

Post-qualification Professional Practice Procedures and Criteria 2017/2018

Pursuant to Section 7(2) (f) and (g) of the Teaching Council Acts
2001 to 2015

An Chomhairle
Mhúinteoireachta



The Teaching Council

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Glossary of terms

Associate

An associate is a fully registered and practising teacher who is also an experienced mentor and/or Induction Programme facilitator, nominated by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) to support the *Droichead* process.

Centre for Education

A Centre for Education means a place, other than a school or a place providing university or other third level education, where adult or continuing education or vocational education or training is approved and which is designated for that purposes. The Minister may from time to time designate a place to be a Centre for Education (Education Act, 1998).

Continuum of Teacher Education

This describes the formal and informal educational and developmental activities in which teachers engage, as lifelong learners, during their teaching career. It encompasses initial teacher education, induction, early and continuing professional development and later career support.

Droichead

Droichead, an integrated professional induction framework, includes both school-based and additional professional learning activities to meet the needs of teachers as they begin their career. *Droichead* is applicable in primary and post-primary schools and in Centres for Education in which a post-primary curricular subject(s) is being taught, where such schools or centres have been registered by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) as participants in the *Droichead* process.

Induction Programme

The Induction Programme is a flexible learning programme, funded by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and designed to meet the particular professional learning needs of newly qualified teachers (NQTs). The programme, which is coordinated by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT), builds other learning that took place during initial teacher education. It can be tailored by an NQT depending on his/her particular circumstances. NQTs whose route to registration is probation (primary) or post-qualification employment (post-primary), are required to engage in an overall minimum of 20 hours of professional learning, and may combine school-based professional learning activities with off-site workshops to meet that requirement.

Mentor

A mentor is an experienced teacher who has completed a programme of professional development with the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT). A mentor supports the professional learning of a newly qualified teacher (NQT) and facilitates his/her induction into the school and the profession, in collaboration with colleagues.

National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT)

The National Induction Programme for Teachers is a State-funded support service that co-ordinates the provision of a multi-faceted induction programme for teachers. Full-time team members (Regional Development Officers) are supported in their work by a team of associates (see above).

Newly Qualified Teacher

This refers to a teacher who meets the Council's requirements in terms of qualifications, but who has not completed the required period of professional practice. In this document, a newly qualified teacher (NQT) refers to all newly registered teachers who are beginning their teaching career, or may be returning to teaching after a period of absence, regardless of the date of qualification.

Participation in *Droichead*

A school participating in *Droichead* offers the *Droichead* professional induction model which has been developed by the Council. Newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in such schools will undergo a period of supported professional practice called *Droichead*, as defined above.

Post-qualification employment

Post-qualification employment (PQE) is a condition of registration which applies to all newly registered post-primary teachers other than those undergoing the *Droichead* process, as defined above. To meet the condition of PQE, teachers are required to complete a period of post-qualification employment.

Probation

Probation is a condition of registration which applies to all newly-registered primary teachers other than those undergoing the *Droichead* process, as defined above. The condition is removed when the teacher has demonstrated to the Council that he/she has met certain post-qualification criteria.

Professional Support Team

The professional support team (PST) is a team of experienced and fully registered teachers which works collaboratively to support and mentor the newly qualified teacher during the *Droichead* process and his/ her entry into both the school and the teaching profession. All members of the professional support team (PST) are required to complete *Droichead* professional development provided by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT).

Taise: Portfolio-based learning

A professional learning portfolio is developed over time by teachers undergoing *Droichead*, to support the process of reflection on their practice. The portfolio may provide a focus for the professional conversations which are central to *Droichead* and allow the NQT to identify areas in which he/she may need support or guidance. It may be created in hard copy or electronic format. Further details on this process are available from the *Droichead* eBook on the *Droichead* pages of the Council's website. Practical guidance on this process is available to NQTs and the PST from the NIPT.

List of acronyms

HEI	Higher Education Institute
ILR	Irish Language Requirement
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LEC	Limerick Education Centre
NIPT	National Induction Programme for Teachers
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
OCG	Oiriúnú le haghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge
PQE	Post-Qualification Employment
PST	Professional Support Team
SCG	Scrúdú le haghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland

1 Introduction

The Teaching Council (“the Council”) is the body with statutory responsibility for the registration of teachers in Ireland. Teachers are registered by the Council in accordance with the Teaching Council [Registration] Regulations 2009 or Teaching Council [Registration] Regulations 2016 as appropriate. A copy of these regulations and full details about how newly registered and other teachers may apply to the Council for registration may be found on www.teachingcouncil.ie.

This document sets out the Council’s requirements for newly registered teachers who need to fulfil one or more post-qualification registration conditions in Ireland, which may include *Droichead*, Probation, Post-qualification employment (PQE) and Induction Programme.

1.1 Registration subject to conditions

- 1.1.1 Registration subject to conditions (conditional registration) is granted when an applicant for registration has not fulfilled all of the registration requirements set down by the Council. This is the norm for all newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and may also apply to other teachers in certain circumstances. A teacher with conditional registration is eligible to be employed in the school sector that is appropriate to his or her qualifications in Ireland (Department of Education and Skills Circular 0031/2011). The conditions applied to a teacher’s registration, and the time period allowed to meet those conditions, are notified to the teacher when they are admitted to the Register of Teachers. A teacher may also check his/her conditions of registration on My Registration section of the Council’s website.
- 1.1.2 While registration conditions remain, a teacher is not fully registered and may not be recognised as a teacher in other EU/EEA Member States in accordance with European Directive 2005/36/EC as amended. The same applies when a teacher from another Member State wishes to apply for registration with the Teaching Council in Ireland. More information may be found in Section 1.6.
- 1.1.3 Teachers registered under Regulation Two (Primary) (Route 1), who have previously been partially probated in a restricted setting may be eligible to apply for full registration in that sector subject to specific criteria. This policy came into effect from 1 September 2016 and is detailed in Section 3.1.7.

