



Circular 0021/2011

**To: The Managerial Authorities of Recognised Primary, Secondary, Community, and Comprehensive Schools  
and  
The Chief Executive Officers of Vocational Education Committees**

## **Educational Qualifications for Appointment as Special Needs Assistant in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools**

The Minister for Education and Skills wishes to inform Management Authorities that the minimum educational requirement for the appointment of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) to primary and post-primary schools as contained in previous communications is amended.

With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011, the minimum required standard of education for appointment to the post of Special Needs Assistant is:-

1. A FETAC level 3 major qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications, OR
2. A minimum of three grade Ds in the Junior Certificate, OR
3. Equivalent

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland is responsible for the development and implementation of the Framework. Any questions regarding the level of learning or recognition of qualifications should be addressed to [www.nfq.ie](http://www.nfq.ie). Queries in relation to the recognition of foreign qualifications should be directed to [www.qualrec.ie](http://www.qualrec.ie).

School Authorities must comply with other employment criteria as outlined in circular 03/03 (as amended).

All Special Need Assistants who meet the amended requirements may now progress on the incremental salary scale for SNAs from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 provided evidence is received by the Department/VEC that they meet the new qualification criteria by that date. In the event of notification being received in the Department/VEC on a subsequent date then SNAs may progress on the incremental salary scale from the date of receipt of such notification. Incremental credit will not be allowed retrospectively.

This circular supersedes all previous circulars, memoranda, rules and regulations in relation to the minimum educational requirements for special needs assistants. Please ensure that copies of this circular are provided to all members of the Boards of Management/Vocational Education Committees.

This Circular can be accessed on the Department's website under [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) Home - Education Personnel – Special Needs Assistants.

All enquiries regarding this circular should be e-mailed to [teachersna@education.gov.ie](mailto:teachersna@education.gov.ie)

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