



Project Officer for Digital Content (permanent)

Professional Development Service for Teachers (Technology in Education)

Job Description and General Notes

Introduction

The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) is a cross-sectoral support service under the remit of the Teacher Education Section (TES) of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) which offers professional development support to primary and post-primary teachers and school leaders. The work of the PDST contributes to school improvement by providing high quality continuing Professional Development (CPD) on curricular and educational issues, fostering reflective practice and ongoing development among teachers and school leaders. PDST operates under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills and is managed out of Dublin West Education Centre.

PDST Technology in Education (PDST – TIE) is part of PDST and its offices are based in the Dublin City University (DCU) campus in Glasnevin. It promotes and supports the integration of digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment in primary and post-primary schools. Its remit includes the Scoilnet and Webwise initiatives, the design and delivery of online courses and resources for teachers in the area of digital technologies, the provision of digital technology infrastructure advice and support to schools as well as managing the national school's broadband initiative.

Scoilnet is the Department of Education and Skills (DES) official portal for Irish education. Originally launched in 1998, the website is managed by [PDST Technology in Education](#) on behalf of the DES. Scoilnet collaborates with practising teachers to maintain and manage the content on the website.

Scoilnet is both a *repository* and *referatory* of 20,000+ resources aligned with the Primary and Post-Primary curricula. Since May 2014 it has expanded its functionality to allow for registered users to upload and share their own resources. This is in line with international trends and the fact that Irish teachers are looking for online spaces to share resources peer to peer.

The Scoilnet initiative actively promotes the integration of digital technologies in teaching and learning and, as a result, the Scoilnet team has been involved in developing a number of independent websites with specific relevance to the Irish curriculum. This has been done in conjunction with professional development and curriculum support services, and other relevant organisations.

The Scoilnet.ie website is the flagship of the Scoilnet initiative. There are a number of other educationally-relevant services provided under the Scoilnet brand. These services include:

- A framework of digital reference content for schools, i.e., content that has been licensed or made available to schools within the Schools Broadband Network, e.g., World Book Online, Irish Times Digital Archive, Irish Newspaper Archive, Dictionary of Irish Biography and JSTOR Ireland Collection;
- Scoilnet websites, i.e., a range of independent websites produced and managed by Scoilnet that focus on specific curriculum subjects;
- Scoilnet accounts, i.e., one single account for teachers that can be used to access all Scoilnet services as well as some external services; and
- Scoilnet webhosting/blogs, i.e., a managed service for schools wishing to create or host a school website.

The Project Officer Role

The post holder is responsible for sourcing and management of quality digital content for Scoilnet, the official portal for primary and post-primary schools at www.scoilnet.ie, along with a number of sub-sites. As part of the digital content team, the post holder will manage multiple teachers, acting as subject editors, who will also be sourcing appropriate digital content aligned with curriculum/syllabus needs. As part of the Scoilnet team, s/he will play a role in developing the vision and supporting the realisation of same for Scoilnet and associated sites generally, with particular reference to the use of digital content in schools in line with the *Digital Strategy for Schools (Enhancing Teaching, Learning & Assessment) 2015-2020* launched on the 7th of October 2015 and future DES policies or policy statements.

The Project Officer will report directly to the National Co-ordinator for Digital Content and work closely with other National Coordinators in PDST Technology in Education (CPD Design and Delivery and Technology Integration). S/he will also work closely with other PDST team leaders in order to remain current with developments in all PDST priority areas, which will, in turn, inform work in relation to digital content and ICT generally, ensuring that key areas of emphasis are supported by Scoilnet and associated sites.

S/he will be employed on a full-time, permanent basis to PDST TIE, will be a member of a public sector pension scheme and shall be located in the offices of PDST Technology in Education, DCU, Glasnevin, Dublin 9.

Prospective applicants should note that while the current vacancy is primarily assigned to the Digital Content team, all Project Officers can be assigned to other initiatives within PDST Technology in Education, should different priorities emerge in the future.

Job Description

Reporting to the National Co-ordinator, a Project Officer will be expected to provide full administrative support on key initiatives of the Digital Strategy for Schools. This includes pedagogical, research or technical support as well as project management and communication support.

