



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
*Donegal Education and
Training Board*

Donegal Education and Training Board Education Conference

The Irish Education System: Changes and Challenges

Thursday 24th October 2013

9.30am – 2.00pm

Mount Errigal Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

Chairperson: Dr Martin Gormley, Adult Education Officer

- 9.30am Registration / Tea & Coffee
- 10am Welcome: **Clr Philip McGlynn, Chairperson, Donegal ETB**
- 10.20 - 10.40 **Mr Padraig Monaghan**
Vice President Government Claims Operations
United Health Group, Global Healthcare Systems Ltd
- 10.40 - 11am **Mr John Logue**
Outgoing President Union of Students of Ireland
- 11am - 11.20 **Dr Mary Fleming**
Head of School of Education
NUI Galway
- 11.30 - 11.50 Coffee Break
- 11.50 – 12.40 **Keynote Speaker: Professor Brian MacCraith**
President
Dublin City University
- 12.40 – 1.30 Open Forum and Panel Discussion: **Ms Anne Mc Hugh, Education Development Officer**
- 1.30pm Close of Conference

A Light Lunch will be served following the Conference

Context

On 1 July 2013, the Education & Training Boards Act 2013 established 16 Education & Training Boards (ETBs) which replaced 33 VECs in what represents a hugely significant change in the Irish education infrastructure. ETBs have a broader remit than their predecessors, and their responsibilities include the establishment and maintenance of schools and centres of education, as well as the planning, co-ordination, delivery and review of much of the 2nd level and Further Education & Training provision in their areas and the provision of support services to other education and training providers.

Current FÁS training provision will also be under the remit of ETBs when the 16 FÁS Training Centres transfer to the ETBs shortly; the merge with the former VEC Adult Education services is designed to bring coherence to a fragmented system by forming an integrated further education and training sector. In addition, SOLAS, the Further Education & Training Authority which will be formally established by the end of the year, will develop a national FET strategy with goals and priorities for the ETB and wider FET sector.

There are changes afoot too in 2nd level education, particularly with the introduction of the new Junior Cycle Framework which proposes radical changes in how students' progress and learning are assessed at junior cycle.

It is important to note also that all of these changes are taking place in the context of a harsh economic climate in which resources are limited and the morale of educators tested, but where the education system is being asked to play a key role in Ireland's economic recovery as well as being relevant to social and civic needs.

It seems therefore an opportune time to explore whether our education system as it stands is fit for purpose and whether it is possible for it to adapt to meet the multiple needs of individuals, community and society.

Conference Speakers

Padraig Monaghan is Managing Director of United Health Group Global Services Ltd, Ireland and Vice President, Government Claims Operations. He has overall responsibility for Claim Operations for the Medicare & Retirement, Medica and Specialty Benefits lines of business within the U.S market with teams are located in Ireland, America and India. Padraig is a member of the Irish Business and Employers' Confederation Regional Executive and is a Board Member of the Ireland Chamber of Commerce, North West Division and the Temple Crone Cooperative Society.

John Logue (24) is a former President of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and a graduate of University College Dublin. He has served on the Boards of the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Quality and Qualifications Authority of Ireland (QQI), the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) and the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI).

Dr Mary Fleming is Head of the School of Education in NUI Galway. As Director of Teacher Education within the School she also has primary responsibility for the postgraduate Initial Teacher Education Programme, the Professional Diploma in Education. Mary's research interest areas are concerned with the dynamics of teaching and learning within a professional practice setting and leadership and policy developments within schools and the education system in general.

Professor Brian MacCraith is President of Dublin City University since 2010. Formerly Director of the Biomedical Diagnostics Institute (BDI), and currently he is a member of the Forfas Advisory Council on Science, Technology & Innovation and the Government-appointed High-Level Steering Group on Research Prioritisation.