Application Guidebook 2015/2016

The Foundation Courses for Higher Education – Young Adults

Trinity College Dublin and CDETB Liberties College
Frequently asked questions:

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1. What are the Foundation Courses for Higher Education?

The Foundation Courses are an academic and personal preparation for students who may not otherwise have the opportunity to undertake degree course studies for socio-economic reasons. There are two courses:

1. The Trinity Access Programmes Foundation Course for Higher Education
2. The Liberties College University Access Course (run in partnership with Trinity College, Dublin)

For more detailed information on the course content and structure, please refer to our website at: www.tcd.ie/Trinity_Access/

2. Who should make an application for the Foundation Courses?

To be considered for these courses, you need to meet the following criteria:

- **Age:** You must be under 21 years of age on 1st January 2015.
- **Fees:** You must be eligible for the Government Free Fees Scheme or EU fees.
  
  If you are in any doubt about your eligibility for free fees contact the Student Support Unit in the Department of Education and Science: Tel 0506-21363 (pm only) or the Admissions Office in Trinity College 01 896 4444
- **Academic Criteria:** You must achieve a minimum of five passes in the Leaving Certificate AND a ‘C’ in one honour (higher level) subject. You also need to pass English and Mathematics to be considered for the Foundation Course and Liberties College UAC.
  You may alternatively present results from the Leaving Certificate Applied (distinction required), the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme or the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC).
  
  It is important to note that preference is given to students with clear academic ability in academic subjects and to those who achieve more than one honour.
- **School:** You must attend a second level school in the Greater Dublin area which is linked to an access service (this criteria only applies if you wish to be considered for the Foundation Course in Trinity College Dublin).
Financial, social and cultural indicators: Applicants must also meet a range of financial, social and cultural indicators to be considered for the courses. Here is a list of the indicators:

1. Your family income falls on or below the Income Limit (see below).
2. Your family has a Medical/GP Visit card this was in date on 31 December 2014.
3. Your family received a means-tested payment from the Department of Social Protection (formally Department of Social Welfare) for at least 26 weeks in 2013.
4. You belong to a group that is under-represented in higher education based on the occupation and employment status of your parent(s) or guardian(s). Under-represented socio-economic groups are non-manual workers; semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers; and agricultural workers.
5. You completed five years in a secondary school that is part of the DEIS initiative run by the Department of Education and Skills or a school that is linked to TAP or another third level access service? If you don't know, ask your Guidance Counsellor or School Principal.
6. You live in an area where there is concentrated disadvantage – in other words in an area where, for example, there is high unemployment and poverty and where only a small proportion of adults have attained third level education.
To meet this indicator your address must be in an area classified as disadvantaged, very disadvantaged or extremely disadvantaged.

You must meet Indicator 1, the Income Limit, plus a combination of 2 other indicators to be eligible for the courses. The combinations are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Indicator 1 plus 2 plus 4 or 5 or 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator 1 plus 3 plus 4 or 5 or 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicator 1 plus 4 plus 5 or 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator 1 plus 5 or 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicator 1, the Income Limit, is calculated by:

- How many children are in your family;
- How many people in your family are in full time education;
- How much your parent(s)/guardian(s) earned in income during the year ending 31 December 2013.

Use the table to estimate if your family’s income is less than the Income Limit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of dependent children* in your family</th>
<th>Income Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 4</td>
<td>€ 45,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 7</td>
<td>€ 50,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 8</td>
<td>€ 54,630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add € 4,670 to the total income for every sibling/parent enrolled in a full time college, university of post leaving certificate further education course.
A dependent is: a sibling or foster child under the age of 16 years on 1st October 2014; or a sibling, foster child or parent over 16 years who is attending a full-time course at an education institution; or a sibling or foster child who is medically certified as permanently unfit to work; or your child (if applicable).

3. How do I apply for the Foundation Course?

You must apply online. You can apply using either of the links below:

http://www.tcd.ie/courses/undergraduate/foundation/
http://www.tcd.ie/Trinity_Access/prospective/access/young.php

If you are unsure if you should apply or want to check if you are eligible for the course, please consult Question 1 and 2 above.

