

**Here are the answers to some commonly asked questions.**

* It is not possible to change anything on your C.A.O. form once you have received your results.
* The C.A.O. offers will be available on line from 6.00 a.m. or by post next Monday.
* If eligible, you 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 you can only accept one.
* If you receive, for example, your 3rd 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 below this preference you have been offered.
* If you accept this offer you can still be offered your 2nd /1st preference/s in round two – if the points drop and you become eligible.
* If you do not accept his 3rd preference offer, you can still be offered your 2nd /1st preference/s in round two – if the points drop and you become eligible. However, if the points do not drop, you cannot change your mind and ask for the original round one offer. You 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 you receiving a higher preference offer on level 8 in round two.
* For example, if you are offered course C on level 8 and course Y on level 7/6, you will never be offered courses D,E,F,G, nor, courses Z,P,Q,R,S. in future rounds. If you accept course C you can still be offered one of A or B and X in the second round. If you accept course Y you can still be offered course A or B or X in the second round.

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| Level 8 | Level 7/6 |
| 1 | A | 1 | X |
| 2 | B | 2 | ***Y Offered*** |
| 3 | ***C Offered*** | 3 | Z |
| 4 | D | 4 | P |
| 5 | E | 5 | Q |
| 6 | F | 6 | R |
| 7 | G | 7 | S |

* If you receive two offers, one level 8 and one level 7/6, sometimes if may be a preferable option to accept the level 7/6 offer above the level 8 if the level 7/6 is in the area of study you really want and the level 8 is not.
* If you have obtained the necessary points and do not get an offer, please check the minimum requirement.
* When you accept an offer, the C.A.O. office notifies the particular third level institution. It is always good practice to print out a copy – from the C.A.O. website - of the page showing your acceptance. The third level institution will then send you, by post, details of how and when to register. Please pay particular attention to the dates/times mentioned. Over the last number of years a considerable number of courses offer a very large number of modules from which you can select what to study. These modules are very much based on demand and can fill up very quickly. It is recommended that you log on to the college web site in advance and find out as much detail as possible about the module choice available. You need to research these options well in advance of the registration time/date. Once this registration time/date arrives (it is usually an online registration system) you should log on as soon as possible so that the selection of modules you want are still available. Very popular modules can fill up with an hour or so. It might also be a good idea to select a plan B of modules and have this plan ready. You will not have time to carry out new research once registration has opened.
* If you send your script to be rechecked the results will not be known until mid-October. If, as a result of an upgrade, you are entitled to a place on a course you will be guaranteed an offer on this course. However, if the course is one where the numbers are strictly controlled (like Medicine and Dentistry) the third level institute will encourage you to defer your place until next year. If however, the course is one like Arts they may let you take up your offer this year. One other factor that is also taken into consideration is if the course has already started. You may have already missed 2/3 weeks of lectures. The rules determining the uptake of a late offer due to an upgrade depends very much on the third level institute concerned and the individual faculty within the institution. The school does not know when the recheck results will arrive. The first the school will know is when the post arrives on that morning.

**If you are not sure if the course you have been offered is for you, or if you have not received any offer, here are your options.**

1. You could accept the offer you have received and start the course and end up liking it. You could accept the offer and start the course and if, during your 1st year you decide it is not the course for you, you can reapply through the C.A.O. system the following year and use your points to gain entry to another course starting off again in 1st year. You will however have to pay the 1st year fees. There is a sliding scale of fee payment. If you complete the whole of 1st year you will have to pay full fees when doing another 1st year, or if you leave before 1st February (approximately – it varies from college to college) you will have to pay half fees.
2. There are also a few limited avenues whereby you can transfer from a course in one college to another similar course in another college having completed the first two or more years. The content of these courses must overlap. These options are NOT guaranteed, very limited, and depend on both results obtained at the end of 1st year and availability of places. These would need to be checked out beforehand.
3. Similarly, there are transfer options between courses within the same college provided you obtained the original points required for the course you want to enter when you sat your Leaving Certificate.
4. The day after the first round offers are published, the C.A.O. will publish on-line a list of *vacant places*. This is a list of courses that did not have enough applications to fill all available places. However, a word of caution so as not to build up your hopes. These courses, by their very nature, were not in high demand in the first place, and mainly consist of offers from private colleges. However, there may be some attractive courses from the state run colleges. To be eligible for these places you do not have to have the points but you must have the minimum requirements. While you will not need the total points that was originally required, if you apply for one of these places you will be placed in a queue determined by the points of all applicants you have applied under the vacant places facility. Accepting your first round offer does not prevent you applying for one of these vacant places. While this is a long shot, it is still worth checking this list if only to leave no stone unturned. In order to apply for a vacant place you will need to insert the course code onto your C.A.O. application. You should insert the code above the offer you have already received but below any course that may be more attractive than the course with vacant places. This allows the possibility of still being offered another course on the second round. The vacant places will then be offered when the second round offers are published. The vacant places list on the C.A.O. website should be checked regularly as it is undated daily.
5. Some students who are happy with their offered may wish to defer their place until the following year. Others may defer to do a P.L.C. or repeat in the hope of getting a better offered next year. If you wish to defer do not accept the offered and telephone the College concerned and follow their instructions (if you are deferring in the hope of getting a better offered the following year, do not disclose this to the College concerned). Note:: if you are deferring you will need to fill out a C.A.O. form next year an insert that deferred course *only*. If you insert another course in addition to the deferred course, the deferred place is cancelled.
6. Check the course on offer on the Private College’s websites.
7. \*Check the U.K. *Clearing System* on U.C.A.S.
8. \*If you have an interest in this area, check the courses that Teagasc

 (food and agricultural area) have on offer, which do not require points.

1. \*If you have an interest in this area, check the course that Irish Fisheries Board have on offer, which do not require points.
2. \*Check the part-time/evening course on Qualifax.
3. \*If you have an interest in this area, check the apprenticeships offered by FAS.
4. \*If you have an interest in this area, check the other courses offered by FAS.
5. \*Enrol in a P.L.C. course for its own sake. It is worth noting that some of these courses will have already been filled in March. Also, in September 2009 there were 60,000 applicants for 30,000 places. This option needs to be looked into immediately.
6. \*Enrol in a P.L.C. course as a *back door into college*.
7. \*If you have an interest in this area, wait until the Garda, Fire & Ambulance service advertise for vacancies.
8. \*If you have an interest in this area, wait until the Army, Navy, and Air Force start recruiting.
9. \*Repeat the entire Leaving Certificate to increase points.
10. \*Having obtained the points, but not an essential requirement/s, this requirement/s can be repeated on its own.
11. \*Going straight into the world of work.
12. \*Going straight into the world of work while continuing education part-time, or with the intention of returning to it at a later date.

**Note, it is never possible to consider a plan B until your mind has gone through a process of accepting that plan A will not happen. This may take a while. Also, any alternative should not be taken just for the sake if it. Any plan B should only be embarked upon if it is right for you at this time and suits you interests, aptitudes, and personality.**