

Final Report of the Review Panel to the Teaching Council following a review of reconceptualised Initial Teacher Education Programme at the University of Limerick

Bachelor of Science in Physical Education with English, Gaeilge, Geography or Mathematics (LM090)

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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 lifelong 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 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. 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 subjects entrants can ultimately be registered to teach. They will also guide PME providers in matching students appropriately to methodology modules.

1.6 Programme overview

The Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences (PESS) at the University of Limerick originated in 1973 as the National College for Physical Education (NCPE). By 1975, the NCPE was recast as Thomond College of Education and was integrated into the University of Limerick (UL) in 1991. Responsibility for teacher education programmes in physical education was transferred to the university at that time. The Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences is now one of six departments within the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences at the university. Delivery of the four-year, undergraduate Bachelor of Science in Physical Education Programme with English, Gaelige, Geography or Mathematics (LM090) is a major part of the department's function. In 2009/2010 all undergraduate programmes at the university, including LM090, were restructured to ensure compatibility with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

The Bachelor of Science in Physical Education Programme with English, Gaelige, Geography or Mathematics (LM090) is one of a number of concurrent initial teacher education programmes provided by the University of Limerick. Other concurrent programmes include:

- LM092 - Bachelor of Science (Education) in Biology with Chemistry or Physics or Agricultural Science
- LM094 - Bachelor of Technology (Education) Materials and Architectural Technology
- LM095 - Bachelor of Technology (Education) Materials and Engineering Technology
- LM096 - Bachelor of Science (Education) in Physical Science with Chemistry and Physics

All the concurrent ITE programmes in UL are led and co-ordinated by staff in the relevant faculties and discipline, but they all share the same education and school placement modules. There are many similarities across all the programmes. For example:

- The conceptual framework is generally the same for all the concurrent ITE programmes,
- The Foundation and Professional Studies modules are common to all programmes,
- The School Placement modules are common to all the programmes.

This report relates to the review of the Bachelor of Science in Physical Education programme with English, Gaelige, Geography or Mathematics (LM090) (hereinafter referred to as "the programme") at the University of Limerick (hereinafter referred to as "UL" or "the university").

LM090 is an eight semester programme of between 270 and 276 ECTS credits, offered over four years. On successful completion of the programme, graduates are entitled to be registered with the Teaching Council to teach Physical Education and either English, Irish, Geography or Mathematics to Leaving Certificate level.

Up until 2014 a fifth combination, Physical Education and Chemistry, was provided by the university. However, in April 2014, a decision was taken to withdraw Chemistry as a second subject. The combination of Physical Education with Chemistry, when the programme was re-conceptualised to comply with the Teaching Council criteria, required a total of 283 ECTS credits over the four years. The University Teacher Education Board (UTEB) took the view that the impact of the additional workload of 43 ECTS credits would be detrimental to the student teacher experience. Scheduling 283 ECTS credits over four years would demand extending the academic year considerably for both staff and students.

In 2012, Mary Immaculate College (MIC) agreed to offer Geography modules to student teachers who were studying Physical Education at the University of Limerick. This agreement entailed personnel from the Geography Department in MIC coming to UL to teach Geography. The panel was informed that this arrangement is operating well in practice.

To enrol in the LM090 programme, applicants are required to hold the established Leaving Certificate (or an approved equivalent) with at least Grade C3 in two higher level subjects and Grade D3 in four ordinary or higher level subjects (including Mathematics, English, Irish or another language). The university also notes that it is desirable that the candidate wishing to take a specific elective subject should hold at least a higher grade C3, or an approved equivalent, in the relevant Leaving Certificate subject.

The following are the numbers of students enrolled on the programme in the last four years.

Year	Numbers of Students
2010 - 2011	284
2011 - 2012	275
2012 – 2013	270
2013 - 2014	270

The ratio between male and female is approximately 60:40. Entry to the programme is primarily through the CAO points system. In 2013-14, the minimum requirement for entry was 495 points. Up to 15% of the places on the programme each year are available to mature applicants who apply directly to the university.

2. The Review Process

The review of Bachelor of Science in Physical Education (LM090) took place between February 2013 and November 2014, in accordance with the Teaching 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.¹ To assist and support the work of the panel, Risteard Ó Broin was appointed as rapporteur. His functions included liaison with the university, maintaining records of meetings, and drafting and finalising the panel's report in conjunction with the panel Chairperson. The panel was supported by external experts in the areas of Physical Education, English, Irish, Geography and Mathematics who offered expert advice to the review panel in their subject areas. Valuable support was also provided by the Director and staff of the Teaching Council.

