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Supporting the Professional
Learning of School Leaders
and Teachers

Welcome to the Oide Guidance Team Newsletter!

Dear colleagues,

As the leaves begin to turn and the crisp autumn air ushers in a season of transition, we are delighted to welcome you to the Oide Guidance Team Newsletter! This vibrant time of year perfectly parallels the journey of planning and exploring pathways for our students, as they chart courses, navigate challenges, and consider their next steps.



Éidín Gallagher
Senior Leader



Joanne Parry
Professional Learning
Leader



Marie Cumiskey
Professional Learning
Leader



Sinéad Duffy
Professional Learning
Leader

[Our team](#) has been going through some changes of its own and we are delighted to include some new faces. Joined now by Éidín Gallagher, Senior Leader (Guidance, Geography and CASD) and Marie Cumiskey, Professional Learning Leader (Previously an Associate to the Guidance Team and currently on secondment from Presentation College, Carlow). Éidín and Marie, join with Sinéad Duffy and Joanne Parry who continue to build the connections of Guidance in Practice.

In this edition and those to follow, we aim to equip you with the latest information, tools and resources to enhance your role. This edition highlights the developments within **Tertiary Courses** and a link to their **upcoming webinar on November 7th, 2024**, at 4pm and links to the recently launched **Toolkit for Guidance Counsellors** below.

We also want to draw your attention to the **inaugural circular in Guidance** that was published in April 2024 and linked at the end of this newsletter. This important document is the first of its kind, integrating and centralising policy relating to guidance in post-primary schools.

As a team, our overall goal is to support you and your school in developing a sustainable, embedded whole school guidance approach with effective and responsive curriculum planning, reflective of your individual school's context.



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Our **Guidance Professional Learning 2024/25** focuses on planning a responsive and effective guidance programme across the continuum of learning, catering to both new and experienced guidance counsellors. This is the first time Guidance has been included in the Cluster Days and we are excited to have this opportunity to work together in this way.

The session begins with a focus on self-care and available supports, emphasising the importance of Guidance Counsellor well-being, along with professional agency.



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JIGSAW
Young people's health in mind

About Jigsaw Get support Get involved

Self-care course for teachers

Folláine le Chéile
Wellbeing Together

spectrum
life

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We then explore planning a developmental guidance programme, targeting learning outcomes. Participants will then collaborate to plan a guidance unit of learning addressing student needs.

The day concludes by revisiting the role of the guidance counsellor, reinforcing the themes discussed, and ending with a focus on self-care.

School Support from our Guidance Team.

Whole School Planning A Journey, not a Destination

In a whole school approach, all members of the school community (school leaders, middle management, teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and communities) play an active role, and understand their shared responsibility.



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Schools are busy places, and getting dedicated time with a member of our Oide Guidance team to talk through areas relating to Whole School Guidance Planning can be the step (or steps if sustained support is requested) that a school may welcome to progress their work. Remember it is a process, never a finished product.

No matter what stage of planning a school is at, school support can be beneficial.

Schools are invited to select up to three areas for support on this application and **Guidance and Guidance Counselling school support is an available option.**

Once your application is submitted you will receive an email receipt (to the email address detailed on the school profile) and you will be given the option to print off the application for your records. An Oide PLL will then contact you to arrange the support. Please be advised that while we endeavour to respond to all applications made, this is subject to team capacity and available resources at any one time.

Applications for in-school support for 2024/2025 are now open. The details of how to request this support have been shared with schools. If you have any queries, please contact postprimarysupport@oide.ie

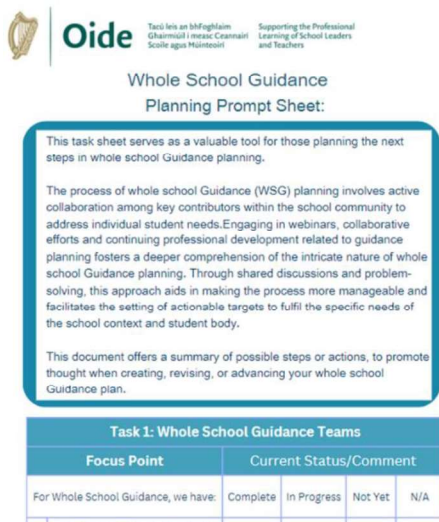
Schools can submit one application for general school support (one off visit or sustained support) which **must be approved by the School Principal** through [Schools - Oide](#)



Resources

Reminder that the three-part webinar series exploring Whole School Guidance planning is available on [Professional Learning Materials - Oide](#). Webinar 1 explores the collaborative whole school approach to Guidance planning and the shared responsibilities of various stakeholders. Webinar 2 explores Whole School Guidance planning in more detail, and Webinar 3 explores improvement planning for Whole School Guidance.

