



Circular Letter 0008/2017

To: The Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR RECRUITMENT/PROMOTION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN
EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARDS**

Introduction

The arrangements as set out in this Circular replace and supersede the arrangements of Circulars 55/1985 and 91/2008.

These revised arrangements set out the eligibility criteria for recruitment and promotion for administrative staff. The arrangements in this Circular further set out the details for the operation of an Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool. The Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool is the pool of eligible applicants that may apply for administrative posts within the Education and Training Sector, the Education and Training Sector comprising Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and Institutes of Technology (IOTs).

This Circular sets out the arrangements and procedures to be implemented by ETBs.

Context

The Minister for Education and Skills directs you to implement the regulations and procedures regarding eligibility criteria for recruitment/promotion for administrative staff employed/to be employed in ETBs.

The Minister further directs you to implement the regulations and procedures in regard to the Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool arrangements. The regulations and procedures outlined in this circular relate to administrative staff employed/to be employed in ETBs/IOTs whose posts are wholly funded by monies provided by the Oireachtas.

The regulations and procedures outlined in this circular are to be implemented by each employer with immediate effect.

This circular supersedes all previous circulars, memoranda, rules, regulations and arrangements in relation to Eligibility Criteria for administrative staff employed/to be employed in ETBs/IOTs.

Please ensure that copies of this circular are provided to all relevant staff in your employment including those on leave of absence. Queries should be sent in the first instance to hr@etbi.ie for collation and forwarding to Department of Education and Skills where required.

This Circular can be accessed on the Department's website under www.education.ie

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Definitions

For the purposes of this circular the following terms shall have the meanings assigned to them here unless the context indicates otherwise:

The Department – means the Department of Education & Skills.

Employer – means the Education and Training Board (ETB) / Institute of Technology (IOT).

Administrative Staff – means those staff employed from Grade III through to Grade VII.

(In ETBs only -There are a number of grades that, as part of the mapping process which was undertaken during the transfer of SOLAS staff to ETBs, were mapped to ETB administrative grades. Some of these grades are not deemed to be administrative posts (details attached at Appendix 1) and are therefore excluded from the quotas that apply in respect of administrative staff in ETBs. However, staff in these grades will be entitled to apply for administrative posts that may arise, in line with the “Access to Promotional Posts” document which sets out that while specific qualifications and/or experience may be required for posts, that specific criteria should not be put in place that would exclude staff from applying solely because they are employed within the administrative, educational or training stream as appropriate of the ETB.)

(In IOTs only – ICT staff in Grades III through to VII, due to the specialist nature of their work across all grades are excluded from the quotas that apply in respect of administrative staff in IOTs. However, staff in these grades will be entitled to apply for administrative posts that may arise).

Administrative Post – means a post from Grade III through to Grade VII in an ETB /IOT, which is wholly funded by monies provided by the Oireachtas.

Specialist Post – means an administrative post in Grades III through to VII in an ETB /IOT which is wholly funded by monies provided by the Oireachtas, but, having regard to the post’s nature and responsibility, requires as an essential an academic qualification and/or relevant experience.

Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool – means the pool of eligible applicants that may apply for administrative posts, as defined above, within the Education and Training Sector.

Open Competition – means a competition to which any member of the public can apply.

1. Recruitment/Promotion - Eligibility Criteria

The provisions of this circular supersede Circulars 55/85 and 91/08. The following applies to the eligibility criteria for recruitment/promotion for the individual Grades as set out below:

1.1 Grades III, IV, V, VI and VII - Citizenship, Health and Character

1.1.1 Citizenship Requirement

Candidates should note that eligibility to compete for posts is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) or to non-EEA nationals with a valid work permit. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Swiss citizens under EU agreements may also apply.

1.1.2 Health & Character

Those under consideration for a position may at the discretion of the employer be required to complete a health and character declaration and a Garda Vetting form. References will be sought. Some posts may require special security clearance. In the event of potential conflicts of interest, candidates may not be considered for certain posts.

1.2 Grade III - Requirements and Eligibility for Recruitment from Open Competition or from the Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool

Candidates must:

- have the requisite knowledge, skills and competencies to carry out the role. Competencies will be informed by best practice Public Appointment Service competency frameworks for the Irish Public Service;
- be capable and competent of fulfilling the role to a high standard;
- have obtained at least Grade D3 in five subjects in the Leaving Certificate Examination (higher, ordinary, applied or vocational programmes) or equivalent or have passed an examination at the appropriate level within the QQI qualifications framework which can be assessed as being of a comparable to Leaving Certificate standard or equivalent or higher or have appropriate relevant experience which encompasses equivalent skills and expertise;
- be at least 17 years of age on or before the date of advertisement of the recruitment competition.
- Oral Irish – It may be a requirement of the post that the candidate possesses a competency in Oral Irish, to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive of the ETB/to the satisfaction of the IOT. Where there is a requirement for competency in Oral Irish in respect of a post it will be specified in the advertisement for that post.

