



Appointment to the State Examinations Commission (SEC)

Closing Date: Midnight on Thursday 12th March

**State Boards Division
Public Appointments Service
Chapter House, 26 – 30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1**

Telephone Number: 353 1 858 7769

Email: info@stateboards.ie

State Boards.ie operates under the auspices of the Public Appointments Service and is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Public Appointments Service (PAS), established under statute in 2004, provides an independent shared service in recruitment, assessment and selection to organisations across the Civil and Public Services. On 30 September 2014, the Government decided that PAS should also be given responsibility for putting in place an open, accessible, rigorous and transparent system to support Ministers in making appointments to State Boards. Our dedicated website, www.stateboards.ie, is the channel through which PAS advertises vacancies on State Boards. It is also the means through which accomplished, experienced and qualified people, including people who might not previously have been identified as available for appointment, can then apply to be considered for particular vacancies.

1. **Entity:** SEC (State Examinations Commission)
2. **Location:** Meetings will be in Athlone.
3. **Number of Vacancies:** 5 (4 ordinary members and 1 Chairperson)
4. **Remuneration:** €7,695 member, €11,970 Chair
(It should be noted that in line with the 'One Person One Salary' principle, no serving public servant will be entitled to receive remuneration in the form of board fees)
5. **Time Requirements:** Approx. 10 meetings per annum. In addition, it has been customary for the Deputy Chairperson to act as Chair and one other board member to sit on the SEC Audit Committee, which meets separately to the main Board.

1. Background

The SEC is responsible for the development, accreditation and operation and delivery of the State examinations, principally the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate examination. All of the Board members, including Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, are appointed by the Government on the nomination of the Minister for Education and Skills in accordance with the terms of [S.I. No. 373/2003 - State Examinations Commission \(Establishment\) Order 2003](#). All positions become vacant on 3 April, 2015.

Members will serve on a part-time basis. Travelling and subsistence allowances in accordance with public service guidelines may be paid in respect of journeys undertaken to attend meetings of the Commission or to transact its business.

In line with the certificate examinations schedule, at least one of the approximately ten meetings will be held in May, August and September. Members will be required to devote as much time to duties on the Commission as is necessary for the proper and efficient discharge of their duties, and to comply with the relevant provisions of the [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies - available here](#). This Code includes a description of the role and responsibilities of board members.

Members of the Oireachtas or of the European Parliament will not be eligible to become members of the Commission. In addition, undischarged bankrupts and people who have made composition or arrangements with creditors within the preceding 3 years and/or who have served a period of imprisonment within preceding 5 years are excluded from membership.

2. Functions of the Board

Under the terms of the [SEC Establishment Order, 2003](#) (No. 373/03), the functions of the Commission are to -]

- (a) organise the holding of examinations,
- (b) ensure the preparation of examination papers and other examination materials,
- (c) determine procedures in places where examinations are conducted including the supervision of examinations,
- (d) make arrangements for the marking of work presented for examination,
- (e) issue the results of examinations,
- (f) determine procedures to enable the review and appeal of results of examinations at the request of candidates,
- (g) charge and collect fees for examinations and apply such monies to the carrying out of its functions, and
- (h) designate places where examinations may be held.

3. Person Specification

There are currently five vacancies on the SEC, including the position of Chairperson.

The intention is that appointees will, collectively, have senior level experience relating to the Irish education system, with a particular focus on second level, as well as expertise in governance, legal and finance ideally in a public sector context.

Appointees to the Board require high levels of judgement. Applicants should note that individuals currently employed or otherwise directly involved in the post-primary education system are not eligible to apply due to potential conflicts of interest.

