



TEACHERS' UNION OF IRELAND / AONTAS MÚINTEOIRÍ ÉIREANN

# news

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February 2017

## Irish students perform strongly in latest international comparisons



PISA results in Reading, Maths and Science endorse work of Irish teachers

# A Word from the President – Joanne Irwin

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## New gains for teachers – November agreement

Since the last edition of TUI News, new gains have been secured for teachers as a result of the Union's engagement with the Department of Education and Skills and other teacher unions in a series of meetings in November. The gains include the provision of an opt-out and opt-in on a once off basis for the Supervision and Substitution scheme, further measures that have the potential to improve job security and an enhanced focus on the issue of teacher wellbeing. Comprehensive details are set out in this edition of TUI News.

The new gains follow the major advances set out in the agreement with the Department of Education and Skills that members voted to accept in May 2016 and improvements in salary for recent entrants to the profession that were announced in September 2016 and that began to take effect from 1st January.

## Pay increase to be paid five months earlier

In January, it was confirmed that a €1,000 pay increase on annualised salaries (i.e. salaries exclusive of allowances) up to €65,000, originally due for payment from 1st September 2017 under the Lansdowne Road agreement (LRA), will now be paid from 1st April 2017. This will be added to all points of scale of all grades which TUI represents. This is an actual pay increase and when pay restoration is completed, salary will be the fully restored salary plus €1,000.

The improved arrangement is the result of negotiations between public service unions, represented by the Public Service Committee of the ICTU, and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. TUI, together with other unions, had insisted in November on early negotiations to accelerate public service pay restoration.

In acknowledging the payment, the Public Services Committee of ICTU advised the management side that



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TUI PRESIDENT, JOANNE IRWIN

outstanding issues will be pursued in further talks which are due to commence following the initial report of the Public Service Pay Commission, which is to report in the second quarter of this year. TUI and INTO have made a joint submission to the commission.

### **Technological Universities Bill and conference**

Since April 2016, members in the Institute of Technology sector have not cooperated with merger activities related to the proposed Technological Universities as a result of industrial action following a national ballot.

The union is seeking to have the concerns of members in relation to conditions of service, pensions, regional mission, multi-level programme provision and various other issues addressed.

TUI is actively lobbying public representatives to seek amendments to the Technological Universities Bill. A major consultative conference of

members will be taking place in Athlone on February 1st. Members will be kept updated on any developments in this regard.

### **Successful Junior Cycle campaign**

In September 2015, TUI members voted to accept new Junior Cycle proposals in a national ballot. These negotiated proposals attained the union's key objectives by providing for reinstatement of a fully externally assessed, state certified Junior Certificate examination and also provided professional time – within timetable - for teachers.

The revised proposals followed an extensive campaign of lobbying and industrial action on the issue.

However, despite detailed information consistently being provided during and after the successful campaign, some misconceptions continue to persist. We hope we have comprehensively addressed these issues in an article in this edition of TUI News.

### **PISA results – great news for Irish students and teachers**

The latest international PISA findings recognise the high quality work of Irish teachers and students in an era of hugely damaging cuts to the education system. In all three areas which were examined – Maths, Reading and Science - the scores of Irish students were well above the OECD average. These results were mirrored in the Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS) report, the results of which issued around the same time. All evidence shows that Irish students and teachers are performing remarkably well in what continue to be difficult circumstances. It is high time that Government

matched the dedication and achievements of teachers and students by investing appropriately in the education system.

### **Ongoing campaigns - Further Education and Higher Education sectors**

TUI is still engaged in discussions with the Department of Education and Skills on a variety of issues in the Further Education and Higher Education sectors. A poster updating members on recent gains in the union's third level campaign was distributed to third level workplaces before Christmas. A poster on Further Education issues will also issue upon conclusion of the current talks.

The third level review as set out under the May agreement with the Department of Education and Skills has commenced with an initial report due by March 2017.

A BTEI conversion process is currently being negotiated. It will see all qualified and registered teachers delivering courses under the BTEI initiative converted to teachers, with all the associated terms and conditions.

### **Youthreach discussions and consultative conference**

Discussions are ongoing to ensure that measures analogous to the Ward Report's recommendations will apply to the Youthreach resource and Youthreach Coordinator grades.

A consultative conference for Youthreach staff will take place on 4th March in Athlone. Further information will issue later this month.

*Joanne Irwin*

# Additional gains for teachers following talks with education partners

Following an invitation issued in November by the Chair of the Teachers' Conciliation Council (TCC) to the three teacher unions, the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, TUI engaged with the other parties in discussions on a range of issues.

As a result of these discussions, a document - 'Outcome of Department of Education and Skills, INTO and TUI discussions – 29 November 2016' - was agreed. It should be read in conjunction with:

- The TUI/INTO 'New Entrant Pay Issue and Related Commitments, 16 Sept 2016', which provides significant improvements in the pay of those who entered the profession on or after 1st February 2012
- 'DES/TUI Agreement, May 2016', which provides a range of other gains for teachers and lecturers, including a review of the usage of the 'Croke Park' hours and a review of posts of responsibility/management structures
- Circular Letter 59/2016, which sets out a mandatory sequence for the filling of new posts/hours that will benefit serving teachers on part-time hours. This circular letter was negotiated by the TUI with the Department of Education and Skills and has effect from 31st August last.

These documents are all available on the TUI website.

The document that issued on the 29th November ('Outcome of Department of Education and Skills, INTO and TUI discussions – 29 November 2016') recognises these gains and addresses other issues that had been brought by the teacher unions to the TCC, including:

- The provision of an opt-out and opt-in on a once-off basis for the Supervision and Substitution scheme
- Further measures that have the potential of improving job security and
- An enhanced focus on the issue of teacher wellbeing

## The key elements of the November document are set out in detail below

### SUPERVISION AND SUBSTITUTION SCHEME

#### Opt-Out

An opt-out will be made available on a once-off basis to post-primary teachers with a minimum of 15 years service.

A teacher who opts out will not be required to carry out S&S duties and will have a reduction applied to his/her salary on an ongoing basis until retirement. This reduction will be €1,769 as at 1 September 2017 and will subsequently change in line with changes to teacher salaries.

The opt-out is irrevocable and having so opted, a teacher may not subsequently opt back in to the requirement to carry out S&S duties.<sup>1</sup>

The opt-out from S&S duties and consequent salary reduction will be effective from 1 September 2017.

#### Opt-In

An opt-in to S&S duties will be made available to post-primary teachers who opted out of the requirement to carry out such duties under the terms of Circular 0006/2014. The opt-in will operate on the following basis:

- a teacher who opts-in will be required to carry out supervision and substitution duties and will have the salary reduction associated with the opt-out restored to his/her salary;
- to be eligible to opt-in on a pensionable basis, a teacher must be in a position to carry out S&S duties for a minimum of 10 years prior to reaching preserved pension age;
- the opt-in is irrevocable.

The opt-in to S&S duties and consequent restoration of the salary reduction will be effective from 1 September 2017.

Given the above changes, the operation of S&S provisions in post-primary schools will be kept under review by the parties to the TCC.

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that opting for this arrangement will have the effect of reducing the teacher's retirement lump sum and pension following his/her retirement.

### FIXED-TERM AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

A template letter will be provided to enable an employer to confirm that a teacher who holds a contract of indefinite duration is employed on a permanent basis, where such confirmation is requested by the teacher concerned.

The provisions of the Report of the Chairperson of the Expert Group on Fixed-Term and Part-Time Employment in Teaching have made significant improvements to the careers and career prospects of fixed-term and part-time teachers. It is acknowledged that there remain categories of teachers who have not benefitted from

the measures implemented in consequence of the Report. It is agreed that the parties (Department of Education and Skills, management bodies and unions) will undertake work to identify those categories and will put in place agreed measures to address issues affecting them, including further development of the medium and long term recommendations of the Ward Report, re-evaluation of the statement in the Ward Report regarding a post-primary supplementary panel, and implementation of a post-primary supplementary panel or an equivalent appropriate mechanism.

## PAY MEASURES FOR NEW ENTRANT TEACHERS

TUI and INTO negotiated a document with the Department of Education and Skills and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform titled "Agreement New Entrant Pay Issue and

Related Commitments, 16 September 2016". The pay measures set out in that document are replicated in the document under consideration by ASTI. As provided for in the September 16th document, the

issue of the H.Dip allowance has already been tabled at the TCC on 18 October 2016.

