







# VISION

The NCCA will play a key role in providing an education system of the highest quality for learners to enable them to realise their full potential and to equip them for successful participation in, and contribution to, economic and civil society, and in so doing promoting the growth of a learning society.

# MISSION

The role of the NCCA is to lead developments in curriculum and assessment and to support the implementation of changes resulting from this work. The NCCA works in a spirit of consensus and partnership. It seeks to promote an innovative and creative environment for all learners in schools and other educational settings.

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The background of the page is an abstract composition of large, overlapping, curved shapes. A prominent dark green shape curves from the top left towards the center. Below it, a light blue shape follows a similar path. On the right side, a yellow shape curves upwards. The overall effect is a textured, painterly style with soft edges and a rich color palette.

# FOREWORD AND INTRODUCTION

# FOREWORD

As the Irish economy moves into a more turbulent era with the likelihood of a significantly more restrictive public spending environment, the issue of resourcing education, especially education innovation is likely to become increasingly challenging.

Notwithstanding the fact that education spending in Ireland increased substantially over recent years, it has not kept pace with economic growth. It is important that as economic growth dips, the spend on education is protected.

There is a public consensus in Ireland on the value of education investment – not only in terms of economic spin-off but also with regard to its contribution to social cohesion, cultural enhancement and intergenerational progress. Considering such outcomes, it is all the more surprising that the education spend is not carefully ring-fenced. This becomes all the more important now in a period of retrenchment.

There is of course also the matter of prioritising within the education spend. In this regard, and of particular importance to the work of the NCCA, it is imperative that curricular change and innovation continue to be supported. Indeed, it could be argued that this consideration becomes all the more pressing in a context of tighter resources. Proposals which have been, or are in process of being, developed by the NCCA in Leaving Certificate Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Art and second level Mathematics are not resource neutral.

It is imperative, however, that the resources necessary for the introduction of these innovations now available into the second level system are secured and allocated.

Failure to do so would not only damage the collective enthusiasm and developmental momentum of all of the partners in education represented on Council, but would also undermine notional objectives regarding the production of 3rd and 4th level graduates in Science, Engineering and Technology.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of many people to the work of the Council this year. In particular, I would like to thank my colleagues on Council for the generosity of their contributions and insights in the course of the year's work. I would like to thank the Executive of the Council for the consistent professionalism and quality of thinking with which they inform the decision making of Council. Finally, a special word of thanks to Dr. Anne Looney for all the unerring quality of leadership, which she brings to every aspect of her role as Chief Executive of the organisation.



Prof. Tom Collins  
*Chairperson*

# INTRODUCTION

This annual report presents more than the activities of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in 2007. It also includes the activities of many of our collaborators in the work of curriculum and assessment development. Collaboration of this kind has become a feature of our work in recent times and has led to the forging of new connections – between researchers and teachers and practitioners, between the making and doing of policy, and between the best of current practice and the emerging directions for schooling into the future.

Synergies of this kind have a range of benefits for any system. They can result in imaginative and innovative solutions – like Project Maths. They can inform the insights of practitioners with the findings of researchers and give rise to challenging questions for both – as in the Senior Cycle Network. And they can connect local practice with international trends in ways that serve classroom teachers and school leaders in Ireland, and attract the attention of the international education community – as with the Assessment Guidelines for Primary Schools.

A particular feature of the work of the Council is the inclusion of the insights of children and young people, whose learning experiences are shaped by curriculum and assessment policies, in the development of advice on the future of those policies. Listening to their voices, and ensuring that processes of development in curriculum and assessment are connected to and informed by their insights and challenges has given the Council's work greater authority and urgency.



Connections of this kind can also generate new questions and highlight ongoing concerns – about resourcing levels in Irish schools, about the need for greater flexibility for schools to meet local needs, and about the policy priorities for our very youngest children.

Establishing those connections, and maintaining and growing them is challenging, even in an education system that is small in relative terms. The Council, with its representative composition, and consultative ethos, and its many committees and sub-groups functions as a nexus at the heart of curriculum and assessment connections. As the annual report documents, 2007 saw an increase in the number of meetings held under its auspices (Appendix 3). Staff continued to engage with interest groups and agencies on a range of themes, at home and abroad. The Council members, the very many members of NCCA committees and working groups, and the hard-working executive staff are to be commended for the energy and commitment that generates these connections, and fuels the imaginative heart of the process of developing curriculum and assessment.



Dr. Anne Looney  
*Chief Executive*

# THE ORGANISATION

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

The NCCA is a statutory Council and its brief is to advise the Minister for Education and Science on matters relating to curriculum and assessment for early childhood education and for primary and post-primary schools.

## VISION

The Council's Strategic Plan 2006-2008 sets out its statement of vision:

*The NCCA will play a key role in providing an education system of the highest quality for learners to enable them to realise their full potential and to equip them for successful participation in, and contribution to, economic and civil society, and in so doing promote the growth of a learning society.*

## MISSION

The Council's approach to its work is summarised in its mission:

*The role of the NCCA is to lead developments in curriculum and assessment and to support the implementation of changes resulting from this work. The NCCA works in a spirit of consensus and partnership. It seeks to promote an innovative and creative environment for all learners in schools and other educational settings.*

## COMPOSITION

The Council is a representative structure, the membership of which is determined by the Minister for Education and Science. The 25 members come from organisations representing teachers, school managers, parents, employers, trade unions, early childhood education, Irish language interests and third-level education. Other members include representatives of the Department of Education and Science, the State Examinations Commission and a nominee of the Minister. The functions of the Council are included in Appendix 1. The membership of the current Council, which was appointed for a three-year term to 31 March 2009, is as follows:

Prof. Tom Collins	Chairperson
Ms. Catherine Byrne	Deputy Chairperson
Ms. Eilis Humphreys	Deputy Chairperson
Ms. Antoinette Buggle	National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education
Mr. Oliver Donohoe	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Mr. Aidan Farrell	State Examinations Commission
Mr. Michael Freeley	Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland
Mr. Declan Kelleher	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Ms. Marion Lyon	National Parents Council Post-Primary
Mr. John MacGabhann	Teachers' Union of Ireland
Ms. Doreen McMorris (to 25th January)	Department of Education and Science
Dr. Kenneth Milne	Church of Ireland Board of Education
Ms. Mary Mullarkey (to 21st June)	Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools
Mr. Paddy Murchan	Catholic Primary Schools Managers Association
Ms. Maria Murphy	National Parents Council Primary
Mr. Éamonn Murtagh (from 8th March)	Department of Education and Science
Ms. Sheila Nunan	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Dr. Barney O'Reilly	Irish Vocational Education Association
Tomás Ó Ruairc Uas.	Foras na Gaeilge
Ms Sheila Parsons	Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland
Ms. Pat Quinn	Minister's Nominee
Ms. Bernie Ruane	Teachers' Union of Ireland
Ms. Eileen Salmon (from 27th September)	Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools
Mr. Heino Schonfeld	The Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education
Mr. Frank Turpin	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
Mr. Paul P Tyrrell	Joint Managerial Body
Prof. Eugene Wall	Irish Federation of University Teachers



## STAFF

The NCCA has a full-time executive staff led by the Chief Executive Dr. Anne Looney, and the Deputy Chief Executives, John Hammond and Dr. Sarah FitzPatrick. Together with the full-time staff members, there is a team of part-time Education Officers, who have particular expertise and who are appointed on a secondment or commission basis to the NCCA.