Main Responsibilities and Duties will include:

- Contributing to the ongoing development and maintenance of Scoilnet content, with particular emphasis on the content for primary level. The role includes coordinating the work of temporary contractors when the need arises to support different sections of the site and collaborations with other agencies and organisations to generate curriculum and other material for the Scoilnet and associated digital content websites.
- Promoting the use of Scoilnet and associated websites, and the use of the internet for education generally through regular communications to schools, projects, media and conferences.
- Monitoring and promoting the use of content procured through the Digital Reference Content framework and securing the provision of new digital content required by schools.
- Collaborating on the delivery of Scoilnet- associated projects (e.g., Arts in Education <http://artsineducation.ie/en/home/>) to demonstrate the use of digital content in schools for teaching and learning.
- Representing Scoilnet/PDST Technology in Education on external committees, including national and European networks as the need arises.
- Contributing to PDST TIE strategic work plans in line with the Digital Strategy for Schools, with particular reference to actions regarding the use of digital content in schools.
- Providing full administrative support to the National Co-ordinator with responsibility for the initiative.
- Participating in the selection, training and performance appraisal process of project resources, including temporary contract staff as required
- Assisting in the implementation of monitoring and evaluation processes at an operational level.
- Contributing to the effective communication of the work of Scoilnet/the initiative including through newsletters and social media platforms.
- Briefing other PDST staff on key developments and overall progress of the various initiatives at an operational level.

The project officer will carry out any other duties as may be defined by their National Co-ordinator and/or Deputy Director for Digital Technologies in consultation with the post holder.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Applicants should have the following qualifications, experience and competencies:

- a relevant third level qualification (at least level 7)
- Thorough knowledge of digital technologies and their application in primary level education
- Demonstrable understanding of the Irish Educational system
- Knowledge of and or/experience in the use of digital content relevant for primary level

- Demonstrable experience and skills in project management, and ability to work to and produce key deliverables within specified deadlines
- Strong presentation, communication, facilitation and interpersonal skills
- Excellent writing, proof-reading and editing skills
- Administrative skills
- Ability to undertake an innovative, creative and challenging role
- Capable of working effectively within a team environment and on a proactive and self-starting basis
- Flexibility to meet the needs of the organisation, including a willingness to travel for work and/or approved work-related events and a willingness to work additional hours outside of core hours as may be required on occasion.

Desirable

It would be particularly advantageous for candidates for this post to have:

- Thorough knowledge of the primary curriculum and/or two years or more teaching experience at primary level
- A high level of competency in, and ability to work through, the Irish language
- Experience working on digital content projects - especially digital content projects for education
- Experience in the development of online educational resources
- Experience using graphic design software

Although it would be advantageous for an applicant to have the above skills/experience these will be used as guidelines only. The above will be taken into account in terms of overall suitability for the role. Proficiency in the above will not automatically rank an applicant as more suitable for the role.

Other Eligibility Criteria

Citizenship Requirement:

Applicants should note that eligibility to compete is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

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 debarred from applying 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, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public

Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.

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. Thereafter the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-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) and the Minister's consent will have to be secured prior to employment by any public service body.

Declaration:

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a Public Service scheme of incentivised early retirement and/or the collective agreement outlined above. 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.

Principal Terms and Conditions

Tenure

The appointment is to an established post in the Public Service and is subject to the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the Public Service. The successful candidate will be required to serve a 12-month probationary period.

Location

The successful candidate will be employed by Dublin West Education Centre and will be based in the PDST-TIE Education offices in the Invent Building, Dublin City University, Glasnevin, Dublin 9 however, this may change as the needs of the organisation may change from time to time.

Salary

The Standard Salary Scale (rates effective from 1 January 2010) for the position will apply and are as follows:

€52,933, €55,088, €57,246, €59,403, €61,563

This rate will apply where the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6th April 1995 or is newly recruited to the Civil Service and is required to make a personal pension contribution.

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 with current Government Policy.

Annual leave

Annual Leave entitlement will be 24 working days per year, exclusive of Public Holidays. This allowance, which is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave, is on the basis of a five day week.

Hours of Work

The normal hours of work will be 37 hours net per week, from 9.00 am until 5.30 pm, Monday to Thursday, and 9.15 am until 5.15 pm on Friday. There is a one-hour unpaid break for lunch to be taken as appropriate. However, the successful candidate will be required to be flexible with working hours in order to carry out the duties of the position and to meet the needs of the organisation. The successful candidate may be required to work additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties subject to the limits set down in the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997. Successful candidates will also be expected to engage in travel, evening and weekend work where necessary.

Candidates should note that hours of attendance may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government policy.

Superannuation and Retirement

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the Civil/Public Service, at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, and except for candidates who have worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment (see paragraph d below), this means being offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"). Key provisions attaching to membership of the Single Scheme are as follows:

a. Pensionable Age

The minimum age at which pension is payable is 66 (although subject to revision) in line with State Pension age changes.

b. Retirement Age

Scheme members must retire at the age of 70.

c. Pension Abatement

- If the successful candidate was previously employed in the Civil Service and is in receipt of a pension from the Civil Service normal abatement rules will apply. However, if the successful candidate was previously employed in the Civil Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER) or the Department of Health Circular 7/2010 VER/VRS which, as indicated above, renders a

person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements will however, be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the successful candidate for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the successful candidate may be eligible.

