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To seanadreformwg@taoiseach.gov.i  
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cc  
Subject Submission

History:

This message has been replied to.

Dear Mary

Please find below my submission to the working group.

## Submission for Seanad Working Group

### Closing date for Seanad Nominations.

The process where nominations for the Seanad do not close until after the Dail General Election must end.

There are examples of personalities rejected by the electorate in a Dail General Election and further rejected by the Seanad electorate only to be appointed as a Taoiseach's nominee. This in the eyes of the public debases the Seanad.

If we are to have a professional Seanad nominations must close on the same day as they do for a Dail election. Thus candidates choose at the time of a General Election which house they wish to stand for.

### Reform of the University Panel

There must be an expansion of the University Panel to meet with the provisions set out in the 1979 7th Amendment to the Constitution. This would replace the current National University of Ireland panel with a graduate's panel. However I believe that the University of Dublin (Trinity College) panel must be retained in order to meet the needs of the unionist community. Thus any proposed reform must find a way to provide access for all third level graduates.

### The Vocational Panels

ARTICLE 19 of the constitution makes provision for the direct election by any functional or vocational group or association or council of so many members of Seanad Éireann as may be fixed by such law in substitution for an equal number of the members to be elected from the corresponding panels of candidates constituted under Article 18 of this Constitution.

Thus the Oireachtas sub-panel members could continue to be elected by Oireachtas members together with City and County Councillors.

The registered nominating bodies sub-panel would then become the electorate for their nominees. Whether this would mean that the franchise would be extended to the executive committees of the registered nominating bodies or to their entire membership is a matter for the working party.

Qualifications required for all panels are vague offering no clear criteria or guide for a perspective candidate. The only criterion seems to be whether one can obtain a nomination from one of the many registered nominating bodies or not. There must be a clear schedule of qualifications for each vocational panel

**Gerard P Craughwell**