

Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

General Council Report 1486

(Meeting/s of 26 September 2007)

Interdepartmental promotions to HEO and AP

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Interdepartmental Schemes of Promotion to Assistant Principal Officer (Circular 36/2005) and Higher Executive Officer (Circular 26/2005)

The Schemes were reviewed at meetings on 7 July 2005, 14 July 2005, 28 July 2005

1. As agreed at General Council the Schemes have been reviewed by the Official and Staff Sides.
2. A number of items concerning the next series of Interdepartmental Competitions needed to be finalised:
 - (a) the provisions in the circulars in respect of Decentralisation;
 - (b) the impact on the sequences of appointments of the conversion of positions held on an "acting-up" basis to full promotions;
 - (c) inclusion of atypical staff amongst those who can apply for the competitions;
 - (d) the position of staff who are work-sharers who are offered positions under the Schemes;
3. Circular 26/2005 is at Appendix A and Circular 36/2005 is at

Appendix B.

4. The Report was adopted on 26 September 2007.

Aengus O Riain Joan Byrne
Official Side Secretary Staff Side Secretary

1. Decentralisation

The text on this in the circulars was acceptable to the Union as it was in line with the decisions of the ADC. The Official Side decided, unilaterally, that Removal Expenses would not apply to any interdepartmental promotions, whether to decentralising Departments/Offices or to existing provincial locations.

2. Impact of the Conversion of Posts from "Acting-Up on Allowance" to full Promotions

Under the decentralisation arrangements it is envisaged that staff filling posts on an "acting-up" basis (e.g. an EO filling a HEO post on an allowance basis) would, if they had been in that position for more than 2 years, be promoted to the full higher grade if they were transferring under the Programme.

The Union was concerned about the potential impact which large numbers of such "conversions" to full promotions could have on Interdepartmental "Mobility" appointments (i.e. currently 2 out of 5 appointments) and also Import Quotas in the case of Departments affected under the Interdepartmental Schemes of Promotion to HEO and AP2.

The Union pointed out that, in normal circumstances, if a post were converted from an "acting-up" position to a full promotion, it would count as part of the sequence of promotions in a Department under which two in every five would be filled from the interdepartmental panel. [1 in 2 with effect from 1 January 2007].

The Official Side was not prepared to agree to the Union proposals. In that context, the Union proposal was modified so that it would apply only to the filling of posts under the "two in

five" arrangement. The "Import/Export Scheme would remain unchanged.

Following discussions, the Official Side agreed to a modification, which went some way to meeting the Union position. The qualification (in italics) is as follows:

The proportion of posts to be filled from interdepartmental promotion competitions at HEO level remains at 40% as agreed under the terms of Sustaining Progress (Paragraph 22.17(ii)). This means that in a sequence of five vacancies, the second and fourth will be filled from the interdepartmental panel.

Departments will be allowed to depart from this sequence where it is necessary to make any promotions as a result of the agreement reached at General Council whereby individuals who had been in receipt of allowances for 'acting up' to higher duties for two years or more are to be promoted before completing a CAF transfer. In such circumstances the Departments involved may make these promotions on the basis that any resulting liability to the Interdepartmental Panel must be discharged at the earliest opportunity. This would normally be within the lifetime of the current panel, however a portion of the liability may exceptionally be carried over to the following panel where the Department concerned has obtained the sanction of the Department of Finance, on the basis that it will be able to discharge this liability in full in the course of the next panel (e.g. as a result of anticipated retirements). This proportion will be increased to 50% from the date equating to the commencement of the next subsequent competition for promotion to Principal Officer level i.e. 1 January 2007.

It was agreed to use the Monitoring Committee, as provided for in the Schemes, to consult with the Union on the issue as required.

3. Atypical Staff and the Competitions

The Union's concern was that staff who have held positions on short-term contracts in the relevant grades

for the required period of time should be eligible to compete on the same basis as staff employed on contracts of indefinite duration (i.e. established staff - The Official Side disputes the interpretation that contracts of indefinite duration equate to established status.)

The Official Side proposed to permit such staff to compete but that, if they were successful, they would be required to satisfy a separate establishment process before they could actually be appointed.

It was pointed out that the issue was currently the subject of a series of cases being processed under the Protection of Employees (Fixed-Term Work) Act, 2003.

The Staff Side maintains that a "contract of indefinite duration" as set out in the Act is, in the case of the Civil Service, an established position. The Official Side disputes this interpretation.

As agreement could not be reached on the issue, and in order to avoid holding up the issue of the circular, it was agreed to run with the provision as drafted by the Official Side on the basis that it was accepted by the Official Side that the Union did not agree that this was a proper or correct interpretation of the provisions of the 2003 Act; that the Union was free to pursue cases related to promotion under the Act and that the Department would not quote this provision of the Schemes as evidence of a "solution" to the problem in cases processed under the Act by this or any other Union.

4. Work-sharers and Appointments under the Schemes

The Union was concerned with the position of staff who are Work-sharing and are successful in interdepartmental competitions and, on appointment, wish to continue to work-share. The schemes currently allow for candidates to refuse an offer of appointment on grounds of grade or location and to remain on the Panel. The Union pointed out that there might be an issue of discrimination given that the majority of work-sharers are women and that it would be prudent to permit work-sharers to have a similar facility – i.e. to remain on the Panel for other appointments having refused a promotion from the Panel on the grounds that the appointment did not permit an acceptable work-sharing regime.

The Official Side was not prepared to agree that this "right to refuse" should be added to the Schemes. They

also pointed out that such a provision might be disadvantageous for staff who were work-sharing as it might result in a situation where they would not be offered a promotion at all.

The Official Side recognised the Union's right to take a case under Equality Legislation if it wished to do so and that the terms of the scheme could not be quoted against such a claim.

5. Details of the Schemes are set out in the Appendices A and B to this Report.

Appendix A:

E109/74/03

29 July, 2005

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to announce details of a competition, to be run by the Public Appointments Service, to set up panels for interdepartmental promotion to Higher Executive Officer. The attached scheme of promotion to Higher Executive Officer has been discussed between the Official and Staff Sides. Officers interested in competing should study the scheme, in particular, the section on selection procedures (paragraphs 14-16).

