

Appointment to the Board of The NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment)

Closing Date: Midnight on Thursday, 19th March 2015

**State Boards Division
Public Appointments Service
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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:** NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment)
2. **Board Meeting Location:** Meetings will be in Dublin.
3. **Number of Vacancies:** (3) 2 members, 1 Chair.
4. **Remuneration:** € Nil.
5. **Time Requirements:** 7 meetings per annum

1. Background

The NCCA [Annual Report](#) provides useful information regarding the operations of the Council. Its role is to advise the Minister for Education and Skills in matters relating to the curriculum for early childhood care and education, primary and post-primary schools and the assessment procedures employed in schools and in state examinations on subjects that are part of the curriculum.

The work of the NCCA in curriculum and assessment development involves

- engaging in consultations with a wide range of stakeholders on curriculum and assessment issues
- working closely with networks of schools/early education providers in developing proposals
- undertaking research and participating in national and international educational networks, and keeping abreast of good practice
- advising on curriculum and assessment policy
- developing and reviewing specific curricula and preparing guidelines/support materials for teachers
- supporting and advising on the continuing professional development needs of teachers.
- being cognisant of the wider needs of the economy and society.

NCCA has a staff of 33, headed by a Chief Executive Officer, and an annual budget of around €4.5m.

The website of the NCCA is available at www.ncca.ie

2. Functions of the Council

The Council is composed of a chairperson and 24 members, most of whom are nominated by stakeholder bodies. At its meetings, the Council considers, discusses and approves proposals for curriculum and assessment change, specifications and other materials for particular subjects and curriculum areas, the findings of educational research, and reports of public consultations undertaken to inform curriculum development.

The Council is a representative body and its standing orders emphasise the importance of consensus-building in its decision-making processes.

The Council Chairperson works with the CEO and the Executive of the NCCA in setting the overall strategic direction of the Council's work; in preparing the agendas and discussing documentation for, and progressing the work of, Council meetings; in liaising as appropriate with the Department of Education and Skills and relevant agencies.

3. Vacancy Details & Legislative Requirements

The Education Act 1998 states:

“(2) In determining the composition of the Council, the Minister shall ensure that, as far as is practicable, the membership of the Council

(a) is representative of bodies and persons involved in the education system at early childhood and primary and post-primary levels, in particular national associations of parents, recognised school management organisations and recognised trade unions and staff associations representing teachers, and

(b) includes other persons who—

(i) have experience or skills, including experience of and skills in business and industry, which in the opinion of the Minister are relevant to the work of the Council and would complement the experience and skills of the persons appointed in accordance with paragraph (a),

(ii) have a special interest in, or experience of, the education of students with a disability or other special educational needs, or

(iii) are representative of Irish language organisations”

We are now seeking to fill three positions on the Council whose skill and experience will complement those of the other nominees from representative bodies. Of those vacancies we wish to fill one is for the Council Chairperson, one for a Council Member who will be nominated by the Minister for Education and Skills and should have knowledge and experience relevant to primary and/or post-primary education and one for a Council Member who will be nominated by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and should have knowledge and experience relevant to early childhood care and education.

4. Person Specification

Council Member:

Expressions of interest are invited from members of the public who consider they possess the skills and experience necessary in one or both of the following areas:

- Experience relevant to primary and/or post-primary education.
- Experience relevant to early childhood care and education.

In addition, candidates must have

- Experience of working with stakeholders to arrive at consensus based decisions and solutions.
- Experience which demonstrates a general understanding of qualifications, curriculum, assessment and quality assurance issues in some or all of early childhood care and education, primary and second level school settings.
- Experience which demonstrates an understanding of the Irish education system and an appreciation of broad issues related to curriculum in the education system and to the wider, national social and economic context.
- Experience which demonstrates an understanding of educational assessment, and assessment and certification issues in post primary education.

Other desirable skills and experience

- Experience of strategic management and managing organisational change.
- Experience as a member of a board.
- Experience at a senior level of the application of good corporate governance practice.
- Awareness of emerging developments in educational research and practice, or particular expertise in some aspect of these developments.

Council Chairperson: The role of Council Chairperson is a key role and will include:

- Leading the board of the Council.
- Leading on performance management – for the Council overall, for the CEO and for the board of the Council.
- Leading on compliance – by effective internal and external audit arrangements and full compliance with all key regulatory and reporting requirements.
- Maintaining good governance.
- Determining the Council board agenda.
- Ensure that the CEO provides the board of the Council with sufficient information to support decision-making.
- Ensuring the Council board is effective and facilitating full participation by each Council Member.

Expressions of interest are now invited from members of the public who consider they possess the skills and experience necessary to act as Council Chairperson. In addition to the essential and desirable skills outlined above for Council Members the ideal Chairperson of the Council will have:

- Experience in chairing Boards of Directors
- Proven experience in the review of operational and financial performance
- Strong influencing skills, the ability to communicate with impact and the ability to convince through personal credibility
- Leadership experience of stakeholder management in a complex, consensus based decision making environment.
- Capacity to represent and present on behalf of the NCCA in public fora and at public events

Term of Appointment

Under the Act, appointments to the Council will be for an initial period of 3 years with an option to extend the term of engagement for a second term of 3 years, subject to:

- The membership of any member of the Council may be terminated by the Minister at any time, on the basis of reasons to be stated by the Minister.
- A member of the Council may resign his or her membership of the Council by notice in writing sent or given to the Minister, and the resignation shall take effect on the day on which the Minister receives the notice.
- Members of the Council shall, subject to the provisions of this Schedule, hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Minister may, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, from time to time determine.
- A Council member shall cease to be a member of the Council if he or she is nominated as a member of Seanad Éireann, is elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas or as a representative in the European Parliament, elected to the European Parliament, or becomes a member of a local authority

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 this 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 Council. You must also confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of a Council 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](#)