



Appointments to the Board of the Educational Research Centre

Closing Date: Midnight on Friday 13th November 2015

**State Boards Division
Public Appointments Service
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stateboards.ie operates under the auspices of the Public Appointments Service and is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Public Appointments Service (PAS), established under statute in 2004, provides an independent shared service in recruitment, assessment and selection to organisations across the Civil and Public Services. On 30 September 2014, the Government decided that the PAS should also be given responsibility for putting in place an open, accessible, rigorous and transparent system to support Ministers in making appointments to State Boards. Our dedicated website, www.stateboards.ie, is the channel through which the PAS advertises vacancies on State Boards. It is also the means through which accomplished, experienced and qualified people, including people who might not previously have been identified as available for appointment, can then apply to be considered for particular vacancies.

Membership of State Boards

High standards of corporate governance in all State Agencies, whether in the commercial or non-commercial sphere, are critical to ensuring a positive contribution to the State's overall social and economic development.

Members of State Boards are appointed to act on behalf of the citizen to oversee the running of the affairs of state bodies. State bodies must serve the interests of the taxpayer, pursue value for money in their endeavours (including managing risk appropriately), and act transparently as public entities. Members of State Boards, and the relevant management team, are accountable for the proper management of the organisation.

Board members should act on a fully informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the State body, subject to the objectives set by Government.

The [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies](#) provides a framework for the application of best practice in corporate governance by both commercial and non-commercial State bodies.

In order to be an effective contributor on a State Board it is recommended that members should:

- bring independent and objective scrutiny to the oversight of the organisation;
- be prepared to be challenging when necessary while being supportive to the delivery of organisational strategy and objectives;
- be equipped to offer considered advice on the basis of sound judgement and experience;
- be prepared to make a time commitment to their work commensurate with their role.

Appointments to the Board of the Educational Research Centre

Location:	Meetings will be held in Dublin. Teleconferencing will be available for members unable to attend occasionally in person.
Number of Vacancies:	5 (3 Ordinary Members, 1 Deputy Chairperson & 1 Chairperson).
Remuneration:	Nil but travelling and subsistence allowances, in accordance with public service guidelines, may be paid in respect of journeys undertaken to attend meetings of the Centre or to transact its business.
Time Requirements:	Approximately 6 meetings per annum.

1. Background

The Educational Research Centre (ERC) at Drumcondra was founded on the initiative of the Department of Education and St Patrick's College in the 1960s. Since its foundation, the ERC has been an internationally recognised centre of excellence in research, assessment and evaluation in education.

The Centre carries out independent research on many aspects of education and at all levels of the system. This includes the conduct of national and international assessments of attainment and achievement, including PISA, the evaluation of initiatives and programmes (e.g. DEIS) and critical analysis of issues in education. A significant part of the work of the Centre is the development of standardised tests and other assessment instruments which are made available to schools through the Centre's Test Department. While a significant amount of the research and development work of the Centre is done on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills, work is also undertaken for other agencies or is initiated within the Centre.

In view of the key national strategic role of the Centre, the Government decided on 1st July 2014 to formally establish the ERC as an agency under [section 54 of the Education Act, 1998](#). Following the required consultation with relevant parties and approval from the Houses of the Oireachtas and the Government, the Minister made [an order](#) to formally establish the Education Research Centre as an agency on 9th September 2015.

The objects and functions of the Educational Research Centre are defined in sections 7 to 9 of the establishment order. Further information on the work of the Centre can be found at www.erc.ie

2. Functions of the Board

The board is responsible for the governance of the Centre. This includes overseeing the planning of the Centre's work, the submission of annual plans and reports to the Minister, the appointment and management of staff, including the Chief Executive, the expenditure of the Centre and the general supervision of the activities of the Centre. Full details of the board's responsibilities are set out in the Establishment Order for the Centre in paragraphs [30, 31, 40, 42, 45, 51, 52 and 53](#).

3. Person Specification

The Government, on the nomination of the Minister, shall appoint five board members to the Centre and shall designate one member of the Centre as chairperson and one member of the Centre as deputy chairperson.

Expressions of interest are now invited from members of the public who consider that they possess the judgement, skills, knowledge and experience to become a member of the Board of the ERC.

Chairperson/ Deputy Chairperson

In addition to meeting the requirements for ordinary membership, candidates for chairperson/deputy chairperson must have professional experience which demonstrates:

- a. Senior experience of corporate governance and compliance and
- b. Detailed understanding of the kinds of issues and challenges which educational research and evaluation can address.

