

Printout

**Irish
National
Teachers'
Organization**

*Cumann
Múinteoirí
Éireann*

August 2006

Academic Selection Outlawed from 2008

During the summer, the Education Order 2006 was passed by both Houses of Parliament. Effectively, this means that:

- All forms of academic selection are outlawed from 2008;
- The agreed CCEA Revised Curriculum can be introduced; and
- New arrangements for suspensions and expulsions of pupils.

The abolition of the 11+ is a cause for celebration. It is the achievement of a long-standing strategic objective dating from 1947. So let's pause and say 'Hurrah'.

There is, however, one critical flaw in the Order. If our elected politicians can get their act together and agree

on a devolved assembly by the Government's deadline of 24th November, then the abolition of selection will be the matter of an agreed determination by our political parties.

This will be a sore one for the DUP, which has recklessly disregarded its democratic franchise in its hostility to meaningful dialogue on this issue and is now likely to be hoist by its own petard. Teachers will have little sympathy for them. Teachers' attention is drawn to the House of Lords' debate: www.parliament.uk/handsard where Unionists got themselves worked up about the politics of the old school tie.

Beware the inclination to laugh. Weeping for our children who stay here in what passes as democracy in Northern Ireland may be more appropriate.

New Staff Changes at Northern Office

Summer 2006 has seen major staff changes to Northern Office. Nuala O'Donnell has taken a two-year career break and is currently working for CCMS as an Education Advisor on pupil profiles.

Tony Carlin has been promoted to the post of Senior Official with a range of responsibilities including:

- Legal and Industrial Relations;
- Legislation;
- Casework including legal cases, equality cases, child abuse;
- Social inclusion including equality.



Brendan Harron has also been appointed as Senior Official. Brendan is a lifetime INTO activist and

member of Northern Committee. His areas of responsibility include:

- Serving and developing the Education policy group;
- Professional development and trade union training;
- Industrial relations;
- Nursery, Primary and Secondary policy review.

Helen Mawhinney has returned from maternity leave and continues her work in INTO's recruitment strategy.



Clare Martin has joined the INTO team replacing Lorraine Devine who left to get married and set up home in Donegal.

Have You Registered?

INTO substitute teacher members are reminded that Department of Education Circular 2006/07 advises schools and employing authorities that, as from 1 September 2006, only teachers who are on the Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers Register (NISTR) should be employed to work in schools. The Department sees this as an important measure to strengthen Child Protection.

If you haven't already done so, you should apply to join the register immediately as your application may take up to 8 weeks to process.

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Independent Strategic Review of Education

Marie Eagle, Education Minister has announced the Terms of Reference of the Independent Strategic Review of Education, which is being undertaken by a team led by Sir George Bain, former Vice-Chancellor of Queens' University and distinguished public servant. The terms of reference are:

To examine funding of the education system, in particular the strategic planning and organisation of the schools' estate, taking account of the curriculum changes, including the wider provision for 14-19 year olds, and also demographic trends.

(i) Financial Issues

- Consider the overall deployment of resources across the education system in Northern Ireland;
- Assess the costs associated with multi-sector provision in a divided society, the impact of school size and the impact of the rural nature of much of Northern Ireland;
- Advise on the cost/benefit of the investment and rationalisation programme.

(ii) Strategic Planning of the Schools' Estate

- Consider the proposed approach being adopted to strategic planning of the estate;
- Advise on the appropriate level of surplus capacity, allowing flexibility for changes and parental choice;
- Consider how post-primary and FE provision can best be planned together, particularly for 14 - 19 year olds, given the challenges of the Entitlement Framework, the new curriculum and the need to optimise collaboration with the FE sector.

(iii) Integrating Education and Improving Collaboration

- Consider how strategic planning of the schools' estate can best encourage cross-sector collaboration and models of schooling that promote greater integrating of education in line with "A Shared Future";
- Advise on how the planned investment to renew the schools' estate can best be deployed to incentivise collaboration and sharing;
- Consider what models of collaboration and sharing will work.

NITC made a united teachers' union response, which emphasised:

- Any vision for an education system for the 21st century must be based on the theme of the Government's policy for "A Shared Future".
- The need for an educational focus on "Excellence in Education" and "pupils' achieving their full potential".
- Ensure the enhancement of education standards by implementing the recommendations



Education Minister with Sir George Bain.

of the Curran Report into the salaries' and conditions of service of teachers.

- The existing numbers of teaching jobs in the primary and post primary sectors are protected.
- Teacher transfer across sector and phase.

Check the NITC response out on the INTO website: www.into.ie

INTO NEWS • INTO NEWS • INTO NEWS

► WELB NORTHERN COMMITTEE VACANCY

A vacancy has arisen for the Northern Committee representative position for the WELB post primary area. This is due to the employment of Brendan Harron as a Senior Official in Northern Office with effect from 1 August 2006.

Secondary members who wish to seek election to the Northern Committee for this area should notify in writing their intention to be a candidate to General Secretary John Carr not later than **5.00pm on Friday 8 September 2006** at 35 Parnell Square, Dublin.

A candidate for election as Western Area Northern Committee representative must be nominated by a branch or branches in the area with a total paid up membership of 50 or over.

Any member of a Northern Ireland branch who has been a member of the INTO continuously for two years and is a member of a branch in the electoral area is eligible for the position of Northern Committee area representative. The timetable for election will be:

- Written notice of nomination to General Secretary – **Friday 8 September 2006**
- Nomination by a branch/branches – **Friday 13 October 2006**
- Nomination forms to Northern Secretary by **Monday 16 October 2006**

Election will be in the period up to **3 November 2006**.

► SCRUDU CAILIOCHTA SA GHAEILGE

INTO has identified a lecturer who is prepared to organise a course for INTO members who want to attain the Scrudu qualification to teach in primary schools in the Republic of Ireland. A minimum enrolment of 8-10 teachers is necessary and the course would be on offer in Belfast.

If you are interested please contact Brendan Harron in Northern Office immediately.

► ATTENTION PRINCIPALS AND VICE PRINCIPALS

The Leadership Group Pay Structure from 1 September 2005 – Department of Education Circular has now issued to schools. It is available on the INTO website along with INTO advice as to the use of this Determination. INTO Website address is: www.into.ie

A pro-forma for principal members will be issued early in the new term.

► Year Planner

The INTO Year Planner for 2006/2007 school year is included with this issue of Printout. Further copies can be obtained from Northern Office.

"Enough is Enough" Campaign Continues

I.N.T.O.
Serving Education

In August press reports indicated that teacher absences in Northern Ireland were on average about 9.5 days per year. A significant proportion of teachers who go off sick do so because they can no longer cope with or endure the increasing workload and bureaucracy that is an everyday feature of the teacher's professional life. Their stress is further compounded by the refusal of management to grant the 10% Planning and Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time that their teaching counterparts in England have been granted.

Northern Committee urges all INTO members to continue to support the "Enough as Enough" campaign and to ensure that they:

■ MEETINGS

Limit attendance at meetings held outside of teaching sessions to no more than one meeting per week and to a maximum limit of one hour.

■ PUPIL REPORTS

Prepare no more than one written pupil progress report per year.

■ ANNUAL PARENTS' REPORTS

INTO principals are directed not to undertake any preparation of the Annual Report of the Board of Governors to parents.

■ SUBSTITUTE COVER

Observe strictly the agreed conditions of teachers on substitute cover.

INTO has arranged a special meeting of the Northern Committee for August 2006 to discuss the "Enough as Enough" campaign, the issue of 10% Planning, Preparation and Assessment time (PPA) and the need for an Independent Teacher Welfare service in Northern Ireland.

At a time when the Department of Education is seeking to implement massive change on the 11+, the revised curriculum, new assessment arrangements, rationalisation of schools and change in education administration arrangements, it is

unacceptable that successive Education Ministers continue to refuse to resource the Curran recommendation that teachers in Northern Ireland should have parity with their colleagues in England, Wales and Scotland.

**Should we
be doing more?**

**Let us know
your views.**

Email your comments to:
frankbunting@ni.into.ie

Ethos Days?

INTO is aware that principals and Boards of Governors have been asked to set aside, in the incoming academic year, an exceptional closure day to allow schools to examine how to promote the Catholic ethos in the school. INTO regards this as an unacceptable use of an exceptional closure day.

Exceptional closure days are clearly earmarked for teacher training and development. The Department of Education has currently advised schools of the need for additional exceptional closure days to deal with the implementation of the revised curriculum and other educational matters. School closures exist in order that teachers can enhance their professional practice and as a result discharge their roles and

responsibilities in a confident and professional manner. Exceptional closure days have never been agreed with INTO as a vehicle to enable a particular religious ethos to be promoted. The Organisation is also concerned that this determination is being given at a time when schools are being forced to cut back on training and development requests from individual teachers because of budgetary and workload concerns.

INTO advises our members that they should not attend such closure days until the matter has been the subject of meaningful negotiation with INTO. Members should liaise with their Northern Committee, CEC or branch representatives in relation to this matter.

SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE UPDATE

AT A GLANCE

- All pay to increase by 2.5% – 1 September 2006
- Management allowances permanent from 1 September 2006
- Principals and Vice Principals ISRs increase 1 September 2005 – ACTION NEEDED NOW

PAY INCREASE OF 2.5%

At the time of writing (high summer) the Department of Education boffins are still writing up the business case for teachers to get 2.5% (it is hardly an increase) on their salaries, management allowances and principal, vice principal points effective 1 September 2006.

Unfortunately, and most unfairly, teachers holding management allowances are not to be compensated for the 3 year freeze period. This means that all post holders have, and are working more for less over the last 3 years. In ordinary circumstances this would be called embezzlement or theft. Few tears would be shed if Management Side were to be shipped to Maghaberry for the Winter.

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

INTO has raised the impasse surrounding the Collective Agreement with Management Side. Generally this works well but there is increasing evidence of unhelpful interference from over-punctilious Finance Officers of ELBs, who have scant regard for agreements negotiated within the TNC.

The INTO view on school rationalisation is clear. There **must** be meaningful consultation **BEFORE** the decision to rationalise is taken. When that does not happen, as in the case of the CCMS attempt to close St. Joseph's High School, Plumbridge, INTO, following consultation with the school members will oppose the closure proposal.

Likewise all teachers over 50, including principals and vice principals are entitled to claim redundancy with premature retirement compensation. INTO will oppose any change to this working arrangement without meaningful consultation and agreement.



Mary Cahillane and Gerry Murphy, INTO Negotiators

MANAGEMENT ALLOWANCES

They are once again PERMANENT with effect from 1 September 2006 and should also increase by 2.5%.

Two things for schools reps., principals and members to note:

1. *Are there enough management allowances in your schools staffing structure?* 70% of teachers should be holding management allowances in each school. The CURRAN ENQUIRY report discovered that this required percentage has fallen to 49.5%. This means that a lot of teachers are losing money. You can check whether your school has the correct percentage by consulting INTO Leaflet No.3 "Promotion Template" or call Northern Office for advice.
2. *Management Allowances awarded during the last 3 years of the FREEZE were so called "TEMPORARY".*

INTO and all the teachers' unions dispute this and maintain such allowances are in fact PERMANENT. Any attempt in a school to terminate such a management allowance will be met with a vote for STRIKE ACTION by all the recognised teachers' unions in that school.

- *Interesting Fact:* 4,395 teachers in Northern Ireland are in receipt of one Management Allowance out of a total of between 12,000 and 13,000 teachers receiving management allowances.
- *Uninteresting Fact:* Management Side's only big idea at the last meeting was to seek to redesignate "Management Allowances" again as "ADDITIONAL TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES". NITC rejected this mouthful. As a result, TLRs (Teaching and Learning Responsibilities) introduced by the so-called National Agreement in Britain, will not now apply in Northern Ireland.

One final note, school staffing structures, and any change to them, are important matters. Northern Office should be contacted about changes to staffing structures.

PRINCIPAL/VICE PRINCIPAL ISRS

At long last, the Department of Education has issued the Determination, which enables a Board of Governors to change its ISR upwards by 2 points. Employing Authorities have issued advice and a pro forma to record the change in ISR but this information has been sent to Chairs of Governors – not principals, during the summer. This information is also available on the INTO website along with INTO advice. Principals should obtain this pro forma. The major erosion in differentials between the highest paid teacher and the vice principal arising from the introduction of the Upper Pay Scale for teachers cannot be readily used as a factor by governors. The key factor to be used is that for the retention of principals and vice principals.

PREMATURE RETIREMENT (PRC)

There are currently 3 avenues for Premature Retirement:

- Efficient Discharge (used mostly by principals and vice principals)
- Redundancy
- Ill-health or infirmity retirement

Efficient Discharge Scheme

A significant change has taken place on Efficient Discharge. Instead of each employing authority operating its own arrangement, a Northern Ireland Steering Group will now consider all ED requests. This will undoubtedly lead to greater fairness and equity in the operation of this scheme.

Redundancy

There is no change to redundancy in spite of an inaccurate and alarmist NASUWT schools' bulletin late last term. Meaningful consultations are planned between the NI Teachers' Council and the DE Permanent Secretary on a range of options. "Hard-charging" of individual Boards of Governors is one option to be considered but this is unlikely to work in the Northern Ireland schools' context. Members will be kept informed with accurate information on any developments.

Ill Health

Major changes are planned in this area as part of the Review of the Teachers' Pensions' Scheme.



Frank Bunting, Northern Secretary

LACK OF PROGRESS

At the June meeting of the Teachers' Negotiating Committee, it was obvious that Management Side had become almost entirely dysfunctional. No consideration at all had been given to a series of extremely important topics:

(i) *Planning, Preparation and Assessment Time (PPA)*

This became a statutory right for all teachers in the UK – except for Northern Ireland – on 1 September 2005. That means that all teachers do 10% more teaching time than their colleagues in Britain and that pupils in Northern Ireland are deprived of the additional PPA that young people in Britain now get. Clearly this position is **UNTENABLE**.

With great difficulty NITC persuaded Management Side to set up a small working group to plan for the introduction of PPA in NI. It met once and Management Side did not consider even the minutes of the meeting.

INTO has written to Marie Eagle, MP Minister for Education, in protest at this lack of progress and Northern Committee is meeting in special session to consider the non-implementation of PPA and to do so in the context of the INTO "Enough is Enough" campaign.

(ii) *Teachers; Health and Well-being Strategy*

Management Side, after all these years, is still setting up sub-committees and discussing strategy. Nothing is happening. The one hope for making progress – the Teachers' Support Network (NI had its funds stopped by the TSN charity headquartered in London last January and its staff were made redundant.

"No money" was the Department of Education refrain. No money for teacher welfare or teacher counselling. Yet its sister Department – Department of Social Development (DSO) lashes money around the place with seemingly gay abandon. Have an interface community group and there is not a problem with £100,000 for counselling services! And Don Quixote projects like money to help the Orange Order (which does not permit Catholic membership!) make itself more tourist-friendly.

Yes. We must maintain our sense of humour. But it is obvious that in spite of all the talk, teachers are not a priority when it comes to funding welfare or counselling services. Will this ever change?

(iii) *Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures*

Teachers' procedures are being reviewed by the Labour Relations' Agency. There was a hope that the Government's recent Statutory Disputes Resolution procedures may help make things more teacher-friendly. This hope was misplaced. Consider Naomi Cunningham's report from the Legal Action Group (LAG):

"The new regime is misconceived at the policy level: it is far more likely to intensify and prolong disputes and increase reliance on lawyers, than to lead to early and informal resolution. At the level of detail it is even worse: the rules are obscure, cumbersome and over-complicated, and raise many difficult problems for employers and employees".

The revised procedures will be on the INTO website early in the new term: www.into.ie

(iv) *Unsatisfactory Teaching Procedures – for principals, vice principals and teachers*

This procedure is 5 years past its sell-by date. It is a wicked and evil procedure. For this reason INTO – alone of all the

teachers' unions – has determined it VOID. INTO members are strongly advised to have nothing to do with it.

This does not mean that nothing can be done with individual teachers where serious under performance can be identified. INTO will work with principals and governors to resolve such issues in a professional and humane way.

INTO ADVICE TO MEMBERS: HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH UNSATISFACTORY TEACHING PROCEDURE IN ITS PRESENT FORM. IF IT IS RAISED, CONTACT YOUR NORTHERN COMMITTEE REP OR NORTHERN OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

(v) *Childcare Vouchers*

SUCCESS. DE has promised to change the law in September so that all teachers can claim Child Care Vouchers. The legal change will allow teachers to participate voluntarily in salary sacrifice arrangements and thus make it possible for their Governors to provide Child Care Vouchers.

More information on this will be provided, when available, on the INTO website in September: www.into.ie

(vi) *Extra Personal Vacations (EPU) for Teachers*

This INTO claim would provide teachers who do a professional development course – like the RTU Summer School – time off in lieu. Many schools already use some of their BAKER days in this manner. If it is not working like this in your school, contact your Northern Committee rep.

(vii) *Equality*

All school Boards of Governors are required to have Equal Opportunities' Policy Statements. This became a requirement in 1993 but the model policy statement is way out of date. INTO has drafted a new model Equal Opportunities' Policy Statement (Joint Declaration of Protection). The Employing Authorities argue that the four months they have had this documentation has not been long enough for them to give consideration to it.

INTO Advice: The model Equal Opportunities Policy Statement/Joint Declaration of Protection is available on the INTO website: www.into.ie School Reps and principals should download it and get it adopted by their Board of Governors.

(viii) *Maternity Pay and Leave*

Women teachers have the worst deal of all workers in the public sector. INTO is putting forward proposals to improve this:

- Spreading Occupational Maternity leave over 26 weeks;
- Ensuring that teachers' maternity leave periods can be taken outside the normal summer holiday period.

Management Side has yet to give consideration to these proposals, which given the large proportion of women in the teaching workforce, is not a good sign of the Employing Authorities' commitment to equality of opportunity.

(ix) *Bullying and Harassment*

The "Dignity at Work" Bullying and Harassment procedure needs changing to make it conform with recent employment legislation. A joint management side/teacher union working group met with the LRA and has accepted this interpretation of the law.

SECONDARY MATTERS

KEY STAGE 3 PUPIL PROFILE

INTO is involved in ongoing consultation with CCEA on the KS3 Pupil Profile. At a recent meeting with CCEA, Brendan Harron warned that INTO will consider boycotting the scheme if assurances are not given on workload and manageability issues.

CCEA has advised INTO that the plans for piloting in 2007/08 have not yet been finalised. If a full 'dry run' is required, then it is likely that all Key Stage 3 schools will need to be involved. If not, then it will probably be enough to use the 15 regional pilot schools but with a requirement for profiles to be used for all year 8 pupils.

Schools involved in pilots/trials in 2006/07 will have been recruited in May/June 2006 and those for the 2007/08 pilots/trials will be recruited in May/June 2007. The intention is to invite a broad range of schools (a representative sample as far as would be achievable in terms of different types, boards and sizes) to participate.

INTO has been assured that the trials will be independently evaluated and quality assured in terms of workload, manageability and fitness for purpose.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT BOARD (PMB)

Brendan Harron INTO, has been selected by the NI Teachers' Council as its representative on the Programme Management Board. The PMB is the strategic planning group representing education partners including CCEA, CCMS, Classroom 2000, DE, ELBs, ETI, Education Technology Group, Initial Teacher Education, RTU and UCET.

The joint chairs of the PMB are Gilly Irwin (NEELB) and Carmel Gallagher (CCEA). Brendan will be the representative of all the teaching unions. Check: www.pmbni.org.uk

CHEATING THE SYSTEM

It appears that cheating in exams is a big business today. There are dozens of Internet sites where people are happy to take your money and write anything from a straightforward English essay to a doctoral thesis for you. These people purport to "help" students with their coursework but in fact they mean that they will help them to cheat.

This presents a serious difficulty for teachers, whose responsibility it is to ensure that coursework presented by pupils is their own, unaided work. Plagiarism is a serious concern and can often be very difficult to identify. The problem is made even more difficult when pupils are expected to carry out extensive direct and indirect research into their chosen topics for essays and dissertations. It is difficult for the teacher to decide when the line is crossed between good use of secondary sources and downright plagiarism.

Examining boards are also increasingly concerned about the

amount of help that is given to students by parents and teachers. Many teachers may not even be aware that they are breaching the rules when they give advice to students on how to write essays or how to answer exam questions. Concern at government level has led to consideration being given to abandoning coursework altogether.

QCA figures show that just over 4,500 students were penalised during the 2005 round of A-level and GCSE exams, a rise of 27 per cent over the previous year. However, the overall number of candidates penalised remains low, with less than one incident for every 1,500 exams taken. Around one-third of the offences involved students caught for plagiarism, collusion or copying another candidate's work, typically in coursework done before a final exam.

CCEA has issued helpful guides to teachers and parents. They can be downloaded from CCEA's website: www.ccea.org.uk

KEY STAGE 3 CURRICULUM PILOT BEGINS

The new Key Stage 3 Curriculum Pilot will start being implemented with Year 8 pupils in the 15 pilot schools from September 2006. A list of the 15 participating schools, together with details of the programme is available on-line at: http://www.rewardinglearning.com/development/ks3/docs/ks3_regional_pilot.pdf

Carmel Gallagher, CCEA, has assured INTO that there will be no major differences in the KS3 curriculum, compared with the present. Citizenship will be the only new area and there will be an enhanced emphasis on the development of skills. There will also be flexibility to allow schools to tailor the revised curriculum to their needs. Schools should take the changes at a pace that was suitable for them. Work in preparing guidance and a support material is well advanced. CCEA intends to provide all schools with a full pack of support materials as soon as feasible in the 2006/07 school year.

The roll-out of the revised curriculum for all schools is scheduled for 2007-8 with training taking place in 2006-7. Guidance and Support Materials will be provided directly to schools. There are also Pupil Profile Pilots taking place this year, during which workload issues, particularly the manageability of the Learning Plan (which will be optional) will be independently evaluated.



Brendan Harron, Senior Official with responsibility for Post Primary Issues

VOCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME (VEP)

In June 2004, DE and DEL launched the Vocational Enhancement Programme (VEP) as an initiative to provide the two Departments with the opportunity to develop models of collaborative working between schools and colleges. This was in line with the recommendations of the Costello Report that schools and colleges should be able to offer pupils a wide menu of academic and vocational courses by 2008. During 2004/05, 6 FE colleges and 34 schools were involved in the programme.

An independent evaluation of the first year of the programme highlighted some positive examples of collaborative working between schools and colleges, particularly with regard to the range of courses on offer, the variety of delivery mechanisms and the different age groups involved in the courses. The evaluation highlighted difficulties with collaboration such as timetabling, pastoral care and ICT difficulties. Structural issues such as different funding systems and the different qualifications of teachers/lecturers were also highlighted.

In September 2005, VEP was extended to include all 16 FE colleges, working closely with schools in their localities to deliver vocational education to 175 schools and 11,500 pupils, aged 14-19. The two Departments committed a total of £4m for the 2005/06 academic year and a similar amount will be provided for the 2006/07 school year. The funding is earmarked. It is likely from September 2006 that around 200 post primary schools will be involved in collaborative working with the 16 FE colleges. DE is considering how best to disseminate examples of good practice.

Further details on www.deni.gov.uk/22-ppa-vep_2006-07_circular_2006-03.pdf

SPECIALIST SCHOOLS

From September 2006 twelve schools in Northern Ireland will take part in a pilot scheme to explore the concept of 'specialist' schools. The schools were selected after a two-stage selection process and the recommendations of an independent panel, comprising former principals and members of the ETI.

The schools represent all management types.

Each specialist school will have an emphasis or expertise in a particular curricular area, as well as providing access to the full range of the curriculum. They will set themselves challenging targets to raise standards, not just in their chosen specialist areas, but across the whole curriculum.

They will also set themselves challenging targets to work with other schools, community groups and the business sector. Through collaboration and sharing best practice, it is envisaged that they will benefit schools and pupils in their local areas.

The schools included in the pilot and their specialisms are:

Ashfield Girls	Belfast	ICT
Belfast Girls Model	Belfast	ICT
Glengormley High School	Newtownabbey	ICT
Ballyclare High School	Ballyclare	ICT
St Cecilia's College	Derry	Performing Arts
St Louise's College	Belfast	Performing Arts
Limavady High School	Limavady	Performing Arts
St John's High School	Dromore	Business and Enterprise
St Mary's College	Derry	Science
Lumen Christi College	Derry	Science
St Malachy's College	Belfast	Music
Shimna Integrated College	Newcastle	Languages

ALTERNATIVE QUALIFICATION FOR STUDENTS AIMING FOR TOP UNIVERSITIES

The Cambridge exam board is refining its alternative qualification for students aiming for top universities. From 2008 the Pre-U exam will involve studying three subjects over two years, with final exams and an extended essay. Unlike AS or A-levels, it will not be modular and split into two parts, nor require everyone to do certain subjects like the International Baccalaureate.

The announcement came as an academic said ministers were "in

denial" about A-levels having got easier.

The government insisted standards were rising "year on year". But Dr Robert Coe, an education specialist from Durham University who has analysed trends, said A-levels were no longer "fit for purpose" in challenging or distinguishing between the brightest pupils. "I don't think it is a scandal that they are easier. What I think is a scandal is that they have become easier but that official sources are in denial about it."

Benefits for Working Teachers

For many teachers, particularly substitute teachers and those on temporary contracts, their service may not be sufficient to avail of the benefits collectively agreed family friendly policies and procedures. In such situations these teachers may be required to rely on statutory benefits. This article outlines the range of benefits and facilities available to working parents and teachers.

PATERNITY LEAVE AND PAY

6 April 2003 saw the introduction of a new right to two weeks' paid paternity leave around the time of the birth of a child or around the time a child is newly placed for adoption. Leave must generally be taken in one block (of one or two weeks) within the first eight weeks of the child's birth or placement. An exception to this is in the case of a premature birth, where the new father will be permitted to take paternity leave and pay within 8 weeks of either the child's birth or the expected week of childbirth, whichever is the later.

Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) is currently paid at the rate of £108.85 per week or 90% of average earnings.

For more information on paternity pay and leave, consult the Employment Rights Booklet ER 34 at www.delni.gov.uk

ADOPTION LEAVE AND PAY

Adoption leave and pay for parents adopting a child newly placed with them was introduced on 6 April 2003. Adoption leave is for the same length of time as maternity leave, and Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) is paid for the same period of time as Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP). SAP is paid at the lesser of £108.85 per week or 90% of average earnings for 26 weeks.

More information on SAP is available in the Employment Rights Booklet ER 35. This gives advice and information to your employer as evidence of being matched with a child for adoption.

IMPROVED MATERNITY RIGHTS

Improvements to maternity rights – in particular the right to 26 weeks' ordinary maternity leave (paid) and 26 weeks' additional maternity leave (unpaid) for expectant mothers – were introduced on 6 April 2003. Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) is paid at 90% of average earnings for the first 6 weeks and at the lesser of £108.85 per week or 90% of average earnings for the remaining 20 weeks.

- More detail on the maternity rights is available by consulting Employment Rights Booklet ER 16.

- Also useful is the Social Security Agency's booklet dealing with entitlements to SMP and Maternity Allowance (MA).

These arrangements are designed to improve the position of teachers who cannot avail of the benefits of the teachers' maternity leave and pay scheme.

RIGHT FOR PARENTS OF YOUNG OR DISABLED CHILDREN TO REQUEST FLEXIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS

A duty on employers to consider seriously requests from parents of young or disabled children to work flexible hours was introduced on 6 April 2003. It should be noted that the legislation introduced a right to request flexible working conditions, but there is no automatic right to have such a request granted. There are business grounds on which such a request can be refused by an employer.

Further details on how to make a request, and how to consider and respond to one, can be found in Employment Rights Booklet ER 36. Forms to help employees and employers with flexible working requests can be downloaded from www.delni.gov.uk

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I've got a young family and would like to change my work patterns. What are my rights?

As of the 6th April 2003, many people with children under 6, or disabled children under 18, now have a right to have their employer consider their request to work flexibly.

As well as the new right to have your request for flexible working considered, if you need to change your work pattern you may also have stronger rights, particularly under sex discrimination laws. Bear this in mind if you are making a request for flexible working, and get advice from your INTO representative.

Any additional rights to flexible working will be included in your contract of employment. Your employer is legally bound to honour them because they

have been promised to you. If you have a dispute over your terms and conditions on flexible working, then seek advice from your INTO representative.

What rights do I have to return to work after the birth of my baby?

After returning to work from an ordinary maternity leave a new mother is entitled to return to the job she left, if that is possible, or to another job on terms no less favourable than her old job.

On returning to work after additional maternity leave she is entitled to return to a job which is the same or similar. She also has the right to put in a request for working flexibility. A number of options are available for teachers.

These include:

- Part time or flexible working;
- Job share;
- Temporary variation to the teacher's contract.

The first two options are permanent amendments to the teacher's contract of employment, The third option, is a temporary arrangement, usually for a period of 1 year with further annual extensions possible. Members should discuss possible flexible working with the Principal well in advance of making any application. Where difficulties arise members should seek advice from their school rep, or Northern Committee representative. Guidance on flexible working arrangements is on the INTO website www.into.ie/NI/ConditionsofService/ConditionsofService

My child is sick and I need time to look after him/her, but my school is refusing. Do I have any rights?

You have the right to take reasonable time off to deal with an emergency involving your child if he/she is ill and you need time to make arrangements for their care. In accordance with DE Circulars 1990/32 and 1991/32 a teacher is permitted up to three days with pay to deal with the serious illness of a member of a teacher's household.

PROFILE OF NORTHERN COMMITTEE CHAIR

GERRY MURPHY

I joined the INTO as a student in 1981 following the other teachers in my family into the INTO. I was soon elected as a school rep and began attending meetings of the Belfast West Branch, which in 1981 as now, was home to an eclectic mix of teacher activists from a variety of political and philosophical backgrounds.

I filled a number of positions in the Branch culminating in chairing the Branch for five years in the 90s. This proved to be an invaluable training ground in everything from public speaking to dispute resolution, valuable skills that have proved useful not only in my career but also in my personal life.

This activism exposed me to the various tiers of the Union. I became engaged in these wider tiers from District level through to Six County level and latterly National level. I served on the Officer Board of District and then was elected to succeed Maria Graham on the Northern Committee. Here I have sought to provide strategic leadership to the Union in the North. Currently I am Chair of Northern Committee, which, means I have a representative function

of the membership to statutory and voluntary organisations. It is an honour but also a challenge as I have to balance the demands of my job as a principal against the demands of the union. At a National level I serve on the Standing Orders Committee of Congress. This is the Committee that ensures Congress has an agenda and gets its business done in the allotted time. It is very interesting and rewarding work.

I have never subscribed to the view that in this post Thatcher era membership of a union is a pointless or insurance only related issue. Trade Unions remain necessary and vital in the struggle to protect and enhance the salary and working conditions of teachers. I have always believed that the INTO does this better than the other teacher union in the North because INTO is teacher led with the leadership coming from amongst our own members. This means we have real people, with real experience of our schools and educational administration representing our members from a solid understanding of what they know.

It is also important to me that we are a union organised across the island of Ireland. The experiences of our members



in both parts of the island provide a huge resource that can be employed for the benefit of teachers in both jurisdictions. It also sets us apart from our competitor unions whilst ensuring that the solutions and suggestions coming from INTO are not always simply reflections of policies developed elsewhere for a population that in many cases have little or nothing in common with our pupils or the members we represent.

Through all these years as an INTO activist I have had the good fortune to meet teachers from a variety of schools across the island. I have benefited from their experiences and learnt a lot from them. I also have made some great friends and met people I probably would not have had the opportunity to had I not been in the INTO.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2006-2007

MONTH	EVENT	DATES/TIMES	VENUE
October 2006	Nursery Principals' Conference	Tuesday 3rd, 3.00pm – 5.00pm	Templeton Hotel, TEMPLE
October 2006	Principals & Vice-Principals Forum	Thursday 12th, 2.00pm – 4.00pm	City Hotel, DERRY
October 2006	Health & Safety School Reps Training Course	Monday 16th & Tuesday 17th 9.00am – 3.15pm	Canal Court, NEWRY
October 2006	Bullying & Harassment Seminar	Thursday 26th, 9am – 3.30pm	City Hotel, DERRY
October 2006	School Representative Training Course (2-day course/overnight stay)	Monday 23rd & Tuesday 24th Day 1 (9 am – 4.00pm) Day 2 (9am – 3.30pm)	Canal Court, NEWRY
November 2006	Principals & Vice-Principals' Forum	Monday 13th, 2.00pm – 4.00pm	Malone House, BELFAST
November 2006	Retirement Seminar	Tuesday 14th, 4.00pm – 6.30pm	City Hotel, DERRY
November 2006	Retirement Seminar	Monday 20th, 4.00pm – 6.30pm	Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast
November 2006	Principals & Vice-Principals' Forum	Tuesday 21st, 2.00pm – 4.00pm	Canal Court, NEWRY
January 2007	School Representative Training Course (2-day course/overnight stay)	Monday 15th & Tuesday 16th Day 1 (9 am – 4.00pm) Day 2 (9am – 3.30pm)	Tullyglass Hotel, BALLYMENA
February 2007	Health & Safety School Reps Training Course	Monday 5th & Tuesday 6th 9.15am – 3.30pm	Killyhevin Hotel, FERMANAGH
April 2007	School Representative Training Course (2-day course/overnight stay)	Monday 23rd & Tuesday 24th Day 1 (9 am – 4.00pm) Day 2 (9am – 3.30pm)	Silverbirch Hotel, OMAGH



WELCOME TO THE TE

STUDENT INFORMATION

INTRODUCING THE INTO

Welcome to the teaching profession and welcome to the INTO.

Who Are We?

The INTO is the largest teachers' union in Ireland with over 30,000 members North and South.

What Can We Do For You?

Our goal is to support you during your time as a student. We do this in a number of ways through our regular Information Bulletins, Student Seminars, Website, sponsorship of your Students' Union and Sports Teams.

What Do We Want From You?

We want you to make full use of our full range of benefits – all FREE to you as a student member! Let us show you that we are the Union that best supports you.

We will invite you to upgrade your membership to fully qualified status when you graduate. Don't forget to sign up early for a further year's free membership!

INTO STUDENT SERVICES

- ✓ Free Membership
- ✓ Student Information Pack
- ✓ Student Publications
- ✓ Regular Bulletins
- ✓ Seminars
- ✓ Student Website
- ✓ Dedicated Student Officer
- ✓ Sponsorship

WHERE TO FIND US:

INTO Northern Office
23 College Gardens
BELFAST
BT9 6BS

Tel: 028 9038 1455
E-mail: info@ni.into.ie
Web: www.into.ie

ATTENTION SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES

RECRUITMENT – Building the Union

The lifeblood of a union is its membership – the larger we are, the stronger we are in serving teachers and representing the views of the profession.

Each year INTO undertakes an annual recruitment campaign. Its aim to increase membership across all education sectors in Northern Ireland. INTO relies on you to continue to play an active part in this recruitment exercise.

REMEMBER – 4 easy steps to recruitment:

1. Make a personal approach to colleagues;
2. Explain why they should be a member of the INTO;
3. Show how the INTO meets their professional needs;
4. Give them an application form!

ALL NEW MEMBERS TO THE INTO GET THEIR FIRST YEAR OF MEMBERSHIP FOR FREE!

SCHOOL REPS RECRUITMENT OFFER!

DON'T FORGET – complete and return the white form from the recruitment pack sent to you in August to claim a £5 M&S Voucher for every new member you recruit.

Be Quick! Offer ends 30 September 2006.



WHICH APPLICATION FORM DO I USE?

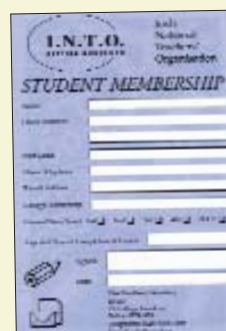


Full-time and Substitute Teachers

Complete Sections One and Two of the blue application form.

Grammar School Teachers

Complete Sections One and Two of the green application form.



Student Teachers

Complete the student application form.

TEACHING PROFESSION

I.N.T.O.
Serving Education

INTO SUPPORT AND ADVICE FOR NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

~ FREE MEMBERSHIP FOR ALL NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS – JOIN NOW – PAY NOTHING UNTIL JULY 2007! ~

Know Who To Contact

A key task for INTO is to represent its members and give them support when they need it. For this purpose, INTO has a network of local representatives in schools and at local level who can give you advice and assistance should the need arise. Contact details for your local representatives are issued to you in your INTO Membership Pack. INTO also has three full-time officials based in Northern Office who are available to give advice, representation and assistance on a wide range of issues.

INTO Publications

INTO has an extensive range of publications for members. These publications are free of charge and contain information and advice that is regularly updated to incorporate changes and new developments.

INTO Website

For further details of INTO services, information and up-to-the-minute educational updates visit our website: www.into.ie

Welcome Functions

During the Autumn Term your local representatives will invite Newly Qualified Teachers in their area to a Welcome Function. This is a great way to meet activists within the union and to network with other Newly Qualified (and some not so Newly Qualified) Teachers!

GET INVOLVED!

By participating in union activities you can make your opinion count and influence INTO policy - it's your union – get involved - get your voice heard!

VERE FOSTER MEDAL WINNER 2006

Vere Foster was the first President of INTO. He used his personal fortune and the profits from his famous copybooks to advance education in Ireland and fund famine relief work. Each year, to commemorate Vere Foster's great work in education, INTO presents a solid gold Vere Foster



Paul Kissick, Stranmillis University College receiving his Vere Foster Medal from INTO Representative Helen Mawhinney. Also pictured Professor Richard McMinn, Principal Stranmillis University College. (Photography by William Mateer, Templepatrick).

Medal to the student in each teacher-training institute who has achieved the highest standard of practical teaching in their final year.

DON'T FORGET!

NORTHERN IRELAND SUBSTITUTE TEACHER REGISTER (NISTR)

From 1 September 2006 only teachers registered on NISTR should be

employed in schools. To find out more about joining the NISTR visit www.nistr.org.uk or telephone: 9056 4000 Ext. 4427.

GTC REGISTRATION

It is important that all PGCE and final year BEd students, training in Northern Ireland and intending to teach in Northern Ireland for the first time, register with the General Teaching Council before commencing their first teaching post (including supply work). To obtain a Beginning Teacher Application form contact the Registration Team:

General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland
4th Floor
Albany House
73 - 75 Great Victoria Street
Belfast BT2 7AF

Tel: (028) 9033 3390

Fax: (028)9034 8787

Web: www.gtcni.org.uk

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

INTO INSURANCE

- ✓ Third Party
- ✓ School Outings and Tours
- ✓ Fire and Theft

ADELAIDE INSURANCE

- ✓ Carplan
- ✓ Homeplan
- ✓ Travelplan

BELFAST TEACHERS' CREDIT UNION

- ✓ Loans to members
- ✓ High interest rates on savings
- ✓ Free Insurance

PLATINUM FINANCIAL

- ✓ Independent Financial Advice
- ✓ Mortgages
- ✓ Life Assurance
- ✓ Retirement Counselling

BENENDEN HEALTHCARE

MAPFRE TRAVEL INSURANCE HOTEL OFFERS INTO DEATH AND BENEVOLENT GRANTS

And many, many more...

FOR FULL DETAILS OF ALL THE ABOVE SERVICES PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE:

www.into.ie

ELECTIONS TO THE GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

In the recent GTC elections INTO successfully contested four out of the five primary seats. The successful candidates were:

- John McGrady
- John Kerr
- Daisy Mules
- Charlie Glenn

One out of the 3 post primary seats was also secured by INTO candidate Damian Walls. The second phase of GTC elections will be starting this school term and INTO will be fielding candidates for the remaining two post primary and one nursery seat still to be filled. The INTO candidates are:

THOMAS McGLONE – Post Primary Position

Thomas left school in 1979 to work as a printer and returned to full-time education in 1986 aged 23, and graduated from the University of Ulster in 1989.

In 1992 he received his PGCE at Queen's University. He has wide INTO union experience at both local and district level and is the school representative in St. Paul's Junior High School, Lurgan. His vision for the GTCNI would be to strengthen the voice of teachers, especially in the post-primary sector.

SEAMUS HANNA – Post Primary Position

Seamus currently teaches in Edmund Rice College and holds the position of ICT co-ordinator and Head of Year. He is also a representative on the Post-Primary Consultative Committee of the NEELB.

Seamus believes teachers are a dedicated body of men and women who deserve to be treated with respect, and whose professional experience will be invaluable to the future shape of our education system.

EILEEN FINCH – Nursery Candidate

Eileen is principal of St. Luke's Nursery School in Twinbrook. She firmly believes in the value and importance of nursery education as a distinct phase of every child's educational experience. She sees her role as striving to be a leader for life-long learning for every child in her care.

All the candidates standing are being actively supported by the Northern Committee. INTO urges you to support them by voting in the forthcoming election and making sure **YOUR VOTE COUNTS**.



Smokebusters Club members from Currie Primary School, Belfast with their prize-winning teacher Mr. Orr.

The winner of the Club's No Smoking Day Competition, receiving a tobacco education package from Smokebusters Project Officer, Judith West.

Membership applications from Primary 6 and 7 classes for 2006/07 are now being accepted. Contact Judith West on 028 90 663281.

An Enhancing Experience

Many individuals apply for teaching positions in schools only to be informed that they have not been short listed because the Board of Governors has deemed that they did not meet the necessary requirements when the essential or desirable criteria were enhanced. This causes consternation and anxiety for many INTO members who contact Northern Office when they fail to be short listed.

Can a prospective employer enhance criteria used in a recruitment and selection process? The short answer is **"Yes"**. However the employer must clearly state on the job advertisement that the criteria may be enhanced and indicate the type of enhancement that may be applied e.g. **"enhancement may be based on additional years teaching special needs"**. Enhanced criteria should not be potentially discriminatory under any of the statutory grounds e.g. **"based on length of service"** as this may constitute indirect discrimination. Nor is it acceptable to enhance criteria for matters of expediency. Job descriptions should accurately reflect the roles and responsibilities of the post. Personnel specifications should contain objective standards that are clearly set out in the essential and desirable criteria needed for the effective performance of the job. In addition, only factors which are relevant to the job should be considered.

Recruitment and Selection practices should be operated in an open and transparent manner, with appointment on merit being the core principle. Criteria set in a personnel specification should be compliant with the Codes of Practice developed by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. A breach of the Code of Practice will not of itself render an employer subject to a finding of discrimination. *However, in any discrimination proceedings before an Industrial Tribunal, the relevant Code of Practice shall be admissible in evidence and a Tribunal shall take into account any provision of the Code which appears to be relevant to any question arising in proceedings before it (Article 56A(9)).*

Any INTO member who feels that they have been the subject of potentially unfair recruitment practices should contact their Northern Committee representative, CEC representative or the Northern Office as quickly as possible after they become aware of matter.

INTO Golf Competition Winners



Mary Hackett winner of INTO Ladies Golf Competition with Barney Magill (Northern Committee) and Maura Pat McReynolds (District II Secretary)





Michael Grant winner of the INTO Golf Competition with Barney Magill (Northern Committee) and Maura Pat McReynolds (District II Secretary)

Civil Servants to get a 'taste' of life in school

Following discussions at the Standing Conference for Secondary Education, DE has agreed to carry out a pilot scheme in Northern Ireland, equivalent to the School Immersion scheme which operates in England. The core element of the scheme is the placement of DE civil servants in schools for a period of three days – their 'immersion' in the everyday reality of life in a typical school.

Two pilot visits have already been arranged – Eddie Rooney, Deputy Secretary, will spend three days in Down High School and Katrina Godfrey, Head of Resource Allocation Division, spent three days in Legamaddy Primary School.


Brendan Harron, Joint Secretary of the Standing Conference said that he hoped the officials benefit from experiencing the reality of life in school and that they would keep their experiences in mind when making decisions that affect the working lives of teachers and pupils.

Ireland's Outdoor Classroom

DERRYGONNELLY

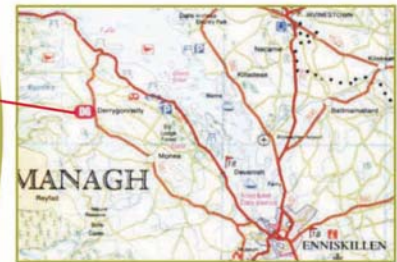
Field Centre



FSC OUTDOOR CLASSROOM IN DERRYGONNELLY

FSC Derrygonnelly, in west Fermanagh, offers cross curricular and curriculum specific programmes for primary and secondary schools including GCSE, AS and A2 Science and Geography

- Purpose built teaching facilities with comfortable accommodation and 24 hour on call duty manager system
- Fully trained teaching staff, risk assessed sites and public liability insurance
- Develop skills and techniques for coursework and exams
- Variety of inspiring habitats and sites for Geography and Science
- Situated in the unspoilt west Fermanagh countryside
- Choice of rural and urban environments
- INSET for teachers including risk assessment and practical fieldwork techniques



For further information

Tel: 028 - 68641673

Email: fsc.dg@field-studies-council.org

www.field-studies-council.org/derrygonnelly

The project has been supported by the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation through the Fermanagh Local Strategy Partnership's Natural Resource Rural Tourism Initiative which has been co-financed by Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Environment and Heritage Service.



Labour Losing the Plot?

INTO expressed serious dismay at the disclosure by Labour's Education Secretary, Alan Johnson that he favours the intensification of pupil testing and league tables. Giving evidence to the Commons' Education Select Committee, Johnson said league tables were "...absolutely the right thing..." for raising standards; that he backed "...the whole kit and caboodle..." of school accountability including OFSTED inspections, national tests and exams and league tables and that "...if anything, we need to intensify that rather than relax...!"

Commenting, Tony Lappin CEC District II, said:

"Maybe it is the weather, as it is reported to be hot in London this summer, but there is absolutely no excuse for an Education Secretary behaving like a buffoon. It is embarrassing to witness an elected politician in "Daily Mail" mode. Britain's kids are amongst the most over-tested

children on the planet for all the good it does them. To recognise that this policy puts "extra intensity and pressure on teachers and children", but that it's "absolutely the right thing to do" is absurd and will be ultimately self defeating not just for pupils, but also for the Labour Government at the next election.

Teachers in Britain and Northern Ireland are crucified by this Government's obsession with accountability and educational initiatives. Both are highly disruptive of the teaching and learning process in schools. The key difference between teachers in Britain and Northern Ireland is that their teaching workload has been cut by 10% to allow them more time to prepare and plan their teaching and assess their pupils. This is now a legal right for every teacher in Britain. In Northern Ireland however, the Government has decided that teachers must teach 10% more than every else in the UK at the same time as they prepare a major change agenda in the curriculum, examinations, school rationalisation and teacher redundancy along with the wide ranging Review of Public Administration. **Something will have to give."**

Schools Given Access to BBC Archives

Schools have been given access to the BBC's open archive of programmes. The Open Schools' Archive will give teachers access to materials to help add depth to lessons. The footage includes news, interviews with war survivors and geography programming.

As with the rest of the material in the Creative Archive, the clips can be edited and copied for non commercial purposes. Some of the clips include colour separation or green screen information so that pupils can edit themselves into the footage.

The Creative Archive contains hundreds of video and audio clips which can be freely shared for non-commercial purposes. Also providing footage for download throughout the project are organisations such as the British Film Institute, Channel 4 and the Open University. Teachers can access the archive at www.bbc.co.uk/schools/archive.