

**Final Report of the Review Panel to the Teaching Council following a review of the following reconceptualised Initial Teacher Education Programmes at St Angela's College:**

**Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Biology and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)**

**Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Economics and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)**

**Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Gaeilge and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)**

**Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Religious Education and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)**

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## 1. Background

### 1.1. The Teaching Council's Review and Accreditation Function

The Teaching Council is the statutory body charged with setting the standards for entry to the teaching profession and ensuring that these standards are upheld.

In accordance with Section 38 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001, the Council shall:

1. review and accredit the programmes of teacher education and training provided by institutions of higher education and training in the State,
2. review the standards of education and training appropriate to a person entering a programme of teacher education and training, and
3. review the standards of knowledge, skill and competence required for the practice of teaching,

and shall advise the Minister and, as it considers appropriate, the institutions concerned.

The Teaching Council's role in relation to the review and accreditation of programmes of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is distinct from the academic accreditation which programmes also undergo. Academic accreditation is based on the suitability of a programme for the award of a degree/diploma, whereas professional accreditation for any profession is a judgement as to whether a programme prepares one for entry into that profession.

The review and accreditation of programmes of ITE by the Teaching Council provides an opportunity for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to demonstrate that they offer quality programmes of teacher education. It is expected that the graduates of such programmes will achieve programme aims and learning outcomes which are aligned with the values, professional dispositions, and the standards of teaching, knowledge, skill and competence that are central to the practice of teaching.

### 1.2. Review and Accreditation Strategy

In order to guide its review of programmes, the Teaching Council has published *Initial Teacher Education: Strategy for the Review and Accreditation of Programmes* (hereinafter referred to as 'the Council's review strategy'). That document sets out the process by which programmes are reviewed.

### 1.3. National Policy Framework

In carrying out reviews, the Council is mindful of its *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education* which sets out its vision for teacher education at all stages of the continuum – ITE, Induction, and Continuing Professional Development. Published in 2011, the policy highlights the evolving and dynamic context for teaching and the increasingly complex role of teachers in Ireland today. The policy states that "...the time is now right for a thorough and fresh look at teacher education to ensure that tomorrow's teachers are competent to meet the challenges that they face and are life-long learners, continually adapting over the course of their careers to enable them to support their students' learning." It further states that innovation, integration and improvement should underpin all stages of the continuum.

In parallel with the development by the Council of its *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education*, the Minister for Education and Skills initiated a national consultation process on the theme of improving literacy and numeracy. This culminated in 2011 with the publication of *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life* as the national strategy to improve literacy and numeracy standards among children and young people in the education system. The strategy emphasised teachers' professional development and proposed that the duration of initial teacher education (ITE) programmes should be extended and that programme content should be reconceptualised.

#### **1.4. Accreditation Criteria**

The Teaching Council, having established an Advisory Group on Initial Teacher Education, developed criteria to be observed and guidelines to be followed by providers in reconceptualising programmes of initial teacher education at primary and post-primary levels. They were approved by the Council and published in June 2011 (with a revised version in August 2011) as *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers* (hereinafter referred to as the Council's criteria). These relate to a range of areas, including programme design, areas of study, the duration of programmes, the numbers and qualifications of staff, facilities and resources. As such, they form the bridge between the Council's policy and the development and implementation of reconceptualised programmes. Significantly, the criteria: prescribe those areas of study which will be mandatory in programmes, including numeracy and literacy, behaviour management, parents in education, ICT and inclusive education;

- set out for the first time the expected learning outcomes for graduates of all ITE programmes
- propose raising the minimum requirements for persons entering programmes of ITE at primary level and a literacy and numeracy admissions test for mature entrants
- require a 15:1 student-staff ratio
- call for the development of new and innovative school placement models, involving active collaboration between HEIs and schools, and an enhanced role for the teaching profession in the provision of structured support for student teachers
- require that student teachers should spend at least 25% of the programme on school placement, and that such placements should be in a minimum of two schools
- require increased emphasis on research, portfolio work and other strategic priorities.

While recognising the inter-related nature of all aspects of programmes of teacher education, the criteria and guidelines are categorised under Inputs, Processes and Outcomes. All three dimensions have an important bearing on the quality of teacher education. The required Inputs and Outcomes are clearly elaborated in the document, while the Processes are less prescriptive to allow HEIs the freedom to develop the processes which best suit their individual situations.

Providers of existing programmes have been asked to reconceptualise their programmes in line with the revised criteria and to submit them for accreditation.

#### **1.5. Particular requirements for post-primary programmes**

In November 2011, the Council published *Teaching Council Requirements for Entry onto a Programme of Initial Teacher Education*, which set out the Council's revised subject criteria in draft form. Following a wide ranging consultation process involving all the major education stakeholders, a final set of proposals were developed and circulated to the providers of all concurrent programmes (post-primary) in early December 2012 so that they might have regard to them in reconceptualising their programmes. These were approved by Council in December 2012, and the Minister for Education and Skills has conveyed his agreement with the Council's views in this area. They have guided providers of post-primary concurrent programmes in determining the subject content coverage which is appropriate.

