eTwinning School application process

Guidelines 2018

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The concept of recognition for work done in eTwinning has been in existence since the start with Quality Labels being available to teachers for their projects both at national and European level. However, these labels are applied only to the work of individual teachers in projects which, at this point in the evolution of eTwinning, is but one part of a wide range of possible areas of activities that eTwinning teachers may engage in. Moreover, the development of eTwinning has signalled a progression in terms of staff involved in eTwinning from the same school (an average of almost three in 2018), which confirms the trend that eTwinning is not only an initiative engaging scattered individuals but rather a concerted action within the school.

Section 1: Identification of the schools & application process

1.1 Identification of eTwinning Schools: Selection Criteria

The identification of eTwinning Schools is based on a two steps procedure. At each stage, a number of criteria must be fulfilled.

Stage 1 is an automatic check by the system of the following 3 points
- The school is registered in eTwinning for more than 2 years
- There are at least 2 active[1] eTwinning teachers linked to the school
- There is a European eTwinning project with a National Quality Label (within the last 2 years from application date).

If a school passes Stage 1 by fulfilling all these requirements, all registered eTwinning teachers in that school will receive an email inviting them to fill in a self-assessment application form. This form is available – only for the schools passing Stage 1 - on eTwinning Live.

Stage 2 is a self-assessment application covering the following 6 Criteria
- **Criteria A.** The school must demonstrate activities that prove teachers'/pupils' awareness of responsible use of the internet
- **Criteria B.** The school must demonstrate that there is an active collaboration between a

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[1] The notion of 'active' is rather inclusive: a teacher registered in that school (who is still flagged as 'working in that school' via the profile information) who is not anonymised is considered active no matter what activities s/he has (not) done in the platform.

group (3 or more) of teachers in eTwinning activities.
- **Criteria C**. The school must demonstrate that at least 2 separate groups of pupils[2] in the school are involved in eTwinning project/projects
- **Criterion D**. The school must demonstrate that two active eTwinning teachers from the school must have participated in one or more eTwinning educational event
- **Criteria E**. The school must publicly show its involvement in eTwinning for instance by 1. displaying the eTwinning logo and/or a description of their eTwinning activities on the school website and/or 2. evidence from a school publicity /policy document or brochure
- **Criteria F.** The school must demonstrate that an eTwinning promotional activity has taken place within the school or in the local community in the year of the award

The application period covers 3 months to allow schools to gather the necessary material. Schools are asked to provide evidence in the various criteria and the final submission must be certified by the School Principal/Manager.

1.2: System actions triggered after Stage 1

The running of the Stage 1 process triggers 3 actions as follows:

1. All eTwinning teachers in schools fulfilling the three criteria will receive an email inviting them to fill out the application form.
2. The application form will be available for each teacher in each eligible school (the link will be in the email and also on the home page of eTwinning Live for teachers in eligible schools)
3. The CSS will send an email with a list of eligible schools & teachers to the NSS/PSA

1.3 Time Frame 2018

The application process for the eTwinning School 2018 will begin on the 9th November 2018 with the running of the automatic process for Stage 1

It will close on the **15th February 2019**

If there is a case where teachers feel their school is eligible but they did not receive an email, there is a **5 week appeal period** .

In order for this to work we advise that in your announcement about the launch of the eTwinning School application process in your country, you include a sentence saying – *If you think your school is eligible but none of the eTwinning teachers in the school have received an email inviting them to fill out the application form, please contact us (@the NSS) for a review of the situation. The review period will end on the* **14 December 2018**-

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[2] This is normally two different classes of pupils

The applicants have until the **15ᵗʰ February 2019** to submit the application form After this there will then be a period of **6 weeks for the NSS/PSA to validate** the agreed 10% of applicants to be finished by the **29 March 2019**. The validation process can of course begin as the applications are finalised during the application period. The announcement and publication of the list of schools will take place shortly after in the beginning of April

1.4 Summary of application process dates

9 November 2018 – stage 1 process runs and applications open
9 November – 14 December 2018 – appeal process for schools who feel they have been left out
15 February 2019 – at midnight the applications will close
15 February – 29 March 2019 – NSS/PSA validation period
After 1 April – Public announcement of awarded schools

Section 2: Filling the application form

2.1 The structure of the form

The application form is an online self-assessment by the school of its eligibility based on the 6 criteria mentioned in Section 1 above. The form contains 17 Questions divided between 4 sections.

