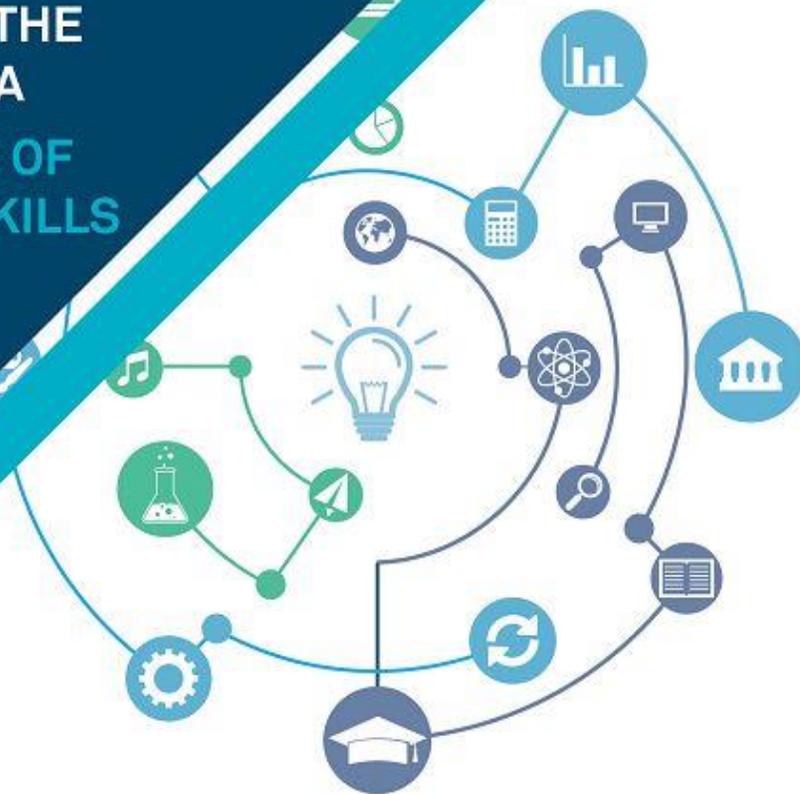**A QQI CONFERENCE ON THE DIGITALISATION AGENDA**

RE-THINKING THE ROLE OF QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

Venue: Radisson Blu Hotel, Golden Lane, Dublin 8

Tuesday

24.10.17

DIGITAL STRATEGY FOR SCHOOLS 2015-2020
Enhancing Teaching Learning and Assessment

Implementation Stage

Digital Strategy for Schools
24 October 2017

OVERVIEW

1. Overview of Strategy
2. Key messages from research and policy
3. Vision
4. Underlying Principles
5. Four pillars
6. Implementation priorities
7. Funding
8. Reporting and evaluation

Overview of Strategy Inputs

Research → Consultation → Analysis → Actions

Strategy informed by evidence gathered from
- Census of teachers and Principals
- Consultative paper 'Building towards a Learning Society: A National Digital Strategy for Schools'
- Consultation – public, Gov Depts., Ed Partners, young people, teachers, parents, internal DES, agencies, support services, IBEC
- Consultations with young people, teachers and parents/guardians
- Face to face meetings with key stakeholders

Key messages from research

- Presence of ICT equipment in a school is not sufficient in itself to ensure it's effective use for teaching, learning and assessment

- Teachers observed an increase in student interest and engagement arising from the use of Digital Technologies.

- Obstacles to the effective use of digital technologies in teaching and learning identified
  - Absence of technical support,
  - age of computing devices,
  - Insufficient time for planning and preparation
  - Internet connectivity
  - School culture

Key messages from research

- Teachers want training and support so they become confident and competent in the use of digital technologies

- Potential of digital technologies to open up new forms of learning

- Digital technologies can support students with special education needs

- Young people use technologies as part of daily lives

- Downsides to use of technologies e.g. plagiarism, distraction, cyber bullying, access to inappropriate material

