

CAO Questions & Answers 2008

How do I accept an offer?

Offers may be viewed and accepted **online** at the CAO web site (www.cao.ie) from 6am on Monday 18th August. On entering the site, click View/Accept Offers then simply enter your 8 digit CAO Number and your date of birth. You can then specify the course of your choice from a list of courses available to be accepted.

The procedure for accepting an offer received in the **post** is printed on the back of the offer notice. If you wish to accept an offer, you must return the appropriate part of the notice to the CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway to arrive no later than 5.15pm on the Reply Date specified (which for 1st Round Offers is Tues the 26th of August) or the offer will lapse. As only one offer may be accepted, care is required to return the correct part. You are also advised to obtain a certificate of posting.

How do I know that my acceptance has been registered?

For those who have accepted an offer **online**, a print out of an acceptance receipt can be obtained. You may also check acceptance been recorded online at www.cao.ie. A formal confirmation receipt of acceptance either online or by post will also be sent to applicant within 3 working days of the Reply Date.

The Higher Education Institution concerned should also send you details of registration and annual charges within ten days of the reply date.

What if I have received more than one offer from the CAO?

On line, on entering the site, click View/Accept Offers then simply enter your 8 digit CAO Number and your date of birth. You can then specify **one** course of your choice from a list of courses available to be accepted.

On the CAO **Standard Offer Notice** the Level 8 and Level 7/ Level 6 lists operate independently, so it is quite possible to receive two offers simultaneously on Parts B and C of the Offer Notice. In this case you can only accept **one** offer and must disregard the other. Should both parts be returned, the CAO at its sole discretion will record an acceptance for only one course, the other will lapse.

Accepting or rejecting an offer from either list at this stage **will not exclude** you from being offered a higher preference from either or both lists in later rounds, assuming there are vacancies available and points fall sufficiently.

What if I have been offered a course from the Level 7 (Diploma)/ Level 6 (Certificate) List, but nothing from the Level 8 (Degree) List?

This would suggest that you don't have enough points or meet the minimum entry requirements for your Level 8(Degree) choices. You can accept your Level 7 (Diploma)/ Level 6 (Certificate) offer now, and could still receive an offer of a Level 8 course in later rounds should the points fall sufficiently and you meet the minimum entry requirements.

What if I get my first preference but I don't want it?

If you're offered your first preference in either the Level 8 (Degree) or Level 7(Diploma)/ Level 6 (Certificate) list, it is assumed that you've been offered what you really wanted, and no further offers will be made from that list. The basic rule is that only higher preference choices can be offered in later rounds.

At this point you will need to carefully consider all your options, which for some may even include re-applying through the CAO next year.

Can I still change my mind at this stage?

Unfortunately there is no facility at this stage to change your course choices or the order of preference. The closing date for the CAO Change of Mind Option was the 1st of July, 2008.

I seem to have enough points but haven't been offered the course

In addition to points, each higher education institution has its own basic minimum entry or matriculation requirements and some courses may also require particular subjects/grades regarded as relevant to your course choice.

If you don't meet the minimum entry/matriculation or specific course requirements, an asterisk (*) will appear immediately to the right of a Course Code in Part A of the paper offer and no offer for this course will be available online, indicating the educational institution in question considers you ineligible for admission to that course.

What if I see an asterix(*) next to a course on the points table?

It is also possible, that if there is an asterix (*) beside the points required for the course on the CAO points table printed in national newspapers, that random selection applies. This means that not everyone with that number of points was offered a place. One will have to wait for the second round offers to see if any vacancies arise.

I have enough points for the course I applied for but I failed maths which is a course requirement. Is there any chance that I will be offered a place on the course?

Unfortunately there is no chance of being offered a place on a course when you fail to meet the course requirements. Points are the final selection procedure and only come into play when an applicant has satisfied all other requirements for the course.

What if information on the CAO Offer Notice or Online is incorrect?

In the unlikely event that any information is incorrect, but if so you should contact the CAO immediately **on line** by using the "Contact us" facility on the website www.cao.ie

The CAO have confirmed that I don't have a first round offer

You could still receive an offer in later rounds should the points fall sufficiently and you meet the minimum entry requirements. In the meantime you should consider some of the many alternatives such as Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses or courses in Independent Third Level Colleges. There is also the possibility of applying to view marked scripts for specific subjects prior to making an appeal, or repeating the Leaving Certificate and/or re-applying through the CAO next year.

What are my chances of getting a subsequent round offer?

Unfortunately there are no guarantees if you are hoping to secure a higher preference offer in later rounds as the CAO will try to fill as many vacancies as possible in the first round. Any remaining vacancies will be offered in subsequent rounds usually with slightly lower points requirements.

If I accept or reject an offer, could I still receive a further offer in subsequent rounds?

Accepting or rejecting an offer from either list at this stage will not exclude you from being offered a higher preference from either or both lists in later rounds, assuming points fall sufficiently and you meet the minimum entry requirements.

I'm thinking of deferring for a year

An applicant who receives an offer and wishes to defer taking up the place for one year should contact the admissions office of the institution concerned immediately to seek their agreement. Such agreement is not guaranteed and is totally at the discretion of the college. For further details consult the CAO Handbook 2008, page 4.

What about vacant places?

Should any places remain unfilled in particular courses after all offers have been made and the waiting lists of applicants meeting minimum entry requirements have been exhausted, such vacancies will be advertised and listed on the CAO website (www.cao.ie). Typically vacant places arise in Independent Third Level Colleges and Institutes of Technology. Application is open to persons who meet the normal minimum entry requirements for the course(s) in question.

Having identified a vacant place you are interested in, and you have not applied previously, you may make a vacant application online upon payment of a fee of €45. If you have applied already there is no further application fee. Such existing applicants may submit an online application or, if necessary, request the appropriate paper document from the CAO.

The Cork Youth Information Centre Student Helpline from 9.30am to 5.30pm each day starting from the 13th of August, 2008. The Student Helpline numbers are (021) 427 0187 & 427 4726.

Further information and relevant links are also available on the internet at www.youthinformation.ie.