Slides, recordings and additional supports are available on the accompanying [Padlet](#) on the Oide website. Schools may wish to use the recordings and supporting materials for school-led professional learning.



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Whole School Guidance Planning Prompt Sheet:

This task sheet serves as a valuable tool for those planning the next steps in whole school Guidance planning.

The process of whole school Guidance (WSG) planning involves active collaboration among key contributors within the school community to address individual student needs. Engaging in webinars, collaborative efforts and continuing professional development related to guidance planning fosters a deeper comprehension of the intricate nature of whole school Guidance planning. Through shared discussions and problem-solving, this approach aids in making the process more manageable and facilitates the setting of actionable targets to fulfil the specific needs of the school context and student body.

This document offers a summary of possible steps or actions, to promote thought when creating, revising, or advancing your whole school Guidance plan.

Task 1: Whole School Guidance Teams

Focus Point	Current Status/Comment			
For Whole School Guidance, we have:	Complete	In Progress	Not Yet	N/A

This Padlet includes resources such as a template for **capturing the activities from Subject Departments that link with Whole School Guidance [Whole School Guidance \(padlet.com\)](#)** and could be integrated into a short input at a staff meeting to paint the larger picture of the work already happening and raise awareness of the broader role that all staff members contribute to.

Reflecting on the [Whole School Guidance Planning Prompt Sheet](#) might help with identifying next steps.

Tertiary – Different Route, Same Degree

Launched in 2023, tertiary degrees offer a new way for students to access a Bachelor or Bachelor (Hons) Undergraduate Course.

Students will start their studies in a further education institute and progress, with guaranteed access, to continue and complete their degree in higher education. Graduates obtain an NFQ level 7 or 8 degree awarded by the higher education institute.

Tertiary degrees are co-designed and co-developed by the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to provide seamless progression between further and higher education.

In summary, here's everything you, and your students, need to know about tertiary degrees:

- 1. No points required! No lottery system! No numbers games!**
- 2. No tuition fees during years 1-2 of study!**
- 3. Embedded awards!**
- 4. Different route, same degree!**

Tertiary Webinar for Guidance Counsellors facilitated by the National Tertiary Office will take place on 7th of November 2024 at 4.00pm.

To attend please register on Eventbrite.

[Link to register for the Webinar on 7 November at 4.00pm](#)



Q. Who are tertiary degrees for?

A. Tertiary degrees are designed to open doors to students of all backgrounds to access the course of their dreams. Everyone can apply – this route is designed to widen participation and make access easier for those who might not have considered higher education.

While entry requirements are tailored to each course, the most important thing to note for students is that the application process does not include leaving certificate points.

Applicants might be asked to provide a portfolio of work, a personal statement, or details of relevant work experience. Applicants might also be invited to interview. Details of entry requirements for each course can be found at www.nto.heai.ie/courses and applications are made directly on nto.ie

Q. What features and supports are available to tertiary students?

A. Tertiary degrees support students in lots of ways.

For example, there are fewer financial burdens with no fees or student contributions required for the years studying at a further education college, and smaller class sizes can support students who don't feel ready to go straight into big lecture halls and fully independent study.

More on Student Financial Support [here.](#)



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Students can also benefit from embedded awards – a unique feature of tertiary degrees. Irish HEIs have reported a high drop-out rate in recent years, often due to non-academic factors such as student housing, financial and personal challenges. With awards embedded throughout the degree, students' academic achievements will be recognised at each stage of their degree programme, even if they need to leave before completing the final year.