Messages from policy developments

- ▶ Curricular reform

- ▶ Regulated teaching profession based on evidence based professional standards

- ▶ Continuum of teacher education

- ▶ Government Strategies (e.g. National Digital Strategy (Broadband), National Skills Strategy, Department of Children and Youth Affairs policies, Wellbeing, Action Plan for Jobs)

- ▶ Programme for Government

- ▶ Ministers Action Plan for Education e.g. innovation, STEM

Vision for Digital Technologies in teaching, learning & assessment

▶ Realise the potential of digital technologies to enhance teaching, learning and assessment so that Ireland's young people become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens to participate fully in society and the economy

Key Principles Informing the Digital Strategy for Schools

The strategy is underpinned by five key principles identified during the consultation and research phase

1. Constructivist Pedagogical Orientation.
2. The use of digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment can enhance the learning experiences of all students.
3. The use of digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment embedded in school curricula, Department policies and teacher education.
4. Digital technology is used in an ethical and responsible way.
5. Digital Learning Planning is required to ensure digital technologies are integrated in to teaching, learning and Assessment.

Key Themes in the Strategy

The Strategy has been developed around four key themes.

- **Theme 1:** Teaching Learning and Assessment Using Digital Technologies
- **Theme 2:** Teacher Professional Learning
- **Theme 3:** Leadership, Research and Policy
- **Theme 4:** ICT Infrastructure

- 36 Key objectives and 69 actions/deliverables to 2020.

Some Implementation Priorities

- Theme 1 – Teaching Learning and Assessment using ICT
  - Future curriculum specifications will include statements of digital technologies learning outcomes.
  - NCCA to develop advice for Minister on the inclusion of digital technologies in the Senior Cycle – Computer Science
  - Develop ICT competency framework to help teachers reflect on practice and identify learning needs.
  - Develop a shared understanding on the use of digital technologies in support services & DES.
  - Provision of high quality digital content to support learning and teaching – PDST via the ScoilNet platform.
  - Showcase how digital technologies can be used to communicate between home & school.
  - Strategic partnerships.

Some Implementation Priorities (ii)

➢ Theme 2 – Teacher Professional Development

  ➢ Embed the use of digital technologies across the continuum of teacher education (ITE, Induction & career long CPD/training)

  ➢ Liaise with Higher Education Institutes to progress this requirement.

  ➢ Increased access to continual professional development.

  ➢ Develop resources for teachers on how digital technologies can be used to support teaching, learning & assessment.

  ➢ Promote sharing of good practice among teachers.

Some Implementation Priorities (iii)

➢ Theme 3 – Leadership Research and Policy

  ➢ Provide strong leadership within the Department, reflect the requirements of the Digital Strategy in policies and supports.

  ➢ Strategies to promote the critical, ethical and safe use of digital technologies (Webwise, etc.)

  ➢ Policy coherence & consistency with other DES strategies

➢ Theme 4 – ICT Infrastructure

  ➢ Primary broadband

  ➢ Grants scheme for schools

  ➢ Explore technical support options for schools

  ➢ Provide guidance to schools e.g. Procurement, emerging technologies – cloud computing, tablets, etc.

Approach to implementation

- Strategy implemented in partnership – internal & external
- Identified lead & timeframe for each action/project
- Department agencies – NCCA (curriculum); Teaching Council
- Colleges of education & universities
- DES funded Support Services for teacher training
- Schools, teachers, parents
- Other Govt. Depts. e.g. funding, broadband, internet safety, policies on children, skills development, policies on procurement
- Governance structures in place to oversee implementation

Communications & Consultation re implementation

- A communications strategy is in place to raise awareness of the Strategy among:
    - Teachers and schools
    - Key stakeholders including the Education Partners, colleges of education
    - DES agencies and services
    - Other partners
- Stakeholder Forum involving Education Partners, young people, Government Departments & industry

Key Projects (1)

➢ Adapting UNESCO Teacher Competency Framework for Irish context – to be called the Digital Learning Framework for Schools