## 1.6. Programme overview

### 1.6.1. Background

St Angela's College in Lough Gill, County Sligo (hereinafter also referred to as 'the college') began providing an initial teacher education (ITE) programme in Home Economics (HE) in 1952. In 1978, the college was accredited to provide a four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree in Home Economics. In the mid-1980s, the elective subjects of Biology and Religious Education were added to its core HE subject to enable graduates to have two teaching subjects on completion of their degree. In 2003, the then Minister for Education announced the closure of St. Catherine's College, Sion Hill, Dublin, the only other national college providing an ITE programme in Home Economics. The business of St. Catherine's was transferred to St. Angela's, which doubled the intake to its B.Ed. programme, and the Department requested the College to add two additional elective subjects, Gaeilge and Economics. In 2006, St Angela's became a College of NUI Galway, and, in the context of the National Strategy for Higher Education, the college and the university are currently working towards the full incorporation of St. Angela's College into NUI Galway.

### 1.6.2. The reconceptualised PME programmes

St Angela's College has now reconceptualised all of its ITE programmes to offer four five-year ITE programmes in Home Economics, each with one other elective subject – Biology, Economics, Gaeilge or Religious Education. Students of the reconceptualised programmes will receive two awards. They will be awarded a B.A. Education (NFQ Level 8) after four years, and PME (NFQ Level 9) after the fifth year. It is only on the completion of the fifth year that students can register with the Teaching Council.

This report relates to the review of the following four reconceptualised programmes, hereinafter referred to as "the programmes":

- Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Biology and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)
- Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Economics and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)
- Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Gaeilge and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)
- Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Religious Education and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)

Each has 300 ECTS credits and received academic accreditation from NUI Galway in December 2014. After four years (Stages 1-4), students will be awarded a (Bachelor of Arts) B.A. degree (Education, Home Economics and Biology / Economics / Gaeilge or Religious Education), an NFQ level 8 honours degree. In order to be eligible to register with the Teaching Council however, students must complete a further year (Stage 5), which carries the award Professional Master of Education (PME) at NFQ level 9. To undertake Stage 5 of the programmes, students must achieve at least a H2.2 standard at the end of Stage 4. Successful completion of Stage 5 of the programme will entitle graduates to apply to the Teaching Council to be registered as teachers of Home Economics and Biology, or Home Economics and Economics, or Home Economics and Gaeilge, or Home Economics and Religious Education.

Students who successfully complete the programme Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Biology and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics) will also be eligible to apply for registration as teachers of Science at Junior Cycle level.

Students who successfully complete the programme Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Economics and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics) will **not** qualify to apply for registration as teachers of Business Studies at Junior Cycle level as they will not have studied the minimum 10 ECTS credits in Business and 10 ECTS credits in Accounting required in the Teaching Council subject criteria. However, the panel notes that St. Angela’s College is currently working in conjunction with the PDST to develop a short course in Economics for junior cycle and commends the college for this innovative engagement.

The programmes are comprised of three major components:

- (a) Home Economics
- (b) A second academic subject (Biology, Economics, Gaeilge or Religious Education)
- (c) Education - Foundation and Professional Studies and School Placement.

The breakdown of ECTS credits for each stage (academic year) of the programme is as follows:

	Education Credits	Home Economics Credits	Biology / Economics / Gaeilge, Religious Education Credits	ECTS credits Yearly Total
Stage 1	20	25	15	60
Stage 2	20	25	15	60
Stage 3	20	20	20	60
Stage 4	20	20	20	60
Stage 5	40	20	0	60

### 1.6.3. Notable features of the programmes

The extension of the programmes from four to five years, and an associated reduction in the ECTS credit allocation per year, from 70 to 60, has enabled a reduction in contact hours per ECTS credit, from 10 contact hours per credit to 8 contact hours per credit in the case of the B.A and 6 contact hours per credit in the PME year. The college anticipates that the extension to the duration of the programmes, with the associated reduction in the number of ECTS credits per year, and the number of contact hours per ECTS credit, will afford students greater opportunities to critically engage with current research and scholarship in education and subject content.

As well as the changes to overall programme duration and ECTS credit weightings, there are also notable changes in terms of programme content and sequencing. Firstly, education modules have been revised to include a greater focus on *Assessment for Learning* to enable student teachers to engage with the most up-to-date approaches to assessment in line with the new junior cycle.

Secondly, new modules have been designed, *Professional Preparation and Development 5*, *Sociological Perspectives in Education*, *Dissertation Research Methods in Education* and *School Placement in Home Economics and Biology/Economics/Gaeilge/Religious Education*. Thirdly, the extended 10 week School Placement is now situated in the PME year to enable higher levels of engagement with practice and associated research and critical reflection. The panel noted in particular that the *Dissertation Research Methods in Education* module, coupled with the extended School Placement will better realise the potential for practitioner-based research, including action research, and a higher level of research output from graduates of the ITE programme. This will form part of the foundation for the Continuum of Teacher Education (as set out by the Teaching Council) which supports practitioner-based research in and on practice in line with best international teacher education research.

The panel also notes that a range of areas for collaborative development between St. Angela's College and the School of Education, NUIG will include an increased emphasis on research underpinned by an expectation of active engagement in research by all staff members. Staff of St. Angela's will contribute to the development and networking of a learning community of teacher educators in St. Angela's and NUIG, as recommended in the Teaching Council Criteria and Guidelines (par. 1.5).

