



Shared Education Campuses Programme

Third Call

Application Guidance

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In May 2013, the then First Minister and deputy First Minister (FMdFM) made a statement to the Assembly on the 'Together: Building a United Community' (T:BUC) strategy, which contains a range of proposals including details on Shared Education Campuses (SEC). The specific aim of the Executive's T:BUC strategy relating to education is 'To enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience'.
- 1.2 The Department of Education (the Department/DE) leads on delivering the headline action of commencing work on ten shared education campuses by 2018. The SEC will be pathfinder projects leading to a wider programme of shared education capital projects and will integrate community activities and resources and other services, including statutory provision where appropriate.
- 1.3 The Department considers that building good relations, tackling intolerance and challenging prejudice can be embedded through the ethos of schools and it is already an integral part of the curriculum. The Shared Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 came into effect in May 2016 and places a duty on the Department to promote, encourage and facilitate shared education. Similar duties apply to the Education Authority. The duty to encourage and facilitate shared education also falls to key education partners under this Act.
- 1.4 In addition one of the strategic outcomes of the draft Programme for Government (PfG) Framework 2016-2021 is to be 'a shared society that respects diversity', in particular by making space for greater sharing between traditionally divided communities. The draft PfG states that 'By continuing to work with communities, we can continue to develop shared spaces in education, in housing, in society in general'.
- 1.5 Creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational underachievement, unemployment and sectarianism; and improving good relations amongst and for our young people.
- 1.6 The SEC Programme is a capital build programme. There have been two previous Calls to the SEC Programme, in January and October 2014, which identified five projects to progress in planning - Limavady, Ballycastle, Moy, Brookeborough and Duneane/Moneynick. Economic Appraisals have been approved for the Limavady and the Ballycastle projects which are progressing to tender stage for design. The Moy economic appraisal is well developed. Project Boards have been established for the Brookeborough and Duneane/Moneynick projects.
- 1.7 Funding for SEC has been made available through the Fresh Start to the Stormont House Agreement. Projects will be subject to Department of Finance and Northern Ireland Office approval.

- 1.8 In progressing shared education, delivery of educational benefits to children and young people must be the overarching priority. It is important that any proposal for an SEC is consistent with the Area Plan, taking into account the full needs of an area, including the implications for other schools and recognising the importance of parental preference.
- 1.9 Enhancing shared education provision provides a range of potential benefits including: raising educational standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils; greater choice and greater opportunity; providing sustainable local provision; facilitating delivery of the Entitlement Framework; and providing wider experiences for pupils in terms of leisure, cultural and sporting activities.
- 1.10 The purpose of this guidance is to set out the process and timetable to assess proposals submitted under the Third Call to the SEC Programme. In addition the Department plans to hold Information Sessions for schools considering applying to the Programme.
- 1.11 Applicants should note that this **application process has been revised and updated** in light of the experience of previous Calls and includes **revisions to the criteria as well as a standard application form**. Applicants are also asked to note that **the assessment process will include a brief presentation** followed by questions from the Assessment Panel.

2. Shared Education - The Legislative Framework

- 2.1 The Shared Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (the Act) came into effect in May 2016 and provides a legislative definition of shared education, confers a duty on DE to encourage, facilitate and promote shared education and confers a power on relevant arms-length bodies of the Department to encourage and facilitate shared education. The Act also commenced the duty specified in the Education Act (NI) 2014 for the Education Authority (EA) to encourage, facilitate and promote shared education.
- 2.2 The Act states that 'the purpose of shared education is
- to deliver educational benefits to children and young persons;
 - to promote the efficient and effective use of resources;
 - to promote equality of opportunity;
 - to promote good relations; and
 - to promote respect for identity, diversity and community cohesion'.
- 2.3 The Act is underpinned by 'Sharing Works - A policy for Shared Education' published by the Department in 2014. This policy includes a description of how shared education is expected to work in practice and sits within the broader education policy framework designed to improve educational outcomes for young people.

- 2.4 It is important that there is a clear definition of what is meant by schools 'sharing'. The Act states that "'Shared education'" means the education together of:
- a. those of different religious belief, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons; and
 - b. those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those who are not,

which is secured by the working together and co-operation of two or more relevant providers'.

For the purposes of the SEC Programme a 'relevant provider' means a person providing education at a grant-aided school.