Details of the full and part-time staff are provided in Appendix 2.

## FINANCE

The NCCA is funded by the exchequer through the Department of Education and Science (DES). Its allocation for the financial year 2007 was €3.848m.

The funds allocated to the NCCA cover

- staff salaries
- costs related to the secondment and commissioning of specialist staff to support the work of the Council
- professional development
- publications, including design, printing and translation
- research
- costs of the meetings of Council and its sub-committees, including hire of meeting rooms, and travel and subsistence costs
- administration costs, such as office maintenance and equipment, stationery, postage, telephone, rent, lighting and heating
- costs related to NCCA conferences and events

- IT maintenance and development
- international interaction, including membership fees of international organisations such as CIDREE (Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe) and AEA (Association for Educational Assessment, Europe)
- advertising.

The DES directly funded Education Officer posts for ICT (2) to 31 August, 2007. A research grant of €91,123 was received from the Gender Equality Unit, DES.

A detailed financial statement is provided in Appendix 4.



# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES





# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 1

To develop, monitor and review curriculum and assessment to improve the educational experiences of learners of all abilities, including learners with special needs, exceptionally able learners, learners who experience socio-economic disadvantage, and learners whose first language is neither English nor Irish, and provide for their educational needs in the 21st century

## Strategy 1.1 Develop a framework to support Early Childhood Education.

### Completed in 2007

Three background papers were commissioned. Focusing on how children learn and develop, on education and care, and on play. These set out the theory, research and practice context which inform the *Framework for Early Learning*.

Part 1 of the Framework was completed. This part presents children's early learning and development through four interconnected themes. Part 2 consist of four sets of guidelines. One of these sets was completed.

Initial work was completed on a publication and dissemination strategy.



**Strategy 1.2** Continue rolling review of the Primary School Curriculum to identify and meet the needs of teachers and children using the Primary School Curriculum.

**Completed in 2007**

A total of 1,380 completed *Review and Reflection Templates for Teachers* were returned from participating schools.

Analysis of the data is almost complete and is on-going on the few remaining items.

A sample of eight schools participated in a school case study.

Interim reports have been compiled and presented.

*So it is good to see [the NCCA] going back to the classroom, back to the coalface and seeing what is working and what is not working... and it is great to see that the two-teacher school is not forgotten in the height of it all!*

**Principal of case study school**



### **Strategy 1.3** Initiate and develop projects which are aligned with the Primary School Curriculum and informed by the findings of the Primary Curriculum Review.

#### **Completed in 2007**

Arising from the findings from Phase 1 of the Primary Curriculum Review and the emerging findings from Phase 2, the NCCA participated in the start-up stage of a research project on Assessment for Learning, in collaboration with St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra.

*This is the best year I've had professionally since I started teaching and it was a great experience for the children as well.*

**Teacher in the project**

*I've never changed my practice so much, I can't believe how different it is.*

**Teacher in the project**

### **Strategy 1.4** Ensure direction and coherence in specific junior cycle developments by positioning these developments in the wider educational context.

#### **Completed in 2007**

On 22nd October, NCCA held a conference entitled *Class Acts: promise, potential and progress in junior cycle* which brought together over 100 education practitioners and policy makers to discuss the findings of research, carried out by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) on behalf of NCCA, into the experiences of students in the third year of junior cycle.

*I found the whole day a great experience and opportunity for discussion and thought.*

*It's always useful and interesting to have opportunities to discuss key pieces of research with others involved in the education community.*

*The manner in which discussion was facilitated was both light handed and tremendously effective.*

**Participants' evaluation of conference**



## **Strategy 1.5 Complete a programme of curriculum and assessment development arising from the review of senior cycle education.**

### **Completed in 2007**

A report of the consultation on the background paper on Social and Political Education was published online.

A student consultation on Social and Political Education was carried out in eight settings.

Ten sample Transition Units were published online.

The curriculum framework for Social, Personal and Health Education at senior cycle was completed.

*Mapping Health and Safety in the Curriculum* was published by the Health and Safety Authority.

*The introduction of an 'academically grounded' 'socially critical discipline' subject at senior cycle, that both 'links organically' to CSPE at junior level but also forms a bridge to existing social science or philosophical subjects at third level is a long-awaited and welcome development.*

**Dr. Audrey Bryan and Professor Sheila Drudy, School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University College Dublin**

*Students should be allowed to be more independent in their research... there should be more continuous assessment.*

**Student**

*Teachers should respect students' opinions particularly in such a subject which could be called a 'life subject'*

**Student**

*Extremely useful and important work. As a TY Coordinator I believe such units could enhance the experience for teachers and students alike.*

**Glenda Groome, TY Coordinator**

*A great innovation – so many teachers are doing similar modules. I would really appreciate a database of resources.*

**Amanda Driver, Gael Choláiste Chill Dara**

*The report entitled, 'Mapping health and safety in the curriculum', was undertaken by the NCCA and commissioned by the Health and Safety Authority. It examines existing and future opportunities within early childhood education, primary and post-primary education, for teaching and learning related to health and safety.*

**Health and Safety Authority Press Release, 10th October**

**Strategy 1.6 Undertake the actions recommended in major reviews of the curriculum areas of Guidance, Mathematics, the Classical subjects, and Languages (Irish, English and modern languages), aligned with the reviews of junior and senior cycle.**

### Completed in 2007

Planning and preparation for the implementation of *Project Maths* was completed. The project combines major developments in all mathematics courses at junior and senior cycle with changes in assessment and support for different ways of teaching and learning mathematics.

Following the review of Irish, work commenced to adjust Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate courses to reflect the introduction of a significantly increased weighting for competence in speaking the language in the oral element of the examinations.

Leaving Certificate syllabuses in English and modern languages were converted to a common, outcomes-based syllabus template as part of the senior cycle developments.

A report of the consultation on *A Draft Curriculum Framework for Guidance in Post-primary Education* was completed. Work with schools exploring how the framework would work in schools commenced.

The development of a new Junior Certificate syllabus for the Classics commenced. This combines the existing syllabuses for Classical Studies, Latin and Ancient Greek into a new integrated, unitised Classics course with a number of options for studying classical civilisation and languages.

## Strategy 1.7 Review the position of the Leaving Certificate Applied and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme in light of the broader senior cycle developments.

### Completed in 2007

The initial phase of the ESRI research on participation in and progression from the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) has been completed. An analysis of the background literature and existing data has taken place. This research will provide information on the policy background to the Leaving Certificate Applied, the provision and take-up of the Leaving Certificate Applied, the profile of LCA participants, and post-school pathways of LCA school leavers.

