



# A Guide to CAO

Presented by:

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# CAO stands for the Central Applications Office

- ▶ It handles applications for the majority of 3<sup>rd</sup> level colleges in Ireland
- ▶ These Colleges are referred to as HEIs \_ Higher Institutes of Education
- ▶ Currently 45 HEIs participate in CAO



# HEI courses lead to one of the following awards:

- ▶ Level 6 \_ 2 year (not many of these)  
Higher Certificate
- ▶ Level 7 \_ 3 years  
Ordinary Degree
- ▶ Level 8 \_ 4 years  
Honours Degree



# How and when do students apply?

- ▶ Applicants usually apply on-line
- ▶ Normal Deadline: February 1st, 2012
- ▶ Normal application fee: €40
- ▶ Discounted fee: €30 before 20 January
  
- ▶ Students can apply anytime from now on
- ▶ Can change their course choices up to January 31st



# How are college places allocated?

## First.....

An applicant must fulfil the course

# Minimum Entry Requirements

# Minimum requirements

## General

Most colleges have general minimum requirements

- ▶ For **Level 8 Courses** (Honours Degrees)

**2 HC3s & 4 OD3s**

- ▶ For **Level 7 Courses** (Ordinary Degrees)

**5 OD3s**

**Passes in English or Irish and Maths are usually required**

# General Minimum requirements Dundalk Institute of Technology

## **Level 7:**

**6ODs + 200 points**

**Or**

**1 HC3 + 5 OD3s**

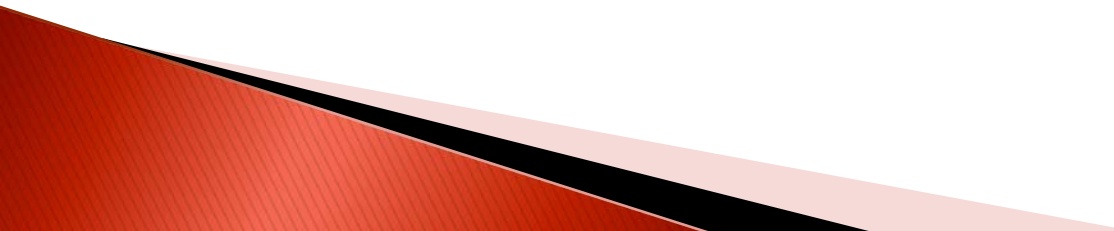
## **Level 8:**

**2HC3 + 4 OD3s + 300 Points**

# Minimum requirements

## Specific

Examples:

- ▶ DkIT level 7 **Engineering** courses OC3 in Maths
  - ▶ DkIT Level 8 **Nursing** OD3 in Biology or another Science subject
  - ▶ DkIT Level 8 **Computing in Games Development** OB3 Maths
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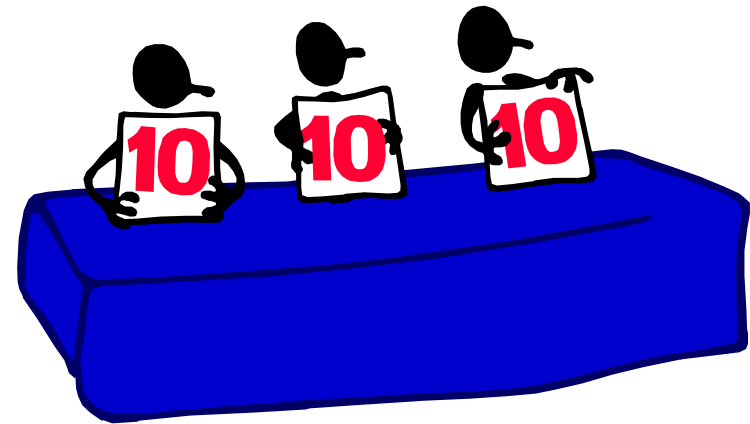
# Once course minimum requirements are met.....

- ▶ Applicants compete for colleges places on the basis of points calculated from their Leaving Cert results
- ▶ Applicants who select a course are **ranked** according to their points
- ▶ the **top scorers** are the ones who get places.



# Points

- ▶ The points published for any course are in fact the cut-off points i.e. the points of the last applicant to get a place.
- ▶ For example, if the points for a course are 350, then all the successful applicants had 350 points or above





Points change every year  
because they are determined  
by the popularity of a course



