

DARE | HEAR

FACTS AND FIGURES 2017 - 2018

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN IRELAND

SUMMARY REPORT

HEAR | HIGHER
EDUCATION
ACCESS
ROUTE

DARE | DISABILITY
ACCESS
ROUTE TO
EDUCATION

iuA | IRISH
UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION

Report prepared by the Irish Universities Association, on behalf of the participating Higher Education Institutions.

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KEY TERMINOLOGY

Application assessed = applicant made an online application and submitted documentation, therefore received a full assessment by trained DARE and/ or HEAR assessors.

Eligible = received a full assessment and was deemed as meeting the DARE/ HEAR criteria.

Ineligible = received a full assessment and was deemed as not meeting the DARE/ HEAR criteria.

Carry forward eligibility = applicant verified as having been eligible the previous year and is availing of the one year eligibility carry forward facility.

Reduced points offer = applicant received a DARE reduced points offer or a HEAR reduced points offer in a participating HEI (applies to Level 8 and Level 6/7 courses).

On/above the points offer = applicant received an offer on or above the points required in a participating or non-participating HEI (applies to Level 8 and Level 6/7 courses).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all of the staff in the participating colleges and other stakeholder groups who have contributed to the development and success of DARE and HEAR and to this research. Thanks to the members of the Access Steering Group for Higher Education Institutions, the DARE HEAR Operations Subgroup and the DARE HEAR Practitioners Group for the expertise and guidance they provided during the development and realisation of the research strategy. Further thanks to the CAO, for providing the data and their expertise, the Access Programme Manager and to the IUA. Finally, thank you to all of the students, their parents and schools who engaged with the schemes since their creation.

PUBLICATION DETAILS

Nic Fhlannchadha, S. (2018). DARE HEAR Facts and Figures Report 2017-2018 Summary. Report prepared by the Irish Universities Association, on behalf of the participating HEIs.

Introduction

The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) and Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) are higher education admissions schemes, which aim to achieve equality of access to higher education in Ireland for two under-represented cohorts identified in the National Access Plan 2015-2019. DARE offers reduced points places to school leavers who, as a result of having a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education. HEAR applicants must meet a range of financial, social and cultural indicators of socio-economic disadvantage to be eligible for reduced points places and extra college support. These schemes were developed by a number of universities and colleges to mitigate the negative impact socio-economic disadvantage and/ or disability can have on progression to higher education. Twenty Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) currently participate in DARE and/ or HEAR.

The DARE HEAR Facts and Figures Report 2018

The Facts and Figures Report 2017/18 is the second annual report on the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) and Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) by the Irish Universities Association (IUA). This year's document provides an overview of data from both supplementary access routes to the Irish higher education system highlighting key trends. Under advisement for content from participating Higher Education Institutes, this document will produce and illustrate figures, interpretations, and trends across datasets from 2015-2017 with reference to earlier datasets. The data analysis and dissemination of results achieved over the past two years has provided participating HEIs and the IUA with the accurate, current and valuable data required to make evidence-based and strategic decisions regarding the future direction of the schemes. Especially given that participation in DARE and/ or HEAR by HEIs in the Republic of Ireland has increased to include nearly all state-funded HEIs, data analysis must remain a priority in advancing the national access strategy and in making higher education accessible for all.

The DARE HEAR Facts and Figures Report 2018 Summary

This document provides a summary of the key observations which emerged from the report. The numbering of tables and figures from the main report is retained to facilitate the location of key findings in the main report.

Application numbers

Overall, the average HEAR applicant in 2015-2017 was more likely to be female than male, to be aged between 17 and 18, to have Irish nationality but not necessarily to have been born in Ireland. Approximately a quarter of all applicants lived in Dublin. Finally, they were more likely to be in a DEIS school (participating in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools scheme) than applicants to DARE.

Overall, the average DARE applicant in 2015-2017 was equally likely to be male or female, more likely to be aged between 17 and 18, to have Irish nationality and to have been born in Ireland. Approximately a quarter of all applicants lived in Dublin. Finally, they were less likely to be in a DEIS school than applicants to HEAR but were more likely to be in a DEIS school than those who applied in 2011.

