

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Open Competition for Appointment to the Role of

Head of Education Therapy Service (Principal Officer Grade)

in the
National Council for Special Education
Permanent Positions

Closing Date: 3.00pm 5th December 2025

The National Council for Special Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

This competition will be run in compliance with the Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). Codes of practice are published by the CPSA and are available on www.cpsa.ie

Orange Recruitment will be administering the competition on behalf of the NCSE.

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Candidate Information Booklet

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Head of Education Therapy Service (Principal Officer Grade) in the National Council for Special Education

Section 1: Overview of the NCSE

Background

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) was set up to facilitate the delivery of education services to persons with Special Educational Needs (SEN) arising from disabilities. The Council was established in December 2003. The NCSE's statutory functions include the coordination of the provision of education supports to children with Special Education Needs (SEN), their families and schools. It includes planning for the inclusion of students with SEN need in mainstream education settings and allocating supports for students with disabilities in mainstream and special school settings in accordance with national policies.

The NCSE is an independent civil service body under the aegis of the Department of Education and Youth (DEY). The Headquarters of the NCSE is located in Trim, Co. Meath and it has approximately 30 local offices throughout the State. The NCSE also has a head office in central Dublin.

Currently the NCSE has approximately 440 staff and its services are delivered through our regional teams comprising:

- Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs) who interact with parents and schools in providing resources to support children with special education needs.
- Advisors who provide Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) delivered mainly through seminars and in-school support to schools in the area of special educational needs.
- Visiting Teachers for Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Blind/Visually Impaired, who provide support to children and young people who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Blind/Visually Impaired, their families and teachers.
- Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and Behaviour & Well-Being Facilitators
 who provide TPL including in school support to schools to build school capacity to support
 students with special education needs.
- Irish Sign Language Specialist Classroom Support (SCS) who provide intensive in-class communication support for individual students.
- Head office and other personnel.

The NCSE is currently undergoing a significant organisational expansion which will enhance the delivery of services. It has developed a service delivery strategy based on three fundamental values: community, inclusion, and excellence. The NCSE is determined to encourage all stakeholders to practice conscious inclusion and equity-mindedness. Working for the NCSE entails actively contributes to the advancement of inclusive education, ensuring that all students, regardless of their needs, receive the individualized support they require to completely participate in their day-to-day school activities.

Regional Structure

NCSE Operations is currently comprised of the Eastern and Western regions which are led by a National Co-Ordinator in each region.

The Eastern region includes counties Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim, Louth, Meath, Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow, Laois, Carlow, Wexford, Kilkenny and Waterford.

The Western region includes counties Donegal, Sligo, Roscommon, Longford, Westmeath, Mayo, Galway, Offaly, Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, Cork and Kerry.

Currently, each region has teams in the respective counties comprising of Advisors, SENOs, Visiting Teachers, ISL Advisors, and ISL SCS who are led by a Team Manager. Two teams in the Eastern and Western Regions are also comprised of OTs, SLTs and Behaviour & Well-Being Facilitators.

In June 2025 the Government formally established the Education Therapy Service. Supporting children and young people with special education or additional needs is a key government priority. The establishment of the ETS is core to meeting this objective. Budget 2026 confirmed an investment of €16 million to continue the development of the ETS, funding will ensure the service has access to a robust clinical governance structure alongside a significant administrative infrastructure which will ensure the service operates to the highest levels of quality, providing the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

More information about the NCSE is available on its website at www.ncse.ie

The NCSE is now recruiting for a Principal Officer to lead the Education Therapy Service (ETS) in the NCSE. The Principal Officer will have a background in Occupational Therapy or Speech and Language Therapy. This is a permanent post.

Principal Officers are key participants in the top management of the NCSE. Principal Officers generally have responsibility for managing a major policy development, business planning or operations/service delivery unit.

Principal Officers may be required to act as representatives for the organisation in the media, at Oireachtas Committees, and may also represent the country at a European and international level. Some of the emerging challenges for Principal Officers include:

- Managing in a constantly changing environment with an increased need for adaptability, flexibility and innovation;
- Managing and optimising the contribution of all, with an increased emphasis on promoting equality, diversity and an inclusive culture;
- Operating in a complex environment of limited resources and competing demands with ever increasing accountability and visibility;
- Improving standards of service delivery, with an increased focus on outputs and outcomes.

As a member of the Executive Board of the NCSE, Principal Officers have a key role in advising on policy and subsequent responsibility for its implementation. Typically, a Principal Officer will lead a division, overseeing the implementation of the organisations objectives and take responsibility for providing the leadership required to deliver a responsive and inclusive service.

This role involves acting as a key participant in the senior management process of the NCSE with a critical influencing role in implementing or advising on policy in the educational, financial, international, environmental and/or social arenas.

