

# **Fund for Students with Disabilities**

## **Guidelines for higher education institutions in EEA Member States United Kingdom and Switzerland**

**Academic Year 2021/22**



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



## Table of Contents

PART A – BACKGROUND, PURPOSE OF THE FUND AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS.....	3
A1 Introduction.....	3
PART B – ELIGIBILITY AND EXPENDITURE RULES .....	4
B1 FSD funding allocation for 2021/22.....	4
B2 Eligible courses .....	4
B3 Who is eligible for support under the FSD? .....	4
B4 Compliance with data protection requirements.....	5
B5 Eligible expenditure .....	5
B6 Ineligible expenditure.....	6
B7 Financial and data requirements .....	6
PART C – GUIDANCE ON TYPES OF SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATIONS .....	7
C1 Assistive technology equipment and software .....	7
C2 Non-medical helpers.....	7
C3 Academic learning support .....	8
C4 Supports for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.....	9
C5 Transport supports.....	9
C6 Examination supports .....	10
C7 Supports outside the academic year .....	10
C8 Work placements and internships.....	10
PART D – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT.....	11
PART E – ALLOCATION OF FUNDING, EXPENDITURE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.....	15
E1 Notification of outcome of applications .....	15
E2 Allocation of funding.....	15
E3 Allocation for needs assessment .....	15
E4 Per-capita allocation for students with specific learning difficulties .....	16
PART F –TIMELINE FOR THE 2021/22 APPLICATION PROCESS.....	17
APPENDIX 1 – RESIDENCY, NATIONALITY, AND IMMIGRATION CRITERIA .....	18
APPENDIX 2 – APPROVED COURSES .....	19
APPENDIX 3 – EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA (EEA) COUNTRIES .....	20
APPENDIX 4 – (Sample) END OF YEAR ANNUAL EXPENDITURE REPORT 2021/22.....	21



## PART A – BACKGROUND, PURPOSE OF THE FUND AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

### A1 Introduction

The Fund for Students with Disabilities (FSD) allocates funding to higher education institutions for the provision of services and supports to full-time students with disabilities. This includes Irish students (see Appendix 1) studying on full-time undergraduate courses in publicly funded institutions in the EEA member states, United Kingdom and Switzerland (as well as full-time postgraduate students in Northern Ireland **only**). The FSD supports the implementation of Ireland's [National Plan for Equity for Access to Higher Education 2015-2019](#) (as extended to 2021 by the [Progress Review of the National Access Plan](#) published in December 2018).

These guidelines are applicable to Irish students (see Appendix 1) studying in EEA member states, United Kingdom or Switzerland.

The Fund operates in addition to the legal framework supporting the rights of students with disabilities to access further and higher education. This document provides full details about the eligibility criteria for support under the Fund, eligible/ineligible expenditure under the Fund and the application procedure.

**In relation to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, for the 2021/22 academic year Irish students studying in the United Kingdom may continue to be supported under the FSD provided they meet the other criteria of the FSD e.g., eligibility criteria for support, approved course, and institution.**

There are a number of differences between the FSD and e.g., the UK's Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs). The key differences are:

- students do not submit applications to the FSD; rather, institutions submit applications on the student's behalf;
- if an application is successful, funding will be paid to the institution which manages the funding on the student's behalf. Funding is not paid directly either to the student or third-party service/equipment providers;
- students must be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course (or, in the case of Northern Ireland **only**, a full-time postgraduate course). **Students on part-time courses are not eligible;**
- **a letter from a GP is not acceptable as a medical diagnosis evidence of disability.** Please see part D for details of the appropriate required medical evidence required;
- institutions are required to submit a renewal application for support for each year of a student's course;
- the scope of the scheme in any financial year is determined by the funds available. Therefore, funding awards made may be less than applied for.



