

Youth Information Q & A

1. What is the legal age to work in Ireland?

A young person must be 16 or older to legally work in Ireland. At 16, a young person can work up to 40 hours a week, but they cannot work more than eight hours each day. Their hours are also limited to between 6am and 10pm. Outside school term Children aged 14 and 15 can work a **maximum of 35 hours a week** (or up to 40 hours if they are on approved work experience. During school time Children aged 14 are not allowed work during school time. Children aged 15 can do **8 hours** of light work a week.

Leaving school early to take up employment, if you are age 16 or 17 and you choose to leave school to seek employment you must inform Tulsa. Tulsa makes sure that every child either attends school or gets a minimum education. It keeps a register of young people aged 16 and 17 who leave school early to take up a job.

For more information go to citizensinformation.ie

2. What is the minimum wage for a person working under 18 years old?

Workers under 18 are only guaranteed up to 70% of the national minimum wage, which is €7.35 per hour. An employer can pay them more than the minimum wage if they want, but they are not required to by law.

Once a young person is over the age of 18 years, they are entitled to €10.50 per hour.

Citizens Information breaks down the pay scales for young people in full, [here](#).

3. What age can I get my full drivers licence at?

You must be 17 years or older in Ireland to obtain a category B driving licence. This will authorise you to drive a car, van or 4-by-4.

The NDLS outlines in full the categories of drivers license available to young people and at what age. It can be found [here](#).

Before a person can take lessons or start practicing driving, they must pass the official driver's theory test. This can be applied for, [here](#).

Once they have passed the theory test, they must apply for a learner's permit. They must hold this learner's permit for **at least six months** before they can complete a driving test. The cost of a learner's permit is €35.

Finally, before taking the official driver's test, they must complete a minimum of 12 lessons with an approved driving instructor. A list of qualified driving instructors can be found [here](#).

It costs €85 to apply for a practical driving test for a Category B vehicle (car or light van)
For all other categories, apply for your driving test at www.rsa.ie and select the category of vehicle to see the full list of prices.

4. College is too expensive is there any financial support for me?

Yes, financial support is available for college. The main grant scheme is the [SUSI Grant](#). The main financial support available for students attending full-time further and higher education courses is the **student grant**, which may include a maintenance grant and/or a fee grant, depending on your eligibility. Applications open in April and close in November but apply early to have a better chance of having funding secured before term begins.

Susi.ie is where you make your grant application.
Contact details below

SUSI Support Desk – Phone: 0761 08 7874 or **Email:** support@susi.ie

Alternatively, there is also the Student Assistance Fund, Fund for Students with Disabilities, as well as local credit union bursaries.

Information on these can be found below:

- [Student Assistance Fund](#).
- [Fund for Students with Disabilities](#).

Local credit unions all over the country offer educational bursaries and scholarships to students.
More information on that can be found [here](#).

Brexit update

SUSI is accepting applications in the usual way from Irish students intending to study approved courses in the UK and from UK students intending to study in Ireland, as they can continue to avail of student grants if eligible.

Brexit will not affect the grants available to eligible students. Students from Ireland will continue to be able to study in the UK and students from the UK will be able to study in Ireland with grant rules continuing to apply in the normal way.

HEAR Scheme (Higher Education Access Route) Scheme offers ‘reduced points’ college places and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. There is range of financial, social and cultural criteria that must be met. You apply for the Hear scheme through the CAO and students must tick the Hear scheme option which will then direct them to a separate Hear application form which must be completed by March 1st. If you get a place through HEAR you will also be offered a range of supports while you are studying at college, such as an orientation programme, extra tuition, study skills and mentoring. The supports available will vary from college to college.

Student Assistance Fund

Once you’re in college, there is still help at hand if you find yourself struggling financially. The Higher Education Authority’s Student Assistance Fund is available to those who are struggling to cover the

costs of books, rent, electricity bills, food, medical expenses, and a number of other issues, aside from fees. This is in addition to the SUSI grant. You need to contact the Access or Student Services Office in your college to apply for the Student Assistance Fund.

Scholarships

Most third-level institutions offers scholarships that vary from academic, sports, arts, research – it allows students to access additional supports – check as early as possible with the college you are hoping to go to about closing dates for applications.

For more information go to crosscare youth information at [Student Financial Supports - Youth Information \(crosscareyouthinfo.ie\)](http://StudentFinancialSupports-YouthInformation(crosscareyouthinfo.ie)).

If you have any other queries, just contact us in Youth Information (insert email or YiChat link here.)

5. I have left school is there any alternative education options?

Yes, there are several options.

LCA in [Youthreach](#) Tralee. To join a Youthreach programme you must be unemployed, out of school and aged between 16 and 20 years. If you are 16 years or over, you will be paid an age-related training allowance.

An apprenticeship is a person who is learning a trade, Craft or profession from a skilled employer. It gives you an opportunity to get an education but also experience the job firsthand while earning a wage. The most common apprenticeships include electrician, construction work, mechanics, engineering, machinery and IT. For more information go to www.apprenticeship.ie.

Most apprenticeships last 4 years , you must be atleast 16 years of age and have a minimum of grade D in any subjects in the junior certificate or equivalent. To apply for any apprenticeship, you must register with www.solas.ie.

