

**Criteria  
for  
Awarding Grants  
by the  
Education Finance Board  
September 2008**

## **The Education (Former Residents of Certain Institutions for Children) Finance Board**

Under the terms of the Indemnity Agreement between the Irish State and 18 religious congregations, dated the 5th June 2002, a fund of €12.7 million is to be used for former residents and their relatives to facilitate them in accessing education programmes.

On 17th February 2006, Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin TD, established a statutory body, the Education Finance Board/An Bord Airgeadais Oideachais, under the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (Amendment) Act 2005, to administer the fund. The Education Finance Board has replaced the Ad Hoc Committee that managed the fund until the legislation was in place.

The functions of the Board are as follows:

- to determine and publish the criteria for the payment of such grants
- to pay grants to former residents of institutions and their relatives to assist them in the availing of educational services
- to provide information in relation to educational services for which grants are payable

This booklet sets out the Board's criteria for awarding grants. The criteria may be revised from time to time and will be reviewed by the Board not later than September 2009.

The Board's full-time staff will handle applications for grants from former residents and their relatives. The Board welcomes all queries and applications. Should you have any queries or should you wish to make a grant application, please use the contact information in this booklet to speak to a member of staff.

## **Criteria under which applications for funding are approved by the Board**

### **1. Introduction**

The Board intends that the grants to be paid from funds available under Section 26 of the 2005 Act will help applicants use the educational services decided by the Board. The Board will have particular regard to the needs of former residents as well as those of any of their relatives with identifiable gaps in their education which arose as a result of residence in one of the specified institutions.

### **2. Who may apply for grants**

The grants are open to all former residents of the institutions listed in the Residential Institutions Redress Act, 2002 and to their spouse, their sons, daughters, grandsons, granddaughters, stepsons and stepdaughters (relatives).

### **3. Proof of residency**

The relevant laws do not define the term 'resident', but it normally means living and sleeping in a place for some time. In general, the Board will consider whether the institution in question may be regarded as the applicant's home at the time.

Anyone who applies must supply satisfactory written and other appropriate evidence of identity and confirmation of residence in an institution. Relatives must also provide written evidence of their relationship to a former resident. The application form outlines the evidence required

### **4. Approved courses and programmes**

The Board offers funding to eligible people for a range of approved courses.

#### **Post-school, undergraduate and post-graduate courses**

Approved courses should:

- last at least one academic year, and
- ideally, be provided by a publicly-funded institution.

If a suitable course is not available in a publicly-funded institution, the Board may consider applications for suitable courses offered by private bodies.

Approved courses must lead to qualifications that are recognised by a state-approved framework, whether in Ireland or another country.

In Ireland, the qualification must be placed at level 3 or higher in the National Framework of Qualifications.

An arrangement exists to align qualifications in Ireland and the UK. This will inform decisions on appropriate recognition for qualifications from UK courses.

The Board will consider courses not covered by this arrangement individually, to decide if an appropriate recognition for the qualifications can be made.

### **Approval for other courses may include the following:**

#### **Personal development and lifestyle courses**

Courses must be provided by a recognised provider or an accredited trainer of the nationally-recognised body.

**Driving Lessons (up to 10 hours)** To apply for funding for up to 10 hours' driving lessons, all applicants must include a legally verified copy of a valid provisional driving licence or the original of a valid provisional driving licence with their application form. A former resident who completes the initial 10 hours may be approved for up to another 10 hours if they provide a letter of recommendation from their driving instructor saying how many hours' tuition they would need to pass the driving test.

**Literacy, Numeracy and One-to-One Tuition** The Board will consider these courses according to each applicant's needs and will need regular reports from the tutor to decide if further one-to-one tuition is needed.

#### **Primary, post-primary school support programmes**

**Extra tuition (normally one hour a week for each child)** This covers extra tuition for school going students by qualified teachers if the school endorses it. The applicant must provide appropriate documents, i.e. a copy of the relevant teacher's qualifications; the teacher's PPS Number (RSI or National Insurance number in the UK) and the cost for each session.

**After-school activities** These might include activities such as music lessons, swimming and so on.

**Course Costs** These must be formal education programmes. Examples include Gaeltacht trips or other summer language courses. The Board may also consider Transition Year participation costs under this heading.

## **5.Grants**

Grants to former residents and / or their relatives may be paid under two headings as outlined below:

#### **Tuition fees and related charges**

These grants are a contribution towards the cost of tuition fees and / or related student service charges such as registration, examination or professional association fees.

