

Dear Parent/ Guardian, Student

Highlighted below is some advice for you to consider during the summer break to help transitioning into sixth year.

1. **University/ College Summer Camps-** Various colleges offer camps throughout the summer months. These are aimed to help students taste a certain degree for a day or promote an area of interest for a student. Popular summer camps include NUI Maynooth/ UCD- they offer students a chance to sample some of their degree programmes such as engineering, law, computer science, arts subjects, nursing, business, drama studies etc. Dundalk Institute of Technology are offering many computer courses to experience also. Check with the University/ College websites to research the programmes available each day, the cost and registration. It is an excellent way for students to become aware of a certain degree they are interested in studying and grasp life on a college campus.
2. **Applying to the UK-** In order to apply for the courses in the UK a student must write a personal statement to the University explaining why they are interested in applying for it. Boards take these personal statements very seriously and decide if they are willing to offer a prospective student a course based on them. In order to write an impressive personal statement it is advised that a student has work experience, enrolled in a short course, been part of a club, work shadowed- in an area of the course they are applying for a place. For example a student interested in studying nursing might have spent some time work shadowing in a hospital with a family/ friend, in addition they may be a member of the Red Cross. Also, some courses in the UK will ask students to attend an interview as part of the application process, therefore having these experiences will help them speak about suitability for the course. Finally, to research courses in the UK use the UCAS website.
3. **Applying to Europe-** More Irish students are interested in applying for courses in Europe. To gather information on costs, deadlines for application, degree content check the website Eunicas.
4. **Restricted Courses-** Some courses in Ireland ask students to create a portfolio, attend an interview, take an additional test or preform. Students will receive extra marks for taking these assessments. They are often added onto the Leaving Cert points for the restricted course they are applying for. All these restricted courses are marked with a # symbol on Careers Portal (website). It would be of great benefit to prepare for these extra assessments during the summer as sixth year can be busy enough. Many students will work on them during the break to relieve stress in their final year.
5. **Leaving Cert Revision/ Preparation-** Finally, I would suggest during the summer to continue revising for subjects that you may have found difficult in fifth year. The three month break is an ample opportunity to revise work that you may have missed or found complex. Some, students also use the break to prepare for assignments/ projects that are submitted before the Leaving Cert Exam in June. For example- History RSR, Agriculture Science etc.

Finally, I would like to congratulate you on completing the first part of your senior cycle year and wish you the very best in the final year commencing after the school holidays.

Useful Websites - Careers Portal. Qualifax. UCAS. Eunicas. Careers and News

Kind Regards, James Mc Nicholas (Guidance Counsellor)