



**An tSeirbhís um Cheapacháin Phoiblí**  
**Public Appointments Service**

**INFORMATION BOOKLET AND APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**  
**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

The Public Appointments Service on behalf of the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) intends to hold a competition for the purpose of recommending a person for appointment to the position of

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
**National Council for Special Education**  
**TLA/C/437**

The Public Appointments Service is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Public Appointments Service will run this campaign in compliance with the codes of practice prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) and are available on [www.cpsa-online.ie](http://www.cpsa-online.ie)

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
**National Council for Special Education**  
**(TLAC/437)**

**TITLE OF POSITION:** Chief Executive Officer  
**OFFICE** National Council for Special Education  
**LOCATION:** Trim, Co Meath.

**The National Council for Special Education**

The National Council for Special Education is an independent statutory body established under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN Act 2004). The Council comprises a Chairperson and 12 ordinary members appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills for a fixed period. Members operate on a part-time basis. The Council has a permanent staffing complement of 109. 84 of the Council's staff are deployed nationwide to provide the Council's local service to schools and parents. The remainder is located at Headquarters. All staff are employed by the Council and are civil servants. The Council's Headquarters is in Trim Co. Meath.

The Council has three key functions:

- To provide a local service to schools and parents to support children with special educational needs particularly the sanctioning of teaching and SNA resources;
- To conduct, commission and publish research on special education matters;
- To provide policy advice to the Minister for Education and Skills in relation to any matter relating to the education of children and others with disabilities.

A detailed list of the Council's general functions is set out in Section 20 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004. In addition the Council will acquire a range of specific functions under the Act when the provisions of the Act are fully commenced. These functions will broadly relate to the rights of children with special educational needs to assessment, an education plan and appeals processes. The Council, through its local service, allocates, monitors, reviews and controls additional teaching resources and SNA supports to schools to support children with special education needs. The cost of the resources sanctioned by the Council is about €800m per annum.

**The Job**

The successful candidate will be based in the Council's Headquarters in Trim, Co.Meath. He/she will manage and control generally the staff, administration and business of the Council and will perform such other functions as may be conferred on him or her by the Council. He/She will be Accounting Officer for the Council. He/she will be answerable to the Council for the efficient and effective management of the Council and for the performance of his or her functions.

In particular the post holder will be responsible for:

- Developing and implementing Strategic Plans as agreed with the Council in accordance with policies as set down by the Minister for Education and Skills;
- Providing leadership and direction to the organisation in relation to all of its activities;
- Proposing an annual budget to Council in accordance with overall allocations as set down by the Minister for Education and Skills and overseeing and reporting on its implementation;
- Ensuring the timely delivery of additional supports to facilitate children with special educational needs to participate in and benefit from education in accordance with policies sanctioned by the Minister for Education and Skills;

- Promoting and overseeing the delivery of a research programme which will inform best practice in relation to the delivery of education services to children with special educational needs and which will contribute to the development of policy advice;
- Ensuring that independent policy advice on all aspects of special education provision is developed and provided to the Minister for Education and Skills on a systematic and orderly basis;
- Fostering and promoting linkages with national and international organisations in the area of special education policy and service provision;
- Maintaining and developing close co-operation and collaboration with the Health Service Executive in relation to the identification of and delivery of services to children with special educational needs;
- Maintaining effective and efficient working relationships with the Department of Education and Skills in relation to policy implementation and policy formulation;
- Maintaining close working relationships with the various stakeholders in the education sector;
- Leading interactions and dialogue with the range of national bodies with interests in special education;
- Engaging directly with Senior Public Servants and Ministers;
- Reporting to the Committee on Public Accounts on the appropriation accounts and reports of the Controller and Auditor General and to other Oireachtas Committees as required;
- Reporting to and advising the Council on all aspects of its statutory functions and assisting it in meeting its governance, reporting and statutory obligations;
- Ensuring that the Council has an effective communications policy;
- Implementing the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 as the various provisions of the Act are commenced;
- Developing and overseeing the implementation of operational policy and procedures in accordance with the decisions of the Council.
- Managing the organisation in accordance with policies, objectives and resource levels approved by the Council;
- Reviewing the operational systems and procedures and capacity of the Council to deliver on its full range of statutory responsibilities;
- Leading and motivating staff to deliver programmes to high quality standards.