1.2 Post-qualification professional practice conditions

- 1.2.1 When a teacher is admitted to the Register of Teachers, he/she will receive a confirmation of registration letter that states any conditions that apply to their registration.
- 1.2.2 In relation to both primary and post-primary teachers who registered after 01 June 2016, the post-qualification professional practice conditions which generally apply are as follows¹:

Primary	<i>Droichead</i> OR Probation and Induction Programme
Post-Primary	<i>Droichead</i> OR Post-Qualification Employment (PQE) and Induction Programme

- 1.2.3 Primary teachers, employed for a sufficient period of time in a primary or special education school which participates in *Droichead*, are required to complete the *Droichead* process to meet the registration condition.
- 1.2.4 In 2017/2018 *Droichead* will be the only route of induction for NQTs in Special Education settings (SEN) settings or in large primary schools where there is a principal and 24 or more mainstream teachers. The school’s eligibility should be determined by the staffing schedule contained in the relevant Department of Education and Skills (DES) circular.

1 Other possible non-practice based conditions may apply e.g. Irish Language Requirement, Qualification Shortfalls. These are listed on the teacher’s confirmation of registration letter. Further information is available in section 1.3.

- 1.2.5 In cases where a primary NQT is employed in an eligible setting in a school, outside of the settings referred to in 1.2.4 above and which does not offer *Droichead*, he/she may complete Probation and the Induction Programme to meet the registration conditions.
- 1.2.6 Post-primary teachers employed for a sufficient period of time in a post-primary school or special education school which participates in *Droichead* will be required to complete the *Droichead* process to meet the registration condition.
- 1.2.7 In 2017/2018 *Droichead* will be the only route of induction for NQTs in SEN settings or in large post-primary schools of 700 or more students.
- 1.2.8 In cases where a post-primary teacher is employed in a school outside of the settings referred to in 1.2.7 above and which does not offer *Droichead*, he/she may complete the Post-qualification employment and Induction Programme to meet the registration conditions.
- 1.2.9 For movement between participating schools and schools which do not offer *Droichead* please refer to Section 4 of this document.
- 1.2.10 Transitional arrangements will be published on www.teachingcouncil.ie to give guidance to teachers who commenced fulfilling their post-qualification practice conditions before the 2017/2018 school year.

1.3 Other registration conditions

- 1.3.1 When a teacher is admitted to the register, he/she may receive conditions other than post-qualification practice conditions. These conditions are listed on the confirmation of registration letter which also includes an expiry date by which the conditions must be addressed. Information about these conditions is available on www.teachingcouncil.ie.

1.4 Time periods for completing registration conditions

- 1.4.1 Generally teachers are required to fulfil their registration conditions within three years of initial registration.
- 1.4.2 Failure to satisfactorily fulfil conditions within the defined period of time will result in a teacher's registration lapsing.
- 1.4.3 In certain limited circumstances, a registered teacher may apply to the Council for an extension to his/her period of conditional registration. Please see the current Registration Handbook or www.teachingcouncil.ie for more information.

1.5 Post-qualification conditions and Employment

- 1.5.1 Only paid employment is deemed reckonable service for the fulfillment of post-qualification professional practice conditions. Since the 3 October 2016, internship schemes such as JobBridge and similar such schemes that may be commenced in the future, are no longer accepted as eligible settings for probation, post-qualification employment and *Droichead*.
- 1.5.2 Where a teacher holds a non-State-funded position, the following guidelines apply:
 - a. The terms and conditions including pay scales are broadly similar to those in place across the education system
 - b. All the criteria set out in this document including setting, curriculum and duration are met
 - c. All relevant DES and other statutory obligations and requirements are met.

1.6 Teacher education qualifications obtained in European Union (EU)/ European Economic Area (EEA) countries

- 1.6.1 In accordance with the European Council Directives on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC as amended, which were transposed into law by the Recognition of Professional Qualifications Regulations 2017 (SI 8 of 2017), persons who are recognised for the purposes of teaching in one EU Member State are entitled to have those qualifications recognised in all other Member States. Such recognition may be granted subject to conditions, pending the making good of any shortfalls identified. The Council is the designated competent authority in Ireland for assessing applications to ensure that they meet the qualifications criteria set out in the relevant Teaching Council regulations. In general, teachers must satisfy all other conditions set by the Council before addressing any post-qualification practice conditions applied by the Council. Commencing in the 2017/2018 school year teachers who complete the *Droichead* process may do so in advance of satisfying all other conditions attached to their registrations. Further details on the implications of the above Directive for teacher registration and qualifications are set out in the Department of Education and Skills Circular 0031/2010 available on www.education.ie.
- 1.6.2 Where an applicant has completed formal post-qualification professional practice in another country, applications for registration to the Council should include evidence of satisfactory completion of same. It is a matter for the Council to determine if the evidence provided is sufficient to warrant exemption from the post-qualification professional practice requirements in Ireland.
- 1.6.3 The Council issued a notice on 19 May 2010 informing persons who intended to commence a teacher education qualification in another EU/EEA Member State from 1 January 2011 onwards, that they must also complete any period of post-qualification professional practice (for example, NQT or induction year) in the country in which they qualified. They must also be fully recognised/registered under the terms of Directive 2005/36/EC by the designated authority of that Member State prior to seeking registration with the Teaching Council in Ireland. The notice from the Council does not change arrangements for persons who have commenced or completed a teaching qualification outside of Ireland prior to 31 December 2010.

Figure 1: Pathways for completing registration conditions² from 01 September 2016



² Other possible non-practice based conditions are not referred to in this figure, e.g., Irish Language Requirement, Qualification Shortfalls. If such conditions apply, these are listed on the teacher’s confirmation of registration letter

2 *Droichead*

The Integrated Professional Induction Framework

2.1 Procedures and criteria for *Droichead* (primary and post-primary)

Introduction

The following procedures apply where a newly qualified teacher is employed for a sufficient period of time in a school which is participating in the *Droichead* process.