Details of the Competition

2. The HEO competition will be a two-stage competition which will assess the appropriate competencies identified as being relevant to effective performance in the HEO role (see Appendix I).

Stage 1: will take place country wide week commencing 10 October and in Dublin week commencing 17 October, 2005 and will consist of an integrated 'Business Challenge Exercise' which candidates will sit during a half day testing session. For this exercise, candidates will be presented with a set of background information based

on a fictional Government Department and will be asked to carry out three tasks on the basis of this information.

- Task One involves analysis and interpretation of information
- Task Two involves making decisions on an issue and planning and prioritising activities
- Task Three involves completing a job scenario questionnaire.

Candidates' order of merit at Stage 1 will be based on their performance on two of these exercises, the analysis and interpretation exercise and the job scenario exercise. Only candidates who reach a satisfactory standard on both of these tasks will be invited to Stage 2.

Stage 2: will commence towards the end of November, 2005 and will involve a competitive competency-based interview, an oral presentation to a board or boards and a short written exercise.

For candidates who progress to Stage Two of the competition, scores on Task Two of Stage One - the Decision Making and Planning exercise - will be taken into account at this stage and will influence placings on the final order of merit. However it is important to be aware that no candidate will fail Stage 2 solely on the basis of their performance on this task.

3. Test Familiarisation material will be available a month prior to the test date.

Eligibility

4. Candidates must:

(a) on the date they apply for the competition, be serving in an established or unestablished (see c below) capacity in the civil service as:

- Executive Officer in the Civil Service **or**
- Junior Clerk in the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas **or**
- Executive Officer on secondment to FÁS from the Civil Service;

and

(b) on 1 September, 2005 have not less than **two** years' service in their existing grade **or** an aggregate of two years' service in eligible grades set out at (a).

(c) Unestablished officers may compete in the competition provided they fulfil the eligibility requirements set out above, subject to having a minimum of one year's continuous service in one of the grades

concerned. An unestablished officer who is successful in the competition will be required to satisfy an establishment element in order to be appointed to an established post.

5. Officers on probation are not eligible to apply unless they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade and have served continuously since satisfactorily completing a probation period. Special leave without pay does not break continuity of service for this purpose.

6. Officers on special leave with pay may apply, if otherwise eligible. Officers on special leave without pay (e.g. to serve with the EU) may be eligible; Personnel Sections should check cases not covered by Department of Finance Circular 33/91 with this Department. Officers on career break may apply if their career break conforms with the terms of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and if they are otherwise eligible.

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

8. Eligibility to compete, health and level of sick leave, are not verified by the Public Appointments Service until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment after Stage 2. Therefore, admission to the competition and placement on a panel does not imply that a candidate meets the health and sick leave criteria. In considering a candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave, the Public Appointments Service will have regard to the Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76, as amended by Department of Finance Circulars 32/91, 33/99 and 17/03. Candidates with doubts about any aspect of their eligibility should clarify their position with their Personnel Section before applying.

Applications

9. Application forms will be available on www.publicjobs.ie and must be returned by 16 September, 2005. **This closing date must be strictly observed.** An applicant, who has not heard from the Public Appointments Service by 7 October, 2005 should contact that office immediately.

10. The Public Appointments Service will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates being called to Stage 2 of the competition (competency based interview, oral presentation and short written exercise). For each candidate called to this stage the Personnel

Officer will be required to certify that the candidate;

- has been satisfactory and worked well in his/her present grade,
- has been satisfactory in general conduct, and
- fulfils the conditions of eligibility specified in paragraphs 4-8 of the Circular.

Duration of panels

11. The panels formed under the terms of this circular will become valid on 1 July, 2005, as the current panel set up under the terms of Department of Finance Circular 16/2003, was extended to 30 June 2005.

12. The validity period of the panels set up under the terms of this circular will extend to 28 February 2007, or until the exhaustion of the panels, whichever is the earlier. Candidates who have not been promoted at the expiry of the relevant panel will have no claim to promotion thereafter because of having been on the panel.

Codes of Practice

13. The recruitment and selection process for appointment to this position will be conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice titled *Selection of Persons for Appointment on Promotion to Positions in the Civil Service (No. 02/04)* published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments.

The Code of Practice reflects the following core principles:

- *Probity*
- *Appointments Made on Merit*
- *An Appointments Process in Line with Best Practice*
- *A Fair Appointments Process Applied with Consistency*
- *Appointments Made in an Open, Accountable and Transparent Manner*

Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the contents of the Code of Practice including, inter alia, the provisions in relation to the responsibilities placed on candidates who participate in the recruitment and selection process.

14. Complaints and Requests for Review: Complaints/requests for review will be considered by the Public Appointments Service in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code of Practice.

15. The Code of Practice may be accessed by visiting www.cpsa-online.ie or by contacting directly the Commission for Public Service

Appointments, Chapter House, 26-30 Upper Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

Information on Panels

16. The information on the panel(s) formed as a result of this competition will be made available to Personnel Officers in all Departments/Offices and Careers and Appointments Section in the Department of Finance. In addition, candidates being invited to Stage 2 will be asked to agree to the same information being made available to the relevant civil service unions for the purpose of monitoring the operation of the scheme.

Circulation and further information

17. Personnel Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their departments and associated offices without delay, including officers on maternity leave, career break, term time, contract, secondment and other relevant forms of leave. If candidates have any queries about the circular they should contact their Personnel Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed to the Public Appointments Service.

18. The Civil Service is an equal opportunity employer. Promotion within the service is made on the basis of qualifications and the ability to carry out the responsibilities of the grade or post.

Mise le meas,

John O'Connell
Assistant Secretary

Scheme of interdepartmental promotion to posts at Higher Executive Officer level

Definitions

1. A "department" includes any office such as the Office of Public Works or the Central Statistics Office which is normally treated as a separate nominating unit for interdepartmental competitions. It also includes FÁS.

A "provincial location" means a location outside of Dublin.

A "vacancy to be filled" only arises in respect of posts which are to be filled by promotion. It includes newly created posts, along with vacancies in existing posts in the grades and departments/bodies listed below:

- (a) All Departments: Higher Executive Officer.
- (b) Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas: Senior Clerk.
- (c) FÁS: Higher Executive Officer.

