

Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

General Council Report 1316

(Meeting/s of 25 June 1997)

Interdepartmental scheme for promotion to Assistant Principal

1. As agreed at General Council these schemes have been reviewed by the Official and Staff Sides.
2. The review was carried out by a sub-committee comprising both sides.
3. The sub-committee agreed that competitions for appointment to posts at Assistant Principal Officer (standard scale) level and Assistant Principal (higher scale) level should be held under the terms of the schemes. It also agreed to propose a number of changes to the schemes. The report of the sub-committee is attached. It was agreed that effect be given to the sub-committee's report.
4. The report was adopted on 25 June 1997.

Report of Sub-committee of the General Council set up to review the schemes of promotion to Assistant Principal Officer level posts

1. A meeting of the sub-committee took place on 4 June 1997 to consider further arrangements.
2. After discussion, the sub-committee agreed to recommend to General Council that effect be given to
 - (a) a scheme to cover promotions to certain posts at Assistant Principal Officer (standard scale) level for the period beginning 1 June 1998

(b) a scheme to cover promotions to certain posts at Assistant Principal Officer (higher scale) level for the period beginning 1 June 1998

(c) that amendments be made to both schemes so as to delete all references to the Irish Aviation Authority (in line with the provisions of General Council Report No. 1260), to take account of the general servicisation of various Customs & Excise grades, to clarify the eligibility of HEO/Systems Analysts, and to ensure the eligibility of certain grades in the Department of Justice (IT and Telecommunications Division at Garda Headquarters).

(d) that in the case of the scheme for promotion to Assistant Principal Officer (higher scale) level posts, an amendment be made to clarify the position of candidates, who between the date they apply for that competition and a date to be specified, are promoted to Assistant Principal Officer (standard scale) level posts.

Details of the revised schemes are set out in the Appendix to this report.

Scheme for interdepartmental promotion to posts at Assistant Principal (standard scale) level

Definitions

1. A "Department" includes any Office such as the Central Statistics Office, the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, the Office of Public Works and the Civil Service Commission which is normally treated as a separate nominating unit for the purposes of interdepartmental competitions. It also includes FÁS and NAOSH (National Authority for Occupational Safety

and Health).

A "fillable vacancy" means

(i) for all Departments excluding the Land Registry/Registry of Deeds in the Department of Justice

an existing post on a Department's total establishment in the grade of Assistant Principal (standard scale) which becomes vacant on or after 1 January 1985 or a new post created in that grade on or after the same date

(ii) for all Departments excluding the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

an existing post on a Department's total establishment in the grades listed in paragraph 2 of the Appendix to this scheme which is vacant on or after 1 January 1986 or a new post created in those grades on or after the same date

(iii) for the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

an existing post in the grade of Senior Auditor which is vacant on or after 1 January 1989 or a new post created in that grade on or after the same date

(iv) for FÁS

an existing post on the total establishment in the grade of Assistant Principal (standard scale) which is vacant on or after 1 January 1989 or a new post created in that grade on or after the same date

(v) for NAOSH

an existing post on the total establishment in the grade of Assistant Principal (standard scale) which is vacant on or after 1 January 1992 or a new post created in that grade on or after the same date

(vi) for the Department of Foreign Affairs

an existing post on the total establishment in the grade of First Secretary which is vacant on or after 1 July 1994 or a new post created in that grade on or after the same date

and which is to be filled by promotion.

Posts which have traditionally been filled by special interdepartmental competition shall not reckon as a vacancy for the purposes of this scheme.

Scope and Application of the scheme

2. The Land Registry/Registry of Deeds of the Department of Justice is excluded from the scheme.

3. The following posts will be filled under the scheme:-

(i) every third fillable vacancy in the grade of Assistant Principal (standard scale) in all Departments excluding the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance

(ii) every third fillable vacancy in the grades listed in paragraph 2 of the Appendix to this scheme

(iii) fillable vacancies in the grade of Assistant Principal (standard scale) in Departments having an import quota; the number of vacancies to be filled in this manner will be determined by reference to the import quota assigned to individual Departments (see paragraph 17)

(iv) one fillable vacancy in the grade of Assistant Principal in FÁS for each officer serving in FÁS who is appointed under the terms of this scheme

(v) one fillable vacancy in the grade of Assistant Principal in NAOSH for each officer serving in NAOSH who is appointed under the terms of this scheme.

4. In calculating the sequence of vacancies for these purposes, each of the grades listed in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Appendix to this scheme will be counted separately. Posts filled under paragraph 45 below will not reckon.