2.1.1 The *Droichead* process

- 2.1.1.1 *Droichead* is an integrated professional induction framework for newly qualified teachers (NQT). It recognises the effectiveness of the reconceptualised programmes of initial teacher education and particularly the extended school placement, in the professional preparation of student teachers. It builds on that phase, taking as its starting point the areas for further learning that have been identified by the NQT in collaboration with the HEI as part of the school placement experience. At the same time, it recognises that induction is a distinct phase of the continuum of teacher education, a socialisation process into the teaching profession. This integrated framework includes both school-based and additional professional learning activities to address the needs of teachers as they begin their careers.
- 2.1.1.2 The main objective of the *Droichead* process is to support the professional learning of the NQTs during the induction phase, thus laying the foundations for subsequent professional growth and learning for the next phase of their career.
- 2.1.1.3 Following the *Droichead* process, a declaration is made by the NQT that he/she is ready to move to the next phase on the continuum of teacher education. A joint declaration is made by the teacher and experienced colleagues, following collective reflection, that through their engagement in *Droichead*, they have participated in a quality teaching and learning process. The Council then removes the *Droichead* condition from the teacher's registration. The teacher will be fully registered by the Council when all registration conditions (e.g., Irish Language Requirement, qualifications shortfall conditions) have been deemed by the Council to have been met.
- 2.1.1.4 When an NQT is employed in a participating school in an eligible setting (see 2.1.2) and for the minimum period of professional practice (see 2.1.3), they register for the *Droichead* process with the Council using the DR1 form. An email confirmation is issued to the NQT from the Council confirming that they have registered for the *Droichead* process. On completion of the *Droichead* process, a completed Form D is submitted to the Council (see 1.5 for further clarification).
- 2.1.1.5 There are two key strands of the *Droichead* process as an integrated induction framework for newly qualified teachers (NQT). The first strand is a school-based induction one (Strand A), through which the NQT is supported by experienced colleagues. The second strand is made up of additional professional learning activities (Strand B), which involves attendance at NQT cluster meetings in local education centres, and one other professional learning activity related to the needs of the NQT. Typical learning activities might be, for example, participation in a workshop, a meeting of a Teacher Professional Network (subject association), an online/blended learning activity, attendance at a conference, Féilte, etc. (See 2.1.5).

2.1.2 Settings in which the *Droichead* process can take place

2.1.2.1 Primary

In 2017/2018 *Droichead* will be the only route of induction for NQTs in SEN settings or in large primary schools where there is a principal and 24 or more mainstream teachers, as determined by the staffing schedule contained in DES Circular 17/2017. Other primary schools may choose to opt in to the process also.

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, a newly qualified teacher may complete the *Droichead* process in one of the following special education teaching roles³:

- 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 and Skills)
- 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.

2.1.2.4 Post-primary

In 2017/2018 *Droichead* will be the only route of induction for post-primary NQTs in SEN settings or in large post-primary schools of 700 or more students. Other post-primary schools may choose to opt in to the process also.

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 roles⁴:

- 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.

3 Department of Education and Skills in Circular 13/2017

4 Department of Education and Skills in Circular 14/2017

2.1.3 Duration of professional practice required

- 2.1.3.1 Professional practice includes (i) school placement (10 weeks) during initial teacher education and (ii) post-qualification practice. The *Droichead* process which fulfils the post-qualification professional practice requirement has been modified to take into account the extended school placement during initial teacher education.
- 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 DR1 form within 5 working days of commencing reckonable employment.
- 2.1.3.3 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 role⁵. The teacher must register for the *Droichead* process with the Council, using the DR1 form within 5 working days of reckonable employment.
- 2.1.3.4 It should be noted that these are absolute minimum periods of practice. Given that *Droichead* as an induction framework is designed to provide the maximum degree of support, guidance and advice, it is recommended, where an NQT has additional time in his/her school over and above the minimum requirements set out at 2.1.3.2. and 2.1.3.3. above, that extra time be used to support the *Droichead* process.

2.1.4 School-based strand

- 2.1.4.1 *Droichead* is fundamentally about the NQT's professional journey and the process of their induction. A key part of this process is an NQT's engagement with more experienced colleagues, and reflection on the professional conversations that take place on their own professional learning and practice. There are a number of ways in which a PST can be established. In larger schools, with multiple NQTs, a number of teams might operate in parallel. In smaller schools, a team of two or three teachers may suffice. In very small schools, or in circumstances where a school is not in a position to establish a PST exclusively from within the staff, an external model is available. Further guidance is available from the NIPT.
- 2.1.4.2 Supporting an NQT during *Droichead* is always a collaborative process, although the roles and responsibilities of PST members may vary in different school contexts, and are therefore agreed before the *Droichead* process commences.
- 2.1.4.3 The PST completes *Droichead* professional development provided by NIPT, and is assisted in its work through the provision of a range of supports and resources including:
- NIPT initial training for all members of the PST.
 - Release time with substitute cover to allow each member of the PST to attend training.
 - Release time to support the school-based elements of *Droichead*.
 - Telephone and email support from the NIPT, through its network of associates and its permanent staff.
 - A comprehensive mentor guide, including a range of sample templates.
- 2.1.4.4 During the course of the *Droichead* process, an NQT has a number of interactions with the experienced colleagues who are supporting the process. These are called professional conversations. These conversations provide opportunities to exchange informal feedback on a one-to-one basis, and discuss issues arising in the course of the NQT's professional learning and practice and offer guidance. Alternatively, a professional conversation may take the form of an arranged meeting between the NQT and one or more members of the PST.