- For more information on Youth Reach in Aras an Phobail, contact: 066 7124114.
- For more information on Apprenticeships at Solas, contact: 01 5332500.

College of further education offer post leaving cert courses. These courses are closely linked to an industry of your desire. The courses are full time and they last one-two years , you will receive a QQI level 5 or 6. You apply directly to the individual colleges and entry requirements is based on your academic ability, work/ life experience or an interview. For more information go to [Further Education - Colleges in Ireland](#).

FET (Further Education and Training) is for anyone over the age of 16 years old. These courses are great if you want to learn new skills or a steppingstone to go into third level education.

FET offers many different courses such as apprenticeships, traineeships, PLC courses, community and adult education and much more. FET Courses and programmes are offer through the education and training board network throughout the country as well as other local providers such as Solas e.college.

For more information go to [About - FET Course Hub \(fetchcourses.ie\)](#)

If these are not suitable then you can come in and make a CV with Karen or Anne and apply for jobs online. Just contacts us at: (insert email link as a CTA)

6. I am very stressed, and I need someone to talk to where do I go?

Online advice for young people is available from the following sites.

- Spunout.ie is an independent, youth led national charity working to empower young people between the ages of 16 and 25 to create personal and social change 01 675 3554.
- 50808 is a free, 24/7 text message support service.
- Teenline.ie or number 1800 833 634.
- Childline.ie free text 50101.
- Belong to supports the LGBTQI+ people 01 670 6223

Sometimes it's easier to speak honestly to a stranger. If you feel it would help you to speak with someone please call one of the numbers below.

- Childline Freephone 1800 66 66 66
- Samaritans 1850 60 90 900
- Teen line Ireland 1800 833 634
- The national LGBT Helpline call- 1890 929 539 or text LGBTI+ 086 1800 280.
- Jigsaw offer support and advice to young people aged 12-25 experiencing mental health difficulties Jigsaw Kerry number 066 718 6785.
- Bodywhys 1890 200 444.
- Pieta House Freephone 1800 247 247 24/7 suicide helpline is available or text HELP to 51444.
- Aware freephone 1800 80 48 48 is available Monday to Sunday 10am-10pm.

If you have any other queries, just contact us in Youth Information (insert email or YiChat link here.)

7. What age can I claim jobseekers' benefit/allowance?

Jobseekers' payments can be claimed by anyone over the age of 18 years old.

To qualify for Jobseeker's Benefit, you must:

- be fully or partly unemployed
- be under 66 years of age
- be capable of work and be available for full-time work
- be genuinely seeking work
- be unemployed for at least 4 days out of every 7

- have enough paid PRSI contributions at class A, H or P

You can work for up to 3 days a week and still get Jobseeker's Benefit for the other days if you are available for full-time work.

Your rate of payment will depend on your average weekly earnings in the governing contribution year.

The current rates are as follows:

Jobseeker's Benefit Rates	Rate
Full weekly payment	€208.00
Extra payment for qualified adult	€138.00
Extra payment for qualified child under 12	€40.00 (full-rate), €20.00 (half-rate)
Extra payment for qualified child 12 and over	€48.00 (full rate), €24.00 (half rate)

If you were working part-time during the governing contribution year and your average earnings were less than €300 a week, you will not qualify for the full rate of payment.

Please see the tables below for details on the reduced rates of payment.

Average weekly earnings	Personal rate of payment
Less than €150	€93.30
€150 or above but less than €220	€134.20
€220 or above but less than €300	€162.90
€300 or more	€208.00

You may get an increased rate of payment for a qualified adult and qualified children.

Information about obtaining a Jobseekers Payment can be found [here](#).

And also here [gov.ie - Jobseeker's Benefit \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

8. What age can I vote?

If you are an Irish citizen, you can vote in every election and referendum when you are over the age of 18 years old.

- British citizens over the age of 18 can vote in Dáil and local elections.
- EU citizens over the age of 18 can vote in European and local elections.
- Non-EU citizens over the age of 18 can vote in local elections.

However, did you know that the National Youth Council of Ireland have been campaigning for Government to extend the right to vote to 16 and 17 year olds for local, national and European elections? Check it out, [here!](#)

9. Where can I find Rights and entitlements supports?

You can find more information about your rights and entitlements at:

- [Spunout.ie](#)
- [NYCI.](#)
- [Citizens Information.](#)
- [The Students Council.](#)
- [Website of the National Education Welfare Board \(NEWB\)](#)
- [Crosscareyouthinformation](#)

10. What websites can help me find some college courses?

CAO, Udemy, Fetch courses, Coursera and Skillshare are all useful websites to find some courses to upskill or go to college.

Links to all of those are below!

- [Central Applications Office \(CAO.\)](#)
- [Udemy.](#)
- [Fetch Courses](#)
- [Coursera.](#)
- [Skillshare.](#)

11. How do I apply for a passport?

To apply for a passport, you can either fill in the passport application form using the **Passport Online service**, send off your application at the post office (Passport Express) or meet someone in person in

a Passport Office counter service. If you are under 18, you need the consent of both parents or guardian(s) in writing to get your own passport.

Information on Irish passports can be found, [here](#).

[Irish Passport Application | Apply for Irish Passport | IAS \(iasservices.org.uk\)](#)