
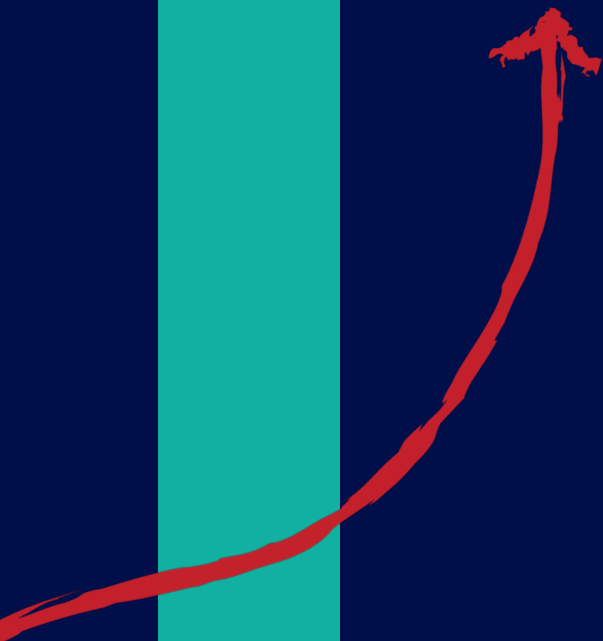


2024



# ATTENDEE INFORMATION PACK



[irishtimes.com/higheroptions](https://irishtimes.com/higheroptions) 

# CONTENTS

## **INTRODUCTION 01**

---

## **PLANNING YOUR DAY 02**

How to make the most of your time

---

## **FINDING YOUR WAY 03**

Getting There  
Getting Around

---

## **TALKING TO EXHIBITORS 04**

Tips for talking to exhibitors  
Questions to ask exhibitors

---

## **CAREER TALKS 05**

Timetable

---

## **AFTER THE EVENT 06**

---





## Welcome to Higher Options 2024

We're delighted to have you join us at this year's event. Whether you're exploring your future options or narrowing down your choices, this is the perfect opportunity to discover what's out there and plan your next steps. We hope you have a productive and inspiring experience.

The opening times for the event are:

Wednesday, 25th September	9am – 12 noon & 12.30pm - 3.30pm
Thursday, 26th September	9am – 12 noon & 12.30pm - 3.30pm
Friday, 27th September	10.30am - 1.30pm

The event is in the Merrion Road Main Hall Complex of the RDS. We are running the event as neighbours and concurrently with World Skills Ireland who will be in RDS Simmonscourt.

It is important to note video and audio recordings will be taken throughout the event. By attending Higher Options you agree to have your likeness recorded for possible editorial, promotion and/or social media use.

We hope you find the event useful and wish you the best of luck for all your career and study choices in the coming year.

All the best,

Janet Stafford,  
Event Organiser,  
THE IRISH TIMES HIGHER OPTIONS



## Making the the most of your visit

Each Higher Options session is three hours long. Prepare well and you can be sure you have made the most of your time at the event. Before attending, ask yourself what you want to take away from it. Reflect on your career and study goals, ideas you have about different areas of study, and any specific questions you have for exhibitors. Do you want to find out about individual colleges, or a particular course, or find out about what career your course will lead to?

It's a good idea to know who will be there, and the key exhibitors you want to visit. Knowing what stands to visit, what career talks to attend and having questions ready to ask is key, use the [Attendee Hub](#) to prepare for the event. The Higher Options supplement will be published with The Irish Times on Tuesday, September 24th. Spend some time on the [preparation worksheet](#) to help focus your mind before Higher Options.

Spending a little bit of time in preparation before the event, means you'll really benefit from the knowledge of the college representatives on the day.

### What to bring

- A notebook and pen to write down your questions and answers.
- You may find yourself asking a lot of questions so bring some water in case your throat goes dry. Hydration Stations will be situated around the halls, so you can refill your water bottle.
- Bring a tote bag to hold the prospectuses and course material you collect.

### Downloading your ticket

If you purchased your own ticket, downloading it is easy. Visit the '[My Account](#)' section of the website to find your ticket and download it.

If your teacher ordered your ticket, they will arrange to distribute it.