## PART B – ELIGIBILITY AND EXPENDITURE RULES

### B1 FSD funding allocation for 2021/22

A first-time application should be submitted on the standard application form along with the appropriate required medical evidence of disability. A needs assessment, if available, should also be submitted. Renewal applications for students previously approved for the FSD should be submitted on the standard renewal application form; no supporting documentation is needed to be submitted with a renewal application form. However, if a renewal student had a change in their circumstances since their first-time application form, the 'Change of Circumstances' form must be completed and submitted along with the appropriate required medical evidence if necessary. **Application forms are available on request from the Higher Education Authority (HEA), by contacting [fsd@hea.ie](mailto:fsd@hea.ie).**

There are two closing dates for the receipt of applications. The first round of applications should be submitted on or before **22 October 2021**. The final closing date for receipt of late applications is **26 November 2021**; however, it is recommended that applications should be submitted as soon as possible after the student has presented to the institution with a request for support. **No applications received after the final closing date will be processed.**

### B2 Eligible courses

An eligible student should be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course of not less than two years duration (or, in the case of Northern Ireland **only**, a full-time postgraduate course of not less than one year in duration) pursued in a publicly-funded higher education institution as per Appendix 2.

### B3 Who is eligible for support under the FSD?

To be eligible for support under the FSD, a student on an approved course should meet **all** the following conditions:

- have a verifiable disability as outlined in **part D** of these guidelines
- meet the nationality and residency criteria as outlined in **Appendix 1**
- be a participant on a full-time undergraduate course (or, in the case of Northern Ireland **only**, a full-time postgraduate course)
- have a verified need for specific supports to enable attendance on their chosen course

First-time applicants need not be exclusively those in the first year of their course in 2021/22 (i.e., some students with a disability may not present with a request for supports for the first time until second year of their course).



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

**HEA** | HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY  
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

## **B4 Compliance with data protection requirements**

The HEI and the HEA will put in place a standard FSD data sharing agreement. The agreement will be provided to HEIs applying for funding.

Students should be informed of the data protection implications of providing their personal data.

They should be informed that:

- personal data collected as part of the application process may be processed for the purposes of coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating the operation of the FSD;
- this personal data may include special category data, e.g. sensitive data such as health data, where they choose to share that data, and;
- their data may be shared with third parties such as the HEA for the purposes of allocating funding and for monitoring.

Where a HEI collects personal data from a student, the HEI should provide the student with all of the information as stipulated in article 13 of the GDPR. Please liaise with your institution's Data Protection Officer for further information and guidance.

## **B5 Eligible expenditure**

Funding can be used to provide supports and accommodations in any of the following broad categories:

- a. assistive technology equipment and software (including student training)
- b. non-medical helpers (e.g. personal assistants, notetakers)
- c. academic/learning support
- d. supports for students who are deaf or hard of hearing (e.g. sign language interpreters, SpeedText)
- e. transport support

Where relevant, institutions are required to comply with European and national procurement guidelines when procuring services or accommodations in relation to the FSD.



## B6 Ineligible expenditure

The FSD does not cover expenditure for any of the following:

- assessment or diagnosis of a disability
- any medical equipment, assistance, or support
- services that can reasonably be expected to be provided by the institution (e.g., counselling service) or by another agency (e.g., local health service)
- course-related equipment, materials, or software (i.e., applicable to all students on the course)
- support or assistance provided outside the academic year, or periods during the academic year when the institution is closed (save for the exceptional circumstances set out in section C7)
- subsistence, mileage and accommodation costs for personal assistants, note-takers, SpeedText operators or Irish sign language (ISL) interpreters
- staff training and development
- policy work or research
- student accommodation (i.e., on-campus or off-campus)
- salaries of staff in disability or access services involved in administrative work
- membership fees or subscriptions.

## B7 Financial and data requirements

### Financial period for the FSD

The financial year for the 2021/22 FSD is **1 October 2021 – 30 September 2022**.

**The HEA will take account of any portion of the FSD tranche which is not spent in an institution on 30 September each year in the transfer of funding to that institution for the following year. The HEA has the right to seek the return of all underspends.**

### Financial reporting requirements

In line with existing practice, institutions are asked to maintain full and appropriate records of all transactions and assistance given to each student.