5. An interdepartmental competition will be held to fill all vacancies within the meaning of the scheme. Two panels of qualified candidates, placed in order of merit will be established as follows:-

(i) Panel A - Assistant Principal (standard scale)

This panel will be formed from among all qualified candidates in the Assistant Principal

(standard scale) level competition who are placed on Panel B and who are either Higher Executive Officers or Administrative Officers (excluding Administrative Officers in the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance) whose parent Departments are assigned an export quota (see paragraph 17). The number of candidates on this panel from any Department shall not exceed four times the export quota determined for that Department. The panel will be drawn from in order of merit to fill posts under paragraph 3(iii) above. The determining factor for the purposes of deciding which candidates are from exporting Departments will be their parent Department as on the eligibility date specified in the circular.

(ii) Panel B - Assistant Principal (standard scale) level

This panel will be formed from among all qualified candidates in the Assistant Principal (standard scale) level competition. The panel will be drawn from in order of merit to fill posts under paragraphs 3 (i), (ii), (iv) and (v) above.

It should be noted that appointments will be made from the panels strictly in accordance with the order in which vacancies fall to be filled.

6. Where a vacancy falls to be filled from both Panel A and Panel B, it will be filled from Panel A, thereby also discharging the liability to Panel B.

7. In the event that Panel A is exhausted before all the import quotas have been satisfied, any subsequent Panel A liabilities will be filled by the appointment of candidates from exporting Departments placed on Panel B but excluded from Panel A because of the export quota limitation referred to in paragraph 5(i) above. If there are no Higher Executive Officers or Administrative Officers (excluding Administrative Officers in the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance) from exporting Departments remaining on Panel B at that stage, Panel A liabilities will be met by the appointment of candidates from Panel B in order of merit. In the event that Panel B is exhausted prior to its expiry date there shall be consultation between the Official and Staff Sides as regards the arrangements to apply for the outstanding period.

8. If a post cannot be filled from a panel (see paragraphs 33-38

below) it may then be filled internally in the Department concerned, and this will be deemed to satisfy that Department's obligation to the panel in that instance. If an internal appointment is made in this manner, then the panel will be deemed to have expired for the relevant grade or geographical location. However, within two months of the expiry date of Panel B, should a post subsequently arise in that grade or geographical location that is due to be filled from the panel, then the Department concerned may fill the post internally but will carry a debt to the panel (see paragraph 36 below).

Duration of the Panels

9. The panels will be valid for a period to be specified in the circulars governing the competitions. The period of validity may be extended by agreement between the Official and Staff Sides.

Eligibility for the Competition for Assistant Principal (standard scale) level posts

10. Candidates must on the date they apply for the competition

(a) be serving in an established capacity in the Civil Service

as an Administrative Officer

or

as a Higher Executive Officer

or

in a departmental grade listed in paragraph 5 of the Appendix to this scheme

or

as a Higher Executive Officer on secondment to FÁS or NAOSH from the Civil Service

and

(b) on a date to be specified have not less than three years' service in their existing grade or an aggregate of three years' service in eligible grades* (see paragraphs 12 and 13 below regarding (i) service in the Higher Officer of Customs and

Excise and Social Welfare Officer grades and (ii) the service requirements of Higher Executive Officers and Administrative Officers who have prior service in the Higher Officers of Customs and Excise or Social Welfare Officer grades)

** eligible grades are as outlined at (a) above*

and

(c) be certified by the Head of the Department as being suitable for consideration having regard to:

(i) performance of work in the present grade

(ii) general conduct

(iii) health, especially sick leave.

11. Officers on probation are not eligible to compete excepting where they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade and they have served continuously since satisfactorily completing a period of probation (periods of special leave without pay should not be considered to break continuity of service for this purpose).

Special Provisions

12. Service in the former grade of Higher Officers of Customs and Excise will count as service in an eligible grade. Former Higher Officers of Customs and Excise may count service, up to a maximum of five years, in the grades of Executive Officer or in the former grades of Officer Customs and Excise or Indoor Officer Customs and Excise as service in the Higher Officer grade for this purpose. Former Higher Officers of Customs and Excise who have been recertified as Higher Executive Officers or/and appointed as Administrative Officers and who do not have three years' service in the Higher Executive Officer or/and Administrative Officer grades, will be required to have an aggregate of not less than eight years' service in eligible grades.

