

Explanatory notes for the online exam to address the registration condition of History & Structure of the Irish Education System

1. Completion of an online exam

An online Aptitude Test is organised by the Teaching Council three times a year. The test is of two and half hours duration and applicants are required to answer TWO exam questions.

- a) Section A of the paper deals primarily with school governance and patronage.
- b) Section B of the paper deals with curriculum and assessment.

2. Structure of the online Test Paper

There are two sections on the paper: Section A and Section B:

There are two questions in each section and applicants are asked to answer only one question from Section A and one question from Section B.

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the developments which have shaped Irish post-primary education since the foundation of the Irish State in 1922 relating to:

- school governance, patronage, structural reforms, system appraisal, policy formulation and implementation; and
- curriculum and assessment.

In brief, examples of key developments which stand out as shaping current post primary education in Ireland have been:

- 1920s (for example foundation of the Irish State and establishment of the Department of Education)
- 1930s-1960s (education remains relatively unchanged)
- 1960s (for example the introduction of free post-primary education in Ireland)
- 1990s (for example Charting our Education Future, 1998 Education Act)
- more recently since the 2000s (for example the establishment of the NCCA, Teaching Council, introduction of Junior Cycle, discourse on school patronage)

Grading

Grading for the aptitude test is Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory (i.e., pass or fail) and there is a high pass rate. In terms of how much detail is required for the aptitude test, please see below the success criteria whereby an answer is satisfactory when:

- The factual information is accurate
- The meaning is reasonably clear
- Some background context is provided to frame the answer
- The candidate demonstrates an understanding of the issues discussed within their context
- Some links are made between the historical and current situation.

Word Count

The recommended word count for each answer is 1500 – 2000 words.

3. Useful Links

Coolahan, J. Towards the Era of Lifelong Learning: A History of Irish Education, 1800-2016 (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration) available at <https://www.ipa.ie/education/towards-the-era-oflifelong-learning-a-history-of-irish-education-1800-2016.3508.html>

Applicants should also refer to the following helpful links below:

- From the Department of Education and Skills website - this gives an overview of the Irish Education System:

<https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/>

- Charting our Education Future – which informed policy developments in education since the 1990s:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Charting-Our-Education-Future-White-Paper-On-Education-Launch-Copy-1995-.pdf>

- Education Act, 1998

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/51/enacted/en/html>

- NCCA website – curricular changes and Junior Cycle

<https://ncca.ie/en>