works

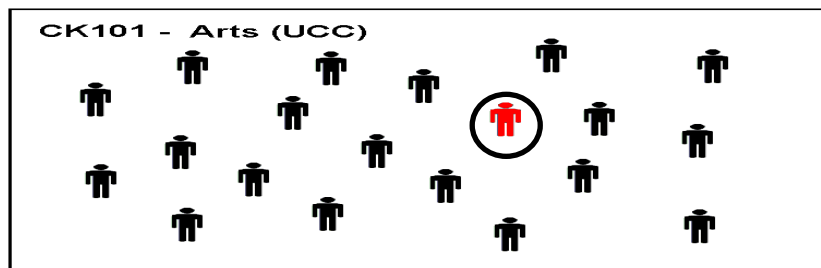
The C.A.O. (Central Applications Office) administers admissions into third level institutes throughout the country. Here is a mock-up of a C.A.O. application form. Applicants can choose up to ten level 8 Honours Degree courses and ten level 7 Ordinary degrees and/or ten level 6 Higher Certificate courses, or a mixture of 6 & 7.

Honours Degree: Level 8					Pass Degree/Certificate: Level 7/6 (Mixed)				
	Title	College	Points	Code		Title	College	Points	Code
1.					1.				
2.					2.				
3.					3.				
4.					4.				
5.					5.				
6.					6.				
7.					7.				
8.					8.				
9.					9.				
10.					10.				

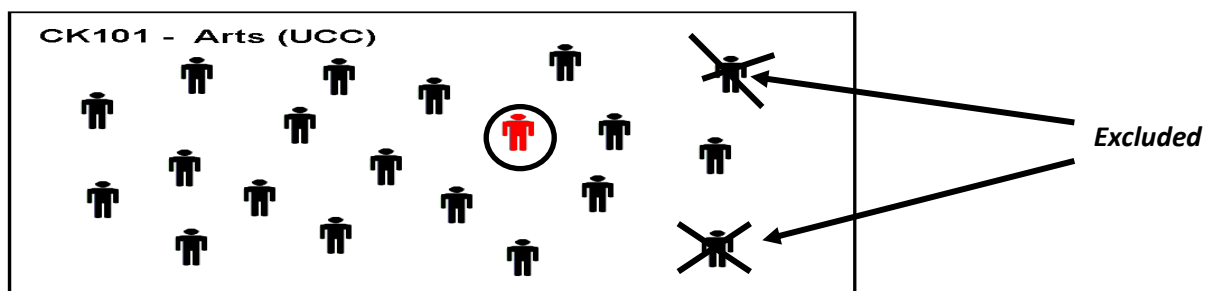
*Courses should always be placed in order of preference regardless of the points required.*

Here is an explanation as to how the system operates. This candidate (circled) has applied for Arts in U.C.C. as their first preference. The candidate is then grouped with all other students who have applied for this course. They are in no particular order until the Leaving Certificate results of these students are published.

