

**Report of the Review Panel to the Teaching Council following a
review of the Initial Teacher Education programme at Limerick
Institute of Technology**

Bachelor of Education Art & Design

October 2020

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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:

- (a) review and accredit the programmes of teacher education and training provided by institutions of higher education and training in the State,
- (b) review the standards of education and training appropriate to a person entering a programme of teacher education and training, and
- (c) 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 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 January 2017, the Council implemented the *Teaching Council Requirements for Entry onto a Programme of Initial Teacher Education*. 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. They also guide providers of post-primary consecutive programmes in determining suitability of entrants and which curricular subject's entrants can ultimately be registered to teach. They also guide PME providers in matching students appropriately to methodology modules.

1.6 Programme overview

This report relates to the review of the following programme provided by **Limerick Institute of Technology, The Bachelor of Education Art & Design**, hereinafter referred to as 'the programme'.

2. *The Review Process*

The review of **Limerick Institute of Technology, The Bachelor of Education Art & Design** took place between October 2019 and October 2020 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 Sheelagh Drudy as Chairperson and Professor Gary Granville and Ms. Valerie Lewis as panel members. In early summer 2020, Professor Drudy for personal reasons stepped down from her role as Chairperson while continuing as a member of the panel. Professor Granville took on the role of chair.¹ The Review panel was supported by a Rapporteur. The Rapporteur's functions included liaison with The Institute of Technology Limerick, maintaining records of meetings, and drafting and finalising the panel's report in conjunction with the panel Chairperson. The panel was also supported in its deliberations by an external subject expert and by the Director of the Teaching Council and his executive staff nominees. The panel conducted all its business through virtual meetings and on-line discussion, due to the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Documentation relating to the application was submitted to the Teaching Council by the Limerick Institute of Technology (hereinafter also referred to as 'LIT' or 'the College') in October 2019. The panel met initially on 21 April 2020 to give preliminary consideration to the submission. Issues for further clarification were identified by the panel and were communicated by the Rapporteur to LIT on 26 May 2020. Following consideration of the supplementary documentation received on 14 June 2020 and a collation of the initial views of the members of the panel, a further meeting of the panel was held on 3 July 2020 and a letter requesting additional clarifications was issued to LIT. The report was drafted and finalised when the final response was received from LIT on 14 September 2020.

¹ Details of the Review Panel membership are included in Appendix I

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.

4. *Documentation*

The documentation submitted in 30 October 2010 by Limerick Institute of Technology was in accordance with the template provided by the Teaching Council in the Pro Forma and Guidelines which accompany the Council's review strategy. Key areas of focus were:

4.1 *Inputs*

- Conceptual Framework
- The Programme
- Programme Aims
- Programme Design
- 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

5. Overall Findings

Having regard to the documentation that was initially submitted, [together with the supplementary documentation and clarifications provided, the panel adjudges that the programme satisfies the criteria set down by the Teaching Council in its *Criteria and Guidelines* and in its curricular subject requirements in respect of the curricular subjects Art & Design. Accordingly, it recommends to the Teaching Council that the programme be granted accreditation.

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 the college to set out, within twelve months of receiving the final review report, its detailed proposals for implementing the recommendations. It further recommends that the Teaching Council should prioritise those areas to be accorded particular attention when the programme falls due for re-accreditation.

In the case of the national issues raised in Section 8 of this report, the panel recommends that the Council engage in dialogue on those issues at national level.

The panel proposes that accreditation of the programmes would have a lifespan of five years.

6. Commendations

Having regard to:

1. the Pro Forma documentation which was submitted
2. the supplementary material which was submitted
3. advice received from the curricular subject specialists who supported the review process.

the panel has noted a number of particular strengths of the programme, as follows:

6.1 Engagement with the review process

Limerick Institute of Technology has co-operated fully with the review process. The panel were satisfied with the response to clarifications sought.

6.2 Inputs

6.2.1 Programme Aims

The Panel commends the strategic planning for this programme. Limerick Institute of Technology has identified the need for an undergraduate degree that enhances the provision of Art & Design Teachers. The college has a strong, well-established record in the provision of postgraduate initial teacher education as well as continuing professional education for serving art-teachers. The Panel notes that the college anticipates that the undergraduate programme will replace its PME programme.

6.2.2 Programme Design

The Panel commends the integration of this teacher education programme into the Culture and Structure of the College. Such integration should help to ensure that parity of esteem is accorded to the B.Ed. programme and also facilitate the added richness that the education programme can bring to the suite of teaching and learning experiences of the entire college community. The panel also commends the relationship with University of Limerick and recognises the benefits this offers in terms of potential further collaboration.

6.2.3 Areas of Study

The Panel commends the interdisciplinary practice developed by the teacher education students on this programme.

