



STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS.

**S.I. No. 155 of 2015**



STUDENT GRANT SCHEME 2015

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STUDENT GRANT SCHEME 2015  
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S.I. No. 155 of 2015

## STUDENT GRANT SCHEME 2015

I, JAN O’SULLIVAN, Minister for Education and Skills, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by section 16 of the Student Support Act 2011 (No. 4 of 2011), with the consent of the Minister for Finance, hereby make the following scheme of grants:—

## Part 1

## PRELIMINARY AND GENERAL

*Citation*

1. This Scheme may be cited as the Student Grant Scheme 2015

*Commencement and application*

2. (1) This Scheme shall come into operation on 22nd April 2015.

(2) This Scheme applies in relation to the provision of grants to students in the 2015/16 academic year, where such year begins on or after 1 September 2015, irrespective of whether anything done under this Scheme is done before, on or after 1 September 2015.

*Interpretation*

3. (1) In this Scheme—

“Accelerated Technician Programme” has the meaning assigned to it in Regulation 4(b)(viii) of the Regulations;

“Act” means the Student Support Act 2011 (No. 4 of 2011);

“appeals officer” means a person designated under section 20(1) of the Act;

“approved course” shall be construed in accordance with section 8 of the Act and Regulation 4 of the Regulations;

“approved institution” shall be construed in accordance with section 7 of the Act and Regulation 3 of the Regulations;

“awarding authority” means—

- (a) an Education and Training Board, or
- (b) a local authority, or
- (c) an appointed awarding authority;

*Notice of the making of this Statutory Instrument was published in “Iris Oifigiúil” of 28th April, 2015.*

“appointed awarding authority” is the City of Dublin Education and Training Board in accordance with article 4 of the Student Support Act (appointment of awarding authority) Order 2012 — S.I. No. 161 of 2012.

“dependent child” shall be construed in accordance with section 16(7) of the Act and article 19(8);

“dependent student” means a class of applicant coming within the meaning of that term in accordance with article 13;

“EU rate of fee” means the fee determined and charged by an institution for a course to European Union, EEA and Swiss nationals, and related categories of student;

“field trip” means a trip which is compulsory and an integral part of a course, which is for fact-finding or research purposes, and without which the student cannot graduate or progress to the next year of the course;

“framework of qualifications” means the framework of qualifications established and maintained pursuant to section 7 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 (No. 26 of 1999);

“Free Fees Schemes” includes the Free Fees Schemes and the Middle Level Technician Programme (M.L.T) and the Higher Technical and Business Skills Programme (H.T.B.S.) which provide for the Exchequer to meet the tuition fees of eligible students attending approved full-time undergraduate courses in approved institutions in the State who meet the criteria of those initiatives;

“independent student” means a class of applicant coming within the meaning of that term in accordance with article 13;

“Member State” means, where the context so admits, Member State of the European Union;

“Minister” means the Minister for Education and Skills;

“normal residence” shall be construed in accordance with article 7(2);

“postgraduate course” means a course leading to a major higher education and training award at Level 8 (Higher Diploma), Level 9 (Postgraduate Diploma, Master Degree), Level 10 (Doctoral Degree) on the national framework of qualifications or equivalent awards;

“post leaving certificate course” has the meaning given to it in Regulation 4(a) of the Regulations;

“prior scheme” means the Higher Education Grants (HEG) Scheme made pursuant to the Local Authorities (Higher Education Grants) Acts 1968 to 1992 or the schemes administered by a Vocational Education Committee, namely the Vocational Education Committees' (VEC) Scholarship Scheme, the Third Level

Maintenance Grants Scheme for Trainees (TLT) and Maintenance Grants Scheme for Students attending Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses;

“recognised awarding body in the State” means—

- (a) Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI);
- (b) one of the universities in the State;
- (c) the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland;
- (d) one of the Institutes of Technology with delegated authority; or
- (e) the Dublin Institute of Technology;

“Regulations” means the Student Support Regulations 2015 (S.I. No. 154 of 2015)

“relevant persons” include—

- (a) dependent children,
- (b) a dependent student's parent(s), and
- (c) an independent student's spouse, civil partner or cohabitant;

“student” shall be construed in accordance with section 14(1) of the Act and Regulation 5 of the Regulations;

“student contribution” means the charge payable by students who are deemed eligible for free tuition fees under the Free Fees Schemes. This contribution encompasses the student services charge and a contribution by students towards tuition costs;

“tuition student” has the meaning given to it by section 14(7) of the Act;

“undergraduate course” means a course leading to a major higher education and training award at Level 6 (Higher Certificate), Level 7 (Ordinary Bachelor Degree), Level 8 (Honours Bachelor Degree) on the national framework of qualifications, or equivalent awards, other than a course known for the time being as a post leaving certificate course;

(2) A word or expression which is used in this Scheme and which is also used in the Act has, unless the context otherwise requires, the same meaning in this Scheme as it has in the Act.

- (3) (a) A reference in this Scheme to an article is to an article of this Scheme, unless it is indicated that reference to some other instrument is intended.
- (b) A reference in this Scheme to a paragraph or subparagraph is to the paragraph or subparagraph of the provision in which the reference

occurs, unless it is indicated that reference to some other provision is intended.

- (c) A reference in this Scheme to a Schedule is to a Schedule to this Scheme, unless it is indicated that reference to some other instrument is intended.

## Part 2

### SCHEME OF GRANTS

#### *Persons to whom the Scheme applies*

4. (1) This Scheme applies to students or tuition students who wish to apply for a grant in respect of attendance on an approved course, in an approved institution, in the academic year 2015/16, other than a person attending a course who was, prior to the coming into operation of section 6 of the Act and this Scheme, awarded a grant to attend their current course under a prior scheme.

(2) An applicant who meets the definition of “student” or “tuition student” and who is attending an approved course in an approved institution shall be eligible to be considered for a grant subject to and in accordance with this Scheme.

(3) An applicant is a student or tuition student in connection with an approved course if, in assessing his or her application for a grant, the awarding authority determines that the person meets or will meet the definition of a “student” or “tuition student” as construed in accordance with section 14 of the Act and Regulation 5 of the Regulations.

(4) To be eligible for a grant in the academic year under this Scheme, a person who meets the definition of student or tuition student who is pursuing an approved course in an approved institution must fulfill the specific eligibility conditions of this Scheme contained in articles 14 to 18 and must have a reckonable income within the limits and other requirements set out in articles 19 to 25.

#### *Awarding authority*

5. An applicant’s entitlement to a grant shall be assessed by the awarding authority deemed appropriate pursuant to article 33.

#### *Classes of grant*

6. For the purposes of this Scheme there shall be three classes of grant as follows—

- (a) a maintenance grant;
- (b) a fee grant; and
- (c) a postgraduate fee contribution.



*Maintenance grant*

7. (1) A maintenance grant is a contribution towards the living costs of a student and is payable at—

- (a) the standard rate, at either a full (100%) or part (75%, 50% or 25%) rate, depending on the level of reckonable income; or
- (b) the special rate, depending on the level of reckonable income and other requirements;

and, in either case, at either adjacent or non-adjacent rates, depending on the distance between a student's normal residence and the institution where the approved course takes place.

(2) For the purposes of this article, “normal residence” means a student’s usual place of residence. For a dependent student this will be the permanent or home address of the dependent student's parents. In the case of an independent student, the normal residence will be the permanent or home address of the independent student.

(3) The awarding authority shall decide the rate applicable to a maintenance grant in each particular case, in accordance with article 27.

(4) A maintenance grant shall not be payable to a tuition student, as defined in section 14 of the Act.

*Fee grant*

8. (1) Subject to the terms of this article, an eligible student or an eligible tuition student can be considered for a fee grant.

(2) A fee grant shall be payable in respect of attendance on an approved course of higher education at an approved institution in the State (other than a course known for the time being as a post leaving certificate course).

(3) A grant for attendance at an approved postgraduate course in Northern Ireland listed in Schedule 3 to the Regulations may include a fee grant where it is awarded to a student, but not where it is awarded to a tuition student.