In the application form the six criteria are grouped into 4 Sections:
- eTwinning and its contribution to developing eSafety awareness in the school
- eTwinning and its contribution to the teaching and learning practices, interdisciplinary teaching and project work
- eTwinning and its contribution as an active and strategic professional development tool for teachers and other school actors
- eTwinning and its contribution to the strategic development of the school

Each Section contains 1 or more criteria with related questions. This may be seen in Table 1.

Sections	Criteria	Question
Section 1: eTwinning and its contribution to developing eSafety awareness in the school	**Criteria A.** The school must demonstrate activities that prove teachers'/pupils' awareness of responsible use of the internet	Policy q1-3 Practice q 4 - 7
Section 2: eTwinning and its contribution to the teaching and learning practices, interdisciplinary teaching and project work	**Criteria B.** The school must demonstrate that there is an active collaboration between a group (3 or more) of teachers in eTwinning activities. **Criteria C.** The school must demonstrate that at least 2 groups of pupils in the school are involved in eTwinning project/projects	Q 8 - 11
Section 3: eTwinning and its contribution to an active and strategic professional development tool for teachers and other school actors	**Criterion D.** The school must demonstrate that two active eTwinning teachers from the school must have participated in one or more eTwinning educational event	Q12/13
Section 4: eTwinning and its contribution to the strategic development of the school	**Criteria E.** The school must publicly show its involvement in eTwinning. eg. By 1. displaying the eTwinning logo and/or a description of their eTwinning activities on the school website or 2. evidence from a school publicity /policy document or brochure **Criteria F.** The school must demonstrate that an eTwinning promotional activity has taken place within the school or in the local community in the year of the award	Q 14-17

Table 1: Outline of the application form

Section 2.2 The application process

The form may be filled in by any eTwinner on the staff of the school although it is recommended that the teachers meet together with the school principal to discuss what approaches they will take to the various sections.

The application may be saved in draft form and may be edited by any other eTwinners on the staff (the system will show the editors and dates).

Please note:
- that the form is locked for 15 minutes after a teacher has saved a draft and left the session, so another teacher in the school cannot open it.
- The final submission must include the upload of the Declaration of Honour signed & stamped by the school principal or manager. It this is not uploaded and submitted the application form is not fully received by the system and cannot be validated.

Each criterion has a set of questions to be answered. Depending on the answer chosen, the applicant schools must provide supporting evidence in the form of a document upload, or a link to relevant material. In some questions, the system will prefill in information that already exists in the system and the applicant can supplement that information.

Depending on the answer & the submission of proof by the applicant school a set of points is automatically awarded by the system in each section.

Please note:
- In Section A (eSafety) the school must achieve the points required to be successful, otherwise they cannot be granted the title.
- The fulfilling of the criteria takes precedence over the points so there are cases where schools achieve high points but fail in one or more criteria and are subsequently not awarded the label.

Table 2 gives a breakdown of the weighting of each question:

Section	Criteria & weights	Comments
Section 1: eTwinning and its contribution to developing eSafety awareness in the school 1.1　　Policy 1.2　　Practice	1.1 - Minimum score in 2 out of 3 questions / Q1,2 3 1.2 minimum score in 2 out of 4 questions　/ Q 4, 5, 6,7	This is compulsory for awarding the label
Section 2: eTwinning and its contribution to the teaching and learning practices, interdisciplinary teaching and project work	Minimum score in 2 out 3 questions relating to Criteria B /Q8,7,10 Minimum Score in 1 question relating to C　/Q11	Please note that if the score for Q11 is not achieved the label cannot be granted
Section 3: eTwinning and its contribution to an active and strategic professional development tool for teachers and other school actors	Must get the minimum score in 1 of the 2 questions relating to Criteria D Q12/13	
Section 4: eTwinning and its contribution to the strategic development of the school	Must get the maximum score in 1 of the 2 questions for Criteria E Q14 /15 **and** The minimum score in 1 of the 2 questions for Criteria F Q16/17	

