

DIPLoma CENTRE

Diploma in Education Law



MODULE 1 & 2: EMPLOYMENT LAW IN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

SESSION 01	TIME	DELIVERY
Friday 01 November 2024	10:00am – 3.30pm	Onsite & Online
<p>1 Course Overview <i>Geraldine Rafferty BL</i></p> <p>2 Course introduction Part 1 - Aims & objective of the diploma: the history of education law in Ireland; sources of education law; a focus on relevant Constitutional provisions including Arts 42 and 44.</p> <p>3 The contract of employment: Identification of the employer in the school context. Express terms - the Terms of Employment (Information) Acts 1994 – 2001; pre-conditions; commencement; job function; exclusive service; probationary period; policies and procedures. Implied terms – sources; duty of care; trust and confidence; good faith & loyalty; mutual duty of respect; duty to provide a reference; terms implied by statute; collective agreements; pay and conditions; Department circulars.</p> <p>4 Equality in the school workplace Part 1: The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015; the nine grounds of discrimination; prohibited discriminatory conduct; disability; age discrimination; victimisation; harassment and sexual harassment; gender and pregnancy; scope of s.37 with regards to “<i>undermining the religious ethos</i>” of the school.</p> <p>5 Equality in the school workplace Part 2: A focus on disability discrimination: Definition of disability; alcoholism as a disability; hypertension; disability and sickness; medical opinion; reasonable accommodation; <i>Humphrey’s v Westwood</i>; prospective employees; ‘disproportionate burden’; size of employer and financial assistance.</p>		

4hrs. Gen. CPD

SESSION 01	TIME	DELIVERY
Friday 01 November 2024	Released at 2pm	ONLINE RELEASE
<p>5 Course introduction Part 2 – An overview of key issues arising: Understanding the distinct role of the various decision makers – the Minister; the patron; the Board of Management; the principal. Types of issues - refusal of admission; student expulsion/suspension; admissions policy; codes of behaviour; bullying; staff recruitment and promotions; complaints against staff, staff misconduct/underperformance; fitness to teach; Section 29/Workplace Relations Commission.</p>		

5hrs. Gen. CPD

SESSION 02	TIME	DELIVERY
Saturday 02 November 2024	10:00am – 1.30pm	Online
<p>1 Ancillary Staff: Employment law issues relevant to ancillary staff such as secretaries, cleaners and caretakers. A focus on how recruitment, contractual, equality law and dismissal provisions apply to such staff. The lecture will also provide a basic introduction to the application of the Transfer of Undertaking Regulations in the school context.</p>		

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- 2 **Recruitment of teachers:** Overview of the employment relationship; equality provisions relevant to recruitment; the recruitment process; the advertisement; application forms; the interview; selection criteria; taking notes; giving reasons; pre-contract issues; references; medical information; background checks; non-permanent teachers. Promotion of staff & appointment procedures for principals
- 3 **Managing employee bullying & harassment within schools:** Increase in cases; existing personal injuries framework; Sutherland v Hatton: foreseeability; risk assessments - preventative measures and acting when on notice of bullying; internal policies; one-off incident; formal or informal process? Recognisable psychiatric injury; reasonable foreseeability; overlapping claims.
- 4 **Application of grievance & disciplinary procedures:** Grievance procedures – as they apply to different schools and personnel; when and how the procedures are to be utilised; fair procedures. Disciplinary procedures - the Education Act and Circulars stages of the procedures; fair procedures; case law.

4hrs. CPD

SESSION 03	TIME	DELIVERY
Thursday 14 November 2024	6pm – 8pm	Online
1 Termination of employment & unfair dismissals: Unfair Dismissals Act 1977-2015; Circular Identification of the employer; capacity – long term absence; consistent short-term absences; possible equality claims; managing competence based issues; managing conduct based issues; teachers' use of social media; constructive dismissal; end of fixed term contracts; constructive dismissals; redress; redundancy; reference to higher and further education setting; managing an unfair dismissals claim: Workplace Relations Act 2015; new structure; jurisdiction issues; time limits.		
2 Termination of employment & unfair dismissals – case study on absence & sick leave management: Independent medical examinations; challenging the validity of the absence; sick pay; termination of employment; service requirement; potential equality claims on the disability ground; reasonable accommodation; frustration of contract; potential personal injury claim; reporting structure.		

2hrs. Gen. CPD

MODULE 3: ADMISSIONS POLICIES & STUDENT CONDUCT		
SESSION 04	TIME	DELIVERY
Thursday 5 December 2024	6pm – 8pm	Online
1 The Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018: Purpose of the Bill; accountability of principal; regulatory framework; admission statement; admission policy; approval by patron; characteristic spirit of the school; religious instruction; grounds for not enrolling students; selection criteria; appealing a decision; prohibition on charging and enrolment fees; Regulations.		
2 Admissions Policies: Position prior to 1998; admission and participation policy; admission of child to recognised school; prohibition on discrimination by educational establishments; SEN – an inclusive education policy; contents of admission policies; possible criteria; indirect discrimination (Stokes v Christian Brothers High-School).		