(4) A fee grant may consist of any of three elements: a tuition fee element, a student contribution element and a field trip element, payable up to a maximum overall limit specified in Schedule 4.

(5) Subject to the maximum overall limits, the tuition fee element and the student contribution element of a fee grant are payable at full (100%) or part (50%) rates.

(6) The awarding authority shall decide on the rate and value applicable in respect of the tuition fee element and the student contribution element and the amount, if any, payable in respect of the field trip element in each particular case, in accordance with articles 28, 29 and 30.

(7) A student or tuition student in receipt of, or eligible for, full assistance towards the tuition fee element from any other source, including sponsorship or an award, shall not be eligible for a fee grant under the terms of this Scheme.

(8) A fee grant, or part thereof, shall be subject to a reduction where the student or tuition student receives, or is eligible for, assistance towards the tuition fee from any other source.

(9) Where a fee grant is subject to a reduction pursuant to paragraph (8), the amount of the reduction shall be equal to the value of the assistance which the person has received or to which he or she is eligible.

*Tuition fee element of fee grant*

9. (1) A student or a tuition student who is eligible under the Free Fees Schemes for free tuition in respect of an approved undergraduate course is not eligible for the tuition fee element of a fee grant under this Scheme.

(2) Subject to article 8(2) and (3), a student or a tuition student, may be assessed for the tuition fee element where they are—

- (a) pursuing an approved undergraduate course to which the Free Fees Schemes applies but where the student, or tuition student, is ineligible for free tuition fees under those schemes; or
- (b) pursuing an approved undergraduate course which is not a course approved for the Free Fees Schemes; or
- (c) pursuing an approved postgraduate course.

*Student contribution element of fee grant*

10. Where a student or a tuition student is pursuing a course approved for the Free Fees Schemes, and where that student has qualified for free tuition fees under those schemes, the awarding authority may award an eligible student or tuition student a full (100%) or part (50%) grant in respect of the student contribution charge in accordance with article 29.

*Field trip element of fee grant*

11. (1) Subject to article 8(2) and (3), where a student or a tuition student qualifies for a full (100%) fee grant, or would have qualified for a full fee grant but for the Free Fees Schemes, and is required to participate in a compulsory field trip, the awarding authority shall, as applicable, consider the student or tuition student for a grant in respect of eligible field trip expenditure, in accordance with article 30.

(2) The rate of the field trip element, if any, is dependent on whether the tuition fee cost, regardless of whether it is funded under this Scheme, and the student contribution element exceeds the maximum limits payable in respect of a fee grant.

(3) The expenditure which is eligible for consideration in respect of a field trip grant is the reasonably incurred, receipted cost of travel and accommodation, associated directly with the field trip.

*Postgraduate fee contribution*

12. (1) Subject to article 14(13) the awarding authority may award an eligible student or a tuition student pursuing an approved postgraduate course, a postgraduate fee contribution at the rate specified in Schedule 4.

(2) An award for attendance at an approved postgraduate course in Northern Ireland listed in Schedule 3 to the Regulations may include a postgraduate fee contribution where it is awarded to a student, but not where it is awarded to a tuition student.

(3) A student or tuition student in receipt of, or eligible for, full assistance towards the tuition fee element from any other source, including sponsorship or an award, shall not be eligible for the postgraduate fee contribution under the terms of this Scheme.

(4) A postgraduate fee contribution award shall be subject to a reduction where the student or tuition student receives, or is eligible for, assistance towards the tuition fee from any other source.

(5) Where the postgraduate fee contribution is subject to a reduction pursuant to paragraph (4), the amount of the reduction shall be equal to the value of the assistance which the person has received or to which he or she is eligible.

*Classes of applicant*

13. (1) For the purposes of this Scheme there shall be two classes of applicant as follows—

(a) independent student; and

(b) dependent student.

(2) An applicant's class is defined at their first point of entry to an approved post leaving certificate course or an approved higher education course or at their point of re-entry to such an approved course and will continue to apply for the duration of their studies.

(3) In this scheme an “independent student” means a mature student who did not ordinarily reside with his or her parents, or either of them, from October of the year before the first point of entry to an approved post leaving certificate course or an approved higher education course or re-entry to an approved course and where it is established to the satisfaction of the awarding authority that they are eligible on that basis.

(4) “Mature student” means a student who on 1 January—

(a) in the year of entry for the first time to an approved post leaving certificate course;

(b) in the year of entry for the first time to an approved higher education course (other than a course known for the time being as a post leaving certificate course); or

(c) in the year of re-entry to an approved course, is at least 23 years old.

(5) “Re-entry”, for the purposes of this Scheme, means a mature student entering an approved course following a break in studies of at least three years, having previously attended an approved course.

(6) A mature student pursuing an approved course following a break in studies of at least five years, in circumstances where the mature student previously attended, but did not successfully complete, a course and is returning in order to pursue an approved course in the relevant academic year, shall be known as a “second chance student”.

(7) “Dependent student” means every student other than an independent student, as provided for in this Scheme, who is eligible to be considered under this Scheme.

*Eligibility exclusions*

14. (1) A student or a tuition student is not eligible for a grant if he or she already holds a grant from an awarding authority.

(2) A student or tuition student is not eligible for a grant if he or she has been awarded or holds any grant, scholarship, prize, allowance, bursary or award of similar description made from public funds in the State, or equivalent from a Member State, a contracting state to the EEA Agreement or the Swiss Confederation, in respect of the approved course being attended.

(3) The awards from public funds referred to in paragraph (2) do not include the following—

(a) awards such as scholarships, prizes or bursaries, made by the institution being attended;

(b) postgraduate research awards where the stipend portion of the award does not exceed a specified amount, which for the relevant academic year, is specified to be €16,000;

(c) awards to applicants under the Student Assistance Fund or the Fund for Students with Disabilities;

(d) Easter Week Scholarship Scheme;

(e) Donogh O’Malley Scholarship Scheme;

(f) Department of Education and Skills Third Level Bursary Schemes;

(g) All Ireland Scholarship Scheme.

(4) A student or tuition student in receipt of any award mentioned in paragraph (3) which includes a provision for fees will not be eligible for a fee grant or a postgraduate fee contribution under this Scheme.

(5) A student is not eligible for a maintenance grant if he or she is in receipt of the Back to Education Allowance (BTEA) or Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) allowance, except in the case of a student in receipt of the BTEA or VTOS allowance and the maintenance grant in 2009/10 who is progressing to an approved add-on course, as defined in the Regulations, at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications, without a break in studies.

(6) A student coming within the exception referred to in paragraph (5) may continue to hold either the BTEA or VTOS allowance in conjunction with the maintenance grant for the duration of the add-on course.

(7) Notwithstanding paragraph (5), a student or tuition student in receipt of the BTEA or VTOS allowance is eligible to apply for the fee grant elements and the postgraduate fee contribution, where he or she is pursuing a course in respect of which fee grants are payable.

(8) A student or tuition student is not eligible for a maintenance grant if he or she is pursuing a postgraduate course.

(9) A student or tuition student is not eligible for a fee grant if he or she is pursuing a postgraduate course.

(10) Notwithstanding paragraph (8) and (9), a student or tuition student who was, prior to the coming into operation of this scheme, pursuing a postgraduate course and was awarded a maintenance or fee grant to attend that course under a prior scheme or under the Student Grant Scheme 2011, shall continue to be eligible for that grant while attending the postgraduate course in respect of which the grant was awarded, subject to the normal terms and conditions of the scheme.

(11) Notwithstanding paragraph (9), a student or tuition student may be eligible for a fee grant if he or she is pursuing a postgraduate course and the applicant's reckonable income meets the qualifying conditions for the Special Rate as specified in Schedule 1 and Schedule 2.

(12) Notwithstanding paragraph (11), a student or tuition student who does not satisfy the eligible payment qualifying condition for the special rate may be eligible for a fee grant where:

- (i) the student was awarded a fee grant for the previous year of their current postgraduate course, and
- (ii) the student held the eligible payment for the special rate on the specified date which enabled their entitlement to a fee grant; and
- (iii) the student, by virtue of their attendance on an approved course, is no longer eligible to be in receipt of an eligible payment; and

- (iv) the student is renewing their grant for the second or subsequent year of their postgraduate course not having had a break in studies, and
- (v) the reckonable income is within the limit for the special rate as specified in Schedule 1;

shall be deemed to meet the qualifying conditions for the Special Rate as specified in Schedule 1 and 2.

