



The Commissioner  
for Public Appointments  
Northern Ireland

**“Guardian of the Public Appointment Process”**

Follow up report on recommendations made in March 2014 Audit of DE – Council  
for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

October 2014

A competition to appoint four members to the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) was selected for audit as part of the 2013/2014 audit programme of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPANI). This competition was administered by the Department of Education (DE).

Six recommendations were identified as a result of this audit and presented in a report published in March 2014. The Department was advised that it should take action to address these recommendations, and that a follow-up to the audit would be conducted in six months' time.

The Department provided a comprehensive response to each recommendation highlighting the action taken to address them.

### **Recommendation 1**

It is recommended that in future competitions the requirement for details of 'private sector appointments' should be removed.

#### Implementation of recommendation 1

Applicants are no longer required to provide details of private sector appointments. Applicants are now asked to provide details of company directorships within a 'Current Commitments' section of the Application Form. This recommendation has been implemented.

### **Recommendation 2**

It must be made clear on all Application Forms that if an applicant is appointed, some of the information they have provided will be placed in the public domain.

#### Implementation of recommendation 2

Applicants are now informed in the Application Form that some of the information they have provided will be placed in the public domain. This recommendation has been implemented.

### **Recommendation 3**

It is recommended that in future competitions panel members score candidates individually at interview, before an agreed score is allocated.

### Implementation of recommendation 3

The Department provided evidence to show that panel members now score candidates individually at interview, before an agreed score is allocated. This recommendation has been implemented.

### **Recommendation 4**

The Department should investigate the process that allowed a serious error to be made in the preparation of applicant summaries, and take steps to ensure that such errors are prevented in future competitions.

### **Recommendation 5**

The Department should examine the effect that the error had on the candidates and institute whatever measures of correction or restitution it believes are appropriate.

### Implementation of recommendations 4 and 5

The Department provided evidence setting out the steps taken to investigate how the error was made, and the effect this administrative error had on candidates. The Department detailed the contact made with all candidates whose name went forward to the Minister explaining the error. These recommendations have been implemented.

### **Recommendation 6**

The Department must ensure that all candidates are kept informed of the progress of their application.

### Implementation of recommendation 6

The Department provided copies of letters notifying candidates of their current status of their application. This recommendation has been implemented.

### **Conclusion**

All recommendations have been implemented. The Commissioner would like to thank the Department for its work on this matter.