

<h2>Student Vetting Procedures (2022)</h2>	Current Version: 06
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Key Contacts

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1. **Background**

Maynooth University offers a number of programmes which require students to undertake placements or other activities, which will bring them into contact with the public and in which they will assume positions of trust. To promote the protection of the public and encourage public trust and confidence, the University is committed to ensuring that these students are vetted, and only suitable candidates are allowed to continue in their programme of study.

On this basis, the University ensures that Garda Vetting is conducted in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 and 2016 (the 'Act'), in respect of any person who is carrying out work or activity, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children and/or vulnerable persons.

The Act can be viewed at: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/47/enacted/en/html>.

2. **The eVetting process**

The following sections describe the stages that are involved in the eVetting process. Students who fail to engage with the eVetting process may have their examination results withheld until such time as they have engaged with the eVetting process to the satisfaction of the University.

Stage 1:

Distribution of the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1) by the academic department/administrative office

- 1.1 Applicants who have been provisionally offered and have accepted a place on the academic programme are sent a Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1) (with instructions and guidelines on how to complete the form) by the relevant academic department at the University.
Current students who are undertaking voluntary work that requires vetting will receive the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1) through the relevant academic or administrative office.
- 1.2 Vetting applicants are requested to bring particular forms of identification and proof of address to their academic department for validation. The academic department must verify the identity and current address of each student in person using the '**100 Point Check**' (see Appendix 2). Further details are available in the "eVetting Process for Departments" document.
- 1.3 Vetting applicants aged **under 18 years** are required to obtain the consent of their parent/guardian, and must submit the Parent/Guardian Consent Form (NVB3) form along with their vetting application to their department.
- 1.4 If a vetting applicant has spent a continuous period of 6 months or more outside Ireland since the age of 18, they will be required to provide a **Police Clearance Certificate** from the relevant jurisdiction(s) along with their vetting application. If the Police Clearance Certificate is not issued in English, it must be accompanied by a certified translation. In circumstances where a Police Clearance Certificate is unobtainable in a particular jurisdiction then the University may, at its discretion, agree an alternative method by which a vetting applicant can discharge this obligation and a sworn affidavit may be accepted by the University in lieu of the Police Clearance Certificate.
- 1.5 The University may also require that applicants provide an enhanced disclosure by the completion of an affidavit or statutory declaration.

Stage 2:

Online process

- 2.1 The Student Vetting Office inputs the information from the NVB1 form into the eVetting database.
- 2.2 Vetting applicants will receive an email from the NVB with a link to the online eVetting application.
- 2.3 The Student Vetting Office reviews the online application and submits it to the NVB for processing.

Stage 3:
University registration

- 3.1 Students complete provisional registration during the registration process. They acknowledge at registration that their registration process is not complete until they have satisfied vetting requirements for the programme.

Stage 4:
Garda Vetting Disclosure

- 4.1 The NVB responds to the vetting request by returning a disclosure for each person vetted to the Liaison Person in the Student Vetting Office.

Stage 5:
Confirmation of NVB response by the Maynooth University Liaison Person

- 5.1 Where the disclosure supplied by the NVB is consistent with information provided by the student and where this information does not give rise to any concern, the Liaison Person will follow Stage 7(a) of this procedure below.
- 5.2 Where the disclosure supplied by the NVB is inconsistent with information provided by the student, the Liaison Person will contact the student to clarify if the information supplied by the NVB is correct. If the student does not agree that the information supplied by the NVB is correct, the Liaison Person will request the NVB to review their information and confirm or change their initial response.
- 5.3 'Specified Information' may be provided by the NVB. This is information which is considered to give rise to a **bona fide concern** that the vetting subject may harm, attempt to harm or put at risk a child or vulnerable person or both. The NVB will contact the student in advance, if this information is to be provided. The student will have an opportunity to appeal the decision to release this information before it is released to the University's Liaison Person.

Stage 6:
Evaluation of information

Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent an applicant from gaining admission to the relevant programme. However, the University will take any relevant criminal convictions of a prospective applicant into account when considering his/her application for admission, and reserves the right to refuse to admit an applicant or cancel the registration of a person admitted where his/her previous criminal conviction makes it inappropriate for him/her to be a student of the relevant programme.

In reaching a decision regarding the admission or continuance of a student, the University will balance the interest of the student (and its ability to provide any appropriate support arrangements) with its responsibilities to provide a safe and secure environment for the public and its staff, students, visitors and others. In addition, the University will take into account the demands of relevant professional bodies and requirements under the law to protect special categories of people, for example children and vulnerable persons.

Further details are available in the Maynooth University Convictions Policy:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/Convictions%20Policy.pdf>.

- 6.1 Once the information has been confirmed by the NVB, it is reviewed by the University's Liaison Person and classified as follows:
- No previous convictions recorded,
 - Minor offence,

- c) Serious offence,
- d) Very serious offence.

