

**ADVISORY GROUP ON PLANNING FOR STATE EXAMINATIONS**

**BY WEBEX, 20 December 2021**

**Draft Note of Meeting**

**Present**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation/Position</b>
<b>Joint Chair</b>	Dalton Tattan (DT)	Assistant Secretary General
<b>Joint Chair</b>	Andrea Feeney (AF)	Chief Executive Officer, SEC
<b>Students</b>	Emer Neville	President, ISSU
	Jack McGinn	Education Officer, ISSU
<b>Parents</b>	Aine Lynch	Chief Executive, NPC-P
	Mai Fanning	President, NPC-PP
<b>Teachers</b>	Eamonn Dennehy	President, ASTI
	Kieran Christie	General Secretary, ASTI
	Martin Marjoram	President, TUI
	Michael Gillespie	General Secretary, TUI
<b>School managers and leaders</b>	John Curtis	General Secretary, JMB
	John Irwin	General Secretary, ACCS
	Paul Fields	Director of Schools, ETBI
	Paul Crone	Director, NAPD
	Paul Byrne	Deputy Director, NAPD
<b>NCCA</b>	Barry Slattery	Deputy CEO, NCCA
<b>State Examinations Commission</b>	Richard Dolan	SEC
	Elaine Sheridan	SEC
<b>Department of Education</b>	Harold Hislop	Chief Inspector
	Yvonne Keating	Deputy Chief Inspector
	Orlaith O'Connor	Assistant Chief Inspector
	Eamonn Moran	Principal Officer
	Paul Keating	Assistant Principal Officer
	Neville Kenny	Principal Officer
	Grainne Cullen	Principal Officer
Aine Doyle	Advisor to Minister	

<b>DFHERIS</b>	Niamh Devine	Assistant Principal Officer
<b>Higher Education</b>	Dr Andrea Valova	HEA (Observer)

## Apologies

<b>DFHERIS</b>	Keith Moynes	Assistant Secretary General
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### 1. Welcome

The Chair (DT) thanked everyone for attending at such short notice and noted the following:

Left the Advisory Group

- William Beausang DFHERIS
- Sheena Duffy HEA

Replacements

- Keith Moynes DFHERIS
- Dr Andrea Valova HEA

New member

- Richard Dolan SEC

### 2. Minutes

Observations on the minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>TH</sup> August were requested to be submitted by cob 7<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

### 3. Leaving Certificate Oral Examinations in Irish and Modern Languages and Music Practicals 2022

#### Information from the State Examinations Commission (SEC)

The Chair (AF) outlined plans for Leaving Certificate 2022 Oral Examinations in Irish and the Modern Foreign Languages and the practical performance tests in Leaving Certificate Music.

The SEC advised that it is planned that these examinations will take place outside of school time over the first week of the school Easter holidays, with the examinations, conducted by

visiting SEC-appointed examiners, running in schools during the six-day period Saturday 9 April to Thursday 14 April inclusive.

Holding these examinations over Easter and outside of school time will limit teacher absences from school and minimise disruption for schools and students. Working with the SEC, and the SEC examiners assigned to the school in each subject, schools will have some flexibility in scheduling the examinations during this period based on local needs.

The SEC noted that it is planned that the Junior Cycle Music practical performance test and the Home Economics practical test will take place during school time as normal.

It was stressed by the SEC that all aspects of the examinations will be conducted in accordance with the prevailing Public Health advice.

### **Remuneration**

Changes to remuneration for those involved will reflect the timing of the Examinations. Additional Examination Aide days will be provided to schools to assist in the running of the orals. Principals do not require to be in attendance during the examinations.

### **Marking conferences**

It is planned to hold a 1 day Oral marking conference during school time, while the music marking conference will take place over 1 school day and 1 weekend day.

### **Contingency days**

2 days, Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> April and Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April, have been set aside as contingency, with decisions on their use being made by the SEC, in conjunction with examiners.

### **Comments from stakeholders:**

There was overall support for the plans put forward by the SEC. It was considered that they were positive and provided clarity for students, principals, teachers, parents and schools and would help to minimise disruption.

The ongoing support of all stakeholders including teachers, principals, vice principals in delivering and managing Exams in their respective schools was acknowledged.

It was acknowledged that the issue of teacher supply, substitute teachers was a concern, as was the fact that teachers are being asked to give up their time during their holidays. There was concern raised in terms of music teachers and the need for their attendance at exams in order to prepare and support their students, including accompanying them in some cases. The SEC advised that extra Examination Aide day provision would be made in this regard.

The issue of scheduling of exams was discussed in terms of possible multiple exams being scheduled for some students on the same day. It was noted that schools and examiners had flexibility to address this.

### **Comments from the Chairs**

The Chair (DT) thanked everybody for their input into the discussion and informed the Group that a Press Release would be issued shortly after the meeting and a copy sent to all Group members in advance.

The Chair (AF) informed the Group that a detailed Circular would be issued as soon as possible regarding the matters discussed and that all channels would be used in order to ensure timely dissemination of information across the education system.

## **4. Action Plan for Education 2022**

An update was provided by Grainne Cullen from the Public Service Reform Programme Office on the Action Plan for Education 2022. The Action Plan is due to be published in early 2022

### **Comments from Stakeholders:**

The impact of Covid could have a negative effect on the delivery and the timing of some of the actions in the Plan.

## **5. AOB**

The Chair (AF) noted that the timetables for the Leaving Certificate Exams 2022 would be issued after Christmas.

The Chair (DT) recorded his thanks to all members for the work that has been completed this year, with very helpful contributions informing this year's process, assisting in its success.

The Chair (DT) advised that the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group would be revisited and updated.

The Chair (DT) concluded by wishing all members a good break over the Christmas.

## **6. Date of next meeting**

The Department will be in contact regarding a date for the next meeting.