

Clarification Note - Covid Learning and Support Scheme (CLASS) & Droichead

Where an NQT is employed under the CLASS provision, applications for the *Droichead* process will be accepted for the school year 2021/2022 once the Droichead Policy requirements are met. These requirements are set out in the *Post-Qualification Professional Practice Procedures and Criteria 2021/2022* and the *Transitional Arrangements 2021/2022* as published on the Council's website.

For ease of reference the relevant policy areas from both documents have been extracted and collated in this note under Post-primary and Primary respectively. Where an application for *Droichead* is made and the criteria are not adhered to, the *Droichead* process cannot be deemed to have been completed and the NQTs registration will not be updated. If a school or NQT has any doubt in relation to eligibility, please email the Council for specific advice at conditions@teachingcouncil.ie.

Post-Primary

1. Eligible Settings (extracted from *Post-Qualification Professional Practice Procedures and Criteria 2021/2022*)

2.1.2.4. Post-primary

From 2020/2021 Droichead is the only route of induction for all post-primary NQTS.

A post-primary teacher will normally undertake the Droichead process when employed in a recognised post-primary school. As a general rule, paid employment in a permanent, temporary or substitute capacity is eligible, so long as such employment will afford the teacher the opportunity to meet the minimum duration requirements set out in 2.1.3.3 below.

2.1.2.5 A post-primary teacher may also complete the Droichead process where they are employed in one of the following roles:

a) a teacher in a special school where a proportion of the pupils attending the school are of post-primary age, and where the teacher is teaching a post-primary curricular subject(s) to such pupils,

or

b) a teacher in a Centre for Education where a post-primary curricular subject(s) is being taught.

2. Time requirements (extracted from *Post-Qualification Professional Practice Procedures and Criteria 2021/2022*)

Points to note:

2.1.2.4 A post-primary teacher must complete 200 hours' teaching employment in an eligible setting to include the teaching of a post-primary curricular subject(s) to a designated class on the school's timetable, or employment in a special education teaching role. The teacher must register for the Droichead process with the Council, using the Login / My Registration section of the Teaching Council website within 5 working days of reckonable employment.

a) It is important to note that hours outside of teaching a curricular subject and/or special education role are not reckonable towards Droichead hours.

Primary

1. **Eligible Settings** (extracted from *Post-Qualification Professional Practice Procedures and Criteria 2021/2022*)

2.1.2.1 Primary

From 2020/2021 Droichead is the only route of induction for all Primary NQTs.

A primary teacher will normally undertake the Droichead process when employed as a mainstream class teacher. As a general rule, paid employment in a permanent, temporary or substitute capacity is eligible, where the teacher is teaching all areas of the Primary School Curriculum, including Irish, to a mainstream class of pupils (single or multi-grade) for the entire school day, and where the teacher's tenure at the school will afford him/her the opportunity to meet the minimum duration requirements set out in 2.1.3.2 below.

2.1.2.2 Other than in exceptional circumstances, schools should deploy NQTs in a mainstream setting. In certain circumstances, where he/she is the most appropriate teacher to support the needs of pupils, an NQT may complete the Droichead process in one of the following special education teaching roles:

- a) special class teacher in a mainstream school
- b) teacher in a special school
- c) full-time resource teacher of pupils with low-incidence disabilities (as defined by the Department of Education)
- d) full-time learning support teacher
- e) a role which combines both c) and d) above (Learning Support/Resource teaching post).

2.1.2.3 In the above cases, the period of employment must involve teaching the same cohort of pupils (save for exceptional absences). As part of the Droichead process, the school should also endeavour to ensure that there are opportunities for the NQT to teach in a mainstream setting, which would include the teaching and learning of Irish in a mainstream class, in collaboration with the class teacher.

Points to note:

- b) It is important to note that teaching must be with the same cohort of pupils.
- c) Where an NQT is changing roles /position within the same school it is important to seek advice from the Council prior to commencing Droichead or as soon as it is known.
- d) Please see point 3 below for additional flexibilities

2. **Time requirements** (extracted from *Post-Qualification Professional Practice Procedures and Criteria 2021/2022*)

2.1.3.2 A primary teacher must complete a block of 60 consecutive school days in an eligible setting from the date on which they were first appointed to a post recognised for Droichead purposes in a primary school. The teacher must register for the Droichead process with the council using the Login/My Registration section of the Teaching Council website within 5 working days of commencing reckonable employment.

Points to note:

- a) It is important to note that the requirement is for 60 consecutive days where the teacher is teaching full hours.

