



Circular 0010/2021

THIS CIRCULAR SUPERSEDES ALL PREVIOUS CIRCULARS ON THIS SCHEME

To: Managerial Authorities, Principals and Teachers of Recognised Primary, Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools, the Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards.

Teacher Fee Refund Scheme 2020

ALL ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

The Administrator, Teacher Fee Refund Scheme
Marino Institute of Education
Griffith Avenue, Dublin, D09 R232
Tel: (01) 8535102
E-MAIL: refundoffeesscheme@mie.ie

**Applications will only be accepted for
Courses/Part of courses completed in the period
1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020**

Introduction and Purpose

The aim of this circular is to set out for school management authorities, principals and teachers the provisions determining the operation of the *Teacher Fee Refund Scheme*.

The purpose of the *Teacher Fee Refund Scheme* is to provide funding towards the cost of course participation and examination fees on successful completion of professional development courses. (Where course duration is longer than one year funding is provided upon successful completion of each year of the course.) The funding is available for courses that are directly relevant and of benefit to schools and that are subject to certification/award by an appropriate accreditation authority recognised by the Department of Education (DE).

The *Teacher Fee Refund Scheme* refers to individual applications only and refunds may not be claimed by schools or other employers.

This scheme is subject to review and changes may be introduced before the scheme is next open to applications (i.e. before applications for refund of fees in respect of the next academic year are invited).



Teachers Eligible

Currently serving primary and post-primary teachers who are registered with the Teaching Council, paid by the State and employed in a Department of Education recognised primary or post primary school are eligible to apply for funding under the scheme. This includes permanent whole-time teachers, temporary whole-time teachers, part-time teachers, substitute teachers, teachers holding contracts of indefinite duration and teachers holding fixed-term contracts who are employed for the full school year and who provide teaching service during each school week. *The list of recognised primary and post primary schools is available on the Department website: Please see: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/Data-on-Individual-Schools/>.*

- Fully registered teachers on secondment within the education sector are eligible to apply under the scheme.
- Teachers on career break/unpaid leave during the 2019/20 school year are only eligible to apply for a refund of fees upon their return to school and the refund can only be made in respect of fees incurred between 1st September 2019 and 31st August 2020.

Courses Not Eligible Under the Scheme

- Funding under the *Teacher Fee Refund Scheme* will not be provided for courses which result in a qualification in respect of which an allowance is payable.
- Courses which are already part funded by the Department of Education are not eligible for the scheme.
- This scheme will not fund shortfalls in qualifications required for full recognition as a primary or post-primary teacher.



Qualifying Courses

- Courses which qualify should be directly relevant and of benefit to schools, school management, or teachers and should ultimately positively impact on teaching and learning.
- Courses should be subject to certification/award by an appropriate accreditation authority recognised by the Department of Education for the purpose of this scheme.

Diploma Courses

- In general, recognised diploma and certificate courses accredited as above will be eligible under *the Teacher Fee Refund Scheme*.
- A copy of the actual diploma certificate received following the successful completion of the course must accompany all application forms.

Applications to Teacher Fee Refund Scheme

- The Marino Institute of Education (MIE) administers the scheme on behalf of the Department of Education.
- Teachers must apply with the approval of their Principal and Board of Management and/or Education and Training Board on the standard application form. Completed application forms should be forwarded to:

The Administrator, Teacher Fee Refund Scheme
Marino Institute of Education, Griffith Avenue, Dublin D09 R232
Tel: (01) 8535102
e-mail: refundoffeesscheme@mie.ie

- Applications will only be accepted for courses/part of courses completed in the period **1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020**.
- The closing date for receipt of applications is **31st March 2021**. All applications received will be acknowledged.
- Where the duration of a course is more than one year, applications must be made following the successful completion of each year.
- Applicants will also be required to provide documentary evidence from the course provider (Accrediting Authority or Third Level Institute) confirming:
 - a) the official title of the course
 - b) the applicant's successful completion of the course or year of course



c) the applicant's examination results

Note: A copy of the official transcript will suffice if it meets all of the above requirements.

- It is the responsibility of all applicants to ensure that the application form is fully completed, signed and accompanied by all relevant documentation.

MIE and the DE reserve the right to request original documentation at any time.

- **LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

Monitoring Committee

- A Monitoring Committee, consisting of teacher union representatives and representatives from school management and the Department of Education, oversees the administration of the scheme and makes recommendations on the allocation of payments to applicants.
- Appeals against a recommendation of the monitoring committee may be made to an Appeals Committee under the aegis of the Minister for Education.

Appeals Committee

- An Appeals Committee comprising members of the Teacher Education Section, DE and the Inspectorate will adjudicate on appeals from applicants whose applications were not approved during the normal application process.
- Appeals on decisions **must be received within four working weeks** from the date on which notification of the decision was issued.
- Late, incomplete or unsigned applications are not grounds for appeal.
- A copy of the application form must be attached to the letter of appeal. This letter should state clearly the grounds for appeal.
- All information and documents in support of an appeal is subject to verification.

Amounts Payable to Applicants

- Payment to successful applicants will be by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Please provide your bank details on page 12 to facilitate this. MIE will apply appropriate data security protocols to the use of this data.
- Applications for funding under the *Teacher Fee Refund Scheme* are made retrospectively for a course undertaken during the previous academic year.
- To be eligible for a refund of fees, the total fees payable by the applicant for the course must exceed **€600** in the relevant application year. The maximum fee



amount on which a refund will be made is **€5,000** per year. Only fees which relate to the academic year for which the application is made will be considered.

- The funding for this scheme is conditional on the budget allocated to the Department of Education.
- The proportion of fees refunded under the scheme depends on the number of qualifying applicants in any given year. The funding available is allocated on a pro-rata basis so that all successful applicants each receive the same proportion of their eligible fees.
- Where an applicant is already in receipt of any payment/subsidy towards the cost of the course in question, the amount of fees eligible for payment will be reduced accordingly by the amount of such payment(s).
- Failure to declare all subsidies/allowances will result in an application being declared null and void.
- Courses which are already part funded by the Department of Education are not eligible for the scheme
- Payment will issue as soon as a decision has been reached.

Notification of Teachers

Please bring this circular to the attention of all teaching staff including those on leave, secondment or career break.

Review of the Scheme

The Department of Education has undertaken a review of the Teacher Fee Refund Scheme.

It is proposed to introduce some changes to the Scheme in relation to claims for courses commencing or parts of courses continuing in the 2021/2022 academic year – i.e. for claims relating to the period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022. These changes will be set out in a separate circular letter.

Martin McLoughlin
Principal Officer
Teacher Education Policy (ITE and Professional Development)
January 2021