

Student Visa Requirements from the Irish Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

IMPORTANT: This list is intended as a guideline only and does not limit the discretion of the visa officer in dealing with individual applications.

1. Valid Passport

There should be no less than 6 months validity on the passport from the date of the course's completion.

If available, copies of previous passports exhibiting the immigration history of the applicant should be provided. All pages, not just those with valid visas must be included.

2. Evidence of course

The college should provide an original letter, indicating that the person has been accepted on a full-time course of education (specify subject) entailing 15 hours or more study in a privately funded course. Provisional letters offering a place are not acceptable

The college must be in a position to satisfy the Department of its educational and other credentials. Recognition by the Department of Education through ACELS meets the criteria.

3. Fees

Evidence must be supplied that the course fees have been paid in full. However while this is desirable, it is not expected that an applicant pay more than € 6,500 prior to visa approval. Evidence of payment may be incorporated into the above evidence of course letter which should include accommodation, fees and other relevant charges.

4. Private Medical Insurance

Every student should have full private medical insurance. Evidence of such insurance cover will be taken to be the Letter of Acceptance provided by the host school, college, university or other educational institution.

This Letter of Acceptance will contain details of the insurance cover taken out on behalf of each student by the host school, college, university or other educational institution on behalf of the student.

Alternative evidence will be taken to be a Certificate of Private Insurance taken out by the student in his or her own country prior to travel.

Persons attending a course of study of a least one academic year in duration are entitled to public health services in Ireland under the terms of Department of Health guidelines on ordinary residence.

5. Family Members

Applicants should disclose details of family members who are already residing in Ireland or in other EU countries. For this purpose family members include first cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews or grandparents.

6. Applicant's Character

There should be nothing in the person's personal history which would give rise to concerns on public policy, public security or public health grounds.

Occasionally, applications are refused on these grounds, despite the production of all of the required documents for reasons that will not be disclosed.

Public policy is taken to include the protection of the common travel area and accordingly refusals or negative immigration history in the UK will be taken into account. Where an individual has been refused a visa and/or entry to the UK, details of the refusal should be provided to enable a decision to be made on the case's individual merits.

7. Applicant's Self-sufficiency

Applicants must provide evidence that they have sufficient funds to support their stay in Ireland, including emergencies, without recourse to State funds.

This is important as recourse to State funds might have a detrimental effect on the person's future immigration prospects.

Bank statements which clearly identify the holder together with a translation and details of conversion rates at the approximate date of the application are required.

8. Applicant's Profile

The applicants profile should appear to match the course of studies proposed. Colleges should endeavour either through interview or through their agents to satisfy themselves as to the bona fides of the prospective student. Information regarding checks/interviews of the candidate which have been undertaken by the school or its agents can be submitted in support of the application.

The applicants' prospects of obtaining a visa are enhanced by the submission of verified details of their profile, including family background, history of study etc.

9. Employment details of applicant in Country of origin

If the applicant is in employment the employer must state:

That all course costs are being met by the employer or, if the employee is meeting the costs, the employer must state that in the opinion of the employer the employee has the financial resources to meet all such costs

The length of leave being granted to the employee and this must not differ from the stated duration of the course on which the applicant has been accepted

The purpose of participation in the proposed course of study

The applicant's level of pay and the currency it's received in

10. Consistency within application

None of the details within the application or its supporting documentation should be of a conflicting nature. E.g. the proposed length of stay on the application form should not conflict with the verified course

acceptance .

11. Change of status

Full details of course duration should be disclosed in the initial application in so far as they are known.

If there is any probability that a person intends to study for longer than 90 days (3 months) they should ensure that they apply for a 'D' study visa. Persons who seek to study for less than this period can apply for a 'C' study visa.

In the case of an applicant with a 'C' visa, extensions of permission to remain will only be entertained where a written request is made to the visas appeals officer and will be given in very exceptional circumstances only. The following details must be supplied to allow the request to be considered and applications that do not supply all the required documents will be refused:

- Itemised details of payment of relevant fees and proof of payment
- Details of the course of studies proposed
- Accommodation details identifying host family
- Evidence of financial self sufficiency, all financial details should identify the student
- Details of the students attendance at the initial course of studies must be lodged
- The particular circumstances of the applicant will be a major issue in the decision
- A copy of the passport exhibiting the original visa must be lodged

12. Foundation Courses

As for point 11, full details of proposed course of study should be disclosed with the initial application.

Visas will be granted for foundation courses, leading to longer, non-language study (including diploma/degree courses) in other institutions where the applicants have disclosed their intentions initially and have satisfied the Department regarding all of the above criteria (including fees, subject to € 6,500 ceiling referred to at 3) for both courses and for the entire period of study proposed.

13. Right of Appeal

Any decisions to refuse a visa can be appealed by writing to :

Visa appeals Officer
Immigration Division
Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform
72-76 St. Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2

Only written appeals will be dealt with.

The visa reference number, decision number and nationality will facilitate processing.

Obviously the success of an appeal will be enhanced if the applicant is in a position to forward additional supporting documentation in favour of the application or to submit a document previously omitted.

14. Leave to Land

Although a visa is a form of pre-entry clearance, it does not guarantee entry to the State. Immigration officers at point of entry are entitled to deny access and to question students regarding their bona fides.

Accordingly, it would be in everyone's interest if school could make arrangements to be represented at points of entry, particularly where they believe the student's standard of English may be poor. It would also be sensible for either the school or the student to have on hand copies of any supporting documentation, which have been lodged in support of the Visa application.

15. Re-Entry Visas

Students who have a valid reason for leaving the State during their period of study and who can show that they are genuinely continuing with their studies may apply for re-entry visas.

16. Entitlement to Take Up Casual Employment

Non EEA nationals who have permission to remain in the state as students will be entitled to take up casual employment (defined as up to 20 hours part-time work per week, or full time work during vacation periods) for the duration of their permission to remain. The entitlement to take up employment ceases upon the expiry of their permission to remain as a student and their being in casual employment will not, in itself, entitle them to further permission to remain.

17. Conditions of Permission to Remain

Students will be required to sign an undertaking as part of the visa application process stating that:

They will not enter full time employment while in the State other than casual employment as defined in the student visa guidelines.

They will not visit Great Britain or Northern Ireland or any other country without a valid entry visa and a re-entry visa for Ireland.

They will ensure that they do not breach the Visa requirements of this State.

Students will be required to acknowledge that should they breach their conditions their case will be reviewed with a view to being deported.

These guidelines have been issued by the Irish Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.