

The 1916 Bursary Fund

In Budget 2017 the Minister for Education and Skills announced a new 1916 Bursary Fund to commemorate the centenary of 1916 as part of the overall package of access measures to promote participation by under-represented groups in higher education. This Fund, under the Department of Education and Skill's *Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) Fund*, will support 200 students annually over the course of three years.

Consistent with the vision, goals and target groups in the **National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-19**, the 1916 Bursary Fund will provide financial support to students identified by clusters of higher education institutions as being most economically disadvantaged from specified target groups, and it will complement existing student supports and access initiatives.

These Bursaries differ from existing bursaries in a number of respects, in that they are targeted at non-traditional entry and can support undergraduate study on either a full or part-time basis. Each bursary will be the amount of €5,000 per annum (and could be on top of a SUSI grant if the applicant qualifies for a SUSI grant). Funding is being initially provided for the award of bursaries to 35 students in the Mid-West Cluster (University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology and Mary Immaculate College) for the current academic year 2017/2018. 20% of the "1916 bursaries" will be earmarked for socio-economically disadvantaged lone parents.

The University of Limerick will be responsible for selecting the students to be awarded bursaries in UL and will be responsible for the implementation of the Bursary Scheme according to the guidelines set out by the Department of Education and Skills/ HEA.

19 of the total 35 Bursaries will be awarded to students in the first year of their undergraduate study at the University of Limerick who meet the following eligibility criteria:

Students must be from **one** of the following target groups:

- **All recipients will have to be socio-economically disadvantaged regardless of the target group.**
- Lone parents (at least 20% of the bursaries will be targeted at lone parents)
- First time, mature student entrants
- Students with a disability – particularly students with a physical/mobility impairment, students who are deaf/hard of hearing and students who are blind or have a visual impairment
- Travellers

- Further education award holders
- Ethnic minorities (including programme refugees)
- Bursaries may be provided to full- or part-time students. It is expected that a number of the bursaries will be provided to students studying on a part-time basis.
- Bursaries will be available to undergraduates who are progressing to higher education for the first time and for 2017/2018 to undergraduate students who are currently in the first year of their undergraduate studies.
- Students must be attending a full-time or part-time course that meets the guidelines of the fund. Courses attended must be an undergraduate course in a publicly funded institution that: (a) take not less than two years to complete, and (b) on the successful completion of which a student is awarded a major higher education and training award at level 6 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

The following conditions will also apply:

- Each bursary will be in the amount of €5,000 per annum. This applies to both full and part-time students.
- Bursaries may be approved for study in any discipline offered by the University. There will be no restriction on programme of study.
- Students are not entitled to receive the 1916 Bursary in conjunction with any other bursary or scholarship.
- Students will be entitled to hold the 1916 Bursary and the student grant simultaneously, where they meet the eligibility conditions of the student grant scheme. The 1916 Bursary will not be included for the purposes of 'reckonable income' in the student grant scheme.
- A bursary will be awarded for the duration of an undergraduate programme, normally four years, subject to continued compliance with the bursary guidelines.

The University of Limerick will target and award bursaries in the current academic year to first year undergraduate students and in the following years to new entrants on undergraduate programmes. Work in the area of widening participation in the university already uses a range of sophisticated mechanisms to target the under-represented student cohorts. The selection process will make use of these existing well-developed criteria across the access pathways to identify eligible applicants thereby limiting the need for an application process. It will use existing student information to select those experiencing the greatest disadvantage while also linking into existing scholarship mechanisms.

For further information on the 1916 Bursary Awards email

1916BursaryFund@ul.ie