13. Social Welfare Officers will be required to have not less than eight years' service. Service, up to a maximum of five years, in the grade of Executive Officer will count as service in the Social Welfare Officer grade for this purpose. Former

Social Welfare Officers who have been recertified as Higher Executive Officers or/and appointed as Administrative Officers and who do not have three years' service in the Higher Executive Officer or/and Administrative Officer grades, will be required to have an aggregate of not less than eight years' service in eligible grades.

14. Service in the grade of HEO/Systems Analyst, other than service on an allowance basis, will count as HEO service.

15. Officers serving in the Land Registry/Registry of Deeds of the Department of Justice are not eligible.

16. The eligibility of any particular grade or group for appointment to any grade under the competitions held under this scheme applies exclusively in the context of the scheme.

Import/Export Quotas

17. Departments will be assigned an import/export quota on the basis of promotional trends from Administrative Officer and Higher Executive Officer to Assistant Principal, both standard and higher scale. Departments will be informed of their quotas. The Land Registry/Registry of Deeds of the Department of Justice, the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Houses of the Oireachtas, FÁS and NAOSH will not be assigned an import/export quota.

18. Departments which in the preceding period of five years had more or less than the average number of promotions to Assistant Principal (calculated by multiplying the annual average of eligible officers in each Department by the ratio which the number of promotions to the grade servicewide bore to the number of eligible officers servicewide) will be assigned import or export quotas respectively, the satisfaction of which will make good the departures from average. Quotas of less than 0.5 will be disregarded and other quotas will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

19. For the purposes of determining import/export quotas, all promotions of Higher Executive Officers and Administrative Officers (excluding promotions of Administrative Officers from the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance) to Assistant Principal, whether standard or higher

scale, will be reckonable.

20. In any case where Departments have been divided or amalgamated during the five-year period referred to in paragraph 18 above, import/export quotas for such Departments will relate to the functional area for which the Department now has responsibility. Their quotas will be calculated by reference to the numbers of (a) eligible officers and (b) promotions of officers in the individual Branches/Division involved in the interdepartmental reorganisation over the relevant five-year period.

Selection Procedures

21. Selection will be by means of a competition conducted by the Civil Service Commission (CSC). The competition will consist of a competitive interview.

22. The CSC may require candidates to undergo preliminary tests and invite only those who reach the requisite standard to attend the competitive interview, which will determine which candidates are fully qualified for appointment. Panels will be drawn up, in order of merit, from the qualified candidates as provided in the scheme. The preliminary tests, if any, will be run by the CSC. The competitive interview will be conducted by a board(s) to be set up by the CSC.

23. In placing in order of merit the candidates considered best qualified for appointment the CSC will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English, in accordance with Circular 30/90 and Circular 43/75 to candidates qualified for the award of such credit on or before the date specified in the Circular.

24. Membership of the interview board will consist of serving civil servants of not less than Assistant Principal rank, not excluding a civil servant who retired in the four-year period preceding the holding of the competition, and will, as far as practicable, be representative of employing Departments, i.e. those to whom successful applicants are likely to be assigned and will, save in exceptional circumstances, have at least one female member. Not more than one member of the board will be a retired civil servant.

25. The interview board will be provided with a detailed

breakdown of the range of competencies required for effective performance in Assistant Principal (standard scale) level posts which are appropriate for assessment at the interview stage of the competition.

26. The number of candidates called to interview and the number of qualified candidates placed on the panels established in order of merit will be based on an estimate, to be supplied by the Department of Finance, of the likely requirement from the panels for the period in question. If, however, that estimate exceeds the number of candidates qualified by the interview board as suitable for promotion, Panel B will comprise the latter only.

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

27. Candidates who indicate that they are interested in being considered for appointment as Senior Auditor in the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and who are successful in being placed on Panel B, will be interviewed subsequently by a separate board to establish whether or not they are deemed to be qualified for Senior Auditor posts. This board will consist of a representative of the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office and a person nominated by the Civil Service Commissioners. A panel of qualified candidates, if any, will be drawn up from those interviewed. Assignments to the post of Senior Auditor, should vacancies arise, will be made from those candidates listed as suitable for the post, in accordance with their order of merit on Panel B.

Department of Foreign Affairs

28. Candidates who indicate that they are interested in being considered for appointment as First Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs and who are successful in being placed on Panel B, will be interviewed subsequently by a separate board to establish whether or not they are deemed to be suitable for the diplomatic service. This board will consist of a representative of the Department of Foreign Affairs and a person nominated by the Civil Service Commissioners. A panel of qualified candidates, if any, will be drawn up from those interviewed. (The CSC, may, at its discretion, decide that officers serving in the Third Secretary grade who are placed on Panel B can be deemed to be qualified for the diplomatic service without having to attend for further interview).