This senior level position offers an exciting opportunity for an ambitious, enthusiastic and committed professional with a strong commitment to serving the public interest. The role involves collaborative working and a willingness to take on new challenges. The successful candidate will be offered a dynamic, satisfying and varied career, with competitive terms and conditions.

Education Therapy Service

The development of the Education Therapy Service (ETS) was approved by Government in early 2025. It will build on the strengths of the therapy service previously delivered by the NCSE and is part of a broader inclusive education strategy. The service will initially include Occupational Therapists (OT) and Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) and will expand to include other grades such as Therapy Assistants and other professionals over time.

The service will commence with some special schools in the 2025/2026 school year. Further implementation will then progress on a phased basis, with the aim that remaining special schools will have an assigned OT and SLT (full or part-time) in the 2026/27 school year. Over time, the service will expand to meet the needs of all children with special educational needs, whether in special schools, special classes or mainstream classes.

Every child in Ireland has right to access an appropriate education. Access to a high quality and inclusive education will ensure that each child reaches their full potential.

The ETS aims to maximise every child and young persons' participation and engagement by adopting a multi-tiered model of support. The model of support will provide individualised supports to children and young people in their school context, while also supporting the school community's capacity to meet the needs of all children and young people attending their school.

The ETS will work with the HSE and other health and social care services to meet the holistic needs of the child/ young person. A core focus will include needs identified in a school setting that will benefit from an education-based therapy response. The ETS will actively promote inclusive education across the full continuum of education supports, while working collaboratively with parents, teachers, principals and other school staff, other NCSE services, HSE/HSE funded services and National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS).

The ETS is not a replacement for existing children's services such as Primary Care or Disability Services provided through the Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs). It will complement existing service delivery and will be delivered in a coordinated and aligned way with services, including NCSE supports, NEPS and HSE/HSE funded services.

Section 2: The Role

The NCSE is seeking applications for the position of Principal Officer as Head of the national Education Therapy Service. The successful candidate will have a professional qualification in either Occupational Therapy or Speech and Language Therapy and have significant experience both clinically and in senior management.

The successful candidate will lead the ETS and report to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the NCSE. They will function as a member of the NCSE's Senior Management Team. They will lead out on the development of the ETS from phase one, through to full rollout. They will work to ensure that children and young people with special education or additional needs, attending special schools, special classes and mainstream classes, have access to speech and language therapy and occupational therapy services, necessary to ensure children and young people achieve the best possible educational outcomes. Initially, the work will focus on recruitment and retention, workforce development, establishing the ETS model within schools, working in collaboration with teachers and principals, practice (student) education, ensuring the service is delivered to children and young people in line with evidenced informed practice, ensuring the ETS is aligned and coordinated with NCSE services and existing children's services including HSE/HSE funded services.

The successful candidate will work closely with the Department of Education and Youth's Therapy and Inclusion Unit to ensure service delivery is in line with government policy and best practice. The successful candidate will also work closely with HSE services and other relevant voluntary bodies to ensure the ETS is delivered in a coordinated, seamless manner across education and health services.

A key objective of the role will be to develop OTs and SLTs as core team members of the school community, working alongside teachers and SNAs as members of the school team, focussed on meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs. The successful candidate will work closely with other key stakeholders including the Department of Children, Disability, Equality (DCDE), the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) and with other bodies as required, including TUSLA.

It is expected that the ETS will develop from the current 39 number of posts in the NCSE to approximately 500 by end of 2027. The policy approved by Government envisaged as many as 750 Therapy and Therapy Assistant posts with full implementation. The governance and management needs of the service will be reviewed as rollout occurs.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities of the Role

The successful candidate will be responsible for:

- The delivery of the ETS, initially in special schools, with a further rollout into special classes and mainstream schools in line with Department of Education and Youth's policy.
- The development and implementation of an integrated, coordinated and aligned model of service delivery, which meets the needs of children and young people to not only achieve their best educational outcomes, but also ensure that they are supported and empowered to achieve their full potential as citizens of the State.
- Promote excellence in education-based therapy provision through an evidence informed knowledge and leadership.
- To manage the change involved for the school community in embedding a new model of integrating therapy services within, over time, potentially 4000 schools and an education workforce of almost 80,000 teachers and 23,000 SNAs.
- To assist in communicating with parents, children and young people, advocacy groups and wider educational stakeholders re the purpose of the ETS and how it will operate.
- To lead, manage, organise and motivate ETS staff to function effectively in a changing environment.
- To ensure that systems are in place that provide for easy and timely access for children and young people, parents and schools to appropriate supports and interventions in line with the model of service delivery and in accordance with their needs.
- To provide for the ongoing development and implementation of the service including systems and processes to ensure that all children and young people, their families and their school communities are supported in a child centred environment, consistent with prevailing evidence informed practice.
- The PO will lead the ETS team, including lead clinicians in SLT and OT, and will develop the appropriate structures and systems to ensure optimal clinical governance, clinical supervision and delivery of best possible outcomes for children and young people.
- Develop and implement strategies and structures to receive feedback from those that access the ETS with the emphasis on improving the service experience and quality.
- To assist the Department of Education and Youth's work to design and develop the suite of protocols and procedures to ensure ongoing collaboration and alignment with existing children's services. This will include:

- The delivery of local implementation groups and continuous monitoring and quality improvement mechanisms for service delivery.
- Contributions to workforce planning for therapy services
- o Contribution to workforce planning for therapy assistants.
- Development and implementation of a practice education framework for therapy students in school settings.
- o Development of clinical specialist and advanced practitioner roles.

