

Circular: 2007/ 22
Date of Issue: 10 October 2007

Subject:

QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS IN NURSERY, PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Target Audience:

- Education and Library Boards
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
- Principals and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided schools
- Initial Teacher Education Institutions
- Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
- Comhairle Na Gaelscolaíochta
- Governing Bodies Association
- Teachers Unions

Summary of Contents:

Qualifications required to be eligible to teach in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland

Enquiries:

Any enquires about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to: -

Mrs Helen O'Neill
Teachers' Pensions, Pay & Administration Branch
Department of Education
Waterside House
75 Duke Street
LONDONDERRY
BT47 6FP

Governor Awareness:
Essential

Status of Contents:
Information /Advice for teachers and schools

Related Documents:

Circular 2007/06
Circular 2007/20

Superseded Documents:
DE Circulars 2001/21,
2001/2,1997/11,1971/48,
1970/25

DE Website:

<http://www.deni.gov.uk>

Tel: 028 71 319022
Fax: 028 71 319190
helen.o'neill@deni.gov.uk

QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS IN NURSERY, PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Article 35 of the Education (NI) Order 2006 amends Article 36 of the Education (NI) Order 1998 to enable the transfer of responsibility for the approval of teaching qualifications, for the purposes of registration with the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI), from the Department to the Council, and the Teachers' (Eligibility) Regulations (NI) 1997 require that anyone employed as a teacher must have such qualifications as may be approved by the Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI).
- 1.2 The purpose of this Circular is to update existing guidance on the qualifications required by anyone wishing to teach in grant-aided nursery, primary, secondary and special schools in Northern Ireland. This Circular replaces Circulars 2001/21 issued on 19 December 2001, 2001/2 issued on 10 January 2001, 1997/11 issued on 10 July 1997, 1971/48 issued on 1 September 1971 and 1970/25 issued on 3 April 1970.
- 1.3 The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI) is the self-regulatory professional body for teachers. The Council has a statutory duty to determine who should be a member of the teaching profession in Northern Ireland. Persons employed as teachers in grant-aided schools and peripatetic teachers are required, under Article 35 (3) of the Education (NI) Order 1998, to be registered with the Council.
- 1.4 From 19 October 2007, The GTCNI will, as part of its registration process, approve qualifications for the purpose of registration and eligibility to teach. Therefore teachers requiring admission to the GTCNI's Register of Teachers must seek approval of their qualifications by making an application to the Council. Applications forms can be obtained from the Council's website www.gtcni.org.uk or by contacting the Council directly: registration@gtcni.org.uk, 028 9033 3390, GTCNI, 4th Floor Albany House, 73 – 75 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7AF
- 1.5 Teachers who have already been granted recognition under the terms of the replaced Circulars will continue to be recognised.**
- 1.6 When making appointments, relevant bodies should bear in mind that although a teacher may be eligible to teach in either Primary or Secondary Schools, they, (employer bodies) should ensure that the teacher is suitably trained for the required phase and subject, especially in practical and physical subjects where there is a potential health and safety risk. See Annex A in relation to the teaching of Technology and Design and Physical Education (PE).

1.7 When making appointments for nursery teaching an emphasis on early years initial training is desirable but not essential.

2.0 Students who have successfully completed one of the following courses of study at any approved university or teacher education college in the United Kingdom will be eligible to teach in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland.

A University Degrees

- (i) Bachelor of Education Degrees
- (ii) Other degree courses with an approved Teacher Education element

B Courses of Teacher Education

- (i) An approved degree course and an approved Post Graduate Certificate in Education
- (ii) An approved degree course and a Post Graduate Diploma in Further and Higher Education obtained while serving as a teacher in an Institution of Further Education

For students who have obtained their teacher education qualifications in England or Wales, the courses must be Teacher Development Agency (TDA) approved and lead to the granting of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) by GTC in England or Wales. For students who have obtained their teacher education qualifications in Scotland, the course must be GTC for Scotland approved.

