

**Report on implementation of
Céim: Standards for Initial
Teacher Education
Education Committee
16 September 2024**

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Introduction

The Teaching Council Acts (2001-2015) mandate the Council to establish and promote the maintenance and improvement of standards of programmes of teacher education. Section 7(m) of the Acts mandates the Council to review and accredit programmes of teacher education and training for the purpose of registration. In accordance with Section 38 of the Act, from time to time the Council shall 'review and accredit the programmes of teacher education and training provided by institutions of higher education and training in the State.'

In 2011, the Council approved the first edition of the document, *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers*. A revised edition was published in March 2017. This document set out the criteria and guidelines which providers of ITE were required to adhere to and formed the bridge between the Council's policy and the development and implementation of reconceptualised programmes. The first cycle of accreditation was completed in 2015, with 59 programmes of ITE (primary and post-primary) completing the review process.

In preparation for the next cycle of the review and accreditation process the Council's policy on standards for ITE programmes were reviewed and redrafted and in November 2020 *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education* (hereinafter referred to as *Céim*) was published.

The revision of *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education* was informed by a three-phase consultation process which included the following:

1. 2015 'Report on the Evaluation of the first cycle of Teaching Council ITE Review and Accreditation', which involved a survey of HEIs and Panel Chairs
2. 2018 Impact Consultation Exercise (Survey of student teachers, graduates, teachers and principals), and focused consultations on themes arising
2018 Commissioned Research on School Placement
3. 2019-2020 Three Rounds of Consultations involving 12 sessions with education stakeholders.
2019-2020 'Report on the analysis of the consultation responses for the Teaching Council'. Written submission process with an external review of submissions received.

A second cycle of review and accreditation was conducted between 2021 and 2024, with an individual report produced for each accredited programme.

All programmes reviewed achieved the minimum standards outlined in *Céim*, including in the implementation of the seven core elements. This report provides a snapshot at system level of the range of approaches and innovative practice reflective of different contexts, in Higher Education Institutions, across the State.

Summary of main changes from 2011 (Criteria) to 2020 (Céim)

Document Title and Restructure
<p>The document itself was renamed and restructured.</p> <p>The title of Céim (step, degree) was chosen to bring the document into alignment with the other phases of the continuum i.e. Droichead (bridge) and Cosán (pathway). Both Droichead and Cosán are based on a number of key standards. The language of 'Standards' is also in accordance with Section 6 and Section 38 of the Act, as the Council is mandated to 'establish and promote the maintenance and improvement of standards of programmes of teacher education and training'.</p>
Conceptual Framework
<p>Feedback received from the written submissions indicated that HEIs sought an opportunity to reflect individual HEI missions and values in the conceptual framework. HEIs also felt that school placement should be noted as being at the centre of student teachers' experience in ITE.</p> <p>Céim also includes the requirement that 'the professional studies aspect of the programme shall demonstrate that student teachers have sufficient opportunities to actively learn from practising teachers about relevant and innovate methodologies, appropriate to their practice. These opportunities shall be independent of and in addition to engagement with Treoraithe on school placement.'</p>
Programme Duration and Balance
<p>Feedback received during the consultation process highlighted the need for ECTs to be included in the programme balance table. It also highlighted that HEIs use different ECTs models, thus they are referenced in minimum and maximum amounts.</p> <p>The core values were inserted which enriches and humanises the document as well as highlighting the interpersonal nature of the teaching relationship.</p>
Tréimshe Foghlama sa Ghaeltacht (TFsaG)
<p>Céim provided for an enhanced and more explicitly described TFsaG to ensure that the TFsaG is an immersive educational experience appropriate to all learners, to encourage quality assurance and consistency and to enrich the language immersion experience and connect that experience to coursework and practice as a primary school teacher.</p>
Integration and Diversity of Programme Content
<p>The following additional requirement has been inserted under this section:</p> <p><i>'Provision of "aptitude tests" for teachers who have qualified outside of the State.'</i></p>

By inserting this requirement, the Teaching Council, as a professional standards body and competent authority, strengthens the process by which it can be ensured that all teachers regardless of where they qualify, achieve the same standards of ITE.

