



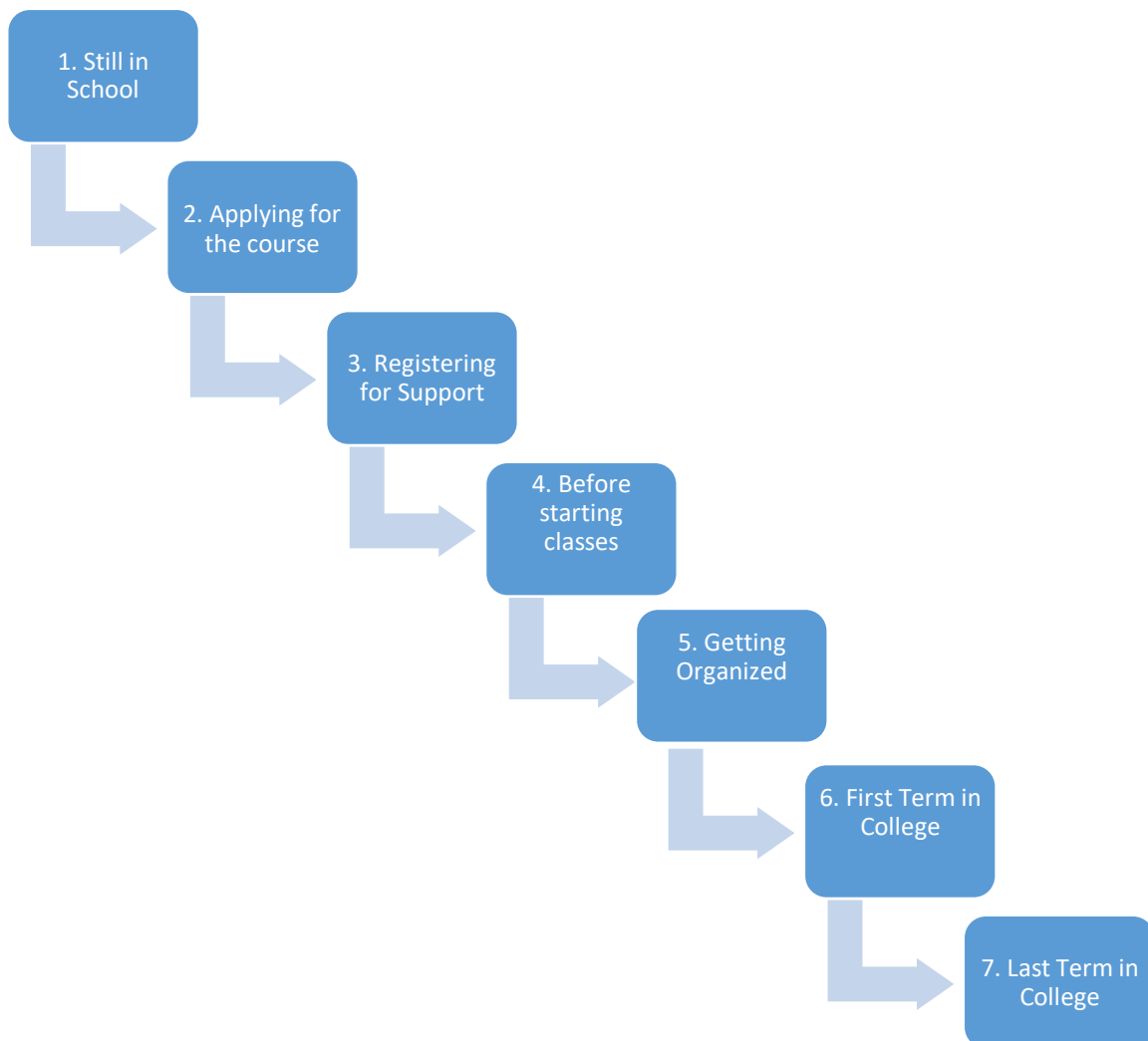
A Guide

for Students with

Disabilities and Learning Difficulties

This Guide is designed to help prepare students and parents/guardians for the transition from secondary school to college. This information will also help students and parents/guardians navigate all the various stages of college life.

The information is set out in a timeline from when students are still in secondary school until the end of their first year in college. The checklists are prompts for students and parents/guardians to ensure they are on track during all the various stages.



1. Still in School

Do plenty of research into the courses you are interested in.

The college website contains information about each course: <https://www.cdce.ie> The website details course content, duration, and certification. Check beyond the course name and look at the modules (subjects) on the course. Try and explore if studying these modules will suit you: is it practical, does it require a lot of writing & reading, is it very *Mathsy* (numbers, formulas, etc.), do you need a foundation knowledge for this subject (studied in school), is the course level suitable, are you interested in this subject/module, etc.