General responsibilities will also include:

- Engaging with colleagues within the Department of Education and Youth, as appropriate, with
 responsibility for teacher education and the teacher professional learning to ensure the
 development of teacher capacity to engage with therapy services in schools. This work may
 also include engagement with Initial Teacher Education providers.
- Engaging with colleagues within the NCSE and Department of Education and Youth with responsibility for Special Needs Assistant (SNA) workforce to ensure the development of SNA's capacity to engage with therapy services in schools as appropriate and necessary.
- Managing the provision of responses to all correspondence, representations and parliamentary questions etc. relating to therapy services in schools, workforce development and other key areas of responsibility.
- Where appropriate to contribute to raising awareness of the service through presentations at conferences, stakeholder events and, where required, Oireachtas Committees
- Carrying out any other duties appropriate to the role that may be assigned by the CEO.

Please note:

The above is a general guide to the key duties and responsibilities of the role and is not an exhaustive description. Other duties and responsibilities appropriate to the role may be assigned by the relevant line manager from time to time.

Essential Criteria

Candidates on or before 5th December 2025 must:

- a) Hold a recognised, relevant first or second-class honours primary degree (Level 8, National Framework of Qualifications) or a Level 9 master's level qualification in speech and language therapy or occupational therapy, recognised by CORU and;
- b) Be CORU registered or eligible for CORU registration prior to taking up position and;
- c) Have at least 5 years' experience in the delivery of therapy services to children and young people in a health setting and or special education setting.
- d) Have at least 5 years' experience of working in a senior management role in education, health care or social care or other area relevant to the role. This should include significant operational and line management experience in the delivery of complex clinical or professional services.

Person Specification

The person appointed will have:

- A record of achievement in his/her career to date demonstrating management and leadership skills at the highest level;
- Ability to provide effective leadership and direction in a complex Organisation;
- A set of finely developed interpersonal skills to enable the post-holder to operate effectively
 with all key players and top management figures in the NCSE and external stakeholders;
- Proven capacity for sound judgement in pressured situations and clear strategic and decisive decision making;
- A capacity to operate and relate effectively to the political process and environment;
- Ability to deal effectively at the highest level with a range of Agencies and other Government Departments/Bodies;
- Capacity to contribute effectively to the overall strategic management of the organisation through the Executive Board.

The successful candidate must also be able to demonstrate:

- Evidence of the core Principal Officer Competencies which are listed below.
- A significant track record of achievement as a leader and senior manager in a large complex organisation.
- Successful track record of planning and delivering organisational change in a complex environment involving multiple stakeholders
- A track record of successful and innovative leadership.
- Experience of clinical and corporate governance.
- Capacity to effectively and efficiently manage competing demands in a fast-paced environment.

Annual Registration

On appointment practitioners must maintain annual registration on the Speech and Language Therapists Register maintained by the Speech and Language Therapists Registration Board at CORU. Practitioners must confirm annual registration with CORU to therapy management in the NCSE.

Competencies

In addition to the above, applicants must demonstrate, by reference to specific examples from their career to-date, that they possess or have the capacity to acquire the qualities, skills and knowledge required for the role of Head of Education Therapy Service, as identified in the following competency framework*.

Leadership & Strategic Direction

- Leads the team, setting high standards, tackling any performance problems & facilitating high performance
- Facilitates an open exchange of ideas and fosters an atmosphere of open communication.
- Contributes to the shaping of Departmental/Government strategy and policy.
- Develops capability and capacity across the team through effective delegation
- Develops a culture of learning & development, offering coaching and constructive/supportive feedback.
- Leads on preparing for an implementing significant change and reform.
- Anticipates and responds quickly to developments in the sector/broader environment.
- Actively collaborates with other Departments and Agencies.

Judgement & Decision Making

- Identifies and focuses on core issues when dealing with complex information/situations.
- Assembles facts, manipulates verbal and numerical information and thinks through issues logically.
- Sees the relationships between issues and quickly grasps the high level and socio-political implications.
- Identifies coherent solutions to complex issues.
- Takes action, making decisions in a timely manner and has the courage to see them through.
- Makes sound and well-informed decisions, understanding their impact and implications.
- Strives to effectively balance sectoral issues, political elements and the citizen impact in all decisions.