- b) Where two schools use CLASS hours to employ the equivalent of a full-time teacher, the inter-schools support model may be used. Contact the NIPT for further information info@teacherinduction.ie
- c) Applications for Droichead where an NQT has a minimum of 60 consecutive days can occur throughout the year. A final application date will be notified in early 2022.

3. Additional Flexibilities (See *Droichead Temporary Measures Dec 2021*)

Due to the introduction of emergency Temporary Measures in December 2021 extending Droichead to those covering Supply Panels and Principal Release days, an extension has also been granted to those on job-sharing/part-time contracts.

Applications for Droichead will now be accepted until **31 January 2022** from NQTs who meet the criteria below for job-sharing/part-time contracts provided they commenced in their role **on or before 31 December 2021** and their contract extends to the end of the 2022 academic year. Where a change in role occurs during the year the Council should be contacted immediately for case specific advice.

Extract from *Transitional Arrangements 2021/2022*

1.3. Job-sharing or part-time contracts for the full academic year

Applications for the *Droichead* process will be accepted for the school year 2021/2022 for teachers registered under Primary, or Route 4 Other, with the condition of *Droichead* or Probation attached to their registration, who are:

- 1.3.1. on a job-share contract for the duration of the full academic year, including teachers employed as replacement teachers.
OR
- 1.3.2. on a part-time contract of not less than twelve and a half hours (12.5 hours) for the duration of the academic year.

Please note the following:

- Note 1:** In relation to teachers who meet either of the above eligibility requirements, the Council will accept applications for the *Droichead* process on the understanding that the applications are made by 30 September 2021 and that the process will extend for the duration of the academic year.
- Note 2:** All other requirements of the process must be met unless otherwise exempted e.g., Cluster meetings, professional learning activities, observations.
- Note 3:** Where a teacher has 2 separate part-time contracts which total more than 12.5 hours for the full academic year, they may apply for *Droichead* once both schools agree to the process and a PST cluster arrangement is put in place, if necessary. Advice should be sought from the Teaching Council by emailing conditions@teachingcouncil.ie.
- Note 4:** Where applications for *Droichead* are made after the deadline of the 30 September and or the eligibility requirements at 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 are not adhered to, the *Droichead* requirements will not be deemed met and the *Droichead* condition will remain on a teacher's registration. The NQT/ school should email conditions@teachingcouncil.ie for advice prior to applying for *Droichead*.

Points to note:

- a) It is important to note that the requirement is with the same cohort of pupils.

- b) Where an NQT is changing roles /position within the same school it is important to seek advice from the Council prior to commencing Droichead.

4. Combining CLASS Hours with Principal Release Days

Due to the introduction of emergency Temporary Measures (December 2021) permitting NQTs covering Principal Release Days on a full-time basis (i.e., 5 days per week) to participate in Droichead, the following arrangement is being extended to NQTs combining CLASS hours with principal release days:

On an exceptional basis, applications for Droichead will be accepted for the school year 2021/2022 where an NQT is employed on a continuous basis (i.e., 5 days per week) covering a combination of CLASS hours and principal release days, provided the following requirements are met:

- a. The application for Droichead must be made on or before the **31 January 2022** and the process must extend until the end of the academic year.
- b. A minimum of two Professional Support Team members (PSTs) are required to support the NQT throughout the process. If the NQT is working in a cluster of schools, at least one of the PST must be from the base school. In this case the NIPT should be contacted at info@teacherinduction.ie to discuss the option of offering the process using the External PST model or the Inter-school's model.
- c. The PST and NQT must ensure that they have prior consent and agreement and that if working in a cluster that all schools are willing to facilitate the completion of the Droichead process.
- d. If working in a cluster, the principal of the base school must act in an oversight role.
- e. All other requirements of the Droichead process must be met unless otherwise exempted e.g., Cluster meetings, professional learning activities, observations, and reflective practice. Cluster Meeting 1 is compulsory and must be followed by either Cluster Meeting 2 or Cluster Meeting 3.
- f. Where applications for Droichead are made after the deadline of the 31 January 2022 and/or the eligibility requirements are not adhered to, the Droichead process will not be fulfilled and the Droichead condition will remain on a teacher's registration. The NQT/school should email conditions@teachingcouncil.ie for advice prior to applying for *Droichead*.

5. Miscellaneous

Extension Requests: It is important to note that all newly qualified teachers (NQTs) are given 3 years in which to address the induction condition of Droichead. NQTs can request an extension of time in which to fulfil the condition if required.

Queries: Queries to the Council may be sent by email to conditions@teachingcouncil.ie and should include full name and Teaching Council registration number.