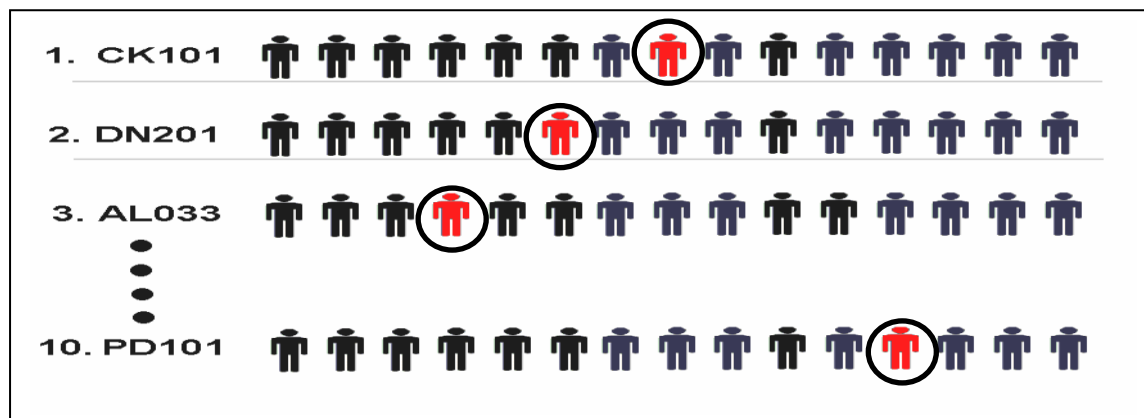
### Round One



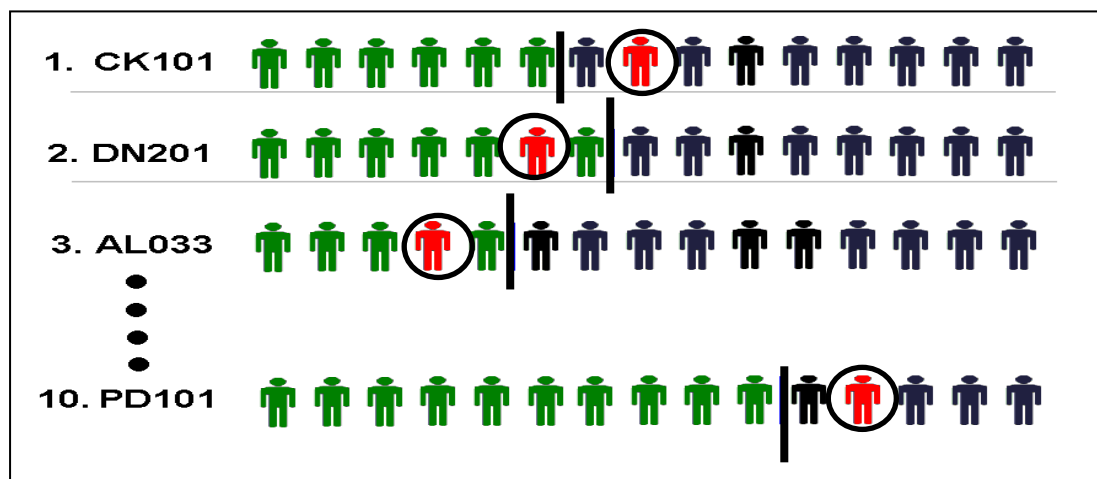
Once the results are published, the students' results are scanned to see who has all the minimum requirements. For example, one student failed English and another failed Irish. These students are now excluded from the rest of the process.



Those students who have all the minimum requirements and who applied for Arts in U.C.C. (CK 101) are then ranked in order of points obtained. The student who obtained the highest number of points is placed at the top of the queue and the student who obtained the second highest number of points is placed second in the queue, and so on. This process is carried out for all the candidates' choices. The position in the queue for each of their courses is indicated above.



The colleges where each course takes place is then asked how many students will be taken into each course. This is then deemed to be the cut-off point as indicated below. For example, in U.C.C. Arts there are 6 places for 15 students in the queue. The points obtained by the 6<sup>th</sup> student in the queue are then the points published. **These are the points that are deemed to be the cut-off point and this is where the points that are published originate.** Our candidate is 8<sup>th</sup> in the queue and will not gain admission. For the 2<sup>nd</sup>, the college (DN 201), have indicated they will take the 7<sup>th</sup> student and above. Our candidate is 6<sup>th</sup> in the queue. For the 3<sup>rd</sup>, the college has indicated they will take the 5<sup>th</sup> student and above. Our candidate is 4<sup>th</sup> in the queue. This process is carried out for all of the courses applied for.



The computer will then scan and select the highest preference course the candidate is eligible for. In this case, it is the second choice, DN 201. Even though the candidate is eligible for the third choice, they will not be offered a place as they have indicated that they would prefer DN 201 above AL 033 by placing DN201 above AL 033 on their application. Indeed, all preferences from 3<sup>rd</sup> down are now wiped from the system. These courses from 3<sup>rd</sup> choice down will never be considered again. The student will now receive an offer of a place on DN 201 in round one. If eligible, they will receive two separate offers, one Level 8 (Honours Degree) and one level 7/6 (ordinary degree/certificate). Both offers are independent of each other but they can only accept one. If they receive, for example, their 3<sup>rd</sup> preference on level 8 in round one, all preferences below this will be deleted from the system and you will never be offered any course from 4<sup>th</sup> preference down. If they accept this offer they can still be offered their 2<sup>nd</sup> /1<sup>st</sup> preference/s in round two – if the points drop and they become eligible. If they do not accept this 3<sup>rd</sup> preference offer, they can still be offered their 2<sup>nd</sup> /1<sup>st</sup> preference/s in round two – if the points drop and they become eligible. However, if the points do not drop they cannot change their mind and ask for the original round one offer. They will be left with no offer. The same system operates independently for levels 7/6.

