



Funding Factsheet



FREE FEES INITIATIVE

If you are about to undertake an undergraduate higher education course for the first time the State will pay your tuition costs dependent on eligibility criteria. Learners must be taking a full-time course that is more than two years in duration and they must be an EU national. The Free Fees Initiative only applies to full time courses, if you intend on taking a degree part time, then you will be required to pay full fees.

HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS

There are four schemes currently funded by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) which provide maintenance grants schemes to full-time students:

- The Higher Education Grants Scheme
- Third Level Maintenance Grants Scheme for Trainees
- Vocational Education Committee's Scholarship Scheme
- Maintenance Grants Scheme for Students attending PLC courses

To apply for one of these grants you must be studying in a college recognized by Department of Education and Skills These grants are administered by your local VEC or local authority. A Special Rates Maintenance Grant also known as the Top Up grant is also available to more disadvantaged students in further and higher education.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE FUND

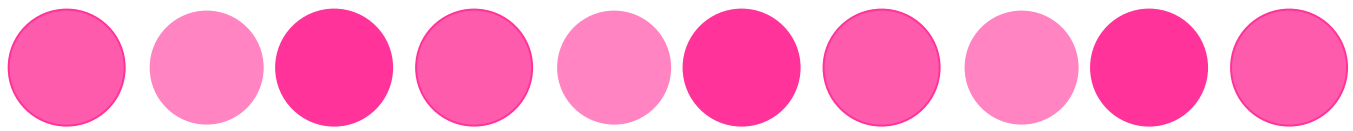
This is aimed at students that are experiencing financial hardship while in college. Students are recommended to contact the Access Officer or go to the Student Services Offices within their institution.

BACK TO EDUCATION ALLOWANCE (BTEA)

The Back to Education Allowance allows people in receipt of certain social welfare payments to retain those payments whilst participating in approved full-time courses in further and higher education. In order to be eligible for assistance at third level an applicant must be on a relevant social welfare payment for 9 months. For a second level option the qualifying period is 3 months. People awarded statutory redundancy may access the scheme immediately, provided an entitlement to a relevant social welfare payment is established prior to commencing an approved course of study.

The Back to Education Allowance replaces an applicant's existing social welfare income and, in addition, participants qualify for an annual €500 cost of education allowance. The cost of the





Student Registration Fee may also be met by the Exchequer on behalf of BTEA applicants, but they must submit an application for a Higher Education Grant.

TAX RELIEF

Tax relief can be claimed on tuition fees up to a maximum fee limit of roughly €5000. Learners can claim up to 20% of course fees back through tax relief. Applicants are advised to contact their local tax office in relation to this and to note that the course must be delivered through or in conjunction with an approved institution.

EUROPEAN GLOBALISATION FUND

The EGF is designed to help eligible redundant workers prepare for alternative employment. If you have been employed by either DELL, Banta Global Turnkey, Flextronics, SerCom, IEC/Flextronics, Sodexo, Cube, RPS Engineering, Rehab Logistics and Novo Strat, Federal Security prior to 8th January 2009, and have become unemployed from the period of 8th January, 2009 to 30th April 2010 as a result of the closure of the DELL manufacturing facility you may be eligible for the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF). For more information about the EGF and contact details visit www.tusnua.ie

FUND FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

This Fund allocates funding to further and higher education colleges for the provision of services and supports to full-time students with disabilities. Eligible students can receive assistance from the Fund from PLC level right up to doctoral level. Contact the Disability or Access offices in your institution for further information.

For more information on these and more financial supports visit www.aontas.com or www.studentfinance.ie