Documentation relating to the application was initially submitted to the Teaching Council by the University of Limerick in February 2013. Following consideration of the documentation and discussions with UL staff during visits in March and July 2013, the panel became aware that the programme had not been reconceptualised in accordance with the Teaching Council's revised guidelines. A meeting took place in the offices of the Teaching Council between senior staff from UL and the Teaching Council on 28 August 2013 at which UL agreed to revise the submission to ensure that it was in accordance with the criteria and guidelines. A revised submission was made in June 2014. The documentation was furnished in hard copy to the members of the panel on 17 June 2014. Panel members were asked to review the documentation and to submit their initial observations, comments or concerns to the rapporteur. In the course of reviewing the documentation, the panel maintained contact on a systematic basis both by e-mail and phone. The Teaching Council also forwarded the documentation to the relevant external subject experts. These external advisers provided their reports to the panel on the following dates: Geography -19 August 2014; Mathematics - 4 September 2014; English - 18 September 2014 and Irish - 10 October 2014.

In reviewing LM090, the panel gave consideration to the report of a previous panel, also chaired by Professor Áine Hyland, which reviewed UL's Bachelor of Science (Education) in Physics and Chemistry programme (LM096) in 2010, and specifically, those recommendations which were included in that report which were pertinent to the education elements of the programme. The panel was aware in particular that the issue of staff/student ratio in the Department of Education and Professional Studies (DEPS) had caused concern in 2010.

The panel met on Tuesday 23 September 2014 to discuss the LM090 programme. Following that meeting, meetings were requested with the university management, programme leaders and subject co-ordinators of LM090. These meetings were held on Thursday 16 October 2014. At the meetings, further information was provided to the panel in the following areas:

a) Staff/student ratio

The Teaching Council report following the review UL's Bachelor of Science (Education) in Physics and Chemistry programme (LM096) in 2010 noted that the staff/student ratio in DEPS was in excess of 1:40 – well in excess of the average staff/student ratio in the university at that time. That report strongly recommended that the staff/student ratio should be reviewed and should be at a minimum, on a par with the average ratio across UL.

In subsequent correspondence with the Teaching Council, UL "recognised the comparatively high staff/student ratio in DEPS as related to teacher education provision". It assured the Teaching Council that "The University Executive is working on a revised Resource Allocation Model which can serve to address the disparities in resources between Departments".

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

In view of the ongoing correspondence in 2010 and 2011 about staff/student ratio, the panel was concerned to read in the documentation relating to LM096 submitted in 2014, that the ratio in DEPS appeared to be still in the region of 1:40. The panel met with the Registrar, Professor Paul McCutcheon and the Assistant Registrar, Dr. Pat Phelan, on 16 October 2014 to discuss this and other overarching issues relating to the provision of the ITE concurrent programmes at UL. At the meeting the Registrar informed the panel that steps have been taken systematically by UL to increase the number of staff and improve the staff/student ratio in DEPS since 2010. He explained the formula by which staff/student ratios are computed and compared throughout the university. He stated that the ratio in DEPS has improved from 1:40 in 2010 to 1:25 in 2012/2013. In 2010, there were 15 full-time staff in DEPS there are now 24 full-time staff, including three at professorial level.

b) Programme duration and design

Discussion also took place regarding the panel's concerns about how UL could meet the Teaching Council ECTS credit requirements in a four-year programme, normally totalling 240 ECTS credits, given that Physical Education requires 90 ECTS credits and that the other subject disciplines would require a minimum of 60 ECTS credits. Combining that with the 120 ECTS credits required by the Teaching Council for the Education component of the programme means that the level of student workload far exceeds what would normally be expected. The panel noted that some other colleges, which had previously provided a two-subject concurrent ITE programme in four years, had recognised that they could no longer do so within a four-year time-frame and had extended their programmes to five years to meet the Teaching Council requirements. Personnel from the Physical Education Department in the university recognised this difficulty and they too expressed concern about what was termed "subject overspill".

c) Allocation of ECTS credits to programme modules

In UL, modules are listed as either 6 ECTS credits or 3 ECTS credits. The majority of modules require 20 hours of contact and independent study for each ECTS credit. This would appear to be less than that generally required by other institutions, where the norm is 25 hours per ECTS credit.

The panel also drew attention to the fact that the contact time (lectures, laboratories, and tutorials) as listed in the module descriptors, varies considerably between modules. For example in year one, the module *Foundations of Teaching and Learning in Physical Education* (6 ECTS) has a total semester contact time of 72 hours, while the module *Pedagogy of Adventure and Outdoor Education* (6 ECTS) has a total semester contact time of 30 hours.

The panel also received clarification about how modules are assessed.

d) Clarification on specific questions in relation to subject content in Physical Education, English, Irish, Geography and Mathematics.

e) Other areas

Details about the Foundation and Professional Studies component and school placement had already been provided to the panel during its review of two other ITE programmes (LM094 and LM095). As these components are common to all ITE programmes at the university, it was not necessary to seek further information about them. However, some further detail about how literacy and numeracy are addressed in all the ITE programmes was sought.

PowerPoint presentations were made at the meeting by the Course Director for LM090, Professor Bridget Moody, and by the co-ordinators for English, Irish, Geography and Mathematics. The visit schedule is included in Appendix 2.

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

As outlined in 2 above, documentation relating to LM090 was initially submitted to the Teaching Council by the University of Limerick in February 2013. Revised documentation consisting of the completed Teaching Council ProForma and five volumes of appendices totalling over 500 pages was subsequently submitted in June 2014 in hard copy and electronic format. This section of the panel's report refers to the latter submission.