3. Target Schools and Partnerships

- 3.1 The SEC Programme is seen as complementing the shared education activity already taking place in schools and will be targeted towards infrastructure projects aimed at improving or facilitating educational sharing initiatives within local schools. **The SEC Programme is aimed at schools that have already engaged in shared education with a strong partnership.** It is intended therefore that the projects selected will build on a **solid foundation of existing sharing.**
- 3.2 The SEC Programme will provide capital funding for facilities at **schools which will be used on a shared educational basis.** The Programme will not provide for replication or duplication of existing or proposed facilities within the education sector, including that provided by the Further Education sector. As this Programme is specifically targeted at the provision of shared education in schools, applications from youth and sporting organisations/groups will not be considered for support under the Programme at this time.
- 3.3 The SEC Programme has the potential to bring together a range of schools for the delivery of education to children on a shared basis. There may be additional ancillary benefits which can arise from the establishment of these new facilities, including increased opportunities for the wider community to use school facilities for a range of educational, sporting, recreational, arts or cultural activities in line with the Department's "Community Use of School Premises: A Guidance Toolkit for Schools" which seeks to assist schools in opening their doors to the local community.

- 3.4 The SEC Programme is aimed at schools that can demonstrate the following types of sharing:
- Shared educational facilities - where new facilities are built to allow for shared educational use by all schools within the model eg Limavady SEC.
 - Enhanced educational facilities - where current facilities are improved to allow for shared educational use by all schools within the model.
 - Shared Educational Campuses - where schools are co-located and share infrastructure eg the Ballycastle and Moy SECS.
- 3.5 In addition, proposals from schools of two different management types and religious ethos who wish to consider becoming a Jointly Managed school will be considered under this Programme. Such schools should already have a Development Proposal (DP) published prior to applying to this Programme. A DP follows a statutory process separate to any application under this Programme.
- 3.6 Shared/enhanced facilities or Shared Campuses supported under this Programme must be located on a site that is, or will be, under the ownership or management of the Education sector.
- 3.7 The SEC Programme will not give consideration to the concept of a 'virtual campus' or to schools that do not actually share facilities.

4. Application Information

- 4.1 Applicant schools are encouraged to work with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the Education Authority (EA) in the preparation of their applications.
- 4.2 Applicants are advised that rather than providing generic content about the statutory and policy basis and benefits of shared education, it would be more beneficial to provide specific evidence against each criterion about their schools and the intended benefits and outcomes of their project in the application.
- 4.3 The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) have developed a self-evaluation framework for Shared Education ("Developing Shared Education: A Framework for School Partnerships"
www.sepni.org/resources/6599/7067_6599_87_ETi_Self-Evaluation_Framework.pdf). The framework is a tool that can be used by schools to self-assess their current position in relation to the delivery of shared education.

- 4.4 The framework uses the four 'Every School a Good School' Indicators to allow schools to assess their current position in the four key areas of:
- Learner Centred
 - High Quality Learning and Teaching
 - Effective Leadership
 - Community Connections.
- 4.5 In each of these key areas there are four main stages of progress on the journey to effective, high quality and embedded shared education - Defining, Developing, Expanding and Embedding - with associated descriptors.
- 4.6 Applicants to the SEC Programme may find it beneficial to self-assess using this framework as the process should assist them in identifying areas they could use as evidence, as well as evaluating whether they are likely to be suitable to progress to the next stage. This self-assessment should not be submitted to the Department.
- 4.7 Schools may wish to discuss this aspect of their development with their District Inspector (DI) but with the understanding that the DI would not be assisting in any way with their application.

5. Programme Requirements

Applications must be submitted on the associated application form.

- 5.1 A separate application form must be completed for each proposal. A summary checklist of SEC Programme requirements is provided at Annex A.

6. Gateway Checks

- 6.1 Each project proposal will have to demonstrate that they meet all four Gateway checks below in order to be progressed under the Programme:

a. Number, Management Type and Phase of Schools

The proposal must involve a minimum of two schools from different management sectors (ie controlled, Catholic maintained, other maintained, Irish-medium, integrated, voluntary grammar, special). If any proposal involves schools from more than one educational phase (eg primary/post-primary) at least two schools at each phase from different management sectors must be represented, to enable educational sharing across similar age groups.