Table 2: weighting of answers

Please Note
- A school may apply and submit and will get immediate feedback on the status of their application. Schools unsuccessful in their first submission are free to resubmit up to the final deadline.
- Any school rejected after its further submissions up to the deadline date, must wait until the next application period opens in 2019 if they wish to reapply

Once the application is submitted 3 system actions are triggered

1. successful schools receive a message as follows **(Note this is a revised message to be finalised at NSS PDW Albania)**

Thank you for your submission. You have answered all the areas successfully and are now in the process of becoming part of the elite group of European eTwinning Schools. Please note that your award is pending and will be reviewed by your National Support Service or Partner Support Agency who, in some cases, may come back to you to ask further information, before the final validation.

The formal announcement will be made in April 2019, and, provided that your application meets the required criteria, your school will be listed among the successful schools who have obtained the label of eTwinning School 2019 – 2020. By your participation you have demonstrated that your school and staff are really dedicated to the practice and promotion of eTwinning.

2. The system sends the above mail to all teachers + principal of the school with the same message
3. The system flags all schools as 'pending' in the NSS Desktop

Section 3: The Validation Process

Once the schools have been notified of the 'pending' status, the validation of at least 10% of the applications can begin or continue.

The review process is available on the NSS/PSA desktop under the registrations section as in Figure 1 below.
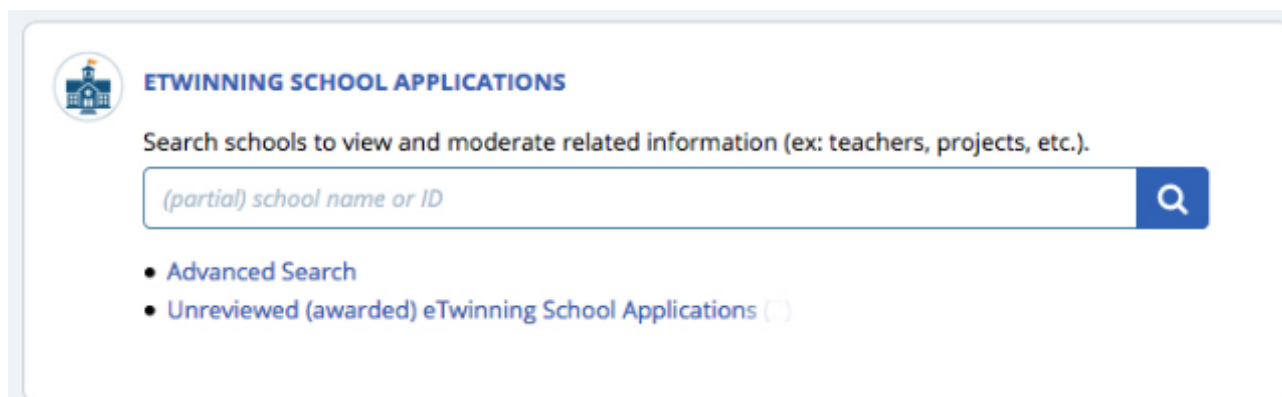
Figure 1