### **Personal Requirements**

Ideally candidates should have the following;

- Senior Management experience and proven ability to manage and lead a large team;
- A good understanding of the structure and operation of the education sector institutions and systems and special educational policies and support systems;
- Proven administrative ability, sound judgement and an ability to guide the resolution of difficult and complex issues in a pressurised environment;
- Excellent communications skills and an ability to effectively represent the Council at National and International Fora;
- A well developed strategic focus and an ability to think strategically.

### **Key Competencies for effective performance at Assistant Secretary level**

The attention of candidates is drawn to the key competencies that have been developed for use by the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) for Assistant Secretary posts.

The competency framework has identified 10 key individual competencies associated with effective performance at the Assistant Secretary level, clustered into 4 main dimensions as illustrated below:

<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Managing Relationships</b>	<b>Personal Drive for Results</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Leads on the management of Change</li><li>Focus on Human Resources</li><li>Corporate Contribution</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Analysis &amp; Thinking Skills</li><li>Strategic Contribution</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Managing Critical Relationships</li><li>Communication</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Organisational Skills</li><li>Results Orientated Approach</li><li>Professional Integrity</li></ul>

### **Eligibility**

Citizens of non-European Economic Area (EEA1) states will not be eligible to compete.

Normal rules of the Civil Service will apply as regards eligibility. In the case of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER), one of its conditions at paragraph 12 of Circular 12/09 debarretirees from the Civil Service under that Scheme from applying for another position in the civil Service. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for these positions.

<sup>1</sup> The EEA consists of the member states of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Special conditions may apply to citizens of Bulgaria and Romania following their recent entry to the European Union and their eligibility to be employed and work in Ireland.

*Eligibility should be confirmed with the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Innovation.*

### **Principal Conditions of Service**

#### **General**

The appointment is subject to the Civil Service Regulation Acts 1956 to 2005, the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004, and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the Civil Service.

#### **Pay**

The salary scale for this position as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 is as follows.

PPC [Personal Pension Contribution] Pay Scale:

€134,523      €140,636      €147,262      €153,885

*Or (as appropriate to the employee's employment history)*

Modified Pay Scale:

€127,796      €133,605      €139,898      €146,191

Candidates should note that the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy

## **Tenure**

The appointment will be for a 7 year term. A successful candidate who is not a new entrant for the purposes of the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 will have a maximum retirement age of 65. If the successful candidate is appointed from within the public service, they will be seconded to the position and return to their parent employer and/or be redeployed in their original grade at the end of the seven years.

## **Location**

The Council's Headquarters is in Trim Co. Meath.

## **Hours of Attendance**

Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time but will amount, on average, to not less than 41 hours per week.

No additional payment will be made for extra attendance (over and above 41 hours per week) as the rate of remuneration payable covers any exceptional extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

## **Annual Leave**

The annual leave allowance will be 31 working days a year. This allowance, which is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave, is on the basis of a five day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

## **Superannuation and Retirement**

The terms of the Superannuation Scheme for Established Civil Servants and of the Contributory Spouses' and Children's Pension Scheme for Established Civil Servants will apply to this appointment. These terms are subject to any relevant legislation enacted that affects these superannuation schemes.

For a successful appointee who is deemed to be a new entrant under the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004, there is no specified retirement age. The period of appointment may be governed by the terms and conditions of the contract. However, for appointees who are deemed not to be new entrants as defined in the aforementioned 2004 Act, retirement is compulsory on reaching 65 years of age. At the time of being offered appointment, the Department of Finance will, in the light of the appointee's employment history, determine whether he or she is a "new entrant" or not.

For persons previously employed in the Civil Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (excluding the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement, the terms of which debar one from applying for this competition), entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements will, however, be made for the reckoning of previous service for the purpose of any future superannuation awarded where appropriate.