5 Department of Education and Skills in Circular 14/2017

- 2.1.4.5 Portfolio-based learning is an important process to support the NQT in engaging in these professional conversations. The Council uses the term *Taisce*, (Irish for treasure trove) to refer to this process of portfolio-based learning. Engaging in the process of portfolio-based learning enables the NQT to reflect on their professional learning in a way that suits them and identify and plan for areas in which they may need further support or guidance. Further detail on this process is available from the *Droichead* eBook on the *Droichead* pages of the Council's website. Practical guidance on this process is available to NQTs and the PST from the NIPT.
- 2.1.4.6 Observations are also a key feature of *Droichead*. This includes observations by the NQT of more experienced teachers' practice, as well as observation of the NQT's practice by the PST. Both types of observations are arranged in advance, and provide NQTs with opportunities to learn from their fellow professionals. Observations by the PST of the NQT's practice should focus on areas where the NQT feels that they need particular advice, help and support. The NQT should therefore be encouraged to teach in an area where they feel their learning need is greatest. This can then provide the basis for a subsequent professional conversation. It is recommended that there would be at least two of each type of classroom observation (observations by the NQT, and observations of the NQT's practice), and that the exact number, and the classes observed, should be based on discussions between the NQT and the PST.
- 2.1.4.7 The motto of the NIPT is "To ask for help is a sign of strength." To that end, the NQT and the PST are encouraged to take every opportunity to discuss issues and challenges as they arise. PSTs offer a range of supports that enable the NQT to address those challenges and learn from them. Additional support, advice and guidance is available from the NIPT via its school support service, and some additional time to facilitate this may be of value. The more comprehensive the support offered, and the greater the degree of open engagement by those involved, the better for the NQT.

2.1.5 Additional professional learning activities

- 2.1.5.1 To complement the school-based induction strand outlined above, NQTs also engage in additional professional learning activities as part of the *Droichead* process, as follows:

2.1.5.1.1 NQT Cluster Meetings and other Professional Learning Activities

NQTs engage in one cluster meeting per term, in a local education centre. The meetings are facilitated by NIPT and in collaboration with the group of NQTs. The agenda is developed in consultation with the NQTs, and may include key elements of *Droichead* such as the observation process, professional conversations, *Taisce*, etc.

2.1.5.1.2 Other professional learning activity

NQTs should also engage in one other professional learning activity, identified by themselves in accordance with their professional learning needs, in consultation with the PST. Typical learning activities might be, for example, participation in a workshop, a meeting of a Teacher Professional Networks (subject association), an online/blended learning activity, attendance at a conference, *Féilte*, etc.

2.1.6 Standards to guide and support the *Droichead* process

- 2.1.6.1 The Council has established standards to support the *Droichead* process, in guiding the NQT, with the PST, in relation to their professional learning and practice. These are set out in Appendix 2. *Droichead* standards and school context examples are further explored as part of professional development for the PST, facilitated by NIPT.

2.1.7 Maintaining records of the *Droichead* process

- 2.1.7.1 A *Droichead* outline plan is created by the PST, in consultation with the NQT. Ideally the NQT will undertake the *Droichead* process for a period longer than the minimum stipulated period, when their period of employment so allows. Templates for both the *Droichead* outline plan and the observation process, as well as guidance on the use of such templates will be provided by the NIPT. To facilitate the Council's quality assurance process, schools are asked to retain records which they have created to support the *Droichead* process in line with their data protection policy.

2.1.7.2 In maintaining records, the PST should respect the privacy of others and the confidentiality of information garnered during the course of the process. They should also be mindful of ethical and data protection considerations, anonymising data where appropriate and taking any measure necessary to restrict access to sensitive information.

2.1.7.3 Where an NQT who has completed some or all of the *Droichead* process leaves a school, they should be given a copy of the relevant records which the school holds in relation to that process.

2.1.8 Concluding the *Droichead* Process

2.1.8.1 When an NQT is nearing the conclusion of the *Droichead* process, as per the indicative timeframe agreed at the start of the process, a professional conversation takes place between the NQT and the PST. This conversation will also involve the NQT identifying areas of further professional learning (to be included on Form D).

2.1.8.2 When the NQT and PST have concluded the *Droichead* process (school-based induction and additional professional learning activities) they complete Form D.

2.1.8.3 When Form D has been fully completed and submitted to the Council, the Council will remove the *Droichead* condition from the teacher's registration and issue a revised Confirmation of Registration letter. All conditions must be met, for the teacher to be fully registered.

2.1.9 Consistency and quality assurance

2.1.9.1 A number of mechanisms are in place to assure the quality and consistency of the *Droichead* process nationally:

- a) NIPT provides support to schools offering *Droichead* that employ a NQT.
- b) *Droichead* Quality Assurance (DQA) panels, comprising an independent chairperson, a practising teacher from the relevant sector and a person with expertise in the support and/or evaluation of teaching and learning at school level, are established by the Council. The DQA panel visits a random sample of schools where the *Droichead* process has taken place and discusses the process with the PST and the NQT. Such visits are pre-arranged and take place in a spirit of collegiality and collaboration. Following its review, the DQA panel submits an anonymised report to the Council setting out its findings and recommendations in relation to the process. The report is considered by the Council and, following ratification, is published on the Council's website and circulated to the NIPT and the Inspectorate.
- c) As a leader of learning in the school, the principal, while not necessarily involved in the *Droichead* process, fosters a learning culture in which *Droichead* can flourish, and supports the PST in facilitating a quality induction process.
- d) Professional development, including cluster meetings for PST members, includes discussions regarding the standards and indicators of good practice which guide and support the *Droichead* process.
- e) A review process is in place where NQTs or the PST wish to raise concerns about aspects of the *Droichead* process. This process includes an informal stage, at school level, and a more formal stage at NIPT level. It also allows for unresolved issues to be escalated to the Council, via its *Droichead* Quality Assurance panel.

2.1.10 Further guidance

The Council will engage with the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and its agencies regarding the implementation of *Droichead*, and to ensure its consistency with the overall policies as may be determined by the Minister from time to time. This will include the development of guidance for the transition to the *Droichead* policy. For additional information on Transitional Arrangements please see Section 4.