Assignments to the post of First Secretary, should vacancies arise, will be made from those candidates listed as suitable for the post, in accordance with their order of merit on Panel B.

Knowledge of Irish

29. It is recognised that the position in relation to the performance of duties in the Departments of Education, Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht and the Civil Service Commission through the medium of Irish could present special difficulties. Those Departments may, therefore, as an exceptional arrangement, satisfy themselves as to the competence of any candidate due to be assigned to them to undertake such duties through the medium of Irish. If further appraisal of a candidate's competence in that respect is sought, it will be effected by the CSC on the basis of a test held specifically for this purpose.

Appointments

30. Appointments will be made from the panels in accordance with the provisions of the scheme. Appointments will be in an acting capacity for at least one year and will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. Officers not promoted at the expiry of the panels will have no claim to promotion thereafter because of their having been on the panels. In the event of reversion an officer will return to fill a vacancy in the grade previously held in the Department which sent the officer forward for the competition. The next person on the relevant panel will be appointed to the vacancy thus created without affecting the sequence of appointments in that Department provided the reversion occurred before the expiry of the relevant panel.

31. Officers on the panels will continue to be eligible for promotion in the normal course in their own Department but in the event of any such officer accepting an offer of appointment made in the normal course or under the scheme or to a grade covered by the scheme s/he will no longer be offered appointment to posts at or below that level under the scheme.

32. Any candidate who (a) retires, is suspended or dismissed from his/her post or (b) is not qualified by the selection board as being suitable for promotion to Assistant Principal (standard scale) level, will not be eligible to be placed on Panel B.

Refusal of Appointments

33. Appointments will be offered, in order of merit, to officers on the panels set up as a result of the interdepartmental competition. An officer may refuse an appointment on grounds of grade offered or geographic location. An officer may also refuse an appointment to FÁS or NAOSH.

34. An officer who refuses appointment on grounds of the grade offered will not be offered an appointment to that grade again but will remain on the panel for appointments to other grades. Similarly, an officer who refuses appointment on grounds of geographic location will not be offered an appointment in that location again but will remain on the panel for other locations. An officer who refuses an appointment in FÁS or NAOSH will not be offered another appointment in that body but will remain on the panel for other appointments.

35. An officer who refuses an offer of appointment under the provisions of paragraph 33 above and who has not been promoted at the expiry of the relevant panel will have no claim to promotion thereafter because of having been on the panel.

36. An appointment refused under the provisions of paragraph 33 above, will be offered successively in order of merit to the remaining candidates on the appropriate panel until the post is filled. If the appropriate panel is Panel A and if no candidate accepts the position, it will be offered to those candidates from exporting Departments placed on Panel B but excluded from Panel A because of the export quota limitation referred to in paragraph 5(i). If there are no such candidates remaining on Panel B at that stage or if no candidate accepts the position, it will be offered to those remaining on Panel B. In the event that the post cannot be filled in this way, it will be filled by internal promotion in the Department concerned and that Department will be deemed to have satisfied its panel liabilities in respect of the vacancy in question. If an internal appointment is made in this manner, then the panel will be deemed to have expired for that grade or geographical location. However, within two months of the expiry date of Panel B, should a post subsequently arise in that grade or geographical location that is due to be filled from the panel, then the Department concerned may fill the post internally but will carry a debt to the panel.

37. An officer who is not found qualified for appointment because of the particular Irish requirement in paragraph 29 above, will retain his/her place on the relevant panel. If on expiry of that panel such an officer has not been promoted and it is established that s/he would have been promoted from the panel but for the operation of the Irish requirement, s/he will be offered the first appointment which would fall to be filled from the next equivalent panel established under this scheme and to which the Irish requirement does not apply.

38. When an offer is made, an officer will have a maximum of 5 working days after receipt of the offer to accept or reject the offer of appointment.

Applications

39. Application forms will be made available by the CSC to Personnel Sections. Applications should be addressed to the Head of the Department in which the candidate is serving. Where a candidate is on loan, the Head of the Department concerned should transmit the application to the parent Department. Applicants from FÁS or NAOSH should address their applications to the Secretary, Department of Enterprise and Employment.