Institutions are required to submit an End of Year Expenditure Form for the previous year (see Appendix 4). This form should include the overall amount spent and any unspent FSD funds held by the institution from the allocation made in the relevant year and/or in previous years, as applicable. Record-keeping and financial reporting for the FSD are necessary to establish the ongoing position of institutions regarding the allocation of the fund locally and to inform national policy.

Data is also required on the types of cost items for which funding is allocated to students.



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



## PART C – GUIDANCE ON TYPES OF SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATIONS

This section provides information on the types of services and accommodations that fall within the expenditure scope of the FSD. However, it is not exhaustive. It is a matter for disability support staff to conduct the needs assessment and satisfy him/herself that the FSD expenditure used to provide supports is consistent with the eligibility categories.

**Only costs associated with the delivery of services and accommodations directly to eligible students are covered under the FSD.** Developmental costs, e.g., staff training and development, are **not eligible**.

In cases where HEIs employ personnel to deliver supports, the contractual relationship and the rights and duties embodied within it are strictly between the individual employee and the HEI.

### COVID-19

Although “return to campus” measures are being put in place for the 2021/22 academic year, it is still to be expected that online or alternative methods of teaching, learning and assessment will continue in some form. In that context, it is still appropriate for students to be supported under the FSD once the supports are in line with what is deemed eligible in the FSD guidelines. The HEA continues to encourage HEIs to consider how existing services can be reconfigured to meet the needs of students with disabilities and provide supports during the Covid-19 pandemic while still operating within the FSD guidelines.

### C1 Assistive technology equipment and software

Assistive technology is defined as any item, piece of equipment or product system whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customised/custom-built, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

The FSD may also be used to cover training for students in the use of such technology. Training for staff is not considered eligible.

### C2 Non-medical helpers

Non-medical helpers such as personal assistants or notetakers provide help to students with disabilities who require assistance with the logistical and personal care requirements associated with attendance on a course of study. Funding can be used to provide the service to a student during an institution’s normal operating hours and, if required, to assist the student with commuting to and from college. In general, personal assistance is only provided to students with physical/mobility disabilities and blind/visually impaired students who require



such assistance to participate in their chosen course of study. However, it is recognised that students with non-physical disabilities e.g., Asperger syndrome may also require non-medical help and assistance during their studies.

Many students with severe physical/mobility disabilities may require a personal assistant for the entire period each day that the student is in college. Other students may only require personal assistance at certain times of the college day. Blind students may require personal assistance for a short period at the beginning of the academic year, until they have familiarised themselves with their surroundings. As the independence of the student is compromised using a personal assistant, the service should only be provided when necessary, and after the full range of options have been explored. Decisions associated with the engagement of a personal assistant are with the institution, taking account, where appropriate, the student's wishes/preferences.

In relation to non-medical helper supports that may be required outside the normal academic year (e.g. during summer months), these may be considered eligible under the FSD in the case of students with particular or specific high needs who may require access to facilities or services outside the normal academic year, to support their academic progression and completion.

#### *Notetakers*

Students with disabilities that affect their ability to record class notes may be eligible for notetaking support. A range of alternative solutions are increasingly in place in education which can reduce the need, partly or fully, for the traditional notetaking approach. Lecturers making notes available to students in advance, preferably online, reduces the need for dedicated notetakers. Recording of lectures or the use of products such as the LiveScribe pen are other options. Institutional disability services should explore all options before recommending the provision of a notetaker. Notetaking is not a substitute for a student's full participation in each class. Notetaking support can be provided during academic contact hours only.

### **C3 Academic learning support**

Learning support is important for all students, including those with disabilities. For this group, the development of skills, tools and techniques that minimise or eliminate any barriers presented by the learning environment are particularly critical to student success and progression in higher education and beyond.

In addition to assistive technology, study skills support is the most common category of learning support required by students with learning difficulties. This includes memorisation, mind mapping, taking notes, writing skills (including spelling and grammar checkers) and personal learning strategies. It can be delivered in small groups or individually, and there are an increasing range of online applications/tutorials available. Both study skills support and



specialist learning supports may also be needed by students with mental health difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions and those with multiple disabilities.