The panel noted that the module template used for programme approval in UL does not include information on assessment. As a result, only limited information was available in the completed Pro Forma relating to individual module assessment. Some module descriptors also lacked a statement of learning outcomes. These points were highlighted by a number of subject advisers who found it difficult to provide a comprehensive review of modules in the absence of such information.

The volume of documentation also presented a significant challenge for the panel. 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 Pro Forma submission from the university, together with the supplementary material provided, the written advice of the external subject experts and the meetings with management and staff of the university, the panel adjudges that the programme LM090 generally satisfies the criteria set down by the Teaching Council in its *Criteria and Guidelines* and in its curricular subject requirements for Physical Education, English, Irish, Geography and Mathematics (see Appendix 3). Accordingly, it recommends to the Teaching Council that the programme be granted accreditation, subject to the stipulations set out in Section 8 below.

The commendations in Section 6 of this report relate to areas of particular strength which the panel has identified in the programme. With regard to the recommendations in Section 7, the panel submits that the Teaching Council should require UL 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 to be accorded particular attention when the programme falls due for re-accreditation.

The stipulations in Section 8 of the report relate to areas which the panel believes to be of such strategic importance to the programme that accreditation should be subject to those stipulations being met. Therefore, the panel recommends that the Teaching Council should require the University of Limerick to set out and submit to the Teaching Council, within two months of receiving the final review report, its proposals for implementing the stipulations.

In the case of the national issues raised in Section 9, the panel recommends that the Council engage in dialogue on those issues at national level.

The panel acknowledges the difficulties faced by the University of Limerick (and other providers) in meeting the Teaching Council subject discipline criteria for concurrent undergraduate programmes and combining them with the criteria for foundation studies, professional studies and school placement. This is especially the case where subject disciplines require a minimum of 90 ECTS credits and where a provider wishes to offer another teaching subject with a minimum requirement of 60 credits. The panel acknowledges the efforts which UL has made to map its programmes to the Teaching Council criteria and to maintain high standards and meet its own Academic Council regulations.

The panel proposes that accreditation should be for a period of five years after which the programme should be reviewed, i.e. the review should be carried out during the academic year 2019/2020.

6. Commendations

Having regard to the Pro Forma documentation which was submitted, the supplementary material received, advice received from the curricular subject specialists who supported the review process and information gleaned during the visit to the University of Limerick and subsequent engagement with programme staff, the panel has noted a number of particular strengths of the programme, as follows:

6.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework underpinning the Initial Teacher Education programmes at the University of Limerick indicates that the programmes are based on sound educational philosophies and values. The case for concurrency is strongly advanced, although the argument that early specialisation may not always be in the best interest of the profession is not mentioned. The vision presented of the ‘professional teacher in Irish schools’ as one who is characterised by critical thinking and inquiry, whose work is rooted in research and evidence, is appropriate. The integrated approach to educational studies, as a particular strength of concurrent programmes, is well articulated. In the case of LM090, the development of a conceptual approach to Physical Education is well set out in the documentation. Three key concepts underpin the programme rationale; the vision for the programme is clear and comprehensive while the programme itself is well grounded in a spirit of reflection and inquiry. The programme is well rooted in a strong theoretical and research-informed foundation.

6.2 Programme Design

Sample student timetables indicate that the programme is designed with a judicious balance of lectures, project work, practical sessions and students’ independent study time. Students’ skills, knowledge and dispositions are incrementally developed over the four years. The programme vision to “become professional teachers of young people in Irish schools” is well considered. The centrality of pedagogy and the development of professional competencies ensures that the programme integrates fully and gives practical expression to learning across the Physical Education, Foundation and Professional Studies and School Placement. The placement of modules is well considered to scaffold student teachers’ learning as they progress through the programme. The extent of the programme provides a comprehensive exploration of the multi-faceted nature of human movement. The programme enjoys access to a range of excellent facilities to support teaching and learning in Physical Education.

6.3 Areas of Study

It is commendable that there are several references to reflective practice in both the foundation studies and school placement components of the programme. For example, students are encouraged to make key decisions about their teaching practice in the module *School as an Institution*. It is suggested that the six-step School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process should further inform this reflective practice so that graduates will be fully prepared to engage in the required SSE process when they begin working in schools.

6.4 Physical Education

The three concepts underpinning the education of Physical Education teachers (curriculum models, teacher as researcher, and physical activity providing both rationale and identity to the programme) are very well articulated in the submission. The emphasis on understanding and interrogating young people’s physical activity and sedentary behaviour is considered essential to the work of the Physical Education teacher in modern society. Ensuring that graduates of the programme possess the knowledge and skills to assess and address the physical literacy needs of learners gives significant strength to the programme.

An innovative approach has been taken by the faculty to pair each movement domain module with a curricular/instructional model. These models form the basis of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) draft Senior Cycle syllabus. This approach ensures students learn, through their own practical experience, how each curricular/instruction model may be used to support learning in Physical Education. Similarly, the alignment of some modules that give practical expression to biomechanical, physiological, sociological and psychological concepts to specific movement domains, presents student teachers with opportunities for deeper, more authentic and relevant learning experiences. This approach is most useful in preparing student teachers to teach the planned Leaving Certificate syllabus.

