

# Leaving Cert Support 2018

Important information you may need to consider now that your results are out.

**Patrician Presentation Secondary School, Fethard - Class of 2018,**

Congratulations on doing so well in your Leaving Certificate. We just wanted to share some important information that you may need to consider at this stage. In this letter, you will find information on the following:

- Support
- Second Chance Mathematics Exam
- CAO Available Places
- Private Colleges
- PLC Courses
- SUSI Grant
- Apprenticeships
- Some other options
- A Final Appeal for First Destinations Information

## ✓Support

If you are disappointed with your results, it is important to allow yourself some time to digest the situation and to weigh up all your options. The National Parents Council will host a Freephone Exam Results Helpline which will be manned by fully qualified Guidance Counsellors. The Helpline number is 1800 265 165. The helpline will open each day from Wednesday 15th August until Wednesday 22nd August. They are available to answer any questions you may have. Feel free to get in contact also by email: [guidancefethard@gmail.com](mailto:guidancefethard@gmail.com) if you would like to arrange an appointment to speak to our Guidance Counsellor, Mr Gree.



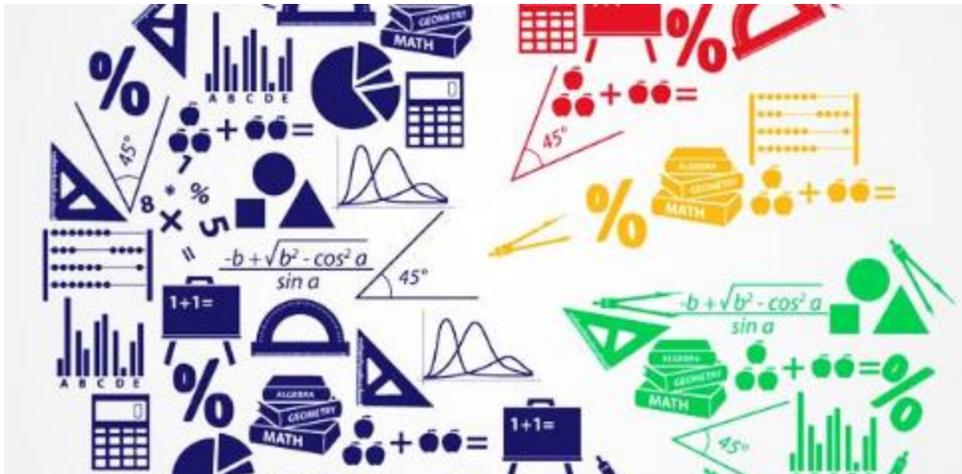
It is important to remember that, even though you may be disappointed, there are always options available to you. These options include the following alternatives:

### ✓ Second Chance Mathematics Exam

Mathematics is a required subject for many third level courses especially, Engineering and ICT courses. If you are disappointed with your Mathematics result, you may fear that you have now locked yourself out of the chance of receiving an offer next week.

However, some college courses offer students a Second Chance to secure their Mathematics grade. Some colleges also facilitate Preparation Courses in order to assist students that have difficulty with Mathematics. However, a warning! You will need to Act quickly. The application deadlines are approaching fast as these exams will take place in the coming weeks. Please check with your individual institution to see if the option is available to you.

Have a look at some options below:



- DIT holds a Mathematics Competency Test (MCT) for applicants to its Level 8 (Honours) Degree Programmes which require Higher Level Mathematics. The purpose of the MCT is to offer candidates an alternative route to achieve this minimum entry requirement. They also offer a two day tutorial prior to this August exam.
- Maynooth University offers an Engineering Mathematics Exam to provide students with a second chance to secure the required H4 to gain entry into the Engineering degree.
- WIT Maths Entry Exam scheme is designed to assist students who have not achieved the required grade in Mathematics for entry into Waterford Institute of Technology. The process provides a “second chance” for students to achieve that grade by attempting a paper comparable to the leaving certificate ordinary level paper. The content of this paper will be based on the leaving certificate (ordinary level) syllabus. Closing date for entry is Thurs Aug 23<sup>rd</sup> at 12pm Midday.

- Candidates who sit the examination at WIT and achieve the designated grade specific to their chosen programme of study will be offered a place (subject to numbers) as a **CAO round 4** offer in September.

### ✓ CAO Available Places

Every year, at this time, there are a number of vacant college places available through the CAO. These courses were in the CAO handbook but the level of application did not meet the number of places available, so vacancies still exist. These places continue to be available for application, both for those who have already applied to the CAO and those who have not yet submitted a CAO application. Please see link below to view these places. Please be careful - if you are making any changes to your CAO application we advise that you watch the CAO video on this process before proceeding with this.

