

This document contains two separate INTO documents on panels and fixed-term vacancies.

The documents are:

1. FAQs On Redeployment Panels / Filling Fixed-Term Vacancies
 - *27 June 2011*

2. FAQs On Supplementary Panel Rights
 - *28 June 2011*

27 June 2011

(Note: Please see Q 12 & 13 for separate arrangements that apply in the Dioceses of Tuam & Raphoe)

Q1 What key announcements did the DES make in the update it published on its website today?

The DES has addressed two key issues in today's announcement. One relates to the next stage in filling permanent vacancies via the panel system.

The second separate matter relates to commencing the filling of fixed-term vacancies.

Permanent Vacancies

Q2 At this stage are all permanent teachers on the various panels redeployed?

The good news is that all panel areas (with the exception of the Catholic Panels in the Dioceses of Tuam and Raphoe) are either clear or are down to low single figures.

The first stage of the redeployment process is now nearing completion.

Q3 What is the next stage in the process of filling permanent vacancies via the panel system?

A separate arrangement applies in the Catholic Dioceses of Tuam and Raphoe. These arrangements are dealt with in separate questions later (refer Q 12 and Q 13). These questions should be read carefully by all schools within the geographical boundaries of the Catholic Dioceses of Tuam and Raphoe and by Catholic schools in neighbouring dioceses.

The following is the next stage in other areas:

Once the permanent teachers in the various panel areas have been redeployed, there is another group of teachers to be added to the Main Panel.

This cohort of teachers are entitled to access to the Main Panel on the basis that they have accumulated five years or more fixed-term service.

These teachers will be added today to those panel areas that are now clear and over the next number of days as the remaining panels will clear. It is anticipated that it will only take a week or so before this cohort of teachers are redeployed into permanent posts as there are only 60 teachers (approx) nationwide in this category.

This will complete the second stage of the redeployment process.

Q4 Once these teachers with 5 years or more fixed-term service are redeployed can schools proceed to fill permanent appointments through open competition?

No. There is a third stage to the redeployment process. Once the Main Panel is clear (i.e. both segments: permanent teachers and fixed-term teachers with five years or more service), the Supplementary Panel comes into operation.

Q5 What is the Supplementary Panel?

Teachers gain access to the Supplementary Panel having completed three or more years fixed-term service. The Supplementary Panel only comes into operation once the teachers on the Main Panel (permanent teachers) and teachers with five years or more fixed-term service are redeployed. In today's announcements, the DES has given an indicative date of 1 July for the releasing of the Supplementary Panel.

Q6 What posts are filled from the Supplementary Panel?

Schools that have permanent vacancies must fill these posts from the Supplementary Panel.

Q7 Do fixed-term vacancies have to be filled from the Supplementary Panel?

No. As outlined above, teachers on the Supplementary Panel are in the queue for permanent vacancies.

Q8 Summarise the stages of filling a permanent vacancy.

The key stages of filling a permanent vacancy as outlined in Appendix 1.

Fixed-Term Vacancies:

Q9 What announcement did the DES make today in relation to the filling of fixed-term posts?

The DES made a significant announcement today in relation to the filling of fixed-term vacancies.

However, the separate arrangement that apply to Tuam and Raphoe – See Questions 12 & 13 should be read in conjunction with this answer.

The DES is now permitting schools to proceed to fill their fixed-term vacancies in accordance with the following formula.

SCHOOL SIZE

3 or less Mainstream Classroom Teachers	All Fixed-Term Vacancies
Special Schools & schools with between 4 & 8 Mainstream Classes	Hold 1 vacancy and fill the balance (eg a school with 3 fixed-term posts can fill two)
8 Mainstream Classes or More	Hold 2 vacancies and fill the balance (eg a school with 6 fixed-term vacancies can fill four)

Q10 Why are some fixed-term vacancies (1 or 2 depending on the size of the school) not being released?

The DES are withholding these posts as a contingency in case some permanent teachers do not secure redeployment to a permanent vacancy and they need to assign some permanent teachers to fixed-term posts. It is important to emphasise that this is only a contingency measure and it is likely that in a short space of time, the DES will make a further announcement permitting the filling of these remaining fixed-term posts in the normal manner.

Q11 To be clear, can schools now proceed to fill their fixed-term vacancies based on the formula in Q. 9 or must schools wait until the teachers with five years or more fixed-term service and the teachers on the Supplementary Panels are redeployed?

It is better to think of two separate processes.

Schools with permanent vacancies must fill these from the Main Panel and then from the Supplementary Panel when published on 1 July next.

Schools with fixed-term vacancies can start filling these vacancies from today onwards based on the formula outlined in Q. 9 and subject to Questions 12 & 13 below.

Separate Arrangements in Tuam, Raphoe & Neighbouring Dioceses

Q12 What is the difficulty in the Catholic Dioceses of Tuam and Raphoe panel areas?

The difficulty is that there are still 16 and 13 permanent teachers waiting redeployment in these panel areas respectively. It is likely that there will be insufficient permanent vacancies to absorb these teachers within their own diocese. This may result in some of these teachers being redeployed into fixed-term vacancies within their diocese for a one year period and they will return to the panel for a permanent reassignment next year. There is a possibility that vacancies (permanent and/or fixed-term) in neighbouring Catholic dioceses may be required for these teachers.

