

Droichead

A quick reference guide

Teaching Council policy on a new
model of induction and probation



An Chomhairle Mhúinteoireachta
The Teaching Council

Introduction to *Droichead*

Droichead is a new model of induction and probation for newly qualified teachers (NQTs). The Council's policy on this new model was developed following a consultation process, which took place in 2013.

Droichead is about a systemic welcome for NQTs, by fellow professionals, into the most important profession in society. It refers to that period of supported professional practice which an NQT will undertake following initial registration.

Satisfactory engagement in *Droichead* will be attached to new teachers' registration as a condition, along with completion of the National Induction Workshop Programme. Teachers will be deemed to be probated and awarded full registration when the Council has received evidence that all registration conditions have been met.

Droichead must be completed within three years of initial registration. There are exceptions to this; please see the Council's *Procedures for Induction and Procedures and Criteria for Probation 2014/2015* for further information.

Droichead in practice

Professionally-led regulation is the fundamental value underpinning *Droichead*. This value is manifested by the fact that fully-registered teachers are best placed to support the newly qualified teacher on their journey to full registration. It is also evidenced by the fact that an experienced colleague(s) confirms to the Teaching Council whether or not the teacher has satisfactorily completed *Droichead*.

Droichead is, therefore, a process which seeks to empower the profession to lead its own process of professional support in a way that ensures the highest of standards, and maintains public confidence in the profession.

Droichead may be facilitated within schools in different ways, depending on their size, structure and particular circumstances. Each school is asked to ensure that the experience offered to the new teacher is structured, and that support is available.

The Council suggests that the best approach would involve the establishment of Professional Support Teams. The team would typically be comprised of the principal, a mentor and one or more experienced colleagues, although there is considerable flexibility around this and different models will suit different schools. Mentors support the newly qualified teacher during the *Droichead* process. The principal, and/or the experienced colleague(s) also support the new teacher and are asked to confirm to the Council that the teacher has satisfactorily completed the process.

In some circumstances, a single Professional Support Team might be comprised of teachers from a number of schools. In other circumstances, confirmation of satisfactory engagement in *Droichead* could be made by the school principal or deputy principal, or an experienced colleague nominated by the principal. This means that principals have the choice of being directly involved in the confirmation process or not.

In confirming that a teacher has satisfactorily completed the process, a *Droichead* form is completed, confirming that the teacher has:

- completed a required minimum period of professional practice;
- engaged professionally with the school-based induction activities as established by the Teaching Council;
- demonstrated a satisfactory commitment to quality teaching and learning; and,
- demonstrated an ability to practise independently as a qualified, fully registered teacher.



The form is retained by the newly qualified teacher until he or she has completed the total period of professional practice required. Based on the form submitted, the Teaching Council determines if the *Droichead* condition should be removed from the teacher's registration.

Droichead pilot

Schools are welcome to take part in an opt-in *Droichead* pilot. At present, the pilot is focused on primary and post-primary schools in those counties which normally have the highest concentration of newly qualified teachers. These are listed in *Droichead: A Guide for Pilot Schools* which is available on the Council's website, www.teachingcouncil.ie. Schools outside of those counties can make a case for inclusion in the pilot, and some have done so already.

Where a school opts to take part in the pilot, it is invited to participate in a cluster of schools in the same region. Cluster meetings are arranged at which participating schools receive training, share their experiences of the pilot, and receive support from the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) and an inspector assigned to that cluster. Ongoing email and phone support is available from the NIPT and the Inspectorate.

Research is being carried out to evaluate the new model and to gather evidence from the profession to inform the Council's thinking in the further development and rollout of *Droichead*. A research bursary is available to schools participating in the pilot, to support their role in the research strand.



Further information can be found
on the *Droichead* section of
www.teachingcouncil.ie

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