



**To: Second Level Workplace Representatives/Branch Secretaries/Branch Chairpersons
Executive Committee (for information)**

13th December 2018

Re: Junior Cycle Circular Letter 79/2018 - Junior Cycle Implementation

Guidance and Clarification for Teachers/Principal Teachers/Deputy Principal Teachers

Dear Colleague,

As you are aware, the Department recently issued DES Circular Letter 79/2018 in relation to 'Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to school year 2018/19'.

In this context members are reminded:

1. That Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) in a subject replaces an in-house/term examination in that subject. Conducting both breaches the Junior Cycle Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation and its Appendix – agreed between the TUI and the Department of Education and Skills, increases the workload for teachers and constitutes the 'over-assessment' that TUI was assured would not occur. An ambition of the reform of Junior Cycle is "to minimise the cumulative burden on students and teachers of multiple assessments across the full range of subjects". As the Agreement states "in this context, the Classroom-Based Assessments will substitute for other assessments currently undertaken in the school such as in-house examinations, as appropriate".

The TUI will support any member who, in order to uphold the Agreement and apply best practice, refuses to set, mark or otherwise administer a term exam for a class that is undertaking a CBA in the subject.

2. The Agreement also requires that all class periods be a minimum of 40 minutes long. Class periods of less than 40 minutes are not allowed. If a member is timetabled for a class period of less than 40 minutes that represents a breach of the Agreement. In such a case, management should be advised that there is a breach and be asked to rectify the situation without delay. If management is reluctant to make the necessary adjustments or refuses to do so, the Branch should be so advised and a collective grievance lodged. Please note that there is no provision in the Agreement for the allocation of class periods of less than 40 minutes to "fill out" a teacher's timetable to 21 hours 20 minutes.

3. Notwithstanding the increased flexibility provided under CL79/2018, the Classroom Based Assessments in a subject must be completed within the time allocated (3 weeks, 4 weeks etc.) as specified in the Assessment Guidelines for that subject.

As some CBAs had already begun before the Circular issued, TUI strongly advises members to complete the CBA within the previously specified timeframe.

4. The TUI has a clear agreement with the Department that the inputting of information/detail/comments regarding Other Areas of Learning (OALs) will eventually become the responsibility of the relevant teachers but not until enhanced technology to support data entry and Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) production is in place. The technology required for this process is not yet in place; it is still under development. Pending the technological resolution, the DES put in place an interim measure for the 2017 JCPA data entry requirement in respect of OALs and is required to do so again for 2018 by way of payment of a dedicated administration grant to schools. In 2017, members of FÓRSA (School Secretaries) undertook this work following an agreement negotiated by that union with the Department. It is a matter for the Department to finalise an appropriate measure for the 2018 exams that does not involve members of the TUI. Members are therefore advised that the data entry for JCPA 2018 relating to OALs/CBAs is not their work and that they are not to input this data on JCPA other than in original report form.
5. Professional Time: The 40-minute professional time provided within timetable is available to teachers on the basis that they will use this time flexibly in available time periods and in carrying forward time to facilitate professional collaboration. Teachers may also use the time periods for individual planning, feedback or reporting activities relating to Junior Cycle. The only use of the professional time that requires bundling is for the 2-hour SLAR meetings.

This is designed as a high trust model that is task-oriented. The model does not envisage or need micro-management by a school's senior management team. Teachers are not required to specify in detail how they utilised this provision.

6. SLAR Meetings: Each teacher attending a SLAR meeting utilises 2 of her/his 22 hours of professional time for the purpose. Over and above the professional time, the Agreement also provides an additional two hours per SLAR meeting (to be allocated by school management to teachers on a rotational basis) for the preparation and co-ordination of that meeting.
7. Management Resource Hours: In spite of the trenchant opposition of the TUI, the Department has reduced the allocation of management resources hours for the 2018/19 academic year. The Union is therefore advising members who are in receipt of Management Resource Hours to attend to such duties associated with those hours as can reasonably be discharged within the reduced allocation. If some duties cannot be accommodated on this basis, management should be so advised. The Union will support members in applying this principle.

Purpose of Management Resource Hours: Some or all of the following activities may be included:

- supporting the Principal/Deputy Principal with planning, communication and organising substitution for teachers attending in-service;
- Scheduling of in-school CPD events and liaison with JCT in planning visits;
- overseeing the scheduling of SLAR meetings;
- liaising with the coordinators of SLAR meetings
- overseeing the new Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA)
- reporting procedures for subjects and for L2LPs, L1LPs and short courses to parents/guardians.
- organising administration of the Assessment Tasks and making the necessary arrangements for returning the Assessment Task to the SEC.

The inputting of OALs for JCPA does not form part of the duties and should not be done.

Management Resource Hours may not be used, in whole or in part, for any purpose other than those specified above.

Management Resource Hours are not allocated in perpetuity to any one teacher. Expressions of interest shall be invited by management each year and the hours allocated annually.

The duties associated with Management Resource Hours may not be assigned as Post of Responsibility duties.

Junior Cycle Implementation Committee

The TUI will, as and when necessary, bring any concerns regarding the implementation of the reformed Junior Cycle to the Implementation Committee. Members should let us know, through the local Branch and Area Representative, whenever issues of concern arise.

We would ask members to continue to implement the Junior Cycle programme in a professional manner and in accordance with the collective Agreement and continue to follow course specifications and CBA/SLAR/Assessment Task guidelines. Also, in line with the nationally agreed Junior Cycle Joint Statement of Principles and Implementation and the collective Agreement, we ask that you adhere to the guidance supplied above.

Yours sincerely,



Seamus Lahart
President



John MacGabhann
General Secretary