

Appointment to the State Examinations Commission

Closing Date: 15:00 on 5th of June 2017

**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. In that regard and in accordance with 13.2 of the Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards, "it is advisable that no member of a State Board should serve more than two full terms of appointment or should hold appointments to more than two State Boards."

The [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016](#) (the Code) 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.

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Location: Athlone

Number of Vacancies: 1

Remuneration: €7,695

Travel & Subsistence is payable at Civil Service rates. (It should be noted that in line with the 'One Person One Salary' principle, no public servant will be entitled to receive remuneration in the form of board fees, save for situations that are statutorily provided for e.g. Worker Directors).

Time Requirements: Approximately 10 meetings per annum. 1 day reading/prep work can be assumed for each meeting.

In line with the certificate examinations schedule, at least one of the approximately ten meetings will be held in May, August and September.

1. Background

The SEC is responsible for the development, accreditation and operation and delivery of the State examinations, principally the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate examination. All of the Board members (5 in total) are appointed by the Government on the nomination of the Minister for Education and Skills in accordance with the terms of [S.I. No. 373/2003 - State Examinations Commission \(Establishment\) Order 2003](#). The term of the current Board runs until 30th November 2018. There is currently one vacancy for an ordinary member of the Board.

2. Functions of the Board

Under the terms of the [SEC Establishment Order, 2003](#) (No. 373/03), the functions of the Commission are to:

- (a) organise the holding of examinations,
- (b) ensure the preparation of examination papers and other examination materials,
- (c) determine procedures in places where examinations are conducted including the supervision of examinations,
- (d) make arrangements for the marking of work presented for examination,
- (e) issue the results of examinations,
- (f) determine procedures to enable the review and appeal of results of examinations at the request of candidates,
- (g) charge and collect fees for examinations and apply such monies to the carrying out of its functions, and
- (h) designate places where examinations may be held.

3. Person Specification

The composition of the Board requires a mix of skills. Such skills would be developed through a range of experience including:

- (a) Extensive experience of leadership at a senior level in the second-level education system in Ireland;
- (b) Detailed working knowledge in a third level setting of the policies and procedures underpinning the selection of students for entry to third-level education in Ireland.
- (c) Previous senior management or board level experience, with knowledge of corporate governance and compliance, financial or risk matters
- (d) Experience of strategy/policy development and implementation.
- (e) Senior management experience ideally in large scale logistical operations with a requirement for high levels of security/confidentiality and delivery to tight deadlines

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 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

Applications are now invited from individuals who consider they may possess the skills and experience necessary to join the Board.

To complement the composition of the existing Board candidates must have a career history that demonstrates the following at a senior or executive level:

- Significant experience of good corporate governance and compliance practices, ideally in a public sector context
- Significant experience of strategic management and managing change

Desirable

- *A recognised qualification in corporate governance*
- *Executive/board experience, ideally in a regulatory body;*

Applicants should note that individuals currently employed or otherwise directly involved in the post-primary education system are not eligible to apply due to potential conflicts of interest.

4. Term of Appointment

The term of office of a member of the Commission shall be such period not exceeding 5 years as may be specified by the Government when appointing that member and the member shall hold office for the period for which he or she is appointed unless he or she sooner dies, resigns by letter addressed to the Minister or ceases to be a member in accordance with the terms of the SEC Establishment Order. A member of the Commission whose term of office expires by the passage of time shall be eligible for re-appointment. The term of the current Board runs until 30th November 2018

Members of the Oireachtas or of the European Parliament will not be eligible to become members of the Commission. In addition, undischarged bankrupts and people who have made composition or arrangements with creditors within the preceding 3 years and/or who have served a period of imprisonment within preceding 5 years are excluded from membership.

5. Submitting your Application

Before submitting your application, please review the self-assessment questionnaire which can be found [here](#). This 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 the Person Specification section in this booklet. Please give careful consideration to the possibility of any potential conflict of interest that may arise if appointed to this board.

Your submission should be made via the following link www.stateboards.ie together with your **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 application. 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.

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

6. Assessment Process

An Assessment Panel (the “Panel”) will be convened by PAS to consider and assess the applications received by PAS. The Panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role, as advertised in this Information Booklet;
- assess potential candidates further once they meet the specified appointment criteria by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
 - Consideration of the written applications; and/or
 - Meeting¹/conference call; and/or
 - Referee checks; and/or
 - Any other selection or verification method deemed appropriate (this may include PAS requiring statutory declarations from shortlisted applicants as to the bona fides of the qualifications and experience contained in their applications).
- arrive at a shortlist of suitable candidates to be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

Please note that the Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by candidates as part of our selection process.

7. Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquires, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process.

Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

8. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

Should your name be forwarded to a Minister for consideration, please note that your cover letter and curriculum vitae will be forwarded to the State Board Liaison Officer in the relevant department and may be retained for up to one year.

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

¹ The Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

APPENDIX 1

Submitting your application:

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

1. Go to www.stateboards.ie.
2. On the bar at the top of the page click on "Available Appointments".
3. 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).
4. On the relevant page please click on the "apply for position" button at the bottom of the page
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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".
8. 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.
9. 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.