



North/South Postgraduate Scholarships

Guidance Notes for 2010 Applicants

INTRODUCTION

Universities Ireland, which promotes collaboration between universities in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and the Joint Business Council of the Confederation of British Industry (NI) and the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC), which promotes North-South business cooperation, are offering four-six scholarships to students undertaking a recognised Master's or the first year of a PhD programme (taught or research) in the other Irish jurisdiction. Dublin Institute of Technology is also a partner in this scheme, which is now in its sixth year.

These scholarships are worth €15,000 (approx. Stg£13,500) each. Two-four of the scholarships will be in areas of study of particular relevance to business and industry, and will be co-sponsored by Universities Ireland and two-four individual companies in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland. Two more will be in another area (humanities and social sciences) and will be funded by Universities Ireland alone. These scholarships must be taken up for the academic year 2010-2011.

The aim of this scheme is to encourage outstanding students from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland to cross the border to undertake postgraduate study and experience life in the other Irish jurisdiction. Because it is 50% sponsored by business firms, there is a particular emphasis on subjects of interest to business, and the





scheme aims to help build all-island innovation in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) – along with business administration – which will be vital in moving the island towards the knowledge economy that is vital to its future prosperity. It is thus a scheme which has been conceived both to support the continuing peace process in Northern Ireland and to train highly skilled postgraduates to contribute to a new phase of economic development for the island as a whole.

THE SPONSORING FIRMS

There will be two-four sponsoring firms for the business scholarships this year. For the first time the North/South Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme (business scholarships only) will also incorporate a structured three-month **graduate placement opportunity** in the sponsoring company (to be taken at the end of the funded postgraduate year). It will not be compulsory for scholarship recipients to avail of this opportunity, although willingness to do so will be taken into account in the selection process for the business scholarships.

The **Export Orientation Programme (EOP)**, which is managed by IBEC, will coordinate this graduate placement. The EOP is the Republic of Ireland's longest-running and most successful graduate placement programme. It provides recent graduates and postgraduates with a valuable introduction to international business and competing in export markets.

The aim of this placement is to provide the scholarship winners with a unique opportunity to develop practical skills and to gain hands-on experience in a business environment relevant to their studies. Each placement will be tailored to ensure that the postgraduate gains exposure to all areas of the sponsoring business with a particular focus on the international element. This placement will be flexible and dynamic in nature.

Following completion of their postgraduate course and the three-month work placement, scholarship winners will have gained a greater understanding of what it takes to compete in the international business environment. The experience, skills and competencies gained through this initiative will significantly enhance the attractiveness of the postgraduate for future employment.

Among the areas which will be of particular interest to sponsoring firms will be the following: ICT, finance, biotechnology, chemistry, food science, transport and logistics, business administration, planning engineering and environmental sciences, climate change and sustainability.

This list is not exhaustive. Candidates should contact the Centre for Cross Border Studies (*see details below*) for advice on other relevant subjects.

The two non-business scholarships will continue to be funded by Universities Ireland alone.

ELIGIBILITY

These scholarships are open to all students current registered at an Irish or a Northern Irish university or Dublin Institute of Technology (or who have graduated within the past five years) proposing to take up a place on a Master's or PhD programme which would require them to locate to the other Irish jurisdiction. They are also open to currently registered students at an Irish or a Northern Irish



university or Dublin Institute of Technology (or who have graduated within the past five years) wishing to follow a cross-border Master's or the first year of a PhD programme involving a significant period of study in the other Irish jurisdiction.

These scholarships are open to all students at an Irish or Northern Irish university or DIT (or who have graduated within the past five years) regardless of their nationality or birthplace.

These scholarships are also open to **Irish or Northern Irish-born students currently registered at (or who have graduated within the past five years from) a British university** (i.e. a university in England, Scotland or Wales) who wish to relocate to the Irish jurisdiction they were **not born in** to undertake a Master's or the first year of a PhD programme (or to follow a postgraduate programme with a significant period of study in the Irish jurisdiction they were not born in).

