An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

Re: Temporary arrangements for students to work in settings during the summer period

To Registered Providers of Early Learning and Care and School-Age Childcare services:

In light of the current staffing pressures in early learning and care (ELC) and school-age childcare (SAC) services, as a temporary measure specifically to help services with short-term staffing shortages over the summer period:

- On a temporary basis DCEDIY has arranged an accelerated process for assessment of equivalence with the level 5 minimum qualification requirement for students currently enrolled on a recognized level 6, 7 or 8 course. Students who are approved through the accelerated assessment process will receive a "**Letter of Temporary Permission to Practice**" from DCEDIY. As a Registered Provider, you may employ a student who has such a letter to work directly with children attending an ELC service until at latest 1st of September 2024 (a student may also apply at the same time for a general – not time-limited – "Letter of Eligibility to Practice**"**.)

  The student's Letter of Temporary Permission to Practice will be recognized by Tusla as meeting the requirements of Section 9(4) of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. As the Registered Provider you should keep a copy of the student's Letter on file as evidence of temporary recognition.

These are temporary arrangements specifically to help alleviate some of the current staffing pressures, and are not intended to address longer-term staffing issues.

You are reminded that, as the employer, the Registered Provider will be responsible for all vetting, induction training, supervision and other governance requirements for staff, as set out in the Regulations, for students who are employed as a result of these temporary arrangements. Please note that this is not a student placement, and the students will be employees of the service.

To be approved through the accelerated process for assessment of equivalence with the level 5 qualification requirement to work with children in ELC, a student:

- Must be currently enrolled on a course that is on the list of DCEDIY Early Years Recognised Qualifications at level 6, 7 or 8.
- Must have successfully completed at least the first year of the course.
- Must have successfully completed a practice placement in-person in an ELC service.

It remains the case also that any student who already has a full level 5 award or a Letter of Eligibility to Practice from DCEDIY is already qualified to be employed to work directly with children in an ELC service. In addition, the application process remains in place for individuals – including students – to obtain a general (not time-limited) Letter of Eligibility to Practice, on the basis of equivalence of their qualification profile with a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Regards,

Paul Gleeson
Principal Officer, Workforce Unit
Early Learning and Care and School-Age Childcare Division