## Strategy 1.9 Complete an ICT Framework for compulsory education.

### Completed in 2007

The ICT Framework school-based developmental initiative concluded at the end of May. Feedback from teachers across the twelve participating schools was analysed and presented in a final report, and the ICT Framework itself was revised. Both the report on the initiative with schools and the revised Framework issued as advice to the DES in November 2007.

Work was also completed on presenting the revised ICT Framework on the ACTION website, along with five sample activities linked to the curriculum and the ICT Framework.

18 Digital Award Schools (primary schools) also developed sample activities for the ICT Framework, supported by NCTE.

*The Framework cuts across a range of curriculum subjects. My lesson on the snowman was really simple but it covered so much of the curriculum – music, feelings in SPHE, movement in PE and dancing, oral language in English and Drama... I thought it was really useful for integration.*

**Teacher**

*Looking at the ICT Framework has made me really think about my teaching methodologies. ICT provides great opportunities on how I present things to students. More importantly, I see great potential in providing more active experiences for my students.*

**Teacher**

*The arrival of new equipment, and attendance at the workshop were of great motivational value. They encouraged me to find the time to make use of ICT and to develop my own skills and confidence with it.*

**Teacher**

*I had data logging equipment for years, never used it. Data logging is mentioned in the ICT Framework. For this initiative, I pulled it out, brought it home, taught myself how to use it. It took a long time, but I must say I really enjoyed using it in class. It greatly enhanced the science lessons. The lads loved it; their learning was much deeper.*

**Teacher**



# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 2

To continue to work towards the development of assessment strategies that draw on national and international research and take account of individual learning needs, and thereby assist in planning educational experiences for all learners

## Strategy 2.1 Progress the development of assessment in the Primary School Curriculum.

### Completed in 2007

*Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools* was launched in November by Mary Hanafin, TD, Minister for Education and Science.

The guidelines support teachers' knowledge and understanding of assessment, and assist schools in developing and implementing an assessment policy.

*Minister for Education Mary Hanafin has launched a new set of guidelines for primary school teachers and schools.... The aim of assessing children is to ensure they are progressing well, meeting their potential and supporting them in making decisions about their future learning.... The publication is the result of widespread consultation, research conducted in Ireland and abroad, and discussion and debate at the level of Council.*  
**RTE News, Wednesday, 28 November**

*Let me congratulate you and your colleagues on Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum. As soon as it arrived in our school there were sighs of relief. Much overdue, the document was well worth waiting for. I believe it is the most attractive and most teacher-friendly document to come into our school in a very long time.*

**Dr. Rosalyn Brady, St. Joseph's National School, Dundalk, Co. Louth**

*We found out that your recently developed Assessment Guidelines for Schools is excellent developed material and that our teachers can also benefit from it. Most of our teachers don't know English and we are interested to translate it in Macedonian and use as additional material besides our training materials.*

**Gorica Mickovska, Macedonian Civic Education Center (MCEC), Republic of Macedonia**

## Strategy 2.2 Support assessment practice in early childhood settings.

### Completed in 2007

The background paper, *Supporting children's early learning and development through formative assessment* was commissioned and drafted.

Informed by the background paper, guidelines on assessment were drafted. These are a key component of the *Framework for Early Learning*.

## Strategy 2.3 Develop national report card templates for primary schools to support reporting to parents on their children's progress.

### Completed in 2007

A developmental initiative involving 29 schools using the report card templates was completed. The draft templates were modified to meet the needs of individual schools.

*We feel the process has been excellent as it made us reflect. We have learnt a great deal and it has highlighted areas we need to look at. [It promoted]... dialogue and consultation and reflection among all staff.*

**Feedback from participating school**

*Child friendly, easy to use. The information provided was relevant and easy for parents to understand. Also the space provided to allow teachers to inform parents on how they can help their child was very good.*

**Teacher**

*It gave me a good idea of my child's enthusiasm for learning in the section 'your child as a learner'. This will help me in my approach to supporting her.*

**Parent**

*What I liked most was that the whole child was reviewed. The holistic nature of the report.*

**Parent**



**Strategy 2.4 Disseminate the outcomes of the Assessment for Learning (AfL) initiative as part of the review of junior cycle.**

**Completed in 2007**

Exemplars, using a number of samples of student work, have been produced to provide support for teacher judgement in a range of subjects. Currently on the NCCA website are exemplars for history, home economics, geography, religious education and business studies.

Arising from a successful developmental project with teachers from 20 schools, assessment materials and planning exemplars in physical education have been produced for dissemination on the website and through the Junior Cycle Physical Education Support Service.

**Strategy 2.6 Progress the proposals to widen the range of assessment approaches and methods used in senior cycle education as part of senior cycle developments**

**Completed in 2007**

Proposals for new methods of assessment were developed for inclusion in draft syllabuses for SPHE and Politics and Society being prepared for consultation.



# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 3

To support and improve change and development in curriculum and assessment in schools and other educational settings, and to take a leading role on advising on the professional development needs of teachers

**Strategy 3.1** Liaise closely with the support services working with primary and post-primary schools and teachers, with agencies in the early childhood sector, and with providers of pre-service training and professional development for the education sector.

### Completed in 2007

The NCCA contributed to the work of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) on the seminars for teachers on standardised testing.

The NCCA supported the work of the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE) through the Centre's Consultative Committee.

The NCCA contributed to the preparatory work for the National Childcare Training Strategy through the Sectoral Standards Sub-Group.

The NCCA collaborated with T4, the support service for the Leaving Certificate technology subjects to develop draft assessment materials for LC Design and Communication Graphics and LC Technology.

*Very clear and worthwhile. Input – very relevant.*

*Very well prepared presentation. Exactly what was needed to clarify thoughts*

*Very helpful – new guidelines great – a lot clarified*

*Terrific input. Guidelines will be most helpful.*

**Seminar facilitators reflecting on NCCA input to training**

### **Strategy 3.2 Continue with the recently established practice of engaging directly with schools and other educational settings in the process of curriculum and assessment review and development.**

#### **Completed in 2007**

The NCCA worked with three teachers and 96 students in developing and evaluating the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) pilot project. The project integrated mobile phones and text-based web chat in the teaching and learning of Irish. The project evaluation showed that students' competence in Irish had benefited from participation in the project and that their enjoyment in learning Irish was enhanced. Teachers noted the positive shift to more student-centred learning and increased student motivation for using Irish.

The NCCA worked in collaboration with a researcher from St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra on a project entitled GOALL – Guiding Our Assessment of Literacy Learning. The project aimed to determine the practical significance of teachers' employment of Assessment for Learning (AfL) methodologies for children's standardised reading achievement.

The project involved five teachers and 120 pupils in the project school. The project is due for completion in 2008.