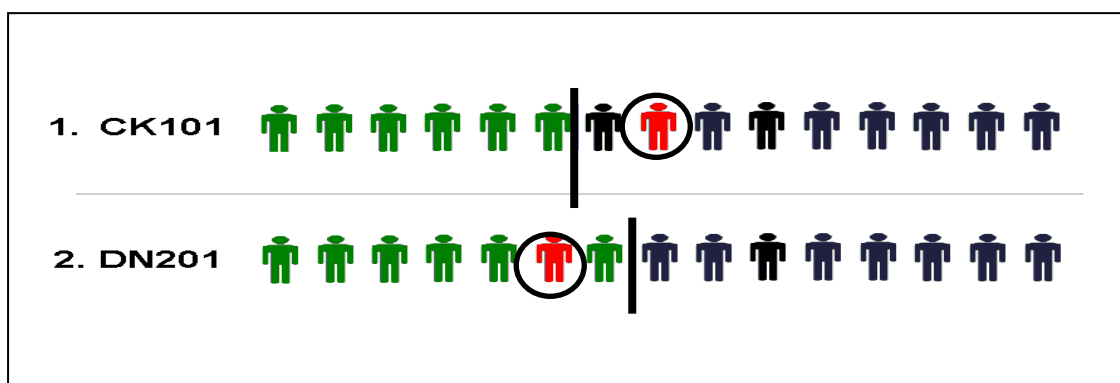
Accepting an offer on level 8 in round one does not preclude you receiving a higher preference offer on level 7/6 in round two. Similarly, accepting an offer on level 7/6 in round one does not preclude receiving a higher preference offer on level 8 in round two.

For example, if a student is offered course C on level 8 and course Y on level 7/6, they will never be offered courses D,E,F,G, nor, courses Z,P,Q,R,S. in future rounds. If they accept course C they can still be offered one of A or B or X in the second round. If they accept course Y they can still be offered course A or B or X in the second round.

Level 8		Level 7/6	
1	A	1	X
2	B	2	<b>Y - Offered</b>
3	<b>C - Offered</b>	3	Z - Deleted
4	D - Deleted	4	P - Deleted
5	E - Deleted	5	Q - Deleted
6	F - Deleted	6	R - Deleted
7	G - Deleted	7	S - Deleted

## Round Two

The student's first preference was course CK101 and they did not achieve enough points. This candidate is two positions from being offered a place. Six students were offered a place on CK 101 in round one. If two of the students in the queue for CK 101 do not accept their first round offer, two places will become available. These two places will then be offered on Round 2 and our candidate will be offered a place. Therefore, in round one our student was offered DN 201 and in round two, roughly a week later, was offered CK 101. Our candidate can now decide to hold onto his first round offer and decline the second round offered, or can accept the second round offer and discard the first round offer. It is worth repeating, that accepting an offer on round one from level 8, does not prevent a higher round 2 offer from either level 8 or indeed level 7/6. Similarly, accepting a round one offer on level 7/6 does not prevent a higher round two offer from level 7/6 or indeed level 8. No candidate will ever be offered a course below the course offered in round one.



## **Restricted Courses**

When checking the details of courses it should be noted that some courses are referred to as *restricted*. This means that to enter these courses the student is required to submit a portfolio and/or sit an aptitude test and/or attend an interview. These additional requirements also explain why some courses require more than 600 points. For example, Animation in the Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design, and Technology requires 699 points. This consists of points from the Leaving Certificate, a portfolio, and possibly an interview. In D.I.T. Architecture requires 590 points; 100 can be obtained from an aptitude test, 100 from an interview (at which it is recommended that portfolio is shown) and the remainder from the Leaving Certificate. Interviews, portfolio assessment, and aptitude testing are normally carried out during Easter time. As a result, some restricted courses cannot be added to an application after the 1<sup>st</sup> February. Even during the change of mind period (first week in May to 1<sup>st</sup> July) it is not possible to add most restricted courses to an application.

## **Change Of Mind System**

From the first week in May to 1<sup>st</sup> July the C.A.O system opens up to allow changes to the original application free of charge. Please note that during this time,

- (i) Some restricted course cannot be added.
- (ii) Other courses can be added.
- (iii) Courses can be deleted.
- (iv) The order of courses can be changed.
- (v) The above applies to the level 8 section and the level 7/6 section independently.
- (vi) Candidates should delete restricted courses if they have not passed or submitted a portfolio, or not passed or attended an interview or aptitude test.
- (vii) Candidates should consult the CAO website for *courses changes*. Since originally filling out an application in February, some courses will have been cancelled, some new courses may have become available, others may have changed their title. These changes can be found on [cao.ie](http://cao.ie).
- (viii) When sitting the Leaving Certificate, some candidates may have taken an ordinary level paper instead of the intended higher level. In this case, if a course requires, for example, honours Maths, is on an application, this course should be deleted.
- (ix) Do not leave the level 7/6 list blank. If there are no level 7/6 available in a student's area of interest, a safety net should be built into the level 8 selections.
- (x) Candidates should never change the order of preference based on second-guessing what results they might achieve.