3 Traditional processes

Traditional processes for addressing post-qualification professional practice conditions

Probation (Primary)

Post-qualification employment (PQE) (Post-primary)

Induction Programme (Primary & Post-Primary)

3.1 Procedures and criteria for probation (primary)

Introduction

The following procedures and criteria apply in cases where the traditional probation process for Newly Qualified Teachers is being operated. The Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) carry out the probationary process at the request of the Council.

3.1.1 The process of probation

3.1.1.1 The probationary process for primary teachers incorporates two elements:

- a) the completion of a period of satisfactory service in a school (the service requirement)
- and
- b) the demonstration of professional competence in a school setting (the professional competence requirement).

3.1.1.2 A primary teacher who is conditionally registered, and whose remaining conditions relate to post-qualification professional practice, is eligible to commence the probationary process. He/she must do so in a teaching post that is recognised for probationary purposes in a primary school.

3.1.1.3 Applications to undertake the probationary process and any other queries should be made to Limerick Education Centre (LEC) at www.lec.ie in the first instance. Please note that probation may only be commenced when all other qualification shortfall conditions and the Irish Language Requirement (if applicable – see 3.1.8) have been fulfilled.

3.1.1.4 Once the Council has received certified evidence of satisfactory completion of the probationary process, the registration condition will be removed. Evidence includes:

- o a completed Form C confirming completion of the service requirement and
- o a statement of competence from the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills (provided by the Limerick Education Centre LEC).

3.1.1.5 Form C is available to download from www.teachingcouncil.ie.

3.1.2 Settings in which the probationary process can take place

- 3.1.2.1 From September 2017, teachers working in SEN settings or in large primary schools with a principal and 24 or more mainstream teachers as determined by the staffing schedule contained in Circular 17/2017 must avail of the *Droichead* process to gain full registration with the Council, where all other conditions have been met. Other categories of schools may choose to opt in to *Droichead* also. Probation by the Inspectorate will not be possible in such schools.
- 3.1.2.2 A primary teacher may undertake the probationary process when employed as a mainstream class teacher in a school other than those referred to in 3.1.2.1 above, so long as the school is not registered for *Droichead*. Employment in a permanent, temporary or substitute capacity is eligible, where the teacher is teaching all 11 subjects of the Primary School Curriculum, including Irish, to a mainstream class of pupils from junior infants to sixth class (single or multi-grade) for the entire school day.

3.1.3 Service requirement

- 3.1.3.1 To meet the service requirement for probation, a primary teacher must secure eligible employment in a primary school in a post recognised for probationary purposes in a permanent, temporary or substitute capacity. The employment must comprise:
- at least 100 consecutive days in a single setting, or
 - at least 100 days, which may take place in separate settings in two periods of not less than 50 consecutive days each.

In either case, the period of employment must involve teaching the same cohort of pupils for the minimum block period and meet the requirements as set out in 3.1.2 above. (see Section 1.5 for further clarification)

- 3.1.3.2 This service must take place after an initial teacher education qualification has been successfully completed and within a maximum of three years from the date of initial registration or, if applicable, from the date on which other conditions are met (with the exception of induction which may be undertaken at the same time as probation). It is during this period that the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills will evaluate the professional competence of the teacher. Only paid employment is reckonable (see 1.5 for further clarifications).
- 3.1.3.3 It is the responsibility of the probationary teacher to obtain written evidence of his/her service from the employing school or schools, and to submit this information on Form C to the Council so as to satisfy the Council regarding the completion of the service requirement.
- 3.1.3.4 In the case of teachers who were employed in recognised schools prior to 1 September 2010 and who require evidence of their service to submit to the Council, the Department of Education and Skills will provide these teachers with a record of their service up to 31 August 2010.

3.1.4 Professional competence requirement

- 3.1.4.1 To have his/her professional competence evaluated to satisfy the Council's probationary requirements, a teacher must make an application for inspection to Limerick Education Centre using Form OP1, which is available at www.lec.ie. The administration of the probationary process is administered by the LEC on behalf of the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills and the Council.
- 3.1.4.2 Applications for inspection must be made electronically and as soon as the teacher commences service in a post that will last for a period of at least 50 consecutive school days. Where a teacher commences eligible employment a maximum of five working days will be allowed to submit a completed application to LEC. The post must be recognised for probationary purposes (see 3.1.2 and 1.5 for further clarification.)

The date on which LEC receives a completed OP1 form or the first reckonable date of employment, whichever is the later, will be used when determining the 50/100-day period. Every effort is made to ensure that all eligible teachers who make an application for inspection as soon as they commence service in such a position will be inspected in that school year. Teachers must be available for inspection on any day of the 50/100 day period. Notification of pre-planned absences should be forwarded well in advance to the relevant inspector. Where an unforeseen absence occurs, the Principal or Deputy Principal should inform the inspector immediately.

- 3.1.4.3 A closing date for receipt of applications will apply. Advance notice of the closing date will be posted on www.lec.ie in the second half of the school year. Applications for inspection visits will not be processed after the closing date.
- 3.1.4.4 A new OP1 application form must be submitted to LEC to seek a second inspection visit when a teacher moves to another school which does not offer *Droichead* for the second 50 consecutive day period.