As was the case in 2015-2016, the growth in number of applications to DARE from 2016 to 2017 (18.3%; Fig. 2) was greater than the growth in applications to HEAR (which was down 1.3%; Fig. 1) and to the overall Central Applications Office (CAO; 5.2%). Longitudinally, while pointing to significant growth in applications to HEAR from 2010 to 2014, applications to this scheme appear to have reached a plateau. The number of dual eligible applicants, i.e. those eligible for DARE and HEAR, increased by 36% in 2016 and a further 35% in 2017. The increase is likely due to the prioritisation of dual eligible applicants for a reduced points place from 2016 onwards.

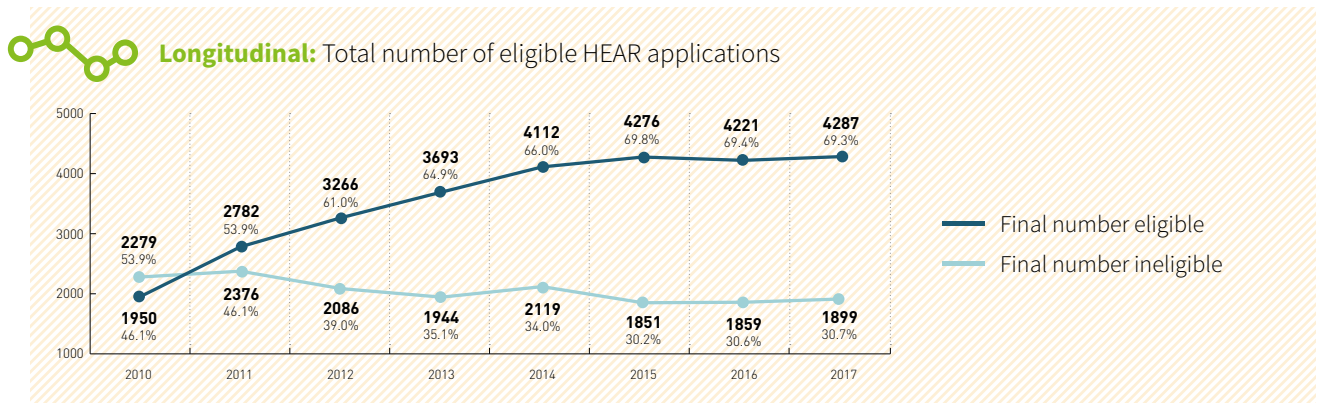


Figure1: Based on Table 1.18 Longitudinal: Total number of eligible HEAR applications.

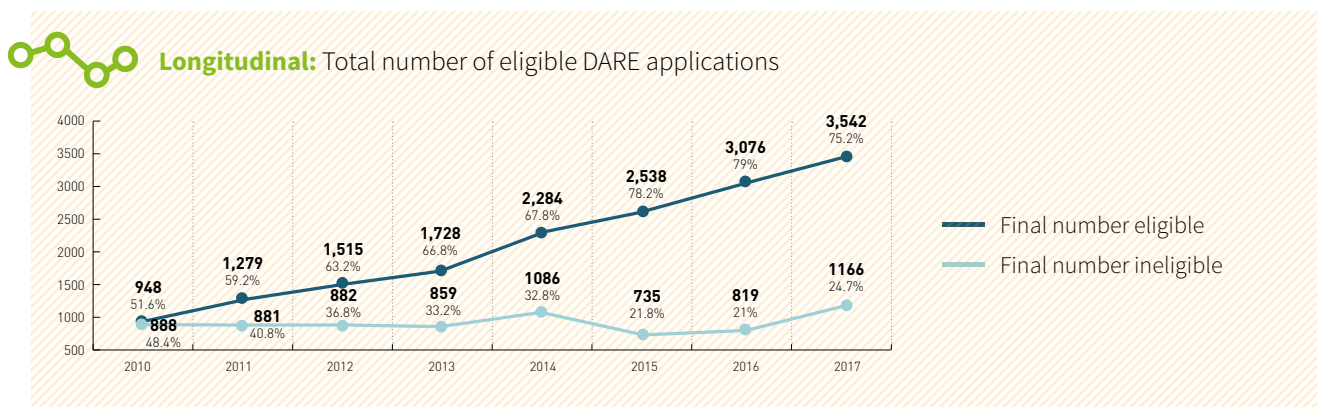


Figure 2: Based on Table 2.18 Longitudinal: Total number of eligible DARE applications.

