

Subject:

**QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED TO TEACH IN
INSTITUTIONS OF FURTHER AND HIGHER
EDUCATION**

**Circular Number:
FE12/09**

**Date of Issue:
23 November 2009**

Target Audience:

- Governing Bodies and Principals of Institutions of Further and Higher Education
- Principals and Governors of all grant-aided schools

Summary of Contents:

This Circular provides guidance on:

- (i) the new qualifications required to teach in Institutions of Further and Higher Education; and
- (ii) which qualifications entitle a person to teach in a grant-aided school.

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Status of Contents:

Information/Advice

Related Documents:

DE 2007/22

Superseded Documents:

DE 1997/27

DE 2006/21

DE 2007/19

DE 2008/21

Expiry Date:

N/A

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Introduction

1. The Further Education Teachers' (Eligibility) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 (S.R. 2007 No. 127) require that every person employed as a teacher must have such qualifications as may be approved by the Department for Employment and Learning. This circular outlines the qualifications and other requirements for new teachers in Institutions of Further Education who do not hold a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) Degree or a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

Background

The Current Post-Graduate Certificate of Further and Higher Education

2. Since September 1994, new entrants to full-time, permanent lecturer and associate lecturer posts in further education, who do not already possess a B.Ed degree or a PGCE, have been required to obtain the Post Graduate Certificate in Further and Higher Education (PGCFHE) within three years of appointment.

Revised Arrangements

3. Following an evaluation of the teacher education programme in further education in 2006, the Department has revised the PGCFHE qualification in order to meet the needs of the 14-19 agenda and facilitate the transfer of teachers' skills across the post-primary education sector. This qualification will be known as the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (Further Education) and will be delivered by the University of Ulster (UU). The qualification is underpinned by the Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) professional standards for teachers.
4. With effect from November 2009, the PGCE (Further Education) will become a mandatory qualification for all new-entrant, permanent, full-time and associate lecturers who are not qualified teachers. Year 1 of the PGCE (Further Education) must be completed within the first year of teaching and be followed within the next two years by the successful completion of the second year of the PGCE (Further Education).

5. The implementation arrangements, as set out in paragraph 7 of this circular, will initially be piloted for a two year period. At the end of this period (November 2011) the Department will review these arrangements with a view to extending the PGCE (Further Education) to all FE lecturers.
6. Only the following qualifications are recognised for teaching in the Northern Ireland Further Education (FE) Sector:
 - PGCE;
 - B.Ed;
 - University of Ulster PGCFHE;
 - University of Ulster PGDFHE; and
 - the University of Ulster PGCE (Further Education).

Implementation of the Revised Arrangements

7. From 1st November 2009, delivery of the PGCE (Further Education) will be available for completion over two academic years.
8. In recognition of the fact that some full-time and associate lecturers may be entering their second or third year of teaching but have not yet commenced the PGCFHE, the following arrangements will apply:
 - a) for one final year (September 2009 – June 2010), a one year PGCFHE programme will be offered to full-time and associate lecturers who are entering their third year of teaching;
 - b) permanent full-time and associate lecturers entering their second year of teaching will undertake Year 1 of the PGCE (Further Education) in September 2009; and
 - c) colleges will be permitted to postpone Year 1 of the PGCE (Further Education) for all other newly appointed permanent full-time and associate lecturers until September 2010. With effect from September 2010, **all** newly

appointed permanent full-time and associate lecturers will be required to undertake Year 1 in their first year of their teaching.

Qualifications/Courses

9. A new PGCE (Further Education) is not in itself an approved qualification for teaching in FE. To be eligible to teach in FE and to undertake the PGCE (Further Education), lecturers must also meet the general education and experience requirements, as outlined in **Annex A**.

10. Teachers/lecturers who hold a teaching qualification which is not listed in paragraph 6 above will be required to undertake and complete the PGCE (Further Education). Consideration will however be given to the previous qualifications undertaken and accreditation of prior learning (APL) offered, where appropriate.

11. Existing teachers/lecturers who hold other qualifications and who are already recognised as qualified teachers in Institutions of Further Education will continue to be so recognised.

12. Any new applicant applying for a teaching post who holds a qualification which is not listed in this circular **should not be appointed**, until confirmation has been received from the Department that the qualification is deemed acceptable.

13. Examining and validating bodies may also require teachers to hold specific qualifications as a condition of their approval of a particular College course.

Essential Skills

14. Where a College employs or intends to employ a lecturer to teach Essential Skills, the requirements stipulated in the Essential Skills Tutor Education Circulars ES02/04 and ES01/09, issued by the Department, apply.

15. Permanent, full-time and associate essential skills lecturers who have already achieved the Diploma in the Teaching and Management of Literacy and/or the

Diploma in the Teaching and Management of Numeracy are exempt from Year 1 of the PGCE (Further Education). All permanent full-time and associate lecturers must undertake Year 2 within two years of commencing teaching. Those lecturers previously granted an exemption to teach Essential Skills under the provisions of the Essential Skills Tutor Education Policy will also be exempt from Year 1 of the PGCE (Further Education).

16. Lecturers who have already achieved the Certificate in the Teaching and Management of Literacy and/or the Certificate in the Teaching and Management of Numeracy have the choice of progressing to the Diploma in the Teaching and Management of Literacy and/or the Diploma in the Teaching and Management of Numeracy or, to Year 1 of the PGCE (Further Education), on appointment as a permanent full-time or associate lecturer.

Eligibility to teach in Grant Aided Schools

18. Holders of the existing PGDFHE will continue to be eligible for registration with the General Teaching Council (NI) and therefore eligible to teach in a grant-aided school in Northern Ireland.

ANNEX A

ESSENTIAL GENERAL EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

APPLICANTS MUST HAVE:		
GCSE English (Grade A – C) / Essential Skills Level 2 (or higher) in Communication; <u>and</u>		
GCSE Maths (Grade A – C) / Essential Skills Level 2 (or higher) in Numeracy , or NICATS Access Maths Modules;		
and either		
<p>A University Degree**</p> <p>**defined as follows –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a degree obtained at a University in the UK or the Republic of Ireland; or • a degree obtained at any other University, provided the Department accepts the standard and content of that degree as equivalent to those stated above; or • any qualification deemed by the Department to be equivalent to a university degree. 	OR	<p>Three years relevant industrial, professional or business experience</p>
		AND
		<p>A qualification in the specialist area in which the applicant is to teach. This qualification should be at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF – revised September 2004) or on the QCF.</p> <p>NB. If the specialist area in which the applicant is to teach is Health and Social Care, the following qualifications are deemed appropriate –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Level Registered Nurse; or • Diploma in Social Work; or • Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW); or • Certificate in Social Services (CSS)