Mandatory Elements/Core Elements

The mandatory elements table was reconceptualised as seven core elements in the interests of reflecting research and practice. The conceptualisation of core elements that underpin all aspects of programme design ensured that these seven areas of focus were threaded through all aspects of programme design and provision rather than a modular focus in particular areas.

New headings were inserted concerning Digital Skills, Inclusive Education and Global Citizenship Education and an extensive glossary was included to support the implementation of the core elements.

Staffing

It is practice across regulatory bodies that registered professionals assess the students of that profession while on placement. This is to ensure that the practice of the profession is assessed by a professional who has followed the same experiential journey as the student and has already met the standards required for registration purposes in that profession.

Céim states:

‘It is a requirement that all student teachers are supported and assessed by two or more Placement Tutors. From May 2022, at least 50% of all School Placement Tutors shall be registered as teachers with the Teaching Council in accordance with the Routes of Registration as outlined in the Teaching Council Registration Regulations (2016). Prior to qualification, a student teacher shall be summatively assessed at least once by a registered teacher, during their programme of initial teacher education.’

Taisce in School Placement

The creation and maintenance of Taisce, the Irish for ‘treasure trove’, was firmly embedded within the Droichead Induction framework for newly qualified teachers. Taisce was incorporated into **Céim**, in order to connect the first two stages of the continuum of teacher education.

Taisce is a reflective portfolio used by student teachers to document and reflect on their learning experiences during their placement periods.

It supports portfolio-based learning, helping them to demonstrate their understanding particularly in the areas of inclusive education and effective collaboration with parents.

Research & School Placement

In *Céim*, research and its connection to practice, via school placement was emphasised.

During at least one school placement module, the student teacher shall engage in research on their own practice that demonstrates the connection between the sites of practice (HEI and school).

The term '*Treoraí*' replaces 'co-operating teacher'.

Accreditation cycle 2021 – 2023

The second cycle of review and accreditation of primary and post-primary programmes of ITE commenced in May 2021 and was conducted in accordance with *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education (2020)* and the *Procedures for the Professional Accreditation of Programmes of Initial Teacher Education*.

As part of the review process, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) demonstrated that the programmes were aligned with *Céim* for student teachers commencing first year studies in and from September 2022.

Fifty-two programmes were reviewed and accredited as part of Cycle 2. Eleven programmes received accreditation in the primary sector, with 41 in the post-primary sector.

Sector	Concurrent	Number	Consecutive	Number	Total
Primary	DCU	1	DCU	1	
	MIE	2	MIE	1	
	MIC	2	MIC	1	
	MU	1	MU	1	
	Hibernia			1	
Total		6		5	11

Sector	Concurrent	Number	Consecutive	Number	Total
Post-Primary	ATU	6	DCU	1	
	DCU	6	Hibernia	1	
	MIC	1	MU	1	
	MU	1	NCAD	1	
	NCAD	1	TCD	1	
	TCD	1	UCC	2	
	UCC	3	UCD	1	
	UCD	2	UoG	2	
	UoG	2	UL	1	
	UL	7			
Total	30			11	41

See Appendix A for details of timelines and programmes reviewed and accredited.

Section 1: Conceptual Framework Overview

The principles, beliefs, and values about education as described in the conceptual frameworks of the HEIs emphasise a commitment to fostering inclusive, equitable, and diverse educational environments that promote lifelong learning and social justice.

The approach to teacher education is research informed. HEIs incorporate the latest educational research into their teaching practices. Reflective practices encourage, self-awareness and professional growth among student teachers.

Principles and Beliefs:

- **Education as a Transformative Force:** Education is viewed as a critical medium for personal and societal advancement. HEIs believe in the power of education to transform lives by equipping student teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute positively to society.
- **Learner-Centred Approach:** A strong focus is placed on student teachers' holistic development, ensuring that educational experiences are responsive to their individual backgrounds, needs, and professional aspirations.
- **Ethical-Relational Teaching:** Teaching is regarded not just as a transmission of knowledge but as an ethical and relational practice that emphasises the development of socially just relationships and a commitment to community and global citizenship.
- Programmes are committed to the core values of respect, care, integrity, and trust.