## PARTIAL SICK LEAVE ABSENCES

At the moment, when a teacher who is on the DES payroll is absent on sick leave for a period of less than a full school day, the DES records these absences as a full day.

In order to prevent this over-recording, such absences will, as an interim measure, be recorded at school level. These absences will only be recorded on the DES payroll system once the teacher has

accumulated one full day's absence.

The DES will issue a Circular setting out the interim measures to apply at school level pending the implementation of an electronic recording solution.

## TEACHER WELLBEING

It is recognised that teacher wellbeing contributes positively to the quality of education, and that teaching and learning outcomes can be enhanced by creating opportunities for teachers to consider their own sense of wellbeing. The Teaching Council recognises 'the importance of care of self so as to be able to care for others and, in that context, teachers' wellbeing is vital if they are to effectively lead learning, and support and facilitate students in this endeavour'.

An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for teachers. The aim of this strategy is to promote the health of teachers in the workplace, with a focus primarily on prevention rather than cure. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance and Wellbeing

Programme and Occupational Health Services for teachers.

The Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme incorporates confidential face-to-face counselling on issues such as health, relationships, bereavement, stress and conflict. The Occupational Health Service incorporates pre-employment health assessments, sickness absence referrals, assessments of medical fitness for work and ill health retirement assessments.

The overall aim is to improve the health, wellbeing and welfare of teachers.

It is agreed that a working group will be established to further develop the Occupational Health Strategy and promote the health and wellbeing of teachers. This group will incorporate teacher unions and school management.

The following improved services will be introduced immediately:

- increased counselling support with the maximum number of sessions available increased from four to six;
- the provision of a dedicated website with articles which focus on areas of concern to teacher wellbeing;
- provision for 24 hour, 365 day freephone employee assistance and wellbeing helpline support;
- commitment to increased telephone support in relation to staff wellbeing in schools for school management and teachers with management responsibilities; and
- that helpline and counselling services will also be available to the family members of teachers.

## JUNIOR CYCLE

The new Junior Cycle programme is being implemented following agreements reached in May and July 2015. A statement of assurances has been provided by the Department of Education and Skills in respect of concerns raised by ASTI (see document titled "Junior Cycle – Statement of Assurances 29 November 2016 – Department of Education and Skills & Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland"). These assurances are in line with assurances provided in direct

discussion with the TUI and at the regular meetings of the Implementation Committee established under the Agreements.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the State Examinations Commission (SEC) have communicated requirements for completion of the Assessment Task for English by students between 5 and 9 December 2016. While this timing requirement remains, the parties

acknowledge that a significant number of students will not be in a position to meet this requirement.

On a once off basis, the NCCA and SEC will communicate arrangements in respect of a second calendar window in the 2016/17 school year to allow for the completion and submission of the Junior Cycle English Assessment Task by students who are prevented from meeting the current deadline.

# Irish students perform strongly in

TUI described the latest findings of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study (released December 2016) as an endorsement of the high quality work of Irish teachers and students in an era when schools and programmes have experienced hugely damaging cuts to resources. In all three areas which were examined - maths, science and reading - the scores of Irish students were significantly above the OECD average.

PISA is a worldwide study, conducted by the OECD, that aims to measure how well students, at age 15, are prepared to meet the challenges they may encounter in future life, including education. The study takes place every three years.

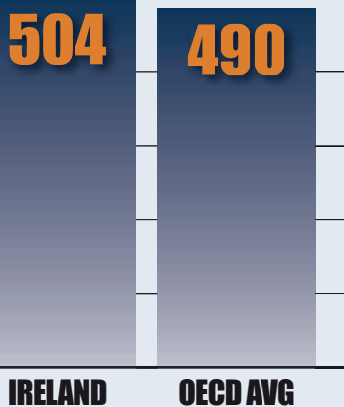


## ► PISA 2015 findings



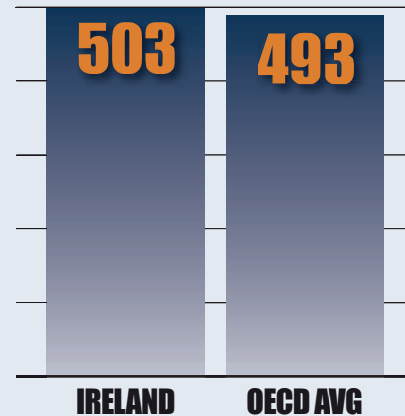
### Maths

✓ **13th** of 35 in OECD  
 ✓ **9th** among EU countries

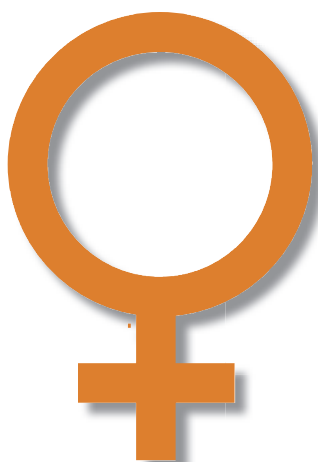


### Science

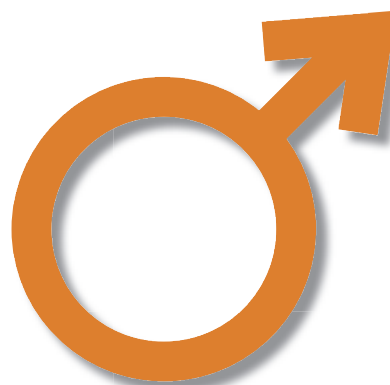
✓ **13th** of 35 in OECD  
 ✓ **6th** among EU countries



## ► Gender differences



**Girls performed better than boys in reading**



**Boys performed better in maths and science**

# latest international comparisons



## Reading



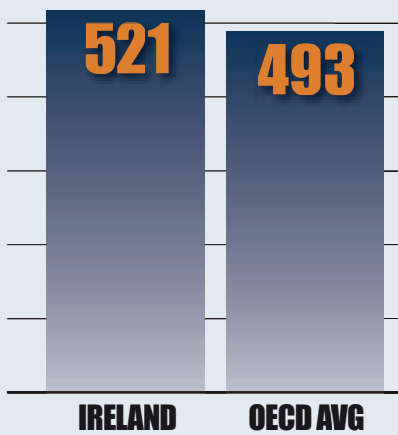
**3rd**

of 35 in  
OECD



**2nd**

among EU  
countries



## ▶ TIMSS 2015 – another strong showing from Irish students

Separately, the performance of Irish students in maths and science was endorsed in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study 2015 (TIMSS), the findings of which were released in November 2016.

**9<sup>th</sup>**

**Irish second year students ranked 9th of 39 countries in maths**

**10<sup>th</sup>**

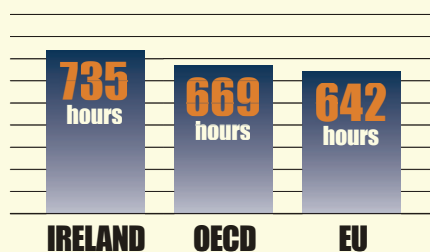
**Irish second year students ranked 10th of 39 countries in science**

The report provides an international comparison of student achievement in both areas at Fourth Class in primary and at Second Year of post-primary. Ireland's mean scores were significantly above the international TIMSS average in maths and science at both grade levels.

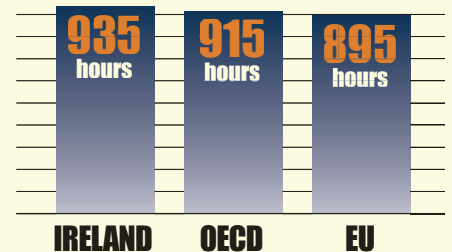
## ▶ Irish teaching hours far beyond international norm

Irish teachers continue to teach a number of hours that is far beyond the international norm. September's OECD Education At A Glance report shows that, at **735 hours**, second level teachers in Irish schools teach far above the OECD average across second level of **669 hours** and the European average of **642 hours**. Also, at **935 hours**, compulsory instruction time for second level students in Ireland is higher than the OECD average of **915 hours** and the European average of **895 hours**.