### Queueing information

Please note that queueing will start no earlier than 30 minutes before each session starts. Early admission will not be granted.



## Getting There

Higher Options takes place in the Main Hall Complex of the RDS. The main entrance to the venue is via the Merrion Road.

The Irish Times is committed to sustainable travel. All attendees, where possible, are encouraged to take public transport, coach, carpool, or bike.



### Parking

If you are arriving by car with a parent or guardian, parking for individuals is available in the RDS for a fee of €10 per day.

### Coach Parking

If you are arriving on a coach with your class, the coach will park in RDS Simmons Court. From there, follow the one-way system marked out to guide you to the queue at the RDS Main Hall Complex. If you need help, keep an eye out for wayfinding signage and stewards will guide you to the queue.

### Cycling or Walking

It is a [short cycle](#) from Dublin city centre to the RDS with dedicated cycle lanes in place. Visit [Dublin Bikes](#) for more information on easy bike rental in Dublin city. Those walking and cycling should use the Merrion Road gate and enter the hall via the Main Hall front entrance.

### Public Transport

#### Train and DART Routes

The DART service runs to [Lansdowne Road Station](#) and [Sandymount Station](#), both of which are a short walk from the RDS.



[InterCity Rail](#) services run from 2 different Dublin stations:

- [Heuston Station](#) has trains to and from Ballina, Westport, Galway, Limerick, Tralee, Cork, Waterford, Portlaoise and Kildare.
- [Connolly Station](#) has trains to/from Belfast, Sligo, Dundalk, Kildare, Longford and Rosslare Europort. The Luas Red Line links the two stations door to door.

For timetables and tickets, please visit the [Iarnród Éireann Trip Planner](#).

### Bus Routes

The Merrion Road Main Hall Complex is serviced by several bus routes.

[4 From Harristown To Monkstown Avenue via Ballsbridge](#)

[7 From Mountjoy Sq. Towards Loughlinstown/ Cherrywood via Ballsbridge](#)

[7a From Mountjoy Sq. Towards Loughlinstown](#)

[27X From UCD Belfield To Clare Hall Via RDS Ballsbridge](#)

[18 From Palmerstown Towards Sandymount via Ballsbridge](#)

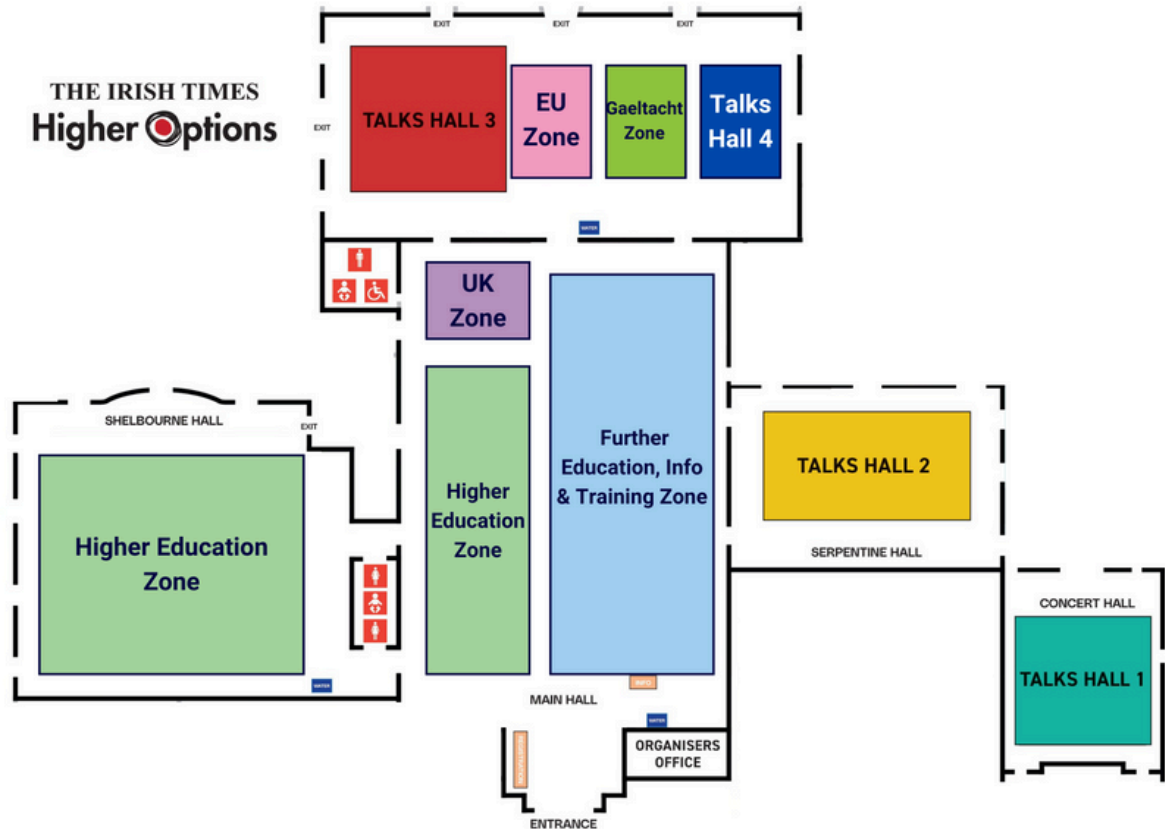
[S2 From Heuston Station to Poolbeg via RDS Ballsbridge](#)

