



## NCGE Management of Guidance Committee (MGC) 2017-2020

### Record of the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020

#### 1. Draft Meeting Record

There were no amendments to the Meeting Record of the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting, which is to be then uploaded onto the NCGE website.

#### 2. Minutes from the last meeting (29<sup>th</sup> April 2020) and Matters Arising

There were minor amendments to the Minutes.

##### Matters Arising

Regarding matters arising and actions from the last Minutes:

- The NCGE Director to respond informally to Accenture.
- The next Finance Sub-Committee Meeting to take place early July once the End of Quarter 2 Report has been completed. The new style Finance Sub-Committee Report to include a more detailed breakdown of figures.
- The Chair received a response from the Department of Education (DE) to his letter written on behalf of the MGC, in support of the DE response to the Covid-19 pandemic. With the newly formed government, the Education Sector will continue to be in the midst of a lot of change and it is imperative that guidance fits into the national picture to develop a coherent, long-term strategy for lifelong career guidance, notwithstanding the effect of Covid-19. There has been no update on the work of the Internal Taskforce on Guidance and NCGE feels it necessary to request an update on the draft proposal from the Taskforce.
- Further information given on the SUSI grant stating that when students apply for a grant, while it is usually the tax return for last year which is considered, in exceptional circumstances (e.g. Covid-19) income tax returns for the current year are also being considered.

#### 3. Items for Agenda under AOB - Part B – Discussion/Decisions

There were no items suggested for discussion.

#### 4. NCGE Points of Information

The NCGE Points of Information included:-

- The Chair asked the NCGE Director to convey sincere gratitude from the MGC to the NCGE staff for their commitment and service while operating in the context of Covid-19, and in particular the Wednesday webinars providing information and CPD on various themes to support guidance provision in post-primary schools.
- The Chair highlighted Point No. 6 – ‘Cedefop’ survey on the global guidance response to the pandemic, which was emailed to all members from the NCGE Director, encouraging members to complete the survey as the report. The Director envisages that the survey report will be available before the next MGC Meeting in September; and will send the report to DES as it will provide valuable information to enlighten the recommended guidance policy recovery from Covid-19.

## **5. Points of Information from MGC Members**

- DEASP employment services have recommenced and will be contacting people on the case officers' caseloads initially. 20,000 new job seeker claims since the 12th March will be brought into activation services next. Individuals on the "pandemic payment" who were earning less than €200 per week prior to the pandemic will receive the reduced single rate of €203 from the 7th July. Another review of the balance of individuals will take place in mid-August to segment that cohort to allow greater targeting of services. The DEASP is working closely with a broad range of agencies/organisations including the ETBs and this indicates the importance of guidance becoming more and more relevant.
- An update on the SOLAS 'Skills to Compete' programme and SOLAS expecting submission response from NCGE.
- SOLAS working on education for the disadvantaged and is seeking information for more disability supports. NCGE Director to discuss and advise.
- The Internal Task Force has not met up since April as it is his understanding that it has been put on hold during the pandemic and so there is no further update.

## **6. Governance & Risk**

### **6.1. NCGE Staffing**

The NCGE Director reminded the MGC that staffing is an ongoing issue in relation to fixed and temporary contracts in NCGE. NCGE staff are not part of the delegated sanction of staff for Léargas, so to recruit new staff or renew secondments and contracts, NCGE needs to request permission from DE. NCGE has ongoing contact with DE to resolve staffing issues.

### **6.2. Changes in Avoca House (NCGE Office)**

The NCGE Director explained to the MGC that NCGE rents the office space in Avoca House from Léargas. Due to Covid-19 Léargas require more space for their staff members return to work and therefore the Léargas Training Room based in NCGE/Avoca House will be converted to office space to house 8 Léargas staff members. The NCGE Director emphasised that while this would mean double the staff numbers with office desks in the NCGE office, not all staff (Léargas and NCGE) will be in the building at the same time. There is a great emphasis on health and safety risks in the planning and compiling of the Léargas and NCGE Return to Work Protocols. She added that she will update the MGC at the next meeting in September regarding these protocols.