



EIRCODE CASE STUDY

Student Universal Support Ireland

Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) is the national awarding authority for all higher and further education grants. SUSI processed over 108,000 applications, with in excess of 83,000 students awarded grants, for the 2015/16 academic year.

How are Eircodes helping SUSI?

Eircodes have been integrated into SUSI's system to help determine which level of grant to award to applicants. The 'adjacent rate' of maintenance grant is payable to students whose normal residence is 45km or less from the approved institution that they are attending; the 'non-adjacent rate' of maintenance grant is payable in all other cases.

SUSI asks students to provide their address, including their Eircode, as part of the application process. Once the address and Eircode are entered, SUSI's system 'finds' the GPS co-ordinates of the address. Using Google Mapping, the system then determines the distance from the student's address to the institution they are attending. This ensures that SUSI captures an accurate address location as part of the application process. This reduces the need to further verify the precise location of a student's house. This is particularly useful with more rural addresses.

WHAT ARE THE KEY BENEFITS TO SUSI OF USING EIRCODE?



Speedier processing of applications

Having an Eircode ensures that SUSI captures a validated address as part of the application process. No further documentation is required and the application process can continue. This benefits SUSI and the applicant, as applications are processed quicker and the number of requests for further information is reduced.



Accuracy and control of expenditure

Using Eircodes reduces the potential for data entry errors and makes the assessment process more efficient. It also significantly reduces the time required to assess a student's eligibility for grant funding.



Fairness of application of the eligibility rules

Use of the Eircode removes any ambiguity about the exact location of addresses. Distances can be automatically calculated using exact co-ordinates for the student's address.

Scale of savings or improvements

SUSI estimates that using Eircodes saves about two minutes on each application. While this may appear relatively minor, it equates to about 2,666 working hours each year. This is equivalent to 1.6 full-time equivalent staff or savings of about €70,000 a year.¹

Reference

1. Applying Department of Public Expenditure guidelines to the estimation of staff costs: <http://publicspendingcode.per.gov.ie/e-01-calculation-of-staff-costs/>.