[https://www.cao.ie/courses/vpl\\_courses.php](https://www.cao.ie/courses/vpl_courses.php)



### ✓ Private Colleges

As well as publicly-funded higher education colleges, such as universities and institutes of technology, there are also a number of long-established private third-level colleges, with strong track records, offering courses both within the CAO and/or through direct application. Many school-leavers, through their CAO research, will already be familiar with these and other independent colleges and their courses, and may, indeed, have applied for them. But, even at this stage, there will still be vacancies on some of these colleges' CAO-listed courses, which will be advertised on the CAO Available Places webpage.

Private colleges also offer courses that are not part of the CAO system. These are known as direct entry courses, and lead to qualifications at all levels. Many private colleges will be holding open days and evenings over the coming days and weeks and will be happy to discuss options. Additionally, interested applicants can use the direct entry courses filter on the [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) 'Course Finder' under the students tab and then courses to research options. Even where a course is listed with the CAO, the cut-off points for entry tend to be lower than in publicly-funded third-level colleges, although an applicant will have to meet any minimum entry requirements.



QualifaX National Learners database

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

Qualifax - National Learners' Database of course and career information. The site has a listing of all courses in Ireland.

### ✓PLC Courses

Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses are extremely popular — and for good reason. They offer an immense variety of courses, as diverse as animal care, early childhood education and pre-university law, business, science and engineering, which can prepare school-leavers to go straight into the workplace, or act as a stepping stone to third-level.

With all the talk about points and the fierce competition for CAO places around that process, it is worth noting that thousands of students enter college every year having used their PLC results as the basis for their application. In many cases, such students end up on a desired third-level programme, for which, a year earlier they would not have had the points. Having done a PLC, a student then has the choice of applying to the CAO on the basis of their PLC results, or using Leaving Cert points. They may submit both and the better of the two will be chosen.

The pressure of the Leaving Cert means that many sixth years are very unsure of what to do next, and lack confidence about making the right choice, and may use a PLC as a breathing space to build some essential skills, while getting a taste of a particular area of study. A big advantage of PLCs is that entry is not based on points, and all applicants are interviewed. PLC courses are offered at level 5 (one year) and level 6 (two years). Many colleges have been accepting applications and conducting interviews since January. However, most do not have closing dates and will continue to consider applicants until all places have been filled. While some courses will already be filled, it is likely that all PLC colleges will have places available on some courses. It is worthwhile ringing the college directly also to see if they have a place. Applications are made directly to colleges and anyone interested should contact their local colleges for information about available courses and interview dates. We have attached PLC interview questions for you to familiarise yourself with.

To search PLC courses, use the [CareersPorta.ie](http://CareersPorta.ie) Course Finder Tool. This tool is very helpful in researching all PLCs, but to ensure that you select the correct PLC course to enable you to link

in with your Level 8 Honours degree you should use the CAO Course Finder tool on Careersportal.ie and choose the course that you have listed on your CAO as your first preference or any other courses which you are interested in pursuing. Click into it from the list of CAO courses and then follow the link for Fetac/QQI courses. If you click on this you will find the PLC course which is linked up to the degree you are interested in. They are more details in the IGC brochure which we sent to you earlier this week if you would like a step to step overview of how to complete this.

[https://careersportal.ie/courses/plc\\_search.php](https://careersportal.ie/courses/plc_search.php)

PLC participants are eligible to apply for a student grant. For more details on the grant visit the SUSI website. [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie)



### ✓ **Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeships are a fantastic option for students wishing to work and pursue a part-time degree or trade. Please see list attached of the apprenticeships **HERE**.

### ✓ **Some other Alternatives**

- Bord Iascaigh Mhara <http://www.bim.ie/>
- Teagasc <https://www.teagasc.ie/>
- Garda recruitment <https://www.publicjobs.ie/en/>
- Defence Forces <http://www.military.ie/home/>

### ✓ **An Appeal for First Destinations Info**

Lastly, the school Guidance Department would like to make a small request. Each year we aim to compile a list of the First Destinations of our students - where do they go when they

leave Patrician Presentation Secondary School. The information is extremely useful in helping us to better plan our Guidance Programme as it allows us to analyse trends year on year. Once the offers are issued, we would ask that you would take the time to send us a very quick email to [guidancefethard@gmail.com](mailto:guidancefethard@gmail.com) letting us know what you have decided to do next year.



As always, if you would like to further discuss your options, you may make an appointment with Mr McGree. He will be able to offer you expert advice and will outline the options available to you. They will support you with any decisions that you may need to make and will help you move forward. For those of you hoping for CAO offers today, we hope you get what you wished for but, if not, the options available are wide and varied.

From all of the staff in Patrician Presentation Secondary School, we wish our Leaving Certificate Class of 2018 all the very best in the future.