### AVERAGE TEACHING TIME



### COMPULSORY INSTRUCTION TIME



Meanwhile, in last year's OECD Government At A Glance report, the percentage of citizens expressing confidence in the Irish education system was **83%**. By way of comparison, the percentage of citizens expressing confidence in national government was **46%**.

## ▶ How is PISA carried out?

PISA is based on a random sample of 15-year-old students in each of the participating countries. In 2015, over a half a million students took part in PISA. 167 schools in Ireland took part.

# Young Scientist Exhibition showcases the exciting and innovative work happening in Irish schools



The Young Scientist Exhibition 2017 again demonstrated the exciting work happening in Irish schools. The exhibition, now in its 53rd year, is the final stage in the competition which is open to students from both north and south of the border.

Visiting the exhibition, TUI President Joanne Irwin praised the creativity and innovation of the students who took part and the dedication of the teachers who supported and encouraged them.

A wide range of projects was on display at the exhibition and many schools had more than one project accepted into the competition. To attempt a comprehensive overview of the impressive work would be impossible, but by way of giving some sense of the ingenuity demonstrated, here are a few of the projects that caught our eye.

## An investigation into developing a more efficient method of drying woodchip for use in boilers.

### *Magh Ene College, Co Donegal*

A more efficient method of drying woodchips for use in boilers was investigated. The study examined issues of pressure, bed height and temperature. It was found that the greatest reduction in moisture content came from heating three bricks for 30 seconds. The best bed height was 10cms and the ideal temperature was 70 degrees.

## Go Bananas! Using Banana Peel for Eco-Friendly and Low-Cost Nylon Production

### *Adamstown Community College, Dublin*

This project focused on using the starch in banana peels to synthesise a type of nylon with superior properties to regular nylon. The project was successful in turning banana peel into eco-friendly and low cost nylon. The peel of one banana could be used to produce 10ml of cadaverine i.e. bio-based nylon.



HARITHA OLAGANATHAN PICTURED WITH TEACHER JANE HALLORAN, ADAMSTOWN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN AND TUI PRESIDENT JOANNE IRWIN





(L-R) SARAH LALOR AND EIMEAR BUTLER LISTER OF AVONDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CO WICKLOW PICTURED WITH TUI PRESIDENT JOANNE IRWIN

## Can milk be turned into plastic?

**Avondale Community College, Co Wicklow**

A study into whether pasteurised milk could be turned into plastic, and what are the resulting benefits for the environment. The project succeeded in turning excess milk into casein plastic, thereby reducing pollution.



(L-R) DANIEL O'BRIEN, PATRICK O'KEEFE (TEACHER), TADHG Ó SÚILLEABHÁIN, JOANNE IRWIN, TOMÁS MURPHY.

## Development of an Improved Rowing Machine Handle to Increase Feathering Muscle Build-up

**Clonakilty Community College, Co Cork**

Could an improved rowing machine handle be developed so as to increase feathering muscle build-up? Again, the project succeeded in its aim. By using a palms-down wrist furl, it was possible to show a significant improvement in feathering muscle build-up using the new handle design.

## Striding for speed; An investigation into the most influential factor regarding speed

**Heywood Community School, Co Laois**

Video analysis was used in an investigation into the most influential factor regarding speed. The aim was to assess which makes a runner faster: a longer stride, a higher stride rate, being taller, or having longer legs. It was found that different factors had different impacts on different genders. For example, length of stride was more important for boys whereas frequency of stride was most important for girls. Height had no impact on pace for female athletes.

## Put a halt to that Headache! Which painkiller has the fastest dissolution time?

**Coláiste Pobal Bheantraí, Co Cork**

The students examined which painkiller has the fastest dissolution time. They examined aspirin, ibuprofen and paracetamol. Both generic and branded versions of each were tested. The students discovered that branded aspirin dissolved fastest and that branded ibuprofen dissolved slowest.

## MCPA Pesticide in Drinking Water

**Athlone Community College, Co Westmeath**

This project examined the issue of MCPA pesticide in drinking water, and why, despite information campaigns, MCPA is being found in excessive levels in the drinking water supply. In relation to new regulations, the study found a large information gap between the understanding of the matter by farmers and the understanding of state bodies.

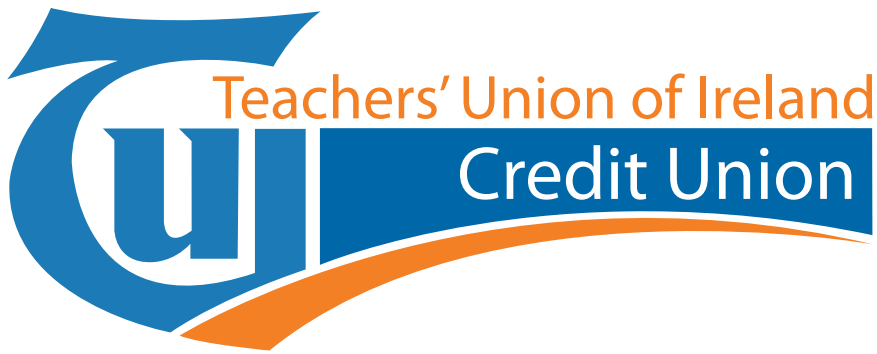


(L-R) DYLAN NESBITT, JOANNE IRWIN, JOE BOYLE (PRINCIPAL), KELLY NESBITT AND TEACHER MARY GIBBONS.

## A Study into the development of young drivers on Irish roads

**Deele College, Co Donegal**

Students from Deele College in Donegal conducted a study into the development of young drivers on Irish roads.



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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016

The TUI Credit Union held its 2016 AGM on Wednesday 14th December in the Clarion Hotel, Liffey Valley, Dublin 22.



John Mullan from the Irish League of Credit Union with TUI Credit Union Chairperson Tina Reddin and Secretary Frank Mc Ginn

TUI President Joanne Irwin and General Secretary John MacGabhann addressed the AGM. There was a good attendance of members from around the country which was great to see. The TUI Credit Union had another successful financial year. The TUI Credit Union issued over €7.4m in loans, significantly up on 2015. A dividend of 0.5% and interest rebate of 10% were approved by the AGM. The interest rebate acknowledges the worthy contribution members who take out loans have made to the TUI Credit Union.



TUI General Secretary John Mac Gabhann addressing the TUI Credit Union AGM

Hence our interest rebate is designed to reduce the cost of interest to our members.

### What is an Interest Rebate?

An interest rebate is TUI Credit Union's acknowledgement of the loyalty of borrowers and rewards accordingly.

An interest rebate of 10% was applied to all loans and has been lodged to the members shares account.

e.g member paid €500 in loan interest for year ended 30th September 2016 so an interest rebate of €50 will be lodged.

Interest rebates are not liable for D.I.R.T. and thus the member receives the full rebate into their shares account.

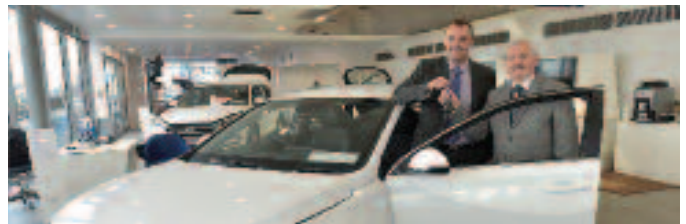
## CAR LOAN TYPICAL REPAYMENTS

AMOUNT BORROWED	PERIOD (MONTHS)	REPAYMENT	TOTAL INTEREST PAYABLE
€10,000	60	€199.19	€1,951.62
€12,500	60	€248.99	€2,439.52
€15,000	60	€298.79	€2,927.43
€17,000	60	€348.59	€3,415.33

Repayments based on 60 monthly repayments, lending criteria, terms and conditions apply. Rate quoted at 7.5% APR is correct as at 03.01.2017 and is subject to change.

