

APPENDIX 7

S.C.G. Exemptions Policy

GUIDELINES FOR SCG EXEMPTION

INTRODUCTION

The Irish Language Requirement

Teachers in national schools must be qualified to teach the range of subjects as outlined in the Primary School Curriculum -1999 (Curaclam na Bunscoile) to children in all classes. The ability to speak Irish proficiently and to use Irish as the language of incidental communication in the classroom is a prerequisite for teaching Irish. Accordingly, teachers who obtained their teaching qualification outside the State and have a curriculum shortfall in Irish must make good this shortfall.

Under the EU Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC) Regulations, 2008, as given effect in S.I. No 139 of 2008, teachers who have a curriculum shortfall in Irish have the choice to make up this shortfall, either by way of an Aptitude Test (SCG – An Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge) or an Adaptation Period (OCG – Oiriúnú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge). In the past, teachers who obtained their primary teaching qualification outside the State undertook the aptitude test, *An Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge* (SCG), as a means of acquiring the necessary qualification.

The Teaching Council is the designated authority for the recognition of qualifications under the terms of the above EU Directive and the competent authority for the recognition of qualifications obtained outside of the EU. The terms and conditions for employment in recognised schools are determined by the Minister for Education and Science.

Prospective applicants for the SCG (An Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge – Aptitude Test) are referred to the Irish Language Requirement Website www.ilrweb.ie which outlines the ways in which teachers with a curriculum shortfall for registration purposes in the Irish language can address same.

Prospective applicants seeking to fulfill the Irish Language Requirement (ILR) must be registered with the Teaching Council or have submitted an application for Registration. They must choose between the SCG (An Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge – Aptitude Test) and the OCG (Oiriúnú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge – Adaptation Period). Candidates must inform the Teaching Council of their choice and must ensure that their conditional registration deems them eligible to undertake their choice of SCG or OCG. The candidate must apply to the Irish Language Requirement Office (Coláiste Mhuire, Marino) to undertake the SCG or the OCG.

1. THE IRISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

In order to satisfy the Irish language requirement applicants have two options.

Option 1

- Pass the written, aural, oral and practical elements of the Qualifying Irish Examination (Scrúdú Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge) (SCG) Further information on the SCG may be downloaded from the Irish Language Requirement Website www.ilrweb.ie; and
- Provide certification that they have resided in the Gaeltacht while attending an approved three-week course or its aggregated equivalent either in one-week blocks, or in a combination of one-week and two-week blocks.

Option 2

- Complete the requirements of the Qualifying Irish Adaptation Period (Oiriúnú don Cháilíocht sa Ghaeilge)(OCG), and
- Provide certification that they have resided in the Gaeltacht while attending an approved three-week course or its aggregated equivalent either in one-week blocks, or in a combination of one-week and two-week blocks.

Details of approved Gaeltacht courses for the SCG/OCG are available from the Irish Language Requirement Website www.ilrweb.ie

2. EXEMPTION FROM ELEMENTS OF SCG

Candidates may apply for an exemption from some elements of the SCG where they have already met the essential requirements of those elements and can produce the required documentary evidence to support their application.

2.1 Exemption Criteria

Candidates who have Irish as a major subject of their degree qualification (See paragraph 3) may apply for an exemption from elements of the SCG. Candidates who are granted an exemption will, however, be required to:

- undertake the practical elements of Paper 1 and Paper 2 of the SCG Examination. The practical elements are assessed in the classroom setting.
- undertake the theory question on Paper 1 on Teaching Irish in the Classroom. When undertaking the theory question on the Teaching of Irish in the Classroom, exempted candidates for the SCG will have an allocation of 30 minutes, i.e. the first half hour of the Paper 1 examination, to undertake this question.

- comply with the Gaeltacht requirement (See paragraph 4)

Candidates who have already complied with the Gaeltacht requirement may seek an exemption from this element of the SCG programme. Where a candidate is seeking exemption from part or all of the Gaeltacht requirement (3 weeks) he/she must provide written documentation from the college in which the original degree (where Irish was a major subject) was undertaken, indicating that the week(s) of Gaeltacht attendance for which exemption is/are being sought were undertaken as part of the original degree.