#### **1.6.4. Entry requirements**

It is expected that a majority of students will enter the programmes after the Leaving Certificate Examination through the CAO system. Some places will be reserved for mature students and students who enter via the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR). The following are the entry requirements from the Leaving Certificate Examination:

a) B.A. (Education, Home Economics and Biology) / PME (with Home Economics)

Applicants are required to have an established Leaving Certificate (or an approved equivalent) with at least two Grade C3s at Higher Level and four Grade D3s at Ordinary or Higher Level.

Subject Requirements:

- Irish, English, Mathematics
- A laboratory science subject
- A third language for entry purposes
- Any one other subject recognised for entry purposes

b) B.A. (Education, Home Economics and Economics) / PME (with Home Economics)

Applicants are required to have an established Leaving Certificate (or an approved equivalent) with at least two Grade C3s at Higher Level and four Grade D3s at Ordinary or Higher Level.

Subject Requirement:

- Irish, English, Mathematics
- Home Economics or a laboratory science subject
- A third language for entry purposes
- Any one other subject recognised for entry purposes

c) B.A. (Education, Home Economics and Irish) / PME (with Home Economics)

Applicants are required to have an established Leaving Certificate (or an approved equivalent) with at least two Grade C3s at Higher Level and four Grade D3s at Ordinary or Higher Level.

Subject Requirement:

- Irish (Minimum C3 at Higher Level)
- English, Mathematics
- Home Economics or a laboratory science subject
- A third language for entry purposes
- Any one other subject recognised for entry purposes

d) B.A. (Education, Home Economics and RE) / PME (with Home Economics)

Applicants are required to have an established Leaving Certificate (or an approved equivalent) with at least two Grade C3s at Higher Level and four Grade D3s at Ordinary or Higher Level.

Subject Requirement:

- Irish, English, Mathematics
- Home Economics or a laboratory science subject
- A third language for entry purposes
- Any one other subject recognised for entry purposes



## 2. The Review Process

The review of all of the reconceptualised five-year programmes took place between January and March 2015, in accordance with the Council's review strategy. The process was formally initiated when the Review Panel (hereinafter referred to as 'the panel') was appointed by the Teaching Council's Director, with Professor Áine Hyland as Chairperson.<sup>1</sup> To assist and support the work of the panel, Risteard Ó Broin was appointed as Rapporteur. His functions included liaison with the college, maintaining records of meetings, and drafting and finalising the panel's report in conjunction with the panel Chairperson. The panel was supported by external subject advisors for Home Economics, Gaeilge, Biology, Economics and Religious Education. Valuable support was also provided by the Director and staff of the Teaching Council.

Documentation relating to the application was furnished electronically to the panel on 5 January 2015 and hard copies were sent by courier to panel members on Wednesday, 7 January 2015. Panel members were asked to review the documentation and to submit their observations, comments or concerns to the rapporteur. In the course of their study of the documents, the panel maintained contact on a systematic basis both by e-mail and phone. In 2013 the same panel had reviewed the existing four-year B.Ed programme in Home Economics and Biology, Economics, Gaeilge, and Religious Education and as part of that review, panel members visited the college to meet with management and staff and to assess college facilities. As this current review took place within twelve months of the previous review, and as the college management team and staff had generally remained unchanged during that period, the panel considered that it was not necessary to visit the college again in 2015.

In January 2015, the documentation relating to the subjects Home Economics, Biology, Gaeilge, Religious Education and Economics was sent to five external subject advisors who reviewed it and provided advice to the panel in relation to the individual subjects.

Three of the five members of the panel met in the offices of the Teaching Council on Monday, 16 February to discuss the review. Two members of the panel were unavailable to attend meetings in February, however, as panel members were anxious not to delay the review, it was decided that those who could not attend in person would submit their evaluations and determinations in writing for consideration at the meeting. They also discussed their evaluations by phone and email with the Chair of the panel. All of the views, including those of the external subject advisers, were carefully considered at the meeting and the panel was able to arrive at a consensus decision in relation to the programme.

## 3. Publication of this Report

The Teaching Council routinely makes information available to the public in relation to its functions and activities and, in line with that practice, this report will be available on the Council's website, [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie).

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<sup>1</sup> Details of the Review Panel membership are included in [Appendix I](#)

## 4. Documentation

The documentation submitted in January 2015 by the college was in accordance with the template provided by the Teaching Council in the Pro Forma and Guidelines which accompany the Council's review strategy. It was comprehensive and clearly set out, facilitating easy navigation by the reader. The Pro Forma was meticulously completed, and concise documentation for each of the five subject areas (Home Economics, Biology, Economics, Gaeilge and Religious Education), was provided. The panel would like to compliment the staff of St. Angela's on an excellent submission, which was exemplary in terms of presentation, clarity and content.

Key areas of focus were:

### 4.1. Inputs

- Conceptual Framework
- The Programme
- Programme Aims
- Programme Design<sup>2</sup>
- Areas of Study
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies
- School Placement
- The Duration and Nature of the Programme
- Student Intake
- Staffing
- Facilities
- Student Support and Guidance Systems
- Communication and Decision-Making Structures
- Financial Resources

### 4.2. Processes

- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Approaches
- Engagement of Student Teachers with the Programme
- Engagement of Student Teachers with Staff and with other Student Teachers
- Progression within the Programme
- Personal and Social Development
- Development of Professional Attitudes, Values and Dispositions
- Lifelong Learning
- Reflective Processes

### 4.3. Outcomes

- Knowledge-Breadth/Knowledge-Kind
- Know-How & Skill-Range/Know-How & Skill-Selectivity
- Competence-Context/Competence-Role
- Competence-Learning to Learn
- Competence-Insight

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<sup>2</sup> Given that the new programmes will be offered for the first time in September 2015, the panel accepts that it would not be realistic to expect that a detailed timetable would be available at this stage.