Research-Informed Approach:

- **Integration of Research and Practice:** HEIs stress the importance of grounding teacher education programmes in educational research and evidence-based teaching practices.
- **Reflective and Reflexive Practices:** Student teachers engage in reflective practices that not only involve self-assessment but also a critical engagement with contemporary educational challenges and research findings.
- **Collaborative Learning:** HEIs demonstrate a focused approach to collaborative learning environments where student teachers can learn from peers, practising teachers, and through partnerships with educational stakeholders.

Section 2: Programme Structure

All HEIs demonstrated that programmes were compliant with Table 1 in *Céim*, Programme Balance and Structure and were appropriately structured in line with the three pillars of:

- Foundation Studies
- Professional Studies
- School Placement opportunities

Post-primary

All HEIs demonstrated that Post-Primary concurrent programmes were compliant with the Teaching Council's Curricular Subject Registration Requirements (2023) for at least one curricular subject.

The Council carried out a review of its 2017 post-primary curricular subject requirements between 2018 and 2019 in the context of a range of factors including ongoing developments in the continuum of teacher education and teacher supply issues. The review also included the development of requirements for two new curricular subjects, Computer Science and Politics and Society.

As part of the review of the Curricular Subject Requirements, the Council aimed to bring parity of esteem across all subject requirements by ensuring a 60 ECTS credit requirement for all.

Following a wide-ranging and comprehensive consultation process conducted between June 2018 and April 2019, a revised set of post-primary curricular subject requirements was approved by the Council at its 2019 October meeting and by the Minister for Education in October 2020. The revised Post-Primary Curricular Subject Registration Requirements became live for registration purposes on 1 January 2023 and became effective for accreditation purposes in 2021.

In addition to parity of esteem, achieving a 60 ECTS requirement across all subjects is also key to supporting the adequate supply of subject teachers nationally. The Department's Teacher Supply Action Plan identified the need to promote 4-year concurrent programmes (combining subject content and pedagogy) for post-primary teaching as a more sustainable solution to meeting the demands of the system. For example, as a result of the reduction of ECTS credits for Home Economics, the existing provider reconfigured their programmes, reducing a five-year programme (BA plus PME) to a four-year concurrent programme. A Post-primary provider adapted their Bachelor of Science Education programme so that student teachers now graduate with a qualification in two science subjects, rather than one.

In the context of teacher supply, HEIs responded to a call from the HEA to develop concurrent programmes of ITE in the priority subject areas. There is now a wide variety of concurrent programmes on offer around the country with new programmes in Modern Foreign Languages, Irish, Computer Science STEM and Home Economics.

Subject pedagogy is now explicitly housed in *Céim*, the Council's revised standard for ITE programmes rather than the curricular subject requirements.

Subject availability and Subject Methodology at concurrent level

The Professional Master of Education (Post-primary) is delivered in 10 HEIs. The Professional Master of Education (Primary) is delivered in 5 HEIs.

The subject methodologies in post-primary PME's are offered as follows:

Post-primary PME	Number of subject Methodologies
DCU	13
Hibernia	15
MU	18
TUS	1
TCD	14
NCAD	1
UCC	14
UCD	18
UofG	16
UL	7 Areas (Business, Languages, Music, PE, Science, Technological Education)

There are concurrent degrees available in 12 HEIs. The subjects offered are:

Subject	HEI'S							Total
Accounting	MICT							1
Applied Mathematics	UCD	UofG						2
Art	NCAD	TUS (Limerick)	ATU					3
Business	MIC T							1
Computer Science	MU	UCC	UCD	UofG	UL			5
Construction Studies	DCU	UL						2
DCG	UL	TUS (Athlone)	ATU					3
Engineering	UL	TUS (Athlone)						2
English	DCU	UCC						2
Gaeilge	DCU	MIC T	St AC	UCC	UCD	UL		6
Geography	UL							1
History	DCU	UCC						2
Home Economics	DCU	MIC T	St AC					3
Mathematics	DCU	MIC T	MU	UCC	UCD	UofG	UL	7
MFL (French, German, Spanish, Italian,)	DCU	UCC	UCD	UL				4
Music	DCU	TCD						2
PE	DCU	UCC	UL					3
Religious Education	DCU	MIC T	St AC					3
Sciences (Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Ag Science)	DCU	MU	UCC	UCD	UL	St AC ¹		6
Technology	TUS (Athlone)	UL						2

¹ ATU St Angela's only offers Biology as part of the Sciences

There are two PME programmes that are one subject specific (Art). The other 8 post-primary programmes offer between 13 and 18 subject methodologies. Post-primary PME programmes are delivered in 10 HEIs and primary PMEs are delivered in 5 HEIs. The PME is delivered in Irish in one HEI in Galway and a Gaeilge option is proposed and accredited for one primary PME in Dublin.