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

Scope and Application of the Scheme

2.1 The proportion of posts to be filled from interdepartmental promotion competitions at HEO level remains at 40% as agreed under the terms of Sustaining Progress (Paragraph 22.17(ii)). This means that in a sequence of five vacancies, the second and fourth will be filled from the interdepartmental panel.

2.2 Departments will only be allowed to depart from this sequence where it is necessary to make any promotions as a result of the agreement reached at General Council whereby individuals who had been in receipt of allowances for 'acting up' to higher duties for two years or more are to be promoted before completing a CAF transfer. In such circumstances the Departments involved may make these promotions on the basis that any resulting liability to the Interdepartmental Panel must be discharged at the earliest opportunity. This would normally be within the lifetime of the current panel, however a portion of the liability may exceptionally be carried over to the following panel where the Department concerned has

obtained the sanction of the Department of Finance, on the basis that it will be able to discharge this liability in full in the course of the next panel (e.g. as a result of anticipated retirements).

2.3 The proportion of interdepartmental promotions will be increased to 50% from the date equating to the commencement of the next subsequent competition for promotion to Principal Officer level i.e. 1 January 2007.

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

(a) Every second and fourth vacancy in a sequence of five in the grade of Higher Executive Officer to be filled in all departments except the Land Registry / Registry of Deeds (but see (d) below).

(b) Every second and fourth vacancy in a sequence of five in the grade of Senior Clerk to be filled in the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas.

(c) Vacancies in the grade of Higher Executive Officer to be filled 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 paragraphs 11-13 of the Scheme**).

(d) The non-specialist Higher Executive Officer post to be filled in the Land Registry /Registry of Deeds.

(e) One vacancy in the grade of Higher Executive Officer to be filled in FÁS for each officer serving in FÁS who is appointed under the terms of this scheme.

(f) The sequence for filling posts in the Higher Executive Officer grade in each Department (apart from posts to be filled under the "Import/Export arrangements) will be as follows: **Internal, Panel B, Internal, Panel B, Internal**.

(g) However, where a Department is assigned an "Export" quota of two or more they will substitute internal promotions to a number equal to the "Export" quota for appointments which would otherwise have been filled from Panel "B" on the basis that every second post which would otherwise have been filled from Panel "B" is filled by internal promotion. As an example, in the case of a Department with an "Export" quota of two, the sequence for filling posts would be as follows:

Internal, Panel B, Internal, Internal (first panel B substitute),
Internal
Internal, Panel B, Internal, internal (second panel B
substitute), **Internal**.

(h) A Higher Executive Officer post that is filled in a Department from an open competition held under the terms set out in Sustaining Progress, shall reckon as having fulfilled the Department's liability to fill a post which would otherwise have been filled from panel "B".

4. Where a post is filled by a special interdepartmental competition, provided for under paragraph 37 below, it will be regarded as fulfilling the requirements to fill posts by interdepartmental competitions.

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 set up as follows:

Panel B: This will be the main panel; it will be formed from among all qualified candidates. The panel will be drawn from in order of merit to fill posts under paragraph 3(a), (b), (d) and (e).

Panel A: This panel will be formed from among all qualified candidates on Panel B and who are Executive Officers whose parent departments (when they apply for the competition) are assigned an export quota (see paragraph 11). The number of candidates on this panel from any department will not exceed four times' that department's export quota. The panel will be drawn from in order of merit to fill every post falling to be filled under paragraph 3(c). Appointments will be made from the panels strictly in accordance with the order in which vacancies fall to be filled.

6. Candidates who are deemed to be **qualified for appointment** will be required to specify the provincial locations, (if any), where they would be prepared to serve, on a form to be supplied by the Public Appointments Service. Candidates **placed on the panels** will be offered appointments to Dublin and such provincial locations so specified, should appointments in those locations arise. Candidates on the panels will not be offered appointments to provincial locations which they have not specified. However, should an appointment arise in a location which has not been listed on the form supplied by the Public Appointments Service, it will be offered, in order of merit, to officers on the panels and will not affect the position regarding refusals of appointments as set out in paragraph 28 below. Candidates can be given no assurances that even one appointment to any particular location will be available.

7. 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.

8. Where Panel A is exhausted before all import quotas have been satisfied, any subsequent Panel A liabilities will be met by appointment of candidates from exporting departments placed on Panel B but excluded from Panel A due to the export quota limitation set out in paragraph 5. If no such candidates remain on Panel B at that stage, Panel A liabilities will be met by appointment of candidates from Panel B in order of merit.

9. Where a post cannot be filled from a panel **on grounds of grade** or because it is in **FÁS** (see paragraphs 26-31), it may then be filled internally in the department concerned and this will be deemed to satisfy that department's obligation to the interdepartmental panel in that instance. If, however, a post in a provincial location cannot be filled from a panel on **grounds of geographic location** and it cannot subsequently be filled under the provisions of paragraph 25(b) below, it may then be filled internally in the department concerned but that department will carry a debt forward, for that particular location, to the next equivalent panel established under this scheme. The next vacancy to be filled that arises in that particular location in the department concerned during the life of the subsequent panel will be due to be filled from the panel; if it cannot be filled in this manner, the debt will lapse. If a post in **Dublin** cannot be filled from a panel on **grounds of geographic location** it may then be filled internally in the department concerned but that department will carry a debt forward, for Dublin, to the next equivalent panel established under this scheme. The next vacancy to be filled that arises in Dublin in that department during the life of the subsequent panel will be due to be filled from the panel.

10. An Executive Officer promoted to Higher Executive Officer under Department of Finance Circular 30/65 or any later circular containing similar provisions governing the return of an officer to fill a post of Higher Executive Officer in his/her parent department, will, on his/her return to such department, be regarded as filling the next vacancy which would normally be due to be filled from Panel B.

Import/Export quotas

11. Departments will be assigned (and informed of) an import/export quota based on promotion trends to Higher Executive Officer. In determining these quotas, all Executive Officer to Higher Executive

Officer promotions (including promotions to HEO/Systems Analyst) will be counted. The Land Registry/Registry of Deeds, the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas and FÁS will not be assigned an import/export quota.

