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An Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta  
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Circular 0056/2009

**To: The Management Authorities of Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools and to Chief Executive Officers of Vocational Education Committees**

**Revised arrangements 2009/2010  
September Returns (Teacher Timetables)**

The Minister for Education & Science wishes to advise school management authorities of revised arrangements for September Returns (Teacher Timetables).

**1. Importance of timetabling.**

The formulation of school timetables, appropriate to the diverse needs of individual schools, is a core function of school managerial authorities in ensuring the effective deployment of resources and the provision of a broad, high-quality educational experience for all students. School authorities must ensure the school timetable continues to provide optimum curriculum coverage for students and the best use of teaching resources.

**2. Uses of September Returns (Teacher Timetables) information.**

The timetable information from individual schools is used by the Department for a number of purposes. For example, the Inspectorate uses a review of timetabling information during the course of Whole School Evaluations (WSE) and Subject Inspections (SI) to help in the assessment of the quality of school management, the quality of curriculum provision and the degree to which teaching resources are equitably and effectively deployed in accordance with the Education Act, 1998, (Section 7(2) (b)). Similarly, Allocations Section uses timetabling information when making decisions on the allocation of teaching resources to schools.

**3. Changes for 2009/2010 School year.**

In the past timetable information was submitted to the Department of Education and Science by a specific date.

With effect from 2009/2010, until further notice, the arrangement is as follows:

Schools must store the returns data in a secure manner and have them available for transmission to the Department via the Esinet portal on request. The Department will seek this information, as it is required, for example, by the Inspectorate in advance of evaluation activity or by Allocations Section for teaching resource decisions. T1 forms must also be retained in the school until requested.

**4. Generating the returns data in 2009/2010.**

For the school year 2009/2010, schools are required to generate the returns data on a specific date not later than **Wednesday 30 September 2009.**

Schools must generate their returns using software the output of which is compatible with the Department of Education IT systems.

The following software packages have been evaluated as compatible for 2009/10:

- a. **Facility Administration (Regardless of Options, Scheduler etc.) 09.1.10 Department Returns Version 2.7**
- b. **Facility Timetabler & Cover 6.4 Build 6**
- c. **gp-Untis 09**

Other timetabling packages or programs being put forward as meeting the relevant specifications need to be evaluated and approved by the Department's IT Unit in order to ensure delivery of the information. Copies

of the specifications have been, and continue to be, available to all interested software developers (contact the I.T. Unit at (01) 8892103 for details).

Schools are requested to refer to the guidelines for the compilation of the individual returns available on the Department of Education and Science website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) under the following path: Education Personnel > Post Primary > September Returns/ Teacher Timetables. This site includes detailed instructions on completion of the returns. -

**Please ensure that a copy of this circular is provided to the person who will be completing the Return.**

Anne Killian  
Principal Officer  
Schools Division  
September 2009