There are many admirable aspects to the various modules. For example, the iPlay programme provides valuable opportunities for student teachers to develop their competence and confidence to teach people with disabilities. The attention given to movement analysis, determinants of physical activity behaviour and the integration of information and communication technology to support learning is also noteworthy.

The reading lists, both required and additional, are comprehensive and up to-date. Students benefit from being taught by some of the text authors. It is commendable that safety aspects relevant to teaching and learning across the various modules is highlighted in many of the module descriptors.

6.4.1 *English*

The programme in English covers a wide historical range as well as introducing students to critical concepts and methodologies. The reading lists for English are appropriate and they indicate up-to-date knowledge of the key trends and concepts in the field. There is commendable integration of modules that address pedagogy specific to English.

6.4.2 *Irish*

In Irish, a comprehensive learning programme is set out in respect of the academic element of the language. The course aims to empower the student teachers to enhance their own four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in addition to their knowledge of the history, literature and traditions of the language.

6.4.3 *Geography*

The Geography programme is clearly structured to ensure that a core range of modules is included that cover the key features of both physical and human geography. The programme takes account of the resources available and uses them effectively.

6.4.4 *Mathematics*

There are many excellent modules set out in the Mathematics programme, some of which are quite demanding. A good programme is planned, including excellent exposure to analysis, algebra and logic.

6.5 **Literacy and Numeracy**

Some of the learning outcomes note that student teachers will identify opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy, plan for literacy and numeracy in teaching and learning, and discuss strategies for the effective integration of literacy and numeracy within their subjects. It is commendable that these particular learning outcomes feature in both the disciplinary modules and the foundation studies modules. Also positive, is the fact that student teachers are required to demonstrate skills in the teaching of literacy and numeracy within their subject specialism during their periods on school placement.

6.6 School Placement

The principles, procedures and supports for school placement are systematically outlined and discussed both in the main submission and in the specific school placement documentation received by the panel. The procedures to develop positive relationships with schools are particularly commendable. The development of a network of co-operating schools where staff are made fully aware of their supporting role for students is also a very commendable feature.

The Teaching Council has determined that 60 ECTS credits over the four years of undergraduate ITE programmes should be allocated to school placement, and that requirement is being met. The school placement component includes in-school work, preparation for school placement and provision for students to reflect critically on their practice.

The emphasis on partnership with schools and how a partnership approach will be implemented and developed is very commendable. Likewise the panel was impressed by the provision of continuing professional development opportunities for school placement tutors.

6.7 Student Intake

While a majority of the students enter the programme through the CAO applications system, the panel commends the university for its strategy to increase access for students who come from disadvantaged and minority backgrounds.

7. Recommendations

Having regard to the Pro Forma documentation that was submitted, the supplementary material received by the panel, advice from the curricular subjects specialists who supported the review process, and information gleaned during the visit to the University of Limerick and subsequent engagement with programme staff, the panel has noted a number of areas of the programme which it believes should be developed. They are as follows:

7.1 Feasibility of the Extension of the Programme

The panel acknowledges the pressures placed upon programme managers by the increase in education components in four-year post-primary concurrent programmes. In order to address the increased education requirements while also seeking to meet the Teaching Council subject criteria, UL has increased the number of ECTS credits from 240 to 270 in the case of three of the four pathways (PE with English or Irish or Geography) and to 276 ECTS credits in the case of the fourth pathway (PE with Mathematics). These increases will result in very intensive workloads for both staff and students over the four years of the programme and the panel is concerned that this might impede efforts aimed at developing the students as reflective practitioners.

The number of credits is outside the recommended workloads for eight-semester, four-year, undergraduate programmes in the current guidelines for implementation of ECTS within the Bologna framework of the European Higher Education Area. The panel therefore strongly recommends that the programme should **either** be extended to five years, with a possible redefinition of some of the final year modules to Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications **or** if the programme is to remain a four-year programme, it should be re-designed so that students will study Physical Education only with no second subject. Models for both structures for concurrent ITE post-primary programmes currently exist in Ireland.

7.2 Curriculum and Assessment Issues

The panel recognises that the programme includes a module entitled Curriculum Studies (Appendix C of the Pro Forma submission: Foundation Studies module samples) which focuses on philosophical and sociological aspects of curriculum and national curriculum policy. In view of the proposed introduction of short courses to be developed at school level, and the introduction of school-based assessment at junior cycle, the panel recommends that the programme should explicitly address the theory and practice of curriculum and syllabus design. The theory and practice of assessment - formative, summative and diagnostic – should also be included and made explicit in this and other relevant Foundation Studies and Subject Pedagogics components of the programme.

National strategies and compliance areas for schools should be given greater emphasis throughout the four years of the programme. The programme should include explicit training in junior and senior cycle key skills and the Statements of Learning in the new Junior Cycle framework. The inclusion of these issues in several modules, including the modules *Teacher as a Professional* and *Curriculum Studies* and subject pedagogics modules, would support integration and give emphasis to their national importance.