12. Import/export quotas are calculated on an annual basis. Departments which in the preceding period of three years had more or less than the average number of promotions to HEO (calculated by multiplying the annual average of eligible officers in each department by the ratio which the number of promotions to the grade service-wide bore to the number of eligible officers service-wide) will be assigned import or export quotas respectively, the satisfaction of which will make good the departures from the average. Quotas of less than 0.5 will be disregarded and other quotas will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

13. Where a department has been divided or amalgamated during the three-year period referred to in paragraph 12 above, that department's quota will relate to the functional area for which it is now responsible. The quota will be calculated by reference to the numbers of eligible officers and promotions in the individual branch/division involved in the interdepartmental reorganisation.

Selection procedures

14. Selection will be by means of a two-stage competition as outlined in paragraph 2 of the circular. The final stage of the competition will be a competitive interview, an oral presentation and a short written exercise, conducted by a board or boards set up by the Public Appointments Service. This stage will determine which candidates are fully qualified for appointment. Panels will be drawn up, in order of merit, from among these qualified candidates.

15. In ranking the candidates considered best qualified for appointment, the Public Appointments Service will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English, in accordance with Department of the Public Service Circular 43/75 and Department of Finance Circular 30/90 and any other relevant instruction to candidates qualified for the award of such credit on or before the date of the competitive interview, or such other date as may be agreed between the Official and Staff Sides.

16. Competitive interview boards will consist of board members who have been fully trained in the structured interview technique.

Knowledge of Irish

17. It is recognised that the performance of duties in the Department of Education and Science, the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Public Appointments Service 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 such competence is sought, it will be assessed by the Public Appointments Service by means of a special test. An officer found not to be qualified for appointment because of this Irish requirement will retain his/her place on the relevant panel. If on expiry of that panel the officer has not been promoted and it is established that he or she would have been promoted from the panel but for the special Irish requirement, then that officer will be offered the first appointment falling to be filled from the next equivalent panel set up under this scheme to which the Irish requirement does not apply.

Conditions of Appointment

Decentralisation:

18. In Budget 2004, the Government announced a major programme of decentralisation of Government Departments and other agencies from Dublin to locations around Ireland. In a decentralised civil and public service, offers of employment may be conditional on the appointee undertaking to work in a particular decentralised location where required to do so by the appointing Department.

19. Where an offer of appointment is to a post in a Department/Office that is planned to be decentralised, **or to an existing provincial location**, such offers of appointment will be made on condition that appointees are prepared to relocate to a particular location with the appointing Department/Office. In such cases, appointees will be required to sign an undertaking on taking up duty that they are prepared to relocate to a particular location as required to do so by the appointing Department.

20.1 Appointees will be required to serve a **minimum period of 2 years** in a decentralised location before they would be eligible for a transfer to another location and they will be required to sign an undertaking on appointment to this effect.

20.2 Where the appointee is required to serve a period of less than or equal to 2 years in Dublin prior to decentralisation, the total period, including the period in the decentralised location, before being eligible for transfer to another location would be the period served in

Dublin plus 2 years in the decentralised location.

20.3 Where the appointee is required to serve a period of greater than two years in Dublin prior to decentralisation, the maximum total period, including the period in a decentralised location, before being eligible for transfer to another location, would be four years.

21. Candidates who do not accept an offer of appointment on this basis will remain on the panel for consideration for further offer(s) of appointment, should these arise. However, it should be noted that any further offer(s) of appointment will also be made on condition of the candidate's undertaking that they are prepared to work in a particular decentralised location. However they will not receive further offers of appointment to a location which they have previously turned down.

22. Candidates should note that the provisions of Circular 6/89, Removal Expenses, will not apply to any offers of appointment arising from this competition.

23. Offers of appointment will be made from the panels in order of merit. An officer will have a maximum of five working days after receipt of an offer to accept or reject it. 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 parent department just prior to promotion. 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.

24. 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 he or she will no longer be offered appointment to posts at or below that level under the scheme.

25. Any candidate who (a) resigns, retires, is suspended or dismissed from his/her post or (b) is not qualified by the selection board as being suitable for promotion to Higher Executive Officer level, will not be eligible to be placed on the panels.

Refusal of appointments

26. 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, geographic location or that the appointment is to a post in FÁS.

27. 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.

28. An officer who refuses an offer of appointment **on grounds of geographic location** will not subsequently be offered an appointment to the same location but will remain eligible for appointment to such other locations as he or she has specified should appointments arise in those locations. Candidates are advised that when specifying provincial locations (if any), as provided for at paragraph 6 above, they should list only those locations in which they are prepared to serve.

29. An officer who refuses an appointment in **FÁS** will not be offered another appointment in that body but will remain on the panel for other appointments.

30. An appointment refused under the provisions of paragraph 26 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 above. If there are no candidates from exporting departments remaining on Panel B or if none of them accept the position, the appointment will be offered in order of merit to those remaining on Panel B. In the event that the post cannot be filled in this way and,

(a) **the appointment has been refused on grounds of grade or because it is in FÁS**, it will be filled by internal promotion in the department concerned and that department will be deemed to have satisfied its interdepartmental panel liabilities in respect of the vacancy in question,

(b) **the appointment is to a provincial location and has been refused on grounds of geographic location**, it may be filled internally in the department concerned but that department will carry a debt forward, for that particular location, to the next equivalent

panel established under this scheme. The next vacancy that arises in that particular location in the department concerned during the life of the subsequent panel will be due to be filled from the panel; if it cannot be filled in this manner, the debt will lapse, and

(c) the appointment is to Dublin and has been refused on grounds of geographic location, it will be filled by internal promotion in the department concerned but that department will carry a debt forward, for Dublin, to the next equivalent panel established under this scheme. The next vacancy to be filled that arises in Dublin in the department concerned during the life of the subsequent panel will be due to be filled from the panel.

31. An officer who refuses an offer of appointment under the provisions of paragraph 26 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.