Demographic variables

In keeping with the results from previous years, examination of the demographic variables (e.g. sex, address by county, country of birth) included in the report did not generate any concerning findings with regard to inherent biases in the assessment process for either DARE or HEAR eligibility. For example, applicants were roughly equally likely to be eligible regardless of sex or county of birth, as shown in the tables below.

Table 1a Sections of Tables 1.19 and 2.19.

	HEAR 2017	DARE 2017
	Eligible as % of assessed	Eligible as % of assessed
Female	68.8	74.4
Male	70.0	76.1

Table 1b Sections of Tables 1.24 and 2.24.

	HEAR 2017	DARE 2017
	Eligible as % of assessed	Eligible as % of assessed
Ireland	69.8	75.8
Other EU	69.0	69.4
Non EU	66.2	74.0

School type and DEIS status

The percentage of schools with DEIS status with at least one applicant to HEAR (Fig. 3) has remained consistently high since 2010, while the percentage of these schools with at least one applicant to DARE (Fig. 4) has increased substantially since the development and application of the DARE redefinition in 2015-2016. While the number of applications from each of these schools could range widely, having at least one applicant to either scheme was interpreted as evidence of engagement with the schemes.

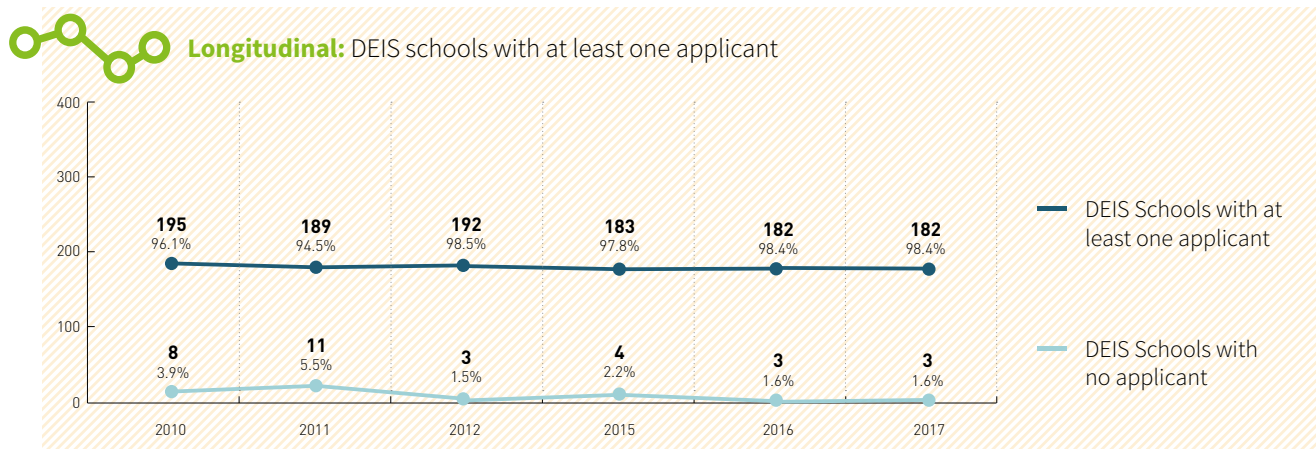


Figure 3: Based on Table 1.16 Longitudinal: DEIS schools with at least one applicant to HEAR.

*The data for 2013 and 2014 were not available.