## 5. Overall Findings

Having regard to the documentation submitted by the college, together with the reports of the five external subject advisors and on the basis of the visits to the college in 2013 and 2014 and the evidence garnered as a result of same, the panel considers that the programmes satisfy the criteria set down by the Teaching Council in its *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers* and in its curricular subject requirements in respect of the five subject areas. Accordingly, it recommends to the Teaching Council that the four ITE programmes, which lead to the award of a Professional Master of Education, level 9 qualification, should be granted accreditation:

- Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Biology and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)
- Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Economics and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)
- Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Gaeilge and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)
- Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Religious Education and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics)

Students who successfully complete the programmes leading to the award of Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Biology and Professional Master of Education (with Home Economics) will also have satisfied the Teaching Council requirement to teach Junior Certificate Science.

Students who successfully complete the programme leading to the award of Bachelor of Arts (Education) Home Economics and Economics will not have satisfied the Teaching Council requirements to teach Junior Certificate Business Studies.

The commendations in Section 6 below relate to areas of particular strength which the panel has identified. With regard to the recommendations in Section 7, the panel submits that the Teaching Council should require St Angela's College to set out, within twelve months of receiving the final review report, its proposals for implementing the recommendations. It further recommends that the Teaching Council should prioritise those areas for particular attention when the programme falls due for re-accreditation. In the case of the national issues raised in Section 8 of the report, the panel recommends that the Council engage in dialogue on those issues at national level.

The panel proposes that accreditation of the programme would have a lifespan of five years to date from September 2015.

## **6. Commendations**

The panel notes a number of particular strengths of the programme as follows:

### **6.1. Engagement with the review process**

The panel received full cooperation from St Angela's in respect of all aspects of the review. As previously noted, the documentation submitted by the college was of an exceptionally high standard – it set out clearly and concisely all the required information about the proposed programmes and was ordered and colour-coded to facilitate ease of access to the various sections; it accorded closely with the Council's Pro Forma and clearly described how the Council's criteria would be met. The subject modules were comprehensively described and included the ECTS credit weighting, rationale, aims, learning outcomes, content, teaching and learning strategies, assessment and bibliography for each module.

### **6.2. Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for the programmes is graphically set out in a manner that clearly illustrates the educational philosophy, beliefs, values, principles, aims and desired learning outcomes of the programme. It further describes the professional qualities, attitudes and dispositions that the college aims to inculcate in its students. It sets out a concurrent initial teacher education programme underpinned by an extensive analysis of foundation and professional studies, together with a comprehensive school placement experience for students which includes preparation, planning, micro-teaching and in-class teaching. The conceptual framework is informed by the most up-to-date educational research and the link between the conceptual framework and the various education and subject modules is apparent throughout the submission.

### **6.3. Areas of Study**

#### **6.3.1. Education**

The foundation and professional studies modules include relevant aspects of educational psychology, the history of education and approaches to educational policy development in Ireland; the sociology of education, educational technology and curriculum studies are all included; pedagogy and professional preparation for teaching are comprehensively covered. The programmes incorporate a wide range of assessment techniques. Good examples include the use of learning diaries and reflective portfolios enabling the students to develop an awareness of learning as they engage in self-assessment of learning and progress.

The panel commends the inclusion in module ED 2.1 - Curriculum Studies – of selected relevant contemporary curriculum developments at post-primary level in Ireland. Transition Year, School Development Planning, LCA, LCVP, CSPE, Health Promotion and Child Protection are explicitly covered in this module. SPHE is explored in the Curriculum Studies module 3.1.2.

#### **6.3.2. School Placement**

All school placement policies, procedures and practices are in compliance with the Teaching Council requirements and are implemented in a well-organised, professional manner. Aspects of school placement are delivered in each of the five years of the programmes to allow the student teachers to apply theory to practice consistently and developmentally, thus strengthening the theory-practice continuum. Students' school placement experience provides initially for observation followed progressively by direct teaching practice.

A fine example of integration across the programme is the involvement of ITE staff in school placement supervision. Staff members are therefore in a position to relate pedagogical approaches, including modelling used in the academic modules, to practice in the schools and vice-versa. The guidelines for school placement are well thought out and carefully documented. Students are placed in a variety of school settings and schools are requested to give student teachers some experiences of a whole-school nature – briefing them on management structures, mission statements and ethos, and involving students, where appropriate, in planning meetings and extra-curricular activities. Assessment procedures and templates for monitoring students' planning, preparation and classroom practice are very well designed and students' teaching performance and professional progress is comprehensively evaluated.

### **6.3.3. Home Economics**

The panel was very impressed by the excellent programme in Home Economics provided by St. Angela's College which it recognised as world-class. There is clear evidence of staff commitment, at individual and at team level, to deliver an outstanding learning experience for students.