6.2 Following the review, the information will be dealt with by the University as outlined in Stage 7.

Stage 7:**University response to information provided by the NVB**

(a) No previous convictions recorded

The Student Vetting Office sends the disclosure directly to the student by email. This disclosure can then be used by the student where necessary. The names of all students where no previous convictions have been recorded are reported to the relevant Programme Coordinator or Head of Department. The Programme Coordinator/Head of Department sends confirmation of this information to the placement provider if a request is received from them.

(b) Minor offence

With regard to minor offences, i.e. offences which, within the absolute discretion of the University, are not considered to pose any risk to children or vulnerable adults, the University response is different depending on whether or not the student openly disclosed the offence:

- i) If the offence has been disclosed, the Programme Coordinator or Head of Department may notify the student, and the placement provider if a request is received from them. The full information will be provided to the placement provider if a request is received from them.
- ii) If the offence has not been disclosed the Programme Coordinator may contact the student to seek an explanation for the non-disclosure.
- iii) If a satisfactory explanation is received, the information will be provided to the placement provider by the Programme Coordinator or Head of Department.
- iv) If a satisfactory explanation is not received, the offence will be deemed to be a serious offence and will be dealt with as for section (c) below.

(c) Serious offence

With regard to serious offences, i.e. offences, the nature of which could potentially indicate a risk to children or vulnerable persons, the University response will be different depending on whether or not the student openly disclosed the offence.

- i) If the offence has been disclosed, the Programme Coordinator or Head of Department will contact the student to discuss the circumstances of the offence. The purpose of this discussion is to evaluate whether the student can demonstrate evidence of significant rehabilitation and/or evidence of appropriate behaviour modification since the event(s) took place. The Programme Coordinator or Head of Department will then communicate the outcome of this discussion to the Liaison Person (and/or the Vetting Review Committee, if necessary).
- ii) If the Liaison Person (and/or the Vetting Review Committee) are in agreement that there has been evidence of significant rehabilitation and/or evidence of appropriate behaviour modification by the student since the event took place, the Liaison Person will advise the student that he/she will be allowed to continue on the programme and that all placement agencies, whether or not they request the information, will be advised of the offence.
- iii) If the Liaison Person (and/or the Vetting Review Committee) are in agreement that there is no evidence of significant rehabilitation and/or evidence of appropriate behaviour modification by the student, the

Liaison Person will advise the student that their offence is being treated as a very serious offence and the procedure outlined in section (d) below will be followed.

- iv) If the offence has not been disclosed the Programme Coordinator or the Head of Department will contact the student. Other than in very exceptional circumstances, the student will be advised that their offence is being treated as a very serious offence and the procedure outlined in section (d) below will be followed.
- v) The Vetting Review Committee may ask to meet the student during the procedures listed in Stage 7 (c) as this may be a helpful forum for the student to provide the information required by the Committee for it to fully consider the case.

(d) Very serious offence

With regard to very serious offences, i.e. offences, the nature of which could potentially indicate a serious risk to children and vulnerable adults or other members of the public, the Vetting Review Committee will meet. The purpose of this meeting is to determine and confirm that owing to the nature of the student's conviction(s), the student cannot continue in that programme of study. The Vetting Review Committee may ask to meet the student as part of this process.

Following the meeting of the Vetting Review Committee, the student will be advised in writing of the University's decision. The student may, within two weeks of the date of the letter, make an **appeal** to the Vice-President Academic, Registrar and Deputy President to have his/her case reviewed by an **Appeals Committee**.

Stage 8: Completion of eVetting

Students who have satisfactorily completed vetting (and any other requirements of the registration process) will be deemed to be fully registered as students of the University.

3. Maynooth University Convictions Policy

Maynooth University actively promotes equality of opportunity and is keen to encourage a diverse student population with a wide range of talents, backgrounds and experiences. Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent an applicant from gaining admission to the University. However, the University will take any relevant criminal convictions of a prospective applicant into account when considering applications for admission, and reserves the right to refuse to admit an applicant where his/her previous criminal conviction makes it inappropriate for him/her to be admitted.

All applicants, including those applying to the University through the Central Applications Office (CAO) and the Postgraduate Applications Centre (PAC), are required to disclose any Relevant Conviction when applying for admission to the University. If information relating to offences is not given or is given in incomplete form, then the University reserves the right at any stage (including after an offer of a place has been made, or after registration) to reject the application.

Further details are available in the Maynooth University Convictions Policy:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/Convictions%20Policy.pdf>.

4. Students who acquire a conviction during their course of study

Students on any of the programmes or undertaking any of the activities listed in Appendix 1 who acquire a conviction during their course of study are required to notify the Student Vetting Officer and will be subject to the provisions of the University policy and procedures. Non-disclosure may result in a cancellation of registration.