  ➢ Purpose of framework is to:
  - ➢ Develop a shared understanding on the use of digital technologies in Irish schools
  - ➢ Enable teachers and schools to measure the integration of digital technologies in their teaching & school
  - ➢ Inform local and national programmes of teacher training & professional development
  - ➢ Inform school planning

  ➢ Progress
  - ➢ Framework has been developed and will be trialled in 50 schools
  - ➢ Extensive supports and school visits
  - ➢ Independent evaluation during trial
  - ➢ Commence roll out to all schools in 2018 – extensive training required over a number of years
  - ➢ DLF to be key instrument for evaluating how technologies are being embedded in T&L

Key Projects (2)

- Update eLearning Planning Resource For Schools – to be called Digital Learning Planning Guidelines

- Purpose is to guide planning on the implementation and embedding of digital technologies across teaching, learning & assessment on a whole school basis

- Work commenced in 2017

- Align with Digital Learning Framework for Schools

- Align with other evaluation frameworks in schools

Key Projects (3)

➢ Embed digital technologies in DES funded programmes of professional development for teachers

Purpose
➢ Develop plan for the embedding of digital technologies across professional development programmes (CPD) for teachers
➢ Develop Shared understanding on the use of digital technologies for teaching, learning & assessment including standards & training required for the 250 personnel involved
➢ Approach to be aligned with outcome of the Digital Learning Framework, Digital Learning Planning guidelines etc.

Progress
➢ Planning Group for the Support Services established

Key Projects (4)

➢ UPGRADE INTERNET CONNECTIVITY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS (OBJECTIVE 4.2, THEME 4 - ICT INFRASTRUCTURE)

Purpose
➢ Ensure schools in areas with poor broadband connectivity benefit from the roll out of the broadband infrastructure proposed in the National Broadband Intervention Strategy
➢ Develop options for raising quality of internet connectivity in primary schools
➢ Align with/leverage of National Broadband Plan

Progress
  ➢ Multi disciplinary Working Group with D/Communications, Climate Action and Environment established

Key Projects (5)

➢ TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR SCHOOL ICT INFRASTRUCTURE (Objective 4.1)
Purpose

➢ To address ICT infrastructural requirements/deficits identified in the 2013 ICT Census through distributing the first tranche of €30m for the 2016-2017 from the €210m commitment

Progress
  ➢ Scheme & Guidance developed
  ➢ Grants paid

Key Projects (6)

➢ OTHER ACTIONS PLANNED FOR 2017 INCLUDE:

➢ Planning for the introduction of Computational Science Subject at Senior Cycle from September 2018
➢ New curriculum subject specifications will include statements of expected digital learning outcomes
➢ ICT Infrastructural Grants scheme to be reviewed to maximise/incentivise the embedding of digital technologies in teaching & learning, to apply to future distribution of grants
➢ Explore options regarding the provision of technical support to schools
➢ Continuing professional development programmes for teachers will include an embedded strand on the use of digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment.
➢ A number of projects in the DES funded support services relating to the provision of digital content, advice, guidance, new strategic partnerships
➢ School Cluster scheme to promote innovation in the use of digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment.

Funding

- Annual Government budgetary process
- €210m ICT Infrastructure Grant Funding committed for 5 years of Strategy, starting with €30m in 2016/17 school year, rising to €50m pa by the end of the period.
- School Digital Funding 2017
  - €14m Broadband Scheme.
  - €3.6m PDST-TiE including additional posts
  - €333k Education Centres (for CPD).
  - €206k Innovative Projects (including eTwinning, Digital Schools of Distinction, etc.).
- Other Funding Requirements likely to arise over coming years:
  - Provision of wireless Infrastructure in schools
  - Cost of upgrading connectivity in primary schools
  - Provision of training
  - Computer Science

Reporting and Evaluation

➢ DES standard reporting and evaluation methodologies as advised by DES Programme Reform Office

➢ DES Annual Report at the end of each year.

➢ The Inspectorate will evaluate the impact of the Strategy on Teaching, Learning and Assessment – development of specialist templates to get underway in 2018

➢ Other evaluation opportunities may arise!