

## **2021 Student Grant Scheme**

### **Guidelines for an awarding authority**

- 1. Funding for repeat periods of study in exceptional circumstances.**
- 2. Determining the rate of maintenance grant.**
- 3. Apportionment of payments.**

**Higher Education – Equity of Access Section**

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## Chapter 1

### **FUNDING FOR REPEAT PERIODS OF STUDY - EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES REFERENCE: ARTICLE 15(8) OF THE STUDENT GRANT SCHEME 2021**

An awarding authority has discretion to award a grant for a repeat period of study in exceptional circumstances under Article 15(8) of the Student Grant Scheme 2021.

Exceptional circumstances may arise which could impact on a student completing a particular period of study or undertaking exams. It will be necessary, therefore, for an awarding authority to treat each application for repeat funding on a case by case basis.

The following are matters that may be taken into account by an awarding authority in determining whether to exercise its discretion in respect of the provisions of Article 15(6) and (7) of the Student Grant Scheme 2021:

1. Whether the nature of the circumstances documented by the applicant are sufficient to describe them as exceptional.
2. When the circumstances occurred.
3. The period of time over which the circumstances continued.
4. How the circumstances impacted on,
  - (i) the applicant's participation throughout the full academic year on their course of study.
  - (ii) the applicant's ability to take their end of year exams.
  - (iii) the applicant's ability to take/re-take their end of year exams at a later stage.
  - (iv) the applicant's ability to submit projects/thesis on time.
  - (v) the results from exams taken.
5. Whether the circumstances directly impacted on the applicant.
6. Whether the circumstances happened to a third party and, if so, in what way they impacted on the applicant as a result.
7. Whether documentary evidence provided by the applicant is sufficient to support the applicant's case including whether the exceptional circumstances continued over a significant period of time or were just a once-off event.

8. Whether the exceptional circumstances are of a nature that will impact on the applicant's future career options.
9. Whether the exceptional circumstances are likely to reoccur.
10. Any other matters which, in the opinion of an awarding authority, are proper matters to be taken into account in exercising its discretion to waive the provisions of Article 15(6) and (7) of the Student Grant Scheme 2021.

In relation to the Leaving Certificate Examination 2020, a student shall remain eligible to apply for SUSI grant assistance in respect of the repeat period of first year study, if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Received Leaving Certificate predicted grades in 2020;
- Opted to sit the 2020 Leaving Certificate examinations;
- Received an improved CAO offer on foot of these Leaving Certificate examinations results to start their course in the 2021/22 academic year; and
- Choose to accept that improved CAO offer.

## Chapter 2

### **DETERMINING THE RATE OF MAINTENANCE GRANT: ADJACENT OR NON-ADJACENT RATE REFERENCE: ARTICLE 27(3)(a) STUDENT GRANT SCHEME 2021**

The maintenance grant, whether the full and part standard maintenance grants, and the special rates of maintenance grant shall be paid at either the adjacent or non-adjacent rates. The awarding authority shall determine the rate that applies in respect of an eligible student.

#### **Adjacent Rates**

The lower adjacent rates shall be paid where the awarding authority establishes that the distance from the student's normal residence to the institution where the approved course takes place is 45km or less.

#### **Non-adjacent Rates**

The higher non-adjacent rates shall be paid where the awarding authority establishes that the distance from the student's normal residence to the institution where the approved course takes place is more than 45km.

“*normal residence*” means a student's usual place of residence. For a dependent student his 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.

#### **Guidelines**

Article 27(3)(a) of the Student Grant Scheme 2021 provides that the distance criterion will be measured in line with guidelines agreed by the Minister. The following guidelines set out the matters to be considered by the awarding authority when establishing the criteria to be applied to determine whether the adjacent or non-adjacent rate of grant is payable.

The shortest most direct route from the applicant's normal residence to the institution where the approved course takes place applies.

In determining the shortest most direct route the awarding authority shall establish:

- the method for measuring a route;
- the factors to be taken into account in establishing and measuring a route.

The awarding authority's criteria for measuring a route must be accessible, particularly to the applicant, the appeals officer and the Student Grants Appeals Board.

## Chapter 3

### APPORTIONMENT OF PAYMENTS

**REFERENCE: ARTICLE 27(5) OF THE STUDENT GRANT SCHEME 2021**

Arrangements for the apportionment of grants for students undertaking the Professional Practice Course in Blackhall Place and the Accelerated Technician Programme are as follows:

#### Professional Practice Course, Blackhall Place

##### Tuition Fee

Professional Practice Course (Part I):

The tuition fee payable will be subject to two thirds of the maximum fee limit, provided for in Schedule 4 of the Scheme, applicable on commencement of PPC - Part I.

Professional Practice Course (Part II):

The tuition fee payable will be one third of the maximum fee limit, provided for in Schedule 4 of the Scheme, applicable on commencement of PPC - Part II.

##### Postgraduate Fee Contribution

Professional Practice Course (Part I):

The postgraduate fee contribution will be subject to two thirds of the rate provided for in Schedule 4 of the Scheme, applicable on commencement of PPC - Part I.

Professional Practice Course (Part II):

The postgraduate fee contribution will be one third of the rate, provided for in Schedule 4 of the Scheme, applicable on commencement of PPC - Part II.

##### Maintenance grant

Professional Practice Course (Part I):

Two thirds of the annual Postgraduate Special Rate of maintenance grant will be payable at the current rate specified in Schedule 3 of the Scheme.

Professional Practice Course (Part II):

One third of the annual Postgraduate Special Rate of maintenance grant will be payable at the current rate specified in Schedule 3 of the Scheme.

## Accelerated Technician Programme

1) The rates of grant payable to students on the Accelerated Technicians Programme in approved institutions will be in accordance with the rates specified in Schedule 3 of the Scheme.

2) The Accelerated Technician Programme can vary in length, therefore, students undertaking the programme are paid a grant on a pro rata basis for a period up to a maximum of 36 weeks in any one academic year.

**The maintenance grant is not paid during any period of paid placement.**

### **Formula for working out a student's entitlement:**

Student's appropriate rate of grant is divided by 36 (standard number of weeks in an academic year) multiplied by the number of weeks for the particular ATP course (less any paid placement period).

Example of how this works in practice:

### **ATP with 22 weeks term time:**

Student commences course in January, the course has a 22-week duration and the student qualifies for the adjacent special rate of maintenance grant which is €2,375 for 2021. The following would be the calculation:

$$€2,375 \div 36 \times 22 = €1,451$$