# The Application Form

Applicants can choose

- ▶ 10 level 8 courses
- ▶ 10 level 6/7 courses
- ▶ Separate independent lists

**!Must rank courses in order of genuine preference !**



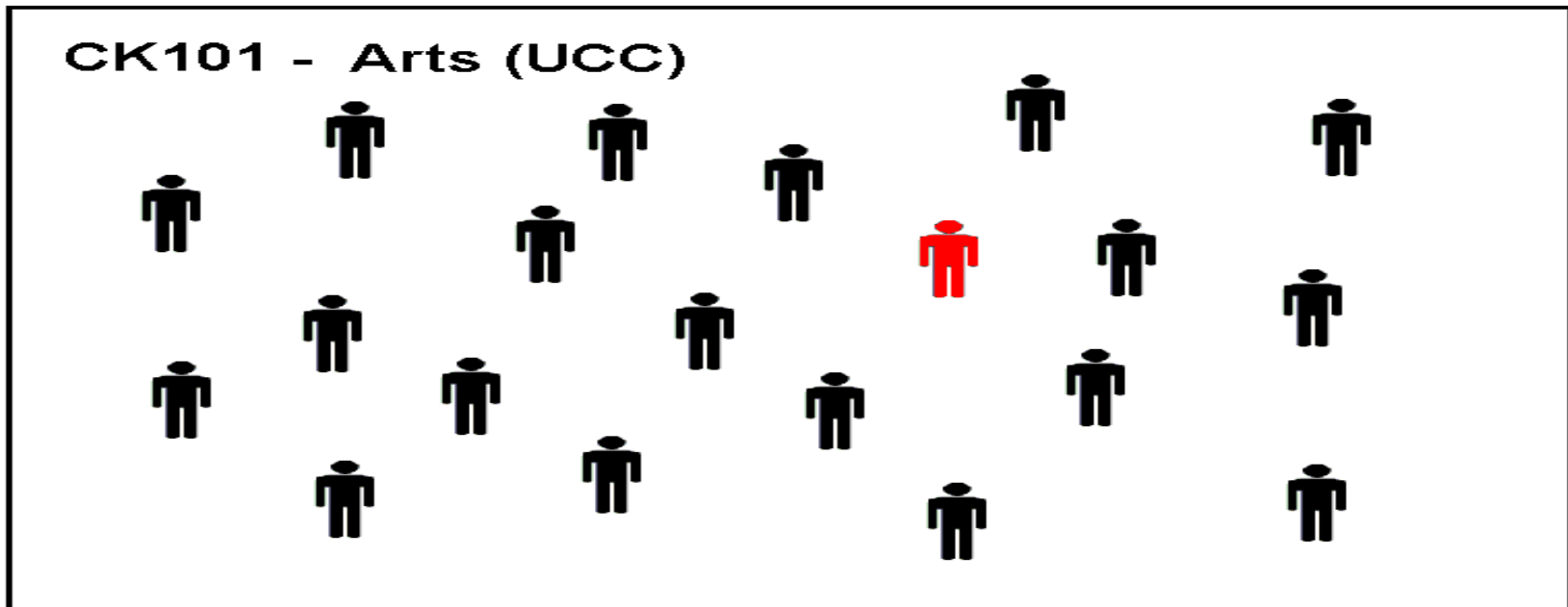
# Two independent lists:

Level 8

Pref	Course Code
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Level 7/Level 6

Pref	Course Code
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	



These are the applicants for CK101 Arts in UCC.

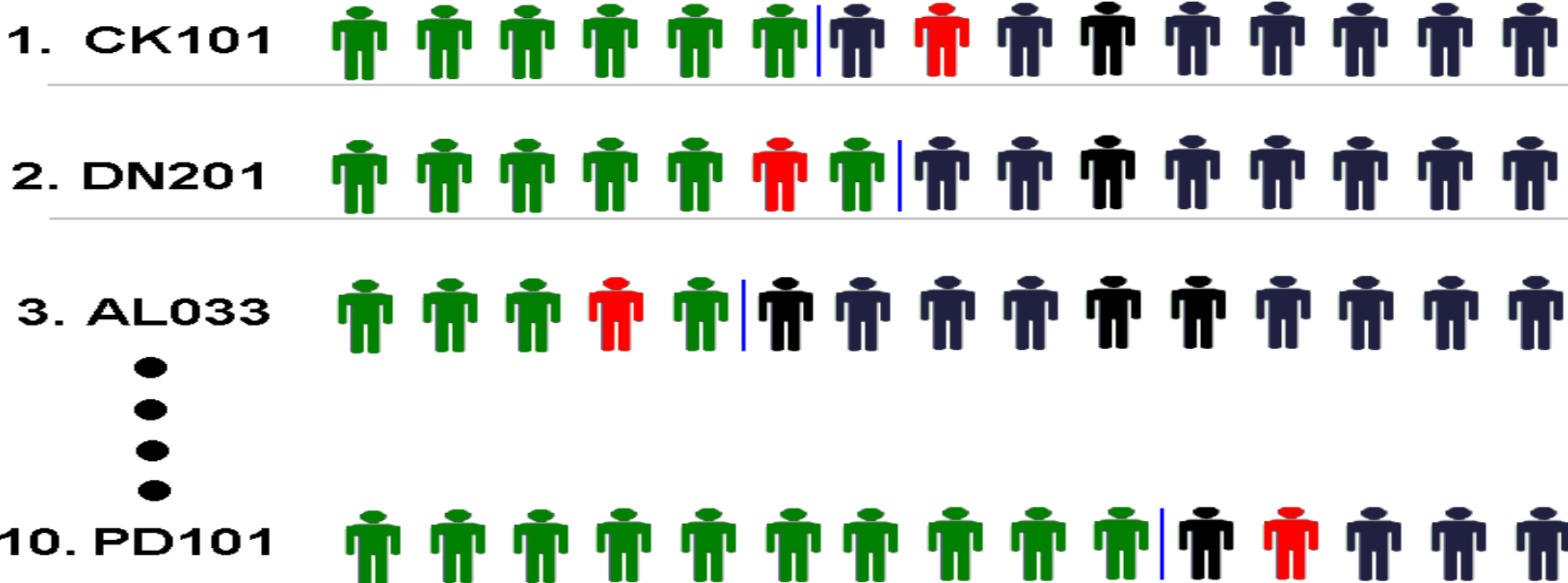
The examination results have not yet been released, so these applicants are in no particular order.