Performance Appraisal

40. In the case of each candidate who is called to competitive interview, the Head of the relevant Department will furnish the CSC with an assessment of the candidate's suitability for promotion on a form to be supplied by the CSC. The promotion potential form in the relevant schemes of performance appraisal as completed at the last appraisal before the date of the Circular advertising the competition should be used when completing that form. Where a sufficiently long period, say of the order of nine months, has elapsed since the candidate's appraisal and where there is sufficient reason to believe that the candidate's performance in the interim period merits a change in the assessment, then a current appraisal should be made.

Career Development, Training

41. Where an officer is promoted from a departmental grade to

a general service grade or vice versa under this scheme, s/he will have career development opportunities equivalent to other members of the grade. Subject to the demands of the job having priority, any desirable induction training (formal and on-the-job) should also be provided as soon as practicable.

Steering Committee

42. A Steering Committee, representative of the Official and Staff Sides, will monitor the progress of the scheme with a view to resolving issues which may arise in relation to its operation.

Review

43. The Official and Staff Sides will review general issues arising from the operation of this scheme.

Reservations

44. The Minister for Finance reserves the right to suspend or modify the scheme in the event of redundancy which has to be dealt with on a general servicewide basis.

45. The Minister for Finance also reserves the right to arrange for the filling, by separate interdepartmental competition or otherwise, of vacancies at Assistant Principal (standard scale) level for which special circumstances exist. Before an interdepartmental competition is initiated in any case where special circumstances are deemed to exist, there shall be consultation between the Official and Staff Sides.

June 1997

APPENDIX

POSTS AT ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL (standard scale) LEVEL WHICH CAN BE COMPETED FOR

1. The general service grade of Assistant Principal (standard

scale) **excluding** such posts in the Department of the Taoiseach, the Department of Finance and the Land Registry/Registry of Deeds of the Department of Justice.

2. The following departmental grades:

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General
Senior Auditor

Department of Foreign Affairs
First Secretary

Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas
Assistant Principal Committee Clerk

3. Certain posts in FÁS and NAOSH as specified in paragraph 3 of the scheme.

**GRADES ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE FOR POSTS AT
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL (standard scale) LEVEL
LISTED ABOVE**

4. The general service grades of Administrative Officer and Higher Executive Officer (excluding officers serving in the Land Registry/Registry of Deeds of the Department of Justice).

5. The following departmental grades:

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General
Auditor

Department of Foreign Affairs
Third Secretary

Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas
Senior Clerk

Department of Justice, IT and Telecommunications Division at
Garda Headquarters
Systems Analyst

Department of Social Welfare
Social Welfare Officer

6. Certain officers serving in FÁS or NAOSH as specified in paragraph 10 of the scheme.

Scheme for interdepartmental promotion to posts at Assistant Principal (higher scale) level

Definitions

1. A "Department" includes any Office such as the Central Statistics Office, the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, the Office of Public Works and the Civil Service Commission which is normally treated as a separate nominating unit for the purpose of interdepartmental competitions. It also includes FÁS and NAOSH (National Authority for Occupational Safety and Health).

A "fillable vacancy" means

(i) for the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance only

an existing post on a Department's total establishment in the grade of Assistant Principal (higher scale) which is vacant on or after 1 January 1987 or a new post created in that grade on or after the same date

(ii) an existing post on a Department's total establishment in the grade listed in paragraph 2 of the Appendix to this scheme which is vacant on or after 1 January 1987 or a new post created in that grade on or after the same date

and which is to be filled by promotion.

Posts which have traditionally been filled by special interdepartmental competition shall not reckon as a vacancy for the purposes of this scheme.

Scope and Application of the scheme

2. The Land Registry/Registry of Deeds of the Department of Justice is excluded from the scheme.

3. The following posts will be filled under the scheme:-

(i) every third fillable vacancy in the grade of Assistant Principal (higher scale) in the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance

(ii) every fifth fillable vacancy in a sequence of six in the grade of Assistant Principal (higher scale) in the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance

(iii) every third fillable vacancy in the grade listed in paragraph 2 of the Appendix to this scheme.

4. In calculating the sequence of vacancies for these purposes, each of the grades listed in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Appendix to this scheme will be counted separately. Posts filled under paragraph 38 below will not reckon.