3.1.5 Evaluation of professional competence: inspection visits and reports

- 3.1.5.1 As part of the probationary process in 2017/2018, the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills has agreed, on behalf of the Council, to evaluate the professional competence of primary teachers in mainstream classes in schools not participating in *Droichead* as outlined in 3.1.4. The purpose of this is to inform the Council's decisions regarding the conditional or full registration of primary teachers. (See Section 1.5 for further clarification)
- 3.1.5.2 All teachers undertaking the probationary process are required to participate in the Induction Programme (described in Section 3.3 of this document). They should also receive assistance and advice from the school principal and other teachers. (See Section 1.5 for further clarification.)
- 3.1.5.3 The Inspectorate will consult with the school principal (or another fully registered teacher nominated by the principal) about the teacher's progress and will inspect the teacher's work during one or more unannounced inspection visits. Inspection visits may occur at any time during the school year and will generally last not more than half a school day. During the inspection visit(s), the inspector will evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in a classroom environment and in teaching curriculum areas and subjects, as outlined in the Primary School Curriculum. The inspector will also provide advice and oral feedback to the teacher during each visit. It is desirable for the principal (or another fully registered teacher nominated by the principal) to be present when the oral feedback is provided to the NQT so as to be in a position to provide ongoing support to the NQT following the inspection visit. At the end of the visit(s), the inspector will inform the teacher if the evaluation of professional competence is complete or if another inspection visit will occur. The criteria used by inspectors to evaluate the teacher's work are available in Appendix 1 and on the website of Limerick Education Centre at www.lec.ie.
- 3.1.5.4 Following the inspection visit(s), the Inspectorate will determine the rating to be applied to the teacher's work as follows:
- a) Has demonstrated satisfactory professional competence in a mainstream setting
This rating indicates that the teacher has demonstrated satisfactory teaching skills in a mainstream class, or
 - b) Requires a further period to develop and demonstrate professional competence
Normally this rating may be used only once, following two inspection visits (normally in the first year of service), where the inspector may recommend that the teacher needs more time to develop and demonstrate his/her satisfactory professional competence. This may arise because the inspector judges that there are significant weaknesses in the teacher's work and that he/she requires additional time to develop appropriate skills, or
 - c) Has not demonstrated satisfactory professional competence
This rating indicates that the inspector judges that the teacher has not demonstrated satisfactory teaching skills in the setting in which his/her work has been evaluated.
- 3.1.5.5 The Inspectorate will provide the teacher with written confirmation (via email from LEC) that he/she has demonstrated satisfactory professional competence.
- 3.1.5.6 Where a teacher has successfully completed the first inspection visit in a restricted setting prior to 2016/17 school year new arrangements apply. These transitional arrangements are published on www.teachingcouncil.ie.

- 3.1.5.7 It is the responsibility of the teacher to submit this written confirmation, in addition to proof of the required service requirement, to the Council so as to satisfy the Council regarding the completion of the professional competence requirement of probation by submitting a completed Form C.
- 3.1.5.8 In the case of teachers whose work is rated as “requires a further period to develop and demonstrate professional competence” or “has not demonstrated satisfactory professional competence”, a written inspection report outlining the outcomes of the evaluation and recording advice for further development will be furnished to the teacher by the Inspectorate through LEC.
- 3.1.5.9 Where the probationary period is extended beyond the normal service requirements, as described at 3.1.5.4(b) above, it is the responsibility of the teacher to take the necessary steps to complete the probation process immediately on commencing reckonable service in a school in the following school year. Generally, such teachers may not apply for an additional inspection visit within the same school year. Alternatively the teacher may complete the *Droichead* process. (see section 2 and 4.1 for further clarification).
- 3.1.5.10 Where the inspector judges that the teacher “has not demonstrated satisfactory professional competence” as described at 3.1.5.4(c) above, it is the responsibility of the teacher to take the necessary steps to complete the probation process immediately on commencing reckonable service in a school in the following school year. The teacher must complete a further service period of not less than two periods of 50 consecutive school days, with the same class in each instance, during which the teacher’s professional competence will be evaluated.
- 3.1.5.11 Written reports are no longer furnished to the teacher following the successful outcome of the evaluation of his/her professional competence.
- 3.1.5.12 A teacher may seek a review of an inspection in line with the Procedures for Review of Inspections on Schools and Teachers under Section 13(9) of the Education Act, 1998 available on www.education.ie.
- 3.1.5.13 From September 2016, the Inspectorate no longer carries out supplementary visits to teachers previously probated in a restricted setting who have moved into mainstream settings. (See Section 3.1.7 for further information)

3.1.6 Completion of the probationary process

- 3.1.6.1 The probationary period ends when the Council is satisfied that both the service requirement and the professional competence requirement are fully met. The Council will provide confirmation to the teacher regarding his/her conditional or full registration as a teacher.
- 3.1.6.2 Teachers registered under Regulation Two/Route 1 (Primary) and who satisfactorily complete the professional competence requirement in a combination of mainstream and restricted settings before September 2016, will be deemed probated in the setting where the final inspection visit(s) occurred (see 3.1.5.6).
- 3.1.6.3 Failure to fulfil this registration condition successfully and within the stipulated time limit will result in the registration of the teacher lapsing and will have significant implications for his/her eligibility for employment in a school.
- 3.1.6.4 A review mechanism is in place by the Council where registration is due to lapse as a result of non-fulfillment of a condition.
- 3.1.6.5 Registration with the Council is a requirement for teachers in order to be paid from public funds (Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001; Department of Education and Skills Circular 0025/2013).

3.1.7 Teachers previously probated in a restricted setting

- 3.1.7.1 Teachers registered under Regulation Two/Route 1 (Primary), who have previously been probated or have completed *Droichead* (prior to September 2016) in a restricted setting may be eligible to apply for full registration in that sector subject to meeting the requirements set out in this section.
- 3.1.7.2 This policy came into effect from 1 September 2016.

3.1.7.3 In order to be eligible the:

- a) Teacher must be registered under Regulation Two (Primary) of the Teaching Council [Registration] Regulations and registered under Section 31(5) of the Teaching Council Acts
- b) only remaining conditions on the teacher's registration must be Probation/*Droichead* in a mainstream setting
- c) teacher is/has been working in a special education setting and carrying out teaching roles that meet the criteria and service requirement below.

3.1.7.4 The following criteria must be met:

- a) The teacher is/was teaching the full primary school curriculum which has been modified in line with the guidelines as set out by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)
- b) The teacher is/was teaching a class of a minimum size of six students on a fulltime basis for the entire day
- c) The teacher is/was fully responsible for the learning of students and has responsibilities comparable to those of a mainstream class teacher.