We are going to trace the progress of the applicant marked in red.



Applicants are placed in a queue for each course they applied for, their position in the queue is determined by their points. The applicant with the highest points is placed at the top of the queue. The points achieved by the applicant in red determines his position in the queue for each course he applied to.

The applicants marked in green have enough points to be offered places.  
The applicant marked in red has enough points for his second preference.



The applicant in red is offered his second preference, the highest preference course that he has enough points for, and he will now disappear from the queue in all his lower choices. Placing DN201 as his second preference meant that he would prefer to receive an offer on DN201 than on any other course except CK101 – which is his first preference.



Having been offered his second preference he must now decide to accept it or to do nothing. If he does not accept the offer the place will be offered to another applicant in the next round of offers.

Regardless of whether he accepts or not he will still be considered for an offer on his first preference if a place becomes available. In the second round, one more offer was made on CK101 and our applicant is now at the top of the queue.



In the third round of offers two more offers are made on CK101 and our applicant, who was at the top of the queue, now receives an offer.

He may do nothing and remain in DN201 or he may accept the offer and begin in CK101.



# Change of Mind

Applicants can change course choices:

- ▶ Up until January 31<sup>st</sup>
- ▶ Between May 5<sup>th</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>

**! It is not possible to change course choices after July 1<sup>st</sup>!**



# CAO Offers

## **Round One:**

Mid August

## **Round Two:**

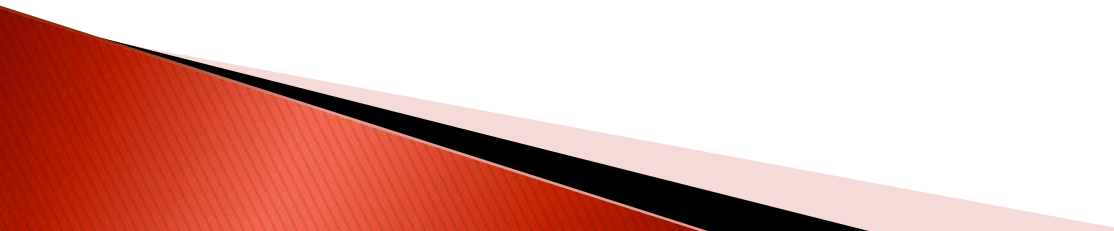
Late August/early September

In Round Two, applicants will only ever receive an offer higher in their list than their Round One offer

# How do you pay?

- ▶ By Card \_ Credit or Debit
- ▶ In the Bank \_ Application Fee Payment Form

# Students are responsible for:

- ▶ Their course choices
  - ▶ Filling in the form correctly
  - ▶ Familiarising themselves with the CAO Handbook
- 

# Post Leaving Cert Courses

All lead to FETAC qualifications \_ level 5 and above

FETAC applicants can apply to college!

In most Institute of Technology courses, FETAC applicants can use points from their course to compete with Leaving Cert students for places

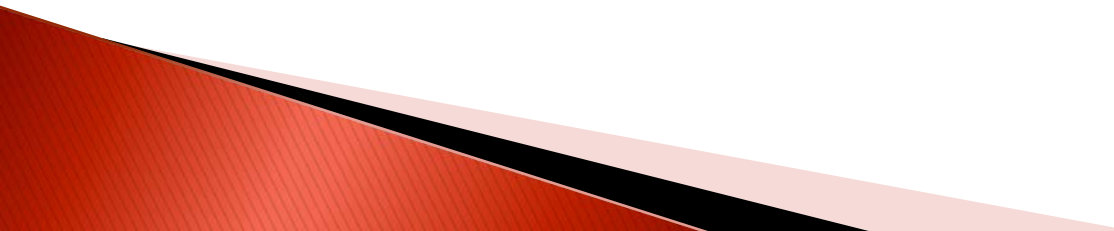
In other cases, FETAC courses are linked with specific courses in Universities, ITs and other colleges

# Grants

- ▶ Students may be entitled to a maintenance grant when attending a 3<sup>rd</sup> level or PLC college
- ▶ Means- tested
- ▶ Further information:

[www.studentfinance.ie](http://www.studentfinance.ie)

# Scholarships and Other supports

- ▶ Higher Education Access Route Access scheme
  - ▶ DkIT Scholarship
  - ▶ Louth Co Council Education Bursary
  - ▶ Cu Chullain Credit Union?
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# For Advice or an Appointment...

6<sup>th</sup> Years:

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