In relation to the Catholic Diocese of Raphoe, its neighbouring adjoining dioceses are Clogher and Derry. In relation to the Catholic Diocese of Tuam, its neighbouring dioceses are Killala, Achonry and Elphin.

The announcement made today by the DES in relation to adding teachers with five years plus service to the panel areas and the commencement of the Supplementary Panel from 1 July next, does not apply in these areas at present.

Similarly, the DES's second announcement regarding the filling of fixed-term vacancies (as per the formula outlined in Q 9.) does not apply within the boundaries of these seven Catholic Dioceses.

Q13 Does the restriction that is applying to the Catholic dioceses of Tuam and Raphoe and their neighbouring dioceses, apply to other panel operators, e.g. Educate Together, Church of Ireland and Special Schools?

Yes, but on a more limited basis as the restrictions apply to filling posts solely within the geographical area covered by the Tuam and Raphoe diocesan panels and not in respect of the geographical area covered by their neighbouring dioceses.

In respect of permanent vacancies, the restrictions mean that teachers (if any) with five years or more fixed-term service or supplementary panel rights, will not be placed on their panels at this stage if the vacancies occur in schools within the geographical area of the dioceses of Tuam and Raphoe.

In respect of fixed-term vacancies, the formula outlined above at Q. 9 for the filling of fixed-term posts will not apply, if the vacancy is located in a school within the geographical boundary of the dioceses of Tuam and Raphoe.

In other words, it is the same restriction that applies to Catholic schools but is confined to the Tuam and Raphoe geographical areas only and not to schools in the geographic area of any neighbouring diocese.

Schools That Do Not Have Access to Redeployment Panels

Q14 What is the situation in relation to schools that do not have access to a redeployment panel, e.g. Gaelscoileanna under the patronage of An Foras Patrúnachta, Community National Schools, Model Schools and the Muslim National Schools?

In relation to permanent vacancies, these schools may now proceed to open recruitment to fill these vacancies provided they are not located within the geographical boundaries of the Catholic Diocese of Tuam and Raphoe. No other schools are permitted at this stage to proceed to open competition recruitment for the filling of permanent vacancies.

In relation to fixed-term vacancies these schools can now proceed to fill these vacancies on the basis of the formula outlined in Q. 9 above provided any of these schools are not located within the geographical boundaries of the Catholic dioceses of Tuam and Raphoe.

FURTHER QUESTIONS TO FOLLOW.....

Q1 Must schools fill their fixed-term posts from the Supplementary Panel?

No. Schools are not obliged to fill their fixed-term vacancies from the Supplementary Panel. Teachers on the Supplementary Panel are in the queue for permanent vacancies and no permanent vacancy can be filled by open competition until the Main Panel and then the Supplementary Panel is clear in their panel area. However schools are not obliged to fill their fixed-term vacancies from the Supplementary Panel. However if a teacher on the Supplementary Panel is offered a fixed-term post (by either open competition or by getting a 'roll over' contract) they can defer their panel rights to take up the fixed-term post. The fixed-term post must extend for a minimum period of one school year

Q2 As a fixed-term teacher what does deferring my panel rights mean?

Deferring panel rights means postponing the date that you go on the panel i.e. become available for a permanent post. You can defer your panel rights if you are taking a fixed-term post in any school. The fixed-term post must extend for a minimum period of one school year i.e. replacing a teacher on career break, secondment etc. As a fixed-term teacher the maximum period for which you may defer your panel rights is 3 years.

Q3 If, as a fixed-term teacher I defer my panel rights to take up a fixed-term position in my own school or in a school other than the school from which I was offered panel rights and subsequently I resign my post during the school year do I forfeit my panel rights?

Yes, access to the panel can only be achieved again by securing a permanent post by open competition, which would subsequently be suppressed, or by completing more than 3 years fixed-term service from the date that you forfeited your panel rights.

Q4 If I need to defer my panel rights when must I notify the Department?

You must defer, in writing (please retain a certificate of postage) to the Department, by the date specified in the panel offer letter.

Q5 If, as a fixed-term teacher, I defer my panel rights to take up a fixed-term position in my own school, and subsequently a permanent post arises in this school, should this post be offered to me?

The Board of Management may offer the post to you (providing the main panel is clear) but it is not obliged to do so. Likewise, you are not obliged to accept the offer. Refusal of such an offer will not cause you to forfeit your panel rights.

Q6 As a fixed-term teacher, if I defer my panel rights to take up a fixed-term post in a school other than the school from which I was offered panel rights, and a permanent post subsequently arises in my new school, can I be offered this post?

If the school in which you are now working is located within the same diocese as the school from which you were granted panel rights, and the main panel is clear, the Board of Management may offer you the post. However, they are not obliged to do so. Likewise, you are not obliged to accept the offer. Refusal of such an offer will not cause you to forfeit your panel rights.

Q7 As a fixed-term teacher, if I defer my panel rights to take up a fixed-term post in another school, located in another diocese, on what panel is my name placed the following year?

With the Patron's approval, your name will be placed on the panel which is appropriate to the school in which you are now serving. For example, if you were offered panel rights for the 2011/2012 school year within the Dublin Archdiocese, but deferred same to take a fixed-term post in Cork, in the 2012/2013 school year you will be eligible for inclusion on the Cork Diocesan Panel following approval from the Patron. It is a matter for the teacher to obtain the Patron's permission.