(13) Notwithstanding paragraph (9) and (11), a student or tuition student may be eligible for a Postgraduate Fee Contribution where the applicant's reckonable income is below the reckonable income limit specified at Schedule 1 for the Postgraduate Fee Contribution.

*Period of eligibility and progression*

15. (1) A grant awarded under this Scheme shall be awarded only in respect of attendance at an approved course in an approved institution, and for the normal duration of such an approved course. A student or tuition student may not, at any one time, qualify for a grant for more than one approved course.

(2) Where a student is required as part of an approved undergraduate or postgraduate course to attend a higher education institution outside the State for a period of up to one year, a maintenance grant may continue to be paid where the period abroad does not extend the normal duration of the approved course.

(3) Where a student is required to participate in an off-campus placement as a compulsory part of an approved undergraduate or postgraduate course, a maintenance grant may continue to be paid where the period of off-campus placement does not extend the normal duration of the approved course.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (3), a student participating in an Accelerated Technician Programme is not eligible to have their maintenance grant continued during the period of paid placement.

(5) A grant shall be paid to a student or tuition student, where he or she is in “progression”, within the meaning given to that term by section 2 of the Act, irrespective of whether he or she was paid a grant for previous attendance on a course and subject to the terms and conditions of this Scheme.

(6) Subject to paragraph (8), a grant may not be paid in respect of a repeat period of study on the same course.

(7) Subject to this paragraph, paragraphs (5) and (8), and the specific progression conditions in articles 16 to 18 a grant may not be paid in respect of a repeat period of study, on a different course. Notwithstanding this condition an applicant who, having previously pursued any course, but not completed it, wishes to pursue an approved course, shall be considered for funding in line with the following provisions—

- (a) Having previously attended, but not completed, any post leaving certificate course or equivalent, an applicant shall—
  - (i) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved post leaving certificate course before being eligible to be considered for a grant; or
  - (ii) be eligible to be considered for a grant to pursue an approved higher education course.
- (b) Having previously attended, but not completed, any undergraduate course at Level 6 or 7 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent, an applicant shall—
  - (i) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved undergraduate course at Level 6 or 7 of the framework of qualifications before being eligible to be considered for a grant, or
  - (ii) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved undergraduate course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications before being eligible to be considered for a grant, or
  - (iii) be eligible to be considered for a grant to pursue an approved post leaving certificate course where no more than one year was completed on an undergraduate course at Level 6 or 7 of the framework of qualifications, or
  - (iv) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved post leaving certificate course where more than one year was completed on any undergraduate course at Level 6 or 7 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent, before being eligible to be considered for a grant, or
  - (v) be eligible to be considered for a grant to pursue an approved postgraduate course.
- (c) Having previously attended, but not completed, any undergraduate course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent, an applicant will—
  - (i) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved undergraduate course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications before being eligible to be considered for a grant, or
  - (ii) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved undergraduate course at Level 6 or 7 of the framework of qualifications before being eligible to be considered for a grant, or

- (iii) be eligible to be considered for a grant to pursue an approved post leaving certificate course where no more than one year was completed on an undergraduate course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications, or
  - (iv) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved post leaving certificate course where more than one year was completed on any undergraduate course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent, before being eligible to be considered for a grant, or
  - (v) be eligible to be considered for a grant to pursue an approved postgraduate course.
- (d) Having previously attended, but not completed, any postgraduate course or equivalent, an applicant will—
- (i) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved postgraduate course before being eligible to be considered for a grant, or
  - (ii) be eligible to be considered for a grant to pursue an approved undergraduate course where no more than one year was completed on any postgraduate course, or
  - (iii) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved undergraduate course at Level 6, 7 or 8 of the framework of qualifications where more than one year was completed on any postgraduate course at Level 8, 9 or 10 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent, before being eligible to be considered for a grant, or
  - (iv) be eligible to be considered for a grant to pursue an approved post leaving certificate course where no more than one year has been completed on any postgraduate course, or
  - (v) be required to complete an equivalent period of study on an approved post leaving certificate course where more than one year was completed on any postgraduate course before being eligible to be considered for a grant.

(8) An awarding authority shall have discretion to waive the provisions at paragraphs (6) and (7) in exceptional circumstances, in line with guidelines drawn up by the Minister.

(9) Notwithstanding paragraphs (6), (7) and (8), a second chance student or second chance tuition student, in accordance with article 13(6), returning in order to pursue an approved course, may be considered eligible for a grant to pursue an approved course, including where this provides for a repeat period of study, subject to the rules of progression, as provided for in this Scheme and section 2 of the Act.



(10) The maximum periods in respect of which a grant may be payable are outlined below and are subject to the conditions set out in this Scheme for progression:

(a) Post leaving certificate courses:

— Grant aid shall be limited to a maximum of three years in total;

(b) Undergraduate courses:

— Grant aid shall be limited to a maximum of four years in total for courses at Level 6 and 7 of the framework of qualifications and, within that total, shall be subject to a maximum of—

(i) two years at Level 6;

(ii) three years at Level 7;

— Grant aid shall be limited to a maximum of four years in total for a course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications, except for courses where the normal duration is more than four years.

(c) Postgraduate courses:

— Grant aid for postgraduate study shall be limited to a maximum of four years in total.

— Account is taken of all previous attendance and attainment at post graduate level when considering grant aid entitlement for post graduate study, regardless of whether a person previously received a grant or not.

*Post leaving certificate courses — progression*

16. (1) Subject to the general conditions outlined in this Scheme and the maximum periods specified in article 15(10)(a), the specific progression conditions that apply to participation on a post leaving certificate course are set out in this article.

(2) A student pursuing an approved post leaving certificate course is ineligible for a grant if he or she already holds a further education qualification at Level 5 or 6 of the framework of qualifications, or a third level qualification at or above Level 6 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent qualifications.

(3) A grant shall not be paid to a student who already holds an undergraduate qualification or a postgraduate qualification and is pursuing a post leaving certificate course, irrespective of whether or not a grant was paid previously.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (2), an applicant who already holds a further education qualification not higher than Level 5 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent, and is now pursuing a course that offers progression, shall be eligible for a grant.

*Undergraduate courses — progression*

17. (1) Subject to the general conditions outlined in this Scheme, and the maximum periods specified in article 15(10)(b), the specific progression conditions that apply to participation at undergraduate level are set out in this article.

(2) A grant shall not be paid to an applicant who already holds a postgraduate qualification and is pursuing an undergraduate qualification, irrespective of whether or not a grant was paid previously.

(3) The progression conditions in respect of study at Level 6 of the framework of qualifications are as follows—

- (a) a student or tuition student who is entering for the first time a course which leads to a higher education and training award, and who wishes to pursue an approved course at Level 6 of the framework of qualifications shall be eligible for a grant.
- (b) a student or tuition student is ineligible if he or she already holds a higher education and training award at or above Level 6 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent;

(4) The progression conditions in respect of study at Level 7 of the framework of qualifications are as follows—

- (a) a student or tuition student who is entering for the first time a course leading to a higher education and training award, and who wishes to pursue an approved course at Level 7 of the framework of qualifications, shall be eligible for a grant;
- (b) a student or tuition student is ineligible if he or she already holds a third level qualification at or above Level 7 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent;
- (c) a student or tuition student who already holds a higher education and training award at Level 6 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent and is progressing to an approved course at Level 7 of the framework of qualifications shall be eligible for a grant in respect of a maximum of two years of an approved course at Level 7 of the framework of qualifications;
- (d) a student or tuition student who completed part of a course at Level 6 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent and gains admission through exemption to the second or subsequent year of an approved course at Level 7 of the framework of qualifications shall be eligible for a grant;

(5) The progression conditions in respect of study at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications are as follows—

- (a) a student or tuition student who is entering for the first time a course which leads to a higher education and training award and wishes to pursue an approved course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications shall be eligible for a grant;
- (b) a student or tuition student is ineligible if he or she already holds an undergraduate higher education and training award at or above Level 8 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent;
- (c) a student or tuition student who already holds a higher education and training award at Level 6 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent and is progressing to an approved course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications shall be eligible for a grant;
- (d) a student or tuition student who already holds a higher education and training award at Level 7 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent and is progressing to an approved course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications shall be eligible for a grant;
- (e) a student or tuition student who completed part of a course at Level 6 or 7 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent and gains admission through exemption to the second or subsequent year of an approved course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications shall be eligible for a grant.

