



Circular 70/2011

**To: The Managerial Authorities of Recognised Primary, Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools
and
The Chief Executive Officers of Vocational Education Committees**

PAYMENT OF QUALIFICATION ALLOWANCES TO REGISTERED TEACHERS IN RECOGNISED PRIMARY AND POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Introduction

1. The Minister for Education and Skills wishes to inform vocational education committees (VECs), management authorities and teachers of certain changes to the payment of qualification allowances to teachers. This includes primary degrees, H.Dip, Masters, Doctorate and the Postgraduate/Higher Diploma in Special Educational Needs allowance.
2. The Government announced as part of *Budget 2012* that, pending completion of the public service-wide review of allowances, changes to teacher qualification allowances were being made with immediate effect. These changes affect both existing teachers and new appointees in the future.

Existing teachers

3. Where a person on or before 4 December 2011—
 - (a) has given service in a teaching position,
 - (b) has been paid on a payroll operated by the Department of Education and Skills or a VEC, and
 - (c) has been in receipt of allowances in respect of their qualifications,he or she will retain those allowances regardless of the level at which they were awarded (but see paragraph 8 below in relation to retirees returning to teach). Teachers who were, on 4 December 2011, in receipt of the allowance for holders of specified qualifications in special education (certain Graduate/Higher Diplomas in Special Educational Needs) may retain that allowance provided that they continue to meet the terms of Circulars 135/2006 (post-primary) or 21/2005 (primary).
4. Existing teachers will not be paid any additional allowance where they acquire any further qualification on or after 5 December 2011.

5. The position of teachers who, on 5 December 2011, were undertaking courses will be considered in the context of the public service-wide review of allowances announced in *Budget 2012* which is to be led by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

New appointees

6. Teachers who are new entrants to teaching on or after 5 December 2011 will be eligible, at time of first appointment, for combined allowances for undergraduate, postgraduate and teacher training qualifications *to a maximum* of the allowance applicable to an honours primary degree level. This means that allowances for other qualifications (*eg* H.Dip., Masters, Doctorate, etc) will not be paid if this were to cause this maximum limit to be exceeded.
7. Where a teacher on first appointment is eligible for payment of an allowance below that equivalent to honours primary degree level he or she will, in common with existing teachers, not be paid any additional allowance should he or she acquire a further qualification.
8. A teacher who is retired and is in receipt of a pension who returns to teaching on or after 5 December 2011 will be treated as a new appointee for the purposes of this circular. This means that the allowance payable to him or her will be subject to the maximum set under paragraph 6 above.

Circulation

9. Please ensure that copies of this Circular are provided to the Board of Management/VEC and its contents are brought to the attention of all teachers in your employment including those on leave of absence.
10. The Circular can be accessed on the Department's website under www.education.ie.
11. All enquiries regarding this Circular should be e-mailed to teachersna@education.gov.ie or payroll@education.gov.ie.

Dalton Tattan
Principal Officer
Teachers/SNA Terms and Conditions

Padraig Maloney
Principal Officer
Payroll Division

16 December 2011

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