4. What are the closing dates for applying?

- The closing date for completing the application form online is February 7th 2015.
- Applicants have until March 28th 2015 to submit their supporting documents online.
- Referees have until March 28th 2015 to return the reference forms to TAP.

5. Do I have to complete my application all in one go?

No. Once you have created a my.tcd.ie account and entered your personal details, you can save your application and return to it as often as you like until February 7th 2015.

6. How do I create a my.tcd.ie account?

When you go to the website to make an application (as described in Question 1 above) you will be invited to create a my.tcd.ie account and instructed how to do so. You must create an account to be able to apply for the Foundation Course. You will need to provide the following to create a my.tcd.ie account:
• Your Name
• Your Date of Birth
• A functioning e-mail address (one which you use and can access regularly)
• A password (which you should keep private)

7. How long will it take me to complete the application?

The form itself should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please remember you also have to include the following which will take additional time:
• Write an Essay (no more than 750)
• Get 2 referees to complete the reference forms
• Gather and include your supporting documents (see Question 10 if you are unsure of what documents you need)

8. What do I write the essay on?

The essay should outline why you want to do the Foundation Course and go to College. It cannot be more than 750 words.

Full details on what the essay should include are given in the Personal Statement Section of the application form. Please consult the application form for further details.

You can write your essay outside the form and save this separately. Once you are finished your essay, you can copy and paste this into the online form.

9. Who should I ask to be a referee?

You should get two suitable academic referees to complete the reference forms (such as a teacher or principal).
You can download the referee forms in the References Section of the application form. The referees should post the completed references directly to Trinity Access Programmes. Full instructions are on the Referee Forms.

10. How do I know what I need to include with my application?

All applicants must do the following:

1. Complete all relevant sections of the online application form (By February 7th 2015).
2. Complete and upload their essay to the Personal Statement Section of the form (By February 7th 2015).
3. Download 2 referee forms from the References Section of the application form. Give these to two academic references who must send these back to TAP (By March 28th 2015).

For advice on uploading documents please see Question 16 below.

You may also need the following:

➢ If you or your parent/guardian has a Medical/GP Visit card:

If you / your parent(s)/guardian(s) have a HSE Medical Card/ GP Visit Card that is in date as of 31st December 2014 you must fill in the Medical Card/GP Visit Card Form. This is available for you to download in the Additional Information Section of the application form.

You must Complete Part 1 of the Medical/ GP Visit Card Form. Then ask your local HSE Office that issued your card to complete and stamp Part 2 of the same form.

The Medical Card/ GP Visit Card Form must be uploaded to your application by March 28th 2015 (for advice on uploading please see Question 17 below). It is your responsibility to ensure this form has been completed correctly by the HSE officials.

➢ If your parent/guardian receives Social Welfare Payments:
You will need to submit the Social Welfare Form. This is available for you to download in the **Additional Information** Section of the application form.

Once you complete Part 1, your parents/guardians will need to bring or post the form to their Local Social Welfare Office and a representative from the Department of Family and Social Protection (DSP) must complete the rest of the Social Welfare Form. The completed Social Welfare Form must be uploaded to your application by March 28th 2015. Late or incomplete forms will not be accepted (for advice on uploading please see Question 16 below).

➢ **If you are in the care of the Health Service Executive:**

Some applicants are foster children or separated children and/or in the care of the Health Service Executive (HSE). If this applies to you, please follow the instructions given to you in the **Additional Information** Section of the application form.

➢ **If you are eligible for EU Fees:**

If you are eligible for EU fees (see Question 2 above) you should upload the following documents to verify your fees status: a copy of your (EU) **passport** OR **national identity card** OR **the original letter** issued by the Department of Equality, Justice and Law Reform confirming your **EU or refugee status**.