Performance appraisal

32. For each candidate called to competitive interview and oral presentation, the Personnel Officer will give the Public Appointments Service an assessment of the candidate's suitability for promotion on a form supplied by the Public Appointments Service. The promotion potential form in the PMDS as completed at the last appraisal before the date of the competition circular should be used when completing that form. Where a sufficiently long period, say about nine months, has elapsed since the candidate's appraisal, and where there is reason to believe that the candidate's performance in the meantime merits a change in the assessment, then a current appraisal should be made.

Career development and training

33. An officer promoted from a departmental grade to a general service grade, or vice versa, under this scheme 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

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

Reservations

35. 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 service-wide basis, or in the event of any future Government decisions.

36. The Minister for Finance also reserves the right to arrange for the filling, by separate interdepartmental competition or otherwise, of vacancies at Higher Executive Officer level for which special qualifications are deemed necessary or in respect of which other 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.

July, 2005

APPENDIX I

Competencies identified as being relevant to the HEO grade

1. Organising and Planning

A Higher Executive Officer must structure and organise their own work effectively, in addition to planning and organising resources and people, in order to meet objectives within agreed time-scales. An effective Higher Executive Officer will accurately assess and prioritise plans, taking account of longer-term issues and business goals and will monitor progress against objectives, taking into account potential obstacles and reviewing plans where necessary.

2. Commitment to Achieving Quality Results

A Higher Executive Officer must demonstrate persistence, determination and commitment to achieving the objectives of the department/unit. It is important that a Higher Executive Officer takes responsibility and is accountable for the work produced on behalf of the department/unit and strives for quality results by monitoring progress against targets and ensuring standards are adhered to.

3. Openness to Change

The effective Higher Executive Officer proactively identifies and suggests areas for improvement and is enthusiastic about and strives to effectively implement new developments/changing work practices. A Higher Executive Officer must review own performance regularly and continuously seek to develop at a personal level. He/ she must also be open to modern technology and aware of the impact it can have on work practices.

4. People Skills

An effective Higher Executive Officer must initiate and maintain good relations with people, displaying diplomacy and courtesy even in emotionally charged situations. It is important to monitor, encourage and develop each team member, treating everyone in a consistent and sensitive manner. Higher Executive Officers need to be customer-oriented and be able to promote and advance the aims of the department/unit. In dealing with others, it is important to be able to show that they are aware of the impact that issues/developments in the public sector will have on their own unit/department.

5. Research, Analysis & Decision Making

An effective Higher Executive Officer seeks all relevant information to help overcome existing or potential problems, analyses and interprets information gathered and takes account of the critical factors including the 'bigger picture'. S/he puts forward practical and realistic recommendations to progress forward. It is important that a Higher Executive Officer makes decisions, utilising resources and expertise available to the maximum, whilst also recognising time constraints.

Appendix B:

E109/138/03

20 December 2005

Circular 36/2005: Confined competition for promotion to Assistant Principal (Standard Scale) level in the Civil Service

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to refer to the attached scheme of

promotion to Assistant Principal (Standard Scale) which has been agreed between the Official and Staff Sides. Under the terms of the Scheme, this circular announces a Public Appointments Service competition to set up panels for interdepartmental promotion to Assistant Principal (Standard Scale) and certain related grades. Officers interested in competing should study the Scheme (see Appendix I), especially the sections on selection procedures (paragraphs 3-7 of the Scheme). For "Department", read Department/Office throughout this Circular.

Duration of panels

2. The panels set up from this competition will become valid from 1 April 2006 or from the exhaustion date of the equivalent panels set up under the terms of Department of Finance Circular 24/2003, whichever is the earlier.

3. The validity period of the panels formed under the terms of this circular will extend to 30 September 2007, or until the exhaustion dates of these panels, whichever is the earlier.

The Competition

4. The Civil Service is an equal opportunity employer. Promotion within the Civil Service is made on the basis of qualifications and the ability to carry out the responsibilities of the grade or post and in accordance with the *Code of Practice of the Commission for Public Service Appointments – Selection of Persons for Appointment on Promotion to Positions in the Civil Service*.

5. Selection will be by means of a competition run by the Public Appointments Service, will be based on a competency methodology and will have two stages:

- **Stage 1** is a qualifying stage and will consist of (i) Verbal Reasoning and Numerical tests and (ii) Job Simulation Exercise. These tests will last a half day and will **commence mid-February, 2006**.
- **Stage 2** will consist of (i) Analysis/Presentation and (ii) Competitive Interview. Only candidates who reach a satisfactory standard at Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2.

6. Test Familiarisation material will be available on www.publicjobs.ie from mid-January 2006.

7. At Stage 2, the Interview Board will be given 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 that stage of the competition. The competency framework for the Assistant Principal (standard scale) role is set out at Appendix 2.

How to Apply

8. Application forms are available on the Public Appointments Service website www.publicjobs.ie and must be submitted **not later than 18 January, 2006**.

Please contact Orla Dooley on (01) 8587645 should you encounter any difficulties applying online. **This closing date must be strictly observed.**

Where an applicant has not heard from the Public Appointments Service by **3**

February, 2006 they should contact that Office immediately.

9. The Public Appointments Service will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates being called to competitive interview at Stage 2. For each candidate called to competitive interview, the Personnel Officer will be required to certify that the candidate;

- has been satisfactory and worked well in his or her present grade,
- has been satisfactory in general conduct, and
- fulfils the conditions of eligibility specified in paragraphs 10-15 below.

Eligibility

10. In order to be eligible to compete, prospective candidates must,

(a) be serving in an established, unestablished or acting capacity (see c below) in the civil service, or the Ordnance Survey of Ireland or be on secondment to FÁS from the civil service, in one of the following grades:

- Higher Executive Officer (including HEO/Systems Analyst and the former Inspector of Taxes grade).
- Administrative Officer.
- Third Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- Auditor in the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- Senior Clerk in the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas,

and

(b) on **1 February, 2006** have at least **two** years' service in their existing grade or an aggregate of **two** years' service in eligible grades set out at (a). In this context, credit is given for all work-sharing service on the same basis as full-time service. Service in the former Inspector of Taxes grade is treated as HEO service for this purpose.