2.1 A teacher who has been awarded a teaching qualification after 21 August 1984 must also have attained at least a grade C in Mathematics and English in GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) or an equivalent qualification. **In addition, all newly qualified teachers who wish to teach in primary schools must have obtained at least a grade C in a science subject or subjects in GCSE or an equivalent qualification.**

2.2 Teachers who have obtained qualified teacher status (QTS) from the Department for Children, Schools and Families, or the General Teaching Council for England or Wales may be eligible to teach in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland. In addition, teachers who have met the Standards for Initial Teacher Education in Scotland are eligible to teach in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland.

2.3 Teachers who have gained teaching qualifications in another Member State of the EEA/EU will be qualified to teach in Northern Ireland if they satisfy the criteria of EU Directive 2005/36/EC. Teachers wishing to seek recognition via the Directive must do so by making an application to the Council. Applications forms can be obtained from the Council's website www.gtcni.org.uk or by contacting the Council directly: registration@gtcni.org.uk; 028 9033 3390; GTCNI, 4th Floor Albany House, 73 – 75 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7AF

- 2.4 Teachers who have gained teaching qualifications in non-EEA/EU countries and who wish to teach in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland must seek approval of their qualifications by making an application to the Council. Applications forms can be obtained from the Council's website www.gtcni.org.uk or by contacting the Council directly: registration@gtcni.org.uk; 028 9033 3390; GTCNI, 4th Floor Albany House, 73 – 75 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7AF
- 2.5 To be eligible to teach pupils with visual and hearing impairment, the teacher must have successfully completed one of the approved courses listed on Annex B to this Circular.
- 2.6 Only those teachers who meet the above requirements may be appointed to grant-aided schools.

RORY O'BOYLE
Head of Teachers' Pensions,
Pay & Administration Branch

ANNEX A

When making appointments relevant bodies should bear in mind that although any of the qualifications listed in the circular will enable a teacher to teach they should ensure that in practical subjects where there is potential health and safety risk, the teachers are suitably qualified.

TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN – QUALIFICATIONS TO TEACH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Suitable qualifications, which are acceptable to teach technology and design in the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum (NIC) include:

1. Degree or Teacher's Certificate in Education (3 or 4 year duration), specialising in craft, design and technology/technology and design. The designation – craft, design and technology is used as an umbrella title and includes the designated courses entitled – Crafts; Handicraft; Design and Technology (resistant materials option); Design, Craft and Technology and Technology (resistant material option);

or

2. Degree in Science or Technology with a substantive element of the degree content reflecting the nature and scope of the NIC together with a Post Graduate Certificate in Technology and Design together with the City and Guilds Certificate No 6131 – Workshop Competency;

or

3. Recognised qualification to teach in a cognate area of the NIC/together with a Post Graduate Certificate in Technology Education from the University of Ulster together with the City and Guilds Certificate No 6131 – Workshop Competency.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION – QUALIFICATIONS TO TEACH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In physical education (PE), given the breadth of activity areas in the programme of study and the range of indoor and outdoor facilities used by schools, there are special demands on teachers in class management and health and safety. When making appointments, employer bodies should ensure that teachers are suitably trained to teach physical education and have experience of teaching the activity areas of the physical education programme in post-primary schools.

ANNEX B

APPROVED COURSES FOR TEACHING PUPILS WITH VISUAL OR HEARING IMPAIRMENT

University/College	Course	Study
Visual Impairment		
University of Birmingham Faculty of Education Ring Road North PO Box 363 Birmingham B15 2TT	Bachelor of Philosophy in Education (Special Education Visually Handicapped) Diploma in Special Education (Visually Handicapped)	One year full-time One year full-time and distance learning
Queens' University of Belfast 69 – 71 University Street BELFAST BT7 1HL	Master of Science Teaching Visually Impaired Learners	Two years part-time
Hearing Impairment		
University of Birmingham Faculty of Education Ring Road North PO Box 363 Birmingham B15 2TT	Diploma in Advanced Studies Special Education (Hearing Impaired)	One year full-time or 2 years part-time
University of Manchester Department of Audiology Education of the Deaf and Speech Pathology Manchester M13 9PL	Diploma in Advanced Studies of Education for Hearing Impaired Children Master of Education (Hearing Impaired)	One year full-time or 2 years part-time 2/3 years part-time course
Oxford Brookes – University Gypsy Lane Campus Headington Oxford OX3 0BI	CNAA Certificate in Education for the Teaching of Hearing Impaired Children	One year full-time