A candidate seeking exemption from the Gaeltacht requirement must have attended the Gaeltacht course in the capacity of a learner.

3. DEGREE REQUIREMENT

The following are important points regarding eligibility for an exemption from the SCG where a candidate presents with Irish as a major subject at primary degree level:

- The candidate must provide documentation (See note below) which establishes that he/she has Irish as a major subject at primary degree level.
- The candidate must provide a copy of the original transcript of their degree qualification.
- The transcript must indicate the subjects/modules/components undertaken in each year of the degree qualification and the marks awarded.
- It should be noted that a candidate presenting as having a degree in Irish where in fact the degree is in Celtic Studies is not entitled to exemption. (A degree in Celtic Studies, where much of the work is undertaken through the medium of English, does not equate with a degree in Irish. Therefore a candidate with a degree in Celtic Studies does not qualify to be exempted from any element of the SCG programme.)

4. GAELTACHT REQUIREMENT:

SCG candidates are required to provide certification that they have resided in the Gaeltacht while attending an approved three-week course or its aggregated equivalent either in one-week blocks, or in any combination of one-week and two-week blocks. Details of DES approved Gaeltacht courses are available on the Irish Language Requirement website www.ilrweb.ie. The following specific requirements should be noted:

- The criteria for full recognition require that SCG candidates attend for three weeks at an approved course in the Gaeltacht. **There is no exemption from this requirement.**
- The candidate must reside in the Gaeltacht for the duration of the course.
- The course may be taken while studying for a degree which has Irish as a major subject, or it may be a DES approved course taken when the candidate commences the SCG programme.
- Candidates should note that week(s) spent on a Gaeltacht course in the capacity of a ceannaire/cinnire/teacher giving instruction/or any other ancillary role, may not be reckoned for exemption purposes.

Summary of SCG requirements where candidates have been granted an exemption

	Element	Detail
A	Practical Element of Paper 1 – Teaching of Irish in the Classroom.	School-based evaluation based on a minimum of one school visit by supervisor if both elements are undertaken successfully during one academic year.
B	Practical Element of Paper 2 - Language and Culture Project.	
C	Theory Question on the Teaching of Irish in the Classroom	Written examination comprising 30 minutes of Paper 1 examination.
D	Gaeltacht Course Requirement	Attend for 3 weeks at an approved Gaeltacht course.

Prospective SCG candidates should refer to the SCG Guide which is available to download from the Irish Language Requirement website www.ilrweb.ie for further details of the specific requirements listed above. Full details and guidance on the above requirements are provided in the SCG textbook 'Cóir Ghaoithe' which may be purchased from the Irish Language Requirement Office, Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education, Griffith Avenue, Dublin

5. APPLYING FOR THE SCG

Prospective candidates wishing to apply for the SCG should do so on the SCG APPLICATION FORM which may be downloaded from the Irish Language Requirement Website www.ilrweb.ie. If also applying for an exemption, the candidate should indicate accordingly in the relevant section on the SCG APPLICATION FORM and should complete the EXEMPTION APPLICATION section of the SCG APPLICATION FORM. Candidates applying for an exemption should apply for the Paper 1 and Paper 2 modules.

6. NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

Prospective candidates who complete and submit the SCG EXEMPTION APPLICATION section of the SCG APPLICATION FORM and enclose the necessary

documentation will be notified of a decision within 6 weeks of submitting the request for exemption.

NOTE

It is the responsibility of the eligible candidate to apply for the exemption at the appropriate time and to provide the necessary documentation as requested in the EXEMPTION APPLICATION section of the SCG APPLICATION FORM. While clear copies of transcripts will suffice, the Irish Language Requirement Office may request a candidate to provide original documentation. In circumstances where original documentation is requested, it will be returned to the candidate in due course.