2hrs. Gen. CPD*

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SESSION 05	TIME	DELIVERY
Thursday 16 January 2025	6pm – 9pm	Online
<p>1 Codes of behaviour & school disciplinary procedures Part 1: The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000; s.23 code of behaviour; Guidelines; status of the Guidelines; structure of the Guidelines; auditing and reviewing of the Code; foundations of an effective Code; developing a School Code to manage behaviour effectively (setting standards of behaviour responding to inappropriate behaviour, promoting good behaviour).</p> <p>2 Codes of behaviour & school disciplinary procedures Part 2: Suspension & Expulsions: Three statutory requirements and related case law including the O'Donovan.</p> <p>3 Codes of behaviour & school disciplinary procedures Part 3: Section 29 appeals – what the State can and cannot do.</p>		

SESSION 05	TIME	DELIVERY
Thursday 16 January 2025	Released at 2 pm	ONLINE RELEASE
<p>4 Student use of social media - The concept 'in school behaviour'; peer-to-peer bullying on social media; liability; commenting on teachers; parental use of social media; subjecting teachers to comments on social media. Etc</p>		

4hrs. Gen. CPD*

MODULE 4: SCHOOL STRUCTURES & GOVERNANCE

SESSION 06	TIME	DELIVERY
Saturday 25 January 2025	10– 2.30	Online
<p>1 Legislative framework and structure and role of the Boards of Management: Historical context; separation of church & State; the Education Act 1998 (as amended): position prior to the 1998 Act; context of the Act; function of Minister; recognition of schools; annual funding; the patron; the Inspectorate; the Board of Management; default provisions; keeping of accounts and records; report and information; the School Plan.</p> <p>2 Key stakeholders & misc. provisions: Functions of the principal and teachers; provisions relating to staff; parents association; information to students and Student Council; grievance and other procedures; s. 28 proposals; appeal to Secretary General.</p> <p>3 Workshop 1: Practical application through case studies and drafting exercises of issues encountered in lectures relating to employment and equality law issues relevant in the school context.</p>		

SESSION 06	TIME	DELIVERY
Saturday 25 January 2025	Released 2pm	ONLINE RELEASE

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The role of the unions in the school context: Right of association; structure of the unions; types of services provided to teachers, principals and SNA; role with the Teaching Council and other education stakeholders.

2hrs. Gen. CPD & 2 hrs M&PD

SESSION 07	TIME	DELIVERY
Thursday 13 February 2025	6pm – 8pm	Online
1	Workshop 02: Interactive session: problem based, scenarios based, and assignment prep.	
2	Providing for special educational needs Part 1: ONLINE RELEASE Constitutional considerations and legislative provisions - historical development; Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004; seminal case law.	

3 hrs. Gen. CPD

MODULE 5 & 6: NEGLIGENCE & LITIGATION MANAGEMENT/PROVIDING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

SESSION 08	TIME	DELIVERY
Friday 21 February 2025	10:00am to 2.30pm	Online
1	Data protection in schools – Part 1 - An introduction: Origins of; personal data; sensitive personal data; data controller; legitimate processing and retention of data; data subject rights & notification requirements; Government data & public sector bodies; sharing between public bodies; data protection vs freedom of information; Data Protection Officer; data breaches.	
2	Data protection in schools - Part 2 – Case Studies	
3	Managing safety and health in schools: Key provisions of the 2005 Act; risk assessments; Safety Statements; employer and employee obligations; penalties; personal liability; guidelines on managing safety and health in schools; school profile; roles & responsibilities; planning documents; risk assessment templates.	
4	Providing for special educational needs Part 2: School policies and procedures for special educational needs - identification of special educational needs; special education plans; special education appeals board.	

4 hrs. Gen. CPD

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	SESSION 09	TIME	DELIVERY
	Saturday 22 February 2025	10.00am – 1.30pm	Online
1	Introduction to Family Law and Schools: Guardianship, Parental dispute regarding educational matters and the impact of family law proceedings on schools		
2	Workshop 03: Practical application through case studies and drafting exercises of issues encountered in relation to issues for codes of behaviour & school disciplinary procedures: Suspension & Expulsions		
	2 hrs. Gen. CPD & 1 M&PD CPD		

MODULE 7 & 8: HIGHER, FURTHER & ADULT EDUCATION/COMPLIANCE MATTERS & MISC. PROVISIONS			
	SESSION 10	TIME	DELIVERY
	Saturday 08 March 2025	10am – 2:30pm	Online
1	Negligence and litigation management Part 1: The duty of care to include the standard of care expected of school staff; negligence in schools- vicarious liability/contributory negligence; supervision-degree of care-student maturity; physical education-School tours-Extracurricular activities.		
2	Negligence and litigation management Part 2: When does a school start and finish? Occupiers Liability; the Safety & Health at Work Act 2005; insurance.		
3	Child protection obligations Part 1		
4	Child protection obligations Part 2		
5	Introduction to higher, further and adult education: ONLINE RELEASE: including a background to such institutions and the governance structures that apply		
	5 hrs. Gen. CPD		

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SESSION 11	TIME	DELIVERY
Thursday 27 March 2025	6pm – 8pm	Online

- 1 Employment law issues in the higher, further and adult education sector.
- 2 Student conduct issues in higher, further and adult education
- 3 Issues relevant to international students in the higher, further and adult education sector:
ONLINE RELEASE

3 hrs. Gen. CPD

Please note that topics & dates may be subject to change. Draft timetable as of April 2024
All lectures are available to join live online and will be recorded and available to watch in your own time.

* Gen = General, M&PD = Management and Professional Development, Reg = Regulatory and eLearning = eLearning CPD credits. **CPD Note:** The number of hours of CPD that you may claim in relation to your diploma/certificate course will depend on the way in which you access each of the individual sessions. For further information please visit the course homepage on our website: www.lawsociety.ie/diplomacentre