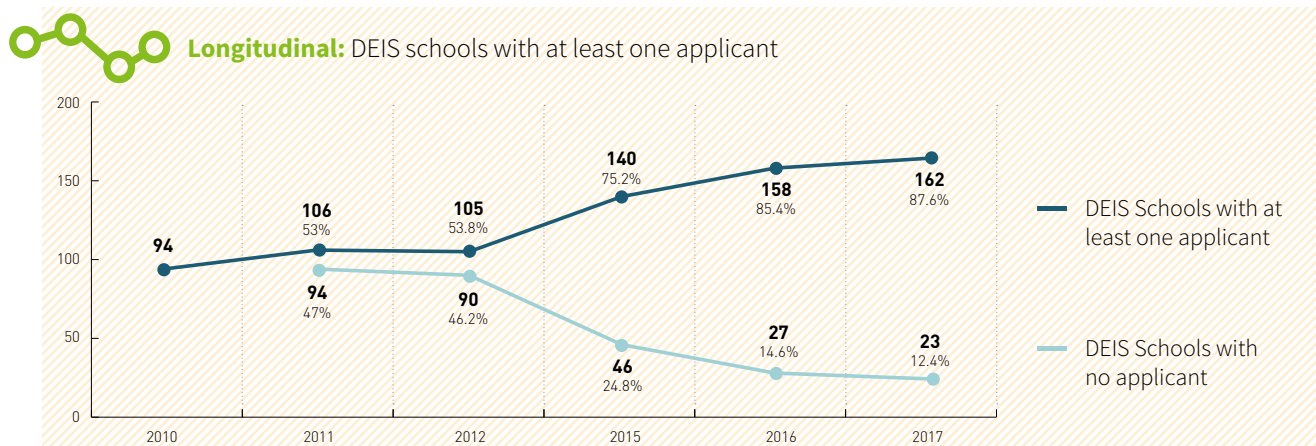


Figure 4: Based on Table 2.16 Longitudinal: DARE applications by DEIS school status. *The data for 2013 and 2014 were not available.

With regard to DARE and school profile, there remains a considerably higher application rate from “Other” schools (the majority of which are fee-paying schools) relative to the secondary, comprehensive, vocational and community schools (see Table 2.28 for results from 2017). While the difference in rate of eligibility across the school types was narrower, applicants from “Other” schools remain somewhat more likely to be deemed eligible for DARE.

Table 2.28 DARE eligibility by type of school and school DEIS status.

2016									
	Total LC sits	Applied		Assessed		Eligible		Ineligible	
	n	n	% total LC sits	n	% of applied	n	% of assessed	n	% of assessed
Secondary	29942	3310	11.1	2545	76.9	1939	76.2	606	23.8
Vocational	13542	1419	10.5	1026	72.3	753	73.4	273	26.6
Comprehensive	1288	172	13.4	127	73.8	99	78.0	28	22.0
Community	7640	797	10.4	592	74.3	438	74.0	154	26.0
Other	1653	350	21.2	260	74.3	218	83.8	42	16.2

The range for applicants receiving an offer across the school types in 2017 was 85.4-89% (see Table 2.38 below), which is quite a narrow range, which indicates that DARE eligible applicants are equally like to receive an offer regardless of the type of school they attend. The range was slightly wider for applicants accepting an offer in 2017, which a similar trend evident in 2016 and 2015. Eligible applicants from Other Schools tended to receive and accept an offer most frequently (though not entirely consistently). They were the cohort most likely to accept a reduced points offer in 2015-2017. A high proportion of applicants from Secondary Schools and Comprehensive Schools also received reduced points offers, while a lower percentage of applicants from Vocational and Community Schools accepted reduced points offer, due in part to their relatively lower rate of accepting any offer.

Table 2.38 DARE offers and acceptances by school type.

		Received any offer		Accepted an offer		Accepted HEAR Below the Points		Accepted an offer on/ above the points in a participating HEI*		Accepted an offer in a non-participating HEI*	
	n	n	% of total	n	% of received	n	% of accepted	n	% of accepted	n	% of accepted
Secondary	1939	1685	86.9	1387	82.3	525	37.9	567	40.9	246	17.7
Vocational	753	648	86.1	493	76.1	140	28.4	212	43	111	22.5
Comprehensive	99	87	87.9	69	79.3	26	37.7	33	47.8	10	14.5
Community	438	374	85.4	261	69.8	83	31.8	116	44.4	57	21.8
Other	218	194	89	164	84.5	72	43.9	72	43.9	19	11.6

*Does not include entry through HEAR.