7.3 Literacy and Numeracy

The debate currently being promoted by the UL programme leaders regarding the national directives to enhance literacy and numeracy across all school subjects is important. This debate should involve students and should bear in mind that the National Strategy states that ITE providers must:

- Ensure that development opportunities in literacy and numeracy feature as a priority
- Develop student teachers' ability to apply current knowledge in the use of current assessment for formative, diagnostic and summative purposes in literacy and numeracy
- Develop student teachers' ability to apply current knowledge in digital literacy and how ICT may be used to support and enrich learning in literacy and numeracy, as appropriate to their subject specialism
- Ensure that all teachers are required to demonstrate satisfactory skills in the teaching of literacy and numeracy as relevant within their subject specialism during the school placement component of their ITE
- Ensure that all teachers complete mandatory units in the development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

7.4 Core Reading Lists

The core and extended reading lists in many of the Foundation Studies modules and in some of the subject discipline modules should be more up-to-date with current developments in education and with aspects of subject-specific education. Contemporary papers/podcasts/articles on developments in education and their impact on teaching, learning and assessment should be included, as should articles on school-based assessment (including assessment for learning), school self-evaluation, and literacy and numeracy.

7.5 Areas of Study

7.5.1 Physical education

In the Physical Education modules, assessment processes and requirements should be included in the module descriptors to give expression to the philosophy outlined in the Pro Forma submission on pages 111 and 112.

References to the specific physical education elements of the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme should be included, where relevant. This will support student teachers knowledge of the various options available to students pursuing the LCA, from the vocational specialism *Active Leisure Studies*, to the *Leisure and Recreation Programme*, and to the *Dance Modules One and Two* as part of the Arts Education element of the LCA programme.

7.5.2 English

As the Leaving Certificate moves further towards the study of other kinds of media (film etc.), it is recommended that the university should provide opportunities for student teachers to develop their knowledge and pedagogical competencies to enable them to provide this component of the Leaving Certificate programme to schools.

7.5.3 Irish

While the quality of the academic study of Irish is acknowledged, it is recommended that greater emphasis be put on presenting Irish to young people as a vibrant, living language which can be both worthwhile and enjoyable. In some cases the recommended reading lists are out of date. For example, the newest version of *An Caighdeán Oifigiúil* (Gramadach na Gaeilge, *An Caighdeán Oifigiúil Athbhreithnithe*, 2012, BÁC: Seirbhís Thithe an Oireachtais) should be included on the reading lists.

7.5.4 Gaeltacht Placement

The panel recommends that the university should clarify in writing individually to students and also include in the Students' Handbook that those who choose Irish as an academic subject will be required for registration purposes to undertake a two-month residency period in a Gaeltacht.

7.5.5 Geography

The panel recommends that more explicit mention should be made in the modules of the key geographer skills that are developed throughout the programme, to include GIS and fieldwork. Specific learning outcomes for Geography as a subject should clarify this matter.

7.6 School Placement

The overall allocation of ECTS credits for school placement is in compliance with the Teaching Council guidelines. Currently, students spend some time on observation in senior classes of primary schools, which is acceptable, but it would be preferable if the time spent teaching in post-primary classes were increased, particularly for final-year students. While the panel acknowledges that the minimum 100 hours of direct teaching experience will be met and that indeed a significant number of additional hours are allocated above the minimum, it recommends that the university works purposefully towards achieving the Teaching Council's desired target of 200 to 250 hours for all programmes.

7.7 School Placement Handbook

Currently, the university provides a generic School Placement Handbook for all ITE students (on concurrent and consecutive ITE programmes) which gives details about many aspects of the school placement experience and answers some of the students' frequently asked questions. It is recommended that the handbook be re-configured to have separate handbooks for the concurrent and consecutive programmes. The handbook should also make clearer to students the need to demonstrate a wide range of teaching strategies during their time in schools. Further guidance about how students can develop literacy and numeracy in their teaching also needs to be included.

The Teaching Council ITE Guidelines require that school placement should provide opportunities for student teachers to plan for and use a wide range of strategies in teaching, learning and assessment. This is not clear in the module descriptors (the term 'appropriate' range of teaching strategies is used). In addition, the School Placement Handbook does not make it clear, as set out in the Teaching Council's *Guidelines on School Placement*, that over the course of a school placement, the student teacher will move gradually from a strongly supported experience in the classroom to teaching independently. This requirement should be stated clearly in the School Placement Handbook.

7.8 Leadership of the ITE programmes

The panel is of the view that given the number of students enrolled in initial teacher education programmes in UL and the stated importance of those programmes in the university's portfolio of programmes, the newly appointed professors of teacher education and STEM education should be actively involved in the leadership and delivery of the initial teacher education programmes and research should inform the design and content of these programmes. While the structures seem to allow for considerable interaction between all staff engaged in ITE, it was apparent that the necessary level of interaction may not have occurred prior to the preparation of ProForma submissions for accreditation on this occasion. There needs to be a greater sharing of the responsibilities among programme coordinators.

