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Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

Am I an EU or Non EU student (for application and fees assessment)?

Introduction

For admission purposes all applicants are categorized into two categories: EU or Non EU. It is important to establish your status before making an application as you will retain your EU/ Non EU status for the duration of your studies.

The determination of EU or Non EU status is important for two reasons:

1. Application Procedure

EU/ Non EU status determines the application procedure that you should follow. Applying through the incorrect EU/Non EU application route will result in your application not being processed.

AND

2. Fees Status

EU/ Non EU status determines the fee category that will apply for the duration of your studies. This is important as the EU/Non EU Fee Category cannot be changed from one category to the other following registration.

Applicants who meet the EU Fees criteria (EU Free Fees or EU Fees - shown below) qualify as 'EU applicants' and apply through the EU application route only, (see Note 1 below).

Note 1: EU Applicants apply via the CAO www.cao.ie with the exception of Graduates, applying to the Pharmacy and Physiotherapy programmes, who apply directly through the College www.rcsi.ie

Applicants who do not meet the EU Fees criteria qualify as 'Non EU applicants' and apply through the Non EU application route only, (see Note 2 below).

Note 2: Non EU applicants apply directly to RCSI <http://www.rcsi.ie> with the exception of applicants, residing in North America at the time of application, who must apply via the Atlantic Bridge Programme <http://www.atlanticbridge.com>.

Determination of EU/ Non EU Status for Undergraduate Students

The criteria for determining the fee category assignment is set by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and all Universities in Ireland are required to implement these regulations for determining;

1. EU Free Fee
2. EU Fees
3. Non EU Fees

1. EU Free Fees

Under the terms of the Free Fees Initiative, the Irish Exchequer will pay tuition fees on behalf of EU students registered for the first time on full-time, undergraduate degree programmes. To qualify for Fees, ALL the criteria for eligibility must be met, in full, prior to registration. Once registered a student's fee status cannot subsequently be changed. Students who qualify for free fees under the Free Fees Initiative will receive funding for their tuition fees for the normal completion of their chosen programme. Repeat year fees are not covered under the Free Fees Initiative.

To qualify for EU free fees, candidates must meet criteria with regard to:



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- a) Residency and
- b) Nationality and immigration status and
- c) Course requirements

a) Residency

The candidate must have been ordinarily resident* in the EU or an EEA member state (Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein) or Switzerland for at least 3 of the last 5 years prior to admission to their chosen course.

* Ordinarily resident means being resident in the EU/EEA/ Switzerland for a minimum of 183 days in any one calendar year, for a minimum of 3 years.

Note 3:

For determination of eligibility for free tuition fees, the place of residence of a student is deemed to be their place of education. This means that if a student receives their full-time education in a non-EU/EEA/Swiss jurisdiction they will not be eligible for free fees.

Note 4:

Students who are the children of Semi State Agency officials, Government officials, Irish officials working with the UN and children of volunteer development workers who reside in non-EU countries as a result of their appointments must note that as and from September 2013 the exemption from meeting normal EU residency requirements is ceased. The Department of Education and Skills withdrew this concession for legal reasons in January 2013.

AND

b) Nationality and immigration

The candidate must also fulfil ONE of the following six criteria as regards nationality and immigration status in Ireland:

They must;

- i. Be a citizen of the EU/EEA or Switzerland or
- ii. Have official refugee status or
- iii. Be a family member of a refugee and have been granted permission to live in the State or
- iv. Be a family member of an EU national and have permission to live in the State, with a stamp "4EUFAM" on your residence card or
- v. Have been granted humanitarian leave to remain in the State or
- vi. Have been granted permission to remain in the State by the Minister for Justice and Equality, following a determination by the Minister not to make a deportation order under Section 3 of the Immigration Act 1999

AND

c) Course requirements

The candidate must also fulfil ALL of the following three course requirements:

- i. Be a first-time full-time undergraduate student
- ii. Be undertaking a full-time undergraduate course of at least 2 years' duration
- iii. Not be repeating the academic year because of failing exams or changing course

Note 5:

Students who have been verifiably absent from 3rd level education for a minimum of 5 years since attempting, but not completing, a first-time degree AND who belong to one of the above categories may be considered "second chance" i.e. eligible for a further round of funding under the Free Fees Initiative.

Note 6:

Ineligibility Notes for Free Fees

- Students who have already completed a first-time undergraduate degree or who have a postgraduate qualification are never entitled to further funding under the Free Fees Initiative.