1.3 Grades IV, V, VI and VII - Requirements and Eligibility for Recruitment/Promotion for Confined Competition from the Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool

Candidates must:

- have the requisite knowledge, skills and competencies to carry out the role. Competencies will be informed by best practice Public Appointment Service competency frameworks for the Irish Public Service;
- be capable and competent of fulfilling the role to a high standard;
- have obtained at least Grade D3 in five subjects in the Leaving Certificate Examination (higher, ordinary, applied or vocational programmes) or equivalent or have passed an examination at the appropriate level within the QQI qualifications framework which can be assessed as being of a comparable to Leaving Certificate standard or equivalent or higher or have appropriate relevant experience which encompasses equivalent skills and expertise;

- have at least two years in a Grade III post, or equivalent, or higher, in the Education and Training Sector. For the purposes of filling vacancies in Grades IV, V, VI and VII in ETBs only, at least two years' service in an ETB Caretaker Grade will also be considered valid.
- have successfully completed their probation period, or have successfully completed a probation period at a lower eligible grade.
- Oral Irish – It may be a requirement of the post that the candidate possesses a competency in Oral Irish, to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive of the ETB/to the satisfaction of the IOT. Where there is a requirement for competency in Oral Irish in respect of a post it will be specified in the advertisement for that post.

2. Arrangements for filling Grade IV Posts in Education and Training Boards

- 2.1** Competitions for the filling of Grade IV Posts will be confined to the Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool.
- 2.2** In the exceptional circumstance of no qualified candidate emerging for a Grade IV post following confined competition, the post will be filled by open competition.

3. Arrangements for filling of Posts through Open Competition for Grades V, VI and VII with effect from 1st January 2017

- 3.1** Under these arrangements 20% of posts at Grades V to VII inclusive will be by open competition.
- 3.2** In regard to sequencing of posts, one fifth of posts will be filled by open competition and it will be a matter for each ETB/IOT to decide which particular vacancies are filled by open competition having regard to the particular requirements of the ETB/IOT.
- 3.3** For each post that is filled by open competition, four vacancies at the level of Grades V, VI, and VII will be filled from the Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool.
- 3.4** Specialist posts will continue to be filled by open competition and will be reckoned for the purposes of satisfying the 20% requirement.
- 3.5** Where efforts are made to fill posts from confined competition for the 80% quota of posts to be filled in this manner, and where no suitable candidates apply or have the necessary qualifications or experience as required by the role, and the post is subsequently filled by way of open competition, this post shall be deemed to be discounted from the 20% open competition quota.
- 3.6** In the case where a candidate internal to the employment of the ETB/IOT in which the specialist post vacancy has arisen secures such a specialist post, this post shall be deemed to be included for the purposes of the 20% open competition quota.
- 3.7** It is acknowledged that flexibility in the first filling at individual ETB/IOT level is both desirable and necessary and as a consequence it is not intended that all ETBs/IOTs will fill their first vacancy by open competition.

4. Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool

4.1 The Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool is the pool of eligible applicants that may apply for administrative posts within the Education and Training Sector. The purpose of the pool is to provide for a confined competition outlet for serving staff employed in ETBs and IOTs in those grades listed in Appendix 2 of this circular.

4.2 Eligible staff may apply for administrative posts advertised within the Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool. The grading level of the post and the location of the post will be clearly identified in the Candidate Brief/Advertisement and applications will be invited from all eligible post holders in such posts employed in the Education and Training Sector.

4.3 Details of how the pool will operate are set out in Appendix 3 of this Circular.

5. Register of Posts

5.1 Each ETB/IOT will maintain a register of the filling of all posts under this agreement, which can be made readily available if required.

6. Review of these arrangements

6.1 The Department, the Employers and the relevant Trade Unions representing staff within the sector agree to review the arrangements as outlined in this circular within an agreed 2 year timeframe from the date of publication of this circular.

Appendix 1 - Posts that are excluded from the Quotas that apply in respect of Administrative Staff

1. Former SOLAS Grades which are not deemed to be administrative posts and are therefore excluded from the quotas that apply in respect of administrative staff in ETBs.

- Senior Training Advisor
- Recruitment Officer
- Contracted Training Officer
- Community Training Officer
- Instructor
- Training Standards Officer

2. IOT ICT Posts which due to the specialist nature of their work across all grades are excluded from the quotas that apply in respect of administrative staff in IOTs

- Grades III through to VII in an IOT ICT area

Appendix 2

Grades which are Eligible to be Members of the Education and Training Sector Pool for the purposes of applying for Administrative Posts in ETBs/IOTs

- Caretaker in ETBs (who are eligible to apply for posts in ETBs)
- Grade III
- Grade IV
- Grade V
- Grade VI
- Grade VII
- Senior Training Advisor
- Recruitment Officer
- Contracted Training Officer
- Community Training Officer
- Instructor
- Training Standards Officer
- Grades III through to VII in an IOT ICT area

Appendix 3

Operation of the Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool

Each individual ETB/IOT will advertise vacancies on their own website. The advertisement will state whether the post is to be filled by open or confined competition.

For those posts that fall to be filled through confined competition and for which eligible staff from the Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool may apply, the following applies:

- The grading level of the post and the location of the post will be clearly identified in the Candidate Brief/Advertisement and applications will be invited from all eligible staff in the Education and Training Sector (those listed in Appendix 2)
- Candidate eligibility will be determined in accordance with the provisions of this circular.
- It will be a matter for each ETB/IOT to conduct the merit based competitive process required for the appointment of candidates.

It is the responsibility of the individual member of the Education and Training Sector Candidate Pool to keep themselves apprised of vacancies that arise for which they may wish to apply.