Credit Union	PCP Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Hidden or Additional Costs</b></li> <li>• <b>No Set Up or Documentation Fees</b></li> <li>• <b>Make Larger Repayments - No Penalty</b></li> <li>• <b>Speedy Loan Decisions</b></li> <li>• <b>Interest Paid on the Reducing Loan Balance</b></li> <li>• <b>Life Savings and Loan Protection Insurance Provided at No Extra Cost</b> <small>Subject to T&amp;C's</small></li> <li>• <b>YOU OWN THE CAR FROM DAY 1</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>READ THE SMALL PRINT</b></p> <p><i>You know the old saying</i></p> <p><i>“If it's too good to be true...”</i></p> <p><b>YOU DON'T OWN THE CAR</b></p> <p>Compare the real cost of a TUI Credit Union loan with that of other financial institutions. Take into account our advantages and we think you'll agree you're better off talking to TUI Credit Union.</p>

## Promotions and Winners



### Monthly Member Draw Winner

PRIZES	November	December
Car	Alan Dodd	
€1,500	John MCGovern	Cornelius Lucey
€1,000	Mary Booth	William Fitzpatrick
€500	John Linnane	Sharon Hickey

### New Member Draw Winner

MONTH	PRIZE	WINNER
November	€100 One4All voucher	Patricia Cullen
December	€100 One4All voucher	Eoghan Fox

## Schools Visits

Do you want a representative from TUI Credit Union to call to your place of work to promote your credit union and the services we offer to your colleagues?

So if you would like us to arrange a visit to your area drop us an email to [info@tuicu.ie](mailto:info@tuicu.ie) or give us a call.

## Conversion process for Hourly Paid Assistant Lecturers (HPALs)/ Associate Lecturers to Assistant Lecturers

The Haddington Road Agreement put in place a process for the phased conversion of Hourly Paid Assistant Lecturers (HPALs)/Associate Lecturers to Assistant Lecturers.

Phase One of the process, which dealt with variable hour HPAL/Associate Lecturer CIDs and also some mixed situations where members had two contracts (e.g. one pro rata contract and the other an hourly paid contract), has been completed. Those converted in Phase One of the process had their revised contracts backdated to September 2014.

Those eligible for conversion to pro-rata contracts in Phase Two with effect from 1st September 2015 are HPALs with CIDs who had two years' service or more at 1st September 2015, and who taught over two semesters in 2014/15. In order to be deemed eligible for conversion, a HPAL/Associate Lecturer needs to be able to answer 'Yes' to the following statements.

1. I am interested in being converted from Hourly-Paid Part-time Assistant Lecturer to Pro-Rata Part-time Assistant Lecturer on a contract of indefinite duration basis.
2. I am fully qualified for a Pro-Rata Part-time Assistant

Lecturer post. That is to say, I hold a first or second class honours degree in a relevant area or an approved equivalent qualification and I have 3 years appropriate post-qualification experience.

3. The hours of the contract of indefinite duration will be the hours for which you were engaged on a fixed term contract in the academic year 2014/15 (unless varied by the terms of Circular Letter 15/05).

I am available to teach such hours as may be assigned by the Head of School

I understand that the Head of School will determine the days/weeks/semesters in which I will teach.

4. I am available to carry out all of the duties of a Pro-Rata Part-time Assistant Lecturer as set out below as determined/required by the Head of School in accordance with the contractual duties as agreed nationally.

If you think that you are eligible to be converted from a HPAL/Associate Lecturer contract to the nationally agreed Assistant Lecturer contract and have not received a letter regarding same from your employer, please contact your local branch officers, as a matter of urgency.

## Campaigning for researchers' rights

TUI has established a Researchers' Working Party to identify the needs and concerns of researchers working in the institute of technology sector. The union is concerned by the precarious nature of employment for researchers. Within the sector there are various types of employment contracts with limited terms and conditions, with some institutes treating researchers as temporary staff who can be hired and fired with very little notice. In some cases, researchers do not even have a pay scale and are instead placed on a single pay point and, in most cases, researchers do not have access to a pension scheme.

To date, there have been two meetings of the Researchers' Working Party. Its main objective is to organise researchers in the sector with a view to negotiating national employment contracts, pay scales, terms and conditions, career paths and access to the education sector's superannuation scheme.

Branches in the institute of technology sector are currently organising information and recruitment meetings for researchers. Researchers who join TUI can attend and raise their issues at branch meetings as well as gaining access to insurance and income continuance schemes and the opportunity to join the TUI Credit Union.

## TUI involvement in European Erasmus+ Projects

In November 2016, the TUI completed an Erasmus+ project with colleagues from Sweden, Iceland and Romania. The project, entitled Opposing Force, sought to identify tools that communities in rural areas could use to assist young adults in gaining employment. The key aim was to find ways of reducing the 'brain drain' of young adults moving from rural to urban areas. Arising from the project, a handbook of tools and techniques is available to download from the TUI website.

In 2016, TUI commenced a new Erasmus+ project with colleagues from Norway, Scotland and France. This project, entitled Optimal, will explore mechanisms to facilitate the recognition of prior learning for vocational education and training, with a particular focus on the aquatic sector.

TUI also submitted an application for Erasmus+ funding with the European Trade Union Committee for Education which focused on teacher engagement to support refugees in society. Unfortunately, this application did not receive funding. However, the parties are considering submitting an amended application for the next round of funding calls.

The union is also involved in the development of applications for future projects which will focus on: supporting refugees, youth unemployment, quality apprenticeship systems, sports for social inclusion and skills for an ageing population. The union, as a social partner, is open to discussing project ideas with other education and training providers and agencies.

# Upcoming pay improvements for TUI members

## €1,000 pay increase brought forward by five months to 1st April 2017

A €1,000 flat rate increase to every point on annualised salaries (i.e. salaries exclusive of allowances) up to €65,000, which was originally due for payment from 1st September 2017 under the Lansdowne Road agreement (LRA), has been brought forward by five months. It will now be paid from 1st April 2017.

The improved arrangement is the result of negotiations between public service unions and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The unions had insisted on early negotiations to accelerate public service pay restoration last November.

The Public Services Committee of ICTU has recognised the value of this payment but has advised the management side that outstanding issues will be pursued in the further talks to take place following the initial report of the Public Service Pay Commission.

Among the key issues being pursued is the establishment of pay parity for all based on the pre-2011 rates. As part of this overall objective, we are seeking the reinstatement of the Professional Masters of

Education/Higher Diploma in Education allowance for those teachers appointed on or after 5th December 2011.

## Recent pay improvements

- **1st September 2016:** €796 was added to each point of the Teachers' Scale. This represents the first half of the agreed restoration of the S&S payment.
- **1st January 2017:** First half of adjustment to incorporate the value of Honours Primary Degree allowance to the scale of those teachers appointed on or after 1st February 2012

## Upcoming pay improvements

- **1st April 2017:** €1,000 flat rate increase to every point on annualised salaries up to €65,000. This payment has been brought forward from 1st September 2017. This flat increase applies to each point of the relevant salary scale/s. Allowances that are held in addition to salary – e.g. Post of Responsibility, Principal, Deputy Principal, Coordinator (etc.) allowances - are not included in the calculation of the €65,000. This is a pay increase, as opposed to restoration of a pay cut. Therefore, when the process of pay restoration is completed, the

effective salary will be the fully restored salary plus €1,000.

- **1st April 2017:** Pay restoration for those earning above €65,000. This is the first half of the agreed restoration of the Haddington Road Agreement pay-cut.
- **1st September 2017:** €796 will be added to each point of the Teachers' Scale. This represents the second half of the agreed restoration of the S&S payment.
- **1st January 2018:** Second half of adjustment to incorporate the value of Honours Primary Degree allowance to the scale of those teachers appointed on or after 1st February 2012
- **1st January 2018:** Pay restoration for those earning above €65,000. This is the second half of the agreed restoration of the Haddington Road Agreement pay-cut.

## Pension calculation 'grace period'

Please note that the 'grace period' - that allows calculation of retirement lump sum and pension on the basis of the June 2013 salary and allowances (i.e. before the Haddington Road Agreement cuts were applied) – has been extended to April 2019.