(c) unestablished officers and officers who are serving in an acting capacity in an eligible grade may be eligible to compete in the competition provided they fulfil the eligibility requirements set out above subject to having a minimum of one year's continuous service in one of the grades concerned on the eligibility date. An unestablished officer who is successful in the competition will be required to satisfy an establishment element in order to be appointed to an established post.

(d) where an officer was acting or on contract in an eligible grade, and was thereafter appointed in a substantive capacity, eligibility can be based on the aggregate service e.g. six months in an acting capacity or on contract and eighteen months in a substantive capacity, can be aggregated to give two years service. For the purpose of deciding eligibility, officers must be serving on the eligibility date and the one year of continuous service must have taken place immediately prior to the eligibility date of the competition in question.

11. Officers on probation are not eligible to compete except 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.

12. Officers on special leave with pay may apply, if otherwise eligible. Officers on special leave without pay (e.g. to serve with the EU) may be eligible. Personnel Sections should check cases not covered by Department of Finance Circular 33/91 with this Department. Officers on career break may apply, if their career break conforms to the terms of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and if they are otherwise eligible.

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

14. Officers serving in the Land Registry/Registry of Deeds are not eligible to compete.

15. Candidates should note that (i) eligibility to compete and (ii) health and the level of sick leave are not verified by the Public Appointments Service until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment after completion of Stage 2. Therefore, admission to the competition and placement on a panel does not imply that a candidate meets the health and sick leave criteria. In considering a candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave, the Public Appointments Service will have regard to Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76, as amended by Department of Finance Circulars 32/91, 33/99 and 17/03. Candidates with doubts about any aspect of their eligibility should clarify their position with their Personnel Section before applying.

Decentralisation

16. In Budget 2004, the Government announced a major programme of decentralisation of Government Departments and other agencies from Dublin to locations around Ireland. In a decentralised civil and public service, offers of employment may be conditional on the appointee undertaking to work in a particular decentralised location where required to do so by the appointing Department.

17. Where an offer of appointment is to a post in a Department/Office that it is planned to be decentralised, or to an existing provincial location, such offers of appointment will be made on condition that appointees are prepared to relocate to a particular decentralised location with the appointing Department/Office. In such cases, appointees will be required to sign an undertaking on taking up duty that they are prepared to relocate to a particular decentralised location as required to do so by the appointing Department.

18.1 Appointees will be required to serve a **minimum period of 3 years** in a decentralised location before being eligible for a transfer to another location and they will be required to sign an undertaking on appointment to this effect.

18.2 Where the appointee is required to serve a period of less than or equal to 2 years in Dublin prior to decentralisation, the total period, including the period in a decentralised location, before being eligible for transfer to another location would be the period served in Dublin plus 3 years in the decentralised location.

18.3 Where the appointee is required to serve a period of greater than 2 years in Dublin prior to decentralisation, the maximum total period including the period in a decentralised location, before being eligible for transfer to another location would be 5 years.

19. Candidates who do not accept an offer of appointment on this basis will remain on the panel for consideration for further offer(s) of appointment, should these arise. However, it should be noted that all further offer(s) of appointment will also be made on condition of the candidate's undertaking that they are prepared to work in a particular decentralised location. However they will not receive further offers of appointment to a location which they have previously turned down.

20. Candidates should note that the provisions of Circular 6/89, Removal Expenses, will not apply to any offers of appointment arising from this competition.

Codes of Practice

21. The recruitment and selection process for appointment to this position will be conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice titled *Selection of Persons for Appointment on Promotion to Positions in the Civil Service (No. 02/04)* published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments.

The Code of Practice reflects the following core principles:

- *Probity*
- *Appointments Made on Merit*
- *An Appointments Process in Line with Best Practice*
- *A Fair Appointments Process Applied with Consistency*
- *Appointments Made in an Open, Accountable and Transparent Manner*
Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the contents of the Code of Practice including, inter alia, the provisions in relation to the responsibilities placed on candidates who participate in the recruitment and selection process.

22. **Complaints and Requests for Review:** Complaints/requests for review will be considered by the Public Appointments Service in accordance with the procedures set

out in the Code of Practice.

23. The Code of Practice may be accessed by visiting www.cpsa-online.ie or by contacting directly the Commission for Public Service Appointments, Chapter House, 26-30 Upper Abbey Street, Dublin 1, telephone number 8779940.

Circulation and further information

24. Personnel Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their departments and associated offices without delay, including eligible fixed term workers, officers on term time, secondment, maternity leave, career break, term time, contract, and other relevant forms of leave. If candidates have any queries about the circular they should contact their Personnel Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed to the Public Appointments Service.

Mise le meas,

John O'Connell
Assistant Secretary

APPENDIX 1 **Interdepartmental promotion scheme to posts** **at Assistant Principal (standard scale) level**

Definitions

1. A "department" includes any office such as the Office of the Revenue Commissioners or the Central Statistics Office which is normally treated as a separate nominating unit for interdepartmental competitions.

2. A "fillable vacancy" only arises in respect of posts which are to be filled by promotion. It includes newly created posts, along with vacancies in existing posts, in the grades listed below:

- Assistant Principal (standard scale) in all departments except the Department of the Taoiseach, the Department of Finance and the Land Registry/Registry of Deeds.
- Senior Auditor in the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- First Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- Assistant Principal Committee Clerk in the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas.

Posts filled by special interdepartmental competition will not reckon as vacancies for the purposes of this scheme.

Selection procedures for promotion to Assistant Principal (standard scale) level

3. Selection under this scheme is by means of a Public Appointments Service competition.

3.1 **Stage 1:** Candidates will be required to undertake preliminary Verbal Reasoning and Numerical tests operated by the Public Appointments Service. Only candidates who reach the requisite standard in those tests will be invited to Stage 2 of the competition.

3.2 **Stage 2:** This stage of the competition will be an Analysis/Presentation Exercise which will be followed by a Competitive Interview, conducted by a board or boards set up by the PAS. This will determine which candidates are fully qualified for appointment.

3.3 Candidates may be invited to Stage 2 in "batches", with the highest-placed qualifiers at Stage 1 forming the first batch, and further batches likewise called by reference to their Stage 1 placing. The number of candidates per batch and the interval between the calling of batches are matters to be determined by the Public Appointments Service. Candidates will be called to Stage 2 strictly according to the order of merit from Stage 1. The interview results and panel placing will issue on a board-by-board basis.

