



15th January 2019

RE: Career Guidance – 6th Years

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a Happy New Year!

As you are well aware we have approached the time of year again where your son/daughter is starting to finalise their plans for progression once they have completed their Leaving Certificate examinations. In short there are a variety of options open to them; College (Universities, Institutes of Technologies, PLC's, Private Colleges), Apprenticeships, Employment etc.

At this stage the majority of students are clear about the route they wish to take (after a lot of research and guidance from family and ourselves), but for other students this is an extremely tough decision to make. As parents and as Guidance Counsellors we have to expect and help with this indecision. Over the coming weeks we would encourage you to take an active role in helping your son/daughter in this process whilst also allowing them to take ownership of the process and their choices.

We feel it is important for students to realise that college decisions at this stage only relate to the next few years, they are not about the rest of their lives. There are plenty of opportunities to change route or specialise in different areas through further education or progression routes within industries. In short, as Guidance Counsellors we still promote the theory of pursuing a route in an area that they enjoy and are interested in, rather than following trends or alternative motivations. Please remember that we are always available should you have any queries or need advice.

To Do:

- At this stage your son/daughter should have had at least one-to-one meeting with their assigned Guidance Counsellor to discuss options. If they have not made an appointment with their Guidance Counsellor please encourage them to do so immediately.
- Can you please confirm with your son/daughter that they are checking their Schoology account on a daily basis. We post all relevant careers information to the Careers page on a daily basis.
- At this stage your son/daughter should have registered with the CAO application process www.cao.ie, they should have recorded their username and password inside their Dialann cover. We can then assist them with their CAO form if they want support. Please remember all they have to do at this stage is register (the final date for this is February 1st), they do not necessarily have to enter courses at

this stage. However if they are applying for restricted courses e.g. Medicine, Architecture (DIT), Music/Performance courses etc.), these courses do have to be entered before the 1st February. They will have plenty of time to revise their choices right up until July 1st (with the exception of restricted courses). We are holding our annual Careers Fair in the school for 6th years on Tuesday 29th January.

- PLC Applications, Your son/daughter may be applying for a PLC course either as a preferential route to gaining a qualification or as an alternative route to getting onto the course they wish to pursue at University/DIT etc. Applications for PLC's are currently open and are made directly to the individual colleges concerned (not via the CAO application process).
- If your son/daughter is considering an Apprenticeship route, there are two routes to follow: 1) You may know of an employer who is willing to take them on for training and register them with 'SOLAS' or 2) You can contact 'SOLAS' directly and they keep a bank of potential employers who may be looking to take on a trainee. Another area where apprenticeships are advertised is www.apprentices.ie. Alternatively, some of the larger companies e.g. ESB/Aer Lingus etc. advertise directly on their individual websites www.esb.ie and www.aerlingus.ie. Recruitment for the Army is advertised on www.military.ie, and An Garda Síochána advertise on www.careerservices.ie. All information regarding Apprenticeships is available on www.solas.ie.
- Your son/daughter may be eligible to apply for DARE (Disability Access Route to Education) or HEAR (Higher Education Access Route), details of both schemes are available on www.accesscollege.ie. If you feel your son/daughter qualifies for DARE/HEAR they should have had regular meetings with their Guidance Counsellor at this stage. This is an important scheme in that if successful students can qualify for points off a course and many other benefits throughout their time in 3rd level.
- To ascertain if you are eligible for a College Education or Maintenance Grant, you can check this out on www.SUSI.ie and clicking on the 'Eligibility' button. All information regarding college grants is available on this site.

Please remember that we are always available should you have any queries or need advice.

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Regards,

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Guidance Department