



**TO: Second Level - representatives and members  
Executive Committee**

21<sup>st</sup> November 2016

**Re: Junior Cycle Reform**

Dear Colleagues,

As you are aware, in September 2015, TUI members accepted, in a national ballot, the proposals set out in the document - *Junior Cycle Reform: Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation (including the Appendix "Professional Time to support Implementation")*. It has come to our attention that, notwithstanding the extensive, authoritative information provided by the TUI, some misconceptions persist.

Therefore, for clarification purposes:

**State Certification**

- Teachers are not assessing their own students for state certification purposes.
- The Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the State Examinations Commission (SEC) have confirmed that students for whom an Assessment Task (AT) is not submitted to the State Examinations Commission, will not be marked out of 100%. They will be marked out of 90%; 10% of the marks will not be available to them. The only subject to which this applies in the current school year is English.
- All Assessment Tasks – irrespective of subject – will be externally assessed by the State Examinations Commission.

**Professional Time – guaranteed and funded**

- With effect from September, 2017 – under the agreement accepted by TUI and funded in Budget 2017 – every full-time teacher who has an involvement with Junior Cycle will have a guaranteed 40 minutes each week for professional time, regardless of whether or not the revised subject specification for her/his subject has been introduced. Teachers on fewer than full hours will have guaranteed professional time on a pro-rata basis.
- To accommodate this professional time, a full-time teacher will have a maximum of 21 hours and 20 minutes of class contact each week.
- In Budget 2017, funding is provided for the creation of 550 additional Whole-Time Equivalent teaching positions to facilitate the guaranteed professional time for teachers from September 2017. By operation of Circular Letter 59/2016, negotiated by the TUI with the Department of Education and Skills under the terms of the DES/TUI Agreement, May

2016, these posts, translated into hours, must be offered, in the first instance, to existing part-time teachers in accordance with the mandatory sequence set out in that Circular Letter.

### **Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs)**

- The Classroom Based Assessment (CBA) is entirely separate from the state certified Junior Certificate which is externally assessed by the SEC.
- Two CBAs per subject are to be undertaken by students – one in second year and the other in third year. These are conducted within the school and are reported upon to parents by the school.
- A CBA will be completed in dedicated class contact time within a nationally specified time-frame and will replace an existing school assessment such as an in-house examination (Christmas or summer exam).
- The TUI is currently in talks with the Department of Education and Skills and other relevant agencies on developing simple, user-friendly templates for school reports to parents/students.

### **Junior Cycle – SEC/State Certified Results**

- The results achieved by a student in the Junior Certificate examination (i.e. the June examination and the Assessment Task – both of which are externally assessed by the SEC) will issue from the SEC to the school in September and will issue through the school to the student, as is currently the case.

### **Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) – a school report**

- The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) is a school report that will issue in late autumn/winter, after a student completes 3<sup>rd</sup> Year.
- The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) is not a state certificate.
- The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will include a copy of the Junior Certificate examination results achieved by a student, copies of the school reports on the Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) completed by the student in 2<sup>nd</sup> Year and 3<sup>rd</sup> Year and may also include a school report on other areas of achievement by the student.

### **Implementation Committee**

- Under the Junior Cycle Agreement of September, 2015, an Implementation Committee was established to monitor implementation of the agreement and to address any issues as they arise.
- The Implementation Committee comprises representatives of the DES and the teacher unions. To date, the TUI is the only teacher union to have attended meetings of the Committee.
- It has met regularly and is operating effectively.

**Other Issues**

- Standardised Testing of 2<sup>nd</sup> Year students in Maths, English and Science has been suggested by the Department of Education and Skills.
- Standardised Testing has nothing whatsoever to do with the Junior Cycle Reform – as is made clear in a footnote to paragraph 6.1 of the Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation.
- As a separate matter, in its own right, Standardised Testing - in the context of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy - is the subject of on-going discussion between the TUI and the DES. The union has set out concerns about the educational and practical implications of such testing and, in particular, has made it clear that additional workload for members would not be acceptable.

Should any further clarification be required, please contact your Branch, Area Representative and TUI Head Office ([tui@tui.ie](mailto:tui@tui.ie)).

Yours sincerely,



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President



John MacGabhann  
General Secretary