Management & Delivery of Results

- Initiates and takes personal responsibility for delivering results/services in own area.
- Balances strategy and operational detail to meet business needs.
- Manages multiple agendas and tasks and reallocates resources to manage changes in focus.
- Makes optimum use of resources and implements performance measures to deliver on objectives.
- Ensures the optimal use of ICT and new delivery models.
- Critically reviews projects and activities to ensure their effectiveness and that they meet Departmental requirements.
- Instils the importances of efficiencies, value for money and meeting corporate governance requirements.
- Ensures team are focused and act on Business plans priorities, even when faced with pressure.

Building Relationships & Communication

- Speaks and writes in a clear, articulate and impactful manner.
- Actively listens, seeking to understand the perspective and position of others.
- Manages and resolves conflicts/disagreements in a positive & constructive manner.

- Works effectively within the political process, recognising and managing the tensions arising from different stakeholders.
- Persuades others, builds consensus, gains co-operation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.
- Proactively engages with colleagues at all levels of the organisation and across other
 Departments and builds strong professional networks.
- Makes opinions known when s/he feels it is right to do so.

Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development

- Develops and maintains skills and expertise across a number of areas that are relevant to his/her field and recognised by people internal and external to the Department/Organisation.
- Keeps up to date with key departmental, sectoral, national and international policies and economic, political and social trends that affect the role.
- Maintains a strong focus on self-development, seeking feedback and opportunities for growth.

Drive and Commitment to Public Service Values

- Consistently strives to perform at a high level.
- Demonstrates personal commitment to the role, maintaining determination and persistence while maintaining a sense of balance and perspective in relation to work issues.
- Contributes positively to the corporate agenda.
- Is personally trustworthy, honest and respectful, delivering on promises and commitments.
- Ensures that customer service is at the heart of his/her work.
- Is resilient, maintaining composure even in adverse or challenging situations.
- Promotes a culture that fosters the highest standards of ethics and integrity.

Candidates should note that admission to the competition does not imply that they meet the eligibility criteria. Therefore candidates should satisfy themselves that they meet the eligibility criteria for this competition.

Section 4: Application and Selection Process

How to apply

Please note that Orange Recruitment will be administering the competition on behalf of the NCSE. Please see attached link for further details including the application process: https://orangerecruitment.ie/register-ncse/

Please note that all sections of the application form, must be fully completed or your application may receive no further consideration.

<u>Please note candidates will be disqualified if they exceed the 500-word count as indicated for each section.</u>

Closing Date

Your application must be submitted no later than 3.00pm on 5th December 2025

All queries relating to this recruitment campaign should be directed to reception@orangerecruitment.ie with the subject heading Head of Education Therapy Service.

Interviews for these posts are likely to commence mid December 2025.

Candidates should make themselves available on the interview date(s) specified by the Orange Recruitment/NCSE and should make sure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct.

The onus is on each applicant, to ensure that they are in receipt of all communication from Orange Recruitment/NCSE. Orange Recruitment/NCSE accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant. **Applications will not be accepted after the closing date of 3pm 5**th **December 2025.**

Selection Process

The selection may include:

- shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application
- presentation or other exercises
- a final competitive interview
- work sample/role play/ media exercise, and any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate

Shortlisting:

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While you may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the NCSE may decide that a limited number only will be called to interview. In this respect, the NCSE provides for the employment of a short listing process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position.

This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. An expert board will examine the application forms against agreed shortlisting criteria based on the requirements of the position. The shortlisting criteria may include both the essential and desirable criteria specified for the position. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience in your application.

Communication

Candidates should note that all communications relating to this competition including the provision of results, will issue by way of email only. Candidates should ensure that a valid email address is provided on the application form and should check that email address on a regular basis.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the National Council for Special Education and ensure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct.

The National Council for Special Education will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

Candidates must produce satisfactory documentary evidence of all relevant qualifications and experience claimed by them, if required.

Section 5: Eligibility to Compete

Eligibility to compete and certain restrictions on eligibility

Citizenship Requirements

Eligible Candidates must be:

- (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- (b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
- **(c)** A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; **or**
- (d) A non-EEA citizen who has a stamp 4 permission¹ or a stamp 5 permission;

To qualify candidates must meet one of the citizenship criteria above by the date of any job offer.

Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the Public Service by any Public Service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility)

Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER)

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are not eligible to apply for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010)

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider Public Service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years. People who availed of the VER scheme are not eligible to compete in this competition. People who availed of the VRS scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility).

Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013)

The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013 introduced a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for Local Authorities. In accordance with the terms of the *Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants* dated 28 June 2012 as detailed above, it is a specific condition of that VER Scheme that persons will <u>not</u> be eligible for reemployment in any Public Service body [as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011 and the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012] for a period of 2 years from their date of departure under this Scheme. These

¹ Please note that a 50 TEU visa, which is a replacement for Stamp 4EUFAM after Brexit, is acceptable as a Stamp 4 equivalent.

conditions also apply in the case of engagement/employment on a contract for service basis (either as a contractor or as an employee of a contractor).

Declaration

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a Public Service scheme of incentivised early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

Employer of Choice

As an **Employer of Choice** the Civil Service has many flexible and family friendly policies, e.g. Worksharing, Shorter Working Year, Remote Working (operated on a 'blended' basis), etc. All elective policies can be applied for in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions and are subject to the business needs of the organisation.

Section 6: Principal Conditions of Service

General

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

Pay

The Principal Officer (Standard) salary scale with effect from 1st August 2025 is as follows:

Personal Pension Contribution (PPC) Pay Rate:

€106,021, €110,520, €114,983, €119,481, €123,275, €127,211 (LS1), €131,139 (LSI2).

The PPC pay rate applies when the individual is required to pay a Personal Pension Contribution (otherwise known as a main scheme contribution) in accordance with the rules of their main/personal superannuation scheme. This is different to a contribution in respect of membership of a Spouses' and Children's scheme, or the Additional Superannuation Contributions (ASC).

A different rate will apply where the appointee is not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Long service increments may be payable after 3(LSI1) years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

Important Note

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Different terms and conditions may apply if you are a currently serving civil or public servant.

Subject to satisfactory performance increments may be payable in line will current Government Policy. You will agree that any overpayment of salary, allowances, or expenses will be repaid by you in accordance with Circular 07/2018: Recovery of Salary, Allowances, and Expenses Overpayments made to Staff Members/Former Staff Members/Pensioners.

Tenure and Probation

The appointment is to a **Permanent** position on a <u>probationary contract</u> in the Civil Service.

The probationary contract will be for a period of twelve months from the date specified on the contract.

During the period of your probationary contract, your performance will be subject to review by your supervisor(s) to determine whether you:

- (i) Have performed in a satisfactory manner,
- (ii) Have been satisfactory in general conduct, and
- (iii) Are suitable from the point of view of health with particular regard to sick leave.

Prior to the completion of the probationary contract a decision will be made as to whether or not you will be retained pursuant to Section 5A(2) Civil Service Regulation Acts 1956 – 2005. This decision will be based on your performance assessed against the criteria set out in (i) to (iii) above. The detail of the probationary process will be explained to you by the National Council for Special Education and you will be given a copy of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's guidelines on probation.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraphs in this section, the probationary contract may be terminated at any time prior to the expiry of the term of the contract by either side in accordance with the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts, 1973 to 2005.

In the following circumstances your contract may be extended and your probation period suspended.

- The probationary period stands suspended when an employee is absent due to Maternity or Adoptive Leave.
- In relation to an employee absent on Parental Leave or Carers Leave, the employer may require probation to be suspended if the absence is not considered to be consistent with the continuation of the probation. and
- Any other statutory provision providing that probation shall -
 - (i) stand suspended during an employee's absence from work, and
 - (ii) be completed by the employee on the employees return from work after such absence.

Where probation is suspended the employer should notify the employee of the circumstances relating to the suspension.

All appointees will serve a one-year probationary period. If an appointee who fails to satisfy the conditions of probation has been a serving civil servant immediately prior to their appointment from this competition, the issue of reversion will normally arise. In the event of reversion, an officer will return to a vacancy in their former grade in their former Department.

Unfair Dismissals Act 1977 - 2015

The Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977-2015 will not apply to the termination of this employment by reason only of the expiry of this probationary contract without it being renewed.

Duties

The officer will be required to perform any duties appropriate to the position which may be assigned from time to time. The officer may not engage in private practice or be connected with any business which would interfere with the performance of official duties.

<u>Headquarters</u>

The successful candidate will be able to choose between NCSE Offices, Trim, Co. Meath or the NCSE Office located in Central Dublin for their headquarters. However, please note that attendance in Trim, Dublin and other travel will be required as deemed necessary on a regular basis. When absent from home and headquarters on duty appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances will be paid, subject to the normal civil service regulations.

Hours of attendance

Hours of attendance will be fixed from time to time but will amount to not less than 41 hours and 15 minutes gross or 35 hours' net per week

Flexibility will be required with regard to extra attendance, which may be required from time to time for matters such as meetings with parents and interest groups.

Annual Leave

On recruitment, the annual leave allowance will be 30 working days in a year. The annual leave 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.

The Organisation of Working Time Act 1997

The terms of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

Sick Leave

Pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the sick leave circulars.

Officers paying the Class A rate of PRSI will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts direct to the employing Department/Organisation. Payment of salary during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims for social insurance benefit to the Department of Social Protection within the required time limits.