b. Endorsement from respective Managing Authorities

The respective Managing Authorities of the schools involved in the application must provide written endorsement of their agreement to the proposal. Proposals under the Programme need to be consistent with the Managing Authorities' strategic plans for the schools under their control. In addition, the relevant Managing Authorities should be aware of any investment at or on behalf of schools through the SEC Programme which creates ongoing liabilities or recurrent resource implications and be prepared to support these.

c. Planning Authority endorsement

The Planning Authority (ie the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and/or the Education Authority) must provide assurance that the schools involved are part of their Area Plan for provision and that the proposal meets the six criteria in the "Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools" (SSP) for each school involved in the proposal. If this is not the case, they must provide a rationale for their endorsement, including an explanation as to how the proposal will contribute to the delivery of sustainable provision in the area going forward. The Planning Authority should engage with relevant sectoral support bodies on the proposal to make them aware of it and how it fits with planned provision in an area.

d. Evidence of Community, Parent and Pupil Support

Community, parent and pupil support is required to ensure the success of proposals. Evidence is therefore required to confirm support is in place from all three of these groupings. In recognition of the unique nature of each proposal, there is no definitive list of what form this support should take. The following list, though not exhaustive, provides some examples of evidence that would be considered:

- letters of support from respective applicant schools' student councils, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Boards of Governors, Educational partners, community organisations, local churches, local business, local playgroups, District Councils, local Councillors, MPs and MLAs;
- Details of consultations with or views sought from pupils, parents and Boards of Governors, local political and/or community representatives;
- Surveys of pupils, parents and Boards of Governors.

7. Essential Criteria

7.1 If a project proposal passes all the Gateway checks, it will then be assessed, scored and prioritised against the following essential criteria.

a. **Evidence of Existing Sharing** - Schools applying to the Programme should already be working in collaboration on curricular and non-curricular issues and/or be sharing facilities on an ongoing basis. The move to an SEC should therefore build on a solid foundation of existing sharing that is already well embedded. Evidence must be provided, detailing the **existing** educational sharing arrangements. This should include quantitative and qualitative evidence, for example;

- the number and percentage of pupils involved in shared classes;
- the frequency of shared classes,
- frequency and type of extracurricular activities,
- number of pupils involved in these activities;
- number and frequency of teacher/Board of Governor shared activities; etc and/or
- an evaluation of the impact of shared activities on learning such as improvements in the quality of experience/learning for the children and young people involved.

Future Sharing - Applicants must also detail how their proposal will enhance and increase **future** sharing between all schools involved in the application and allow the existing sharing to increase. This should include quantitative and qualitative projections based on robust assumptions. Applicants should also explain why they could not undertake the sharing proposed within existing schools/facilities.

b. **Educational Benefits** - the proposal must demonstrate how it will benefit the education of all children involved. The overarching priority for any proposal brought forward under this Programme must be the delivery of educational benefits to children and young people through improving or facilitating sharing initiatives. Marks will be allocated on the basis that the proposal clearly demonstrates:

- how educational benefits to the children and young people will be delivered through the sharing of classes, subjects, sports and extra-curricular activities together by developing future plans to increase the level of sharing between the schools involved;
- how the proposal can aid the sharing of teaching expertise amongst the schools;

- that the courses being delivered are not a duplication of existing provision (in particular Further Education courses);
 - that consideration of the SSP Quality Educational Experience criterion and indicators of not more than 2 composite year groups in a class and a school with a minimum of 4 teachers will be met; and
 - that the current quality of education will be enhanced.
- c. **Societal Benefits** - the proposal must demonstrate how it will enhance/develop a shared future for the local community.
- How will the proposal support the draft PfG outcome; 'We are a shared society that respects diversity'.
 - The specific aim of the T:BUC strategy relating to education is 'To enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience'.
 - Building good relations, tackling intolerance and challenging prejudice can be embedded through the ethos of schools and is already an integral part of the curriculum.
 - Creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational underachievement, unemployment, and sectarianism;
 - improving good relations amongst and for our young people; and
 - The local community should benefit from a shared perspective for example, the retention of a minority community within an area.

Proposals will be marked, based on the evidence provided, on how they will contribute to this overall objective.

- d. **Religious Balance** - A minimum of **15%**, and preferably 30%, of the minority community (Protestant or Roman Catholic) should be represented within the combined total of the school population involved.

Where the proposal involves schools from more than one phase of education (eg primary and post-primary), there should be a religious balance across individual phases so that educational sharing can take place between similar age groups.