- If the successful candidate was previously employed in the Civil Service or in the Public Service please note that the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 includes a provision which extends abatement of pension for all Civil and Public Servants who are re-employed where a Public Service pension is in payment. This provision to apply abatement across the wider public service came into effect on 1 November 2012. **This may have pension implications for any person appointed to this position who is currently in receipt of a Civil or Public Service pension or has a preserved Civil or Public Service pension which will come into payment during his/her employment in this position.**

- **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 that where an individual has retired from a Civil/Public Service body on the grounds of ill-health his/her pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement within the pension scheme of that employment.

d. Prior Public Servants

While the default pension terms, as set out in the preceding paragraphs, consist of Single Scheme membership, this may not apply to certain successful candidates. Full details of the conditions governing whether or not a public servant is a Single Scheme member are given in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012. However the key exception case (in the context of this competition and generally) is that **a successful candidate who has worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) capacity in the public service within 26 weeks of taking up appointment, would in general not become a member of the Single Scheme**. In this case such a candidate would instead be offered membership of the PDST-TIE (NCTE) scheme. This would mean that the abatement provisions at (c) above would apply, and in addition there are implications in respect of pension accrual as outlined below:

e. 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 existing public service pension scheme would apply. This 40-year limit, which is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012 came into effect on 28 July 2012. **This may have implications for any successful candidate who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.**

f. Pension-Related Deduction

This appointment is subject to the pension-related deduction in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measure in the Public Interest Act 2009.

For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme for Public Servants please see the following website: <http://www.per.gov.ie/pensions>.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The above 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(s).

Competition Guidelines and General Application Notes

Competition

- Any offer of appointment will only be made where it is considered that a suitable candidate for the post exists.
- The appointment is subject to the sanction of the Minister for Education and Skills. No definitive offer of appointment can be made before a sanction is given.
- The successful candidate will be appointed as soon as possible.
- Health, sick leave, references and general work record must be satisfactory.
- The contract will provide for a probationary period and on-going performance review.

Selection Procedure

- Applications should be made by submission of a completed application form. This should be submitted in **electronic format to recruitmentie@pdst.ie by 4.00pm Monday 30 March 2020. All enquiries by Friday 20 March at 4.00pm**
- Late applications will not be considered.
- A selection committee will be established to carry out all aspects of the selection process.
- Applicants should note that shortlisting may apply.
- While an applicant may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition and may indeed exceed same, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, it may be decided that a certain number only will be called to interview. In this respect, there will be a shortlisting 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 applicants are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some applicants who are, prima facie, better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is therefore in the applicant's own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of their qualifications/ experience on the application form.

- The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend for interview, is not to be taken as implying that such person fulfils the requirements of the position and/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 applicants to note that the onus is on them to ensure that they meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview.
- Selection of candidates for appointment shall be by means of a competitive interview.
- It is the responsibility of the candidates to make themselves available for interview if invited to attend. Candidates should note that it may not be possible to provide an alternative date.
- Those called for interview will be asked to make a 5-minute presentation to the interview panel focusing on the applicant's vision for the position and the contribution they could make to the development of PDST TIE and the broader PDST.
- This interview will be competency-based in line with the skills outlined in the job description/Application Form.
- Following shortlisting and interview, a panel may be formed from which successful candidates will be appointed to other subsequent positions within the Digital Content team in PDST- TIE which may arise during the year. Candidates whose names are on a panel and who satisfy the PDST that they possess the qualifications declared for the post and that they are otherwise suitable for appointment may within the life of the panel be appointed as appropriate vacancies arise. The life of the panel will not be more than one year from the latest date for receipt of applications. Any such placing on a panel will be subject to compliance with requirements as outlined in a letter of offer.
- Canvassing directly or indirectly will disqualify applications.

Enquiries

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment PDST will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary e.g. employer references, 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.

Specific candidate criteria

In addition to fulfilling the eligibility criteria set out, candidates must:

- Have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned;
- Be suitable on the grounds of health & 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; and
 - Are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position.
 - Comply with any pre-employment requirements.

Non-Refund of Expenses

Any expenses incurred by candidates whilst undertaking or attending any elements of the selection process will not be refunded.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required, or do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as required in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Appointments from panels

It is envisaged that a panel(s) of qualified individuals will be established from which vacancies may be filled. Qualification and placement on a panel is **not** a guarantee of appointment to a position. Please note that once an offer of appointment has been accepted a candidate will no longer remain on the panel.

Declining an offer of appointment

Should the person recommended for appointment decline or having accepted it, relinquish it, Dublin West Education Centre may at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003, and any security clearance and/or enquiries, all aspects of the proceedings, to the extent that they are managed by Dublin West Education Centre are treated in strict confidence and are not disclosed to anyone outside those directly involved in the selection process.

Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

When your application is received, Dublin West Education Centre creates a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003.

Dublin West Education Centre is an equal opportunities employer.