7.9 An elective module in Irish (GA 4006 - An Ghaeilge Ghairmiúil)

The panel notes that an elective module (GA 4006 – An Ghaeilge Ghairmiúil) is available for students who wish to study Irish during their degree course. The documentation for programmes LM094 and LM095 makes reference to this elective module. During the visit on 16 October, the panel was informed that it is open to students on any of the concurrent ITE programme to take this module (subject to timetabling) and that some students who would like to teach in a Gaelscoil or Gaelcholáiste find the module particularly helpful. The panel recommends that student documentation for all programmes includes reference to this elective module.

7.10 Title of the programme

It should be noted that this panel advocates the reconceptualisation of this programme as a four year single subject offering, or a dual-subject programme offered over five years. (See Recommendation 7.1) In the event that the university chooses the latter option, the panel recommends that the title of the programme should be reviewed. In particular, the panel has been advised that the use of the word 'with' in the title may suggest that the second subject is not recognised for the teaching of that subject to Leaving Certificate level and may be more appropriately replaced with the word 'and'.

8. Stipulations

Having regard to the Pro Forma documentation which was submitted, the supplementary material which was received by the panel, advice received from the curricular subjects specialists who supported the review process and information gleaned during the visit to the University of Limerick and subsequent engagement with programme staff, the panel has noted the following areas of the programme which it considers must be addressed to the satisfaction of the Council as a matter of priority and, at the latest, within two months of the final report being received.

8.1 Research Project

On page 110 of the ProForma submission, it is indicated that student teachers may choose to research “an aspect of teaching and learning in either Physical Education or their second subject.” There are 9 ECTS credits awarded for this final-year research project. However, the student teachers who undertake research in their second subject rather than Physical Education will be 9 ECTS credits short of the required 90 ECTS for the subject specialism PE. This element of the programme must be addressed and clarified and the instructions for students should be revised to ensure that all students satisfy the full 90 ECTS credits required for PE.

8.2 Irish

The panel had some concerns about the design and delivery of the methodology module for Irish. In the documentation provided, the methodologies for teaching Irish are written in English. This issue was raised by the panel at the meeting on 16 October. The course leader for Irish indicated that the methodology element of the course was not part of his remit. There seemed to be a lack of clarity as to whether responsibility for Irish methodology lies with the Department of Irish or with DEPS. This issue should be clarified and the relevant module(s) should be more comprehensively expressed and should be written in Irish. Information should be provided on how the module(s) will be designed and delivered to ensure that teachers of Irish will be able to use active learning methods, including language games, group work and online resources. The importance of ICT in the teaching and learning of Irish should also be highlighted. Online websites that will be useful to teachers of Irish such as: www.focal.ie ; www.focloir.ie ; www.potafofocal.com should be presented to the students. The module leader should also be identified in the documentation.

8.3 Mathematics

The programme in Mathematics currently does not include a study of Geometry which is an essential component in the Teaching Council criteria. This was discussed with the subject co-ordinator at the meeting on 16 October. The panel was informed that this lacuna is currently being rectified. The university must inform the Teaching Council how this shortfall will be rectified and submit an appropriate module in Geometry for approval no later than two months from the date of receipt of the final report.

8.4 Staff/Student Ratio

At the meeting in UL on 16 October, the panel was informed that the staff/student ratio in the Department of Education and Professional Studies is approximately 1:25 which is significantly in excess of the ratio of 1:15 as set out in the Council's *Criteria and Guidelines*. Therefore, based on current student intake levels, it would be necessary to increase the numbers of DEPS staff to achieve the 1:15 ratio. Alternatively, the university might decide to maintain current staffing levels, in which case student intake levels would need to be reduced. The panel stipulates that the university should submit clear proposals to address the shortfall, to the satisfaction of the Council. Such proposals should make explicit the rubric being used to calculate the staff/student ratio.

8.5 Design of the programme – submission of a student handbook

The initial documentation submitted for this programme was difficult for the panel to decipher as module titles and codes were not always consistent. Moreover, some module descriptors were incomplete. These inconsistencies, which may result from different practices in course and module design in different faculties and departments of the university, initially led the panel to question the extent of integration and co-ordination of the programme. Where a programme is designed and delivered by academic staff from different disciplines across the university, it is particularly important that the programme documentation is clear and consistent and that the overall rationale and coherence of the programme is made explicit to students.

The panel therefore stipulates that a concise, user-friendly student handbook (of about 30 pages maximum) should be prepared for this programme by the programme co-ordinator, and made available to the Teaching Council, setting out clearly:

- The programme ethos and rationale
- The programme aims
- The programme learning outcomes (education and subject outcomes)
- Explanation of the ECTS including definition of a Credit Unit
- Sequence of modules

In relation to each module, the handbook should adhere to the template for module descriptors which has been developed by the Council. In particular, each module descriptor should include module learning outcomes, information on how the module will be delivered (lectures, practicals, workshops etc.) and how student learning will be assessed. Each module should also include a core and additional reading list.