The college prepares graduates to teach Home Economics to the highest level in post-primary schools. The reconceptualised programmes, delivered over five years, allow for the integration of theoretical, practical and conceptual dimensions of teaching and learning in Home Economics. The concurrent nature of the programmes facilitates a gradual build-up of knowledge, values, attitudes, understanding and personal and professional confidence and self-awareness. Practical dimensions of teaching and learning Home Economics are integrated appropriately into the modules. In addition, research and study skills and the use of information and communications technology (ICT) are skillfully integrated throughout the programme.

The programmes are well constructed and comprehensive, reflecting the discipline of Home Economics and Home Economics education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. There is an appropriate emphasis on Food Studies and Nutrition; Family Resource Management; Home Design and Management; Social Studies; and Textiles, Design and Fashion - all supported by relevant scientific understanding. The Stage 5 module (HE.5.1), *Professional Inquiry in Home Economics and Home Economics Education*, will enable the students, who should by that time have mastered the subject and have experienced a range of teaching approaches, to critically analyse contemporary issues in Home Economics and to engage in reflective practice which will inform their future professional practice. The Module, *Dissertation - Home Economics Education*, (HE. 5.2) which involves the completion of a 10,000 word dissertation will allow students to undertake a significant piece of independent research which will further develop their professional expertise.

### **6.3.4. Biology**

The proposals for Biology are detailed and very well presented. The reading lists are comprehensive and contain all the standard biology textbooks that are commonly used at university level. Course content is of a high standard, comparable to Biology programmes in other third-level institutions. A number of Home Economics modules, in particular in Food Science and Nutrition (HE 2.1) and Food Microbiology, Processing and Preservation (HE 3.1), will enhance students' study of Biology. Taking these modules into account, the panel noted that the programme provides learners with 72 ECTS credits in Biology overall. The panel is satisfied that students who successfully complete the programme will be well prepared to teach Biology to Higher Level Leaving Certificate.

It is commendable to see references to problem-solving, problem-based learning, and the numerous references to investigative practical work in the subject-specific modules and in the subject-pedagogy modules.

The skills listed for the Biology modules include very useful subject-skills to support the teaching of practical work in Biology and science in second-level schools. The use of dataloggers will support their use in practical Biology with second-level students. The modules in Chemistry and Physics are designed to develop learners' skills in problem-solving, manipulation of data, critical analysis and enquiry-based learning, so that learners will have experienced the application of the scientific method to investigative work. These modules enhance the students' overall experience, understanding and teaching of Biology and Science as a whole. It is commendable that the mandatory CAO entry requirements include a laboratory science subject.

The Teaching Council subject requirements for Junior Cycle science have been met.

### **6.3.5. Economics**

The Economics programme satisfies the subject criteria of the Teaching Council. There is an emphasis on context which provides an interesting link with Economic History, History and Home Economics. For example, *The Political Economy of Food* (EC3.4), links appropriately with the Home Economics course. Opportunities are provided for students to look at the same issues through different perspectives. There are good blog and website references for micro and macroeconomic topics in keeping with the application of economic principles to Ireland and the international economy. A number of modules emphasise student research in the areas such as Irish Economy, data analysis, etc.

### **6.3.6. Gaeilge**

Tá an clár foghlama an-chuí, cuimsitheach agus cothrom le dáta. Tá forbairt scileanna, an litearthacht agus an uimhearthacht ina measc, fite fuaite go cuí tríd an gclár. Tá an-bhéim ar an dea-ullmhúchán don teagasc (in aonar agus i gcomhpháirt), ar chruineas teanga i gcumarsáid agus i gcur le chéile acmhainní, agus ar an macnamh agus ar an athmhacnamh. Cuirtear an-bhéim ar an Teicneolaíocht Faisnéise agus Cumarsáide (TFC) ó thús deireadh. Féachtar ar riachtanais chineálacha éagsúla foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge a sholáthar, cé gur ar an bhfoghlaimeoir Gaeilge mar T2 is mó a dhírítear. Pléitear modhanna measúnaithe ar mhaithe le dul chun cinn an déagfhoghlaimeora a thomhas.

### **Irish**

The programme is very appropriate, comprehensive and up-to-date. The development of literacy and numeracy skills forms an integral part of the programme. There is great emphasis on students' preparation for teaching (individually and in partnership), on accuracy in communication and in the preparation of resources, and on reflection and review. Great emphasis is put on the use of information and communications technology (ICT) right throughout the programme. The needs of various categories of learners of Irish are provided for, although students learning Irish as a second language are primarily targeted. Assessment techniques to evaluate the progress of teenage learners are discussed.

### **6.3.7. Religious Education**

All areas of the Teaching Council subject criteria are covered. The programme is content rich, with a wide amount of material to be covered in each module. Great care has been taken to use a variety of assessment modes, and this is to be commended. The education element of the Religious Education programme is clearly integrated into the education component of the programme. The panel is advised that students who successfully complete the programme will have acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach R.E. to the highest level in post-primary education.

#### **6.4. Student Intake**

While the majority of students will enter the programme directly after the Leaving Certificate, St Angela's College is committed to widening participation and it already implements the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) schemes. In addition, it provides a one-year Access Foundation Course for mature-entry applicants and students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The panel commends the caring, inclusive student intake policy of the college.

