

## **Changes to the post-graduate entry process for primary teaching by DCU, Maynooth University, Marino Institute of Education and Mary Immaculate College.**

The Minister for Education and Skills, Joe McHugh T.D. today announced a plan to have one oral Irish examination for students seeking to gain entry to post graduate programmes for primary teaching run by DCU, Maynooth University, Marino Institute of Education and Mary Immaculate College (the four State-funded providers of primary teacher training).

Until now, to apply under the post-graduate entry route to initial teacher education for primary teaching (the Primary Professional Master of Education qualification) in these providers, candidates, who have already satisfied the Minimum Entry Requirements in Irish, English and Maths, have had to do three separate Irish oral examinations. Each oral examination would have taken place on the same day as an interview at the institution concerned. A fail in the Irish oral examination would result in the interview result being discounted, adding considerably to the stress on candidates.

From 2019, there will be one Irish oral examination for all candidates, which will take place before they apply to their preferred institution(s). The Irish oral examination will be administered by the Centre for Irish Language Research, Teaching and Testing in Maynooth University using the Teastas Eorpach Gaeilge (TEG) test, which is linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The Irish oral will be held in February 2019, at venues throughout the country.

Candidates will then apply to their preferred institution(s) and be called to interview by those institutions, in due course. There will be no further Irish oral examination.

The institutions have advised that the oral Irish examination will cost €65 per candidate. However, arrangements may be made for students who enter via a PATH programme to have this fee refunded.

Minister McHugh said today “Tá mé buíoch de na soláthraithe as an tionscnamh seo chun tabhairt faoin gcéim seo leis an bpróiseas d’iarrthóirí a shruthlíniú. I appreciate the initiative of the providers in taking this step to streamline the process for candidates. I’m also glad to see the commitment from institutions to refund the oral exam fee for students on a PATH programme. Alongside that I believe that one standardised Irish oral will do a lot to help reduce anxiety and pressure and help prospective students give their best.”

Welcoming the development, Minister of State for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor T.D. said “This is a positive development for students. I welcome the collaboration and coordination by the higher education institutions for this new oral exam which will reduce stress for students.”