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ABSTRACT

This dissertation has attempted to look at some of the issues raised by appraisal and to assess the implications of the introduction of appraisal into the Irish second level school.

By 1995/1996 all teachers in British schools will have undergone one appraisal therefore, in completing this study, the author has relied heavily on a literary review of the British experience of teacher appraisal. The dissertation outlines the context in which appraisal was introduced in Britain. It reviews the literature on the objectives of appraisal and the concerns raised by it. Models of appraisal used in the British education system are examined and the role of the appraisal interview and self-appraisal in the process of appraisal are evaluated. The inquiry into appraisal systems in operation in Ireland was supplemented by information gathered through interviewing a small sample of people familiar with the appraisal process here.

The study outlines the background to the Irish Government's proposal to introduce an appraisal system in second level schools. It tries to identify obstacles to the implementation of such a scheme. It assesses appraisal systems in the civil service and the Irish primary school system and suggests how these might be used in the second level system.

The findings of the study are that quality of teaching will be achieved only if the objective of appraisal is the professional development of the individual. The most appropriate model of appraisal is a linear management model of appraisal as it ensures 'appraisal with responsibility'. The Irish second level system lacks a middle management structure and this, in the author's view, will militate against the implementation of a linear management model of appraisal. Ensuring quality of education in Irish second level schools therefore will depend largely on whole school appraisal and on the contribution of the Teaching Council which will have a significant role to play in establishing standards in teaching and in ensuring that they are maintained.