Applicants to HEAR (Table 1.51) and DARE (Table 2.46) in DEIS schools had a significantly lower mean Leaving Certificate points attainment than applicants in non-DEIS schools in 2015-2017. The difference between the mean points attainment for applicants from DEIS and non-DEIS schools was greater for DARE applicants than for HEAR applicants. This is evidence of the double disadvantage experienced by students with disabilities who also experience socio-economic disadvantage. It supports the rationale for the continued prioritisation of applicants eligible for DARE and HEAR.

Table 1.50 Points attainment by school type for all HEAR applicants (2017 only).

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Secondary	4237	0	625	334.6	108.8
Vocational	3022	0	613	330.9	104.5
Comprehensive	217	77	576	353.1	102.3
Community	1581	0	625	332.4	105.2
Other	77	60	625	398.3	114.6

Table 1.51 Points attainment by DEIS status for all HEAR applicants (2017 only).

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
DEIS	3132	0	602	314.9	105.7
Non-DEIS	6002	0	625	343.9	106.1

Table 2.45 Points attainment by school type for all DARE applicants (2017 only).

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Secondary	3292	0	625	339.4	115.3
Vocational	1414	0	625	316.9	105.8
Comprehensive	171	0	577	342.9	104.2
Community	794	0	589	311.8	108.2
Other	345	20	625	382.7	111.2

Table 2.46 Points attainment by DEIS status for all DARE applicants (2017 only).

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
DEIS	827	0	566	294.9	104.9
Non-DEIS	5189	0	625	339.1	113

Note in relation to DEIS Urban and DEIS Rural schools: The most recent categorisation of DEIS schools as DEIS Urban or DEIS Rural schools was carried out in 2011 by the Department of Education. This categorisation was used to analyse the data from 2015 and 2016. However, it is inadvisable to use the 2011 list for data from 2017, given the length of time which has passed since the data for the list were compiled, changes to schools' DEIS status and the changes in population dispersion since then.

HEAR

The more HEAR indicators an applicant meets, the less likely they are to receive an offer. However, in 2017, number of indicators met appears to have very little impact on the mean rate of accepting an offer, with all applicants accepting an offer approximately 83% of the time. There was a slightly more uneven negative correlation between the rate of accepting a HEAR reduced points offer and number of indicators met in 2017, which may require further investigation by HEIs aiming to make offers to those most impacted by social and financial disadvantage. These results demonstrate the strength of the HEAR indicators in identifying those impacted by socio-economic and socio-cultural disadvantage, it also points to wider issues and barriers in relation to the impact of financial and social disadvantage on participation in HE.

Table 1.40 Total number of HEAR eligible applicants to receive and accept an offer by number of indicators met – Summary.

		Total	Received any offer		Accepted an offer		Accepted HEAR Below the Points	
		n	n	% of total	n	% of total	n	% of accepted
2017	3 indicators	875	775	88.6	643	83	215	33.4
	4 indicators	1772	1535	86.6	1285	83.7	438	34.1
	5 indicators	1238	1054	85.1	861	81.7	253	29.4
	6 indicators	402	305	75.9	254	83.3	73	28.7
2016	3 indicators	834	729	87.4	638	87.5	235	36.8
	4 indicators	1725	1487	86.2	1257	84.5	433	34.4
	5 indicators	1243	1022	82.2	842	82.4	248	29.5
	6 indicators	419	327	78	269	82.3	94	34.9
2015	3 indicators	860	768	89.3	654	85.2	265	40.5
	4 indicators	1711	1505	88	1295	86	452	34.9
	5 indicators	1291	1099	85.1	881	80.2	297	33.7
	6 indicators	413	328	79.4	274	83.5	90	32.8

DARE

There are varying rates of eligibility depending on the disability type. Some of this variability is accounted for by the nature of the evidence of disability required. For instance, some disability categories require very specific information, e.g. evidence of duration of the condition and must be completed within a specific timeframe. For other categories, no time limit applies and there is more latitude in relation to the professional accepted. Eligibility rates for the various disability categories stayed largely similar from 2016-2017. Some notable exceptions include those assessed as Blind/ Vision Impaired, with a Mental Health Condition, and with a Specific Learning Difficulty (SLD), all both of which fell in 2017. It is particularly notable that rate of eligibility for those with an SLD fell, given the introduction of greater flexibility in the age of report from the Educational Psychologist and the source of attainment scores.