Ordinary Members:

Expressions of interest are now invited from members of the public who consider that they possess the judgement, skills, knowledge and experience to join the SEC and to contribute to the ongoing operation, development and delivery, to immutable deadlines and to the highest levels of quality, of the Irish State examinations. In the interests of the effective and efficient operation of the Commission, a mix of skills and experience is required on the Board. Specifically, candidates should have experience in at least one of the following areas:

- a) Extensive experience of leadership at a senior level in the second level education system in Ireland;
- b) Detailed working knowledge in a third level setting of the policies and procedures underpinning the selection of students for entry to third level education in Ireland.
- c) Senior management or board level experience of corporate governance and compliance
- d) Legal, financial or risk management experience at a senior level
- e) Policy experience and wide-ranging comprehension of the challenges facing the State examinations system
- f) Senior management experience of large scale logistical operations with a requirement for high levels of security/confidentiality and delivery to tight deadlines

Chairperson:

It is essential that the chair will possess the skills at (c) above and extensive knowledge of the Irish education system.

All members

In addition to the above, **all applicants** for appointment should also possess:

- Excellent communication skills
- Proven ability to critically analyse information
- A strong sense of ethics and integrity
- The ability to work effectively and cohesively as a member of a team
- High levels of resilience and judgement in responding to emerging issues in this time-bound national service

The Minister shall have regard to the desirability of a gender balance in the membership of the Commission as the Minister considers appropriate and determines, from time to time, when making nominations for the Commission

4. Term of Appointment

The term of office of a member of the Commission shall be such period not exceeding 5 years as may be specified by the Government when appointing that member and the member shall hold office for the period for which he or she is appointed unless he or she sooner dies, resigns by letter addressed to the Minister or ceases to be a member in accordance with the terms of the SEC Establishment Order. A member of the Commission whose term of office expires by the passage of time shall be eligible for re-appointment.

5. How to Apply

If you are interested in this position, please review the self-assessment questionnaire which can be found on www.stateboards.ie. Please note that the questionnaire is designed to help you in considering whether to submit an expression of interest - you are not required to submit the questionnaire as part of the application process.

Having considered the general suitability criteria for membership of a State Board, applicants should consider whether they meet the specific appointment criteria set out in the 'Person Specification' section above.

If you decide that you wish to be considered for appointment, you should submit an application via the following link www.stateboards.ie together with a detailed Curriculum Vitae and cover letter. In order to submit your application, you should take the following steps:

- i. Go to www.stateboards.ie.
- ii. On the bar at the top of the page click on "Available Appointments".
- iii. This brings you to a page with all our advertised vacancies. Select whichever position would like to apply for (you are welcome to apply for more than one position if you wish).
- iv. On the relevant page please click on the "apply for position" button at the bottom of the page
- v. This will bring you to a page on www.publicjobs.ie and, if you already have a publicjobs.ie account, will prompt you for your username and password. If you do not have an account you will be asked to set one up.
- vi. Once you input your details you will be brought to a page where there is a prompt in the middle of the page which says "apply here". Click on the link to the online application form beside it.
- vii. A form will appear on your screen, some of the text boxes will be populated with information from your publicjobs.ie profile (Name, address etc). You will need to complete the rest of the fields and enter your name and the date at the bottom of the form. Click on "continue".
- viii. You will then be brought to a screen where you should upload your CV and Cover Letter. These are required documents and your application cannot be processed without them. Once you have selected these and uploaded them, please click on "submit" button at the bottom of the page.
- ix. You will receive an e-mail confirmation (to the address listed in your publicjobs.ie profile) to confirm that your application has been submitted.

You must confirm that you do not have any conflicts of interest or legal impediment which would be likely to interfere with your ability to play a full part on the Board. You must also confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of a Board member.

6. Appointments Process

An Assessment Panel (the “Panel”) will be convened by PAS to consider and assess the expressions of interest received by the PAS via www.stateboards.ie. The Panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role;
- assess potential appointees further, once they meet the specified appointment criteria, by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
 - Consideration of the written applications; and/or
 - Meeting/conference call; and/or
 - Referee checks;
 - Any other selection method deemed appropriate.
- draw up a list of people deemed suitable for appointment which will then be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please email info@stateboards.ie.

7. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

For further information on Data Protection please follow the [link](#)