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- No graduate regardless of where, when or how the degree was obtained qualifies for free tuition. If a student has a postgraduate qualification without having completed a primary degree they will not qualify for free fees if they choose to pursue an undergraduate programme.
- If a student withdraws from a programme for which free fees are claimed they will be held liable for all tuition fees for the equivalent period of attendance if they decide to attend another 3rd level programme in the Republic of Ireland.

2. EU Fees

Citizens of the EU/EEA or Switzerland (or those with official Refugee Status as outlined above) may be liable for fees at the EU rate if:

- a) They already hold a degree or have completed one or more years of a Higher Education Course or
- b) They are repeating a year (or part of a year) of study or
- c) They have not been resident in the EU, EEA or Switzerland for at least three of the last five years prior to admission to their chosen course.

Note 7:

EU/EEA/Swiss passport holders who are children of emigrants and who have completed at least 5 years of education (primary or post-primary) in an EU state may be eligible for EU fees.

- a) This change applies to new undergraduate entrants from the 2014/15 academic session onwards.
- b) Does not affect the rules governing entitlement to EU free fees for undergraduate study. The change only relates to candidates being eligible for the EU fee rate rather than the Non EU fee rate.
- c) Documentary evidence of completion of at least five academic years of study in the EU/EEA/Switzerland will be required by the College, i.e. confirmation/certification from the schools attended.

Note 8:

Non EU citizens may also be considered for EU Fees if their principal residence for tax purposes was in an EU/EEA or Swiss member state for a minimum of 3 of the last 5 years prior to admission to their course. In order to meet this criterion, candidates will need the following:

- i. For candidates under 23 on the 1st of September of year of entry:
 - a) A letter from their school confirming attendance for a minimum of 3 of the last 5 years prior to entry and
 - b) P21 tax certificates and/or social welfare documentation belonging to the parent(s) of the candidate must be submitted for each year of residence (minimum 3 of the last 5 years) with other proof of residence as required.
- ii. For candidates aged 23 or over on the 1st of September of year of entry:
 - a) Applicants over 23 are considered independent, mature applicants and must have been resident as a tax-payer (that is - principal residence for the purpose of taxation) in the EU/EEA/Switzerland for 3 of the last 5 years prior to commencing a programme. P21 tax certificates and/or social welfare documentation for the candidate must be submitted for each year of residence (minimum 3 of the last 5 years) with other proof of residence as required.

Non EU Fees

Any candidate who does not meet the conditions outlined above for EU Free Fees or EU Fees will be liable for Non EU Fees, regardless of nationality or citizenship. Candidates classified for fee purposes as Non EU must apply through the Non EU application route only (see Note 2 above) and will not be permitted to change their fee status following admission.

Determination of EU/ Non EU Status for Graduate Entry Students

EU Fees

(a) Graduate students who are citizens of the EU, EEA or Switzerland are liable for fees at the EU rate if they have been ordinarily resident* in the EU or an EEA member state (Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein) or Switzerland for at least 3 of the last 5 years prior to admission to their chosen course.

* *Ordinarily resident means being resident in the EU/EEA/ Switzerland for a minimum of 183 days in any one calendar year, for a minimum of 3 years.*



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(b) Graduate students who are Non EU citizens may also be considered for EU fees if their principal residence for tax purposes was in an EU, EEA or Swiss member state for a minimum of 3 of the last 5 years prior to admission to their course. In order to meet this criterion, candidates will need the following:

For candidates under 23 on the 1st of September of year of entry:

- A letter from their institution confirming attendance for a minimum of 3 of the last 5 years prior to entry and
- P21 tax certificates and/or social welfare documentation belonging to the parent(s) of the candidate must be submitted for each year of residence (minimum 3 of the last 5 years) with other proof of residence as required, plus
- Their GNIB card with an appropriate stamp (excluding Stamp 2).

For candidates aged 23 or over on the 1st of September of year of entry:

- Applicants over 23 are considered independent, mature applicants and must have been resident as a tax-payer (that is - principal residence for the purpose of taxation) in the EU/EEA/Switzerland for 3 of the last 5 years prior to commencing a programme.
- P21 tax certificates and/or social welfare documentation for the candidate must be submitted for each year of residence (minimum 3 of the last 5 years) with other proof of residence as required, plus
- Work or residence visa for 3 of the last 5 years must be submitted along with the GNIB card with an appropriate stamp (excluding Stamp 2).

Non EU Fees

Any candidate who does not meet the conditions outlined above for EU Fees will be liable for Non EU Fees, regardless of nationality or citizenship. Candidates classified for fee purposes as Non EU must apply through the Non EU application route only (see Note 2 above) and will not be permitted to change their fee status following admission.