4. In ranking the candidates considered best qualified for appointment, the Public Appointments Service will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English, in accordance with Department of the Public Service Circular 43/75 and Department of Finance Circular 30/90 and any other relevant instruction to candidates qualified for such credit on or before the date of the competitive interview, or such other date as the Official and Staff Sides may agree.

5. Competitive Interview and Presentation Boards will consist of board members who have been trained.

6. **Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General:** Candidates who indicate an interest in being considered for Senior Auditor appointments in the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, and who are placed on Panel B, will be interviewed subsequently by a separate board to establish whether they are qualified for the Senior Auditor grade. This board will consist of a representative of the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office and a Public Appointments Service nominee. A panel of qualified candidates, if any, will be drawn up from those interviewed. The Public Appointments Service may, at its discretion, decide that Auditors placed on Panel B are qualified for Senior Auditor without attending for further interview. Senior Auditor assignments, should vacancies arise, will be made from those candidates deemed suitable for the grade, in accordance with their Panel B ranking. Candidates interested in being considered for Senior Auditor appointments should note that they will be expected to have a good knowledge of public sector accounting and financial procedures. They will also be expected to be able to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of current accounting and auditing standards.

7. Department of Foreign Affairs: Candidates who indicate an interest in being considered for First Secretary appointments in the Department of Foreign Affairs and who are placed on Panel B, will be interviewed subsequently by a separate board to establish their suitability for the First Secretary grade. This board will consist of a Department of Foreign Affairs representative and a Public Appointments Service nominee. A panel of qualified candidates, if any, will be drawn up from those interviewed. The Public Appointments Service may, at its discretion, decide that Third Secretaries placed on Panel B are qualified for First Secretary without attending for further interview. First Secretary assignments, should vacancies arise, will be made from those candidates deemed suitable for the grade, in accordance with their Panel B ranking.

Scope and Application of the Scheme

8.1 Competition panels: two panels of qualified candidates, placed in order of merit, will be set up from this competition to fill all vacancies within the meaning of the scheme:

Panel B: This will be the main panel; it will be formed from among those candidates qualified at the competitive interview stage of the competition (Stage 2) and will be drawn from in order of merit to fill posts under paragraph 2 above.

Panel A: This sub panel will be formed from among all qualified candidates on Panel B who are Higher Executive Officers or Administrative Officers, whose parent departments are assigned an export quota, excluding Administrative Officers in the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance. The number of candidates on this panel from any department will not exceed the export quota of that department to a degree of four (i.e. Quota x 4). The panel will be drawn from in order of merit to fill posts under paragraph 2 above.

The sequence for filling posts in the Assistant Principal (Standard) grade in each Department (apart from posts to be filled under the "Import/Export" arrangements – see paragraphs 15-22 below) will be as follows:

Internal, Panel B, Internal, Panel B, Internal.

8.2 The proportion of posts to be filled from interdepartmental promotion competitions at AP level remains at 40% as agreed under the terms of Sustaining Progress (Paragraph 22.17(ii)). This means that in a sequence of five vacancies, the second and fourth will be filled from the interdepartmental panel.

8.3 Departments will only be allowed to depart from this sequence where it is necessary to make any promotions as a result of the agreement reached at General Council whereby individuals who had been in receipt of allowances for 'acting up' to higher duties for two years or more are to be promoted before completing a CAF transfer. In such circumstances, the Departments involved may make these promotions on the basis that any resulting liability to the Interdepartmental Panel must be discharged at the earliest opportunity. This would normally be within the lifetime of the current panel; however a portion of the liability may exceptionally be carried over to the following panel where the Department concerned has obtained the sanction of the Department of

Finance, on the basis that it will be able to discharge this liability in full in the course of the next panel (e.g. as a result of anticipated retirements).

9. Departments which have been assigned an Import quota (see paragraphs 15-22 below) will be required to fill certain additional vacancies under the scheme.

10. However, where a Department is assigned an "Export" quota of 2 or more they may substitute internal promotions to a number equal to the "Export" quota for appointments which would otherwise have been filled from Panel "B" on the basis that every second post which would otherwise have been filled from Panel "B" is filled by internal promotion. As an example, in the case of a Department with an "Export" quota of 2, the sequence for filling posts would be as follows:

Internal, Panel B, Internal, Internal (first Panel B substitute), Internal
Internal, Panel B, Internal, Internal (second Panel B substitute), Internal

11. A candidate's parent department will be the parent department at the time of application for the competition. Appointments will be made from the panels strictly in accordance with the order in which vacancies fall to be filled. 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.

12. If Panel A is exhausted before all 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 due to the export quota limit set out in paragraph 8.1 above. If there are no such candidates remaining on Panel B at that stage or if no such candidate accepts the post, it will be offered to those remaining on Panel B in order of merit. If Panel B is exhausted before its expiry date, the Official and Staff Sides will consult on the arrangements to apply for the outstanding period.

13. If a post cannot be filled as outlined above from a panel, 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.

14. For each officer in FÁS appointed under the scheme, one fillable vacancy in the grade of Assistant Principal (standard scale) in FÁS will be filled under the Scheme.

Import/export quotas

15. Import/Export Quotas are calculated annually for the grade of Assistant Principal. The calculations are based on information provided by

Departments/Offices concerning the number of officers eligible and numbers promoted to Assistant Principal over a 5 year period. Departments will be assigned and informed of an import/export quota based on their promotion record to Assistant Principal (standard and higher scale). The Land Registry/Registry of Deeds, the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas will not be assigned a quota.

16. The calculation of Import/Export Quotas is intended to identify Departments with more or less than the average number of promotions so that a fairer balance of promotions can be achieved. If the average promoted is more than the expected promoted then a department will be assigned an Import Quota as such departments are deemed to have a better than average promotion record. If the average promoted is less than the expected promoted then a department will be assigned an Export Quota as such departments are deemed to have a poorer than average promotion record.

17. Departments will be assigned and informed of an import/export quota based on their promotion record to Assistant Principal (standard and higher scale).

