



Droichead - A Quick Reference Guide for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) - Post-primary

What is Droichead?

Droichead is an integrated professional induction framework designed to support the professional learning of NQTs during the induction phase, thus laying the foundations for subsequent professional growth and learning for the next phase of their career.

To Fulfil the Droichead Condition, an NQT must:

- Complete 200 hours teaching employment in an eligible setting to include the teaching of a post-primary curricular subject(s) to a designated class on the school's timetable, or employment in a learning support, special needs, or language support position.
- Engage in the Droichead process, which includes a combination of both school-based induction and additional professional learning activities.
- Declare that they are ready to move to the next phase on the continuum of teacher education. A joint declaration is made by the NQT and the Professional Support Team (PST) following collective reflection, that through their engagement in Droichead, they have engaged in a quality teaching and learning process.

The Droichead Standards

Through their engagement in the Droichead process, the NQT will:

1. have engaged professionally with school-based induction and additional professional learning activities
2. have shown their professional commitment to quality teaching and learning for their pupils/students
3. have engaged in reflective practice that supports their professional learning and practice, both individually and collaboratively.

Who Will Support the NQT?

The PST is a team of fully registered teachers, which may include the principal, ideally with a minimum of five years teaching experience, who work collaboratively to support and mentor the NQT during school-based induction. All PST members will have completed a programme of professional learning with the Droichead Induction Division, including mentor skill development.

What is School-Based Induction?

Any professional activity/conversation at school level which affords the teacher an opportunity to reflect on professional practice and adapt and modify that practice accordingly, for e.g., professional conversations with a member of PST/other colleagues on teaching and learning, observation of teaching and learning and a range of other induction activities.

Observations

Observations are also a key feature of Droichead. This includes observations by the NQT of more experienced teachers' practice, as well as observation of the NQT's practice by the PST. Both types of observations are arranged in advance and provide NQTs with opportunities to learn from their fellow professionals.

Observations by the PST of the NQT's practice should focus on areas where the NQT feels that they need advice, help and support. It is recommended that there would be at least two of each type of classroom observation and that the exact number, and the classes observed, should be based on discussions between the NQT and the PST.

Taisce

The Teaching Council uses the term Taisce, (Irish for treasure trove) to refer to this process of portfolio-based learning. Engaging in the process of portfolio-based learning enables the NQT to reflect on their professional learning in a way that suits them and identify and plan for areas in which they may need further support or guidance.

Additional Professional Learning Activities

Cluster Meetings: NQTs engage in one different cluster meeting per term. These two-hour meetings are facilitated by Droichead Induction Associates. The number of cluster meetings an NQT must engage in is determined by the duration of their Droichead process.

Other Professional Learning Activity: NQTs should also engage in one other professional learning activity, identified by themselves in accordance with their professional learning needs, in consultation with the PST. Typical learning activities might be, for example, participation in a workshop, a meeting of a Teacher Professional Network (subject association), an online/blended learning activity, attendance at a conference, Féilte, etc.

What are the Steps in the Droichead Process?

- Ensure that you are registered with the Teaching Council.
- Speak with the Principal and/or PST member about the Droichead process in your school.
- Apply to begin the Droichead process through the [‘My Registration’](#) login on www.teachingcouncil.ie.
- Inform the PST when you have received a confirmation email from the Teaching Council as this provides approval to commence the Droichead process.
- Read [Cluster Meetings; Important Information and Attendance Protocols](#).
- Confirm dates and times of cluster meetings and register to attend.
- Familiarise yourself with the Droichead Standards and with your school’s Droichead Induction Policy.