Funding is not available for the provision of tutorials that are a direct substitute for core teaching where the student is not prevented because of their disability from participating in core lectures or class-wide tutorials. The HEI should be satisfied that subject-specific tutorials for which funding may be used have been identified as part of an assessment of needs as reasonable accommodation resulting from the impact of a student's condition/disability.

## **C4 Supports for students who are deaf or hard of hearing**

*Supports such as ISL interpreters and SpeedText*

ISL is an officially recognised language under the [Irish Sign Language Act 2017](#) and is regarded as the first language of its users (the deaf community). ISL interpreters translate between English and the language and vice-versa. ISL can be provided during academic contact hours only.

SpeedText is an electronic class synopsis and notetaking system using two laptops, one for the deaf or hard-of-hearing person (for real-time display) and the other for the specially trained operator (for input). A SpeedText operator is trained in condensing language, thus transmitting the meaning of the points discussed, not the actual word-for-word transcription. SpeedText is not a verbatim service. It is primarily for deaf/hard-of-hearing people who have a good command of the English language. SpeedText can be provided during academic contact hours only.

## **C5 Transport supports**

Some students with disabilities have significant, additional travel costs to pay to get to and from college. Funding is available for this purpose for students with physical/mobility difficulties or blind/visually impaired students.

It is recognised that in some cases, the needs assessment may determine that because of their disability, a student incurs additional transport costs in attending college beyond those faced by any student commuting from the same area.

In relation to private transport, a HEI must be satisfied that the use of private transport is fully justified, the cost is legitimate and reasonable and that any reimbursements are in line with relevant HEI or public sector policies e.g., mileage rates.

In relation to transport supports that may be required outside the normal academic year (e.g. during summer months), these may be considered eligible under the FSD in the case of students with particular or specific high needs who may require access to facilities or services outside the normal academic year, to support their academic progression and completion.



Institutional personnel should be satisfied that the need to avail of the proposed transport and the incurrence of additional expenses for the student to participate equitably is supported by the diagnosis in the assessment of disability.

## **C6 Examination supports**

In line with the overall principles of the FSD, supports to students with disabilities should be mainstreamed as much as possible within an institution. This also applies to examination supports or accommodation. However, if specific high-level supports are required for examinations these may be considered eligible under the FSD in respect of the categories of eligible expenditure outlined above in B5.

## **C7 Supports outside the academic year**

In line with the categories of ineligible expenditure outlined in B6, support or assistance provided outside the academic year, or periods during the academic year when the institution is closed, are not covered by the FSD.

However, institutions have discretion to consider cases, e.g., students with particular or specific high needs who may require assistance to be able to access facilities or services outside the normal academic year, to support their academic progression and completion.

## **C8 Work placements and internships**

Work placements and internships are an increasing feature of many programmes. Students with disabilities undertaking such placements as part of their studies may continue to be supported under the FSD in respect of the categories of eligible expenditure outlined in B5. Institutions and employers should work together to identify any particular student needs that may need to be accommodated by an employer in hosting a student as part of their work placement or internship.



## PART D – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT

This section applies to eligible students for which a funding request is being made for the first time. The criteria set out in this section are specifically associated with the FSD and institutions should not assume that the same criteria apply in other contexts, e.g., obligations under law.

Funding can be requested for eligible students who have provided evidence of disability documentation that meets the criteria for the FSD as set out below. Responsibility for collecting and screening of the documentation to establish that it meets the criteria is with the institution and such documentation should be retained on file by the institution.

Acceptable evidence of disability documentation is either:

- a. a report that meets the criteria as set out in the table below, or
- b. the CAO/[Disability Access Route to Education](#) (DARE) evidence of disability form that meets the criteria as set out below where the student has completed this step as part of a CAO application. Please note that the CAO/DARE evidence of disability form is not considered acceptable as evidence of disability in the case of specific learning difficulties (dyslexia and dyscalculia) and students with DCD-dyspraxia/dysgraphia.

