



To: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEES.**

CIRCULAR LETTER PEN 17/03

Pensionability of Allowance payable to Principal Teachers in participating schools in recognition of the Principal's role in supporting and developing the Adult Education Programme.

1. I refer to the self-financing part-time adult education programme in second level schools for which revised arrangements were agreed and advised to schools in 2000 by this Department's Circular Letter 46/00.
2. Among the revised arrangements contained in Circular Letter 46/00 was one that provides for payment of an annual allowance to the Principal of each school offering a part-time adult education programme. The allowance **which is payable with effect from 1 January 1999 at the earliest** was not a pensionable allowance when introduced.
3. The question of reckoning the allowance for pension purposes has recently been reviewed. Following consideration of the matter in conjunction with the Department of Finance agreement has been reached to reckon the allowance for pension purposes.
4. Where the allowance has been paid to a currently serving principal from 1 January 1999 or the date the delivery of an adult education programme became operable, if later, the allowance will be reckonable as pensionable subject to the payment of the appropriate pension contributions with effect from the date from which the allowance became payable. Deduction of ongoing pension contributions from salary in the normal way will commence as soon as practicable. Arrears of contribution, where appropriate, will be collected as soon as possible by deduction from salary by installments to a **maximum** of five installments.
5. The allowance, where held for the final three years of pensionable service, will be reckoned in full for superannuation purposes on retirement. Where held only for portion of the final 3 years of pensionable service the allowance will be averaged by reference to the number of days held as a fraction of three years. Where a school ceases to deliver an adult education programme or the principal resigns or transfers from the school then the allowance ceases to be payable to the principal.

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6. The pensions of Principals who have retired since 1 January 1999 and who had the benefit of the allowance in pay while serving should be revised to take account of the pensionability of this allowance. Arrears of contributions will be recovered by deduction from the benefits payable.
7. Enquiries by VECs regarding the provisions of this Circular should be addressed to the Department at the address given below.

VEC PENSIONS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & SCIENCE
CORNAMADDY
ATHLONE
CO. WESTMEATH.

Enquiries by phone should be made to 090-6483657 or 090-6483658 or to 090-6474621 or 01-8734700: extensions 3657/3658

John Feeney
Principal Officer
Pensions Unit

11 November 2003