When you click on the unreviewed (awarded) link you will get a list of the awarded applicants. when you click on the id number in the left column you will see the application of that particular school. As you can see from Figure 2 below you get a summary of the information on the application form and if you click on the tabs you will see the answers for each section. We ask that in particular, you check the file uploads that are used in justification of an answer to see if they are in order.
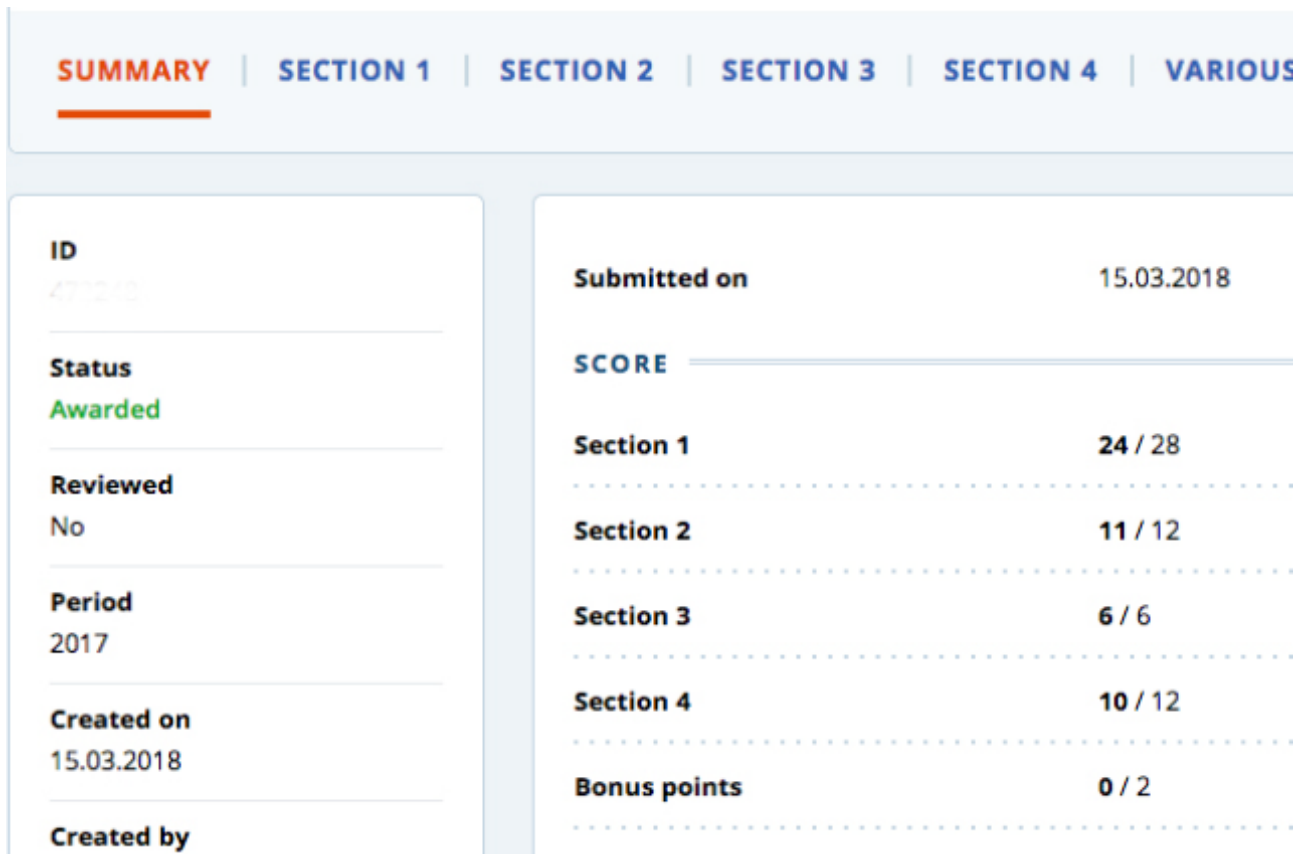
Figure 2