Students will also have access to:

- Academic, health and wellbeing support on both FET and HEI campuses.
- Libraries, sports and other facilities on both campuses.
- Student clubs and activities on both campuses.
- Visits to the HEI campus while studying at further education, so they know what to expect and are prepared to progress.
- Applications to SUSI grant support.

Q. How can Guidance Counsellors support students to apply for a tertiary degree?

A. The National Tertiary Office has developed a **Guidance Toolkit** which will support guidance professionals in making sure that all up-to-date information about Tertiary Degrees is available to all potential applicants. The toolkit provides a clear and accessible outline of the key tertiary degree features as well as timeline and application guidelines.

[NTO Brochure \(PDF\)](#)

Brochure developed for Guidance professionals and includes information about tertiary degrees, key features and application process.

[NTO Flier \(PDF\)](#)

Flier is developed for students and potential applicants and includes key features as well as links to relevant website information pages.

[Presentation for introducing tertiary degrees to students \(PDF\)](#)

Presentation is for Guidance professionals to assist with student engagement to raise awareness of the Tertiary Pathway.

[Tertiary Application Timeline \(PDF\)](#)

To inform students and guidance professionals of the Tertiary Degree application timeline.

[Applicants Guidelines: How to write a personal statement, how to prepare for an interview \(PDF\)](#)

To assist students with the Tertiary Degree Application process.

[NTO Video - https://vimeo.com/918396657](https://vimeo.com/918396657)

Presents key features of the Tertiary Degrees in a short information graphic video.

All resources can be downloaded directly from the website. You can also request a copy of the Guidance Toolkit by emailing info@nto.ie

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GO BEYOND

From being focused on points to being focused on people

Getting to college is just getting better and better with the introduction of the Tertiary Degree Route. Ireland's diverse population has outgrown traditional routes to a degree, and the right moment for access to evolve has arrived. Led by the National Tertiary Office and co-delivered by Higher Education Institutions and the Education and Training Boards, Tertiary Degrees cut through and create change that really matters by enabling progression across and between different institutions.

This guide has been developed for Guidance Counsellor colleagues to forge lasting, meaningful connections around these changes and to promote the points of uniqueness that are on offer through the Tertiary route.

TRADITIONAL DEGREE ROUTE

Closing date

Points

Fees

Accommodation

TERTIARY DEGREE ROUTE

Applications open until Mid September

No tuition or student contribution fees during study years in ETB

No limit on choices

No fee to apply

No Points

Local

Dual student card

Dual support and services: libraries, sports, academic, health and wellbeing supports

Access to both campuses

HEI Bursaries

Higher Education SUSI grant

Smaller class groups

Embedded Awards

National Tertiary Office
Oifig Thrasachta Náisiúnta

For now, you can:

- Remain up-to-date with the tertiary degree offering at www.nto.ie/courses – new courses may be added throughout the year.
- Inform students about tertiary degrees, the application process and how it differs from traditional applications based on points.
- Inform students about the support documents such as portfolios, personal statements, interviews or engagements.
- Arrange a school visit from the National Tertiary Office or your local Tertiary Manager to discuss the benefits of tertiary options with your students.

Contact your local tertiary manager by emailing info@nto.ie to arrange a visit in your area.

Inaugural Circular on Guidance

[First circular on guidance \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie) Published in April 2024, the purpose of Circular 0041/2024 is to provide post-primary schools with information to support well-informed implementation of whole-school guidance planning and practice. This circular on guidance is the first of its kind. Catalysed by evolutions in policy relating to lifelong guidance, Junior Cycle reform, redevelopment of Senior Cycle and publication of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and



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Framework for Practice, this circular integrates and centralises policy relating to guidance in post-primary schools.

We encourage you to bookmark [gov.ie - Guidance \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie) for ease of access to information that will support our practice in schools and for discussion regarding planning with your Whole School Guidance Team.

Just as October teaches us to embrace change with grace, let us remember to nurture ourselves as we guide others through transformation.

Encourage your colleagues to join our mailing list and follow us on X @Oide_Guidance for the latest news and updates.

Should you have any questions or need further information, feel free to contact us at info@oide.ie

Beannachtai,

Oide's Guidance Team



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