The website has a webpage for each course. This webpage lists the college campus where the course is located, **Coolock**, **Raheny** or **Kilbarrack**. The college produces a prospectus each year with similar details to the website of every course. The career guidance teachers in schools should have a copy available to distribute.

The college offers information sessions. These can be in-person or virtual meetings. They are usually held in November and February. They are advertised on the Coláiste Dhúlaigh CFE website and secondary schools are informed when they are happening. Current students and staff members from the college courses are present at these information sessions to answer course specific questions. The disability and learner support team are represented at all these meetings and are available to speak to students and parents/guardians about support available in the college

CHECKLIST:

- ✓ ***Do plenty of research.***
- ✓ ***Read the course information (especially module descriptions) on the college website.***
- ✓ ***Talk to the School Guidance Office & get a copy of our college prospectus.***
- ✓ ***Check locations of courses on website.***
- ✓ ***Attend the information session with your prepared questions.***

2. Applying for the course

- Applications to courses are made via our website using the **Apply Now** button located in the top right-hand corner of the website.
- When a student applies for a Coláiste Dhúlaigh CFE course they open a MIT account. The username and password for this account is emailed to the student's email account. This MIT account will be used at stages of their application and throughout the college term.
- There is a section on the MIT application form to declare a disability or learning support need. It is advisable for students with additional needs to declare their support need on their application form. When this is done the Disability & Learning Support DLS team are immediately notified of this application and can start communication with the student by email.

Checklist:

- ✓ *Has the student applied for the course?*
- ✓ *Has the student kept a secure record of their MIT username and password?*
- ✓ *Has the student declared their disability/learning difficulty?*
- ✓ *Has the student received and replied to emails from the Disability and Learning Support DLS team in Coláiste Dhúlaigh CFE?*

3. Registering for Support (this is a 3-step process)

Students with disabilities/learning difficulties need to register for support with the Disability and Learning Support team. Declaring a difficulty on the application form is not sufficient.

Step 1 of 3 – registering for support.

- ❖ There is a Student Support Registration [Form](#) on the college website: Students can fill in this form at any stage, however, they will receive an email or text to prompt them to fill this in April and August.

If a student has high support needs (physical disability or serious medical condition) requiring support staff or transport, it is recommended that they register for support early.

Step 2 of 3 – registering for support.

- ❖ Students will be emailed a Needs Assessment (NA) Form. This NA form needs to be filled out and uploaded with documentation (evidence of disability) to the students MIT account.

Step 3 of 3 – registering for support.

- ❖ In late August or September, each registered student will be required to book a meeting with the Disability and Learning Support Team.
- ❖ In this meeting we will discuss the students' support needs. A Recommendations for Educational Support (RES) document will be written up by a member of the Disability and Learning Support team and agreed with the student.
- ❖ This RES document will be shared with the course team with advice on the students' difficulty and recommendations on how best to work with this student.
- ❖ Supports discussed such as learning support or technology will be put in place as soon as practically possible.

Checklist:

- ✓ *Has the student completed the Student Support Registration [Form](#)?*
- ✓ *Has student checked for emails from the Disability & Learning Support Team*
- ✓ *Has student received, completed, and uploaded Needs Assessment Form*
- ✓ *Has student uploaded their evidence of disability/learning difficulty*
- ✓ *Has the student made a booking for their RES meeting?*
(Parents are welcome to attend the RES meeting if the student agrees)

4. Before starting classes in College

College visits for **some** students

Students with disabilities can request to visit the college before starting their course. They will be shown around the relevant campus – Coolock, Kilbarrack or Raheny- and the rooms they will be using. They will meet key members of staff and the course team. These sessions are extremely useful for students, course staff, and parents to discuss the support students need in the classroom. Students will complete a safety plan at this time, if required. Parents are welcome to attend this session with students.

Students with a diagnosis of ASD will be invited to an induction workshop in advance of starting college in September. These workshops are designed to prepare students for the first few weeks in college. These workshops usually take two hours. The workshops cover: what to expect in the first few weeks, introductions to members of staff and there is a tour of the quiet building.

Course Induction for **ALL** students

Course Induction. Before classes start students will have an initial morning and/ or afternoon induction. Course coordinators will email students to inform them of the day and time of these induction sessions. These induction sessions are designed to explain how the course will operate and introduce students to the course, their classmates, the building, and staff. There will also be short workshops during the first weeks in college on how to use Microsoft 365, academic writing and referencing and inclusion. Students will get a timetable and explanation of the modules. College email accounts and Moodle accounts are distributed during these sessions.

All Students should attend their course induction.

Checklist:

- ✓ *Does the student want to request a campus tour before classes start?*
- ✓ *Does the student want to attend the Induction Workshop?*
- ✓ *When is my course induction: day, time & campus?*
- ✓ *When are the short workshops (Microsoft 365, academic writing, etc.)?*

5. Getting Organised

Formal classes will usually start mid-to-late September.