#### **6.5. Facilities**

The panel viewed the wide range of Home Economics facilities, science laboratories, library, IT and other facilities available to both students and staff at the campus when the panel visited the college in 2014.

## 7. Recommendations

Having regard to:

- a) the *Pro Forma* documentation which was submitted
- b) the supplementary documentation that was provided pursuant to exchanges with the panel
- c) information gleaned during the previous visits to St Angela's College
- d) subsequent engagement with programme staff and changes that arose from the panel's observations

the panel has noted the following matters in relation to the programme which it considers should be developed.

The panel appreciates that in its response to the draft report, St. Angela's College has accepted the recommendations and indicated that they are already being addressed in expanded and/or revised documentation.

### 7.1. Education

It is recommended that some references to school self-evaluation (SSE) be provided to prepare learners to meaningfully engage with this process when they are in schools. This issue could be included in the Curriculum Studies modules.

It is recommended that the School Placement Report Template be revised to include explicit reference to the teaching of both literacy and numeracy and to the investigative approaches to teaching Science and Biology.

### 7.2. Biology

It is recommended that the Indicative Content section of ED 1.2 be reviewed to include explicit reference to the use of inductive problem-solving approaches to all science lessons, not just practical lessons, in accordance with the Teacher Guidelines for Junior Cycle Science.

The reading list should be reviewed as Junior Cycle reform has led to significant developments in science education in the past few years. The list could include papers on inquiry-based learning and inquiry-based assessment in Science and current NCCA documents such as the Background Paper and draft Science Specification for Junior Cycle Reform.

The reference on page 6 of the Biology submission to *Science Laboratory Demonstrations* should be reviewed, as to "demonstrate" the Junior Certificate Science and Leaving Certificate Biology laboratory practicals to local secondary school students would not constitute syllabus support and would in fact be contrary to the aims of the syllabus. Specifically, the science syllabus advocates investigation, and the aim of the biology syllabus is to foster in students an attitude of scientific inquiry.

To strengthen the many references to problem-based learning, it is recommended, that wherever applicable, the college strives to include the use of the investigative approach to learning science (in all lessons, not just practical laboratory lessons). This would reflect the language in use in the current syllabuses for Science and Biology and the new specification for Junior Cycle Science.



### **7.3. Economics**

It is recommended that the blogs and websites identified in Stage 1 should be continued into Stage 2 Microeconomics and Macroeconomics courses so that they can be used for Irish and international applications (these websites are included in the Irish Economy module). The Department of Finance website should also be included as a reference for valuable economic material in relation to the national budget.

### **7.4. Religious Education**

It is recommended that consideration should be given to making the modules REO 4.3 and REO 4.4 compulsory. These modules encompass some of the “big questions” of human existence, and would greatly enhance student teachers’ ability to engage with pupils at a deep level when they qualify.

### **7.5. Timetabling**

When the timetable is being prepared, there should be an appropriate balance between lectures, tutorials and laboratory practicals in the subject areas of Home Economics and Biology.

## **8. National Issues**

Arising from the review of this programme, the panel has noted the following issue which it believes merits further attention by the Teaching Council and/or other national stakeholders.

### **8.1. Curriculum Design and Assessment**

In the context of the proposed changes to the Junior Cycle programme, and of international best practice, all teacher education programmes should be required to make visible their approach to curriculum design and assessment. In practical terms, this requires a greater emphasis on the theory and practice of formative and summative assessment, and on the uses and limitations of testing. The Teaching Council's criteria and associated Pro Forma and Guidelines should be kept under review, having regard in particular to the evolving context for the Junior Cycle and the proposed new Leaving Certificate syllabi. (For example, the proposed revised Leaving Cert. Biology syllabus includes areas such as Bioinformatics, which are not currently included in the TC subject criteria).

## Appendix 1 - Review Panel Membership

### **Independent Review Panel Chair**

Professor Áine Hyland is Emeritus Professor of Education and former Vice-President of University College Cork. She is a member of the European Universities Association Institutional Evaluation team and has been involved in reviews of universities in Italy, Turkey, North Cyprus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovakia, Portugal and Romania. She is author of A Review of the Structure of Teacher Education Provision in Ireland, a Background Paper published in June 2012, and Transition from Second to Third Level, published in September 2011.

### **Teacher Education Expert**

Professor Seán Farren is a former member of the School of Education at the University of Ulster, where he is currently a Visiting Professor. He is also a former Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly and former Minister of Higher and Further Education in the NI Executive. In recent years he has been involved in developing research partnerships with universities in East Africa through the Irish-Africa Research Capacity Building project. He has published widely on curriculum development and the history of Irish education.

### **Teaching Council Member**

Mr. Patrick Mc Vicar was nominated to the Teaching Council by the post-primary school management organisations of ACCS, JMB and ETBI. He recently retired from his position as Principal of Pobalscoil Chloich Cheannfhaola, Falcarragh, Co. Donegal. He is a previous member of the Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools (ACCS) Executive Committee, where he chaired the Education sub-committee. He served on a number of NCCA committees including Course Committees for Technical Graphics, Design & Communication Graphics and the Board of Studies for Technological Subjects. At Teaching Council, he is a member of the Education, Registration and Disciplinary sub-committees, and serves on the Post-primary Applications Panel.

