

Other Sources of Financial Support

BTEA/ VTOS: If you are in receipt of certain social welfare payments you may be eligible to a standard rate of payment that is not means-tested as well as cost of education allowance of €500. If you are getting the BTEA or VTOS, you will not get a student maintenance grant. However, this does not affect any entitlement you may have to an exemption from college fees or the new student contributions.

St Vincent de Paul Education Grant: Provides small grants towards childcare costs and for materials and transport. Contact Ph: 8386990

Fund for Students with Disabilities: Provides grants for students who have sensory, physical and/or communicative disabilities. Applications for funding should be made through the colleges directly. The Fund is also available to students pursuing PLC course.

The Student Assistance Fund (for Approved Third Level Institutions):

This fund assists students who, having commenced a 3rd-level course, experiencing financial hardship and may be unable to continue their studies. Applications for funding should be made through the colleges directly. The Fund is not available to students pursuing PLC course.

Scholarships

There are a number of Department of Education and Skills scholarships which are awarded on the basis of results obtained in the Leaving Certificate. Full details can be found on www.education.ie or www.studentfinance.ie. Some colleges also offer various scholarships schemes. Contact colleges directly.

Also

- ♦ Tax Relief on Fees—contact 1890 222425
- ♦ If you are a member of a trade union, e.g. SIPTU, you may get some financial assistance

Other Sources of Support

Higher Education Access Route (HEAR): is a third level admissions scheme for school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Each participating college has allocated a quota of places on a reduced points basis for students entering through HEAR. Students who secure a place through HEAR are offered a variety of academic, personal and social supports while at college. The HEAR scheme can be found on www.accesscollege.ie

Disability Access Route to Education (DARE): is a third level admissions scheme for school leavers from disabilities. Students who are eligible may secure a place on a reduced points basis. All students with a disability, irrespective of whether they come through DARE or not, are offered a variety of academic, personal and social supports while studying at third level. Full details of all aspects of the DARE scheme can be found on www.accesscollege.ie

For any further information please contact the
Youth Information Centre
Library Road, Dun Laoghaire
Phone: 01 2809363 Email: info@youthquest.ie

Student Financial Support

Main source of funding is the Maintenance Grant

1. Who is eligible for the grant?

It depends of a number of criteria

- ♦ **Age:** You must be at least 17 years of age by 1st of January of before starting the course. Post Leaving Cert students should be at least 16 years of age on commencement of the course.
- ♦ **Where you live:** You should apply to the relevant awarding body for the area in which your parents/guardians were living last October - except for independent mature candidates (23 years or over **not** living with parents) who should apply to where they were ordinarily resident from October 1st of the year prior to going to college.
- ♦ **Nationality:** You must hold EU nationality or have official refugee status or have been granted leave to remain in the state for humanitarian or other specified reasons
- ♦ **Academic Requirements:** Candidates must be attending a full time course in an approved institution. Candidates must not have previously received a maintenance grant for the same or higher level of study.
- ♦ **Income:** To qualify for a grant you must satisfy a means test - your income must be below a certain level. (See 'How does the Means Test Work?' below)

NB: If you are getting the back to education or VTOS allowance you will not be eligible for the maintenance grant. However, this does not effect any entitlements that you may have to exemption from college fees or student support charges

2. How does the Means Test Work?

- ⇒ based on your family income for the last tax year (ie 2010)
- ⇒ Income includes wages, social welfare allowance etc
- ⇒ Income must be at or below a certain amount:
(the amounts below are the approx rates for 2011 application)

No. of Dependent Children	Full Maintenance	Part Maintenance (75%)	Part Main tenance (50%)	Part Main tenance (25%)	Exempt from student service charge (SSC)*	Exemption from 50% of the new Student Contribution
Less than 4	€41,110	€42,235	€44,720	€47,205	€1,380	€5,920
4 –7	€45,165	€46,415	€49,145	€51,880	€6,460	€61,440
8 or more	€49,045	€50,400	€53,360	€56,320	€6,295	€66,700

3. I think I'm over the initial income limit—do they take anything else into account?

You may be eligible for part-payment of the grant if you are over the initial limit (see table)

If you have a part-time job, your holiday earnings (e.g. summer months) may be deducted from the total income coming into the house.

If more than one person is going to college then the income limit will be increased to take this into consideration:

Where 2 or more children (or the applicant's parent) are pursuing an approved course, the income limits are increased by increments which, for 2010/2011 is €4,980 (full maintenance) €4,815 (part-maintenance).

Change in Circumstances:

If your parents/ your circumstances have changed since last year and this affects the overall family income you may find yourself eligible for the Maintenance grant under 'Change in Circumstances', it is worth making an enquiry to see if you qualify.

4 How much do I get?

It depends on where you live and how much you and your parents earn.

	Non—Adjacent Rate Live more than 45km from college*	Adjacent Rate Live 45km or less from college*
Full Maintenance	€3,120 approx.	€1,248 approx.
Part Maintenance (75%)	€2,338 approx.	€941 approx.
Part Maintenance (50%)	€1,560 approx.	€624 approx.
Part Maintenance (25%)	€778 approx.	€317 approx.

***Mature students will no longer be automatically eligible for the Non-Adjacent rate of the grant**

- ♦ **Student Contribution** up to €2,000 will be paid directly to the college, depending on your entitlement. **Registration fees are not paid for colleges of Further Education.**
- ♦ **Special Rates of Maintenance Grant** 'Top—Up Grants', as outlined below are available to those where total income for the Tax Year 2010 was below €22,703 and who are in receipt of an approved Social Welfare Payment. The approx rates for 2011 application is as follows:

Grant	Standard Grant	Top—Up Grant	Total Grant
Adjacent Rate	€1,248	€1,195	€2,443
Non—Adjacent Rate	€3,120	€2,980	€6,100

When and How do I apply?

- ♦ Application forms are usually available in July every year. Phone your local VEC or Co. Council (see 'Where to Apply) or call into the Youth Information Centre.
- ♦ You may also download the application form from www.studentfinance.ie
- ♦ You must fill out the application form with the relevant documentation and send it back to your local VEC or Co. Council (as appropriate) before the deadline (generally 31st Aug).
- ♦ The relevant authority may however accept an application which is not received on time.

If you need help when filling out the application forms, call into the Dun Laoghaire Youth Information Centre.

Key Documents

Get your supporting documents ready soon to avoid the backlog with the tax or social welfare offices—you can ring up now and request these forms, and they will be posted out to you

- ✓ Original Long Form Birth Certificate
- ✓ P21 (PAYE Statement—from the local Tax Office) Ph: 1890333425
- ✓ P60 for each employment during 2010
- ✓ P45 if employment ceased
- ✓ Social Welfare Statement for 2010
- ✓ Health Board Statement (SWA/Rent Allowance)

Filling in the form

- ◇ Fill in all sections where they apply to you or your family, put in N/A where it is not relevant
- ◇ Keep your application clean and clearly written (block letters)
- ◇ Make sure both you and your parent/s sign the declarations at the back of the form

Where to apply?

The general rules are as follows:

1. Apply to local VEC—for Level 5, Level 6, Level 7
2. Apply to local County Council - for Level 8, Undergraduate course in EU, Post-graduate

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Co. Council, Marine Rd, Dún Laoghaire. Tel: 01-2054777 www.dlrcoco.ie	Dún Laoghaire VEC 100 Upper Georges Street, Dún Laoghaire Tel: 01 214 7200	Dublin County VEC, Main Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24 Tel: 01-4529600 info@codubvec.ie
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