The fundamental requirement for eligibility for this scheme is a willingness to relocate to the other Irish jurisdiction for a whole year or a major part of a year in order to undertake a Master's or the first year of a PhD programme.

Students who are **not eligible** to apply to this scheme include:

1. Students not currently registered at Irish or British universities;
2. Students who have not graduated from Irish or British universities in the past five years;
3. Republic of Ireland students wishing to do postgraduate study at a Republic of Ireland university;
4. Northern Ireland students wishing to do postgraduate study at a Northern Ireland university;
5. Students from either Irish jurisdiction wishing to do postgraduate study at an English, Scottish or Welsh university;
6. Students at English, Scottish or Welsh universities who have not been born in Ireland or Northern Ireland wishing to do postgraduate study at a university in Ireland or Northern Ireland;
7. Students at Institutes of Technology (other than Dublin Institute of Technology) in the Republic of Ireland;
8. Students who have already commenced a Masters or PhD (by coursework or research).
9. Students from Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland who have already taken their undergraduate studies in a university in the other Irish jurisdiction.

Past experience has shown that we receive queries from students who have particular university experiences and personal backgrounds which may not fit exactly into these categories. The Secretary of Universities Ireland (in consultation with the Universities Ireland Executive Committee) reserves the right to decide which of these applicants are eligible to apply to this scheme.

THE ESSAY

To be considered for this award, applicants will be required to write a short essay (1400-1500 words) explaining why they wish to study in the other Irish jurisdiction and how they believe their studies will enhance understanding of innovation and business development on the island of Ireland in their chosen subject (for the business-sponsored scholarships); or understanding of all-island perspectives in their chosen subject (for the non-business scholarship).



Shortlisting for the scholarships will be based on this essay. The shortlisting panel will look for a clear outline of the course of study (or research topic) to be undertaken along with a coherently argued case why this course or topic should be undertaken in the other Irish jurisdiction. Applicants should explain clearly and cogently how they think their studies will contribute to the North-South or all-island dimension of their chosen subject. Applicants for business scholarships should also outline why – and in which business area – they would like to undertake an EOP graduate placement.

TIMETABLE

The closing date for applications for this scholarship scheme will be Monday 17th May 2010 (5 pm) All applications must be made electronically. Scanned signatures will be accepted. The winning applicants will be selected by a high level panel comprising two university presidents (one from the North, one from the South) and two business leaders (one from the North, one from the South), chaired by Dr Don Thornhill, Chairman, National Competitiveness Council (RoI) and former chairman, Higher Education Authority. Shortlisting will take place in early-mid June.

The successful applicants will be informed of the panel's decision in early July. Those being sponsored by a business will meet an official from the IBEC Export Orientation Programme (if they have opted for this programme) between July and September to arrange the three-month work placement and discuss other collaboration to assist them in their studies. This graduate placement is an important new element in the North/South Scholarship Programme, and credit will be given in the selection process to those business scholarship applicants committed to undertaking it.

50% of the scholarship will be paid at the beginning of the student's postgraduate year in autumn 2008; the remaining 50% will be paid in spring 2009. This second payment will be dependent on a satisfactory progress report countersigned by a course or research supervisor, and (in the case of the business-sponsored scholarships) evidence that a work placement has been taken up (or of other serious engagement with the sponsoring firm). The scholarship recipients will also be expected to provide Universities Ireland with a short report at the end of the scholarship period.

Recipients of the scholarships will be required to furnish proof that they have been offered a place on a recognised Master's or PhD programme in the other Irish jurisdiction or on a cross-border Master's or PhD programme. The organisers reserve the right not to award the full number of scholarships if the standard of applications is insufficiently high.

For further information, including an application form, contact Patricia McAllister, Administrator, Universities Ireland, The Centre for Cross Border Studies, 39 Abbey Street, Armagh BT61 7EB, Northern Ireland
Tel: 028-37-511550 [048 from Republic of Ireland]
Email: p.mcallister@qub.ac.uk

Please address queries about eligibility to Andy Pollak, Secretary, Universities Ireland
Tel: 028-37-511550 [048 from Republic of Ireland]
Email: a.pollak@qub.ac.uk