**Ireland - Applying for a Student Visa**

Applying for a Student Visa

You must make your visa application on-line using the [AVATS on-line facility](https://www.visas.inis.gov.ie/avats/OnlineHome.aspx) , the online visa application facility is available worldwide and must be used by all applicants.

Your application will only be processed when the on-line form is completed **AND** the required documentation, passport photograph and appropriate fee are received by the relevant office as indicated by the on-line system.

You should read the visa application details very carefully. If you do not provide the documentation required, your visa will be refused.

Some points for you to note. When making an application you must:

* Complete the [online application](https://www.visas.inis.gov.ie/avats/OnlineHome.aspx) form
* Check the Irish Embassy details where your documentation is to be sent
* Provide a passport sized photo
* Ensure your passport is valid for 12 months
* Pay the application fee
* Provide a signed letter of application which explains why you require the visa
* A Letter of Acceptance from the Irish university, college or school, confirming you have been accepted and enrolled on a course of full-time education, involving a minimum of 15 hours organised daytime tuition each week.
  + This letter must name you (the applicant) and verify the title/duration of the course
  + It should also confirm the amount of fees payable for your course, and that this amount has been paid.
  + If the college has taken out [medical insurance](http://www.educationinireland.com/en/How-Do-I-Apply-/Get-Your-Student-Visa/For-Higher-Education/Medical-Insurance.html) on your behalf, details of this must be contained in this letter of acceptance. If it is not arranged by the college, you must organise this yourself and provide evidence with your application.

Evidence of Payment of Fees

Evidence that all fees have been paid prior to the visa application being submitted. These applications should contain either

* A copy of an Electronic Transfer of Funds from the applicant to the Irish Bank of the college, showing details of the beneficiary's name, address, bank details and the same details for sender and a copy of a letter/receipt from the Irish college confirming that the fee has bee received or
* A valid receipt showing that the course fees have been lodged to an [approved student fees payment service](http://www.educationinireland.com/en/How-Do-I-Apply-/Get-Your-Student-Visa/For-Higher-Education/EduStep-.html).
* Where the course fees are less than €6000 fees must be paid in full to the college. Where the course fees are in excess of €6000, you must pay at least this amount. The minimum amount is an Immigration requirement. However, the college you wish to attend may require full payment of fees.
* Fees paid to the college are a matter between the student and the college. However, in the event of the visa application being refused the college should refund the fee ( minus any small administration charge) within a reasonable period.
* Show evidence of language proficiency, you must show that you have the capacity to fully partake in your chosen course through the medium of English.  [INIS](http://www.inis.gov.ie/) requires IELTS of 5 but most Irish universities and colleges generally require IELTS of 6.5
* Make sure you keep copies of all documents submitted
* If you are applying from [China](http://www.embassyofireland.cn/visa_home.php), [India](https://www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/india/), [Nigeria,](http://web.dfa.ie/home/index.aspx?id=51464) [Russia](http://web.dfa.ie/home/index.aspx?id=32351), [United Arab Emirates](http://web.dfa.ie/home/index.aspx?id=32924) or the United Kingdom, please also check the Irish Embassy website for details of further documentation which may be required.

Finances

You must provide evidence that you have access to sufficient funds to cover your tuition fees and cost of living expenses. You must show you have sufficient funds to support your stay in Ireland without recourse to public funds, or the reliance on casual employment.  In order to provide evidence of access to sufficient finances you will need:

* A detailed statement of your bank account covering a six-month period immediately prior to your visa application, and showing sufficient funds to cover your costs.
* Produce official confirmation that you are in receipt of a scholarship

**Note:** The estimated cost of living in Ireland for a student for one academic year is €7,000. You must demonstrate that you or your sponsor has ready access to an amount of at least €7,000 for each year of your studies, in addition to the course fees for each of those years. Where NON-EEA Students are studying for a period of less than 6 months the non-EEA Student must have access to €500 per month of the stay or €3000 whichever is the lesser.

**Alternative Evidence of Finance – Degree Programme Students**

A pilot programme has now been introduced that would allow degree programme students to provide an alternative to bank statements as a method of proof of finances.  The alternative method is an ["education bond"](http://www.educationinireland.com/en/How-Do-I-Apply-/Get-Your-Student-Visa/For-Higher-Education/EduStep-.html) with a minimum value of €7,000.  The bond must be lodged to an approved student fees payment service (e.g. the electronic fee payment service offered by [EduStep](http://www.educationinireland.com/en/How-Do-I-Apply-/Get-Your-Student-Visa/For-Higher-Education/EduStep-.html))

Checking on your visa status

* You should apply as early as possible for your visa as it normally takes eight weeks for it to be processed but in busy periods it may take longer than this.
* You can check [online](http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Visa%20Decisions)to see if your visa has been processed (using your Visa Application Number). This list is updated weekly.
* If you get approval for a visa, the Embassy to which you sent your documents will affix a visa to your passport.
* If you are refused a visa you may [appeal the decision](http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Visa%20Appeals) within 2 months.

**Note:** Ireland is not a member of the Schengen Agreement. You will, therefore, still have to apply for an Irish visa even if you have a visa for a Schengen country.