5. An interdepartmental competition will be held to fill all vacancies within the meaning of the scheme. Two panels of qualified candidates, placed in order of merit will be established as follows:-

(i) Panel A - Assistant Principal (higher scale)

This panel will be formed from among all qualified candidates in the Assistant Principal (higher scale) competition who are placed on Panel B and who are either Higher Executive Officers or Administrative Officers in the Department of the Taoiseach or the Department of Finance. The panel will be drawn from in order of merit to fill posts under paragraph 3(ii) above.

(ii) Panel B - Assistant Principal (higher scale)

This panel will be formed from among all qualified candidates in the Assistant Principal (higher scale) competition. The panel will be drawn from in order of merit to fill posts under paragraphs 3(i) and (iii) above.

It should be noted that appointments will be made from the panels strictly in accordance with the order in which vacancies fall to be filled.

6. In the event that Panel A is exhausted prior to its expiry date the filling of any subsequent Panel A liabilities will be the subject of discussions between the Official Side and the Staff Side. In the event that Panel B is exhausted prior to its expiry date there shall be consultation between the Official and Staff Sides as regards the arrangements to apply for the outstanding period.

7. If a post cannot be filled from a panel (see paragraphs 27-31 below) it may then be filled internally in the Department concerned, and this will be deemed to satisfy that Department's obligation to the panel in that instance. If an internal appointment is made in this manner, then the panel will be deemed to have expired for the relevant grade or geographical location. However, within two months of the expiry date of Panel B, should a post subsequently arise in that grade or geographical location that is due to be filled from the panel, then the Department concerned may fill the post internally but will carry a debt to the panel (see paragraph 30 below).

Duration of the Panels

8. The panels will be valid for a period to be specified in the circulars governing the competitions. The period of validity may be extended by agreement between the Official and Staff Sides.

Eligibility for the Competition for Assistant Principal (higher scale) level posts

9. Candidates must on the date they apply for the competition

(a)(1) be serving in an established capacity in the Civil Service
as an Assistant Principal (standard
scale)

or

in a departmental grade listed in paragraph 4 of
the Appendix to this scheme

or

as an Assistant Principal or
Assistant Regional Director on
secondment to FÁS from the Civil
Service

or

as an Assistant Principal on
secondment to NAOSH from the
Civil Service

OR

(2)(i) be serving in an established capacity in the Civil Service
as an Administrative Officer

or

as a Higher Executive Officer

or

in a departmental grade listed in paragraph 5 of the Appendix
to this scheme

or

as a Higher Executive Officer on
secondment to FÁS or NAOSH
from the Civil Service

AND

(ii) be among the group to be interviewed for the Assistant
Principal (standard scale) competition

AND

(b) have not less than four years' service in their existing grade
or an aggregate of four years' service in eligible grades (see
paragraphs 11, 12 and 13 below regarding (i) service in the
Social Welfare Officer grade and in the former grade of Higher
Officer of Customs and Excise and (ii) the service
requirements of Higher Executive Officers and Administrative
Officers who have prior service in the grade of Social Welfare
Officer or the former grade of Higher Officer of Customs and
Excise and (iii) the service requirements of officers serving in
grades listed at paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Appendix who have
prior service in the grade of Social Welfare Officer or the
former grade of Higher Officer of Customs and Excise).

AND

(c) be certified by the Head of the Department as being suitable
for consideration having regard to:

(i) performance of work in the present grade

(ii) general conduct

(iii) health, especially sick leave.

10. Officers on probation are not eligible to compete excepting where they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade and they have served continuously since satisfactorily completing a period of probation (periods of special leave without pay should not be considered to break continuity of service for this purpose).

Special Provisions

11. Service in the former grade of Higher Officers of Customs and Excise will count as service in an eligible grade. Former Higher Officers of Customs and Excise may count service, up to a maximum of five years, in the grades of Executive Officer or in the former grades of Officer Customs and Excise or Indoor Officer Customs and Excise as service in the Higher Officer grade for this purpose. Former Higher Officers of Customs and Excise who have been recertified as Higher Executive Officers or/and appointed as Administrative Officers and who do not have four years' service in the Higher Executive Officer or/and Administrative Officer grades, will be required to have an aggregate of not less than nine years' service in eligible grades.

12. Social Welfare Officers will be required to have not less than nine years' service. Service, up to a maximum of five years, in the grade of Executive Officer will count as service in the Social Welfare Officer grade for this purpose. Former Social Welfare Officers who have been recertified as Higher Executive Officers or/and appointed as Administrative Officers and who do not have four years' service in the Higher Executive Officer or/and Administrative Officer grades, will be required to have an aggregate of not less than nine years' service in eligible grades.