In addition we ask that you check the School Principal's Declaration which you may see under the Various tab as per Figure 3 below.
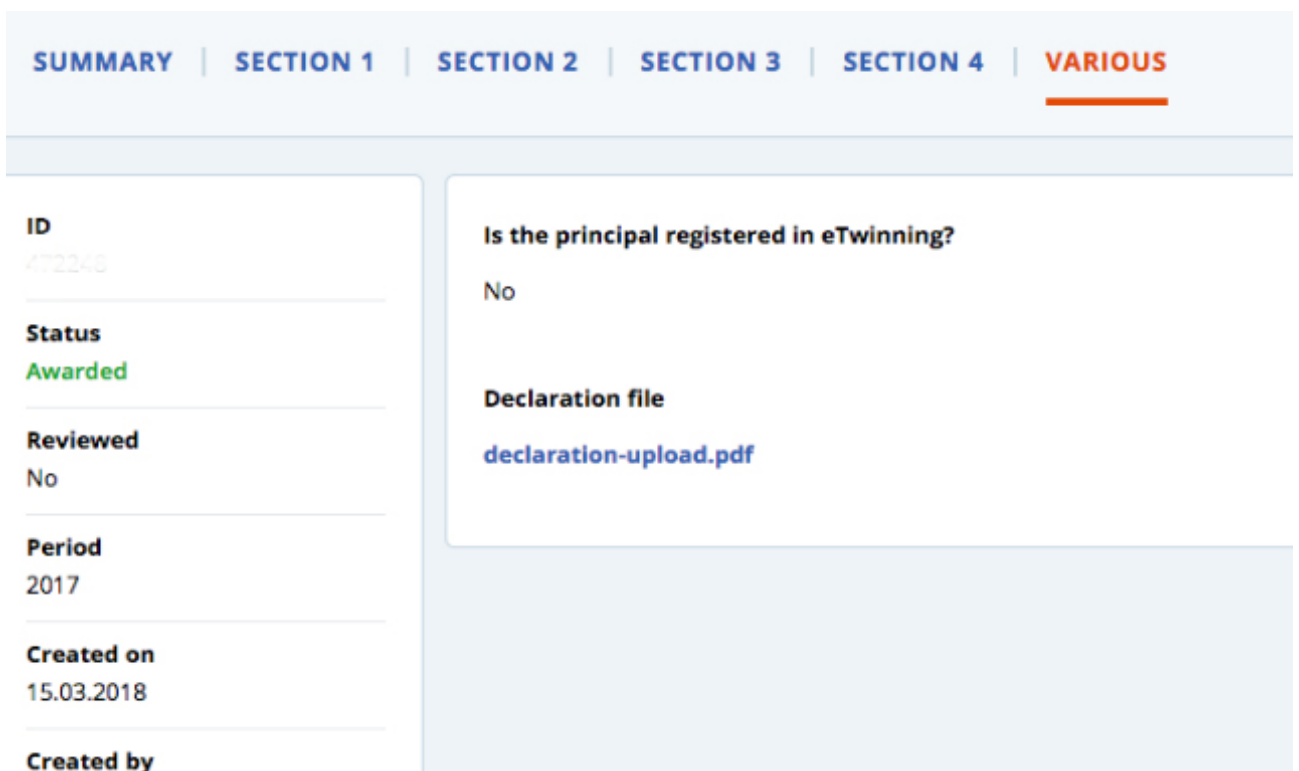

Figure 3

Should you notice something amiss, we suggest you first **check with the school** and ask them to provide the correct information. If you are still not satisfied you may reject the application by clicking on the reject button

After the 1st April on a chosen date which will be communicated in advance, the system will change the 'pending' status to 'awarded' for all applications who have not been rejected. Such applications will be added to the ones NSS/PSA have already validated and given the 'awarded' status.

Section 4 Communication

The CSS will communicated along the process with reminders of the various significant dated.

In April 2019 the CSS will send a Communication plan to coordinate the announcements of the new eTwinning Schools in every country.

Section 5: Merging Schools – known issues

There is a known an issue which may occur if you merge schools during the application period or after the final point of awarding the schools, one of which may have been awarded the eTwinning School label.

When merging schools in the NSS Desktop you must check in the step where you see the information of the schools. If a school has applied for the eTwinning School application and whether it was awarded the Label or not, you must keep that school or else the application and if awarded, the award status will be lost and cannot be recovered!

When you are merging 2 or more schools the system will check how many applications there are, and which have been awarded.

If there are no applications, then any selected school can be chosen as the school to keep.

If there is one or more schools with an application, but no awarded schools, the school(s) that can be kept will be limited to those that have an application.

If 1 or more schools were awarded the Label then the school(s) that can be kept will be limited to those that were awarded the label, excluding schools that were not awarded the label but did apply.

In addition the different "Yes" values are highlighted in red and bold font.

Figure 4 below gives an example:

Figure 4

Here only the ID 71 can be kept because it was awarded the Label while the others were not, even if ID 66 did apply.