8.6 Foundation Studies

The Foundation Studies module addressing the historical background to Irish education should be reviewed in order to strengthen this aspect of the programme. The panel noted that in some of the sample examination papers provided, the History of Education examination question appears to be optional. As History of Education is a compulsory area of study in the Teaching Council *Criteria and Guidelines*, its assessment should also be compulsory.

8.7 DES Syllabus for the Junior and Senior Cycles

The extent to which the programme addresses the DES junior and senior cycle syllabuses needs to be made more explicit throughout the programme.

9. National Issues

Having regard to the ProForma documentation which was submitted, the supplementary material which was received by the panel, advice received from the curricular subject specialists who supported the review process and information gleaned during the visit to the University of Limerick and subsequent engagement with programme staff, the panel has noted the following issues which it believes merit further attention by the Teaching Council and/or other national stakeholders.

9.1 Curriculum Design and Assessment

In the context of the proposed changes to the Junior Certificate 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 processes by which curriculum is designed, the theory and practice of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment and on the uses and limitations of testing. Arising from this, the Teaching Council's criteria and associated Pro Forma and Guidelines should be kept under review, having regard to the evolving context for the junior cycle and other areas of the curriculum at national level.

9.2 Duration of Concurrent ITE Programmes

The panel is aware of the heavy workload imposed on students in concurrent initial teacher education programmes where two subject disciplines are studied to degree level (level 8) within a timeframe of four years (240 ECTS credits or more). The Teaching Council criteria require 120 ECTS credits to be applied to the education elements of the programme leaving just 120 ECTS credits for the subject disciplines. This is particularly onerous for students who have not previously studied the subjects in question and are encountering the subject disciplines *ab initio* in a university environment. The panel is also aware that in the case of some of the subject discipline modules in this programme, the amount of contact hours and the ECTS credits allocated, are less than were available in the past.

The panel recommends that the Teaching Council reconsider the duration and credit allocation of concurrent ITE programmes for post-primary teachers where more than one subject discipline is being studied.

9.3 Comparability of ITE Programmes

The panel notes that modules in the University of Limerick are computed on the basis of six ECTS credits or multiples thereof, whereas in other HEIs, the normal unit of computation for modules is five ECTS credits or multiples thereof. This raises issues of comparability and consistency across ITE programmes in different HEIs. The panel recommends that the Council discuss the implications of this with ITE providers and other relevant bodies at national level.

9.4 Supply Needs of Irish-medium schools

In line with "20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010- 2030", the teacher supply needs of Irish medium schools and the teaching of Irish, require the special attention of the Council.

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

Patrick Mc Vicar was nominated to the Teaching Council by the post-primary school management organisations of ACCS, JMB and ETBI. He was previously Principal of Pobalscoil Chloich Cheannfhaola, Falcarragh, Co. Donegal. He is a former 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

Risteard Ó Broin is a former 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

Review of ITE programmes at the University of Limerick

Schedule of meetings Thursday 16 October 2014

9.30-11.00 Meeting with Senior Management

- Prof. Paul McCutcheon (Vice President and Registrar)
- Prof. Edmond Magner (Dean of Faculty of Science and Engineering)
- Dr. Pat Phelan (Associate Registrar)

11.00 – 11.30 Tea/ Coffee

11.30 – 12.00 LM094 and LM095 programmes

- Dr. Oliver McGarr (Head of Education & Professional Studies)
- Dr Seamus Gordan (Head of DMT Department)
- Dr. Niall Seery (Course Director LM095)
- Dr. Donal Canty (Course Director LM094)

12.00 – 13.00 LM090 programme

- Dr. Oliver McGarr (Head of Education & Professional Studies)
- Prof. Brigitte Moody (LM090 Course Director)
- Dr. Deborah Tannehill (PE specialist)
- Dr. Michael Griffin (English specialist)
- Dr. Catherine Dalton (Geography specialist- MIC)
- Dr. Tadgh O hlfearnain (Gaeilge specialist).
- Dr. Olivia Fitzmaurice (Maths specialist).

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00- 15.00 LM092 and LM096 programmes

- Dr. Oliver McGarr (Head of Education & Professional Studies)
- Dr. Damien Thompson (Physics specialist and LM096 Course Director)
- Dr. Sarah Hudson (Chemistry specialist)
- Dr. Thomas Harrington (Biology specialist and former LM092 CD)
- Dr. Ken Byrne (Agricultural Science specialist)
- Dr. Audrey O'Grady (Biology specialist and LM092 CD).

Appendix 3 Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements

(Post-primary) Effective for registration on or after 1 January 2017

Physical Education

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

1.
 - (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Physical Education 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 pass² result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Physical Education.
 - (c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Physical Education 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 Physical Education during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Physical Education syllabus³ to the highest level in post-primary education (see www.curriculumonline.ie).
 - (a) To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of all of the following to a minimum of 60 ECTS credits (or equivalent):
 - i. Adventure Activities
 - ii. Aquatics
 - iii. Athletics
 - iv. Dance
 - v. Games
 - vi. Gymnastics
 - vii. Health-Related Activity.