There are also multiple routes serviced to and from the nearby [Donnybrook Road Bus Garage](#) on the N11 which is 10 minutes walking distance from the RDS. They are [46a](#), [145](#), [7b](#), [7d](#), [39a](#), [84x](#), [116](#) and [155](#).



## Getting Around

The main entrance to the venue leads you into the RDS Main Hall. Once you're in visit the information booth at the centre of the hall to pick up your map so you can find your way around each zone. This is a general map, check the [Attendee Hub](#) for a detailed map and list of exhibitors.



## Medic On Site

Please visit the Organiser's Office at the front of the Main Hall if you need the assistance of a medic. The First Aid Room is at the front of the Main Hall, adjacent to Restaurant 1881. A medic will also patrol the event regularly should assistance be required.

## What to do if you get lost

Higher Options is a big event and you may get separated from your group. If this happens, and you cannot locate your group before they leave the venue, please report to the Organiser's Office at the front of the Main Hall. The team will be able to make contact with your teacher and assist you.



## Tips for Talking to Exhibitors

Have a look at which colleges are at the event on the [exhibitors list](#). You won't get to every stand but pick two or three that you want to focus on and prioritise those. Please bear in mind that some larger Irish university stands will be very busy so having questions prepared in advance is advised.

At the stands, there may be lecturers who can tell you more about their subject and give you a sense of whether it might be of interest to you. There will also be student ambassadors who can tell you all about campus life and what it's like to go to the college they are representing.

While it is useful to be prepared and have a clear focus, try to balance this out by still being open to new study options and possibilities. You might find your ideal course exists in a form you didn't previously know about. Every year, students come to Higher Options and find inspiration from seeing things they never considered before.

After attending career talks and speaking with stand representatives, make a note of things to follow up later. You might think you'll remember, but there will be a lot to take in.

## Questions to ask Exhibitors

Asking questions will help you gather comprehensive information to make informed decisions. Here are some sample questions you should consider asking, your time is of the essence so jot down no more than five key points that really matter to you:

### Academic Programs

1. What courses and programs do you offer?
2. Can you provide details about the content of the course I'm interested in?
3. What are the entry requirements for the course I like?
4. Are there specific subject requirements for the course I'm interested in?

### Campus Life

5. What is campus life like?
6. What clubs, societies, and extracurricular activities are available?
7. What services and academic supports are available for students?
8. Can you tell me about the campus facilities (libraries, labs, sports facilities)?
9. What is in place if I have accessibility requirements?

### Admissions and Application Process

10. Do you offer early admissions or any special admissions programs?
11. Are there any scholarships or financial aid opportunities available?





### Accommodation and Living

12. What accommodation options are available for students?
13. How much does on-campus/off-campus accommodation cost?
14. What support is available for finding accommodation?

### International Opportunities

15. Are there opportunities for studying abroad or exchange programs?
16. Do you have partnerships with other international institutions?



