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Subject:

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Circular No:
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Target Audience:

- Principals and Boards of Governors of grant-aided post-primary schools with sixth forms;
- Careers Teachers in grant-aided post-primary schools with sixth forms;
- Education and Library Boards;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment;
- Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education;
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
- Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team

Summary of Contents:

Information for schools on the awarding of Higher Education Scholarships

Enquiries:

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Governor Awareness:
Essential

Status of Contents:
Information for schools

Related Documents:
None

Superseded Documents:
None

Expiry Date:
Not applicable

DE Website:
This circular is available on
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HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Introduction

The purpose of this circular is to make schools aware of a new third level scholarship scheme which will operate on an all Ireland basis. The scheme will provide financial assistance to top-performing students from low-income households who intend to take up higher education places from next autumn.

The scholarships are being offered by the Trustees of the JP McManus Charitable Foundation. The Foundation has already contributed €24million to fund the provision of 100 third level scholarships in the Republic of Ireland and €6million is now being made available to offer similar scholarships to students in Northern Ireland.

Number of scholarships

The new scholarships will provide financial assistance for up to 25 students per year in Northern Ireland for studies at undergraduate level, with 19 of the scholarships being awarded through the schools sector and 6 through the Further Education (FE) sector.

Eligibility Requirements

The scholarships being awarded through the schools sector will be on the basis of performance in the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) GCE A level examinations. In order to be eligible, candidates must attend a grant-aided post-primary school in Northern Ireland. In addition, candidates must be recognised as being from low-income households and, as evidence of this, must be in receipt of an Educational Maintenance Allowance.

Scholarships will be awarded to eligible candidates on the basis of the highest scores in A levels awarded by the CCEA. A minimum of two scholarships will be offered in each county (based on the home address of the student) with additional awards allocated on the basis of the top A levels achieved. The first scholarships will be awarded to students who intend to take up higher education places from autumn 2009.

Nomination Process

Pupils must complete a self nomination form which must be signed by the principal of the school or Further Education College. Principals will be asked to verify a candidate's home address and to complete a declaration that he/she is in receipt of an Educational Maintenance Allowance. Candidates will be required to confirm that they are willing to allow all relevant details to be given to the CCEA. When CCEA GCE A level results have been issued to candidates, CCEA will validate top achievers on the basis of their CCEA examination results.

Further Information

Information about the scheme is available on the Department for Employment and Learning website at www.delni.gov.uk/allirelandsscholarships

SEAN WARD
Raising Standards Division