13. Officers who are currently serving in grades listed at paragraph 3 and 4 of the Appendix and who do not have one year's service in their current grade and who have prior service in the former grade of Higher Officer of Customs and Excise or the Social Welfare Officer grade will be required to have an aggregate of not less than nine years' service in eligible grades. (Any such officer who also has prior service in the Higher

Executive Officer or/and Administrative Officer grades and who has an aggregate of four years' service in his/her existing grade and the Higher Executive Officer or/and Administrative Officer grades will be eligible).

14. Service in the grade of HEO/Systems Analyst, other than service on an allowance basis, will count as HEO service.

15. Officers serving in the Land Registry/Registry of Deeds of the Department of Justice are not eligible.

16. The eligibility of any particular grade or group for appointment to any grade under the competitions held under this scheme applies exclusively in the context of the scheme.

17. A candidate who is serving in a grade listed at paragraph 9(a)(2)(i) above when s/he applies for the Assistant Principal (*higher scale*) competition and who, before a date to be specified, is promoted to Assistant Principal (standard scale) or a grade listed at paragraph 4 of the Appendix to the scheme, will not be required to be among the group to be interviewed for the Assistant Principal (standard scale) competition in order to be eligible for the Assistant Principal (higher scale) competition (i.e. paragraph 9(a)(2)(ii) above will not apply in these circumstances). S/he will, however, have to fulfil the service requirements of paragraph 9(b) above. ***The onus will be on candidates to notify the Civil Service Commission that they have been so promoted and that they are still interested in competing in the Assistant Principal (higher scale) competition. Candidates should note that only those who apply for the Assistant Principal (higher scale) competition before the closing date will be eligible to compete in that competition.***

Selection Procedures

18. Selection will be by means of a competition conducted by the Civil Service Commission (CSC). The competition will consist of a competitive interview.

19. The CSC may require candidates to undergo preliminary tests and invite only those who reach the requisite standard to attend for competitive interview, which will determine which candidates are fully qualified for appointment. Panels will be drawn up, in order of merit, from the qualified candidates as provided in the scheme. Interviews will be conducted by a

board or boards to be set up by the CSC.

20. In placing in order of merit the candidates considered best qualified for appointment, the CSC will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English, in accordance with paragraph 5 of Circular 43/75 to candidates qualified for the award of such credit on or before the date specified in the Circular.

21. Membership of the interview boards will be confined to serving civil servants of not less than Assistant Principal rank, not excluding a civil servant who retired in the four-year period preceding the holding of the competition, and will, as far as practicable, be representative of employing Departments, i.e. those to whom successful applicants are likely to be assigned and will, save in exceptional circumstances, have at least one female member. Not more than one member of the board will be a retired civil servant.

22. Interview boards will all be provided with broad indications of the range and content of Assistant Principal (higher scale) level jobs. [These will be for the assistance of the boards and will not, in any sense, be formal job descriptions.] Special care will be taken to ensure that interview boards are aware of the wide variety of duties performed in the relevant grades.

23. The number of candidates called to interview and the number of qualified candidates placed on the panels established in order of merit will be based on an estimate, to be supplied by the Department of Finance, of the likely requirement from the panels for the period in question. If, however, that estimate exceeds the number of candidates qualified by the interview board as suitable for promotion, Panel B will comprise the latter only.

Appointments

24. Appointments will be made from the panels in accordance with the provisions of the scheme. Appointments will be in an acting capacity for at least one year and will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. Officers not promoted at the expiry of the panels will have no claim to promotion thereafter because of their having been on the panels. In the event of reversion an officer will return to fill a

vacancy in the grade previously held in the Department which sent the officer forward for the competition. The next person on the relevant panel will be appointed to the vacancy thus created without affecting the sequence of appointments in that Department provided the reversion occurred before the expiry of the relevant panel.

25. Officers on the panels will continue to be eligible for promotion in the normal course in their own Department but in the event of any such officer accepting an offer of appointment made in the normal course or under the scheme or to a grade covered by the scheme s/he will no longer be offered appointment to posts at or below that level under the scheme.

26. Any candidate who (a) retires, is suspended or dismissed from his/her post or (b) is not qualified by the selection board as being suitable for promotion to Assistant Principal (higher scale) level, will not be eligible to be placed on Panel B.

Refusal of Appointments

27. Appointments will be offered, in order of merit, to officers on the panels set up as a result of the interdepartmental competition. An officer may refuse an appointment on grounds of grade offered or geographic location.

