



NCGE Management of Guidance Committee (MGC) 2017-2021

Record of the 20th Meeting 25th November 2020

1. Draft Meeting Record

There were revisions to the Meeting Record of the 18th Meeting after which it will be uploaded to NCGE website.

2. Minutes from the last meeting (30th September 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 emailed a response to the Accenture Report awaits a reply.
- Skills to Compete discussion paper – NCGE await an invitation from SOLAS to participate in the steering group.
- Acknowledgement of receipt of letters to Minister Foley, Department of Education (DE) and Minister Harris Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) received but no further information. DFHERIS noted that a stakeholders meeting is to be arranged and NCGE are waiting for a meeting date.

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 updates document includes:-

- The Overarching Research on Data Gathered in DE/SOLAS/NCGE Adult Guidance Management System of the AEGI 2004-2018 was received. This will be uploaded to the OMS for confidential review and feedback/comments from all to the NCGE Director by Wednesday 9th December.
- Final draft of the report on the European Schools Review sent to the NCGE Director. Once finalised this report will be uploaded to the OMS.

5. Points of Information from MGC Members

- With Level 5 restrictions all DSP activation services suspended again and reactivation depends on the new restrictions level on 2nd December. Currently the emphasis is on supporting whatever section is in crisis. DSP hoping to be back to full capacity in January 2021. The Live Register has increased little and companies have not folded as much as was expected so it is not known how this will end.
- Some student apathy in secondary schools as businesses in the community and other activities stripped away. Mid-term exams going ahead with all stretched to capacity. While Covid-19 a temporary occurrence, students are still missing out on key developments which will impact them over a number of years.
- The next annual IGC Conference will be held on a virtual platform (Vfairs) and will take place on Saturday 17th April but will be available on demand for the following 30 days to IGC members. IGC has invited NCGE, in collaboration with the guidance inspectors, to deliver a workshop at the conference.
- ETBI is applying to SOLAS for funding under the Mitigating against Educational Disadvantage Programme to support groups and communities most affected by the pandemic.
- AGA notes that still lack of broadband particularly for vulnerable adult learners and a lack of assistance in areas of social media.

- During Level 5 restrictions it is not “business as usual” and while university courses are continuing well groups are eager for more of a connection with others. Current pandemic situation implies profound implications for engaging especially for the young. Impact of Covid-19 is not equal for all. Need for the guidance sector to create space for all to talk about their individual experiences and not just their struggles but how they are coping.
- Student teachers report finding this year very challenging , requiring personal support.
- SOLAS working on project ‘Consultation on 10-year Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy’ with a link to the consultation process on SOLAS website. A new strategy is expected within 6 months.
- In 2021 new cycle of Erasmus+ over the next 7 years, political agreement reached on finances, funding available early January. Projects (schools, adult education, etc.) – European project partnerships maintained with difficulty; only 3% cancelled projects with majority moving forward. Overall European projects very much valued.
- Springboard progressing well as mainly online and courses are filling. Some report difficulties in getting Intreo appointments.
- Ongoing discussions in DE with regard to supporting the guidance community. Currently dealing with legal issues regarding predictive grades and dependent on Covid-19 guidelines upcoming exams will go ahead. Ongoing discussions are taking place and therefore no final decision as of yet.

6. Governance & Risk

- NCGE staffing remains a governance and risk issue. NCGE received approval from DE for the Maternity Leave cover for two staff; one Guidance Officer on a temporary 6-month contract to cover the Maternity Leave of the two staff.
- Two NCGE secondments (guidance staff) to end in the summer of 2021 also an upcoming issue.
- Current lack of clarity on governance and structure of NCGE and on strategic planning poses an organisational risk to the role, remit, and activities of NCGE. NCGE under both Departments (DE and DFHERIS); the MGC has agreed that the Chair and NCGE Director will issue a letter to DE requesting urgent clarification on a number of issues including the outcome of the DE Taskforce on the Indecon Report and on the proposed departmental governance structure.

7. Report from the NCGE Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee Report (dated 15th October 2020) was uploaded to the NCGE Online Management Space (OMS) and shared on the Zoom screen during the meeting.

Correspondence sent to SOLAS Executive Director stating that as SOLAS is a significant funder of NCGE it is imperative to have a SOLAS rep on the subcommittee, particularly as a CAP rep sits on the subcommittee for this oversight purpose. Next Finance Subcommittee Meeting on 20th January 2021.

8. Extension of MGC Term

With agreement from the Board of Léargas, DE has extended the MGC term of office to the 31st December 2021 and has invited Paul King to continue as MGC Chair to that date. The MGC agreed to this extension and endorsed Paul King to continue in the position of MGC Chair.

9. NCGE MGC Terms of Reference (TOR)

The edited TOR was uploaded to the OMS and shared on the Zoom screen during the meeting. TOR updated with just 2 edits which consisted of change of wording and end date to 2021. MGC agreed with edits and the TOR signed-off for 2020.