Where the CAO/DARE evidence of disability form is furnished, the requirements as stated on the form must be met (including that it be accompanied by the qualified health professional's stamp, business card or headed paper; or where the information from the qualified health professional is provided by a GP, it be accompanied by the GP's stamp, business card or headed paper).

**Providers of reports must be appropriately qualified professionals and members of professional/regulatory bodies. Reports should be signed and on headed paper.**

**A GP's own diagnosis of a disability/condition is not acceptable as evidence of disability for the purposes of the FSD.**

**Following on from COVID-19 and associated restrictions that may still be in place, it is recognised that some students may not be able to produce evidence of disability in line with the evidence and eligibility criteria set out in the table below. In all cases relating to evidence of disability, an institution must satisfy itself as to the integrity and validity of the documentation provided and that it is consistent with the evidence of disability required under the FSD.**



Please also note the following:

- Where a funding request is based on needs arising from more than one disability, **appropriate evidence of disability documentation for each disability must be** provided by the student and retained on file by the institution.
- All institutions should advise students and relevant third parties that any medical reports or professional opinions compiled by third parties in support of an application should only contain details relevant to the disability being outlined.
- Disability documentation which has been completed in a language other than English can be submitted, along with an English translation. This translation must be conducted by an individual/organisation that is completely independent of the student.

Disability	Evidence and eligibility criteria	Age of report
<b>Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)</b> (including Asperger's Syndrome)	A report from an appropriately qualified consultant psychiatrist OR psychologist OR neurologist OR paediatrician providing a diagnosis of ASD	No age limit
<b>Attention deficit disorder (ADD)</b> <b>Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)</b>	A report from an appropriately qualified consultant psychiatrist OR psychologist OR neurologist OR paediatrician providing a diagnosis of ADD/ADHD	No age limit
<b>Blind/ Vision Impaired</b>	A report from one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ophthalmologist/ophthalmic surgeon providing a diagnosis of severe reduction in vision that cannot be corrected with standard glasses or contact lenses. The diagnosis must be in relation to best-corrected visual acuity or field of vision</li> <li>• a letter from the National Council for the Blind of Ireland confirming registration</li> <li>• a letter from the principal from a school for the blind confirming attendance</li> </ul>	No age limit
<b>Deaf/ Hard of Hearing</b>	A report from one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an audiogram from a professionally qualified audiologist and/or ENT consultant, indicating moderate to</li> </ul>	No age limit



Disability	Evidence and eligibility criteria	Age of report
	profound bilateral hearing loss or unilateral moderate hearing loss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a letter from the principal from a school for the deaf confirming attendance</li> <li>• existing report from ENT consultant or Cochlear Implant Programme Coordinator confirming cochlear implant or bone anchored hearing aid</li> </ul>	
<b>Developmental co-ordination disorder (dyspraxia/dysgraphia)</b>	A report from a psychologist OR an occupational therapist OR chartered physiotherapist OR neurologist OR paediatrician diagnosing developmental co-ordination disorder (dyspraxia).  The CAO/DARE evidence of disability form is <b>not</b> acceptable evidence of disability for this category of disability	No age limit
<b>Mental health condition</b> (for example, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, clinical depression, severe anxiety, severe phobias, obsessive compulsive disorder, severe eating disorders and psychosis)	A report from a consultant psychiatrist OR specialist registrar	Less than five years
<b>Neurological condition</b>	A report from one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neurological conditions – neurologist OR another relevant consultant</li> <li>• Speech and language disabilities – speech and language therapist</li> </ul>	No age limit
<b>Significant ongoing illness</b>	A report diagnosing a significant ongoing illness such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diabetes type 1 – endocrinologist OR paediatrician</li> <li>• Cystic fibrosis – consultant respiratory physician OR pediatrician</li> <li>• Gastroenterology condition – gastroenterologist</li> </ul>	Less than five years



