Dublin, May 20th, 2013 – Junior Cycle reform will be explored by education stakeholders at a seminar entitled *Education in the 21st Century* taking place on Wednesday, May 22nd, 2013, in Trinity College Dublin.

Organised by the Research in School Education (RISE) Group in the School of Education, TCD, the seminar will focus on the rationale, aims and possible outcomes of proposed Junior Cycle reform in the context of improving young people’s opportunities and wellbeing.

The seminar will provide a forum for stakeholders to offer commentary on the philosophy and principles behind Junior Cycle education and to analyse proposed reforms in the context of aspirations, needs and feasibility at the individual, local, national and international levels.

In her keynote address, entitled “Schooling in the 21st Century”, TCD’s Associate Professor in Education, Dr Colette Murphy, will present her research into student perceptions of assessment among primary school-going children.

Dr Murphy’s research compared the views of children in Wales, where standard attainment tests (SATs) were abolished in 2004, with those of a group of children in England who were part of the last cohort to take SATs in science at the end of their primary education.

“The clearest message to emerge from this study is the enormous contribution children can make to debates on their own education. Young people often have a much more sophisticated understanding of the issues than they are given credit for and raise issues which might otherwise be overlooked,” Dr Colette Murphy commented.

Other speakers at the seminar will include Tony Donohoe, Head of Education, Social & Innovation Policy, Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC); Lesley Emerson, Lecturer in Education, Queen’s University Belfast; John Halbert, Director, Curriculum and Assessment, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA); Dr. Pádraig Hogan, Senior Lecturer in Education, National University of Ireland, Maynooth and Moira Leydon, Assistant General Secretary, Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland (ASTI).

The issues to be discussed at the seminar will be relevant to teachers, students, parents, researchers, policymakers, teacher educators and the wider community interested in the education and general development of our young people.

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