#### **Education assistance**

These grants help applicants to continue with their participation in approved post-school, undergraduate and post-graduate courses.

#### **Points to note:**

- **Payment of all grants is subject to the availability of funds to the Board**
- **The Board can only pay grants to applicants that meet all the criteria of the grant scheme.**

- **The Board will only support a single course at a particular level. For example, if you receive a grant towards the fees or related charges of a primary degree, you cannot later apply for funding for a second primary degree.**
- **The Board will only pay grants for the current year of study. Applications relating to courses or course modules that have been completed in a previous academic year will not be eligible for grants or assistance.**
- **There are limits on the overall amounts the Board may pay to a former resident and /or their relatives. They are as follows:**
  - **A total of €15,000 to a former resident.**
  - **A total of €15,000 to all relatives of a former resident.**
  - **€5,000 to an individual relative of former residents.**

**These amounts cover grants towards fees, related student charges and educational assistance and include any grants already made to the same applicant(s) under the Education Finance Board's Interim Criteria.**

## **6. Schedule of grants towards tuition fees, related charges and educational assistance**

The maximum amounts a former resident and / or their relatives may get for suitable courses under this scheme are outlined below. These amounts are subject to the overall limits detailed under Points to Note on page 3. The maximum amounts relate to the 'nett charge' for a course. This charge is the amount an applicant must personally pay for the course after receiving other grants. It is not the full cost of the course.

### **Fees for approved post-school and undergraduate courses**

Former residents

A maximum of €6,000 a year towards the nett charge.

Relatives

- A maximum of €1500 a year where the nett charge is €3,000 or less each year.
- Half the nett charge, up to a maximum of €2,000 a year, where the nett charge is more than €3,000 a year.

### **Distance Education**

The Board will consider each application related to distance education individually

### **Fees for approved post-graduate courses**

Former residents

A maximum of €6,000 towards the nett charge for the normal length of the course

Relatives

- A maximum of €1,500 a year where the nett charge is €3,000 or less each year
- Half the nett charge, up to a maximum of €2,500 in each year, where the nett charge is more than €3,000 for each year of the course
  - Overall maximum €5000 for the length of the course

### **Distance Education**

The Board will consider each application related to distance education individually

**Educational assistance**

Full-time study: two payments of €800 a year (total €1,600)

Part-time study: two payments of €300 a year (total €600)

The Board will consider each application related to distance education individually

Applicants must provide written evidence that they are still taking part in the course to receive their second payment of the year.

**Grants for other approved courses**

**Personal development and lifestyle courses** A maximum of €1,000 for each applicant each year

**Driving lessons**

Car – a maximum of €40 per lesson plus test fee

Truck or minibus – a maximum of €750 plus test fee

Coach – a maximum of €1000 plus test fee

Driving instructor – a maximum of €1,500 in Ireland and an appropriate contribution for a similar course overseas.

**Extra tuition, after-school programmes and summer courses**

The Board has set aside a suggested budget of €75,000 for 2008/2009.

Extra tuition and after-school programmes – a maximum of €30 an hour and €900 a year

Course costs – a maximum of €900 a year

**7. Special cases**

If the Board believes that special circumstances apply, especially to a former resident, the Board has discretion to change the Criteria.

**8. Reviewing decisions**

If an applicant is not satisfied with a decision relating to their application, they may ask the Board to review it. If the applicant is dissatisfied with the Board's review, they may refer the matter to the Ombudsman.

**9. Effective date**

These rules take effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008, and replace all other criteria.

If funding has been approved for courses lasting a number of years under the Pre-establishment Administrative Scheme Criteria or under the Interim Criteria, the Board may decide to change the maximum grant levels detailed in Sections 5 and 6 to take into account what the Board regards as an applicant's reasonable expectations.

These Criteria are subject to review and may be changed without notice.

Contact information

Education Finance Board Floor 3 Frederick Court 24/27 North  
Frederick Street Dublin 1

Within Ireland **Telephone:** 1890 742 742 **Fax:** 01 8745709

Outside Ireland **Telephone:** 00353 1 8745708 Fax: 00353 1  
8745709

Email [info@educationfinanceboard.com](mailto:info@educationfinanceboard.com)

Web [www.educationfinanceboard.com](http://www.educationfinanceboard.com)