

**2022 Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme
Frequently Asked Questions**

FAQs will be published every Thursday until 14 October 2021.

New questions will be marked ****New****

Updated questions will be marked ****Updated****

Questions are grouped under the following headings:

1. Eligibility
2. Applying to the programme
3. Conditions of award

1. Eligibility

****New****

If applicants have for example, registered in 2019, completed 2 years of their PhD as a full time participant, and are currently registered as a part time student who has a 4 month extension, due to the HEA Covid fund, would this applicant be eligible for 2 years of funding or is the duration of funding completely dependent on the applicant's date of registration which was Sept 2019, and according to the eligibility criteria on page 6 of the Call Document, applicants who registered in 2019 are eligible for one year of funding.

Any year of part-time study will be counted as a year of full-time study. Given that some research degrees have been disrupted as a result of COVID-19, applicants who have been granted formal extensions to their degrees due to the pandemic (whereby no additional fees were charged by their host institution) can apply for funding despite having registered for their degree prior to the dates listed in section 7.7.2 of the [Call Document](#). Evidence of the extension granted by their host institution will be required at award offer stage.

I am an Irish citizen but lived in Australia from January 2018 to August 2020. Whilst in Australia I was working full time, primarily as an occupational therapist. As per clause [7.7.8 of the Call Document](#), does this exclude me from being assessed as a category one applicant? If I apply will my application be reviewed under category 2?

*As per the Call Document, footnote 8 (page 7), 'Ordinarily resident refers to the applicant's place of legal and permanent residence. **This will not be deemed as having been interrupted if an absence from the country of ordinary residency has been caused by the training, education or employment of the applicant or the applicant's spouse or parents.**'*

As the potential applicant in question was absent from Ireland for reason of employment, this is not deemed as an interruption of their ordinary residence in Ireland. Therefore, the applicant will be assessed as a category 1 applicant.

A potential applicant has earned a 2.2 bachelor's degree from a university in the past; however, they have since been awarded a first-class (1.1) Higher Diploma from an Irish institution. According to Irish NQF standards, a Higher Diploma and an Honours bachelor's degree are both listed as level 8. As such, is this student eligible thanks to their 1.1 Higher Diploma?

As per the [Call Document](#), *'All applicants must have a first class or upper second-class honours bachelor's, or the equivalent, degree', and 'Host institutions are expected to be guided by QQI and the NQF in terms of the recognition and equivalence of a degree.'*

According to Irish NQF standards, a higher diploma and an honours bachelor's degree are both listed as level 8. As such, the applicant in question is eligible as a result of their first-class higher diploma.

According to the guide, applications will be deemed ineligible if *"the research project as proposed in the application form has previously been funded either in full, or in part, by the Irish Research Council or any other funding agency"*. A potential applicant is currently receiving external funding for a research Masters and is looking to transfer it to a PhD and apply to the scholarship to fund the PhD. Can you please confirm if this is permitted, or would they be deemed ineligible due to their Masters being externally funded?

This clause applies to projects that have already been completed, not ongoing projects. Therefore, it does not apply to any applicants currently registered for a master's or PhD who wish to apply to the programme for funding to complete their degree, or to those who are transferring from a master's to a PhD.

A potential applicant would like to apply for one year of funding as they are aiming to be transferred from a Masters to the PhD register this year. They first registered in September 2018, but due to Covid they received HEA funding for a 12-month extension. Would they be eligible to apply for one-year funding, even though their first registration took place prior to the 1st September 2019?

The IRC understands that some research degrees have been disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, applicants who have been granted formal extensions to their degrees due to the pandemic (whereby no additional fees were charged by their host institution) can apply for funding despite having registered for their degree prior to the dates listed in [section 7.7.2 of the Call Document](#).

The potential applicant is therefore eligible to apply for one year of funding provided that fees were not charged during the 12-month extension granted by their host institution. Evidence of the extension granted by their host institution will be required at award offer stage. Failure to produce such evidence will result in the award offer being withdrawn.