There are concurrent post-primary degrees available in 12 HEIs across the Country. They offer 4-year concurrent programmes in 27 subject options.

Section 3: Core Elements

Céim outlines seven core elements that underpin initial teacher education programmes. These are:

1. Inclusive Education: Enhancing the ability of student teachers to cater to diverse learning needs and promote equitable learning environments.
2. Global Citizenship Education: Fostering understanding and skills for wellbeing, social justice, sustainable development, human rights, and cultural diversity.
3. Professional Relationships and Working with Parents: Building collaborative educational relationships
4. Professional Identity and Agency: Developing reflective, autonomous teaching professionals.
5. Creativity and Reflective Practice: Encouraging innovation and reflective learning practices among student teachers.
6. Literacy and Numeracy: Ensuring student teachers can effectively teach and assess these fundamental skills.
7. Digital Skills: Integrating digital literacy and technologies into teaching and learning processes.

This report places a spotlight on Inclusive Education and Global Citizenship Education as key areas of focus to prepare teachers for addressing the complexities of modern educational needs. In the review and accreditation process, all HEIs demonstrated how their programmes adhere to the core elements of *Céim*.

Inclusive Education

Céim describes inclusive education as one that 'includes the fostering of appropriate learning environments, including digital ones, that support the development of student teachers' ability to provide for the learning needs of all pupils by utilising, for example, a universal design for learning framework.

'The term inclusive education as any aspect of teachers' learning aimed at improving their capacity to address and respond to the diversity of learners' needs; to enable their participation in learning; and remove barriers to education through the accommodation and provision of appropriate structures and arrangements to enable each learner to achieve the maximum benefit from his/her attendance at school.

'The Council's view of a truly inclusive approach to professional practice recognises that teachers encounter a diverse range of needs in the course of their teaching, regardless of setting. This will include additional learning needs (e.g. autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia) and learning needs associated with diverse linguistic, socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic (including Traveller community, Roma) backgrounds,' (The Teaching Council, 2020).

The accreditation process demonstrated that HEI programmes meet minimum standards in relation to the core element of Inclusive Education, while showing that all the programmes, provide specific content learning, inclusive pedagogical approaches and school placement opportunities, related to inclusive education.

1. Specific content learning

- Inclusive Education modules introduce students to key perspectives and definitions of Inclusive Education, both internationally and within the Irish context. The modules also delve into the roles and responsibilities of relevant agencies involved in special education provision, such as NEPS, NCSE, and NCCA, and address inclusive language and communication skills in the classroom environment.
- Programmes across different institutions integrate the core values of Equity, and Inclusion into their curricula. This includes addressing and challenging systemic barriers and promoting practices that support equitable educational opportunities for all, including marginalised communities such as the Traveller and Roma.
- Programmes also cover the cultural competencies required to effectively teach in diverse classrooms. This includes understanding and respecting the unique cultural backgrounds of all students, including those from the Traveller and Roma communities, and integrating this awareness into teaching practices.
- Policy and Legislation: Several programmes delve into the role of policies and legislation in shaping inclusive education practices, exploring international initiatives like the Salamanca Statement and national legislation across different countries. Programmes delve into Ireland's policy on inclusive education, emphasising the

teacher's role in creating inclusive learning environments. Some programmes include modules that explore equality and rights issues underpinned by the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children with Disabilities around policy, practice, and the realities of children who are marginalised in Ireland. In many programmes, participants are introduced to important policy and guidance documents including the Intercultural Education Guidelines for Post-primary Schools (NCCA, 2006) and the UDL guidelines (CAST, 2018).

- Many programmes offer discrete modules specifically dedicated to inclusive education, covering issues like different special education needs and areas of neurodiversity such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism. e.g. inclusive pedagogy
- Inclusive and Special Education lectures consider best practices, provision, teaching, and learning for a wide range of needs, and explore inclusive education concepts, policies, and legislation, with a focus on the social model of disability and Universal Design for Learning.