## Annual Congress 2017 – a reminder

### What?

TUI's Annual Congress 2017

### When?

18th to 20th April 2017

### Where?

Clayton Silver Springs Hotel, Cork

See [www.tui.ie](http://www.tui.ie) for full details



# Leave Entitlements Checklist

<b>Family Leave</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Paid</b>	<b>Maximum Period</b>	<b>Paid Sub-Cover</b>	<b>Details – Teachers</b>	<b>Details – Other ETB Grades*</b>
<b>Force Majeure</b>	Urgent tending to an ill person for whom you have caring responsibilities, including accompanying to the hospital in emergency situations	Yes	A maximum of three days in each period of 12 months or five days in 36 months.	Yes, apart from first day. S&S is used to cover first day.	Circular Letter 17/99	The TUI is currently negotiating a circular with the DES. In the interim the provisions of the Parental Leave Acts 1998 and 2006 apply
<b>Family Bereavement</b>	Leave related to bereavement	Yes	5 days in the case of a spouse, child or parent; 3 days in the case of a brother, sister, grand-parent, aunt, uncle or parent-in-law.	Yes	Circular Letter 19/00	The TUI is currently negotiating this circular with the DES. In the interim, the custom and practice is to apply the provisions of the teachers' circular
<b>Marriage Leave</b>	Member's own wedding and days either side (if workplace is open)	Yes	7 consecutive calendar days (including the date of the marriage)	No	As per DES/ETB policy	As per ETB policy
<b>Maternity Leave</b>	Birth and Early Care	Yes	26 consecutive weeks (& option of additional unpaid leave)	Yes	Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Post Primary Schools (Web-Book) – Chapter 2 (pg. 24)	Circular Letter 80/2015
<b>Adoptive Leave</b>	To allow adopting member a period with placement of adopted child	Yes	24 consecutive weeks (& option of additional unpaid leave)	Yes	Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Post Primary Schools (Web-Book)	Circular Letter 65/2016

<b>Paternity Leave</b>	Caring responsibilities soon after the birth or placement of a child	Yes	2 weeks within 6 months of birth	Yes	Circular Letter 57/2016	Circular Letter 66/2016
<b>Parental Leave</b>	Care of Children under 13 and children with Special Educational Needs under 16	No	18 weeks per child	Yes	Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Post Primary Schools (Web-Book) – Chapter 6 (pg. 66)	The TUI is currently negotiating this circular with the DES. In the interim, the Parental Leave Acts 1998 and 2006 and the European Union (Parental Leave) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 81 of 2013) apply.
<b>Carer's Leave</b>	Care for person medically certified as in need of care	No	104 weeks (in respect of one relevant person)	Yes	Circular Letter PPT 17/03	Circular Letter 0078/2015
<b>Career break</b>	Break from normal duties for the purpose of caring, study, travel etc.	No	10 school years, maximum of 5 years consecutively	Fixed Term Replacement Appointed (may qualify for a CID as per Ward report).	Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Post Primary Schools (Web-Book) – Chapter 4 (pg. 50)	Circular Letter 0079/2015
<b>Job-Sharing</b>	Work flexibility for family or other reasons	Yes	Unspecified, but must be applied for annually and taken in periods of one year.	Fixed Term Replacement Appointed	Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Post Primary Schools (Web-Book) – Chapter 5 (pg. 56)	The TUI is currently negotiating this circular with the DES. In the interim, custom and practice is to apply the ETB's polic

Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools (Web-Book) is available at <https://www.education.ie/en/Education-Staff/Services/Breaks-Leave/Terms-and-Conditions-of-Employment-for-Registered-Teachers-in-Recognised-Primary-and-Post-Primary-Schools.pdf>  
 All Circular Letters are available from [tui.ie](http://tui.ie) or [education.ie](http://education.ie)  
 All legislation is available at [www.acis.ie](http://www.acis.ie)  
 \*Applicable grades set out in the relevant circular

# Junior Cycle Reform – Dispelling some misconceptions

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”)*.

Evidence from schools suggests that, notwithstanding the extensive information provided during and after the Union’s successful campaign on the issue, some misconceptions persist.

Therefore, the following clarification is provided to dispel the misconceptions.

## 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 3rd 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 2nd Year and 3rd 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 2nd 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).





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# Education workers most likely to suffer work-related stress, anxiety and depression



Those working in the education sector are most at risk of experiencing work-related stress, anxiety and depression (SAD), according to new research from the ESRI.

*Work-related Musculoskeletal Disorders and Stress, Anxiety and Depression in Ireland* identifies the types of workers who are most at risk of developing the two most common types of work-related illness – SAD and work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSD). In Ireland, these account for 50 per cent and 18 per cent of work-related illness respectively.

The research was compiled using data from the Quarterly National Household Survey for the years 2002-2013, and outlines implications for measures to assist those most at risk of developing work-related MSD and SAD.

## MSD and SAD in Ireland – an overview

- Work-related MSD affects different parts of the body that are used for body movement, for example, the skeleton, muscles, tendons and ligaments.
- Work-related stress is defined by the WHO as “the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not

matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope”. Depression and anxiety are distinct psychiatric disorders with defined diagnostic criteria.

- In 2013, an estimated 55,000 workers in Ireland suffered from a work-related illness, resulting in the loss of 790,000 days of work.
- The research measured the number of days absent for the most recent illness reported by workers in a 12-month reference period. The average length of absence was 15.9 days for MSD and 17 days for SAD. Both involve longer absences than the average for all other types of work-related illnesses (12.8 days).
- The rates of both illnesses, especially MSD, increased during the economic boom years and decreased during the recession (controlling for the composition and size of the work force).

## Factors associated with Work-related Stress, Anxiety and Depression (SAD)

- Women have a higher risk of SAD illnesses, with 5.8 per 1,000 female workers experiencing this type of

illness compared to 4.0 per 1,000 male workers.

- Workers aged 35 to 54 years are most likely to experience SAD: 6 per 1,000 workers in this age bracket experienced SAD illnesses.
- The risk of SAD illness is highest for workers in the education sector, followed by those in health, public administration, transport and “other services”, which includes finance, information and communications.
- Workers in the agriculture, construction and industry sectors have the lowest risk of SAD (less than 3 per 1,000 workers).
- The self-employed have a lower risk of SAD illnesses than employees.
- There is a greater risk of SAD illness for those working long weekly hours. Those working over 50 hours are three times more likely to experience SAD than those working less than 30 hours.
- Shift workers have a greater risk of SAD.
- New recruits have a higher risk of SAD per month worked.

## Implications for policy – what can be done?

- The high proportion of SAD cases among work-related illnesses suggests that a greater awareness of mental health issues is required.
- Employers find it difficult to assess and manage mental health risks. Therefore further information and supports, such as stress audit tools may prove useful.
- The high incidence of MSD among self-employed workers points to the necessity for assistance specifically targeted at this group.
- There is a necessity to monitor work-related illnesses in sectors with greater risks of SAD and MSD and in organisations which operate shift-work and night work.
- Addressing the “long-hours culture” in workplaces is likely to reduce SAD.
- Specific measures, such as training and supervision, are required to assist new recruits who face higher risks of SAD and MSD illnesses.

# The Principal and Deputy Principals' Association (PDA)

The Principal and Deputy Principals' Association (PDA) held its annual conference in Ballinasloe in November. The theme of the conference was 'Reflection and Renewal', and the event was very successful, with presentations and workshops on issues as diverse as health and wellbeing, leadership, timetabling and cyberbullying and internet safety.

The PDA's Acting President Adrian Power gave the conference's keynote address, which was followed by an address from TUI President Joanne Irwin.

Check out the PDA's website at [www.pda.ie](http://www.pda.ie) for full details about the association and keynote speeches from the conference.



PICTURED AT THE CONFERENCE ARE, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: TUI GENERAL SECRETARY JOHN MACGABHANN, TUI PRESIDENT JOANNE IRWIN, ACTING PDA PRESIDENT ADRIAN POWER, TUI AREA 2 REPRESENTATIVE PADDY HEALY AND ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY MICHAEL GILLESPIE.

## Vacancies on NCCA Development Groups

From time to time, vacancies arise on National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) development groups. Participation on these NCCA committees provides a valuable opportunity for practising teachers and the nominating teacher unions to influence developments in curriculum and syllabi. Each teacher union is usually invited to nominate two representatives to each development group. Each TUI representative will be expected to contribute thoughtful insights and the wisdom of his/her experience to the discussions at the relevant development group, within the context of TUI policy. Representatives are required, from time to time, to discuss strategy and meet with relevant members of the

TUI Executive Committee and officials from TUI Head Office. Representatives may also be asked to act as state examinations spokespersons for TUI in the subjects relevant to their expertise. This involves giving considered feedback regarding state examinations papers to the media and State Examination Commission, again within the context of TUI policy.