*Postgraduate courses — progression*

18. (1) Subject to the general conditions outlined in this Scheme, and the maximum periods specified in article 15(10) (c) the specific progression conditions that apply to participation at postgraduate level are set out in this article.

(2) The progression conditions in respect of postgraduate study at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications are as follows—

- (a) a student or tuition student who is entering for the first time a course at postgraduate level leading to a higher education and training award and wishes to pursue an approved postgraduate course at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications shall be eligible for a grant;
- (b) a student or tuition student is ineligible for a grant if he or she already holds a postgraduate higher education and training award at or above, or equivalent to, Level 8 of the framework of qualifications;
- (c) for the purposes of this Scheme, postgraduate qualifications at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent are deemed to be progression from undergraduate qualifications at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent.

(3) The progression conditions in respect of postgraduate study at Level 9 of the framework of qualifications are as follows—

- (a) a student or tuition student who is entering for the first time a course at postgraduate level leading to a higher education and training award and wishes to pursue an approved postgraduate course at Level 9 of the framework of qualifications shall be eligible for a grant;
  - (b) a student or tuition student who holds a postgraduate qualification at Level 8 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent, and no higher, may progress to one of the following—
    - (i) a postgraduate diploma at Level 9 of the framework of qualifications,
    - (ii) a master's degree at Level 9 of the framework of qualifications,
    - (iii) the Barrister-at-Law Degree at the Honorable Society of King's Inns, or
    - (iv) the Professional Practice Course in the Law Society of Ireland;
  - (c) a student or tuition student is ineligible for a grant if he or she already holds a postgraduate higher education and training award at or above, or equivalent to, Level 9 of the framework of qualifications, unless he or she meets the conditions at subparagraph (d);
  - (d) a student or tuition student who already holds a postgraduate diploma at Level 9 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent and is pursuing one of the following, not having previously pursued a course at Level 10 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent, shall be eligible for a grant—
    - (i) a masters degree at Level 9 of the framework of qualifications,
    - (ii) the Barrister-at-Law Degree at the Honorable Society of King's Inns, or
    - (iii) the Professional Practice Course in the Law Society of Ireland;
  - (e) a student or tuition student is ineligible for funding for the Barrister-at-Law Degree at the Honorable Society of King's Inns or the Professional Practice Course in the Law Society of Ireland if he or she holds a masters degree at Level 9 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent, unless that masters degree is in law;
- (4) The progression conditions in respect of postgraduate study at Level 10 of the framework of qualifications are as follows—
- (a) a student or tuition student who is entering for the first time a course which leads to a higher education and training award and wishes to pursue an approved postgraduate course at Level 10 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent shall be eligible for a grant;

- (b) a student or tuition student is ineligible for a grant if he or she already holds a postgraduate higher education and training award at Level 10 of the framework of qualifications, or equivalent;
- (c) a student or tuition student may be eligible for a grant where he or she is progressing to a doctoral degree at Level 10 of the framework of qualifications from a postgraduate qualification at a level lower than Level 10 of the framework of qualifications or equivalent.

(5) Subject to progression, a student or tuition student who completed a one-year postgraduate course which has not led to the conferral of a qualification and gains admittance to the second year or subsequent year of an approved postgraduate course shall be eligible for a grant.

### Part 3

#### RECKONABLE INCOME

##### *Reckonable income limits and eligible payments*

19. (1) To be eligible for an award of a grant or any part thereof in respect of any academic year of an approved course, an applicant's reckonable income in the specified reference period shall not exceed the income limits specified on an annual basis by the Minister for each relevant academic year.

(2) There shall be income limits in respect of—

Maintenance grants:

- (a) the special rate of maintenance grant;
- (b) full (100%) and part (75%, 50%, 25%) standard rates of maintenance grant.

Fee grants:

- (c) full (100%) and part (50%) grant in respect of the tuition fee element of a fee grant;
- (d) full (100%) and part (50%) grant in respect of student contribution element of a fee grant.

Postgraduate fee contribution:

- (e) a postgraduate fee contribution.

(3) The income limit for the field trip element of a fee grant shall be the limit for a full grant in respect of the tuition fee element of a fee grant.

(4) Different income limits in respect of paragraph (2) (b), (c), (d) and (e) will apply in cases where the number of dependent children is—

- (a) less than 4,

(b) 4 - 7, or

(c) 8 or more.

(5) The reckonable income limits in respect of paragraph 2 (b), (c), (d) and (e) may be increased by an additional increment where the applicant, plus one or more relevant persons, are attending an approved course for the purposes of this Scheme or a full-time course of at least one year's duration in further or higher education and training in the State or any other Member State leading to a major award at Levels 5 to 10 of the framework of qualifications or to an equivalent qualification made by a recognised awarding body in the State or another Member State.

(6) The income limits for the specified reference period for the academic year are set out in Schedule 1.

(7) It is a condition of receiving a special rate of maintenance grant that an applicant's reckonable income must include, on the specified date, one of the eligible payments as provided for in Schedule 2.

(8) The following date is prescribed as the relevant date for this Scheme as regards the definition of "dependent child" in section 16(7) of the Act: 1 October of the year prior to the year in which a student, in relation to whose application for a grant a dependent child is relevant, commences a year of study in any year on an approved course.

#### *Reference period*

20. (1) The reference period within which reckonable income is determined for an academic year shall be 1 January to 31 December of the relevant calendar year specified in Schedule 1.

(2) If the business year differs from the reference period, the income shown in the business accounts for a year which ends between 1 January and 31 December of the relevant year will be considered.

#### *Persons whose income is considered*

21. (1) Where the applicant is a dependent student, the income of the applicant and his or her parents, as appropriate, shall be taken into account in calculating whether the limit(s) specified is exceeded.

(2) Where the dependent student's parents are divorced or legally separated, or it is established to the satisfaction of the relevant awarding authority that they are separated, the reckonable income shall be that of the applicant and of the parent or parents with whom the applicant resides.

(3) Where it is established to the satisfaction of the relevant awarding authority that the dependent student—

(a) has no living parent, or

- (b) is irreconcilably estranged from both of his or her parents and neither of his or her parents furnishes financial support to him or her (to include foster children and unaccompanied minor refugees),

a dependent student may be exempted from having parents' income taken into account.

(4) Where an awarding authority is not satisfied that an applicant meets any of the conditions for being exempt from having their parents' income taken into account it will assess that applicant's application for a grant taking into account parental income.

(5) Where the applicant is an independent student, the income of the applicant and his or her spouse, civil partner or cohabitant, as appropriate, shall be taken into account in calculating whether the limit specified is exceeded.

*Determination of reckonable income — general*

22. (1) Reckonable income shall be determined by the relevant awarding authority on the basis of information supplied in the application form and other relevant information and documentary evidence supplied, in accordance with article 36. Where there is income in a currency other than euro, the euro equivalent of the gross amounts must be provided.

(2) If the applicant is unsure whether an income, gain or benefit should be included in the calculation of reckonable income, the details including the amounts should be provided when completing the application form.