28. An officer who refuses appointment on grounds of the grade offered will not be offered an appointment to that grade again but will remain on the panel for appointments to other grades. Similarly, an officer who refuses appointment on grounds of geographic location will not be offered an appointment in that location again but will remain on the panel for other locations.

29. An officer who refuses an offer of appointment under the provisions of paragraph 27 above and who has not been promoted at the expiry of the relevant panel will have no claim to promotion thereafter because of having been on the panel.

30. An appointment refused under the provisions of paragraph 27 above, will be offered successively in order of merit to the remaining candidates on the appropriate panel until the post is filled. If the appropriate panel is Panel A and if no candidate accepts the position, it will be offered to those remaining on Panel B. In the event that the post cannot be filled in this way, it will be filled by internal promotion in the Department

concerned and that Department will be deemed to have satisfied its panel liabilities in respect of the vacancy in question.

If an internal appointment is made in this manner, then the panel will be deemed to have expired for the relevant grade or geographical location. However, within two months of the expiry date of Panel B, should a post subsequently arise in that grade or geographical location that is due to be filled from the panel, then the Department concerned may fill the post internally but will carry a debt to the panel.

31. When an offer is made, an officer will have a maximum of 5 working days after receipt of the offer to accept or reject the offer of appointment.

Applications

32. Application forms will be made available by the CSC to Personnel Sections. Applications should be addressed to the Head of the Department in which the candidate is serving. Where a candidate is on loan, the Head of the Department concerned should transmit the application to the parent Department. Applicants from FÁS or NAOSH should address their applications to the Secretary, Department of Enterprise and Employment.

Performance Appraisal

33. In the case of each candidate who is called to competitive interview, the Head of the relevant Department will furnish the CSC with an assessment of the candidate's suitability for promotion on a form to be supplied by the CSC. The promotion potential form in the relevant schemes of performance appraisal as completed at the last appraisal before the date of the Circular advertising the competition should be used when completing that form. Where a sufficiently long period, say of the order of nine months, has elapsed since the candidate's appraisal and where there is sufficient reason to believe that the candidate's performance in the interim period merits a change in the assessment, then a current appraisal should be made.

Career Development, Training

34. Where an officer is promoted from a departmental grade to

a general service grade or vice versa under this scheme, s/he will have career development opportunities equivalent to other members of the grade. Subject to the demands of the job having priority, any desirable induction training (formal and on-the-job) should also be provided as soon as practicable.

Steering Committee

35. A Steering Committee, representative of the Official and Staff Sides, will monitor the progress of the scheme with a view to resolving issues which may arise in relation to its operation.

Review

36. The Official and Staff Sides will review general issues arising from the operation of this scheme.

Reservations

37. The Minister for Finance reserves the right to suspend or modify the scheme in the event of redundancy which has to be dealt with on a general servicewide basis.

38. The Minister for Finance also reserves the right to arrange for the filling, by separate interdepartmental competition or otherwise, of vacancies at Assistant Principal (higher scale) level for which special circumstances exist. Before an interdepartmental competition is initiated in any case where special circumstances are deemed to exist, there shall be consultation between the Official and Staff Sides.

June 1997

POSTS AT ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL (higher scale) LEVEL WHICH CAN BE COMPETED FOR

1. The general service grade of Assistant Principal (higher

scale) in the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance.

2. The following departmental grade:

Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas
Principal Clerk

**GRADES ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE FOR POSTS AT
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL (higher scale) LEVEL LISTED
ABOVE**

3. The general service grades of Assistant Principal (standard scale), Higher Executive Officer and Administrative Officer, excluding officers serving in the Land Registry/Registry of Deeds of the Department of Justice.

4. The following departmental grades:

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General
Senior Auditor

Department of Enterprise & Employment
County Development Team Secretary

Department of Foreign Affairs
First Secretary

Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas
Assistant Principal Committee Clerk

Department of Justice, IT and Telecommunications Division at
Garda Headquarters
Senior Business Analyst
Senior Systems Analyst

Office of the Ombudsman
Investigator

5. The following departmental grades:

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General
Auditor

Department of Foreign Affairs
Third Secretary

Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas
Senior Clerk

Department of Justice, IT and Telecommunications Division at
Garda Headquarters
Systems Analyst

Department of Social Welfare
Social Welfare Officer

6. Certain officers serving in FÁS and NAOSH as specified in paragraph 9 of the scheme.

This report was adopted on 25 June 1997