## Career Talks

At Higher Options we stage dozens of careers talks on CAO applications, funding supports as well as career areas to help guide you on the next step of your education journey. Among the career talks, there will be Irish Times journalists hosting panel discussions in different skills areas like law, nursing, business, science, tech and engineering. There will be talks on how to study in Ireland, Europe and the UK.

Visit the [Career Talks landing page](#) and jot down the start times of any talks you want to attend, as well as any you're at least partly interested in. You can't make them all, so prioritise and be aware of the time. You'll receive the timetable below when you arrive and signs around the event will remind you when talks start and where they are taking place but have a plan in place.

### Wednesday & Thursday

Talks Hall 1	Talks Hall 2	Talks Hall 3	Talks Hall 4
9.30 - 9.50 Careers in Engineering	9.30 - 9.50 Careers in Science & Tech	9.30 - 9.50 Careers in Nursing	9.30 - 9.50 Careers in Sustainability
10.00 -10.25 Applying to CAO	10.00 -10.25 Careers in Sport & Fitness	10.00 -10.25 Careers in Hospitality & Tourism	10.00 -10.25 Careers with Irish
10.35 -10.55 How to choose your career	10.35 -10.55 Careers in Business	10.35 -10.55 Careers with a Law degree	10.35 -10.55 This is FET / Generation Apprentice
11.10 -11.30 Careers with an Arts Degree	11.10 -11.30 Careers in Media	11.10 -11.30 Careers in Agriculture & Horticulture	11.10 -11.30 Applying to UK & EU
12.45 -13.05 Careers in Engineering	12.45 -13.05 Careers in Science & Tech	12.45 -13.05 Careers in Nursing	12.45 -13.05 Careers in Sustainability
13.20 -13.40 Applying to CAO	13.20 -13.40 Careers in Sport & Fitness	13.20 -13.40 Careers in Hospitality & Tourism	13.20 -13.40 Careers with Irish
13.55 - 14.15 How to choose your career	13.55 - 14.15 Careers in Business	13.55 - 14.15 Careers with a Law degree	13.55 - 14.15 This is FET / Generation Apprentice
14.30 -14.50 Careers with an Arts Degree	14.30 -14.50 Careers in Media	14.30 -14.50 Careers in Agriculture & Horticulture	14.30 -14.50 Applying to UK & EU

### Friday

Talks Hall 1	Talks Hall 2	Talks Hall 3	Talks Hall 4
10.45 - 11.05 Careers in Engineering	10.45 - 11.05 Careers in Science & Tech	10.45 - 11.05 Careers in Nursing	10.45 - 11.05 Careers in Sustainability
11.20 - 11.55 Applying to CAO	11.20 - 11.55 Careers in Sport & Fitness	11.20 - 11.55 Careers in Hospitality & Tourism	11.20 - 11.55 Careers with Irish
12.10 - 12.35 How to choose your career	12.10 - 12.35 Careers in Business	12.10 - 12.35 Careers with a Law degree	12.10 - 12.35 This is FET / Generation Apprentice
12.45 - 13.05 Careers with an Arts Degree	12.45 - 13.05 Careers in Media	12.45 - 13.05 Careers in Agriculture & Horticulture	12.45 - 13.05 Applying to UK & EU

## Next Steps in Your Education Journey

- Take time after the event to review the brochures, leaflets and information you receive from the college representatives.
- Send follow-up emails to the admissions officers or representatives you spoke with, and ask any further questions you may have about their institution and/or the courses they offer.
- Take time to focus your thoughts on what you found interesting and on some of the ideas that attending the event suggested to consider for future studies.
- Discuss what you learned with your parents, friends, teachers and guidance counsellor to help you make some decisions around CAO and other options.
- Watch Career Talks and keep up to date with Irish Times Education content on [irishtimes.com/education](https://www.irishtimes.com/education).
- Opt-in to comms from The Irish Times Higher Options team to stay in touch and keep up to date [at this link](#).

Thank you for attending Higher Options, we hope you enjoy it and find it useful in planning for your future. We wish you every success as you continue your studies and make career choices.

Check out the **Attendee Hub**  
for more info!

Download the **preparation  
worksheet** now!