Longitudinal: DARE eligibility by disability type

Table 2.27 Longitudinal: DARE eligibility by disability type.

	2010		2011		2012		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	n	% of total	n	% of total	n	% of total	n	% of total	n	% of total	n	% of total	n	% of total
ASD	66	97.1	86	91.5	114	88.4	167	86.5	244	95.7	244	91.7	310	89.6
ADD/ ADHD	65	92.9	103	90.4	142	91	173	89.2	172	92.5	213	96.4	227	89
Blind/ Vision Impaired	20	55.6	29	80.6	21	51.2	32	68.1	27	54	38	80.9	55	72.4
Deaf/ Hard of Hearing	47	67.1	58	75.3	48	68.6	67	62.6	78	70.9	82	77.4	89	73
DCD	71	80.7	117	75	117	73.1	229	71.1	243	83.2	260	79.8	342	81.4
Mental Health	78	87.6	112	86.8	194	85.8	294	76.6	375	85	512	81.5	635	75.5
Neurological Condition	25	64.1	34	94.4	35	97.2	148	84.6	172	82.3	140	85.9	151	80.3
Physical Disability	52	83.9	86	91.5	79	85.9	94	70.7	124	83.8	154	79.8	197	83.8
Significant Ongoing Illness	158	83.6	200	88.5	212	78.8	336	75.5	324	82	425	79.4	439	72.6
Speech & Language	N/A	N/A	14	100	23	88.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	43	76.8	58	69.9
Specific Learning Difficulty	362	32.7	440	37.2	530	44.5	744	52.5	867	68	965	71.3	1039	67.6
Total eligible	948	51.6	1279	59.2	1515	63.2	2284	67.8	2630	78.2	3076	79	3542	75.2

*The data for 2013 were not available.

The Educational Impact Statement (EIS) is a form used by DARE to determine if an applicant has been educationally impacted as a result of their disability and was introduced in 2016 as part of the re-definition of DARE. The EIS was effective in identifying educational impact, and, as more data become available, is undergoing continuous refinement. The profile of educational impact was uneven across the disability types, which points to differences in how disability interacts with educational experience.

Dual eligible applicants

Dual eligible applicants remain more educationally impacted than the average DARE-only eligible applicant and HEAR-only eligible applicant. The mean points attainment of dual eligible applicants was 21-24 points lower than the mean points attainment of eligible DARE or eligible HEAR applicants in 2017. The prioritisation of dual eligible applicants appears to have had a positive impact on the percentage of applicants receiving an offer in 2016, with a very high percentage going on to accept the offer, while the percentage fell somewhat in 2017 to 74.4%, compared to 79.2% of DARE-only eligible applicants and 83.2% of all HEAR-only eligible applicants.

Offers and acceptances

Approximately a third (979) of HEAR eligible applicants who received an offer accepted a reduced points offer in 2017 (see section of Table 1.39). Over a third (1177) were eligible for HEAR but were accepted into a participating HEI on or above the minimum points required for their accepted course. Just over a quarter (820) were eligible for HEAR but went on to accept an offer in a HEI which does not participate in the HEAR scheme.