Secrecy, Confidentiality and Standards of Behaviour: Official Secrecy and Integrity

During the term of the probationary contract, an officer will be subject to the Provisions of the Official Secrets Act, 1963, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2014. The officer will agree not to disclose to unauthorised third parties any confidential information either during or subsequent to the period of employment.

Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour

The appointee will be subject to the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour.

Ethics in Public Office Acts

The Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

Prior approval of publications

An officer will agree not to publish material related to his or her official duties without prior approval by the Chairperson of the Authority or by another appropriate authorised officer.

Political Activity

During the term of employment the officer will be subject to the rules governing public servants and politics.

Personnel Code

Further details and circulars regarding these terms and conditions can be found on the following website www.circulars.gov.ie

Superannuation and Retirement

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the Civil Service at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, an appointee who has never worked in the Public Service will be offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"). Full details of the Scheme are at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie

Where the appointee has worked in a pensionable (non-Single Scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment or is currently on a career break or special leave with/without pay different terms may apply. The pension entitlement of such appointees will be established in the context of their public service employment history.

Key provisions attaching to membership of the Single Scheme are as follows:

- Pensionable Age: The minimum age at which pension is payable is the same as the age of eligibility for the State Pension, currently 66.
- Retirement Age: Scheme members must retire on reaching the age of 70.
- Career average earnings are used to calculate benefits (a pension and lump sum amount accrue each year and are up-rated each year by reference to CPI).
- Post retirement pension increases are linked to CPI

Pension Abatement

If the appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public Service and is in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during his/her re-employment that pension <u>will be subject to abatement</u> in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. <u>Please note: In applying for this position you are acknowledging that you understand that the abatement provisions, where relevant, will apply. It is not envisaged that the employing Department/Office will support an application for an abatement waiver in respect of appointments to this position.</u>

However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil or Public Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER), the Department of Health Circular 7/2010 VER/VRS or the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular letter LG(P) 06/2013, any of which renders a person ineligible for the competition)the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements may, however be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

Department of Education and Skills Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007

The Department of Education and Skills introduced an Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. It is a condition of the Early Retirement Scheme that with the exception of the situations set out in paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the relevant circular documentation, and with those exceptions only, if a teacher accepts early retirement under Strands 1, 2 or 3 of this scheme and is subsequently employed in any capacity in any area of the public sector, payment of pension to that person under the scheme will immediately cease. Pension payments will, however, be resumed on the ceasing of such employment or on the person's 60th birthday, whichever is the later, but on resumption, the pension will be based on the person's actual reckonable service as a teacher (i.e. the added years previously granted will not be taken into account in the calculation of the pension payment).

Ill-Health-Retirement

Please note any person who previously retired on ill health grounds under the terms of a superannuation scheme are required to declare, at the initial application phase, that they are in receipt of such a pension to the organisation administering the recruitment competition.

Applicants will be required to attend the CMO's office to assess their ability to provide regular and effective service taking account of the condition which qualified them for IHR.

Appointment post III-health retirement from Civil Service

If successful in their application through the competition, the applicant should be aware of the following:

- 1. If deemed fit to provide regular and effective service and assigned to a post, their civil service ill-health pension ceases.
- 2. If the applicant subsequently fails to complete probation or decides to leave their assigned post, there can be no reversion to the civil service IHR status, nor reinstatement of the civil service IHR pension, that existed prior to the application nor is there an entitlement to same.
- 3. The applicant will become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) upon appointment if they have had a break in pensionable public/civil service of more than 26 weeks.

Appointment post III-health retirement from public service:

Where an individual has retired from a public service body his/her ill-health pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement under that scheme.

If an applicant is successful, on appointment the applicant will be required to declare whether they are in receipt of a public service pension (ill-health or otherwise) and their public service pension may be subject to abatement.

The applicant will become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) upon appointment if they have had a break in pensionable public/civil service of more than 26 weeks.

Please note more detailed information in relation to pension implications for those in receipt of a civil or public service ill-health pension is available <u>via this link</u> or upon request to NCSE.

Pension Accrual

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one pre-existing public service pension scheme (i.e. non-Single Scheme) as per the 2012 Act shall apply. This 40-year limit is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

Additional Superannuation Contribution

This appointment is subject to the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) in accordance with the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. **Note;** ASC deductions are in addition to any pension contributions (main scheme and spouses' and children's contributions) required under the rules of your pension scheme.

For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme please see the following website: www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie

The foregoing represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.

Section 7: Important Information

Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014 applications will be treated in strict confidence.

Clearance Procedure

You will be required to complete and return a Garda eVetting form should you come under consideration for appointment. This form will be forwarded to An Garda Síochána for security checks on all Irish and Northern Irish addresses at which you resided, verification of identity, qualifications, experience, and medical status, and the provision of references. However should your application for the competition be unsuccessful this form will be destroyed by NCSE. If you subsequently come under consideration for another position, you may therefore be required to complete a further Garda Vetting Form.