Disability	Evidence and eligibility criteria	Age of report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other – consultant OR consultant registrar</li> </ul>	
<b>Physical/mobility</b>	A report from an orthopaedic consultant OR other relevant specialist diagnosing a significant physical or mobility difficulty	No age limit
<b>Specific learning difficulties (dyslexia or dyscalculia)</b>	<p>The report of a psycho-educational assessment by a psychologist OR by an assessor (PATOSS accredited) diagnosing a specific learning difficulty</p> <p>Students may be asked for their latest assessment scores/educational reports to assist institutions in determining the appropriate level of support</p> <p>All tests used in the assessment must be valid, reliable and age appropriate</p> <p>The CAO/DARE evidence of disability form is <b>not</b> acceptable evidence of disability for this category of disability</p>	No age limit
<b>Speech and Language Communication Disorder</b> (including (but not exclusively) Stammering; Receptive and/or Expressive Language Disorders; Unintelligibility due to a phonological disorder, articulation disorder associated with structural anomalies; Acquired communication disorders such as Aphasia, Anomia, Dysarthria, Dyspraxia resulting from neurological conditions, or any	A report from a speech and language therapist	No age limit



Disability	Evidence and eligibility criteria	Age of report
neurodegenerative, or genetic disease associated with impaired communication and social interaction		

## PART E – ALLOCATION OF FUNDING, EXPENDITURE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### E1 Notification of outcome of applications

Details of funding approved will be provided in writing to institutions. Students will not be informed individually by the HEA of the outcome of their application. Confirmation of registration will be required to trigger transfer of funding to institutions.

In cases where an application has not been approved, or only partially approved, the institution will be notified to this effect. An application may be reviewed on submission of new information (for example outstanding or up-to-date supporting documentation) within the application deadline date (26 November 2021).

### E2 Allocation of funding

There is a restricted budget available under the FSD. It is sometimes necessary to cap funding levels per student to ensure that all eligible applicants receive at least a minimum level of support. Therefore, funding allocations made may be less than that applied for.

In determining the value of supports required the HEA will use the currency rate of Sterling to Euro on the date of the first deadline date of receipt of applications.

### E3 Allocation for needs assessment

Previously the FSD included provision for a per-capita amount of up to €400 to assist with verifiable, additional cost to the institution of completing a needs assessment for approved first-time applicants. For 2021/22 there will be a contribution amount awarded towards the per-capita amount in proportion to the overall fund available and the number of students who apply for funding. This payment will only be provided if an appropriate **evidence of cost associated with a needs assessment is submitted to the HEA with the HEI's application for FSD funding.**



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



It will not be possible to approve the per-capita funding for a needs assessment in advance of the approval of equipment, supports and services. Where an application to the FSD is not approved (for example due to insufficient evidence of disability documentation), funding will not be approved in respect of a needs assessment regardless of whether or not an assessment has been carried out by the institution.

Similar to other items funded under the FSD, the per-capita subvention for a needs assessment can only be allocated in respect of individual confirmed students approved under the FSD in 2021/22.

#### **E4 Per-capita allocation for students with specific learning difficulties**

The HEA uses a standard per capita allocation for each approved first-time application made by institutions on behalf of students with specific learning difficulties (including dyslexia/dyscalculia and dyspraxia/dysgraphia). The per capita allocation is designed to provide for the costs of assistive technology and academic support for this cohort of students.



## PART F –TIMELINE FOR THE 2021/22 APPLICATION PROCESS

- **Round 1 closing date:** 22 October 2021
- **Late application closing date:** 26 November 2021

Applications should be forwarded on or before **Friday 22 October 2021** for consideration under the first funding round. The final closing date for receipt of late applications is **Friday 26 November 2021**; however, it is recommended that applications should be submitted as soon as possible after the student has presented to the institution with a request for support. No applications received after the final closing date will be processed in 2021/22.

### SUBMISSION OF FSD APPLICATION FORMS

Applications should be forwarded electronically to [fsd@hea.ie](mailto:fsd@hea.ie).

The HEA will provide ongoing advice and support to institutions and any queries can be directed to [fsd@hea.ie](mailto:fsd@hea.ie) or by phoning +353 (0)1-2317100.



