

Update re Teaching Council's revised Droichead policy

The Teaching Council has made a number of significant changes to *Droichead*, the enhanced model of professional induction for newly qualified teachers.

We are continuing to work closely with the Department of Education and Skills, and stakeholders, with a view to ensuring that the necessary resources, including release time, training and NIPT support are available for the roll-out of this policy to take effect and the growth of *Droichead* to proceed as smoothly and as effectively as possible. The Council is conscious of teachers' concerns about workload and believes that it is important to clarify these matters in advance of roll-out.

In this light, Council will confirm the implementation date for this revised policy as soon as possible.

It is important to note that once this date is confirmed, there will be opportunities for schools and the profession generally to engage with the Council in order to clarify all aspects of the policy.

In the meantime, the changes, which have been made following the Council's review of *Droichead*, our engagement with stakeholders and in line with Council's ongoing commitment to periodic policy review, include the following:

1. The revised policy makes explicit that *Droichead* is a non-evaluative professional induction process. This means that neither principals, school colleagues nor external school colleagues will be engaged in the evaluation of NQTs for registration purposes.
2. There is considerable flexibility in the revised policy vis-à-vis the role of principals, the way in which the model can operate in different schools, the size of the PSTs, and the use of an external PST member to act as a mentor where necessary.
3. It provides that JobBridge or any other similar schemes cannot be used to access the *Droichead* programme.
4. An extended growth phase whereby *Droichead* will be the route of induction for all NQTs by the 2020/2021 school year.

The key changes are reflected in the updated version of the policy which is available [here](#), and in the [Droichead form](#). The latter has been amended to, inter alia, reflect the NQT's responsibility for his or her own learning.

The section of the form which previously required a recommendation to be made to the Council by the PST, has now been replaced with a new joint declaration between the PST and NQT.

The approved changes are also reflected in revised and strengthened [Droichead Quality Assurance procedures](#).

The new *Droichead* policy takes into account the revised and extended initial teacher education courses together with the additional criteria with regard to school placement. It further recognises the strengthened position of the critically important role of school placement for all student teachers. Council has also highlighted its position on guaranteed placement, and the fact that this is inextricably linked to a managed process of teacher supply meeting the needs of the school system.

The Council is committed to ensuring that the quality of support for newly qualified teachers embarking on their career will be maintained and enhanced through the professional leadership of

their experienced colleagues. Research commissioned by the Council through the ESRI shows that this process can both enhance the quality of teaching and learning in schools, and support enhanced wellbeing for our new teachers.