



2013 EDUCATION

Financing the future

Aisling Hussey looks at the financial support available to students >> 26

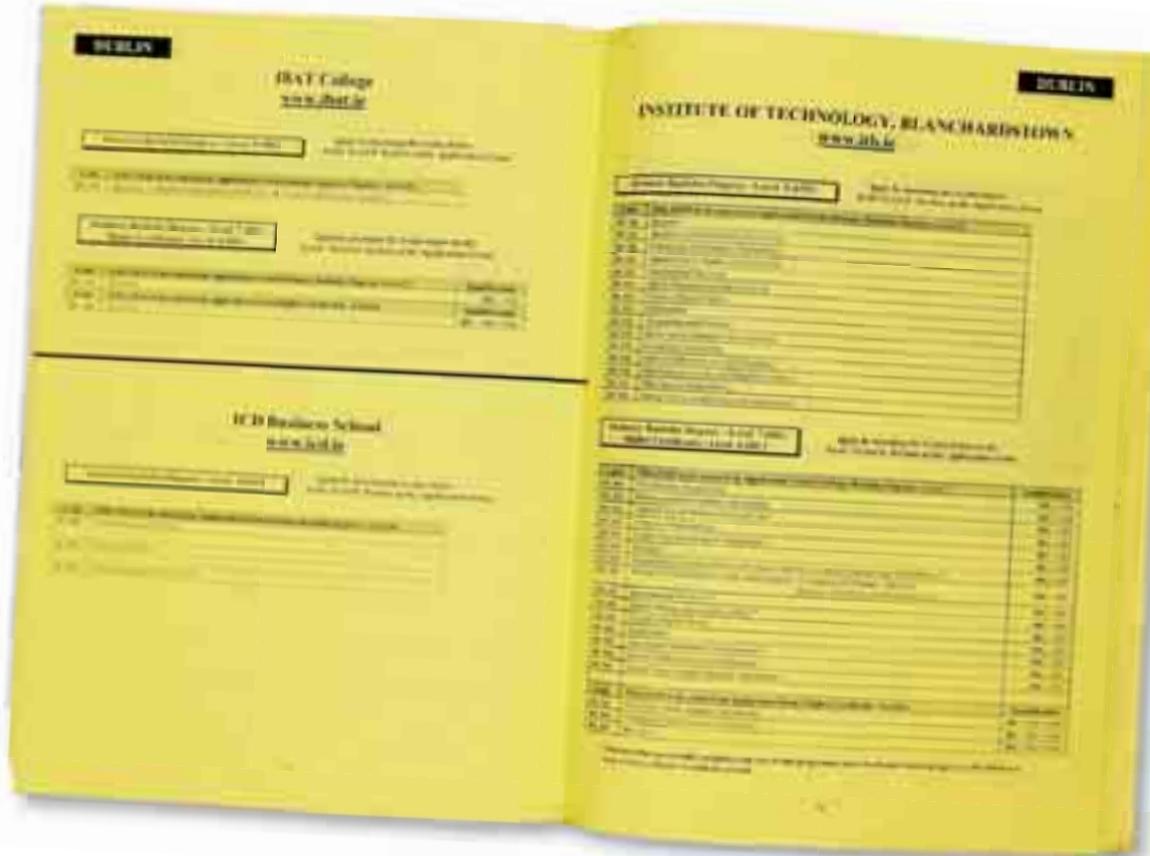
Edited by Mary Phelan | mphelan@farmersjournal.ie

1 Following friends is not a good idea: Applying for courses in one college or location, because that's where you believe your friends are going, is never a wise move. You might not be friends with them in two years time.

2 Incorrect names will set you back: The name on the CAO form must be the same as recorded by the school and submitted by the school to the State Examinations Commission.

3 Fill out all the spaces: Fill out all space provided on both the Level 8 and Level 7/6 lists. Leaving spaces blank leaves you with less options.

4 Thoroughly check all chosen courses for Minimum Entry Requirements (MERs): If you don't meet all the MERs for a particular course, it's wasting space on your form.



10 Understand costs: Going to college can be expensive and, in light of that, perhaps consider applying for colleges nearer to home.

11 Not ticking relevant boxes: Not ticking boxes on forms for option schemes such as HEAR and DARE is a frequent slip-up made by students.

12 Don't forget your previous Leaving Certificate number: Also fill in the year in which you first completed the Leaving Certificate if you're a repeat student.

13 Effort is required: Mature students must be aware that they need to spend time on the quality of their personal statement and the reasons for choosing their course, as this argument determines whether they'll receive a place.

CAO form – fifteen blunders

5 Expected points are not the priority when applying for courses: You should list your courses in genuine order of preference, even if the points seem out of reach. However, always ensure you have some back-up courses in place.

6 Ensure you tick the SUSI box: Ensure you tick the box on the CAO form indicating CAO may pass your information on to SUSI if you intend to apply for the third-level grant.

7 Non-standard applicants: Mature and deferred students must be aware that they will receive their CAO offer in early July and will only have one week to accept it.

8 Be vigilant: Check the CAO website as it indicates cancelled or new courses.

9 Losing confidence: Losing confidence after mock exams and going for CAO choices with lower points is a mistake often made by students.

It's that time of year again, as another batch of CAO students are faced with the task of choosing a career path. This guide, compiled by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors and **Mary Phelan**, will help you avoid the 15 most common blunders

14 Restricted courses: These must be included in CAO applications before 1 February. If you decide to amend at a later stage and want to include a restricted course then you'll have missed the opportunity to take the extra necessary assessments required to obtain a place.

15 September will come: You may find yourself on a course you're not interested in – if you don't research it adequately. Try and find out exactly what modules you'll be taking in each year of the programme and don't hesitate to contact the programme office or the college faculty to get more information. **CL**

CIT ON YOUTUBE



and further content is being developed on an on-going basis. Students should do everything in their power to make an informed CAO choice to avoid the possibility of doing first year twice. The channel is located at youtube.com/cit.

There's essentially only one resource that gives students a real sense of what they can expect from a course – students' own experiences. Of course, no matter how many friends and relatives you have in third-level, you might not always know someone who's familiar with the area you're

interested in. That's why CIT have launched a YouTube channel addressing all aspects of the college experience – education, societies, research and entrepreneurship – in high-definition video. The initial focus has been placed on disciplines within the Faculty of Engineering and Science,



Left: Betty McLoughlin, from the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, who helped compile the 15 most common blunders to avoid when filling in your CAO form.