(3) In calculating reckonable income, the awarding authority shall consider income from all sources whether it arises in the State or not, including income under the following headings—

- (a) Income from employment (including benefit-in-kind and directorships),
- (b) Social welfare payments,
- (c) Payments from other government departments or state agencies,
- (d) Self-employment or farming,
- (e) Rental and other income from land and property,
- (f) Income from pensions other than the social welfare state pension,
- (g) Income from savings, deposit accounts and investments,
- (h) Income from maintenance arrangements,
- (i) Lump sum payments from retirement and redundancy,
- (j) Income from the disposal of assets or rights,

(k) Gifts and inheritances,

(l) Income from other sources not mentioned above.

(4) The following payments, known for the purposes of this Scheme as “income disregards”, are not included in calculating reckonable income—

- Aftercare Allowance,
- Blind Pension (where paid to the applicant),
- Caranua services support,
- Carer's Allowance,
- Child Benefit,
- Compensation for a personal injury,
- Department of Education and Skills Third Level Bursary Scheme,
- Disability Allowance (where paid to the applicant),
- Domiciliary Care Allowance,
- Exceptional Needs Payments,
- Family Income Supplement,
- Foster Care Allowance,
- Guardian's Payment,
- Household Benefits Package,
- Housing Assistance Payment,
- Independent Living Allowance for Young People in Residential Care,
- Jobseekers Allowance Transition (where paid to the applicant),
- Mortgage Interest Supplement,
- One Parent Family Payments (Means Tested) (where paid to the applicant),
- Rent Supplement,
- Student Assistance Fund,
- Student grant,
- Water Conservation Grant.



(5) For the purposes of determining the reckonable income of an applicant, the aggregate of any of the following shall be deducted—

- (a) in respect of income from employment, employment-related expenses as approved by the Revenue Commissioners, or equivalent;
- (b) income from employment which represents holiday earnings outside of term time, subject to a maximum limit set out in Part B of Schedule 1;
- (c) maintenance payments made under a legally enforceable arrangement to a separated spouse, as approved by the Revenue Commissioners;
- (d) contributions to pension schemes and pension or retirement products, within the limits allowed by the Revenue Commissioners; and
- (e) overtime payments earned in the reference period that are not recurring payments.

(6) “Income from maintenance arrangements”, for the purposes of paragraph (3)(h), includes money or money’s worth actually received as maintenance.

(7) In determining whether an applicant meets the reckonable income limit for the special rate of maintenance grant, a deduction may be made in respect of child dependent increase (C.D.I.) paid by the Department of Social Protection.

*Determination of reckonable income — self-employment and farming, including rental and other income from land and property*

23. (1) The following adjustments shall be made to the profit or loss shown by the accounts in the reference period in order to calculate reckonable income from self-employment and farming—

- (a) add-back depreciation;
- (b) add-back interest on borrowings which fund the fixed assets of the business or the personal expenditure of the proprietor;
- (c) add-back finance lease payments;
- (d) add-back remuneration in respect of—
  - (i) wages or payments made without applying the PAYE and PRSI regulations, or equivalent regulations;
  - (ii) wages or payments to dependent children; and
  - (iii) wages or payments to non-dependent children where the payment is above the norm for the work undertaken.
- (e) add-back for personal expenditure charged against the business income.

(2) The income tax adjustment for farm stock relief is disregarded in calculating reckonable income from farming.

(3) In calculating reckonable income from self-employment and farming—

(a) no allowance is made in respect of tax capital allowance or tax write downs; and

(b) no allowance is made for any deduction for capital expenditure, regardless of how it is treated for income tax purposes.

(4) In calculating reckonable income in respect of rental and other income from land and property, the adjustments set out in paragraph (1) are made to the profit or loss from land and properties as shown by the statement of rental income and no allowance is made in respect of the matters mentioned in paragraph (3) (a) and (b).

*Determination of reckonable income — secondary income*

24. (1) Regarding investments, include savings certificates, life assurance bonds and other financial instruments where the interest or profit builds up and is paid out as a lump sum at the end of the investment period, the interest or profit is time apportioned.

(2) If any of the persons whose income is under consideration retired or was made redundant from employment or self-employment in the reference period and received a lump sum, a proportion of the lump sum is taken into account for calculating reckonable income.

(3) If any of the persons whose income is under consideration received income from the disposal of assets or rights in the reference period, other than in the case of the exceptions listed in paragraph (4), only a proportion of the gain or loss is taken into account in calculating reckonable income.

(4) The exceptions referred to in paragraph (3) are—

(a) the disposal of a principal private residence except where the sale price reflects development value;

(b) in the case of an independent student—

(i) disposals between an applicant and his or her spouse, civil partner or cohabitant; and

(ii) disposals from an applicant or his or her spouse to their dependent children; and

(c) In the case of a dependent student—

(i) disposals between parent(s),

(ii) disposals from parent(s) to an applicant, and

(iii) disposals from parent(s) to their dependent children.

(5) If any of the persons whose income is under consideration made a gain on the realisation of a life assurance policy or units in an investment fund in the reference period, only a proportion of the gain is taken into account in calculating reckonable income.

(6) If any of the persons whose income is under consideration received gifts or inheritances in the reference period, these are included in reckonable income, unless—

- (a) in the case of an independent student, the gifts or inheritances were between the applicant and his or her spouse, civil partner or cohabitant; or
- (b) in the case of a dependent student, the gifts or inheritances were between parents or to the applicant from his or her parent(s).

*Treatment of losses*

25. (1) Losses arising from a trade, other than a trade operated on a non commercial basis, and losses arising from the disposal of an asset can be offset against all other sources of income in the reference period. However, losses carried forward from a previous year cannot be offset.

(2) Rental losses cannot be offset against other income in the reference period.

Part 4

AWARD OF GRANTS

*Offer and award of grant and transfer of status*

26. (1) Where an awarding authority makes a provisional offer of a grant to an applicant under this Scheme, the applicant, where requested to do so, shall confirm to the awarding authority the title of the course he or she proposes to follow, and such other details as requested, within such period after notification of the provisional offer of a grant as the awarding authority may stipulate.

(2) Pursuant to section 18 of the Act, an awarding authority shall determine whether an applicant is eligible to receive a grant under this Scheme having regard to—

- (a) Information furnished by the applicant pursuant to that section of the Act,
- (b) any other information in relation to the application, as appropriate, and
- (c) the Regulations and such criteria as are specified in this Scheme.

(3) Where a student is offered a grant or where a student is awarded a grant under this Scheme, but does not pursue an approved course in the academic year, the offer or award shall be deemed to have lapsed.

(4) A grant is awarded for the normal duration of the approved course but is subject to renewal each academic year. Annual renewal will be based on compliance with the reckonable income limit of the relevant academic year and the student progressing from year to year within the course, having successfully completed the part of the course as required during the previous year. The student will also be required to have registered on and continue to attend the same course and to meet all other relevant provisions of this Scheme and schemes appropriate to each relevant academic year. Renewal is subject to the approval of the awarding authority each academic year.

(5) A student who, during the course of his or her studies, wishes to change course or faculty must obtain the prior approval of the awarding authority in order to ensure compliance with this Scheme or a future scheme.

(6) Where an eligible student transfers to another course, the awarding authority shall transfer the student's status as an eligible student to that course where—

(a) it receives a request from the eligible student to do so, and

(b) it is satisfied that the terms of the relevant scheme continue to be met.

(7) A student who, having commenced an approved course, wishes to defer his or her grant during the course of his or her studies must obtain the prior approval of the awarding authority. Such student's eligibility will be reassessed on recommencement of the course in order to ensure compliance with the relevant scheme.

*Rates and value — maintenance grants*

27. (1) The award of a maintenance grant shall be in accordance with the terms of this Scheme and the value of such grant shall be determined by the awarding authority having regard to the applicant's reckonable income, whether the reckonable income includes an eligible payment for the special rate as specified in Schedule 2 and the income limits for each of the respective rates in Schedule 1.

(2) The value of the special and standard rates of maintenance grant in respect of an approved course shall be in accordance with the annual rates specified by the Minister. The rates specified for the financial year are set out in Schedule 3.