Ordinary Members

Candidates must have professional experience which demonstrates:

- a. Extensive knowledge of the Irish education system and an awareness and understanding of issues and challenges facing that system which educational research and evaluation can address
- b. Extensive experience of a variety of types of educational research and evaluation especially large-scale national and international surveys and Programme Evaluations
- c. Experience of test development
- d. Experience of providing assessment type services to schools

In addition to the above, candidates must demonstrate experience in **at least two** of the following:

- e. A knowledge of Irish
- f. Experience of corporate governance and compliance
- g. Experience of board membership
- h. Legal expertise
- i. Financial expertise

In addition to the above, **all** applicants for appointment should also possess:

- Excellent communication skills
- Proven ability to critically analyse information
- A strong sense of ethics and integrity
- The ability to bring independent and objective scrutiny to the oversight of an organisation such as the ERC
- The ability to work effectively and cohesively as a member of a team
- High levels of resilience and judgement in responding to emerging issues in this time-bound national service

Appointments to the board of the ERC shall be made with due regard to best practice in terms of gender balance requirements.

4. Term of Appointment

Board members are appointed for a period not exceeding five years. Full details regarding the term of appointment of the members of board are outlined in [paragraphs 15 to 23](#) of the Establishment Order and include:

- The membership of any member of the Board may be terminated by the Minister at any time, on the basis of reasons to be stated by the Minister.
- A member of the Board may resign his or her membership of the Board by notice in writing sent or given to the Minister, and the resignation shall take effect on the day on which the Minister receives the notice.
- Members of the Board shall, subject to the provisions of this Schedule, hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Minister may, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, from time to time determine.
- The roles and responsibilities of Board Members are described in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2009 which is available on the website of the Department of Finance ([Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies](#)).
- A board member shall cease to be a member of the board if he or she is nominated as a member of Seanad Éireann, is elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas or as a representative in the European Parliament, elected to the European Parliament, or becomes a member of a local authority.

5. Submitting your expression of interest

If you are interested in these positions, please review the self-assessment questionnaire which can be found on www.stateboards.ie. Please note that the questionnaire is designed to help you in considering whether to submit an expression of interest - you are not required to submit the questionnaire as part of the application process.

Having considered the general suitability criteria for membership of a State Board, you should consider carefully how your background and experience fits with the specific appointment criteria set out in Section 3 - Person Specification in this booklet.

If you decide that you wish to be considered for appointment, we welcome you submitting your expression of interest via the following link www.stateboards.ie together with your detailed Curriculum Vitae and a cover letter (see Appendix 1 of this booklet for help with the online process).

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please take care when submitting your expression of interest. As the Assessment Panel will generally make its recommendation(s) based on consideration of the documentation which you submit, it is most important that you do the following:

- 1. Ensure your Cover Letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Board position(s) specified in this booklet, and*
- 2. That you fully answer any supplementary questions which are presented to you as part of our online application process.*

This will help ensure that the Assessment Panel is as informed as possible as to the basis for your candidature and why you believe you are a person who could potentially be appointed to this State Board.

6. Assessment Process

An Assessment Panel (the "Panel") will be convened by PAS to consider and assess the expressions of interest received by the PAS via www.stateboards.ie. The Panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role;
- assess potential appointees further, once they meet the specified appointment criteria, by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
 - Consideration of the written applications; and/or
 - Meeting/conference call; and/or
 - Referee checks;
 - Any other selection method deemed appropriate.
- compile a list of people deemed suitable for appointment which will then be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please email info@stateboards.ie.

7. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

For further information on Data Protection please follow the [link](#)

The Public Appointments Service thanks you for your interest in State Board appointments

APPENDIX 1

Submitting your expression of interest

In order to submit your application, you should take the following steps:

- i. Go to www.stateboards.ie.
- ii. On the bar at the top of the page click on "Available Appointments".
- iii. This brings you to a page with all our advertised vacancies. Select whichever position you would like to apply for (you are welcome to apply for more than one position if you wish).
- iv. On the relevant page please click on the "apply for position" button at the bottom of the page
- v. This will bring you to a page on www.publicjobs.ie and, if you already have a publicjobs.ie account, will prompt you for your username and password. If you do not have an account you will be asked to create one.
- vi. Once you input your details you will be brought to a page where there is a prompt in the middle of the page which says "apply here". Click on the link to the online application form beside it.
- vii. A form will appear on your screen, some of the text boxes will be populated with information from your publicjobs.ie profile (Name, address etc.). You will need to complete the rest of the fields and enter your name and the date at the bottom of the form. Click on "continue".
- viii. You will then be brought to a screen where you should upload your CV and Cover Letter. These are required documents and your application cannot be processed without them. Once you have selected these and uploaded them, please click on the "submit" button at the bottom of the page.
- ix. You will receive an e-mail confirmation (to the address listed in your publicjobs.ie profile) to confirm that your application has been submitted.

You must confirm that you do not have any conflicts of interest or legal impediment which would be likely to interfere with your ability to play a full part on the Board. You must also confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of a Board member.