Modular Examples of Content Learning

- One HEI has two compulsory modules offered in Year 2 and 3 respectively, which explore equality and rights issues underpinned by the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children with Disabilities around policy, practice, and the realities of children who are marginalised in Ireland. These modules encourage student teachers to engage with the concept of inclusion at a systemic, organisational level, to explore what it means to be an inclusive teacher, within an inclusive classroom, within an inclusive school. Inclusion in this context is taken to refer to children who are potentially vulnerable to reduced participation in education such as pupils from linguistic, cultural and ethnic minorities, pupils from disadvantaged communities, but with a particular focus on pupils with disabilities or neurodiverse pupils. This module addresses responsive teaching in the form of Universal Design for Learning Approaches for all learners in a diverse classroom. Student teachers critically analyse effective ways of communicating and collaborating with all parents for the benefit of each child.
- Another HEI recognises inclusive education as a central aspect of teacher preparation. Modules on inclusive education are integrated into professional and foundation studies, addressing diverse needs and incorporating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. The module recognises the distinct contribution of special education to the wider field of inclusive education and is underpinned by an understanding of the common, distinct, and unique strengths and needs of all children, but specifically, children with special educational needs. The module supports the classroom teacher to build skills, knowledge, and competencies which will allow them to use appropriate evidence-based practices to respond to individual learner profiles in the inclusive classroom.
- Finally, one HEI's PME programme focuses on Inclusion as extending beyond special education needs expertise to consider various identity dimensions like culture, socioeconomic status, language, religion, and ability. A module requires student

teachers to show how they differentiate curriculum content (e.g. learning intentions, depth or complexity of task); differentiate teaching approach or method (varying support, pace, time allocation, differentiated questioning, incorporating differing learning preferences, modify class and homework); differentiate teaching resources (textbooks, print and non-print materials, multi-sensory materials, assistive technology); and differentiate assessment (multiple methods, materials and procedures, modified grading, formative and summative approaches) for such students. Furthermore, in this PME, students are required to outline how an intercultural environment is supported in their placement school and how students from differing ethnic, national, religious, non-religious and linguistic communities are recognised and supported in the placement school.

2. Pedagogical approach

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Many institutions emphasise UDL and have integrated it across their curriculum, aiming to cater to diverse learning needs and styles. UDL principles are specifically emphasised in course design, delivery, and assessment methods. This approach ensures that teaching methods, assessment modes, and educational environments cater to diverse learning needs without requiring subsequent adaptation. Student teachers across institutions are encouraged to bridge the theory-practice divide by exploring how UDL can be implemented in their practice. One HEI challenges deficit-laden approaches by exploring the Capability Approach and UDL while evidence-based practices to support SEN learners (particularly neurodiverse learners) are promoted.

Professional Studies modules focus on integrating theory with practice, such as developing inclusive pedagogical strategies and adapting teaching for children with special needs.

- Innovative Teaching Methods: Workshops, guest lectures, and collaborative projects are utilised to provide students with practical strategies and firsthand experiences that promote inclusivity in education. Collaborative practices, including team teaching, are introduced to support inclusive education.
- Assessment methodologies are explored to support, monitor, and assess student learning, and include a focus on digital assessment.
- Some HEIs collaborate with community organisations and engage in inclusive school-based initiatives to contribute to student learning and inspire research topics related to inclusivity.

Modular Examples of Pedagogical Approach

- In one HEI's concurrent programme, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is promoted as a philosophy, framework, and set of overlapping principles for designing and delivering flexible approaches to teaching and learning that address student diversity within the classroom context.
- Another HEI focuses on the distinction between universal design for learning and differentiation and examines the ways in which UDL and differentiation are applied to meet the diverse needs of learners implicitly through course design, delivery and assessment. The alignment of theory and practice in relation to creating an inclusive

teaching and learning environment is identified as a core competency in the assessment of students on placement.

- Additionally, one HEI's module introduces students to a variety of differentiated instruction strategies suitable for diverse learners. These strategies include active learning, demonstration, differentiated tasks, use of semantic/concept mapping, design thinking strategies, and providing immediate feedback and opportunities for self-assessment. The Universal Design for Learning framework and various forms of assessment are the focus of specific modules.

3. School Placement

- