

INTO Summary of Teaching Council's Note regarding School Placement 2020-2021

21 October 2020

Summary

The Teaching Council has published a *Guidance Note regarding School Placement for 2020-2021*. School Placement will continue this year but will be adapted in response to Covid-19.

The Guidance is a framework of options for the colleges in how school placement can be adapted and is not a prescription. The Guidance is available on the Teaching Council website

https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/News-Events/Latest-News/10-08-2020-Guidance-Note-for-School-Placement-2020_.pdf

Key Points

The key points are as follows:

- The continued support of student teachers by schools is more important than ever.
- Postponement of school placement for any student would add to pressures on schools at a later stage.
- It is important to continue with the supply of teachers.
- Colleges will continue to plan for school placement as normal.
- School placement will take place / continue even where schools are closed with student teachers continuing to support pupil learning during their placement.

School placement could include:

- On-site teaching and learning in schools (subject to public health advice and guidance from Department of Education)
- Synchronous Classes – live online classes
- Asynchronous teaching and learning – lessons online uploaded by teachers and accessed by pupils at different times
- Home-school collaboration – engaging with parents at home, where parents or pupils cannot access online learning

The Teaching Council will accept as a valid school placement experience any of the above teaching and learning contexts and state that the above examples are not exhaustive.

Student teacher may engage in various forms of teaching, learning and planning activities including – online team-teaching, preparation of asynchronous lessons, the creation of screencasts and observations.

Assessment

Assessment of student teachers during placement could be through on-site tutor visits (subject to public health advice and Department of Education advice re visitors to schools); microteaching, live streaming, portfolio-based learning, reflective practice. The Teaching Council has identified core principles that should be observed in deciding on the assessment format to be used.

- Safeguarding the continuity and quality of the school placement experience.
- Observations of teaching and learning including pupil engagement should continue.
- Ensuring that all participants in the lesson are aware of and consent to the recording of lessons for the purposes of assessing school placement
- Ensuring that recordings of lessons are managed in line with HEI policies and appropriate data protection guidance provided under GDPR.
- Choosing hardware and software that maximises the security of the streaming / recording process for all involved.

INTO Advice

INTO advises teachers to continue accommodating students on school placements. INTO advises against the use of video-recordings in primary classrooms, given the complexity associated with consent and GDPR. Where a school that hosts students suddenly closes, or where classes in which a student teacher is being hosted are sent home due to Covid-19, the student teacher should assist the class teacher in supporting the continuity of learning for the pupils concerned, in whatever manner has been decided at school level. Like all visitors to schools, student teachers must adhere to public health advice and to the school's Covid-19 Response Plan.