Table 1.39 Total number of HEAR applicants to receive and accept offers – Summary (section of full table).

		n	Received any offer		Accepted an offer		Accepted HEAR Below the Points		Accepted an offer on/ above the points in a participating HEI*		Accepted an offer in a non-participating HEI*	
			n	% of total	n	% of received	n	% of accepted	n	% of accepted	n	% of accepted
2017	Eligible	4287	3669	85.6	3043	82.9	979	32.2	1177	38.7	820	26.9
2016	Eligible	4221	3565	84.5	3006	84.3	1010	33.6	1108	36.9	831	27.6
2015	Eligible	4276	3701	86.6	3105	83.9	1104	35.6	1074	34.6	879	28.3

Over a third (861) of DARE eligible applicants who received an offer accepted a reduced points offer in 2017 (see section of Table 2.35). A significantly higher number (1064) were eligible for DARE but were accepted into a participating HEI on or above the minimum points required for their accepted course. Less than a fifth (451) were eligible for DARE but went on to accept an offer in a HEI which does not participate in the DARE scheme.

Table 2.35 Total number of DARE applicants to receive and accept offers – Summary (section of full table).

		n	Received any offer		Accepted an offer		Accepted HEAR Below the Points		Accepted an offer on/ above the points in a participating HEI*		Accepted an offer in a non-participating HEI*	
			n	% of total	n	% of received	n	% of accepted	n	% of accepted	n	% of accepted
2017	Eligible	3542	3061	86.4	2423	79.2	861	35.5	1064	43.9	451	18.6
2016	Eligible	3076	2660	86.5	2188	82.3	819	37.4	872	39.9	416	19
2015	Eligible	2630	2306	87.7	1891	82	750	39.7	728	38.5	350	18.5

Applicants in the Care of the State

Applicants to HEAR who were verified as being in the Care of the State, i.e. children in foster care, in the care of the HSE and/or separated children, are consistently less likely to receive an offer compared to the overall HEAR eligible cohort (Table 1.44). Upon receiving an offer, this cohort was nearly as likely as the overall HEAR eligible cohort to accept the offer, though were nearly twice as likely to accept an offer in a HEI which does not participate in HEAR as the overall HEAR eligible cohort in 2017, which indicates that they are possibly over-represented in IoTs and under-represented in universities and teaching colleges.

Table 1.44 Total number of HEAR eligible applicants to receive and accept an offer by SEG – Summary (section of full table).

		n	Received any offer		Accepted an offer		Accepted HEAR Below the Points		Accepted an offer on/ above the points in a participating HEI*		Accepted an offer in a non-participating HEI*	
			n	% of total	n	% of received	n	% of accepted	n	% of accepted	n	% of accepted
2017	All Eligible	4287	3669	85.6	3043	82.9	979	32.2	1177	38.7	820	26.9
	In the care of the State	126	94	74.6	74	78.7	20	27	19	25.7	33	44.6
2016	All Eligible	4221	3565	84.5	3006	84.3	1010	33.6	1108	36.9	831	27.6
	In the care of the State	111	73	65.8	57	78.1	16	28.1	19	33.3	22	38.6
2015	All Eligible	4276	3701	86.6	3105	83.9	1104	35.6	1074	34.6	879	28.3
	In the care of the State	119	90	75.6	74	82.2	23	31.1	22	29.7	28	37.8

Areas for further consideration

The Facts and Figures Reports of 2017 and 2018 have been and will be useful for policy makers and practitioners in evaluating who applies to the DARE and/or HEAR schemes, how they negotiate the application process, and how many, and which cohorts of, applicants go on to receive and accept an offer.

These reports are accompanied by Summary reports, Individual HEI reports and Individual HEI Link Schools reports, all of which aim to facilitate understanding and utilisation of the data by HEI staff and other invested organisations to inform and enhance future policy and practice.

There remains a need to investigate the impact of the DARE and HEAR reduced points mechanism on the offers being accepted by eligible applicants. The number of eligible applicants who receive a reduced points offer but who would otherwise not have received an offer, and are therefore brought into the HE system because of DARE and/or HEAR, has yet to be investigated. Of those who would have received some offer regardless of eligibility, it is unknown what impact the reduced points offer had on the position of the course and of the HEI making the reduced points offer in their CAO preferences. Finally, further investigation of the impact of a reduced points offer on the nature of the course accepted is needed to ascertain what impact a reduced points offer has on chosen area of study.