## **13. D.A.R.E & H.E.A.R.**

### **D.A.R.E.**

- The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is a supplementary admissions scheme for school leavers with disabilities which operates on a reduced points basis.
- The C.A.O. application system is open from the first week in November.
- It is recommended that you register on line in early November.
- This will generate a C.A.O. application number.
- When you tick the disability/learning difficult box a series of application forms must be completed.
- The first part, Section A, needs to be completed by the student/school.
- The second part, Section B, needs to be completed by the school.
- The third part, Section C, needs to be completed by a medical professional/educational psychologist.
- Supporting documentation will need to be provided.
- All parts need the C.A.O. number. Therefore it is recommended that this process should be started in early November.
- It is also important to start this process in early November to give time for all mentioned above to complete the relevant sections and to source the relevant supporting documentation.
- Copies of all forms should be made and kept safely.
- Blank copies of the forms can be obtained on [cao.ie](http://cao.ie). Click on “Downloads” and go to the “Supplemental Information Form” section.
- It is possible to start an application and generate an application number without inserting or selecting any courses. These can be selected and inserted later (before 1<sup>st</sup> February).
- Section A needs to be completed by 1<sup>st</sup> March.
- Section B & C need to be completed and sent to the C.A.O. by 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- More information can be found on [accesscollege.ie](http://accesscollege.ie) and check DARE scheme.

### **H.E.A.R.**

The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a third level admissions scheme for school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. All documentation is completed by parent/s, and the school does not have to fill in any section. Full details on [accesscollege.ie](http://accesscollege.ie).



## 14. Irish & Language Exemption

### NUI Exemptions

The National University of Ireland is an umbrella organisation for the following third level colleges.

University College, Dublin

University College, Cork

National University of Ireland, Galway

Maynooth University

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

National College of Art & Design

Shannon College of Hotel Management

Milltown Institute, Dublin

Institute of Public Administration

The colleges have some courses that require Irish and a third language as a minimum requirement. If a student has an exemption from studying Irish at secondary school, an application needs to be set to the NUI for the exemption from Irish and the third language to be carried over college course. Details can be found on [nui.ie](http://nui.ie).

### Non - N.U.I. College Exemptions

If a candidate has an Irish and is applying for a course or courses in a non-NUI college where Irish is an essential requirement, an application for that exemption needs to be made to each college. Contact each college for their individual application process.

## 15. Post Leaving Certificate Courses – P.L.C.

Further Education institutes through the city and county of Dublin provide post Leaving Certificate courses. These courses prepare candidates for employment or entry to Higher Education.

These courses do not operate a points system and most courses require passes in five Leaving Certificate subjects. In addition, an interview may also take place along with a portfolio submission in the case of some Art & Design courses. The official closing date is normally late February or March, however, a large number of courses will accept applications in September after the Leaving Certificate results are published. There are however, some very popular courses that fill all their places in February/March, for example, art, media, and music courses in Ballyfermot College of Further Education.

Students undertake these courses

- (i) For their educational value,
- (ii) To enhance employment opportunities,
- (iii) Gain entry to their original first choice in college for which they did not obtain the necessary points (back door entry)
- (iv) To gain entry to colleges in the U.K. which will accept the P.L.C. course in addition to, or instead of, their Leaving Certificate results.

When searching for a suitable course, it might be useful to *work backwards*, i.e. check if the degree course you really want accepts applications from P.L.C. courses. Then check what P.L.C. courses they will accept, and then find where that P.L.C. course is run. For example, D.I.T. hold 3 places on their Forensics & Environmental Science course for those who have completed an Applied Science/Lab Technicians P.L.C. course. They also hold 7 places on their Business & Marketing course for candidates who have completed one of four different types of P.L.C. courses. U.C.D. hold 20 places on their General Science degree, 25 on their Arts degree, 7 on their Nursing degrees, and 3 on their Commerce degree for those candidates who have completed and reached a certain standard in certain P.L.C. course. The I.T. in Tallaght hold off 10% of places on most of their courses for P.L.C. graduates.

## P.L.C. Colleges In Dublin (etb.ie)

- College of Further Education, Dundrum
- Collinstown Park Community College, Clondalkin
- Deansrath Community College, Clondalkin
- Dundrum College
- Grange Community College, Donaghmede
- Greenhills College, Walkinstown
- Stillorgan College of Further Education
- Ballsbridge College of Further Education
- Kilmore College, Ballyfermot
- Ballyfermot College of Further Education
- Colaiste Enna, Cabra
- Larkin College (off O'Connell Street)
- Colaiste Dhulaigh, Coolock
- St. Kevins' College, Crumlin
- Crumlin College of Further Education
- Pearse College of Further Education
- Colaiste Eoin, Finglas
- Colaiste Ide, Finglas
- Inchicore College of Further Education
- Killester College of Further Education
- Liberties College
- Marino College, Fairview
- Rathmines College of Further Education
- Ringsend Technical College
- Presentation College, Terenure
- Margaret Aylward Comm. College, Whitehall
- Plunket College, Whitehall
- Whitehall College of Further Education

Below, is an example of how to search for the correct P.L.C. course.