(3) In accordance with article 7, full and part standard maintenance grants, and the special rates of maintenance grant, shall be payable at either adjacent or non-adjacent rates. The awarding authority shall determine the rate applicable in respect of an eligible student as follows—

- (a) the adjacent rates of maintenance grant shall be payable in the case of students whose normal residence is 45 km or less from the approved institution which he or she is attending, where the distance is measured in line with guidelines agreed by the Minister;
- (b) the non-adjacent rate of maintenance grant shall be payable in all other cases.

(4) Where a student in receipt of a maintenance grant as part of their approved course is required, to participate in—

- (a) compulsory off-campus placement, where the period concerned is not less than one academic term or semester, or
- (b) compulsory study abroad for a period up to one year as an integral part of their course,

they may have their grant entitlement paid in the normal manner in accordance with article 15(2) and (3). The rate of grant payable in respect of subparagraph (a) or (b) will be determined by the awarding authority having regard to paragraph (3).

(5) If an approved course is run over a shorter academic year or an academic year is different from the standard academic year, a portion of the rate of grant will be awarded in line with guidelines issued by the Minister in respect of such courses, having regard to the number of weeks over which the course is run.

*Rates and value — fee grant, tuition fee element*

28. (1) The award of the tuition fee element of a fee grant shall be in accordance with the term of this Scheme and the rate and value of such grant shall be determined by the awarding authority having regard to the applicant's reckonable income and income limits, the EU rate of fee applicable to an approved course and the maximum limits applicable for each respective rate in Schedule 4.

(2) The value of the tuition fee element shall be determined in accordance with article 9 and shall conform to the income limits set out in Schedule 1.

(3) A full tuition fee element is payable for the EU rate of fee in respect of an undergraduate approved course provided in the State to which the Free Fees Schemes applies.

(4) A full tuition fee element in respect of the EU rate of fee up to but not exceeding the maximum fee limit prescribed in Schedule 4, is payable in respect of an undergraduate approved course provided in the State, but to which the Free Fees Schemes does not apply.

(5) A full tuition fee element in respect of the EU rate of fee up to but not exceeding the maximum fee limit prescribed in Schedule 4, is payable in respect of a postgraduate approved course provided in the State or Northern Ireland.

(6) A part tuition fee element, not exceeding 50% of the EU rate of fee, is payable in respect of an undergraduate or postgraduate approved course provided in the State and covered under the Free Fees Schemes.

(7) A part tuition fee element in respect of 50% of the EU rate of fee, but not exceeding 50% of the maximum fee limit prescribed in Schedule 4, is payable in respect of an undergraduate approved course provided in the State but to which the Free Fees Schemes does not apply.

(8) A part tuition fee element in respect of 50% of the EU rate of fee, but not exceeding 50% of the maximum fee limit prescribed in Schedule 4, is payable in respect of a postgraduate approved course provided in the State or Northern Ireland.

(9) The award of the postgraduate fee contribution shall be determined in accordance with the terms of the scheme and the reckonable income shall conform to the income limits for the postgraduate fee contribution set out in Schedule 1 and is payable at the rate prescribed in Schedule 4.

*Rates and value — fee grant, student contribution element*

29. (1) The award of the student contribution element of a fee grant, in accordance with article 10, and the rate of such grant shall be determined by the awarding authority having regard to the reckonable income which shall conform to the income limits set out in Schedule 1.

(2) A full student contribution element (100%) may be paid, up to the rate prescribed in Schedule 4, in respect of an applicant who qualified under the Free Fees Schemes subject to the terms of this Scheme.

(3) A part student contribution element (50%) may be paid, up to the rate prescribed in Schedule 4, in respect of an applicant who qualified under the Free Fees Schemes subject to the terms of this Scheme.

*Rates and value — fee grant, field trip element*

30. The field trip element of a fee grant is payable, in accordance with article 11, subject to the maximum fee limits provided for in Schedule 4.

*Rates and value — postgraduate fee contribution*

31. The postgraduate fee contribution is payable, in accordance with article 12, at the rate specified in Schedule 4.

*Review of eligibility during academic year*

32. (1) The eligibility of a person to whom this Scheme applies for the award of a grant, or the level of the grant awarded, may be assessed or re-assessed by the awarding authority in the event of changes of circumstances between 1 January following the reference period and the end of the academic year to the following—

- (a) the applicant's reckonable income, within the meaning of articles 19 to 25, which is likely to obtain for the duration of the approved course or for the foreseeable future, including eligible payments for the

special rate of maintenance grant, other than where that payment is jobseeker's allowance or jobseeker's benefit;

- (b) the number of dependent children;
- (c) where a relevant person commences an approved course for the purpose of this Scheme or a full-time course of at least one year's duration in further or higher education and training in the State or any other Member State leading to a major award at Levels 5 to 10 of the framework of qualifications or to an equivalent qualification made by a recognised awarding body in the State or in another Member State;
- (d) normal residence;
- (e) nationality or immigration status;
- (f) change of course or institution.

(2) If there is a fall in the income of any of the persons whose income is under consideration, between 1 January following the reference period and the end of the academic year, and the awarding authority is satisfied that the fall in income is likely to obtain for the duration of the approved course or for the foreseeable future, a review of the application may be applied for or, where a student grant application form was not completed for the academic year, an application can be made for a student grant under such change in circumstances.

(3) Where an awarding authority is satisfied that a change in circumstances has occurred within the meaning of paragraph (2) the application will be assessed based on current income.

(4) Where an adverse change in the reckonable income occurs, awards or adjustments in cases assessed under this article shall be made with effect from the month in which the change in circumstances occurs.

(5) The amount of the tuition fee element, the student contribution element, postgraduate fee contribution and maintenance elements of the grant payable in respect of a month shall be one-ninth of the annual rate.

(6) If there is an increase in the income under consideration, between 1 January following the reference period and the end of the academic year, any grant awarded shall continue to be paid until the end of that academic year.

## Part 5

### APPLICATION, PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND PAYMENT

#### *Appropriate awarding authority*

33. (1) An applicant shall apply to an awarding authority for a grant.

(2) The awarding authority to which an applicant shall make an application shall be the appropriate awarding authority (a local authority or an education training board or an appointed awarding authority).

(3) If, at the time of application, an applicant is ordinarily resident in another Member State, a state in the European Economic Area or Switzerland, such applicant shall make an application to the appointed awarding authority.

(4) An applicant shall make an application to the appointed awarding authority if they wish to attend, or will be attending, an approved course in an approved institution as set out in the Regulations.

(5) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (4), an applicant who was awarded a grant under a prior scheme or under any other scheme made under the Act shall make an application to the awarding authority which granted the award if they are continuing on the same course in the relevant academic year.

(6) An awarding authority may as appropriate cancel an application or transfer an application to another awarding authority as appropriate within the provisions of paragraphs (4) and (5).

#### *Application time limits*

34. (1) Applications duly completed must be received by the awarding authority not later than 1 August 2015.

(2) The awarding authority may at its discretion accept an application which is not received on time.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (2), an application may not be accepted by the awarding authority later than one month before the end of the academic year to which the application relates.

#### *Applications generally*

35. (1) An applicant may not apply for or receive more than one grant at any one time.

(2) An applicant must apply for a grant in connection with each academic year of an approved course by completing and submitting to the awarding authority an application in the format approved by the awarding authority which must be supported by such documentary evidence as required by the awarding authority.

(3) The awarding authority may take such steps and make such inquiries as it considers necessary including the exchange of data between bodies listed in Schedule 2 of the Act or prescribed by Regulations to determine whether the applicant is an eligible student, whether he or she qualifies for a grant and the amount of a grant payable.

(4) An applicant shall furnish an awarding authority with the personal, family, financial and other information that the awarding authority may seek in relation to the applicant, the applicant's spouse, civil partner or cohabitant, each parent of the applicant, and any dependent child, as appropriate, and shall produce



evidence, in such form as may be required by the awarding authority, to verify the information, in order that the awarding authority may determine whether or not the applicant is eligible to receive a grant.

*Submission of information*

36. (1) An applicant shall furnish to the awarding authority such information as it requests and shall produce evidence in a form acceptable to the awarding authority, in order that the awarding authority may determine whether or not the applicant is eligible to receive a grant.

(2) An awarding authority may stipulate the period of time within which the information, further information or evidence shall be submitted or produced to it.