### **Inspector from the Department of Education and Skills**

Carmel Donoghue is senior Post-Primary Science Inspector at the Department of Education and Skills. She has a variety of experience in research, curriculum, teaching and inspection. Her work involves a range of evaluation models of teaching and learning, as well as whole-school evaluations, including management and leadership.

### **Rapporteur**

Mr. Risteard Ó Broin was, until recently, a member of the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills. Initially he worked as a District Inspector and later at Divisional level. In addition to conducting whole-school evaluations, he contributed to policy formulation and implementation in a variety of settings throughout the education system including the area of initial teacher education. Prior to being appointed an inspector, he taught at primary level in a number of schools and also served as a principal teacher of a large school for a period of seven years.

## Appendix 2 - Visit Schedule

### Monday 2 September 2013

<b>9.30-10.30</b>	Meeting with College President (Dr Anne Taheny), Head of Home Economics (Amanda McCloat), Head of Education (Eugene Toolan) and Director of B.Ed. Programme (Fiona Crowe).
<b>10.30-11.00</b>	Coffee break
<b>11.00-11.45</b>	Meeting with B.Ed. Programme Board (Approximately 28 people)
<b>11.45-12.45</b>	Meeting with personnel from the Home Economics subject specific discipline (approximately 8 people)
<b>12.45-1.30</b>	Meeting with personnel from other subject disciplines
<b>1.30-2.30</b>	Lunch
<b>2.30-3.30</b>	Meeting with Education Discipline including school placement team (approximately 8 people)
<b>3.30-4.30</b>	Tour of College Facilities
<b>4.30-5.00</b>	Concluding meeting with President, Head of Home Economics, Head of Education and Director of B.Ed. Programme

The following representatives of the Teaching Council Review Panel attended the meetings on Monday 2 September 2013:

Professor Áine Hyland (Chairperson)  
Professor Seán Farren  
Mr Patrick Mc Vicar  
Mr Risteard Ó Broin (Rapporteur)

Ms Madeleine Mulrennan (subject advisor for Home Economics) also attended

## Wednesday 29 January 2014

- 9.00-10.30** Meeting with College President (Dr Anne Taheny), Head of Home Economics (Amanda Mc Cloat), Head of Education (Eugene Toolan) and Director of B.Ed. Programme (Fiona Crowe).
- 10.30-11.00** Coffee break
- 11.00-12.30** Meeting with College President (Dr Anne Taheny), Head of Home Economics (Amanda Mc Cloat), and Director of B.Ed. Programme (Fiona Crowe).
- 12.30 – 1.30** Lunch

The following representatives of the Teaching Council Review Panel attended the meetings on Wednesday 29 January 2014:

Professor Áine Hyland (Chairperson)  
Mr Risteard Ó Broin (Rapporteur)

## Appendix 3 - Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-Primary) Effective for registration on or after 1 January 2017

The following are the criteria required to meet the registration requirements set down in the Teaching Council [Registration] Regulations for:

### Home Economics

In order to meet the registration requirements set down in the Teaching Council [Registration] Regulations in respect of the curricular subject of Home Economics an applicant must meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Home Economics studied up to and including third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).  
  
(b) The qualifying degree must be equivalent to at least Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and with a minimum pass<sup>3</sup> result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Home Economics.  
  
(c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Home Economics comprising at least 90 ECTS credits (or equivalent) and with not less than 10 ECTS credits (or equivalent) studied at third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
2. The study of Home Economics during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Home Economics syllabus<sup>4</sup> to the highest level in post-primary education (see [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)). In order to meet this requirement the study of all of the following inter-related components of Home Economics and their application to the individual, family and society must be studied as an integral part of the degree course:
  - a. Food Studies (including the integration of theory and practice)
  - b. Textiles, Fashion and Design (including garment construction and craft work)
  - c. Family Resource Management and Consumer Studies (including Home Economics Studies)
  - d. Home Design and Management
  - e. Social Studies.
3. The degree must include course and practical work content.
4. Applicants must also have completed a programme of post-primary initial teacher education (age range 12-18 years) in which the theory, methodology and practice of teaching Home Economics forms the central aspect. This course must be equivalent to a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>5,6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> which includes pass by compensation

<sup>4</sup> as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

<sup>5</sup> Applicants who have commenced a programme of initial teacher education prior to 01/09/2014 carrying less than 120 ECTS credits may be exempted from this requirement at the Council's discretion.

<sup>6</sup> Applicants who have completed a specialist concurrent degree in Home Economics must meet all of the requirements as detailed above. This course should be equivalent to a minimum of 240 ECTS credits.

## Gaeilge/Irish

1. (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Irish studied up to and including third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).  
  
(b) The qualifying degree must be equivalent to at least Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and with a minimum pass<sup>7</sup> result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Irish.  
  