This example shows how to search for the correct P.L.C. that can gain you entry into Media Studies in N.I.U.M. (MH109).

The image shows a sequence of two screenshots from the Central Applications Office (CAO) website. The first screenshot is the homepage, and the second is the 'Student Resources' page. A yellow box on the left contains instructions: 'Click on Student Resources', 'Click on FETAC Information', and 'Then FETAC Requirements'. Arrows point from these instructions to the corresponding links on the website. The first arrow points from 'Click on Student Resources' to the 'Student Resources' link in the left sidebar of the homepage. The second arrow points from 'Click on FETAC Information' to the 'FETAC Information' link in the right sidebar of the 'Student Resources' page. The third arrow points from 'Then FETAC Requirements' to the 'FETAC Information' link in the right sidebar of the 'Student Resources' page.

**cao.ie**

**Click on**

**Student Resources**

**Click on**

**FETAC Information**

**Then FETAC Requirements**

**Central Applications Office**

Search Site...

HEI contact details  
Downloads  
Important Dates  
Student Resources  
Access Routes  
DARE / HEAR  
Restrictions  
Mature Applicants  
About Change of Mind  
Information for Parents

Visit the CAO Applicant News page for regular updates.

**Student Resources**

All applicants must carefully read the CAO Handbook and take note of the important deadlines and any restrictions that may apply. Applicants must treat all correspondence from CAO as extremely important and notify CAO immediately through this website if there are any errors or omission recorded in application documents.

CAO Applicant News  
CAO Video Guides  
CAO Handbook  
Online Applicant Checklist  
Paper Applicant Checklist

**FETAC Information**

Alert Lists  
Applicant Scoring  
Points by Year  
Entry to Medicine

**Key in**

**'MH109'**

2011 FETAC Requirements Look-up (CAO Courses only)

FETAC (NCVA) awards are made up of a number of modules. Different sets of modules lead to different awards.

The applicant must be getting a **FULL** award. Certain courses require a specific award and/or a specific grade in specific modules.

For information on the evaluation of FETAC qualifications, click [here](#).

Enter a CAO course code and click on **Go**:

**CAO course code :**

**Each of these codes represents a different P.L.C. course**

**EMPXX  
ERPXX  
ETFPX  
EPJXX**

Course	Course Title	Level	Essential FETAC awards	Essential FETAC Modules	Notes (Info)
MH109	Media Studies	8	EMPXX ERPXX ETFPX EPJXX	5 modules at distinction level. The qualification must include a distinction in E20008	GP8/MAN/ONE/-

**Specific Module Requirement**

**It is now necessary to find which P.L.C. colleges offer these courses. The example below searches for EMPXX. The same search can be carried out for the other codes/courses.**

**qualifax.ie**

**Student**

**Course Finder**

**PLC**

**Code EMPXXC**

**Can be narrowed to a county e.g. Dublin**

**List of all the  
EMPXX courses  
in Dublin and  
which colleges  
offer the  
relevant**

PLC Post Leaving Cert - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=194

Showing 1 to 12 of 12 results for  
Course Code: EMPXX, County: Dublin, Course Type: PLC Post Leaving Cert

New Search Refine Search

Compare	Tag All	Code	Course	Course Provider	NFQ Level	NFQ Classification
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	EMPXX	Audio Visual Media Production	Dun Laoghaire College of Further Education	Level 5 NFQ	Major
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	EMPXX	Cinematography	Ballyfermot College of Further Education	Level 5 NFQ	Major
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	EMPXX	Commercial Photography	Killester College of Further Education	Level 5 NFQ	Major
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	EMPXX	Communication - Media Production	Colaiste Dhulaigh College of Further Education	Level 5 NFQ	Major
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	EMPXX	Creative Writing & Cultural Studies	Inchicore CFE	Level 5 NFQ	Major
<input type="checkbox"/>	★ Tag	EMPXX	English EFL- & Media Studies	Ballsbridge College of Further Education	Level 5 NFQ	Major

Internet | Protected Mode: On

19:25 15/09/2011

## **Caution**

The type of courses that have the EMPXX code can vary in what subject material they cover. For example, EMPXX can range from 'Photography' to 'Print Journalism & Radio'.

Be sure to pick the subject material you find the most interesting.