 - (b) The degree course must also include the study of all of the following to a minimum of 30 ECTS credits (or equivalent):
 - v. Anatomical, Physiological and Biomechanical aspects of Movement
 - vi. Factors which inhibit and promote (Personal, Biological, Psychological, Sociological, Environmental) participation in Physical Activity and Sport
 - vii. Disability and Movement
 - viii. Historical, Sociological and Philosophical aspects of Physical Education
 - ix. Growth, Motor Skill Learning and Development of the Child and Adolescent
 - x. Physical Activity/Sport Promotion and Health across the Lifespan
 - xi. Artistic and Creative Studies.

² which includes pass by compensation.

³ as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

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 Physical Education forms the central aspect. This course must be equivalent to a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)^{4 5}.

⁴ 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.

⁵ Applicants who have completed a specialist concurrent degree in Physical Education must meet all of the requirements as detailed above. This course should be equivalent to a minimum of 240 ECTS credits.

English

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

1.

- (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with English Language and Literature 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 pass⁶ result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of English.
- (c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of English Language and Literature 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 English Language and Literature during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the English syllabus⁷ to the highest level in post-primary education (see www.curriculumonline.ie). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of a minimum of 40 ECTS credits of literature including comprehensive study (through the medium of English) of all of the following:

- (a) Drama
- (b) Poetry
- (c) Fiction.

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

- (d) Media Studies
- (e) Composition and Writing Skills
- (f) Film Studies
- (g) Theatre Studies.

3. Applicants must have verifiable residential experience of at least two months in a country where English is the vernacular.

4. Applicants must provide evidence of linguistic competence in the language. This can be demonstrated by:
- (a) Applicants for whom the language is their mother tongue
or
 - (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.

5. 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)³.

⁶ which includes pass by compensation.

⁷ As approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

Gaeilge/Irish

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

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 pass⁸ 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 syllabus⁹ to the highest level in post-primary education (see www.curriculumonline.ie). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of:

(a) Irish Language Studies
and

(b) Irish Literature

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.

3. Applicants must have verifiable residential experience of at least two months in an area designated as a Gaeltacht area.

4. Applicants must provide evidence of linguistic competence in the language. This can be demonstrated by:

(a) Applicants for whom the language is their mother tongue

Or

(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)¹⁰.

⁸ which includes pass by compensation.

⁹ as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

¹⁰ 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.

Geography

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

1.
 - (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Geography 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 pass¹¹ result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Geography.
 - (c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Geography 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 Geography during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Geography syllabus¹² to the highest level in post- primary education (see www.curriculumonline.ie). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of all of the following:
 - (a) minimum of 15 ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Physical Geography
 - (b) minimum of 15 ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Human Geography.
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)¹³.

Environmental and Social Studies (ESS)

An applicant who meets the criteria for Geography will also be deemed to have acquired the competency to teach the Junior Cycle curricular subject Environmental and Social Studies.

¹¹ which includes pass by compensation.

¹² as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

¹³ 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.

Mathematics

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

1.
 - (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Mathematics 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 pass¹⁴ result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Mathematics.
 - (c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Mathematics 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 Mathematics during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Mathematics syllabus¹⁵ to the highest level in post-primary education (see www.curriculumonline.ie). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of all of the following essential areas to a minimum of 40 ECTS credits (or equivalent):

Essential areas of study

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| (a) Analysis ¹⁶ | - minimum of 10 ECTS credits |
| (b) Algebra ¹⁷ | - minimum of 10 ECTS credits |
| (c) Geometry ¹⁸ | - minimum of 5 ECTS credits |
| (d) Probability and Statistics ¹⁹ | - minimum of 5 ECTS credits |

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

- (e) Dynamical Systems and Chaos
- (f) Calculus of Variations
- (g) Numerical Analysis or Computational Mathematics
- (h) Mathematical Modelling
- (i) Discrete Mathematics
- (j) History or Philosophy of Mathematics
- (k) Mathematical Logic
- (l) Set Theory and Cardinality

¹⁴ which includes pass by compensation.

¹⁵ as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

¹⁶ This must include modules in Differential and Integral Calculus in one and several variables, and may include modules in Differential Equations, Complex Analysis, Abstract Analysis, Measure and Integral, or Topology.

¹⁷ This must include modules in Linear Algebra, and may include modules on Abstract Algebra (Groups, Rings, and Fields), Cryptology, Coding Theory, or Number Theory.

¹⁸ This must include a module or modules in Euclidean and Non-Euclidean Geometry and may include modules in Differential Geometry, Algebraic Geometry, or Topology.

¹⁹ This must include modules in Probability and Statistical Inference and may include modules in Combinatorics or Stochastic Processes.

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)²⁰. The programme should include a module(s) on the teaching of Mathematics carrying a minimum of 5 ECTS credits (or equivalent)²¹.

²⁰ 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.

²¹ Applicants who have completed a specialist concurrent degree in Mathematics must meet all of the requirements as detailed above. This course should be equivalent to a minimum of 240 ECTS credits.