(3) Without prejudice to article 35(4), the following information shall be furnished to an awarding authority in relation to the applicant and, as appropriate, the applicant's spouse, civil partner or cohabitant, each parent of the applicant, and any other dependent child, as appropriate, namely—

- (a) personal public service number,
- (b) date of birth,
- (c) reckonable income,
- (d) nationality, immigration status and residency,
- (e) information in relation to any matters in this Scheme, and
- (f) normal residence.

(4) In addition, the applicant shall furnish the following information to the awarding authority—

- (a) whether he or she is a mature student, dependent student, independent student or tuition student;
- (b) marital status;
- (c) whether he or she has dependants;
- (d) academic history;
- (e) whether he or she is commencing his or her first year of study, is a student in progression or has previous attendance at further or higher education;
- (f) the approved course that the applicant attends or intends to attend and in respect of which he or she is applying for a grant;
- (g) the approved institution which is providing the course; and

(h) any funding, awards and financial assistance in relation to his or her course of study.

(5) A declaration forming part of the application shall be signed by the applicant and the applicant's parents or, in the case of an independent student, by the applicant and the applicant's spouse, civil partner or cohabitant, if applicable.

(6) It will be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the income details and other details sought are full and complete in every respect. If such details contain a deliberate material omission or inaccuracy, the applicant shall be liable to prosecution, loss of grant and repayment, with interest, of any portion of a grant already received in line with the provisions of sections 23 and 24 of the Act.

*Payment of maintenance grants*

37. (1) Payment of a maintenance grant shall be made by the awarding authority except in the case of an applicant attending an approved course at Level 6 or 7 of the framework of qualifications in an approved institution in Part B and C of Schedule 1 of the Regulations, who was awarded a grant in respect of such course prior to the coming into operation of a scheme, made under the Act before 2012 in which case the payments are arranged through the relevant institution, or in the case of an applicant attending an approved post leaving certificate course, who was awarded a grant in respect of such course prior to the coming into operation of a scheme under the Act before 2012 in which case the education training board in the area in which the institution providing the course is situated shall make payments in respect of the applicant for the period of time as prescribed in this Scheme.

(2) The awarding authority, or other relevant paying authority referred to in article 37(1), shall pay maintenance grants in three or nine equal instalments, in line with the annual rates specified in Schedule 3.

(3) Payments of maintenance grants should be made in euro and are to be made in such manner as the Minister considers appropriate, either by payable order or by electronic funds transfer. The Minister may make it a condition of entitlement where payment is being made by electronic funds transfer that the eligible student must provide particulars of a bank, building society or credit union account in the State into which payments may be made by electronic transfer.

(4) Payments of maintenance grants made by payable order shall be addressed to the student, care of the Bursar's or Principal's office of the institution.

(5) An approved institution is required to verify to the awarding authority at agreed intervals that a person awarded a maintenance grant is enrolled or registered with the institution, in accordance with its rules, and is continuing to attend the course for which they have been approved for in that institution. The awarding authority must not pay the first or subsequent maintenance grant instalments, or, where it has been determined not to pay a maintenance grant, make

any payment of maintenance, to the student before it has received such verification.

*Payment of fee grants*

38. (1) The tuition fee element of a fee grant payable under this Scheme shall be paid by the awarding authority, to the approved institution, in line with the rate of fee awarded, upon receipt of—

- (a) an appropriate invoice from the approved institution in respect of the applicable tuition fee,
- (b) confirmation of registration, as supplied by the approved institution, and
- (c) confirmation on whether the student is in receipt of, or eligible for, assistance towards the fee from any other source.

(2) The student contribution element of a fee grant payable under this Scheme shall be paid by the awarding authority, except in the case of applicants attending approved courses at Level 6 or 7 of the framework of qualifications in an approved institution in Part B and C of Schedule 1 of the Regulations, who were awarded a grant in respect of such course prior to the coming into operation of a scheme made under the Act before 2012 in which case payments shall be made by the Department of Education and Skills, to the approved institution, in line with the student contribution rate awarded, upon receipt of—

- (a) an appropriate invoice from the approved institution in respect of the applicable student contribution fee, and
- (b) confirmation of registration.

(3) The field trip element of a fee grant payable under this Scheme shall be paid by the awarding authority to the student or tuition student, in line with provisions in Schedule 4, upon receipt of the following documents—

- (a) a field trip form—
  - (i) with the relevant sections completed, verified and stamped by the approved institution, and
  - (ii) with relevant sections completed and signed by the student or tuition student; and
- (b) receipts for expenses being claimed.

*Payment of Postgraduate Fee Contribution*

39. (1) The postgraduate fee contribution payable under this Scheme shall be paid by the awarding authority, to the approved institution upon receipt of—

- (a) an appropriate invoice from the approved institution in respect of the applicable postgraduate fee contribution,

- (b) confirmation of registration, as supplied by the approved institution, and
- (c) confirmation on whether the student is in receipt of, or eligible for, assistance towards the fee from any other source.

*Overpayments*

40. Any overpayment made in respect of a grant awarded under this Scheme may be recovered by the paying awarding authority in accordance with section 24 of the Act.

Part 6

APPEALS

*Appeals to appeals officers*

41. Where an applicant is aggrieved by a determination of an awarding authority under this Scheme he or she may, pursuant to section 20 of the Act, appeal against that determination to an appeals officer designated by the awarding authority under that section.

*Appeals to Appeals Board*

42. Where an applicant is aggrieved by a determination of an appeals officer under section 20(5) of the Act, he or she may, pursuant to section 21 of the Act, appeal against that determination to the Appeals Board.

## SCHEDULE 1

## Reckonable Income Limits for the 2015/16 academic year

1. Reckonable income limits:

The period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014 is the reference period for the academic year 2015/16.

A tuition student does not qualify for any maintenance grants. The income limits that apply to tuition students are outlined in Tables C — F of this Schedule.

**PLC students****Table A:** Income limits for maintenance grants (as specified in Schedule 3)

To qualify for:	Special Rate*	Standard rate	Standard rate	Standard rate	Standard rate
No. dependent children		Full maintenance 100%	Part maintenance 75%	Part maintenance 50%	Part maintenance 25%
Less than 4	€22,703	€39,875	€40,970	€43,380	€45,790
4 to 7	€22,703	€43,810	€45,025	€47,670	€50,325
8 or more	€22,703	€47,575	€48,890	€51,760	€54,630

Additional increments that may be applied to the income limits in Table A for Maintenance Grants**					
+ increment for each additional relevant person	€ 0	+ €4,830	+ €4,670	+ €4,670	+ €4,670

\* To be eligible for the special rate of maintenance the reckonable income on 31 December 2014 must include an eligible payment listed in Schedule 2.

\*\* Increments which may be added to the relevant income limits.

**Undergraduate students****Table B:** Income limits for maintenance grants (as specified in Schedule 3)

To qualify for:	Special Rate*	Standard rate	Standard rate	Standard rate	Standard rate
No. dependent children		Full maintenance 100%	Part maintenance 75%	Part maintenance 50%	Part maintenance 25%
Less than 4	€22,703	€39,875	€40,970	€43,380	€45,790
4 to 7	€22,703	€43,810	€45,025	€47,670	€50,325
8 or more	€22,703	€47,575	€48,890	€51,760	€54,630

Additional increments that may be applied to the income limits in Table B for Maintenance Grants**					
+ increment for each additional relevant person	€0	+ € 4,830	+ €4,670	+€4,670	+€4,670

\* To be eligible for the special rate of maintenance the reckonable income on 31 December 2014 must include an eligible payment listed in Schedule 2.

\*\* Increments which may be added to the relevant income limits.

Any maintenance grant awarded under the income limits in Table B will also include an award for the full student contribution grant, where the student contribution is chargeable.