Correspondence recently issued to schools and centres setting out current vacancies (see below), guidelines for nominees and the nomination form. If you are interested in becoming involved please contact your local branch for its nomination. Applications (marked 'NCCA development groups') should

reach TUI Head Office no later than 12 noon on March 8th, 2017. It is expected that applicants will be informed of the outcome by mid-May. It is recommended by the NCCA and it is the practice of the TUI that a person would not serve on more than one development group.

Subject	Number of Vacancies
Leaving Certificate Irish	2
Leaving Certificate Business	2
Junior Cycle Classical Studies	2
Junior Cycle Jewish Studies	2
Junior Cycle Religion	2
Junior Cycle Technology	2
Junior Cycle Materials Technology Wood	2
Junior Cycle Technical Graphics	2
Junior Cycle Metalwork	2

# School uniforms - a complex balancing of rights and responsibilities

In November 2016, in response to a request from the Department of Education and Skills (DES), TUI made a submission on school uniforms and associated costs. The full submission is available on the TUI website. The main points made in the submission were that:

- This issue is complex and requires schools to balance many competing rights and responsibilities.
- TUI believes that previous DES recommendations on school uniforms were pragmatic and fully respected the various religious backgrounds of students in our schools while taking account of the legal position. Such guidelines also take account of the fact that many families have experienced financial hardship. For example, statistics show that approximately one in ten children lives in consistent poverty and one in four lives in relative poverty (NESF, 2005; CSO, 2009; Barnardos, 2008; Hayes, 2008). These figures largely pre-date the economic recession so there must, logically, be a concern that the consistent poverty rate may in



fact be higher now.

- TUI believes that parents should not be put in the position of having to pay for school uniforms that are needlessly expensive.
- The pre-existing system, whereby schools decide their uniform policy at a local level, is reasonable, works and should be maintained.
- No school uniform policy should act in such a way that it, in effect, excludes students of a particular religious background from seeking enrolment or continuing their enrolment in a school. However, this does not imply support for the wearing of clothing in

the classroom which obscures a facial view and creates an artificial barrier between pupil and teacher. Such clothing hinders proper communication.

- Schools, when drawing up their uniform policy, should consult widely in the school community.
- Schools should take note of the obligations placed on them by the Equal Status Acts before setting down a school uniform policy.
- In many cases, generic uniforms are perfectly satisfactory and can result in significantly reduced costs for parents/families.
- TUI also believes that, where possible, parents should be able to purchase school uniforms from more than one source. The issue of competitive tendering seems to make sense but it must be borne in mind that schools are under tremendous pressure to carry out many diverse government initiatives and hence time and/or expertise to carry out competitive tendering processes may not be available in some schools.

## A notice from the Teaching Council

### Retrospective Vetting

#### Statutory vetting requirement for un-vetted registered teachers

The National Vetting Bureau Act 2012-2016 requires that employers ensure that all members of their teaching staff are vetted by 31 December, 2017.

To support this process, throughout the year the Teaching Council intends to facilitate the retrospective vetting of all registered teachers who, to date, have not been vetted. The retrospective vetting process only applies to teachers who have never applied for vetting via the Council. Teachers who hold a vetting letter from the Council (pre-29 April 2016), or have completed the on-line vetting offered by the Council (since 29 April 2016), are deemed vetted, and are thereby excluded from this process.

Under Section 33 (Registration Renewal) of the Teaching Council Act 2001-2015, the Council will notify, on a phased basis, the cohort of 33,000

un-vetted teachers on its register and invite them to commence the vetting process. The number of registered teachers that have been vetted continues to steadily increase, with almost 65% of the circa 94,000 teachers on the Teaching Council register now vetted.

Employers/school authorities will be informed of the sequence of the process following commencement. The Council is anxious to ensure that retrospective vetting will roll out in a controlled and sequential manner. For this reason, the Council asks employers/school authorities to respect the sequencing prescribed by the Council and assist the vetting process by ensuring that any un-vetted teacher has complied with the Council's vetting notice within the timeframe prescribed.

Once the vetting process is complete, the employer/school authority may request the vetting disclosure from the teacher. Only in cases where that disclosure reveals an offence which constitutes a child protection risk will a disclosure be provided to the employer/school authority by the Teaching Council.

The requirements for vetting under Circular 0031/2016 will continue to apply for all teachers who are changing employment. Teachers applying for new posts requiring vetting should apply directly to the Council as part of the ongoing vetting process. Employers/school authorities advertising new posts, which may require the teacher to be vetted, should ensure that this is done as early as possible in the recruitment process.



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# Update on curriculum development

In Ireland, the power to prescribe the curriculum is within the legal power of the Minister for Education and Skills under the Education Act 1998. However, such decisions are informed by extensive work undertaken by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). An extensive range of stakeholders is represented on the NCCA, including the teacher unions and management bodies. Recent months have seen developments in a significant number of areas, as summarised below.

## Junior Cycle

- Work is continuing on the specifications for special needs. Those specifications are at Levels 1 and 2 (depending on level of need) on the National Framework of Qualifications (Junior Certificate is Level 3).
- Work is also ongoing on Music, Home Economics, Maths, History, Irish, PE and Geography. Consultations on Home Economics and Geography closed recently. A consultation process on

Music is due to open soon.

- Work is due to begin soon on Jewish Studies, Religious Studies, Classical Studies and the technology subjects.
- Specifications have been completed in Visual Art (formerly Art, Craft and Design), Wellbeing and the modern foreign languages. These specifications have been sent to the Minister for approval.

## Leaving Certificate

- Research is being done on the impact of recent changes in the marks awarded for the oral component of the Irish examination.
- Research is being carried out on the possible roll-out of a programme in Computer Science.
- Work is ongoing on the revision of specifications (syllabi) in Applied Mathematics and Classical Studies.
- Politics and Society, as a subject, has been introduced in approximately 40 schools this year.

- A new specification for Agricultural Science is almost complete.
- A consultation on the draft Economics specification closed on January 31st.
- Specifications for PE (both exam and non-exam frameworks) were recently approved by the NCCA and sent to the Minister for approval.
- Preliminary work on Art is beginning.

All consultations are accessible through the NCCA website at [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie).

## Junior Cycle Training

Members should note that the next phase of training for teachers of Junior Cycle English, Science and Business started at the end of January and will be rolled-out nationally in the next few months. Training for teachers of Visual Art and modern foreign languages will begin before mid-term with training of teachers of Irish also likely to begin around mid-term. Training for teachers of PE, CSPE and SPHE is currently being planned.

## TUI Golf Society

The TUI Golf Society concluded 2016 with the annual overseas trip. This was the society's 12th trip abroad, and this year we travelled to Marbella in Spain at the end of October.



It was a most enjoyable event and all are eagerly looking forward to next year's trip.

The following outings have been organised for 2017:

1. February 23rd - Palmerstown Stud Golf Club  
€40 including lunch. €45 for non-members.
2. April 12th and 13th - Faithlegg Golf Club on the 12th and Tramore Golf Club on the 13th.  
€189 for two nights B&B and one evening meal plus golf.  
Complimentary lunch on Wednesday. €30 single supplement per night.
3. September 23rd - Captain's Prize in Roscrea Golf Club. €25.
4. November 1st and 2nd - Headford Golf Club.  
1st November - Old Course - Captain's Drive in.  
2nd November - New Course.  
€177 per person sharing for two nights B&B and one evening meal in the Headford Arms.

We ask you to continue to support our sponsors, TUI Credit Union and Cornmarket.

Membership of €20 for 2017 is now due. Friends, partners of TUI members and sponsors can now become members of the Golf Society.

Contact: Mr. Tom Buckley, Membership Sec,  
10 Verbena Park, Sutton, Dublin 13.

We hope all our members have a happy and healthy 2017.



## All Gaeltacht schools should be covered by DEIS programme – TUI

In November 2016, in the context of the ongoing review of the DEIS programme, TUI made a submission to the Department of Education and Skills on the resourcing needs of Gaeltacht schools. The main points made in the submission were that:

- 85% of Gaeltacht schools are in the DEIS programme. There is a concern that the other 15% could fall behind. The cost implication of the DEIS programme being extended to cover the remaining 15% would be minimal.
- The new policy for the Gaeltacht regions (November 2016) advocates the immersion mode of linguistic advancement. It is essential that schools have proper resources to implement this policy. Being automatically included in DEIS would be of huge importance in this regard.
- Under the Gaeltacht Act 2012, local groups, or 'lead organisations' as they are termed, have been tasked with formulating and implementing language plans to ensure the retention of Gaeltacht status for Gaeltacht areas. DEIS is an essential component within the Act so that local schools would have the correct resources to implement the language policy as set out.