*The use of mobile phones, including text messaging, in the teaching of Irish in secondary schools is a novel idea and it seems to be catching on. All the indications are students in a pilot programme enjoy using the new teaching techniques which employ their favourite means of communication.*

**Irish Independent, 12 July**

- *I think using mobile phones to teach teenagers is a good idea because most teenagers are always stuck to their phone and they couldn't live without it!*
- *I spoke more Irish in my sentences on and off the phone and I learned new words*
- *I liked it because it put a lot of fun into learning Irish and I think it was beneficial to me for my Junior Cert.*
- *Before the mobile phone project I wasn't good at pronouncing words or speaking and this made me better*
- *It gave me more practice at home and my teacher could still correct me*
- *It was a new and fun way to learn Irish*

**Second year students participating in the pilot project**

- *It's nice to hear students you wouldn't usually hear too much in class talking on the recordings*
- *It's more interesting and interactive than sitting with a red pen*

**Teacher participating in the pilot project**



**Strategy 3.3** Liaise with the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Science and the State Examinations Commission as important sources of information for curriculum and assessment review and development.

**Completed in 2007**

NCCA staff contributed to induction programmes for newly appointed primary and post-primary inspectors.

**Strategy 3.4** Contribute to the management and work of relevant support services.

**Completed in 2007**

See 3.1 above

**Strategy 3.5** Develop and publish guidelines, including web-based guidelines in support of the implementation of curriculum and assessment change.

**Completed in 2007**

Guidelines for English as an Additional Language and Special Educational Needs were all published online, with the latter using flash paper technology.



# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 4

To continue to provide for the education of all learners to enhance quality of access and participation, and attainment of outcomes for all



## **Strategy 4.1** Develop curriculum, assessment and certification to meet the needs of students with special educational needs.

### **Completed in 2007**

*Exceptionally Able Students: Draft guidelines for Teachers* were published and disseminated to all primary and post-primary schools. Schools also received a short questionnaire to give their comments and/or suggestions on the draft guidelines. Draft guidelines and questionnaire were also available on the NCCA website.

The draft was launched at a joint conference of NCCA and CCEA in Fermanagh in October.

*The guidelines are clear and comprehensive  
The overview is well balanced with many  
practical examples and strategies in dealing  
with the exceptionally able student.*

**Learning Support/Resource Teacher**

*This initiative is most significant.  
Exceptionally able students are the forgotten  
group in schools.*

**Principal of primary school**

*Delighted to see NCCA raising awareness of  
needs of exceptionally able students. A lovely  
production.*

**Principal of post-primary school**

*Class chapters very clearly defined any  
information you require is very accessible and  
to the point.*

**Principal of primary school**

**Responses to questionnaire (2007/2008)**

*After the joint CCEA and NCCA Conference  
in at the Manor House Hotel, Co. Fermanagh,  
CCEA's officer in charge of Special  
Educational Needs, Helen Miskelly, said,  
Working with our colleagues at NCCA has  
been very beneficial in developing this resource  
and we hope to continue this relationship long  
into the future.*

**Ulster Herald, 18th October**

## Strategy 4.2 Support primary and post-primary schools in addressing the needs of students with special educational needs.

### Completed in 2007

Guidelines for teachers of students with general learning disabilities were published and distributed to all primary and post-primary teachers. The guidelines digipack comprised an overview booklet and an interactive CD ROM, providing resources and exemplification for teachers of students with mild, moderate and severe/profound general learning disabilities. A web-based version of the resource was published on the NCCA website.

*The new guidelines are very welcome and are comprehensive and well laid out. Those involved in drafting the documents are to be commended for the obvious thought and hard-work put into these very important documents for schools.*

**Siobhan Allen, Chairperson, Principals of Schools for Students with Moderate Learning Disabilities (letter, 11th December)**

*We were pleased to welcome the digipack containing a CD-Rom and an overview booklet sent to all teachers.*

**Chairperson's address, National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education, Annual General Meeting, 15th November**



**Strategy 4.3** Provide materials for parents of primary school children which provide information about the curriculum, and demonstrate how parents can support the work of the school in implementing the Primary School Curriculum.

#### **Completed in 2007**

Two information leaflets for parents on standardised testing were developed and published on the NCCA website in November, to coincide with the launch of the Assessment Guidelines.

The leaflets were developed to help schools share standardised test scores with parents and to explain what the scores mean. One leaflet focuses on using standard scores while the second leaflet focuses on using STen scores as the basis for reporting to parents. Schools can download the leaflets in English and Irish from the NCCA website.

Twenty parents in two schools were invited to provide feedback to NCCA on the usefulness of the NCCA information leaflets. Teachers used the information leaflets to share the Micra T and Sigma T STen scores for 20 children with their parents in October 2007.

## **Strategy 4.4** Contribute to improved access to, participation in, and outcomes of post-primary education through work on curriculum and assessment for students who disengage from the educational system, and who experience educational disadvantage.

### **Completed in 2007**

Eight schools in disadvantaged areas worked on developing prototype Flexible Learning Profiles for students at risk of dropping out of school. Students were consulted as part of the process.

A consultative group was established to guide the work of the NCCA on the development of a framework for curriculum and assessment provision for children in detention schools, high support units and special care units and on guidelines for its implementation.

A report on a survey of learners and a report on a survey of teachers were completed to inform this work.

A sub-group of education practitioners from children detention schools, high support units and special care units was established to work on the guidelines to accompany the framework.

*Students are treated differently - given more respect, treated more like adults, can express opinions more freely, are given more responsibility.*

**Student comment**

*It's all about respect at the end of the day!*

**Student comment**

*Really enjoyed the discussion around the table, good to hear the views of so many. Fair play for all the work you are all putting in its much appreciated by us in the high support, special care & children detention schools.*

**Liam Rimmer, Principal, St. Canices Special School, Limerick**



## **Strategy 4.5 Promote and support the embedding of intercultural education in the curriculum for primary and post-primary schools.**

### **Completed in 2007**

Following the publication of the award-winning guidelines for primary schools in 2005, *Intercultural Education in the Post-Primary School* was published in Irish and English, in hard copy and on the NCCA website.

Copies of the guidelines were sent to every teacher, to teacher training colleges, and to libraries and other organisations.

*In a time when Ireland is experiencing and enjoying the enrichment new cultures can bring to our communities, homes and classrooms, it is particularly helpful to have the wisdom and experiences of best practise and theory to hand, as presented in the NCCA publication *Intercultural Education in the Post-Primary School... The Guidelines strategically identify the school as an ideal forum in which emerging generations can be encouraged and supported in cultivating an appreciation of the diversity of cultures, while in equal measure the same Guidelines nurture in the students the sense of their own cultural identity. They give true testimony to the seanfhocal – ar scath a cheile, a mhairimid.**  
**Anne Kelleher, CEIST.**

## **Strategy 4.6 Support the needs of teachers and schools working with students for whom English is an additional language.**

### **Completed in 2007**

Following the publication of the draft EAL guidelines online and gathering complementary multimedia resources in the classroom, processing and editing work was completed. Phase one of uploading to ACTION was completed, the second phase of uploading will be completed in 2008.

The online environment for EAL on ACTION was designed.

