

## **Meeting of the Teacher Supply Steering Group**

**21 May 2020 @ 11.00 a.m.**

**Via WebEx**

### **Minutes**

#### ***Attendees:***

- Seán Ó Foghlú, Secretary General, DES (Chairperson)
- Aoife Conduit, Asst Secretary General, DES
- Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector, DES
- Deirdre Shanley, Asst Secretary General, DES
- Tomás Ó Ruairc, Director, Teaching Council
- Lewis Purser, Director Academic Affairs, Irish Universities Association
- Seamus Mulconry, CPSMA
- James Duignan, ACCS (for Antoinette Nic Gearailt, ACCS)
- Louise Callinan, HEA (for Alan Wall)
- Anthony Finn, University of Glasgow
- John O'Halloran, Deputy President and Registrar, UCC

#### ***Also in attendance:***

- Chris Kelly, PO, Teacher Education Policy, DES
- Conor McCourt, APO, Teacher Education Policy, DES

#### ***Apologies***

- Eithne Guilfoyle, Vice President Academic Affairs (Registrar), DCU
- William Beausang, Asst. Secretary General, DES
- Mark O'Doherty, Minister's Advisor
- Alan Wall, CEO, HEA
- Antoinette Nic Gearailt, ACCS

### **1. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were agreed.

### **2. Covid-19 public health emergency and teacher supply**

The Group considered the implications of the Covid-19 public health emergency for the demand for and supply of teachers, including arrangements for the reopening of schools and HEIs and their subsequent operation, the use of substitute teacher supply panels, the

operation of ITE student school placements, teacher recruitment and career break/leave applications.

## **2. Update on actions**

### **(a) Data to support teacher supply planning**

#### **(i) *Technical Report***

The following points were noted:

- The updated Technical Report is being finalised following further analysis by the Department and also having regard to the feedback received from stakeholders.
- The overall findings of the updated report remain as in the previously published version.
- It is intended to publish the report on the Department's website before end May and to inform stakeholders.

#### **(ii) *Survey of demand for post primary subject teachers***

The following points were noted:

- Teacher Allocations Section conducted a survey of approximately 280 post primary school principals to determine the unmet demand for post primary subject teachers.
- Data from the survey is being analysed by Statistics Section
- Initial analysis confirms reports previously received from management bodies of difficulties in recruiting teachers of Irish, STEM and modern foreign languages

#### **(iii) *Analysis of post primary subject teacher demand***

The following points were noted:

- Statistics Section, using data from the Deployment of Teaching Resources (DTR) returns and the Teaching Councils register of teachers, is currently drawing up a definition of a subject teacher to support projections of post primary teacher demand.
- Points for consideration include whether the teacher is registered with the Teaching Council and the number of hours per week they are timetabled to teach a particular subject

#### **(iv) *Potential use of the Teaching Council register to hold additional data to support teacher supply planning.***

It was noted that the Teaching Council is exploring the possibility of using the Registration Database to provide additional teacher / subject data to support teacher supply planning, and that this will be considered at the next meeting of the Data Working Group.

## **(b) Communications & promotion of the teaching profession**

### **(i) *Promotion campaign update***

It was noted that the next phase of the campaign is being planned to coincide with the CAO change of mind deadline (1 July 2020).

### **(ii) *Development of a teacher recruitment portal***

The following points were noted:

- IPPN is undertaking the next phase of development of *educationposts.ie*, which will include an option for online applications for long term teaching vacancies.
- The target is for the portal to be operational by end June 2020
- Further phases of development of *educationposts.ie* are planned

It was agreed to engage with ACCS regarding the operation of *turasabhaile.com* in 2020

### **(iii) *Teacher Supply Newsletter***

It was agreed that an updated newsletter should be issued ASAP in June 2020.

### **(iv) *Stakeholder consultations***

The Group noted the positive engagement of stakeholders at the Technical Report Workshop held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020

It was noted that the Teaching Council is exploring the use of digital technology to host future engagements/ forums with stakeholder, including a possible consultative forum in November 2020, and that this will be considered by the Communications Working Group at its next meeting.

It was agreed that it remains important to continue to consult with stakeholders on teacher supply measures.

## **(c) Higher Education**

### **(i) *ITE application numbers 2020***

The Group considered the application numbers for ITE programmes in 2020, including the challenges in attracting students to Computer Science ITE programmes, the possible effects of the COVID-19 emergency on application number and the potential for a promotion campaign to increase CAO applications.

The following points were noted:

*Applications through the CAO system (compared to 2019)*

- The data is based on first preference applications to the CAO by the 1 February 2020 deadline.
- Applications to level 8 programmes generally have fallen by less than 1.5%.
- First preference applications to primary ITE programmes have fallen by less than 1%.
- First preference applications to post primary programmes have increased by 10%.

*PME applications (compared to 2019)*

- Applications to the post primary PME through the PAC system (NUI universities and DCU) have increased by 3% approximately.
- The NUI universities will provide an analysis of applications at subject level

**(ii) HEA call for upskilling programmes**

The Group was updated on the HEA call for upskilling programmes

It was noted that, in respect of each of the programmes recommended for funding by the independent expert panel, a number of issues have been identified and that the Department will engage with these HEIs in advance of a final decision on funding.

**(iii) Longitudinal study of outcomes for graduates of ITE programmes**

It was noted that the HEA's longitudinal study of outcomes for graduates of ITE programmes is progressing through the CSO.

**(iv) Qualitative longitudinal study of the impact of ITE programmes**

The Group noted that the Teaching Council is engaging with the Department with regard to progressing the longitudinal study of the impact of ITE programmes.

**(v) School placements**

The Group considered the challenges to maintaining school placement standards in the context of the Covid-19 public health emergency

The following points were noted:

- School placements will be considered by the Teaching Council at its meeting of 8 June.

- The Council is engaging with the Department concerning the implementation of the recommendations of the School Placement Working Group report

It was agreed that it would be important that arrangements for school placements are finalised and communicated to the system as soon as possible.

(vi) ***Supports for ITE student***

The Group considered student supports in the context of the Covid-19 public health emergency.

The following points were noted:

- Due to the Covid-19 emergency, it is anticipated that there will be increased demand for student supports generally in 2020/21.
- As in 2019/20, €1m will be made available to PME students through the Student Assistance Fund (SAF) in 2020/21.
- SAF funding, given its nature, is unlikely to attract students to PME programmes
- Changes to SUSI to support ITE students may be considered in the longer term.
- Funding under PATH has been effective in supporting access to ITE for targeted groups, and this funding has recently been extended for a further three years.

(d) ***Policies and arrangements for schools and teachers that impact on teacher supply***

The Group was updated on a number of actions under the policies and arrangements heading, including the review of summer courses and substitute teacher supply panels.

The Group considered the impact of the Covid-19 public health emergency on the various actions under the “policies and arrangements” heading

It was agreed that, in the context of challenges for the system arising from the Covid-19 emergency, actions under this heading need to be reconsidered in terms of priority.

### **3. Teacher Supply Action Plan**

The Group considered the most recent draft of the revised Teacher Supply Action Plan and discussed arrangements for its finalisation and publication.

It was noted that the Higher Education Working Group will consider a revised wording for action 12, concerning flexible ITE programmes and a return to work programme.

### **4. AOB**

It was also noted that the Teaching Council is engaging with the Department regarding the operation of Droichead in 2020/21

It was agreed that it would be important that arrangements for Droichead are finalised and communicated to the system as soon as possible.

## **5. Next meeting**

The date of the next meeting (10 September 2020) was noted.

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**Teacher Supply Secretariat  
May 2020**