

STUDENT ASSISTANCE FUND

Guidelines for Students





What is the Student Assistance Fund?

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The Student Assistance Fund (SAF) provides financial support to students who are experiencing short or long-term financial difficulties while attending higher education. The SAF is co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Social Fund as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning.



What can I use it for?

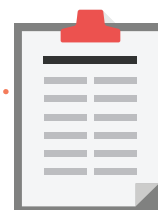
The SAF is available to assist students with costs such as:

- ▶ Books and other class materials
- ▶ Rent, heating and lighting bills
- ▶ Food
- ▶ Essential travel
- ▶ In the case of parent students, childcare costs
- ▶ Medical costs



What costs are not covered?

Tuition fees, registration fees, student loan repayments or any costs borne by your institution are not covered by SAF.

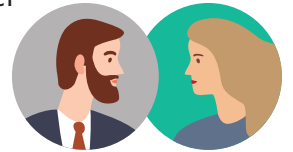


Who can apply for SAF?

Students on courses leading to a higher education award (NFQ level 6-10) in the universities, institutes of technology and other approved colleges are eligible to apply for SAF.

Students on courses that do not lead to a higher education award are not eligible for SAF.

Students participating on a second qualification at the same or a lower level are not eligible for funding. PhD students are funded for years 1-4.



How do I apply?

If you are in financial difficulty you should contact the access or student services office in your institution for further information on how to apply for SAF.

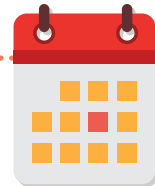
Is it confidential?

Yes, the SAF is administered on a strictly confidential basis by your institution.

Any information you provide as part of your application is protected by data protection policies in your college. To comply with ESF reporting and audit requirements, institutions return data on participants in the SAF to the Higher Education Authority (HEA).

When can I apply?

It is important to apply for funding as soon as you can. Some institutions have a closing date for applications and you should check when this is.



When can I apply?





Where can I find further information?

How are applications assessed?

Your individual circumstances and financial means are taken into consideration by your institution when assessing your application for Student Assistance Funding. Final decisions on awards may be taken by a small committee, including the access officer and student welfare officer.

What are the award amounts?

There are limited funds available so institutions prioritise those who are most in need and not every request for funding can be met.

What documents do I need?

Your institution will be able to advise you what documents you need to provide to support your application for SAF. These may include proof of your own or your parents' income, as appropriate and proof of expenditure such as receipts for costs such as rent, childcare, etc.

Where can I find further information?

Further information and frequently asked questions can be found at: **www.studentfinance.ie**