8. Desirable Criteria

8.1 In addition, priority will be given to project proposals that demonstrate they meet the following desirable criteria which will also be assessed and scored:

- a. **Location** - to facilitate maximum sharing and to ensure significant time is not lost from the teaching timetable through moving pupils between locations it is anticipated that proposals supported under the Programme will be for facilities/schools located within the same campus or in close proximity. Distances between schools/facilities must be included in all proposals. Any proposal that is for shared facilities rather than a shared campus should provide details on the distances between the schools involved and schools will have to explain travel arrangements and demonstrate how they plan to minimise the impact on pupils' education of travelling between the sites involved. Markings will be based on the proximity of the facilities to the schools involved. Shorter distances attract higher scores. For those proposals that involve a number of new facilities and schools, the longest distance that a pupil from one school will have to travel to access a proposed facility will be the distance used to determine the score for that proposal.

Proposals could also seek to reduce current travel distances/times where, for example, a school has to travel to access sports facilities, and the proposal would reduce this travel distance/ time. Details of existing and proposed distances should be provided.

- b. **Socio-economically Disadvantaged Pupil Considerations** - proposals involving schools which serve high proportions of our most disadvantaged pupils, as indicated by the percentage of free school meal entitled (FSME) pupils enrolled in the schools, will be awarded higher marks.

Statistics show, year on year that pupils from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as indicated by FSME, are almost half as likely to gain five good GCSEs including English and Maths as their peers from more affluent backgrounds. FSME is a statistically valid method of identifying and measuring social disadvantage in our schools. It is recognised that pupils from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have greater obstacles to overcome and that additional support may be required to assist them in breaking the link between social deprivation and educational outcome.

Priority will be therefore be given to proposals involving schools which serve our most disadvantaged pupils, as indicated by the percentage of free school meal entitled (FSME) pupils enrolled in the schools. This is in line not only with the Shared Education Act (NI) 2016 definition of shared education, as outlined earlier in paragraph 2.4, but also with the recognition given in the T:BUC strategy that one of the benefits of a more shared education system is to raise educational standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

Schools are 'banded' for social deprivation (TSN) funding under the Common Funding Formula, based on the numbers of pupils entitled to FSM within each school. The vast majority of schools are placed in bands 1, 2 or 3. Marks will be awarded to proposals on the basis of the bandings of the schools involved in each proposal with the maximum marks awarded to schools in TSN Band 3. Where schools involved in the proposal are in different TSN bandings, marks will be awarded on the basis of the highest TSN banded school. This is to encourage social as well as religious mixing.

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9. Assessment

- 9.1 Applications should demonstrate that all Gateway checks and Essential criteria are met and that any evidence requested is provided. Proposals considered as having met all the Gateway checks will be asked to give a short presentation on their proposal (further detail in para 12.2). Applications will then be assessed with priority given to those proposals that best meet both the essential and desirable criteria.

10. Other Application Information

- 10.1 Applicants to the SEC programme must also provide information in respect of the following areas:
- **Constraints to the Project** - Applicants are asked to identify any potential constraints to the project that they are aware of, for example land issues; legal constraints; planning approval issues; community resistance or any known opposition to the proposal;
 - **Management and Implementation** - Applicants must give a preliminary indication of the proposed management arrangements ie Project Board membership; any important outstanding management/implementation considerations; any legal or contractual issues you are aware of;
 - **Costs, other benefits and Risks** - Applicants must provide broad estimates of the capital and recurrent costs of their proposal. Where recurrent costs are identified, applicants should state where these funds will be sourced from and confirm if these funds have been secured. Applicants should also describe any non-monetary benefits, not already

covered, that are expected to arise. Applications should also explain the key risks the project is likely to face as well as any potential mitigation measures.

- 10.2 Signed confirmation from both the school Principal and the Chair of the Board of Governors from each school involved in an application, must be included at the end of each application.