3.1.7.5 The teacher must meet the service requirements set out below:

- a) Teaching service of not less than 50 consecutive days in the same class which meets the criteria is required
- b) This service must be in addition to any service requirement for Probation/*Droichead*
- c) Please note that teaching service in a mainstream setting is also acceptable.

3.1.8 Irish language requirement

3.1.8.1 It is a condition of registration under Route 1 (Primary) that the teacher satisfies the Irish Language Requirement of the Council. Teachers who need to satisfy the Council that they are competent to teach the Irish language (such as those who completed their initial teacher education (ITE) outside the State) do so by means of completing an aptitude test (*Scrúdú le haghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge (SCG)*) or an adaptation period (*Oiriúnú le haghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge (OCG)*), both of which test the teacher's ability to teach the Irish language in classroom settings. Full details are available on www.ilrweb.ie.

3.1.8.2 In order to complete the SCG or OCG, teachers will be required to provide proof to the SCG/OCG coordinator in Marino Institute of Education of three weeks' attendance at a Gaeltacht course recognised by the Department of Education and Skills.

3.1.8.3 NOTE: Prior to 1 September 2010, teachers who completed the SCG or OCG were required to demonstrate their professional competence in the teaching of Irish in a classroom setting. These teachers had to receive a satisfactory additional inspection report on their competence in the teaching of Irish (a *ráiteas*) within two years of taking up a mainstream position. However, given that teachers' ability to teach Irish in a mainstream classroom setting is now tested as part of the assessment procedure for both the SCG and the OCG, the need for the additional inspection report (*ráiteas*) no longer exists. This practice has been discontinued since 1 September 2010.

3.2 Procedures and criteria for post-qualification employment (post-primary)

3.2.1 The registration condition of post-qualification employment (PQE)

- 3.2.1.1 From September 2017, teachers working in SEN settings or in large post-primary schools with 700 or more students and who meet the service hour requirement must avail of the *Droichead* process to gain full registration with the Council. All other teachers may complete post-qualification employment.
- 3.2.1.2 A post-primary teacher may complete PQE when employed in a school outside of the settings referred to in 3.2.1.1 above and which is not registered for *Droichead* and where the service requirement is not being met.
- 3.2.1.3 Generally a period of three years from the date of initial registration is permitted within which a teacher must complete this requirement. In exceptional circumstances, a teacher may apply to the Council for an extension of the three-year time period. Please note that failure to fulfil the PQE requirement within the specified time frame will result in the lapsing of registration unless an extension to the time frame has been granted.

3.2.2 Service requirement

- 3.2.2.1 In order to satisfy the condition of PQE, applicants must provide evidence of 300 hours' satisfactory teaching employment in a recognised post-primary school or Centre for Education in which a post-primary curricular subject is being taught.
- 3.2.2.2 A minimum of two-thirds (200 hours) of the approved employment must be spent teaching a post-primary curricular subject(s) or guidance counselling to a designated class of students on the school's timetable.
- 3.2.2.3 Up to one-third (100 hours) of the approved experience can be carried out in special education teaching roles⁶ or other timetabled teaching activity. The teaching of subjects outside those examined by the State Examinations Commission in Ireland (e.g., QQI or City & Guilds, etc.) may be taken into consideration towards the 100-hour requirement.
- 3.2.2.4 Paid employment as a qualified teacher in a permanent, temporary or substitute capacity is the only acceptable form of employment for the purposes of fulfilling this requirement. Voluntary service is not acceptable (see Section 1.5 for further clarification).

3.2.3 Completion of the Post-qualification Employment process

- 3.2.3.1 On completion of 300 hours' teaching employment, applicants should complete Form B, have it verified and signed and stamped by the school principal and return it to the Council.
- 3.2.3.2 In cases where teaching employment (as a fully qualified teacher) is carried out in more than one school, the teacher must provide a separate form for each school. Teaching service in several schools can be aggregated towards the 300 hours threshold by completing several forms (one form per school).
- 3.2.3.3 Form B may be completed in respect of state-recognised post-primary second-level schools in any country. Additional supporting evidence may be sought. It is a matter for the Council to determine if the evidence provided is sufficient to warrant exemption from the PQE requirement in Ireland.
- 3.2.3.4 The Council will then remove PQE registration condition on receipt of a fully completed Form B.
- 3.2.3.5 Form B is available to download from www.teachingcouncil.ie.

3.2.4 Additional Information

- 3.2.4.1 It is a matter for a registered teacher to secure teaching positions that satisfy the requirements of the PQE process.

3.3 Procedures and criteria for the Induction Programme

3.3.1 The Induction Programme (primary and post-primary)

- 3.3.1.1 The Induction Programme is a flexible programme of teacher professional learning that takes place at the beginning of the teacher's career, usually soon after qualifying as a teacher. Its purpose is to offer systematic professional and personal support to the teacher as he/she continues to develop as a lifelong learner.
- 3.3.1.2 From September 2016, teachers are required to complete the Induction Programme if they are undergoing the probationary or PQE processes. In addition, all other teachers who apply for registration under Regulation Two/Route 1 (Primary), Regulation Three /Route 4 (Other) or Regulation Four/Route 2 (Post-primary)⁷ are required to complete the Induction Programme provided they have not previously:
- o met the requirements of probation (primary)
 - o met the requirements of PQE (post-primary), or
 - o completed a recognised and comparable induction programme in another country.
- 3.3.1.3 Teachers are required to complete an induction programme comprising of a minimum of 20 hours of professional learning within three years of the date of their initial registration.
- 3.3.1.4 Teachers may select from a suite of workshops delivered via the Education Centre network. Certain workshops are available online.