18. Departments, which in the preceding five-year period 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 service-wide bore to the number of eligible officers service-wide), will be given import or export quotas, respectively. The satisfaction of these import/export quotas will be considered to have made good the departures from average number of Assistant Principal promotions. Quotas below 0.5 will be disregarded and other quotas will be rounded up to the nearest figure.

19. In determining import/export quotas, all promotions of Higher Executive Officers and Administrative Officers (excluding Administrative Officers in the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance) to Assistant Principal (standard or higher scale) will be counted.

20. Where a department has been divided or amalgamated during the five-year period, that department's quota will relate to the functional area for which it is now responsible. The quota will be calculated by reference to the numbers of eligible officers and promotions in the individual Section/Branch/Division involved in the interdepartmental reorganisation.

21. Departments which have been assigned an Import Quota are required to fill vacancies from Panel A in the interdepartmental Civil Service Commission competition(s). Panel A liabilities take precedence over all internal and Panel B promotions.

22. A Department with an Export Quota can have a number (not exceeding 4 times the Quota) of successful candidates from that Department, who are on the main panel for the HEO or AP competitions, placed on a second panel, Panel A.

Appointments

23. Offers of appointments will be made from the panels strictly in order of merit. An officer will have a maximum of **five working days** after receipt of an offer from the department with the promotional vacancy to accept or reject the promotion. Appointments will be in an acting capacity for at least one year and they 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 having been on the panels. In the event of reversion, an officer will return to fill a vacancy in the grade previously held by them in the parent department prior to promotion. 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.

24. Officers on the panels will continue to be eligible for promotion in the normal course in their own department. In the event of any such officer accepting an offer of promotion made in the normal course or under the scheme or to a grade covered by the scheme, they will no longer be offered appointment to posts at, or below, that level under the scheme.

25. Any candidate who:

(a) resigns, retires, is suspended or is dismissed from his or her post, **or**

(b) is not qualified by the interview board as being suitable for promotion to Assistant

Principal (standard scale) level, will not be eligible to be placed on the panels.

26. **Knowledge of Irish:** It is recognised that in the Department of Education and Science, the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Public Appointments Service, there may be a particular requirement for the performance of duties through the medium of Irish. 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 such competence is sought, it will be effected by the Public Appointments Service on the basis of a test held specifically for this purpose. An officer found not to be qualified for appointment because of this special Irish language requirement will retain his or her place on the relevant panel. If on expiry of that panel the officer has not been promoted and it is established that he or she would have been promoted from the panel but for the special Irish language requirement, that officer will then be offered the first appointment falling to be filled from the next equivalent panel set up under this scheme to which the special Irish language requirement does not apply.

Refusal of appointments

27. An officer may refuse an offer of appointment from the panels on grounds of grade offered or on grounds of geographic location. An officer may also refuse an appointment to FÁS.

28. An officer who refuses appointment on grounds of grade 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 will not be offered another appointment in that body, but will remain on the panel for other appointments.

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

Performance appraisal

30. For each candidate called to competitive interview, the Personnel Officer will give the Public Appointments Service an assessment of the candidate's suitability for promotion on a form supplied by the Public Appointments Service. The 'promotion potential' element to the relevant scheme of performance appraisal that was completed at the candidate's last appraisal before the date of the competition Circular should be used when completing that form. Where a sufficiently long period, (i.e. greater than six months), has elapsed since the candidate's appraisal, and where there is reason to believe that the candidate's performance in the meantime merits a change in the assessment, a current appraisal should be made.

Career development and training

31. An officer promoted from a departmental grade to a general service grade, or vice versa, under this scheme 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.

Information on Panels

32. The information on panel(s) formed as a result of these competitions will be made available to Personnel Officers in all Departments/Offices and Careers and Appointments Section in the Department of Finance. In addition, candidates will be asked to agree to the same information being made available to the relevant civil service unions for the purpose of monitoring the operation of the scheme.

Steering Committee

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

Reservations

34. 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 service-wide basis. The Minister 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 such case, there will be consultation between the Official and Staff Sides.

APPENDIX 2

Assistant Principal (Standard Scale): Competency Framework

The following table represents a summary of the competencies identified as being essential for the effective performance of the Assistant Principal (Standard scale) role.

Competency Title	Summary Statement of Competency
Strategic Perspective	Understands the relevance of wider departmental, civil service and external issues and recognises the implications in the context of their role. Thinks about issues and their own role in a strategic way and aims to achieve beneficial outcomes for a wide range of stakeholders.
Makes Things Happen and Implements Change	Implements change taking a solution-focused and creative approach to dealing with problems. Is willing to make difficult decisions and to take on responsibility for challenging tasks. Identifies barriers to change and works to overcome them. Looks critically at existing ways of working and recognises opportunities for making improvements.
Analytical Thinking and Decision Making	Identifies relevant information sources, objectively analysing and evaluating complex information to identify the key issues. Demonstrates a well-rounded general capability to analyse and interpret numerical information. Makes sound and realistic decisions on issues based on a thorough analysis of the relevant information. Consults with others, where appropriate, and considers the implications of decisions on other parties.
Leading and Managing Staff Performance	Shows staff how their work fits into the broader context and keeps them informed of relevant issues. Sets high standards for the team and encourages team members to meet these standards. Effectively manages staff performance and development by setting clear and realistic goals and providing constructive feedback as well as directly addressing issues of poor performance.
Organising for Results	Effectively plans projects, maximising available resources and setting realistic timeframes to ensure quality outputs/services. Involves relevant stakeholders and delegates tasks according to the strengths of the team. Measures and monitors progress to ensure delivery of results. Anticipates potential problems and puts contingency plans in place.

Communicating and Influencing	Communicates clearly and effectively, both verbally and in writing. Makes a compelling case, can present persuasive arguments and maintain poise under questioning. When influencing, is clear about the objectives, plans how to influence others to achieve the desired outcomes and is prepared to state own position clearly.
Commitment to High Standards	Demonstrates a commitment to achieving high standards even in pressurised or difficult conditions. Constantly develops own skills in order to improve standards of performance. Sets high standards for the work of their team and strives to ensure that these standards are met.

Agreed report recording agreement

This report was adopted on 26 September 2007