This first class will explain the format of the module, assignment schedule and equipment list (if any) and health and safety points. Most courses are timetabled for four days a week. In the first few weeks the timetable may change but should be finalized by week 3 of each term. Students should have an assignment schedule by week 3. This will list all assignments on the course and dates due. Every course will have assignments and students will have to complete work in their own time as well as attending class.

It is important to attend all classes, especially classes at the start of the course

Some students can be overwhelmed in the first few weeks. The Disability and Learning Support Team and the Guidance Team in the College are available to assist students.

Support such as support staff, transport, technology, learning support as discussed at the RES meeting will be put in place as quickly as possible at the start of the course.

Things to Consider

This is a full-time course, and most courses are timetabled four days a week. There is an expectation that you will **attend all classes** and **allocate time for study and assignment writing**. Students who have a lot of additional commitments such as training, long commutes and part-time jobs will struggle to complete their coursework. Students who need to attend appointments should try to arrange them for days and dates that do not interfere with their attendance and study.

Checklist:

- ✓ *What is the start date for the first class?*
- ✓ *Put assignment schedule on display in the house*
- ✓ *Can students access their college email account and Microsoft 365 account? (If you have a problem ask for help now)*
- ✓ *Can the student commit to the demands of a full-time course & study schedule?*

6. First Term in College

Assessment Methods:

Each course is unique in its timetable, modules, and assignments. This will be explained in the first weeks of the course. Each module has different assessment methods which may be:

- Lab Reports
- Learner Records
- Skill Demonstrations
- Written Assignments
- Presentations: group or individual
- Projects
- Portfolios
- Completed practical component
- Written exams

Students should receive a breakdown of each module and the number, weighting, and submission dates of each assignment. Students should be aware of their own submission dates and take **personal responsibility** for organizing themselves **to submit work on time**. Students can print this organizational chart and fill in their course details. Throughout the year this schedule can be updated to help students stay on track with their course work.

Students will have a one-to-one review meeting with their course coordinator during the first term. This is an opportunity for both parties to discuss how the course is going, identify issues of concern and jointly agree on a course of action going forward.

Learning Support:

Students registered for support will be encouraged to attend Learning Support workshops during the first weeks of college. Students requiring ongoing support will be directed to book a time to link in with the learning support team through the online learner support booking system.

Checklist:

- ✓ *Has the student a good understanding of their assessment methods?*
- ✓ *Is the student using their organizational chart?*
- ✓ *Are assignments being completed and submitted on time?*
- ✓ *Does the student need help with organization or proofreading assignment work? Can anyone at home help with this?*
- ✓ *Is the student attending all classes and availing of learner support sessions?*
- ✓ *If a student is finding a module difficult or struggling - talk to tutors or a member of the learning support team.*
- ✓ *How did the One-to-One review go – how can the student use any feedback they received?*

7. Last Term in College

Assessments & Exams

Assessments: This is an important time of year; students really need to stay focused until the **very end** of the last term. Students need to keep on track with all their assessments and ensure they are submitting everything on time. Check the Organizational Chart to make sure you are not forgetting any course work for all the modules.

Exam: Are there exams in place for modules? Does the student require exam accommodations? Did the student request these during the RES meetings and have they submitted paperwork regarding this to the Disability & Learning Support Team. Students will receive emails from the Disability & Learning Support Team regarding exam accommodations several weeks before exam time.

Next Year's Plan

It is important at this stage that students spend some time planning for next year.

- If the student is applying to the **CAO/DARE route**, make sure to check all the deadline dates for CAO and DARE. It is the responsibility of the student/parent/guardian to make these applications. The college can offer limited support in these circumstances.
- If the student is doing a **two-year course**, they need to ensure they are on track with their results to gain entry to the second year. Check with tutors or course coordinator if unsure. Contact the Disability and Support Team to notify them of your intention to return to the second year.
- If the student is applying to **this college for another course**, then repeat the course application process that you did at the start of the year. Also, re-register with the Disability & Learning Support Team by completing the Student Support Registration [Form](#). Supports can be organised after a quick meeting.
- If the student is applying to **another College**, then the student should do as much research as possible, like the research done at the start of this course: Website, Open Days, College Prospectus, etc.

Checklist

- ✓ *Is the student submitting all their assessments on time?*
- ✓ *Is the Organizational Chart up to date with all the modules?*
- ✓ *Has the student applied for and agreed exam accommodations?*
- ✓ *Has the student applied for CAO or DARE – Check the deadline dates!*
- ✓ *If the student is applying for another college do they know when should they apply?*
- ✓ *Does the student need to make an appointment with the Guidance Office to discuss: courses, course requirements, using QQI qualifications as an access route to college?*