*This valuable resource [guidelines for teachers of students for whom English is an Additional Language] was prepared by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) to support teachers and schools in developing a more inclusive learning environment and in providing students with knowledge and skills they need to participate in a multicultural world*  
**Minister Mary Hanafin, DES press release, 21 February**

**Strategy 4.7** Support the effective transfer of students at all points from early childhood education to primary school, from primary school to post-primary school, from junior cycle to senior cycle and from post-primary education to further and higher education.

### Completed in 2007

The NCCA published a draft curriculum framework for guidance in post-primary education. Providing support for the development of a comprehensive guidance plan, the framework addresses transitions from primary to post-primary, from junior to post-primary senior cycle and the transition out of post-primary school. The draft was the subject of a consultation process that continued into 2008.

*It guides the student into a focus of the overall life picture. It helps focus on the reality of a balanced life – how the pupils cope with the variety of happenings and stages in life.*

**Deputy Principal**

**Strategy 4.8** Contribute to improved access, transfer and progression for all learners in gaining school-based qualifications.

### Completed in 2007

NCCA collaborated with the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) to produce a paper exploring issues arising in relation to the inclusion of the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate awards in the National Framework of Qualifications.





# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 5

To engage in, commission and review relevant research so that the NCCA's work is informed by best practice in relation to curriculum, assessment and learning, and by emerging understandings and experiences of educational change

**Strategy 5.1** Commission research to support prioritised strategies and actions, and integrate the findings of such research into the work of curriculum review and development.

**Completed in 2007**

Three background papers were commissioned to inform the development of the *Framework for Early Learning*. Setting out some of the theory and research underpinning the Framework, these papers focused on children's early learning and development, education and care, and play as a context for learning and development.

Research into Well-Being in the Post-Primary Curriculum was completed for the NCCA by a team from St. Patrick's College Drumcondra, led by Dr. Maeve O'Brien.

Research into the experiences of students in the third year of post-primary education was completed for the NCCA by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).

*The [play] paper is already proving useful in terms of supporting the College's emphasis on play methods, and, in particular, our requirement that 3rd years conduct an extended play session each day on TP (in the Infant classes). In our engagement with schools, we refer to the provision of the paper on Play as evidence of the growing emphasis – in terms of curriculum implementation – of the provision of play opportunities for all children in the Infant classes.*

**Jacqueline Fallon, Lecturer, Early Childhood Education, Church of Ireland College of Education, Rathmines**



**Strategy 5.2 Participate in national and international research initiatives to inform ongoing curriculum review and development.**

**Completed in 2007**

A research paper was presented to the European Conference on Educational Research in September. Entitled *To embed or bury - the challenge of making an impact on teaching and learning through key skills: a reflective practice approach*, the paper presented initial findings on an action research project that is being undertaken through the NCCA School Network.

**Strategy 5.3 Provide staff with professional development opportunities to support their engagement with current research and relevant research networks.**

**Completed in 2007**

Eight staff participated in SPSS training in February to support their involvement in, and use of, research. Four full-time staff pursued post-graduate studies which included developing research skills.

## **Strategy 5.4** Ensure that research reports and other relevant resource materials are available and accessible.

### **Completed in 2007**

A commentary was completed on the findings of research by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) into the experiences of students in the third year of junior cycle and in transition to senior cycle. The commentary was published online and a summary of the findings was also published in info@ncca.

Specific research needs were identified by project teams and resources ordered/supplied accordingly.

A **ReSources** weblog was designed and developed to provide all staff and Council members with an online portal to education resources, links and journal articles.

40 members of staff (both full and part-time) and 8 members of Council signed up to join the ReSources community.

New and established staff members were instructed in library, internet and database research methods.

A total of 497 new acquisitions were catalogued during 2007, 129 books/reports were borrowed by staff members, 95 journal articles were downloaded, and 55 subject search requests were received.

*Very impressive... so much accessible information available on the one site.*

**Staff member.**

*Great to have a 'one stop site' to give and get information.*

**Education Officer.**

*I've just signed up and am impressed at how so much information is available which would require multiple searches otherwise. I love when people make our electronic lives easier!*

**Council member.**

*It is a super resource for us.*

**Education Officer**



# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 6

To develop structures and processes to improve NCCA's corporate capacity, effectiveness and communications, and to strengthen relationships between the NCCA and its stakeholders

## **Strategy 6.1 Continue to promote a culture of continuing professional learning and development across the organisation.**

### **Completed in 2007**

Staff participated in a range of professional development events to support work across the six Higher Level Objectives. This included attending/presenting papers at national and international conferences, conferences organised by the education partners and conferences related to specific aspects of work.

Staff also participated in skills-based training focusing on presenting, interviewing, using SPSS, Business Process Improvement, finance and accounting.

Staff began designing a Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), and took part in initial training on PMDS.

New staff participated in induction training. All staff attended the annual NCCA Education Officer Conference in March.





**Strategy 6.2 Implement workplace policies and value the contributions of all staff to the running and development of the organisation.**

**Completed in 2007**

The NCCA drew upon its workplace policies over the course of the year, including recruitment and selection, conditions of employment, dignity and respect at work, and employee relations.

**Strategy 6.3 Continue to improve the quality of NCCA enabling committee structures and its consultation processes.**

**Completed in 2007**

*The COMET*, the NCCA's customer service newsletter for committee members, was produced for the first time to assist committee members in engaging with their NCCA work. Appendix 1 of this report contains a full list of committee and working group meetings held in 2007.

**Strategy 6.4 Further develop the NCCA IT environment in line with emerging technologies.**

**Completed in 2007**

A new server and operating system were installed to provide increased processing and storage capacity. This also facilitated more reliable web-based access to NCCA email for full-time staff.

NCCA email addresses, with web-based access, were set up for all part-time Education Officers.

Some desktop and laptop computers were replaced as part of the ongoing upgrading and replacement of hardware and software.

## **Strategy 6.5 Maximise the use of financial and human resources to meet legislative requirements in relation to corporate governance.**

### **Completed in 2007**

A plan of work was formulated for each unit from the strategic plan and key milestones were set. Performance against these milestones were measured and reviewed on a six weekly basis.

NCCA staff members continued to meet the requirements of Towards 2016 agreement. Staff members continued to work on a flexible basis on cross sectoral teams and accommodated atypical working hours and arrangements to the benefit of the organisation. An Executive Officer and an Education Officer were assigned specific responsibility for quality of customer service.

All Council members signed declarations of interest and all new full-time employees signed the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour.

Competitive tendering continued to be the normal procedure in NCCA procurement processes.

The audit committee met on two occasions. Internal audit training was delivered to the members. The Committee approved a strategic audit plan 2007-2009 and three internal audit reports were completed and approved. An implementation plan for recommendations arising from the reports has been put in place. The Comptroller and Auditor General completed an audit of the NCCA Financial Statements for 2006 and commented favourably on the running of the accounts section in NCCA.

All tax laws were complied with. All the legislative requirements in relation to corporate governance were met.

### **Strategy 6.6 Prepare for decentralisation to Portarlington.**

#### **Completed in 2007**

The NCCA has continued to liaise with the OPW and the three other decentralising agencies in relation to the planned development of offices in Portarlington. Separate discussions have also taken place about an advance party move to offices in Portlaoise.