11. **What financial documents do I need for my application?**

Please see the table overleaf to find out what financial documents are required.
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<th>DOCUMENTS REQUIRED</th>
<th>HOW DO I GET THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS?</th>
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<tr>
<td>My parent/guardian is an employee</td>
<td>P21 for 2013</td>
<td><a href="http://www.revenue.ie">www.revenue.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parent/guardian is self-employed</td>
<td>Notice of Assessment for 2013</td>
<td><a href="http://www.revenue.ie">www.revenue.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parent/guardian receives income from rental properties etc.</td>
<td>Notice of Assessment for 2013</td>
<td><a href="http://www.revenue.ie">www.revenue.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parent/guardian receives income from Social Welfare Payments</td>
<td>See Question 10 above</td>
<td>Local Social Welfare Office</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.welfare.ie">www.welfare.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1890 66 22 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parent/guardian was made redundant in 2013</td>
<td>Form RP50 Notification of Redundancy</td>
<td><a href="http://www.revenue.ie">www.revenue.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parent/guardian retired in 2013</td>
<td>A letter from the last employer and/or body administering pension showing: date employment ceased, gross amount of lump sum received in 2013, number of years in that employment and gross annual pension</td>
<td>Contact last employer or body administering pension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- Request financial documents early as it can take up to 8 weeks to issue documents.
- If your parents/guardians received income from more than one source make sure you provide all relevant documents.
- All financial documents must be uploaded to your application **March 28th 2015.**
- For advice on uploading documents please see Question 16 below.
12. Where do I get the forms I need to accompany my application?

The following forms should be downloaded directly from the online application form:

- Medical /GP Visit Card Form
- Social Welfare Form
- Referee Forms

Financial Documents:
Your parents/guardians may not automatically receive a P21 or Notice of Assessment from Revenue. They may need to apply for this online or by contacting their local Revenue Office. Please check www.revenue.ie to find your local Revenue Office.

13. What if I have applied to HEAR, do I still need to include supporting documents with my application?

Applicants who are applying for HEAR and the Foundation Course should submit supporting documents (HEAR medical card form, HEAR social welfare form, P21 etc.) directly to the CAO. In such circumstances, it is not necessary to upload the documents to your application form.

Please remember to tick that you have applied to HEAR in the Education & Qualifications section of the application form so we can access your documents from HEAR.

Applicants who have applied to HEAR and who are eligible for EU fees, must upload documents to verify their fees status alongside the rest of their application for the Foundation Course (see question 10 above).

Please note that applicants for the Foundation Course/partnership course who also receive a HEAR offer at degree level, will not normally be considered for offers for the Foundation Course/Liberties partnership Course. Applicants who have received a HEAR offer who also wish to be considered for the Foundation Course/Liberties partnership Course, will have to outline in writing to the course coordinator their reasons for being considered for a place on the
Foundation Course, to arrive no later than the Wednesday following the publication of Leaving Certificate results.

14. What do I do with my supporting documents once they are completed?

Once you have all your documents fully completed, stamped and signed by the relevant office, you need to create an electronic copy of the document to upload to your application form.

15. How do I get electronic copies of my documents?

If you have a hard copy or print out of the document (such as Social Welfare Form or Medical Card/GP Visit Card Form or Letter from the HSE) you can create an electronic copy in some of the following ways:

- Scan the document and save the file. Scanners may be available to you in your school, at a local library or in a copy centre.
- Take an image of the document and save the file.

Revenue will provide documents such as P21 etc. in electronic format.

Please note:
All documents uploaded must be of high quality. All parts of the form, official stamps and signatures must be clearly legible otherwise documents will not be accepted.

Please retain all of your original hard copy documents as you may be asked to produce these to verify your application.

16. How do I upload documents to my application?
Uploading documents to your application form is the same as adding attachments to an e-mail. You simply follow the instruction on the application form and attach the relevant file from your computer. This will add the document to your application.

17. What if I am not sure what financial documents to include?

Please see Question 11 above. If you are still not sure contact Sarah Grimson (grimsos@tcd.ie).

18. What if I experience difficulty accessing my my.tcd.ie account?

If you have any problems accessing your account, please follow the Help instructions on my.tcd.ie.

19. What if I still have questions about my application?

Talk to your guidance counsellor who can help you with your application. If you still have questions about your application please contact TAP directly.