

: IMPORTANT CAO INFORMATION JUST RECEIVED

Good morning colleagues,

Please find below a letter just received from the information office of CAO for dissemination to all our Guidance Counsellors, and principals. I will also forward the CAO letter to applicants in a following email as this communication is quite long. Please forward to your principals also and anyone who you feel can pass on this information to our concerned parents, teachers and students.

Dear Guidance Counsellor,

As you may be aware, our office is temporarily closed due to the recent government measures introduced to control the spread of Covid-19 Coronavirus. Usually at this time we write to you with some updates for the coming months, highlighting in particular the Statement of Application Record, the Change of Mind Process, the Offers and Acceptances Schedule, and the Important Changes to the CAO Handbook.

This year this mailing is not possible, but we hope that through our network of guidance colleagues we will be able to circulate this update to all guidance counsellors and principals, and provide as much information as possible to assist you at this time.

1. Statement of Application Record - Changes

The first important point to note is the fact that we will not be in a position to send a postal Statement of Application Record to applicants. Today (15 May) we will send email correspondence to all applicants who applied to CAO by the 1 February this year. This email is referred to as the Statement of Application Record email, and it replaces the traditional postal document which applicants would normally receive this month. Applicants who applied using the late application facility will receive an email later this month.

The email instructs applicants to log in to their CAO account to verify that all of their personal details, examination information, supporting documents, course choices and exemptions (if any) are recorded correctly on their accounts.

If there are errors or omissions, applicants are given the opportunity to rectify this information (for no charge) via their online CAO Account (as opposed to writing the changes on the paper Statement of Application Record and returning it to CAO, as was the common practice in the past). Examination updates made before the end of May will be updated to applicant accounts in early June.

We have worked on putting together a number of online tools to make the process of checking and updating account information as straight-forward as possible. With the exception of sending supporting documents (if required) all of the changes can be carried out online via the My Application section of the applicant's account - applicants will simply log in to their CAO Account and click on the relevant buttons in the Qualifications and Assessments section and supply the necessary information.

In the 'Information for Schools' section of the CAO Website, you will find a dedicated link for the Statement of Application Record which will contain the following:

1. A link to the instructions page for applicants.
2. A video guide explaining the process of checking and updating applicant accounts,

including a screenshot of a sample applicant's account to assist you in guiding your students.

3. A link to the Important Changes to the 2020 CAO Handbook.

We hope that you find these resources helpful, and please feel free to share these links and updates with your students and their parents. We will also be writing to colleagues in various media outlets in order to ensure that applicants and parents are made aware of this slight change to the application process.

2. Change of Mind and Changes to 2020 Handbook

The CAO Change of Mind facility opened on Tuesday, 5 May. Applicants may add, remove or change the order of their courses as many times as they like up to the 1 July at 5:15pm.

Applicants are also urged to read the 'Changes to the 2020 Handbook' document (available from the Downloads section of www.cao.ie) for information on new courses, cancelled courses, title changes and miscellaneous changes. This document would normally be posted with the Statement of Application Record.

As always, we ask that you encourage your students to list their courses in genuine order of preference, and not based on assumptions about points or examination results.

3. Offers and Acceptances

Over the coming weeks, CAO will hold discussions with the State Examinations Commission about the expected revised timeline for the provision of Leaving Certificate grades.

Following on from this, CAO and HEIs will discuss the impact this change will have on the existing offers and acceptances schedules. We will be updating our website and notifying applicants as soon as a revised schedule has been agreed by CAO and HEIs.

As always, I would like to thank you for your ongoing assistance and guidance, and I hope that you all stay safe and well in these challenging times.

Eileen Keleghan

Communications Officer