Check that the P.L.C. course has the necessary module/s using the web site of the particular P.L.C. college.

## Check List

- ✓ Find the C.A.O. code for the 3<sup>rd</sup> level college course you wish to enter.
- ✓ Search cao.ie to find the necessary P.L.C. code/s and any necessary modules.
- ✓ Search qualifax.ie using the P.L.C. code/s.
- ✓ Find what P.L.C. colleges offer the necessary P.L.C. course/code.
- ✓ Don't just pick a P.L.C. course because it has the correct code, select a course with the correct code that also covers the subject material you find most interesting.  
Note also, some P.L.C. colleges offer course that allow entry into 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a third level degree course.
- ✓ Check the web site of the particular P.L.C. college to ensure the course also has the necessary module/s.
- ✓ Apply in February using the P.L.C. college web site.
- ✓ Check the P.L.C. college web site for any additional entry requirements, e.g. portfolio.
- ✓ It might be necessary to apply for more than one P.L.C. course.
- ✓ Note: Completing a P.L.C. course does not guarantee entry into your desired 3<sup>rd</sup> level college course. You will need to obtain a certain standard in your assessments and exams.



## **16. Teagasc**

Teagasc is the Agriculture and Food Authority that provides training in the agricultural and foods services. As well as providing course within the C.A.O. system, they also provide course outside this system that do not require points. Please check their website for further details, [teagasc.ie](http://teagasc.ie)

## **17. Irish Fisheries Board**

Irish Sea Fisheries Board is the state agencies with the responsibility for developing the Irish Sea Fishing and Aquaculture industries. They provide training and course outside the C.A.O points system. Please check their website for further details, [bim.ie](http://bim.ie)

## **18. Private Colleges**

Although some of the private colleges operate within the C.A.O. system, they may also accept applications even if a candidate did not include their college/course on the original C.A.O application. In addition there are many other private colleges that operate outside the C.A.O. system.

Here is a list of some of the private colleges listed in the CAO handbook.

- Griffith College, Cork [www.gcc.ie](http://www.gcc.ie)
- American College, Dublin [www.amcd.ie](http://www.amcd.ie)
- College of Computer Training, Dublin [www.cct.ie](http://www.cct.ie)
- Dublin Business School [www.dbs.ie](http://www.dbs.ie)
- Grafton College, Dublin [www.graftoncollege.ie](http://www.graftoncollege.ie)
- Griffith College, Dublin [www.gcd.ie](http://www.gcd.ie)
- Independent College, Dublin [www.independentcollege.ie](http://www.independentcollege.ie)
- IBAT College, Dublin [www.ibat.ie](http://www.ibat.ie)
- ICD Business College, Dublin [www.icd.ie](http://www.icd.ie)
- Portobello Institute, Dublin [www.portobelloinstitute.ie](http://www.portobelloinstitute.ie)
- Irish College of Humanities & Applied Sciences, Limerick [www.ichas.ie](http://www.ichas.ie)
- Griffith College, Limerick [www.gcl.ie](http://www.gcl.ie)

All these colleges charge full fees and are not subsidised by the state. Please check their website for further details.



## 19. Non-College Options

### 19.1 Defence Forces, An Garda Síochána, & the Emergency Services

Who is recruited by these organisations? A large number of the individuals recruited to these organisations are in their mid-twenties and have a degree. Some have a degree that equipped them with skills that are useful to these organisations. For examples, computer degrees are useful to all of these organisations. Engineering or Science degrees can be useful in the Defence Forces and Garda, a sociology or Law degree can be useful to An Garda Síochána.

Some of those recruited by these organisations have a degree that may not seem directly useful when embarking on a career with these institutions, for example, History or English. However, those with these degrees have something that makes them more attractive to these organisations than those without a degree. They have demonstrated that they have the self-discipline and drive to commit to, and complete, a three or four year programme of study and they have shown that they have learned how to learn.

However, not all of the individuals recruited to these organisations have a degree. Some may have finished school recently or in that last two or three years. Why were these recruited? They may have a very impressive C.V. that include a Gaisce Silver or Gold Medal, an intermediate or advanced certificate in lifesaving or first aid, or volunteering in the community, or captain of a sports team or other impressive activities that makes them stand out from students who have the Leaving Certificate only.

## 19.2 Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is defined as a programme of structured education and training which formally combines and alternates learning in the workplace with learning in an education or training centre. It is a dual system, a blended combination of on-the-job employer-based training and off-the-job training.