The NCCA's Decentralisation Plan has been updated to reflect staff changes and ongoing planning.

### **Strategy 6.7 Plan for and report annually on NCCA progress.**

#### **Completed in 2007**

The annual report for 2006 was published in hard copy, on CD, and on the NCCA website.

### **Strategy 6.8 Develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy.**

#### **Completed in 2007**

The strategy focused on the NCCA suite of websites, customer service, and info@ncca. Each of these is reported separately.

**Strategy 6.9** Develop *info@ncca* to inform primary and post-primary teachers and early childhood practitioners of the ongoing work of the NCCA, and to support teachers in curriculum implementation.

### Completed in 2007

Editorial content continued to reflect the move towards supporting and illustrating practice in the classroom.

Distribution expanded to include student teachers in third level institutions and to accommodate requests from schools and education professionals for extra copies.

*Thanks for details re info magazine. It is a great resource re: assessment etc.*

**Mary Dunne, PCSP**

*I am writing from CBC in Monkstown. We have just begun looking at our TY programme with a view to evaluating this year and planning for next year so the article on Transition Units is very timely.*

**Principal, CBC Monkstown**

*The newsletter is of great benefit to our school.*

**Noeleen Conboy, Principal, St Brigid's Girls National School, Dublin 20**

*Just a quick word re info@ncca. Having just read the new edition (6) I am struck by what an excellent addition it is to the 'communication of good ideas' agenda for Irish schools. Making something attractive, readable and informative is quite a feat. Well done to you and all responsible for this magazine.*

**Michael O'Leary, SDP**

*This school receives 9 copies of each publication of info@ncca. We have a staff of 13 and we would all like a copy of this worthwhile publication.*

**Principal, Scoil Mhuire na Trocaire, Ardee, Co. Louth**



# Working with other sectors of the education system

## High Level Objectives 3 & 6

In 2007, the executive provided presentations and workshops for colleges of education, parents groups, the inspectorate of the Department of Education and Science and many of the support services and agencies who work directly with teachers and schools. Briefings were also provided for the organisations who participate directly in the work of the Council.

The first table presents a sample of that work which, although directly connected to HLO's 3 and 6, also contributes to the Council's work in the generation of consensus on curriculum and assessment matters. The second table presents details of the conference presentations made by members of the executive in 2007.



GROUP	THEME OF PRESENTATION
PE Physical Activity and Youth Sport Research Forum, University of Limerick	The assessment work of the NCCA
TUI Convenors Seminar, Killeshin Hotel	Assessment in the Senior Cycle developments
School Library Association of Ireland (SLARI) annual conference, Church of Ireland College, Dublin	Current developments in the work of the NCCA
Primary Curriculum Support Programme, Assessment Team, Newbridge, Co. Kildare	Supporting assessment in Primary Schools
Primary Curriculum Support Programme workshops, Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone	English as an additional language: guidelines for teachers
St. Angela's College of Education, Sligo	Senior cycle developments and key skills
St. Angela's College of Education B.Ed. students, Sligo	NCCA and curriculum development
SLSS professional development seminar	Workshop on Intercultural Education
SDPI summer school	NCCA and curriculum development
Church of Ireland College of Education	The work of the NCCA on Special Educational Needs
Consultative Group on Reasonable Accommodations in the State Examinations	Submission by the NCCA to the work of the Consultative Group
PGDE Students in Maynooth	Senior cycle developments and key skills
UBUNTU Network	Key skills
ASTI Education Conference	Key skills
IVEA	Senior cycle review
National Biology Support Service	Senior cycle review
Royal Irish Academy, Physical Sciences Committee	Senior cycle review
Chemical Education Society	Senior cycle review
DES Inspectors	NCCA Curriculum Development – post-primary 2007/2008
Leadership Development for Schools, Cothú Keadeen Hotel, Co.Kildare	A Curriculum Framework for Children Detention Schools, High Support Units and Special Care Units
Leadership Development for Schools, Cothú Keadeen Hotel, Co.Kildare	Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities
Principals of Moderate and Severe/Profound Special Schools, Ashling Hotel, Dublin	Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities – demonstration of CD-Rom
Dublin Institute of Technology BA students, Dublin	The Framework for Early Learning
Dublin City Childcare Committee, Training Network Group, Dublin	The Framework for Early Learning



**SEMINAR/CONFERENCE****PAPER**

Department of Education and Science Inspectorate, Continuing Professional Development Conference, Dublin	<i>Assessment in Primary Schools Framework for ICT in Curriculum and Assessment</i>
Conference of the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Science	<i>The work of the NCCA in Post-Primary Education</i>
Sustainable Development Academy, York University, Toronto	<i>Curriculum and Assessment for Sustainable Development</i>
Intercultural and Global Education Issues for EAL (English as an Additional Language) Educators. Church of Ireland College of Education, Rathmines	<i>English as an additional language: guidelines for teachers</i>
Cultural Diversity in Schools: Challenges and Opportunities for Irish Education. Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown	<i>The Classroom Teacher: a key role in language support. English as an additional language: guidelines for teachers</i>
European Conference on Educational Research (EERA)	<i>To embed or bury - the challenge of making an impact on teaching practice through key skills. A reflective practice approach.</i>
CEIST Annual Conference 2007	<i>Intercultural Education</i>
Computer Education Society of Ireland (CESI) conference, Connect, Create, Integrate, Coláiste de h-Íde, Tallaght	<i>ICT in Curriculum and Assessment: Design and development of the ICT Framework.</i>
Cork Early Years Network Conference, Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa, Cork	<i>The Framework for Early Learning</i>
The Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development's International Conference, Vision into Practice – Making Quality a Reality in the Lives of Young Children, Dublin	<i>Listening for Children's Stories: The NCCA's Portraiture Study</i>
OMEP Conference, Aspects of Childhood, University College, Cork	<i>The NCCA's Portraiture Study – Key Messages</i>
European Early Childhood Education Research Association's (EECERA) 17th International Conference, Vygotsky's Ideas: Crossing Borders, Prague	<i>The Adult's Role in the Framework for Early Learning Poster presentation on Assessment in the Framework for Early Learning Sharing Assessment Information with Parents Using Report Card Templates</i>
Border Counties Childcare Network (BCCN) Conference, Aiming High: Developing World Class Early Years and After School Services, Monaghan	<i>The Framework for Early Learning</i>

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

### Functions of the Council

The detailed functions of the statutory Council under the terms of the Education Act, 1998, can be summarised as follows:

- To periodically review the curriculum, or any part of the curriculum, for schools and the syllabuses taught and to advise the Minister
- To advise the Minister on appropriate methods for the assessment of the effectiveness of the education provided in schools, with particular regard to mechanisms whereby students who have problems achieving their potential may be identified as early as practicable and assisted
- To advise the Minister on strategies which will assist students to make a successful transition from primary school to post-primary school
- To periodically advise the Minister on the standards of knowledge and skills which students at various age-levels should attain and on the mechanisms for assessing the achievement of such standards, having regard to national and international standards and good practice in relation to such assessment
- To periodically review the in-service training needs of teachers, including needs arising from the introduction of new curricula, subjects or syllabuses in schools, and to advise the Minister in relation to those needs
- To advise the Minister on the requirements, as regards curriculum and syllabuses, of students with a disability or other special educational needs
- To advise the Minister on strategies which have as their objective the enhancement of the effectiveness in the teaching and use of the Irish language in schools
- To maintain, manage, administer and invest all the money and assets of the Council
- To promote research and development in education and to conduct or commission such research and development where appropriate to its objects and functions
- To promote equality of access to education generally and to instruction in any particular subjects between male and female students
- To accept gifts of money, land or other property upon such trusts and conditions, if any, as may be specified by the donors
- To do all such acts and things as may be necessary to further the objects of the Council, including such functions in relation to review and reform of the curriculum in schools and the assessment of the outcomes of the education provided in schools as the Minister shall from time to time direct.