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### MASTER'S DEGREES

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Master's in Education (M Ed)  
MEd Additional Support Needs  
MEd Leadership (Online)  
MSc Children and Youth Studies  
MA Ed Psychology  
Professional Master of Education  
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# New guidelines for schools on Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE) scheme

In late 2016, the State Examinations Commission (SEC) issued revised guidelines to schools on the Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE) scheme. The full document (Reasonable Accommodations at the 2017 Certificate Examinations – Instructions for Schools) is available on the SEC website ([www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie)), but the most significant changes are set out below.

TUI and other stakeholders were involved in discussions with the SEC about the changes. At all times, TUI's main concern was that no additional workload be placed on already overburdened schools and teachers.

*Extract from Reasonable Accommodations at the 2017 Certificate Examinations – Instructions for Schools*

## Key changes to the 2017 RACE scheme

- a) From this year on, **accommodations that were provided at Junior Certificate will be reactivated at Leaving Certificate subject to confirmation by the school authority of an identified and continuing need.**

Schools will retain devolved authority for recommending the supports to be put in place at Junior Certificate and will now also have

devolved authority to recommend the supports to be put in place at Leaving Certificate. It is expected that, in most cases, the school's recommendation in the case of Leaving Certificate will be to reactivate the same supports as were provided to the candidate at Junior Certificate.

In the case of reactivating arrangements that had been in place for Junior Certificate, the SEC will accept the recommendation of the school based on the school's judgement that the need for supports persists.

In general there will be no need for schools to undertake further testing. Unless some exceptional





circumstance arises, the SEC will accept all such reactivation recommendations.

This new model of decision making will give certainty from an earlier stage of students' post-primary education as to the supports that they will have in the state examinations should they continue to be needed. There is one exception to this, detailed at d) below.

- b) The category of '**Specific Learning Difficulty**' will be broadened to a new category to be known as 'Learning Difficulty'. This will bring RACE into line with the overall needs-based approach to the provision of support to students with special educational needs, advocated by the National Council for Special Education (2014). There will no longer be a need for the school or candidate to provide cognitive ability scores or to otherwise confirm that a candidate has a specific learning difficulty in order to be eligible for RACE. Instead eligibility will be assessed based on level of need, without a requirement for a diagnosis of a specific condition.

The change to a needs-based approach will enable greater access to the scheme by candidates with general learning disabilities and will bring RACE into line with the overall needs-based approach for the provision of support to students with special educational needs. There are no other changes to the eligibility criteria.

Where testing is required as evidence of eligibility, at Junior Certificate or (in the case of an application for new accommodation) at Leaving Certificate, the testing arrangements are the same as before. So the need for a reader, for example, will continue to be evidenced by reference to the candidate's attainment in a

standardised reading test and error rates in reading examination papers.

Other key features of the RACE scheme for this year, which are set out in greater detail in the remainder of the document, can be summarised as follows:

- c) The role of the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) in the new scheme is changing. Instead of being centrally involved in the review and processing of Leaving Certificate applications, the role of NEPS will be as follows:
- Delivering an initial information programme in conjunction with the SEC
  - Providing advice, information and support to schools that are considering whether to make RACE applications, particularly in relation to complex applications
  - Engaging with the SEC on a scheme of governance and quality assurance of RACE applications.
- d) A candidate who had an individual special centre at Junior Certificate and who continues to require a special centre will be approved for a special centre at Leaving Certificate. However, depending on the nature of their need, this approval may be for a shared, rather than an individual, special centre. Candidates may previously have been placed in an individual special centre when a shared special centre might have been sufficient. In allowing Junior Certificate accommodations to be reactivated at Leaving Certificate, the SEC will work with schools to rationalise the numbers of individual examination centres.
- e) In order to ensure that the scheme is underpinned by good practice, schools will, as part of the application process for Junior Certificate, indicate that learning support and interventions have or will be made by the school to
- f) Applications will be subject to central quality assurance checks during and following the application process, and schools will have access to an SEC referral and advisory service to assist them in difficult decisions.
- g) A separate application process will apply to Leaving Certificate candidates who did not have any accommodations at Junior Certificate or who are applying for a change to the accommodations provided at Junior Certificate.
- h) An Independent Appeals process will continue to be offered. Those unhappy with the outcome of the Appeal will have recourse to the offices of the Ombudsman or Ombudsman for Children.
- i) In order to better manage the scheme and to provide timely access, if necessary, to the Independent Appeals Committee and to the Offices of the Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Children, all closing dates will be strictly applied. The SEC will not accept applications on the regular Application Forms which are received after the closing date. There is a separate process for dealing with late applications and again the closing date for receipt of the Late Application forms will be strictly adhered to.
- j) In order to affirm system integrity, the SEC intends to arrange audio-recording in individual special examination centres in a number of schools at the 2017 Leaving Certificate.

support learning. In order to have the same supports progressed to Leaving Certificate, schools will be required to confirm that the need that led to the granting of supports persists and that the supports provided to enable access at Junior Certificate are required to enable access to Leaving Certificate.



## TUI PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

### PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR

DATE	LOCATION	VENUE
THURSDAY 23RD MARCH 2017	ATHLONE	THE HODSON BAY HOTEL  9:00am – 4:30pm

Places are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.  
Please complete this form in full and return to: TUI, 73 Orwell Rd., Rathgar, Dublin 6.  
OR

Send by Email to: [reception@tui.ie](mailto:reception@tui.ie) for the attention of Liz Daly/Carol Ryan

APPLICATION FORM	
Name	
School/College	Telephone Number
Email Address	

**APPLICATIONS WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED ON OFFICIAL FORM**

TUI, 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6

Telephone: (01) 4922588 (Press 0) Fax: (01) 4922953

# RMA News

## Lobbying on pensions continues

Lobbying of local TDs by RMA members for pension restoration and the repeal of the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (FEMPI) Act continues to be very important, as it greatly assists the work being done by officers of the Alliance of Retired Public Servants in their meetings with the political parties.

Alliance representatives met with officials from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) on 19th December. The Alliance representatives outlined their concerns in relation to early restoration of pensions and related matters and also sought official clarification in respect of the position of the Pay Commission vis a vis public service pensions.

The DPER officials indicated that:

- DPER would be meeting with public service union representatives after the Pay Commission reports in the second quarter of 2017 in relation to pay matters and the winding down of FEMPI
- The Pay Commission advisory report would deal with the winding down of FEMPI only in relation to pay and not in relation to pensions
- As indicated by the Minister, the winding down of FEMPI in relation to pensions and related matters of concern would be discussed with the Alliance at the same time as discussions would be held with the public service unions in 2017
- The Alliance would have the opportunity in those discussions to outline its considered views on the matters arising; and
- That the Minister recognised the case for priority to be given to the restoration of pensions in the winding down of the FEMPI legislation.



RMA AUTUMN BREAK, SLIGO

## Autumn Break and Spring Break

Our Autumn break at the Sligo Park Hotel was extremely successful. The hotel could not have been better, with wonderful food, comfortable accommodation and helpful staff. We enjoyed fantastic guided tours and I would like to compliment Furey's Bus Hire, Sligo on their excellent service to us during our visit to Sligo. Thanks, Paul.

At our dinner on the Thursday night, RMA Chairperson Jim McCarthy made a presentation to our former Secretary Christy Conville as a 'thank you' for his contribution to the Retired Members' Association over a number of years

So you'll come on the next one? Our Spring Break will be in Wexford – Clayton Whites Hotel. It is accessible by train or bus and the break is scheduled for Monday, March 27th to Thursday, March 30th 2017. The booking form can be downloaded from [www.rmatui.ie](http://www.rmatui.ie) and returned directly to the hotel. You can also book by phone. Our tours on Tuesday 28th March may include Dunbrody Famine Ship, the Kennedy Homestead and/or Arboretum, lunch in Kilmore Quay and an afternoon visit to Johnstown Castle (Teagasc Research

Centre). On Wednesday 29th March we will visit Ferrycarrig Folk Park in the morning with the afternoon left free to allow exploration of Wexford towns/shops. See the website for full details.