Apprenticeships open up exciting and rewarding careers, with learning grounded in the practical experience of undertaking a real job and it allows apprentices to earn while they learn and build valuable work-ready skills in a chosen occupation. Apprenticeships in Ireland lead to an award at Levels 5 to 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and are between 2-4 years in duration with a minimum 50% on-the-job learning that allows for flexible delivery – online, blended, off-the-job learning in increments/blocks. Apprentices are employed under a formal contract of apprenticeship and employers pay the apprentice for the duration of the apprenticeship.

There are over 70 different types (solas.ie) of apprenticeships ranging in areas from Construction, Engineering, Electrical, Biopharmaceuticals, Motor, Hospitality, Computers, Logistics, Aircraft Maintenance and Financial Services. Some individuals select a particular apprenticeship because of family tradition or because of family or other connections. However, it might be useful to do the following. Study the various types of apprenticeships and assess the differences between them. Assess your own interests and aptitudes and try and find the optimum match between these and the characteristics of the particular apprenticeships. In other words, an individual can select an apprenticeship that can be easier to organise, or select one that may be more fulfilling.

## 20. Studying In Other Countries

Information regarding studying in other countries can be obtained from qualifax.ie and the relevant embassies.

The screenshot shows the Qualifax website in Internet Explorer. The browser address bar displays [http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=36&Itemid=36](http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=36&Itemid=36). The page title is "Applying for a course outside of Ireland". The main content area is titled "Applying for a course outside of Ireland" and contains text about studying in other countries. A yellow box with the text "Studying outside Ireland" and an arrow points to the "Applying for a course outside Ireland" link in the left sidebar. The sidebar also lists other links: "For Students", "Find a course", "Events", "Useful Tools", "How to use Qualifax", "Support and Advice", "Applying for a course outside Ireland", "CAO Change of Mind", and "Coming to Ireland". The main content area includes a "Click here" link and a "back to top" button. The right sidebar features a "View My Tagged Courses" button and a "Support for searching" section.

## 21. United Kingdom – U.C.A.S.

The United Kingdom operates a similar system to the C.A.O. system. This is referred to as U.C.A.S. Any student interested in attending college in the Britain, or indeed anywhere else outside the Republic should let the careers office know **towards the end of 5<sup>th</sup> year**. The following points are worth noting:

- The system allows for a maximum of five courses in any order on an application.
- A candidate can only apply for Oxford or Cambridge but not both.
- Oxford and Cambridge operate an interview process and an assessment test procedure.
- Other colleges also operate an interview process for their more popular courses such as Medicine, Veterinary and Dentistry.
- No more than four choices allow in (i) Medicine, (ii) Dentistry, (iii) Veterinary.
- Closing date for Oxford and Cambridge is mid-October.
- Closing date for Medicine, Density, and Veterinary is mid-October.
- Closing date for most other courses is mid-January.
- Closing date for Art & Design courses is mid-March.
- The courses you apply for are described as being “invisible”. There is because each college is not aware of the other colleges/courses you have applied for.
- Once the application is sent it cannot be returned or amended if errors are found later.
- The website for applications is [ucas.co.uk](http://ucas.co.uk)
- A personal statement (4000 character essay, 47 lines, about 1¼ A4 pages) is required when making an application, along with a reference for the school Principal.
- Entrance qualifications are as follows, (i) based on points (U.C.A.S. not C.A.O.), (ii) Exam grades, e.g. ABBC is any or specific subjects, (iii) a combination of either (i) or (ii).
- You may be offered anywhere from one to all five choices. You can only accept two, the one you want most, a firm offer, the other is referred to as an insurance offer. The offers may be unconditional or conditional subject to results obtained.
- To study the courses listed below you must sit the **BMAT** aptitude test.
 

University of Cambridge:	Medicine Graduate Medicine Veterinary Medicine
Imperial College London:	Medicine Biomedical Science Pharmacology & Medical Science
University of Oxford:	Medicine Physiological Sciences
Royal Veterinary College:	Veterinary Medicine Combined Degree Programme
University College London:	Medicine
- Other Universities/Colleges in the U.K. use the **UKCAT** aptitude test. These tests take place in Dublin from July to October. You need to register on [www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk). Practice questions and answers can be downloaded free on this website. (Questions cannot be printed).
- Those wish to apply to Cambridge or Oxford should check out [www.admissions.cam.ac.uk](http://www.admissions.cam.ac.uk) and [www.admissions.ox.ac.uk](http://www.admissions.ox.ac.uk).
- **The personal statement and course searches should be carried out over the summer holidays in 5<sup>th</sup> year so as to not interfere with study time in September/October in 6<sup>th</sup> year.**
- You will need three numbers/codes to begin the application process. You will be provided with these in September in 6<sup>th</sup> year. You do not need these numbers to search for courses or write your personal statement.