(c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Irish comprising at least 60 ECTS credits (or equivalent) and with not less than 10 ECTS credits (or equivalent) studied at third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
2. The study of Irish during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Irish syllabus<sup>8</sup> to the highest level in post-primary education (see [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of:
  - a. Irish Language Studies  
and
  - b. Irish Literature
3. The degree must incorporate the study of Literature through the medium of Irish comprising of at least 20 ECTS credits and should incorporate at least two of the following areas:
  - i. Poetry
  - ii. Prose
  - iii. Media/Film Studies
  - iv. Drama.
4. Applicants must have verifiable residential experience of at least two months in an area designated as a Gaeltacht area.
5. Applicants must provide evidence of linguistic competence in the language. This can be demonstrated by:
  - a. Applicants for whom the language is their mother tongueOr
  - b. Providing evidence of achieving a minimum level of B2.2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (or equivalent) from the higher education institution where the qualification was completed. Alternatively applicants can provide certification of successful completion of an independent language competency test.
6. Applicants must also have completed a programme of post-primary initial teacher education (age range 12-18 years) carrying a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> which includes pass by compensation.

<sup>8</sup> as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

<sup>9</sup> Applicants who have commenced a programme of initial teacher education prior to 01/09/2014 carrying less than 120 ECTS credits may be exempted from this requirement at the Council's discretion.

## Biology

- Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Biology/Biological Sciences studied up to and including third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
  - The qualifying degree must be equivalent to at least Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and with a minimum pass<sup>10</sup> result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Biology.
  - The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Biology/Biological Sciences comprising at least 60 ECTS credits (or equivalent) and with not less than 10 ECTS credits (or equivalent) studied at third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
- The study of Biology/Biological Sciences during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Biology syllabus<sup>11</sup> to the highest level in post-primary education (see [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of at least four of the following essential areas to a minimum total of 40 ECTS credits (or equivalent) with at least one area from (a), (b) or (c):

### Essential areas of study

- Botany
- Plant Physiology
- Ecology
- Microbiology
- Zoology
- Mammalian Anatomy
- Mammalian Physiology
- Biochemistry
- Genetics
- Molecular Biology.

The remaining 20 ECTS credits (or equivalent) may be in any of the above essential areas, or be drawn from the following optional areas:

### Optional areas of study

- Biotechnology
- Bioinformatics
- Pharmacology
- Biosciences
- Environmental Biology.

- Experimental/practical work must be completed throughout the degree course.
- Applicants must also have completed a programme of post-primary initial teacher education (age range 12-18 years) carrying a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>12</sup>. The programme should include a methodology module(s) on the teaching of a Science-based subject with a minimum of 5 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>13</sup>.

An applicant who meets the registration criteria for **Biology** will also be deemed to have acquired the competency to teach the Junior Cycle curricular subject **Science** if he/she has studied a minimum of 10 ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Chemistry and a minimum of 10 ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Physics.

<sup>10</sup> which includes pass by compensation.

<sup>11</sup> as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

<sup>12</sup> Applicants who have commenced a programme of initial teacher education prior to 01/09/2014 carrying less than 120 ECTS credits may be exempted from this requirement at the Council's discretion.

<sup>13</sup> Applicants who have completed a specialist concurrent degree in Biology must meet all of the requirements as detailed above. This course should be equivalent to a minimum of 240 ECTS credits.



## Economics

1. (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Economics studied up to and including third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).  
  
(b) The qualifying degree must be equivalent to at least Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and with a minimum pass<sup>14</sup> result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Economics.  
  
(c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Economics comprising at least 60 ECTS credits (or equivalent) and with not less than 10 ECTS credits (or equivalent) studied at third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
2. The study of Economics during the qualification must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Economics syllabus<sup>15</sup> to the highest level in postprimary education (see [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of all of the following with a minimum of 20 ECTS credits drawn from areas (a) and (b) combined:
  - (a) Microeconomics
  - (b) Macroeconomics with reference to the Irish Economy and the International Economy (c) Quantitative Methods.
3. Applicants must also have completed a programme of post-primary initial teacher education (age range 12-18 years) carrying a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>3</sup>.

<b>Business Studies (Junior Cycle)</b>
An applicant who meets the registration criteria for <b>Economics</b> will also be deemed to have acquired the competency to teach the Junior Cycle curricular subject <b>Business Studies</b> if he/she has studied a minimum of 10 ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Business <u>and</u> a minimum of 10 ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Accounting.

<sup>14</sup> which includes pass by compensation.

<sup>15</sup> as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

## Religious Education

1. (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Religious Education or Theology or Religious Studies studied up to and including third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).  
  
(b) The qualifying degree must be equivalent to at least Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and with a minimum pass<sup>16</sup> result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Religious Education.  
  
(c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Religious Education comprising at least 60 ECTS credits (or equivalent) and with not less than 10 ECTS credits studied at third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
2. The study of Religious Education or Theology or Religious Studies during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Religious Education syllabus<sup>17</sup> to the highest level in post-primary education (see [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of all of the following:
  - (a) Sacred Texts including the Bible
  - (b) Christianity – Origins and Contemporary Experience
  - (c) World Religions
  - (d) Secular Belief Systems
  - (e) Ethics
  - (f) Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion.
3. Applicants must also have completed a programme of post-primary initial teacher education (age range 12-18 years) carrying a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>18</sup>. The programme should include a module(s) on the teaching of Religious Education carrying a minimum of 5 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> which includes pass by compensation.

<sup>17</sup> as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

<sup>18</sup> Applicants who have commenced a programme of initial teacher education prior to 01/09/2014 carrying less than 120 ECTS credits may be exempted from this requirement at the Council's discretion.

<sup>19</sup> Applicants who have completed a specialist concurrent degree in Religious Education must meet all of the requirements as detailed above. This course should be equivalent to a minimum of 240 ECTS credits.