11. Calls for Applications - Application Process

- 11.1 The Third Call to the SEC Programme was launched by the Minister during Community Relations Week in September 2016. Applicants should note that a standard SEC Programme Application Form for the Third Call must be completed by project applicants. Completed applications must be endorsed by the appropriate Managing and Planning Authorities and all have to be submitted via the EA. **Applications not submitted via the EA will not be accepted by the Department.** The EA (and CCMS where appropriate) will advise schools of the specific date, in December 2016, they require receipt of proposals in order to allow them time for consideration and endorsement by Commissioners (and Council Members if appropriate) to meet the Department's deadline of 5 pm on 27 January 2017.
- 11.2 The completed application form should set out the case for the shared education campus proposal. It should clearly introduce the basic project concept, backed up with information on sharing already in place, proposed future sharing, the educational benefits, the projected cost, and timing of the project.
- 11.3 The application must be endorsed by the relevant school Managing Authorities for all schools involved in a proposal ie the EA on behalf of controlled schools in its area; the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools on behalf of Catholic maintained schools; or, in the case of Voluntary Grammar, Grant Maintained Integrated, other Maintained or Irish-medium Schools, the Board of Governors of the individual school(s) concerned.
- 11.4 The application must also be endorsed by the relevant Planning Authorities for all schools involved in a proposal ie the CCMS in respect of Catholic Maintained schools and/or the EA, which has responsibility for ensuring that efficient primary education and post-primary education is available to meet the needs of the area and that the area has sufficient schools of the right size and of the right type, in respect of all school types.
- 11.5 The Planning Authority will confirm in writing to the Department whether or not it endorses the applications it receives. If an application is not endorsed by the Planning Authority, the Planning Authority will inform the school(s) involved of the position but the proposal must still be submitted to the Department.

12. Assessment of Applications

- 12.1 A panel of senior DE and ETI officials, chaired by the Director of Area Planning, Admissions and Shared Campuses will be established to consider proposed projects against the set criteria.
- 12.2 Following the closing date for receipt of applications, all project applications will be assessed under the Gateway checks as set out at 6.1 above. Applicants with applications that pass the Gateway checks will be invited to deliver a 15 minute presentation on their proposal. This will be followed by a 15 minute Question and Answer session on the proposal by members of the Assessment Panel. Information conveyed during presentations can be used to assist with the assessment of proposals: representatives from each school involved in an application will be expected to attend the presentation. Applicant schools will be given advance notice of the date of and arrangements for their presentation.
- 12.3 Application forms will be assessed, along with the supporting evidence provided, against the Essential and Desirable criteria as set out in 7.1 and 8.1 above on the basis of the information provided in the application forms and at their presentation.
- 12.4 Following this, assessed applications that best meet the criteria will be submitted to the Minister for a final decision on which projects will be approved to proceed to the Economic Appraisal stage.

13. Approval of Applications to the Programme

- 13.1 The Minister will make the final decisions on which projects should go forward to Economic Appraisal Stage, based on the recommendations of the Assessment Panel. There is no appeal mechanism if a project is not selected.
- 13.2 Planning and Managing Authorities will be informed of the projects approved and not approved by the Minister to proceed to the planning stage. Schools involved in applications will be advised at the same time.
- 13.3 An indicative timetable is included below and a process map is attached at Annex B of this guidance document.

14. Indicative Timetable for Third Call for Expressions of Interest

- 14.1 The indicative timetable for the Third Call under the SEC Programme is as follows:
 - September 2016 - Third Call for Applications to the SEC Programme - the Department notifies Managing and Planning Authorities and all grant-aided schools of the process, copying the approved application guidance, programme application form, and programme timetable and advising them of Information Sessions for interested schools.

- October 2016 - Information Sessions for interested schools, to provide guidance/clarification on the application process.
- January 2017 - deadline for submission of proposals to the Department via the Education Authority.
- February/March 2017- Presentations by Applicants whose applications have passed the Gateway checks.
- May 2017 - Announcement of Third Call applications to the SEC Programme selected to proceed in planning.

15. Project Governance

- 15.1 Project governance and control structures will be established for the projects selected by the Minister to proceed to the planning stage. This will require the establishment of a Project Board, usually with a joint Senior Responsible Owner and Project Manager, and involving representatives from school Managing Authorities, Boards of Governors, Principals and DE to oversee the preparation of an Economic Appraisal for consideration and approval by the Department. Economic Appraisals will be considered within the normal business approval processes and in line with NI Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEAE) guidelines, including value for money and affordability. Projects are also subject to NIO approval. Only after approval of the Economic Appraisal, and subject to available capital funds, will a project be permitted to proceed to tender and construction.
- 15.2 If required, the Department will provide support to Managing Authorities in the development of Economic Appraisals for the selected projects.