For persons previously employed in the Civil Service and where a marriage gratuity was paid, pensionable service before marriage will not be reckoned for superannuation purposes unless an appropriate refund is made in respect of that gratuity.

**Important Note:** Different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is –

- (a) already a serving civil servant who is paying the Class B rate of PRSI, or
- (b) serving in an unestablished capacity in the civil service and has had continuous service in that capacity since 5 April 1995, or
- (c) serving elsewhere in the public sector in a position in respect of which she/he is paying the Class B, C. or D rate of PRSI contribution

## THE SELECTION PROCESS

### How to Apply

Applications must be made by submitting an on line application and attaching a) to d) listed below.

- a) A comprehensive CV clearly showing your relevant achievements and experience in your career to date. Please see CV Guidance Note at Appendix I.
- b) The 'Key Achievements Form' at Appendix II. Please copy and save format in a separate document.
- c) An organisation chart indicating your current position within the Senior Management team (or if not currently employed, in your most recent employment), see Appendix III.
- d) A **short (i.e. no more than 2 pages) cover letter/ personal statement** outlining why you wish to be considered for the post and where you believe your skills and experience meet the requirements of position Chief Executive Officer, National Council for Special Education.

**Please note that documents a) – d) listed above should be submitted as one attachment.**

### Closing Date

**Your online application and CV, etc. must be submitted on the Public jobs website (not later than midnight on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2011.**

*If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within 2 working days of applying, please contact Caitriona at 01 8587486 or email [caitriolahughes@publicjobs.ie](mailto:caitriolahughes@publicjobs.ie).*

### Selection Process

The Selection Process may include:

- shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in the applications and CVs to reduce the list of candidates to a more manageable number for interview;
- completion of an online questionnaire;
- a competitive preliminary interview;
- Supplementary application form
- A competitive interview which will be conducted by the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC).

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the Public Appointments Service and/or TLAC and ensure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct.

### Short-listing

In the event of a short-listing exercise being employed an expert board will examine the application forms and assess them against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience on the application form.

**Please Note:** For candidates called forward to Interview conducted by the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC):

**'Supplementary Application Form':** candidates who are successful at the PAS preliminary interview would then be requested to complete a 'Supplementary Application Form' which would collect / address more detailed questions about your skills, experience, motivation and how they meet the requirements of this demanding role. It should be noted that there will only be a short period of time available (a number of days) to complete and submit the supplementary application.

**Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by the Public Appointments Service, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence, as the Public Appointments Service require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

**References:** We would appreciate it if you would start considering names of people who you feel would be suitable referees that we might consult (2 - 3 names and contact details). The referees listed here do not have to include your current employer, but should be in a position to provide a reference for you. Please be assured that we will only collect the details and contact referees should you come under consideration at preliminary interview stage.

**Other important information**

The Public Appointments Service and TLAC will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend interview, or a successful result letter, is not to be taken as implying that the Public Appointments Service is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements or is not disqualified by law from holding the position.

**The importance of Confidentiality:**

We would like to assure you that protecting confidentiality is our number one priority. You can expect, and we guarantee, that all enquires, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process.

**If you feel you would benefit from a confidential initial discussion about any aspect of this significant opportunity, please contact Tommy Quinn on +353 1 8587405 or by email to [tommy.quinn@publicjobs.ie](mailto:tommy.quinn@publicjobs.ie)**

## Quality Customer Service

We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

## Candidates' Rights - Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process

- The Public Appointments Service will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of the codes of practice published by the CPSA. The Codes of Practice are available on the website of the [Commission for Public Service Appointments](#).
- Where a candidate is unhappy with an action or decision in relation to an application, s/he can seek a review under **Section 7** of the code of practice.
- The candidate must address his/her concerns in relation to the process in writing, setting out the basis for the complaint being made, to the Chief Executive in the first instance. A complaint or request for review must be made **within 10 working days of the notification of the initial decision or within 5 working days of the outcome of the informal review stage**, if availed of.
- However, where the decision being conveyed relates to **an interim stage** of a selection process, a request for review must be received within 4 **working days** of the date of receipt of the decision or within 2 working days of receipt of a decision under the informal process; candidates electing to use the **informal process at the interim stage** must do so within **2 working days** of communication of the decision to them.
- In communicating the outcome to the candidate, which will be done by means of written report, the initial reviewer should indicate that he/she may seek further review by referring the matter to the **Decision Arbitrator and that a request to do so must be made with 7 working days of receipt of the outcome of the initial review**.
- Where a candidate believes that an aspect of the process breached the CPSA's code of practice, s/he can have it investigated under **Section 8** of the code.