Applicants are asked to clearly outline this information in the free text box corresponding to the degree that was extended in the ‘track record’ section of the application.

Is it possible to apply without English language certificate, for example IELTS, TOEFL, CAE?

The English language requirements for your degree are determined by the Irish higher education institution in which you will be enrolled for the research master’s or PhD.

Is an application for a PhD by artefact eligible under the terms and conditions of the GOIPG programme? Are Professional Doctorates eligible under the terms and conditions of the GOIPG programme?

The [National Framework for Doctoral Education](#) commits the key stakeholders in Irish graduate education and research to the highest standards in the provision of doctoral education and research. One of the principles of this framework is that the *successful completion and examination of the research thesis, comprising work of publishable quality, is the basis for the award of the doctoral degree. **The thesis can be presented in a variety of formats.***

Furthermore, according to the [Irish National Framework of qualifications](#) (NFQ), ‘*Doctoral programmes are between three and four years in duration (...) Varying doctoral programmes now exist, including professional and performance/practice-based doctorates*’.

A PhD by artefact or formats other than a monograph (e.g. publication; creative/performance practice) and professional doctorates are therefore eligible, as long as they are supported and awarded by the host institution, and meet the principles of the framework and the NFQ definition referenced above.

An applicant was a recipient of the GOIPG Scholarship to fund one year of Research Masters. They completed the Masters in 2019 and were then awarded the IRC New Foundations Award. Are they eligible to apply for a GOIPG award to fund a PhD? The topic would be similar and has evolved from the Research Masters.

As per the Call Document: ‘*Applicants for a doctoral degree must not currently hold, or have previously held, any Irish Research Council scholarship **other than one which would have enabled them to obtain a research master’s degree.***’

The New Foundation award is not a scholarship, and therefore the applicant is eligible to apply for a GOIPG award to fund their PhD.

2. Applying to the programme

****New****

Can you please advise how applicants can format their application in the online system, such as italicise sections of the application etc?

It is only possible to use plain text in the body of the application form on the online system, the use of italics is not possible. It is permitted to apply such formatting to any supplementary material uploaded in PDF format. Supplementary material should only include essential information required for the interpretation and understanding of the proposed research.

****New****

Is there any limit on the number of sources you can include in your attached bibliography, or do the IRC have any guidance on how many pages your bibliography can be?

There is no limit on the number of sources an applicant can include in their bibliography and the IRC does not offer any guidance in this regard. Supplementary material should only include essential information required for the interpretation and understanding of the proposed research.

Should the applicant be registered in a postgraduate course at an eligible HEI before applying for the scholarship?

Applicants do not have to be a registered student at an eligible HEI before applying for a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship award.

Can applicants use in-text citations or footnotes with a bibliography as part of the application, and are these included in the word count?

As per the indicative application form, supplementary information such as a bibliography can be uploaded in PDF format. Any information uploaded as part of the PDF will not be included in the word count. Please note that supplementary material should only include essential information required for the interpretation and understanding of the proposed research.

Is it possible to select a referee who has retired? The referee form appears to ask for the name of institution and department or company/organisation, as well as the work address.

Applicants may select a referee that has retired from their position.

An applicant has obtained a Masters degree from an institution outside of Ireland, and wishes to include it in the qualifications section of their application. The university in question is recognised by the Ministry of Education in their country. However, when the applicant was initially registering at the host institution, they were advised by the International Office that the institution where the degree was obtained was not a recognised one. Will the IRC recognise the qualification, and should it be included in the application at all?

As per the [Call Document](#), any degree may be included so long as the information provided is verifiable as such on official transcripts.

The wording in the application seems to suggest that a GANTT chart is mandatory, but any other supplementary information is optional. Could you clarify whether the GANTT chart is in fact mandatory?

GANTT charts are not compulsory and applicants can submit their application without including one.

To make this clearer, we have now amended the wording on the online form and on the indicative form uploaded on the website, to the following: *'If you have supplementary information, e.g. GANTT chart, diagrams or a bibliography, which accompany your research proposal, please upload them here in PDF format...'*