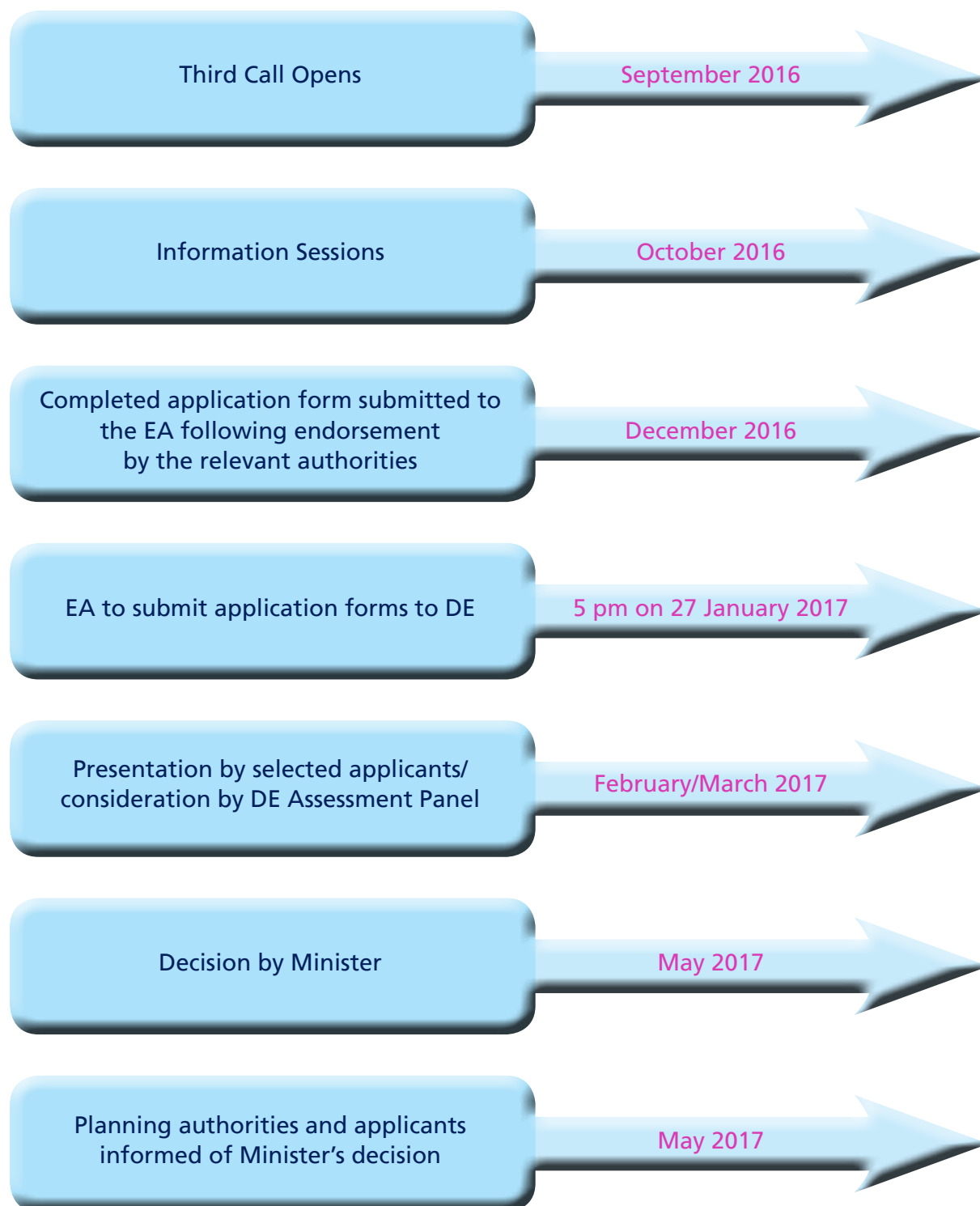
Applicant Checklist Table for all SEC Programme Requirements

GATEWAY CRITERIA	Y/N
Number, Management type and Phase of schools	
Endorsement from respective Managing Authorities	
Planning Authority Endorsement	
Evidence of Community, Parent and Pupil Support	
ESSENTIAL CRITERIA	
Evidence of Existing Sharing	
Details of Future Sharing	
Evidence of Educational Benefits	
Evidence of Societal Benefits	
Data on Religious Balance	
DESIRABLE CRITERIA	
Location - evidence of travel distances	
Data on Disadvantaged Pupil Consideration	
OTHER APPLICATION INFORMATION	
Information on Project Constraints	
Information on Management and Implementation	
Information on Costs, other Benefits and Risks	
Declaration from all schools involved in project	