6.2.4 School Placement

In addition to fulfilling the Council's school placement requirements, the Panel commends the art related placement options being explored by the College (E.g. placement in museums and in alternative educational settings),

7. Recommendations

Having regard to:

1. the Pro Forma documentation which was submitted
2. the supplementary material which was submitted
3. advice received from the curricular subject specialists who supported the review process

the panel has noted a number of areas of the programme which it believes should be developed. They are as follows:

7.1 Inputs

7.1.1 Conceptual Framework

1. The Panel recommends that LIT identify areas of research and conduct research that is focused on the interdisciplinary nature of the programme.

The College should monitor, evaluate and publish the results of this research over the coming years. The role of interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary studies in higher education is a matter of professional interest for the international art and design community. The structured provision of interdisciplinary practices in the B.Ed. programme provides an opportunity for LIT to make a significant contribution to that debate. Such research and evaluation should consider, among other matters:

- The perception of the new programme among students and staff and alumni across all programmes;
- The nature and quality of art and design work generated through interdisciplinary studies as compared to single discipline specialisation;
- The implications of the B.Ed. experience in terms of provision across programmes other than education.

2. The research dimensions of the new programme should be developed both through evaluation as such and also through staff and student research and dissemination. The established practice of the annual Art Teachers' Network conference and exhibition is a strong platform upon which to build.

3. While the immediate priority must be to establish the new programme, the opportunities for further growth and impact across the college should be fostered. Specifically, the experience of education staff and students should be of great value to other programmes as models of social engagement, collaboration and pedagogical processes.

7.1.2 Staffing

The Panel recommends that the College supports Education staff to acquire doctoral

qualifications or equivalent in order to promote the research culture and to project the profile of programme within the college and beyond.

7.1.3 Facilities

The Panel recommends the ongoing provision of appropriate resources for the programme. In particular, the college must ensure that within an interdisciplinary model of provision, resources for the B.Ed. remain ring-fenced and evident.

8. *National Issues*

Having regard to:

1. the Pro Forma documentation which was submitted
2. the supplementary material which was submitted
3. advice received from the curricular subject specialists who supported the review process

the panel has noted the following issues which it believes merit further attention by the Teaching Council and/or other national stakeholders.

8.1 Covid 19 Implications for Initial Teacher Education

In light of the responsibilities placed on teachers during the current pandemic, opportunities for student teachers to engage in the theory and practice of remote and blended learning should be enhanced. In this regard, further consideration of alternative and varied methods of assessment should also be considered.

8.2 Changes in the Leaving Certificate

The panel recommends that the College considers taking the opportunity to prepare the students for the impending changes in the Leaving Certificate curriculum.

Appendix 1 - Review Panel Membership

Independent Review Panel Chair

Gary Granville is Emeritus Professor and former Head of School of Education at the National College of Art and Design (NCAD), Dublin. He served as Interim Director of NCAD before retiring in 2016. In recent years he has chaired the NCCA Development Groups for junior cycle and Leaving Certificate Art.

Panel Member

Professor Sheelagh Drudy is Professor Emeritus of Education at University College Dublin and former Head of the UCD School of Education. She is a former teacher, educational researcher and teacher educator. She was a member of the first Teaching Council 2005 - 2009. She has researched and published numerous books and peer-reviewed papers on education including the sociology of education, gender, class, teacher education and inclusion. She was a member of the Education subject area grouping which was part of the project Tuning (Higher) Educational Structures in Europe. She was a member of Council of the NCSE 2013-2018 and chaired its Research Committee.

Panel Member

Valerie Lewis is an Educational Policy and Development Officer at Education and Training Boards Ireland. She has over twenty years of experience in the Irish Education arena at post-primary and tertiary level, working across a range of sectors. She has previously worked in the Public Information and Communication and, Development Education sections of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, supporting the design and enhancement of their formal education programmes and Strategic Education Partnerships. Valerie has also written and designed a range of citizenship education and training materials, distributed both in Ireland and at European level.

Appendix 2 - Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements(Post-primary) Effective for registration on or after 1 January 2017

Art (including Crafts)

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

1. (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Art and/or Design 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 pass¹ result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Art.
 - (c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Art and/or Design 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 Art and/or Design during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Art syllabus(www.curriculumonline.ie). To meet this requirement, the degree must include the study of all of the following: ² to the highest level in post-primary education (see
 - (a) Drawing, 2D and 3D Visual Studies in Art/Craft/Design
 - (b) Engagement with Digital Media
 - (c) Art/Design History and Critical Studies/Visual Cultural Studies.
3. 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 Art forms the central aspect. This course must be equivalent to a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)^{3 4}.

¹ which includes pass by compensation.

² as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

³ 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.

⁴ Applicants who have completed a specialist concurrent degree in Art must meet all of the requirements as detailed above. This course should be equivalent to a minimum of 240 ECTS credits.