Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

School of Computer Science and Statistics

TAP
Cláir Rochtana Choláiste na Tríonóide
Trinity Access Programmes

Computer Science Hedge School

Study Leaving Certificate Computer Science as an additional subject with Trinity College Dublin

What is it?

The Computer Science Hedge School is a new programme offered by The School of Computer Science and Statistics, and the Trinity Access Programmes, at Trinity College Dublin. Students will have the opportunity to take Leaving Certificate Computer Science as an additional subject, outside of school hours.

Who can apply?

The programme is open to students who will be starting 5th year in September 2025. Any student who attends a school where Computer Science (CS) is not offered as a Leaving Certificate (LC) subject is eligible to apply. Students applying from DEIS schools and

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schools in areas with low progression to 3rd level will be prioritised, but places are open to all students who do not have the option to study LC CS in their school.

What is involved?

- 2-year course during 5th and 6th year
- One Saturday per month in-person in Trinity College Dublin (approx. 3 hours)
- One evening per week online for 2 hours (support available to setup online access)
- Occasional midterm/holiday hours
- Lots of hands-on learning.
- It's challenging but very rewarding – an example of what is called "hard fun"!

Students will take the full LC CS course outside of school hours during their 5th and 6th year, through a mixture of in-person and online classes. In-person classes will take place on one Saturday per month during the school year. Online classes will take place one weekday evening per week during the school year (excluding midterms and other holidays). Occasionally, in-person classes will take place on some midterm days.

Students will be expected to attend the in-person classes in Trinity College Dublin for the two-year duration of the course.

If you need extra support to attend the online classes, we will do everything we can to help you get online. Please do not let potential issues with connecting to online classes stop you from applying – please still apply and, if you are successful in getting a place, we will support you.

Information about the LC CS course can be found here. The course involves three interconnected strands of learning, including engaging in Applied Learning Tasks. This involves students working in teams to solve a problem using a CS approach and create a digital artifact such as an app, game, programme, website, etc.

Leaving Certificate Assessment and Exam

Assessment is split between a coursework project (30% of final LC grade) and an exam (70% of final LC grade). The coursework project takes place over 12 weeks, starting in December of 6th year. The exam takes place in May and involves a written component and a computer component.

Is this for me?

The LC CS course is challenging but very rewarding – it is one of the most enjoyable LC courses to study as there is lots of hands-on engagement. It could be described as "hard fun"! Taking an extra subject outside of school hours is a big commitment, so students who apply should have lots of self-motivation and be able to show up and engage consistently for two years. We will provide lots of support and help but in general, the drive to succeed must come from the student.

For many college courses, Computer Science counts as a recognised science subject, so if a student think they may need an extra science to qualify for college courses you are interested in, this could be a good option.

How much does it cost?

The Hedge School is supported by a philanthropic grant from Google.org so there is no cost to the student, their parent/guardian or the school.

How do students apply?

Apply **HERE**

Or copy and paste this link into your browser:
https://forms.office.com/e/hBWs5QY8mV

- Application deadline is the 26th of May
- Early applications may have an advantage
- Schools will be contacted for reference letters after applications are received
- Information and updates will be sent directly to student's email addresses, not via schools/teachers
- Final awarding of a place will depend on receiving parent/guardian consent

Students should fill out the application form before the 26th of May. Early applicants may have an advantage as places will be filled as suitable applications are received. Once a student's application is received, TCD staff will contact the student's school to confirm that LC CS is not offered in the school, and to request a reference letter for the student from the school principal (or another teacher, if appropriate, such as a year head or TY coordinator). The reference letter will be sent directly to TCD and will not be seen by the student. The letter should outline that the student is, in the opinion of the teacher, capable of the commitment in terms of work and time over 2 years to take CS as an extra subject, and any other information that the teacher feels is relevant when determining if the student will be offered a place.

Once a student has applied, the majority of communication will take place directly to the student via the email address provided in the application. The shortlisted students will be contacted so that their parents can complete a consent form before the student's place is confirmed.

Students who are successful in securing a place on the CS Hedge School will be informed in early June 2025. Classes will start in late August/early September 2025, pending final approval by the State Examinations Commission.

Questions or comments?

Please contact Dr. Jennifer Murphy with any questions or comments: jennifer.murphy@tcd.ie