	NO SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING FROM AN NIPT TRAINED MENTOR	AVAILING OF SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING WITH AN NIPT TRAINING MENTOR
Workshops*	Minimum 20 hours	Minimum of 14 hours
Reckonable School Based Learning	N/A	Maximum 6 hours

* Workshops are facilitated by the NIPT through local Education Centres.

- 3.3.1.5 The details of those teachers who have completed the Induction Programme are sent directly to the Teaching Council at several intervals during the year. The Council then removes the registration condition of the Induction Programme, and issues an updated confirmation of registration letter.
- 3.3.1.6 The Induction Programme is coordinated by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) and further details are available on the website of the NIPT www.teacherinduction.ie.

4 *Droichead* and movement between schools

- 4.1 Due to the nature of employment for teachers in their first years of practice, it is expected that some teachers will move between schools which offer the *Droichead* process and schools which do not.

Transitional arrangements will be published on the Council's website to give guidance to teachers who commenced fulfilling their post-qualification practice conditions before the introduction of the 2017 *Droichead* policy. These arrangements will also support teachers when moving between schools.

5 Contact details

TYPE OF QUERY	CONTACT
Teachers applying to commence probation	Probationary Teachers Desk, Limerick Education Centre, Marshal House, Dooradoyle Road, Limerick. t: +353 (0)61 585 060, ext. 4 e: probation@lec.ie w: www.lec.ie
Teachers applying to commence <i>Droichead</i>	The Teaching Council t: LoCall 1890 224 224 / +353 (0)1 651 7900 e: conditions@teachingcouncil.ie w: www.teachingcouncil.ie
Schools interested in participating in <i>Droichead</i>	Complete the Registration as a <i>Droichead</i> School form on www.teacherinduction.ie NIPT contact details: The National Induction Programme for Teachers t: +353 (0)1 884 2315 / +353 (0)1 884 2257 e: info@teacherinduction.ie w: www.teacherinduction.ie
Teachers seeking to commence NIPT workshops as part of the Induction Programme	Contact your local full-time Education Centre www.ateci.ie
Queries regarding the NIPT Induction Programme	The National Induction Programme for Teachers t: +353 (0)1 884 2315 / +353 (0)1 884 2257 e: info@teacherinduction.ie w: www.teacherinduction.ie
Teacher registration	The Teaching Council t: LoCall 1890 224 224 / +353 (0)1 651 7900 e: info@teachingcouncil.ie w: www.teachingcouncil.ie self-service login via My Registration on Council home page

Appendix 1

Criteria for Probationary Inspections

Planning, preparation and recording of progress

The NQT demonstrates engagement with long and short-term planning in line with school policies (e.g., assessment and other relevant teaching and learning policies) and the primary school curriculum under the following criteria:

- Develops an adequate class timetable referenced to the specified minimum weekly time framework in the Primary School Curriculum and the recommendations included in Circular 56/2011⁸
- Provides clear and suitable teaching and learning objectives with due regard to the Primary School Curriculum and the School Plan
- Plans for differences in pupil abilities, backgrounds and learning styles
- Maintains good quality progress records and prepares an appropriate range of resources

Classroom management and organisation

The NQT demonstrates good classroom management skills under the following criteria:

- Promotes good behaviour through the use of appropriate behaviour management systems
- Cultivates a caring relationship with pupils (including use of praise and positive feedback)
- Provides an attractive learning environment (layout, quality of display including pupils' work, interest centres etc.) Uses resources effectively
- Manages SNA support in the classroom context (where appropriate)

Quality of teaching across curriculum areas

The NQT demonstrates a satisfactory commitment to quality teaching under the following criteria:

- Practises independently through the provision of support, guidance and motivation to pupils towards the achievement of quality learning outcomes
- Utilises an appropriate range of teaching methods, resources and assessment techniques
- Covers an appropriate range of material
- Provides for differences in pupil abilities, backgrounds, learning styles with particular reference to attention levels and receptiveness of pupils
- Demonstrates good communication skills, Structures and paces lessons appropriately, Ensures regard for continuity and progression.

Quality of pupils' learning in curriculum areas

The NQT demonstrates a satisfactory commitment to quality learning under the following criteria:

- Ensures that the pupils are on task and working purposefully
- Enables pupils to demonstrate appropriate knowledge of material covered, skills and attitudes
- Ensures that the quality of pupils' learning outcomes is good.

(Source: Inspectorate, Department of Education and Skills)

Appendix 2

Droichead Standards

The Council has set out the following standards to support the *Droichead* process, in guiding the NQT, with the PST, in relation to their professional learning and practice. Indicators of good practice in different contexts are further explored as part of professional development for the PST, facilitated by NIPT. Through their engagement in the *Droichead* process, the NQT will:

1. have engaged professionally with school-based induction and additional professional learning activities
2. have shown their professional commitment to quality teaching and learning for their pupils/students
3. have engaged in reflective practice that supports their professional learning and practice, both individually and collaboratively.

Appendix 3

Registration Regulations 2016

The Council introduced new registration regulations on 25 July 2016 and amended 8 November 2016. Under the new regulations teachers will be registered under Routes of Registration. The table below shows the linkage between the Teaching Council [Registration] Regulations 2009 and the Teaching Council [Registration] Regulations 2016 Regulations.

REGISTRATION REGULATIONS 2009	REGISTRATION REGULATIONS 2016
Regulation Two (Primary)	Route 1: Primary
Regulation Three (Montessori & Other Categories)	Route 4: Other
Regulation Four (Post-Primary)	Route 2: Post-Primary
Regulation Five (Further Education)	Route 3: Further Education

An Chomhairle Mhúinteoireachta
The Teaching Council

Block A, Maynooth Business Campus,
Maynooth, Co. Kildare, W23 Y7X0, Ireland

Lo-Call 1890 224 224

Telephone +353 1 651 7900

Facsimile +353 1 651 7901

Email info@teachingcouncil.ie

www.teachingcouncil.ie

An Chomhairle
Mhúinteoireachta 
The Teaching Council