5. Re-vetting

The University reserves the right, at its discretion, to require certain groups of students or individual students to undergo a further Garda Vetting process during the course of their programme. In addition, a student may be re-vetted if information concerning his/her suitability to work with children or vulnerable persons comes to the attention of the University.

6. Joint agreements

- (a) The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 provides for student placement providers to choose to accept the vetting undertaken by Maynooth University. In these circumstances, it is University policy to have joint written agreements in place with organisations where student placements occur. These agreements cover the vetting process and avoid duplication of vetting applications for these students. The template for joint agreements is available from the Student Vetting Office. It is the responsibility of each department to ensure that these joint agreements are up to date and filed accordingly, subject to reviews by the National Vetting Bureau. The University reserves the right to share the vetting disclosure with placement providers.

- (b) Where a programme is run jointly by Maynooth University and an external partner, the University reserves the right to share the vetting disclosure with relevant partners.

7. Management of the eVetting process

The following structure is in place to manage the vetting process:

(a) Maynooth University Liaison Person to the NVB:

The Maynooth University Liaison Person to the National Vetting Bureau is the Student Vetting Officer. The Student Vetting Officer is responsible for reporting to the Registrar on operating procedures on a six-monthly basis in relation to statistical information on the number of students vetted, joint agreements in place, and other relevant information.

(b) Vetting Review Committee:

Where a vetting disclosure contains convictions, specified information or information that is inconsistent with that provided by the applicant then it shall be considered by the Vetting Review Committee. The Committee will assess the suitability of the person who is the subject of the disclosure to continue in their programme of study. The Vetting Review Committee consists of the Assistant Registrar - Academic Administration, the Liaison Person, the Programme Coordinator and/or the Head of Department. The Student Vetting Officer will communicate with the student if their case is being considered by the Vetting Review Committee.

If at some point further information comes to the attention of the University that calls a vetting decision into question, the student may be suspended from carrying out the work placement until such information has been considered by the Vetting Review Committee. In reaching a decision regarding the continuance of a student, the University will balance the interests of the student (and its ability to provide any appropriate support arrangements) with seeking to provide a safe and secure environment for the public and its staff, students, visitors and others. In addition, the University will take account of the demands and requirements of relevant professional bodies and requirements under the law to protect special categories of people, for example children and vulnerable adults.

(c) Appeal Committee on Student Vetting:

In the event that a student is dissatisfied with the decision of the Vetting Review Committee, the student may appeal to the Vice-President Academic, Registrar and Deputy President to have her/his case reviewed by the Appeal Committee on Student Vetting, appointed by the Registrar.

The Appeal Committee is convened by the Registrar and will comprise the Vice-President Academic, Registrar and Deputy President (Chair), the Vice President Equality and Diversity and two Deans. The Appeal

Committee can be advised by professional staff including (but not limited to) student services, security, and a legal advisor.

8. Responsibilities of University Departments and Offices

The University recognises the primary role played by departments and offices in the administration of the vetting process and in the oversight necessary to ensure that all relevant students are vetted appropriately.

No student required to undergo vetting shall be permitted by the University to engage in placement or voluntary activities with children and/or vulnerable persons until such time as all parts of the vetting process have been fully completed by the NVB to the satisfaction of the University. It is the responsibility of the department/office to ensure this. Information and advice on the University policy and procedures is available from the Student Vetting Officer.

For reference, relevant work or activities relating to children and vulnerable persons are listed in Parts 1 and 2 of Schedule 1 of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, available at: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/47/enacted/en/html>.

9. Data Protection

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, information about the commission or alleged commission of an offence by a person falls within the definition of special categories of personal data. Accordingly, this information is subject to the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, and the University's data protection policy <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/data-protection/policies-privacy-notice>.

Except in exceptional circumstances, vetting disclosures are retained for the duration of the programme of study plus one year, after which they are confidentially deleted. In the case of further queries or issues being raised in relation to a vetting disclosure, the reference number and the date of the disclosure can be retained on file and can be checked with An Garda Síochána. Vetting disclosures will not be disclosed other than in accordance with the law. If a vetting applicant does not become a registered Maynooth University student, the University confidentially destroys any vetting information provided by the applicant or any disclosure received from the NVB. Refer to the University's data protection policy webpage for more information. <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/data-protection>.

Appendix 1

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 and 2016 (commenced 29th April 2016) provides a legislative basis for the mandatory vetting of persons who wish to undertake certain work or activities relating to children or vulnerable persons or to provide certain services to children or vulnerable persons. For relevant programmes of study, Maynooth University requires students to be vetted by the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána before they fully complete their registration as a student of the University.