## Candidates' Obligations

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- personate a candidate at any stage of the process
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

## Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

When your application form is received, we create a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature and should you be successful certain information you provide will be forwarded to the employing organisation. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. To make a request under the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003, please submit your request in writing to: THE DATA PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR, PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS SERVICE, "CHAPTER HOUSE", 26-30 ABBEY STREET UPPER, DUBLIN 1, ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. A fee of €6.35 should accompany your request. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes.

**Canvassing will disqualify.**



## Appendix I

### Guidance Note on the Curriculum Vitae

Your CV should be no longer than **3-4 pages** in length and should clearly state your relevant achievements and experience in your career to date. A sample CV is attached below for reference. Please note this is only a guidance note and does not intend to prescribe what format is required.

An expert board will examine the CV's and assess them against the requirements of the position. It is therefore in your own interest to ensure your CV clearly and accurately reflects your track record of achievement in areas such as people, change and budget management as well as your track record in delivering on key strategic projects.

#### Sample Curriculum Vitae Layout

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Contact details:**

**Telephone:** *Note: Please include Land line & mobile*

**Email Address:**

#### Career History

*NOTE: Your career history is best presented in reverse chronological order so that the most recent roles appear first. Please ensure you cover the last 10-15 years work experience or last 3 or 4 roles in some level of detail depending on what you have done. For each position, please ensure you clearly indicate your **Management Level**, the **Budget** you were responsible for and the **Number of Staff** reporting to you.*

*Positions held more than 15 yrs ago require only a summary description.*

Current Position:      Job Title      Company      Dates: From-To      Salary

- Main Responsibilities & Achievements (please ensure to include sufficient relevant detail)
- .....
- .....

Previous Position 1:      Job Title      Company      Dates: From-To      Salary

- Main Responsibilities & Achievements (please ensure to include sufficient relevant detail)
- .....

Chief Executive Officer, National Council for Special Education TLAC/437

- .....

**Education Details:** *Note: Please specify status of award if not complete. Should you come under consideration for appointment, you may be required to provide evidence of any qualifications awarded.*

• Institution	Award (e.g. BA, MBA etc)	Subject	Year Awarded
• .....	.....	.....	.....
• .....	.....	.....	.....

**Other Training:**

• Subject	Training Body	Year Completed
• .....	.....	.....
• .....	.....	.....

**Professional Memberships etc:**

• Level of Membership	Professional Body / Association
• .....	.....

**Other:** *Note: you may want to briefly note other achievements that you feel may be relevant to the particular role, for example - other roles you may hold (e.g. Board Member); Key Presentations; Language Skills (including level of fluency); industry / sectoral recognitions: Publications etc.*

## Appendix II

### Key Achievements

For each of the areas below, please briefly highlight specific achievements, contributions or expertise you have developed from your career to date which clearly demonstrate your suitability to meet the challenges of the role of Chief Executive Officer, National Council for Special Education. Please restrict your answers to the space provided.

<b>Leadership</b>
<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Managing Relationships</b>
<b>Personal Drive for Results</b>

## Appendix III

### Guidance Note on the Curriculum Vitae

We would appreciate it if you would forward a copy of an organisation chart indicating your current position within the Senior Management team in your organisation / company.

There is no fixed requirement here in terms of format, and we will accept whatever format is convenient for yourself (e.g. an existing published chart from your organisations website / annual report), but we would emphasise that the selection panel have requested this to help them understand your level within your current / most recent organisation and your positioning relative to other senior managers.

If you do not have access to a corporate chart you may find the template below useful.

If you are independent or have not been part of an organisation recently, a chart is not necessary.

#### Organisation Chart Template