**Table C:** Income limits for the student contribution grant (as specified in Schedule 4)

To qualify for:	Student contribution 100%	Student contribution 50%
No. of dependent children		
Less than 4	€49,840	€54,240
4 to 7	€54,765	€59,595
8 or more	€59,455	€64,700

Additional increments that may be applied to the income limits in Table C for Student Contribution Grants**		
+ increment for each additional relevant person	+ €4,830	+ €4,830

\*\* Increments which may be added to the relevant income limits:

**Table D:** Income limits for tuition fees (as specified in Schedule 4)

To qualify for:	(i) 100% tuition fees	50% tuition fees
No. of dependent children	(ii) Field trip expenses	
Less than 4	€45,790	€49,840
4 to 7	€50,325	€54,765
8 or more	€54,630	€59,455

Additional increments that may be applied to the income limits in Table D for tuition fee grants**		
+ increment for each additional relevant person	+€4,670	+€4,830

\*\* Increments which may be added to the relevant income limits.

***Postgraduate students*****Table E:** Income limits for tuition fees (as specified in Schedule 4)

To qualify for:	(i) Tuition fees *
No. of dependent children	(ii) Field trip expenses
Less than 4	€22,703
4 to 7	€22,703
8 or more	€22,703

Additional increments that may be applied to the income limits in Table E for tuition fees **	
+ increment for each additional relevant person	+ € 0

\* To be eligible for tuition fees the conditions for the special rate of maintenance must be satisfied

\*\* Increments which may be added to the relevant income limits

**Table F:** Income limits for postgraduate fee contribution (as specified in Schedule 4)

To qualify for:	Postgraduate Fee Contribution
No. of dependent children	
Less than 4	€31,500
4 to 7	€34,615
8 or more	€37,580

Additional increments that may be applied to the income limits in Table F for postgraduate fee contribution**	
+ increment for each additional relevant person	+ €4,980

\*\* Increments which may be applied to the relevant income limits:

In the 2015/16 academic year, where the applicant plus one or more relevant persons are attending an approved course for the purposes of this Scheme or a full-time course of at least one year's duration in further or higher education and training in the State or any other Member State leading to a major award at Levels 5 to 10, of the framework of qualifications or to an equivalent qualification made by a recognised awarding body in the State or in another Member State, the reckonable income limits for each of the rates of grant in Tables A, B, C, D & F may be increased by an additional increment as identified.

**Holiday Earnings**

2. Holiday Earnings:

A deduction of up to a maximum amount of €3,809 may be applied to student earnings outside of term time but within the reference period.



## SCHEDULE 2

Eligible payments for the special rate of maintenance grant for the 2015/16 academic year

As at 31 December 2014, the reckonable income must include one of the eligible payments listed in this Schedule, or its equivalence from an EU Member State, net of—

- (a) income disregards (as set out in article 22(4) of this Scheme); and
- (b) Child Dependant Increase (C.D.I.), where paid by the Department of Social Protection.

**Social Assistance Payments**

1. Blind Pension
2. Carer's Allowance
3. One Parent Family Payment
4. Jobseekers Allowance Transition
5. Deserted Wife's Allowance
6. Disability Allowance
7. Farm Assist
8. Jobseeker's Allowance (where held for 391 days or more)\*
9. State Pension (Non-Contributory)
10. Guardian's Payment (Non-Contributory)
11. Pre-retirement allowance
12. Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's (Non-Contributory) Pension

**Social Insurance Payments**

13. Carer's Benefit
14. Deserted Wife's Benefit
15. Invalidity pension
16. Incapacity Supplement
17. Occupational Injuries Death Benefit (Orphan's pension)

18. Occupational Injuries Benefit — Death Benefit (Widow or Widower's Pension)
19. State Pension (Contributory)
20. Guardian's Payment (Contributory)
21. Jobseeker's Benefit (continuous for at least 12 months)\*
22. Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's (Contributory) Pension
23. State Pension (Transition)

**Designated Programmes**

24. Back to Education Allowance (Second Level and Third Level Options)
25. Back to Work Allowance (Employees)
26. Back to Work Enterprise Allowance
27. Community Employment Scheme
28. Rural Social Scheme
29. Tús Initiative
30. FÁS Training Programmes, including Apprenticeships
31. Part-time job incentive scheme
32. Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)

**Others**

33. Foster Care and Aftercare Allowances where paid in respect of the applicant
34. Independent Living Allowance for Young People in Residential Care
35. Family Income Supplement (FIS)
36. In receipt of payments under the FIT (Fastrack to IT) initiative equivalent to a social welfare payment;
37. Participants on a training course approved by a Government Department, State Agency or Area Partnership and who were in receipt of an eligible payment prior to progressing to the programme;
38. Grant aided employees in Community Services Programmes (formerly social economy enterprises);

39. In receipt of payments under the Senior Traveller Training Centre programmes.

\*Combine periods of Jobseeker's Allowance and Jobseeker's Benefit and other eligible payments for purposes of meeting the prescribed period of 391 days or 12 month requirement respectively.

The Department of Social Protection Illness Benefit or Maternity Benefit can also be used to combine periods of Jobseeker's Allowance and Jobseeker's Benefit provided a period of Jobseeker's Allowance or Jobseeker's Benefit comes directly before and directly after the period of Illness Benefit or Maternity Benefit.

Periods on JobBridge, the National Internship Scheme, can also be combined with periods on other listed eligible payments provided a period on an eligible payment comes directly before and directly after the period on JobBridge.

## SCHEDULE 3

## Rates of maintenance grant for the financial year 2015

## Annual Rates

	Non-Adjacent Rate	Adjacent Rate
Special rate of maintenance	5,915	2,375
Standard rate—Full Maintenance (100%)	3,025	1,215
Standard rate—Part Maintenance (75%)	2,270	910
Standard rate—Part Maintenance (50%)	1,515	605
Standard rate—Part Maintenance (25%)	755	305

## SCHEDULE 4

Maximum overall limits for a fee grant for the 2015/16 academic year

<b>Undergraduate Tuition Fee Element</b>		
<b>In respect of the following courses</b>	<b>Maximum fee limit Full (100%) grant in respect of tuition fees</b>	<b>Maximum fee limit Part (50%) grant in respect of tuition fees</b>
Approved undergraduate courses to which the Free Fees Schemes applies.	100% of the EU rate of fee	50% of the EU rate of fee
Approved undergraduate courses provided in the State to which the Free Fees Schemes does not apply.	€6,270	€3,135

<b>Student Contribution Element</b>	<b>Rate</b>
Full (100%) grant in respect of the student contribution charge	€3,000
Part (50%) grant in respect of the student contribution charge	€1,500

<b>Field Trip Element [Calculation of value available towards compulsory costs]</b>		
A student or tuition student who would have qualified for 100% tuition fee element of a fee grant but for the Free Fees Schemes and was awarded a grant towards the student contribution charge.	Maximum Fee Limit:	€6,270
	<i>Less</i> the tuition fee claimed from the State by the institution under the Free Fees Schemes:	-€x,xxx
	<i>Less</i> Student Contribution:	- €3,000
	<i>Equals</i> maximum amount if any available towards field trip element	€y,yyy
Student or tuition student who qualifies for 100% undergraduate tuition fees or postgraduate tuition fees under the scheme of grants.	Max Fee Limit Amount:	€6,270
	<i>Less</i> EU rate of fee applicable to the course/invoiced to the student:	-€x,xxx
	<i>Equals</i> the maximum amount if any available towards field trip element	€y,yyy

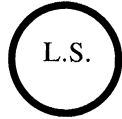
<b>Postgraduate Grants</b>		
<b>In respect of the following courses</b>	<b>Maximum fee limit for grant in respect of tuition fees</b>	<b>Postgraduate Fee Contribution</b>
Approved postgraduate courses provided in the State or Northern Ireland.	€6,270	€2,000

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform consents to the making of the foregoing Scheme.



GIVEN under the Official Seal of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform,  
22 April 2015.

BRENDAN HOWLIN,  
Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.



GIVEN under my Official Seal,  
22 April 2015.

JAN O'SULLIVAN,  
Minister for Education and Skills.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Instrument and does not purport to be a legal interpretation).*

This Scheme of Grant is made pursuant to powers conferred on the Minister for Education and Skills under the Student Support Act 2011.

This Scheme may be cited as the Student Grant Scheme 2015.

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