Maynooth University academic programmes requiring Vetting

This list is subject to annual review

Undergraduate programmes

MH116 Bachelor of Social Science (Community and Youth Work) (full-time)
MH802 Bachelor of Social Science (Community and Youth Work) (part-time)
MH209 Bachelor of Science (Psychology through Science)
MH212 Bachelor of Science (Science with Education)
MH212 Bachelor of Science (Mathematics with Education)
MH212 Bachelor of Science (Mathematics and Computer Science with Education)
MH001 Bachelor of Education (Primary Teaching)
MH002 Bachelor of Education (Gaeltacht Applicants)
MH003 Bachelor of Arts (Early Childhood – Teaching and Learning) full-time
MH004 Bachelor of Arts (Early Childhood – Teaching and Learning) Flexible
MH801 Bachelor of Arts (Early Childhood - Teaching and Learning) part-time

Postgraduate programmes

Higher Diploma in Further Education
Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (School Guidance Counselling)
Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Guidance Counselling
Postgraduate Diploma in Inclusive and Special Education
Professional Master of Education (Post-Primary)
Professional Master of Education (Primary)
Master of Social Science (Community and Youth Work)
Master of Social Science (Social Work)

Other academic work

Teacher mentors in the “Rising Teachers, Rising Leaders” programme
Students on the “Think about Teaching” Certificate Programme

Research work at certificate, diploma or bachelors degree level in any department/institute involving children or vulnerable persons

Postgraduate research work in any department/institute involving children or vulnerable persons

Students intending to undertake certain activities and/or voluntary work with departments/offices at Maynooth University, where they may have access to children and/or vulnerable persons are required to

be vetted. The relevant department/office at Maynooth University provides Vetting Invitation Forms (NVB 1) to the relevant students where required.

Activities requiring Vetting include the following

This list is subject to annual review

Coderdojo volunteers with the Computer Science Department

Maynooth Access Programme Student Ambassadors with the Access Office

Students undertaking relevant work or activities with children and/or vulnerable adults as part of the MUSE programme

Appendix 2: The 100 Point Check

To assist in the verification of identity, the 100 Point Check is recommended as a guideline by An Garda Síochána. This involves seeking documentation that leads to a minimum of 100 points, **including one form of identification with photo and one that confirms current address.**

Identification	Score	Tick
Irish driving licence or learner permit (new credit card format) (must be dated within the last 6 months if used to confirm address)	80	
Irish Public Services Card (must be accompanied by passport or birth certificate)	80	
Current Passport (from country of citizenship)	70	
Irish certificate of naturalisation	50	
Birth certificate	50	
Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) card/ Irish Residence Permit	50	
National Identity Card for EU/EEA/Swiss citizens	50	
Irish driving licence or learner permit (old paper format)	40	
Employment ID		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ID card issued by employer (with name and address, not more than 6 months old) 	35	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ID card issued by employer (name only) 	25	
Letter from employer (not more than 6 months old)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirming name and address 	35	
P60, P45 or Payslip (with home address) (not more than 6 months old)	35	
Utility bill e.g. gas, electricity, television, broadband (not more than 6 months old. Printed online bills are acceptable. Mobile phone bills are not acceptable)	35	
Public services card/social services card/medical card	25	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With photograph 	40	
Bank/Building Society/Credit Union statement (not more than 6 months old)	35	
Credit/debit cards/passbooks (only one per institution)	25	
National age card (issued by An Garda Síochána)	25	
Membership card		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club, union or trade, professional bodies 	25	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational institution 	25	
Correspondence (not more than 6 months old)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From an educational institution/SUSI/CAO 	20	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From an insurance company regarding an active policy 	20	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a bank/credit union or government body or state agency 	20	
TOTAL:		

Identification	Score	Tick
Children under 18 years (any one of the following)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birth certificate 	100	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passport 	100	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written statement by a the Principal confirming attendance at educational institution on a letter head of that institution p 	100	
Recent arrival in Ireland (less than 6 weeks)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passport 	100	
Vetting Subject is unable to achieve 100 points**		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affidavit witnessed by a Commissioner for Oaths 	100	
TOTAL:		

Appendix 3: Version history

Version 01: 21 st February 2019	Updated Joint Agreements.
Version 02: 18 th June 2019	Updated Appeals Process.
Version 03: 9 th August 2019	Updated Data Protection.
Version 04: 24 th February 2020	Approved by Governing Authority on 20 th February 2020.
Version 05: 1 st June 2021	Updated section 2 to note possible withholding of examination results.
Version 06: 23 rd March 2022	Updated Stages 5 and 7 in relation to the procedures involved if a minor, serious or very serious offence is recorded on a Vetting Disclosures. Updated Section 7 in relation to the procedures followed by the Vetting Review Committee and the membership of the Appeal Committee. Updated list of programmes in Appendix 1.