## APPENDIX 2

### NCCA Staff

The full-time staff in 2007 was as follows:

#### Chief Executive

- Dr. Anne Looney

#### Deputy Chief Executives

- Dr. Sarah FitzPatrick
- John Hammond

#### Directors, Curriculum and Assessment

- Arlene Forster
- Peter Johnson
- Bill Lynch
- Hal O'Neill (from 16 July)
- Majella O'Shea
- Hilary Roche (to 31 August)<sup>1</sup>

#### Administration

- Paul Brady, Assistant Principal
- Brian Holland, Higher Executive Officer (to 9 February)
- Denise Harris, Higher Executive Officer (from 21 May)
- Jackie O'Brien, Higher Executive Officer
- Morgan Lockhart, Executive Officer
- Patricia Cassidy, Clerical Officer
- Arlene Foy, Clerical Officer (to 16 February)
- Jason Keogh, Clerical Officer (to 29 June)
- Bernie Gallagher, Clerical Officer (from 5 June)
- Ursula Corcoran, Clerical Officer (from 17 September)
- John Connors, Services Officer
- Maureen Whyte, Services Officer (to 23 March)
- Roy McMullen, Services Officer (from 20 March)
- Ultan Macken, Temporary Clerical Officer
- Ciarán Howley, Temporary Clerical Officer (to 20 April)
- Angela Farrell, Temporary Clerical Officer (from 28 May)
- Breda Dunne, Temporary Clerical Officer (from 25 June)
- Christine Ryan, Resources Co-ordinator

#### Education Officers

- Majella Dempsey
- Susan Dennison
- John Halbert
- Katrina Keogh
- Anne Moloney (to 31 August)
- Dr. Pat Naughton (to 31 August)
- Róisín Ní Shéaghda
- Pierce Nolan
- Cliona O'Keeffe (from 1 September)
- Mary O'Leary (to 31 August)
- Hal O'Neill (to 15 July)
- Eilis O'Sullivan
- Janet Rooney (from 12 November)
- Anna Walshe

<sup>1</sup>. Hilary Roche was seconded to Froebel College of Education, Dublin from 1 September, 2007





### **NCCA Staff (continued)**

The following Education Officers were retained by the NCCA on a part-time or occasional basis:

#### **Early Childhood Education**

- Dr. Mary Daly
- Dr. Rosaleen Murphy
- Avril Sweeney

#### **Primary Education**

- Karin Bacon, Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE): Geography
- Paul Brennan, Arts Education: Drama
- Dr. Lorraine Harbison, Assessment
- Frances Murphy, Physical Education
- Regina Murphy, Arts Education: Music
- Geraldine O'Connor, Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE): History
- Valerie O'Dowd, Mathematics

#### **Post-Primary Education**

- Gwen Baker, Inclusion
- Colette Brophy, Home Economics
- Vivian Cassells, Guidance
- Cahil Doherty, Technical Graphics/Technical Drawing
- John Dredge, History
- Brendan Duane, Chemistry
- Brian Farley, Classics
- Ger Halbert, Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE)
- Michael Halton, Physics/ Chemistry (combined)
- Annette Honan, Religious Education, Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), Interculturalism
- Paddy Keays, Technology
- Brid Kennedy, Special Educational Needs
- Pat Lynch, Engineering

- John McCarthy, Modern Languages
- Frank McGourty, Agricultural Science
- Celine McGuinness, Business
- Sr. Enda McMullen, Art
- Deirdre Matthews, Leaving Certificate Applied
- Kevin Maume, Biology
- John Mulcahy, Geography
- Tom Nelson, Leaving Certificate Applied
- Declan O'Neill, English
- Noel O' Neill, Construction Studies/Architectural Technology
- Diarmaid Ó Murchú, Gaeilge
- Peter Tiernan, Mathematics
- Dr. Roland Tormey, Social and Political Education
- Pat Younger, Economics

## APPENDIX 3

### List of Committee Meetings 2007

COMMITTEE NAME	TOTAL
<b>Early Childhood and Primary</b>	
Early Childhood Committee	4
Early Childhood and Primary Committee	6
Language Committee, Primary	4
Working Group on Assessment, Primary	4
<b>Junior Cycle</b>	
Junior Cycle Review Committee	5
Junior Cycle CSPE	5
Junior Cycle Geography	2
Junior Cycle Home Economics	1
Junior Cycle History	2
Junior Cycle Maths	5
Junior Cycle Science	1
Junior Cycle Jewish Studies	4
<b>CROSS SECTOR</b>	
ICT Steering Committee	3
Special Education Steering Committee	3
Detention Schools High Support Units Committee	3
Short Course Committee	5
Transition Unit Committee	5

COMMITTEE NAME	TOTAL
<b>Senior Cycle</b>	
Senior Cycle Review Committee	7
Senior Cycle Applied Maths	2
Senior Cycle Art	3
Senior Cycle Biology	5
Senior Cycle Chemistry	7
Senior Cycle Construction Studies	1
Senior Cycle Committee on Guidance	1
Senior Cycle Engineering	1
Senior Cycle English	4
Senior Cycle French	1
Senior Cycle Gaelige	2
Senior Cycle German	1
Senior Cycle Italian	1
Senior Cycle Maths	5
Senior Cycle Physical Education	3
Senior Cycle Physics	6
Senior Cycle Spanish	1
Senior Cycle SPHE	3
Senior Cycle Technical Drawing	2
Senior Cycle Technology	2
<b>BOARDS OF STUDIES</b>	
Board of Studies for Arts and Humanities	7
Board of Studies for Classics	4
Board of Studies for Languages	3
Board of Studies for Maths	4
Board of Studies for Science	5
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS IN 2007</b>	<b>143</b>



## APPENDIX 4

### Extracts from the Financial Statements of the NCCA for the year ended 31 December 2007

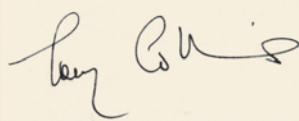
Bank: Bank of Ireland  
Lr. Baggot Street  
P.O. Box 3131  
Dublin 2

Accountants: Crowleys DFK  
16/17 College Green  
Dublin 2

Introduction: In accordance with my obligations under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies I confirm that in respect of the financial year 2007:

- all appropriate procedures for internal audit (as set out in Appendix A, section 4 of the Code) have been complied with
- the procurement procedures as set out in the Code were complied with
- no asset disposals or access to assets by third parties have taken place
- the NCCA had no capital expenditure proposals
- Government policy on the pay of Chief Executives and all NCCA employees has been complied with
- no directors fees were paid to Council members
- the NCCA has complied with its obligations under tax laws.