If you have resided / studied in countries outside of the Republic of Ireland for a period of 6 months or more, it is **mandatory** for you to furnish a **Police Clearance Certificate** from those countries stating that you have no convictions recorded against you while residing there. You will need to provide a separate **Police Clearance Certificate for each country you have resided in**. Clearance must be dated after the date you left the country. Candidates should be aware that any information obtained in the Garda Vetting process can be made available to the employing authority.

It is YOUR responsibility to seek security clearances in a timely fashion as they can take some time. You cannot be appointed without this information being provided and being in order.

Eligibility Requirements

Qualifications/eligibility may not be confirmed until the final stage of the process, therefore, those candidates who do not possess the essential requirements and proceed with their application are putting themselves to unnecessary effort/expense and will not be offered a position from this competition.

Please note that NCSE is not in a position to consider or offer advice on the qualifications/eligibility of individuals unless they come under consideration. The onus is on the candidate to ensure they fulfil the eligibility requirements set out. NCSE reserves the right to deem an applicant ineligible at any stage if it is apparent that the candidate does not hold the required eligibility/qualifications e.g. from the submitted application form. Candidates who come under consideration following the final selection stage will be required to provide documentary evidence of their eligibility, including qualifications.

Candidates who are unable to show that they hold the required qualifications may be withdrawn from the competition at any stage. An invitation to tests, interview or any element of the selection process is not acceptance of eligibility.

Other important information

The National Council for Special Education will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a campaign, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that the National Council for Special Education are satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not

carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important, therefore, for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position the National Council for Special Education will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises the Board may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

Appointment process from panels

Offers of appointment must be accepted within a maximum period of three working days from date of offer; otherwise the offer will be considered as having been refused. If a person refuses, or is deemed to have refused, the post will be offered to the next candidate on the panel.

It is not expected that appointments will be made from this panel after June 2027.

Candidates with Disabilities

Candidates who have indicated on their application or profile that they would like to avail of reasonable accommodations are asked to submit a psychologists/medical report. The purpose of the report is to provide NCSE/Orange Recruitment with information to act as a basis for determining reasonable accommodations, where appropriate.

These reports must be forwarded to the Orange Recruitment at reception@orangerecruitment.ie by **3.00pm 9**th **December 2025**. You should email a scanned copy of the report to reception@orangerecruitment.ie

If you would like to talk about your candidature and any accommodations that may be of benefit during the recruitment process, please contact recruitment@ncse.ie. For further information on the accessibility of our service please see our Accessibility page.

Section 8: Review Procedures

Procedures where a candidate seeks a review of a Decision taken in relation to their application

A request for review may be taken by a candidate should they be dissatisfied with an action or decision taken by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). The NCSE will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of Section 7 of the Code of Practice Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (Commission). When making a request for a review, the candidate must support their request by outlining the facts they believe show that the action taken or decision reached was wrong. A request for review may be refused if the candidate cannot support their request.

The Commission recommends that, subject to the agreement of the candidate, where the office holder (in this instance the Chief Executive Officer of NCSE) considers the matter could be resolved they should first seek to engage on an informal basis, before making use of the formal review procedure.

Procedure for Informal Review

- A request for Informal Review must be made within 5 working days of notification of the decision, and should normally take place between the candidate and a representative of the NCSE who had played a key role in the selection process.
- Where the decision being conveyed relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for informal review must be received within 5 working days of the date of receipt of the decision.
- Where a candidate remains dissatisfied following any such informal discussion, he/she may adopt the formal procedures set out below.
- If the candidate wishes the matter to be dealt with by way of a formal review, he/she must do so within 5 working days of the notification of the outcome of the informal review.

Procedure for Formal Review of Selection Process

- The candidate must address his/her concerns in relation to the process in writing to the Chief Executive, outlining the facts that they believe show an action taken or decision reached was wrong.
- A request for review must be made within 10 working days of the notification of the selection decision. Where the decision relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for review must be received within 4 working days.
- Any extension of these time limits will only be granted in the most exceptional of circumstances and will be at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive.
- The outcome must generally be notified to the candidate within 25 working days of receipt of the request for review.

Complaints Process

A candidate may believe there was a breach of the Commission's Code of Practice by NCSE that may have compromised the integrity of the decision reached in the appointment process. The complaints process enables candidates (or potential candidates) to make a complaint under Section 8 to the Chief Executive Officer of the NCSE in the first instance, and to the Commission for Public Service Appointments subsequently on appeal if they remain dissatisfied.