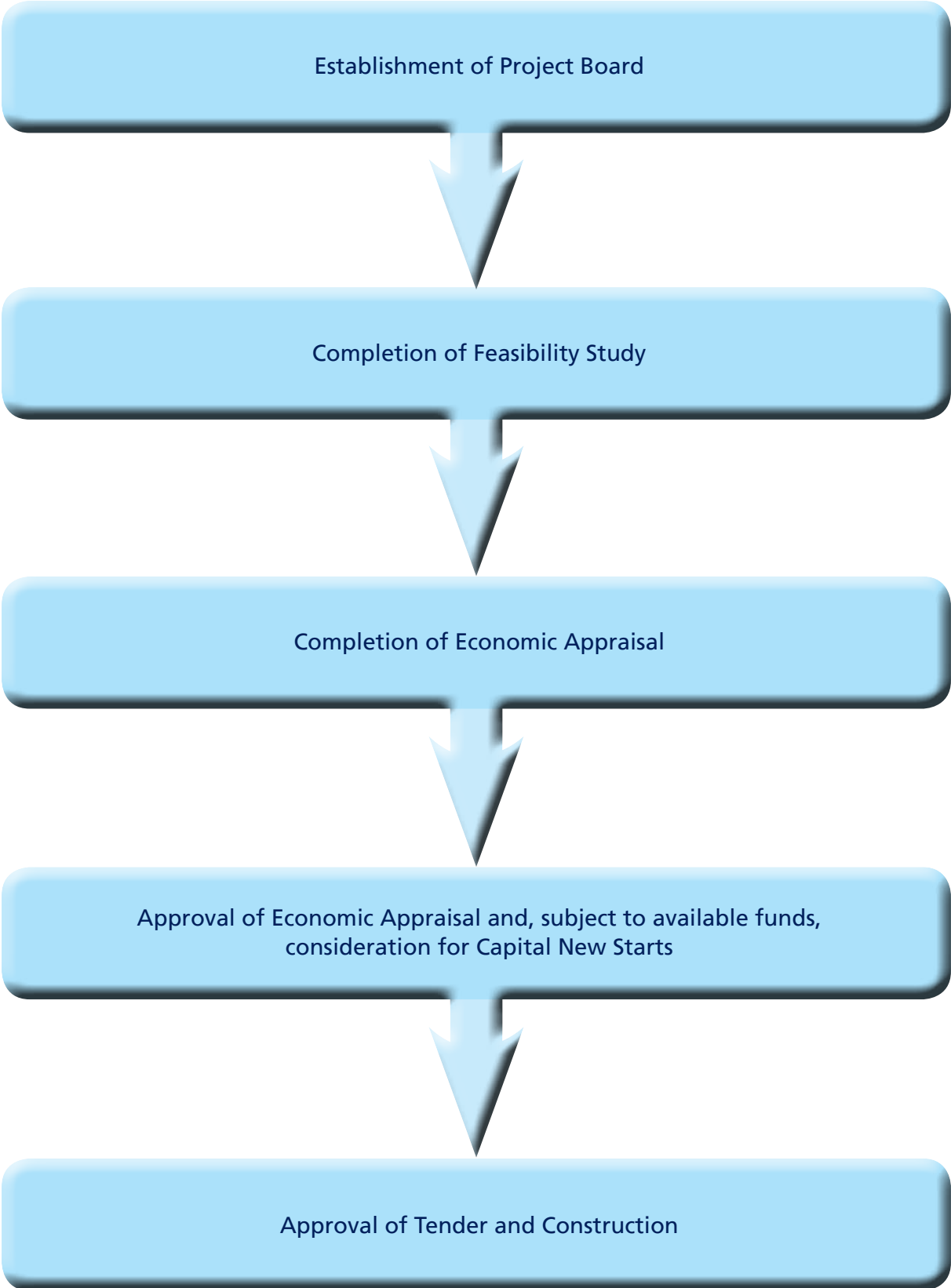
Shared Education Campuses (SEC) Programme Flow Chart for Process

Third Call for Applications to the SEC Programme

Indicative Timeline



Project Governance and Economic Appraisal (approved projects only)



Shared Education Campuses Programme

Third Call