## APPENDIX 1 – RESIDENCY, NATIONALITY, AND IMMIGRATION CRITERIA

### Residency

In order to be eligible for support under the FSD, a student must be legally resident in Ireland for at least three of the five years **up to the day before their approved course commences** in an approved institution.

### Nationality

To qualify the student must be either:

- an Irish national,
- a national of another EU member state, the UK, the European Economic Area (EEA)<sup>1</sup> or Switzerland.

### Immigration status

Students who are non-EU nationals, but who would ordinarily be eligible for free or reduced fees in line with the criteria for the [Free Fees Initiative](#), may be considered eligible for funding under the FSD subject to meeting other relevant FSD criteria.

**Note:** Ireland in this context refers to the Republic of Ireland. Students ordinarily resident in Northern Ireland do not meet the residency criteria for the FSD. Further information on support for students with disabilities from Northern Ireland is available from [www.studentfinancenl.co.uk](http://www.studentfinancenl.co.uk).

---

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 3



## APPENDIX 2 – APPROVED COURSES

Full-time undergraduate courses of not less than two years duration (or, in the case of Northern Ireland **only**, a full-time postgraduate course of not less than one year in duration) pursued in a university or higher education institution which is maintained or assisted by recurrent grants from public funds in an EEA Member State, the United Kingdom or Switzerland, with the **exception of the following:**

1. courses in colleges of further and higher education (other than courses which are at higher national diploma level or higher);
2. courses provided in a college which are offered in private commercial third-level colleges in the state in question, and which are validated by that college;
3. courses in colleges akin to private commercial colleges in Ireland.

Repeat students are also covered by the FSD provided they are repeating a year of study and continue to meet the other relevant eligibility criteria in Appendices 1 and 2. In the case of students who may be repeating e.g. a module or exam only, institutions have discretion to consider exceptional circumstances, e.g. students with particular or specific high needs on a case-by-case basis.

Students on apprenticeship courses are also covered by the FSD in respect of the period(s) when they are attending lectures in a higher education institution for the period of their study.



## APPENDIX 3 – EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA (EEA) COUNTRIES

### EU member states

Austria	Poland
Belgium	Portugal
Bulgaria	Romania
Croatia	Slovakia
Cyprus	Slovenia
Czech Republic	Spain
Denmark	Sweden

Estonia

Finland

France

Germany

Greece

Hungary

Ireland

Italy

Latvia

Lithuania

Luxembourg

Malta

Netherlands

### Non-EU member states

Iceland

Liechtenstein

Norway

**In relation to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, for the 2021/22 academic year Irish students studying in the United Kingdom may continue to be supported under the FSD provided they meet the other criteria of the FSD e.g., eligibility criteria for support, approved course, and institution.**



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



## APPENDIX 4 – (Sample) END OF YEAR ANNUAL EXPENDITURE REPORT 2021/22

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Annual summary of expenditure

A	Total FSD carryover balance as on 1 October 2021	€
B	Allocation for FSD 2021/22 (as per HEA's letter issued during the academic year)	€
C	Total payment provided by the HEA towards FSD 2021/22 allocation (B less A)	€

D	Your total FSD expenditure during the academic year 2021/22	€
E	<b>Unspent</b> balance from your 2021/22 allocation (B less D)	€

**\* If a carryover balance is reported, please outline the reasons why the funds were not fully spent:**

--

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

**HEA** | HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY  
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

## Annual expenditure returns 2021/21

Cost heading	Expenditure (€)
1. Non-medical support	
Personal assistant	
2. Deaf/hard of hearing supports	
Sign language interpreter	
SpeedText	
3. Assistive technology	
4. Learning support	
5. Transport costs	
<b>Total expenditure/beneficiaries</b>	

The undersigned, being the operational agency official responsible for the preparation of this return, hereby certifies:

- a) that the figures contained in this return are accurate and complete
- b) that the costs covered by this claim have already been incurred and amounts given in this return have actually been expended.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