On behalf of Council



**Dr. Tom Collins**  
*Chairperson*

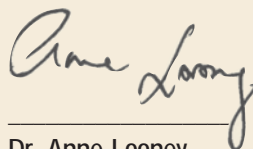
15 August, 2008

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2007**

	Notes	2007 €	2006 €
<b>Income</b>			
Department of Education and Science grants and other income	1 & 1a	3,941,714	4,662,378
Transfer to/(from) capital account	6	23,705	13,922
		<u>3,966,419</u>	<u>4,676,300</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff Costs	2	3,166,995	2,515,129
Administration	7	2,023,527	1,953,500
		<u>5,190,522</u>	<u>4,468,629</u>
<b>(Deficit) / Surplus for the year</b>		<b>(1,225,103)</b>	<b>207,671</b>
Accumulated Surplus at 31 December		<u>1,050,606</u>	<u>842,935</u>
		<u>(174,497)</u>	<u>1,050,606</u>

The Council had no gains or losses in the financial years other than those dealt with in the income and expenditure account.

On behalf of Council



**Dr. Anne Looney**  
Chief Executive

15 August, 2008



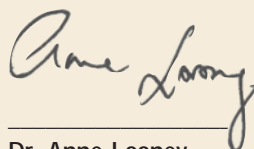
**Dr. Tom Collins**  
Chairperson



**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2007**

	Notes	2007 €	2006 €
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	3	71,630	95,335
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash at Bank		26,173	1,210,324
Debtors	4	37,606	39,979
		<u>63,779</u>	<u>1,250,303</u>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Creditors & Accruals	5	<u>236,086</u>	<u>199,697</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u>(172,307)</u>	<u>1,050,606</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<u>(100,677)</u>	<u>1,145,941</u>
<b>Financed By:</b>			
Capital Account	6	71,630	95,335
Income and Expenditure Account		<u>(174,497)</u>	<u>1,050,606</u>
		<u>(102,867)</u>	<u>1,145,941</u>

On behalf of Council



**Dr. Anne Looney**  
Chief Executive



**Dr. Tom Collins**  
Chairperson

15 August, 2008



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2007

	2007	2006
	€	€
<b>1 Income</b>		
<b>Department of Education and Science (DES) grants</b>	<b>3,939,123</b>	<b>4,574,288</b>
Included in the above are the following grants:		
• Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (ITÉ) staff redeployed	-	68,288
• Research grant from gender and equality unit	91,123	106,000
<b>1a Other Income</b>	<b>2,591</b>	<b>88,090</b>
Included in the above are the following grants:		
• Health and Safety Authority: Grant for curriculum probe	-	15,000
• Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	-	20,000
• CIDREE Project	-	2,620
• AEA Europe	-	2,470
• Foras na Gaeilge	-	48,000
• Deposit interest	2,591	-
<b>2 Staff Costs</b>		
The staff costs of the council comprises		
• Salaries and wages	2,657,616	2,147,869
• Travel and subsistence	340,730	260,733
• Recruitment advertising	46,320	35,898
• Staff development, health and safety expenses	122,329	70,629
	<b>3,166,995</b>	<b>2,515,129</b>

The average number of persons employed by the Council during the period was 36 (37 in 2006).



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2007

	Office F&F €	Office Equip €	IT Equip €	Total €
<b>3 Fixed Assets</b>				
<b>Cost</b>				
1 January 2007	62,774	77,254	206,071	346,099
Additions	-	-	7,390	7,390
As at 31 December 2007	<b>62,774</b>	<b>77,254</b>	<b>213,461</b>	<b>353,489</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
1 January 2007	25,512	53,098	172,154	250,764
Charge for the period	6,277	10,629	14,189	31,095
As at 31 December 2007	<b>31,789</b>	<b>63,727</b>	<b>186,343</b>	<b>281,859</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>				
At 31 December 2007	<b>30,985</b>	<b>13,527</b>	<b>27,118</b>	<b>71,630</b>
At 31 December 2006	37,262	24,156	33,917	95,335
<b>4 Debtors and Prepayments</b>				
			<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
			€	€
Prepayments			37,606	39,979
			<b>37,606</b>	<b>39,979</b>
<b>5 Creditors and Accruals</b>				
Trade creditors			164,151	83,664
Other creditors			6,443	39,412
Accruals			66,492	76,621
			<b>236,080</b>	<b>199,697</b>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2007

	2007 €	2007 €	2006 €	2006 €
<b>6 Capital Account</b>				
Balance at 1 January 2007		95,335		109,257
Transfer (to)/from income and expenditure account				
Funds allocated to acquire fixed assets	7,390		74,023	
Amortisation in line with depreciation	(31,095)	(23,705)	(87,945)	(13,922)
Balance at 31 December 2007		71,630		95,335

<b>7 Expenditure</b>	2007 €	2006 €
<b>Administration Costs</b>		
Rent rates, security and storage	339,594	345,548
Office equipment and repairs and maintenance	46,875	57,954
Telephone, postage, stationery etc.	173,629	142,995
Room hire and catering	56,143	70,878
Accountancy	16,307	13,461
Audit	19,660	19,992
Bank charges	453	394
Information technology	161,111	72,663
General advertising	22,588	6,586
Reference books, documents and subscriptions	19,021	14,209
Light and heat	20,012	13,359
Cleaning	48,300	40,066
Conference expenses	17,933	13,959
Special projects including development of guidelines for schools on Intercultural education and the production of an information DVD for parents	50,920	373,015
Publications	655,678	469,378
Research fees	343,938	211,098
Depreciation	31,095	87,945
	<b>2,023,527</b>	<b>1,953,500</b>



## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2007

### 8 Council Members Interests

The Council adopted procedures in accordance with guidelines issued by the Department of Finance in relation to the disclosure of interests by Council members and these procedures have been adhered to in the year. There were no transactions in the year in relation to the Council's activities in which Council members had any beneficial interest.

### 9 Operating Lease

The Office of Public Works holds a 25 year tenancy agreement from 13 August, 1998 in respect of the lease of NCCA office accommodation at 24 Merrion Square. The annual rent is €235,300 subject to a 5 year rent review.

The Office of Public Works also holds a tenancy agreement for 4 years and 9 months from 16 January, 2007 in respect of the lease of NCCA office accommodation at 24A Merrion Square (The Mews). The annual rent is €68,210.

### 10 Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments at 31 December 2007.

### 11 Contingent Liabilities

No contingent liabilities existed at 31 December 2007.

### 12 Approval of Financial Statements

The financial statements were approved by the Council on 12 March, 2008.











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