UCAS

## 22. Studying In The U.S.

Students who are interested in applying for courses in the U.S. should start the research and application process in 5<sup>th</sup> year. Full details on the U.S. application process see [fulbright.ie](http://fulbright.ie) and the SAT's see [collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org). Leaving this work until September/October in 6<sup>th</sup> year will interfere with the time that needs to be allocated to study. Please let the careers office know early in September of 6<sup>th</sup> year if an application for the U.S. is being made.



## 23. Studying In Europe Through English



Students who are interested in applying for courses in the Europe should start the research and application process in 5<sup>th</sup> year. Full details on [eunicas.ie](http://eunicas.ie). Leaving this work until September/October will interfere with the time that needs to be allocated to study. Please let the careers office know early in September of 6<sup>th</sup> year if an application for the Europe is being made.

## 24. Grants & Scholarships

Eligibility criteria for state grants can be found on [susi.ie](http://susi.ie)  
Some other of the grants and scholarships that are available are:

- Local Authority maintenance grants
- The Millennium Partnership Fund
- Student Assistance Fund
- Scholarships for Ethnic Minorities (Bank of Ireland)
- Irish Institute of Taxation Scholarships
- National Building Agency Foley Scholarship for architecture
- Science Foundation Ireland Engineering Scholarship
- Credit Union Scholarships
- Guinness – Liberties & Coombe Scholarships
- Dublin Docklands Development Authority Scholarship
- Donogh O'Malley Scholarships
- National University of Ireland (N.U.I.) Equal Education Opportunities Scholarships
- SIPTU Education Scholarships
- Details available on [studentfinance.ie](http://studentfinance.ie)

## 25. Conclusion

### ***Success is ...contentment***

The processes described in this booklet are exactly that, *a process*. It can result in frustration and disappointment for an individual if they seek out a single event or activity they believe can provide a definitive exact answer as to what career to follow. If a definitive answer is not yet available patience is required. The individual may have not yet have engaged in, or been exposed to, or given the opportunity to be involved in an activity that allows for a match with their interests, aptitudes and personal characteristics. Indeed, it can be argued that for most – but not all – to try and find the answer to what they will do for the rest of their lives is mis-guided.

Consider that, at the age of 4 months, a soother provided us with the satisfaction we needed at that developmental stage. At 4 years of age this progressed to a cuddly toy. At 10 years of age this progressed to a more sophisticated toy and at the age of 14 this changed again as it did at the age of 17. These changes do not stop once we have reached the age of 18 or adulthood. A 22 year old will be satisfied going on a camping holiday with friends despite the rain and mud. At 30 years of age this progress onto a B & B, and later this progress on to hotel with all its mod-cons that we need to satisfy us. Therefore, it can be argued that the changes that take place with regard to stimuli that we needed up to the age of 18 will continue – albeit at a slower pace – for the rest of our lives. Therefore, if considering doing a degree, it might be advisable to do a degree based on what interests the individual has *now* and allow the experiences during the years doing that degree determine the next step. In other words, do a degree you enjoy and do a postgrad to get a job.

At the beginning of this booklet it was stated that;

We all know people who go to work each day and enjoy the challenges and tasks associated with their chosen occupation. These are individuals who, generally, have fulfilling working lives, and for whom work is a meaningful and stimulating experience. However, on the other hand, there are also individuals who, day in and day out, year in year out, struggle to find any real purpose in their chosen field of work other than the financial reward that is necessary for survival. For them, work is a means to an end, something that facilitates meeting their financial obligations. It can be argued that such outcomes do not happen by chance and that various factors have come into play to determine if an individual enjoys or dislikes their work. For those that find themselves in a fulfilling job are said to be in a working environment that matches their interests, aptitude and personal characteristics. Those that find themselves in a working environment they do not enjoy may have to perform tasks that do not match their interests or aptitudes or personal characteristics or indeed all three.

It needs to be acknowledged that this description highlights either end of a continuous spectrum or people. It is inconceivable to think that every individual will find that perfect job or occupation that provides a 100% match for their interests, aptitudes, and personal characteristics. Therefore, a more practical approach for individuals might be not to try and find that perfect job, but rather *strive towards* finding an *optimum* fit. This is particularly important given the constraints of the economy, our aptitudes, financial position, and opportunities available.

Finally, consider the blissfully happy individual who is content with life despite their job having tasks that are not challenging or stimulating. What makes this individual perfectly happy with their lot? It may be because they derive their satisfaction from elsewhere in their life. Their gratification may be drawn from; their relationships with those that matter to them, the joy of being a good parent and providing for their children, from their involvement in coaching the under 7's and the quiet reflective moments they relishes when pursuing their hobby. Sometimes all we need are the simple things in life to make us happy, or should that be *content*.

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# Notes

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