## RMA flourishing

The RMA continues to grow. The number of branches is increasing (two are in the process of being formed – Wicklow and Cavan / Monaghan). Many branches held a social event or lunch for Christmas. I attended one in Kildare as well as my own branch in Meath and both were a great success.

Finally colleagues, on behalf of the Management Committee, may I wish you a 2017 full of 'positives' and good health. I look forward to seeing more of you participating in our Spring and Autumn breaks and attending our AGM.

**Dan Keane,**  
**RMA Secretary.**



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Congratulations to  
**NOREEN MCCARTHY,**  
**CASTLEBLANEY COLLEGE,**  
**CO MONAGHAN**  
 Winner of Vol 39 No 2 Crossword Competition

# Crossword

€250 prize for the first correct answer drawn from the entries

**Only one entry per member.**  
 Photocopies can be submitted.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace \_\_\_\_\_

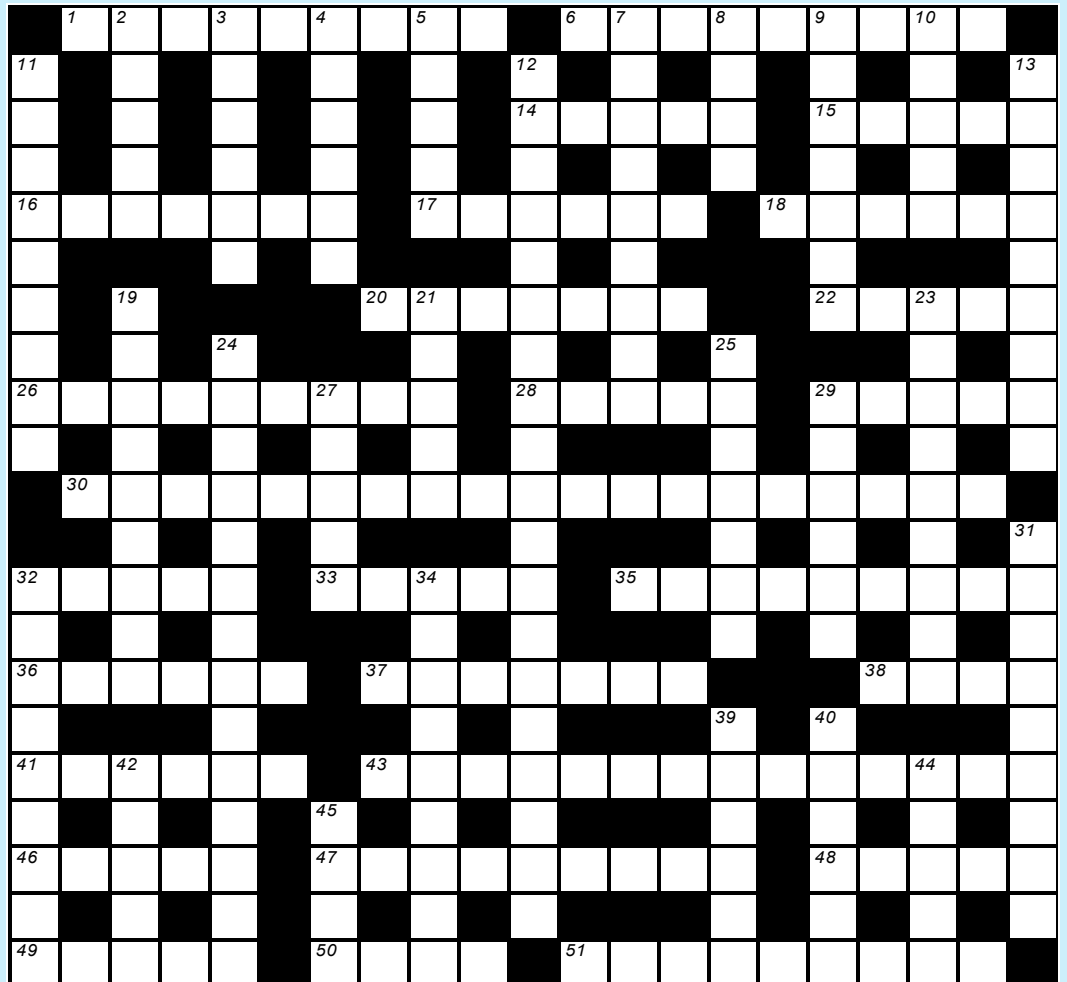
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number \_\_\_\_\_

TUI Branch \_\_\_\_\_

Send entries to TUI Crossword  
 February '17, TUI, 73 Orwell Rd,  
 Rathgar, Dublin 6

Closing date for entries:  
 Friday, 24th March 2017



**ACROSS**

- 1 Aggressively greedy or grasping (9)
- 6 Move or swing back and forth in a regular rhythm (9)
- 14 The lofty nest of a bird of prey (5)
- 15 Allow to enter; grant entry to (5)
- 16 ----- Dogs - 8th studio album by David Bowie (7)
- 17 Weissbräu brewery town in Bavaria (6)
- 18 A hat made of felt with a creased crown (6)
- 20 Make more pleasant or agreeable (7)
- 22 ----- Time, 2016 novel by Zadie Smith (5)
- 26 Someone who proclaims a message publicly (9)
- 28 Turn in a twisting or spinning motion (5)
- 29 ----- Attraction - 1987 American psychological thriller film directed by Adrian Lyne (5)
- 30 Regular payment made by the government to people who are out of work (12,7)
- 32 Refuse with contempt (5)
- 33 A town on Croatia's Dalmatian Coast, known for its beaches and Diocletian's Palace (5)
- 35 A stick or staff used to perform magic (5,4)
- 36 An absence of emotion or enthusiasm (6)
- 37 Enclose or enfold completely with or as if with a covering (7)
- 38 ----- Geste, novel by PC Wren, which details the adventures of three brothers who enlist in the French Foreign Legion (4)
- 41 Preserve a dead body (6)
- 43 A ----- -----, Charles Dickens's festive ghost story (9,5)

- 46 A tangible symbol signifying approval or distinction (5)
- 47 The outer layer of the skin covering the exterior body surface of vertebrates (9)
- 48 A state of extreme happiness (5)
- 49 An adhesive, plastic or other material made from a class of synthetic thermosetting polymers containing epoxide groups (5)
- 50 Hard fat around the kidneys and loins in beef and sheep (4)
- 51 Deductive reasoning in which a conclusion is derived from two premises (9)

**DOWN**

- 2 In the Hawaiian language means affection, peace, compassion, and mercy (5)
- 3 Three -----, 1987 comedy film starring Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short (6)
- 4 Be a hindrance or obstacle to (6)
- 5 The brother of your father or mother; the husband of your aunt (5)
- 7 A vast plain in Tanzania to the west of the Great Rift Valley known for its wildlife (9)
- 8 In the Roman calendar: the 15th of March, May, July, October or the 13th of any other month (4)
- 9 A low leather step-in shoe; the top resembles a moccasin but it has a broad flat heel (7)
- 10 The speed at which a composition is to be played (5)
- 11 A path suitable for riding or leading horses (9)

- 12 To find meanings that are intended but that are not directly expressed in something said or written (4,7,3,5)
- 13 In a manner differing from the usual or expected (9)
- 19 A large mass of land projecting into a body of water (9)
- 21 Long-winded, verbose, prolix, (5)
- 23 Having many complexly arranged elements; elaborate (9)
- 24 Leisure time spent doing something similar to one's normal occupation (7,7)
- 25 Hypersensitivity of the immune system to something in the environment (7)
- 27 American football team based in Indianapolis (5)
- 29 A mural done with watercolours on wet plaster (6)
- 31 Having no scent (9)
- 32 A situation in which no progress can be made or no advancement is possible (9)
- 34 The time in the middle of the day when lunch is eaten. (9)
- 39 Involving or constituting a cause (6)
- 40 A waterproof bag filled with ice: applied to the body (especially the head) to cool or reduce swelling (3,3)
- 42 The -----, children's comic, published by DC Thomson since 1938 (5)
- 44 A pair of long straps used to control a horse (5)
- 45 Fixed charges for a privilege or for professional services (4)