Allegations of a breach of the Code of Practice should be addressed in writing, and within a reasonable timeframe, to the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance. The complainant must outline the facts that they believe show that the process followed was wrong. The complainant must also identify the aspect of the Code they believe has been infringed and enclose any relevant documentation that may

support the allegation. A complaint may be dismissed if they the complainant cannot support their allegations by setting out how the National Council for Special Education has fallen short of the principles of this Code.

On receipt of a complaint, NCSE may determine to engage with the complainant on an informal basis.

For further information on the above procedures please see the Code of Practice *Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service* which is available on the website of the Commission for Public Service Appointments, www.cpsa.ie

There is no obligation on the NCSE to suspend an appointment process while it considers a request for a review. Please note that where a formal review of a recruitment and selection process has taken place under Section 7 of this Code of Practice, a complainant may not seek a further review of the same process under Section 8, other than in the most exceptional circumstances that will be determined by the Commission at its sole discretion.

Requests for Feedback/Test Rechecks

Feedback in relation to the selection process is available on written request. There are no specific timeframes set for the provision of feedback or for carrying out rechecks.

Please note that the Review Process as set out in the Code of Practice is a separate process with specified timeframes that must be observed. Receipt of feedback is not required to invoke a review. It is not necessary for a candidate to compile a detailed case prior to invoking the review mechanism. The timeframe set out in the CPSA Code cannot be extended for any reason including the provision of feedback and/or the outcome of rechecks.

Section 9: Candidates Obligations

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.

It is important to remember that this is a competitive process for a role where integrity is paramount. Sharing information on the selection process e.g. through social media or any other means, may result in you being disqualified from the competition.

A third party must not impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Please note that all assessment and test materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the test material (including passages of information, questions or answer options), associated materials or interview(s) may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process. Any person who contravenes this provision, or who assists another person(s) in contravening this provision, is liable to prosecution and/or civil suit for loss of copyright and intellectual property.

Use of Recording Equipment

The NCSE does not allow the unsanctioned use of any type of recording equipment on its premises. This applies to any form of sound recording and any type of still picture or video recording, whether including sound recording or not, and covers any type of device used for these purposes.

Any person wishing to use such equipment for any of these purposes must seek written permission in advance. This policy is in place to protect the privacy of staff and customers and the integrity of our assessment material and assessment processes.

Unsanctioned use of recording equipment by any person is a breach of this policy. Any candidate involved in such a breach could be disqualified from the competition and could be subject to prosecution under section 55 of the Public Service Management (Recruitment & Appointments) Act, 2004.

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.

Contravention Code of Practice

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, if a person found guilty of an offence was, or is a candidate at a recruitment process,

• they will be disqualified as a candidate and excluded from the process;

 has been appointed to a post following the recruitment process, they will be removed from that post

Specific candidate criteria

Candidates must:

- Have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned,
- Be suitable on the grounds of character,
- Be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned.

If successful, they will not be appointed to the post unless they:

- Agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed,
- Be fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend/undertake any subsequent stage of the selection process as requested, attend for interview or other test when and where required by Orange Recruitment or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as Orange Recruitment require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Candidates are expected to provide all requested documentation to Orange Recruitment, including all forms issued by Orange Recruitment for completion, within the time specified. Failure to do so will result in the candidate being deemed to have withdrawn from the competition and their candidature will receive no further consideration.

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.

Feedback will be provided on written request. A request for feedback does not impact on the timeframe set out for seeking a review.

Section 10: General Data Protection Regulation

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive.

By submitting an application form for the purpose of applying for recruitment to, or promotion or assignment within the NCSE, candidates give consent for the personal data submitted to be processed as part of the selection process and administration of that competition. Where the services of a third party are used in processing your application, it may be required to provide them with information, however all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure the security of your data. If you are successful in the recruitment and selection competition, your application may be made available to the Human Resources section of the organisation to which you have been assigned. By consenting to this agreement, candidates give permission for the data submitted as part of this application form to be processed by NCSE's Competitions & Recruitment section for the purpose of administration and for relevant data to be made available to assessment boards for the purpose of assessing and selecting

the most suitable candidate(s). The data submitted will not be used for any other purpose and will be retained in accordance with the Department's retention policy.

All such information will be maintained safely and securely in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/678 (GDPR). Personal information will be treated in confidence and will not be shared with any party outside of those outlined as part of the selection process and administration of the competition.

In line with the Data Protection Acts 19 88-2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679, you maintain, among others, the following rights in this regard;

To receive a copy of the personal data that we hold about you;

To request that any inaccurate data that is held about you is corrected or, if we have incomplete information, you may request that we update the information such that it is complete;

To request, in certain circumstances, that we erase your personal data;

To restrict processing;

To have your personal information sent directly to yourself or to another organisation;

To make a request to access your personal data please submit your request by email to: dataprotection@ncse.ie ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record(s).

Information in relation to a candidate's personal data held by the National Council for Special Education are set out at <a href="https://ncse.ie/ncse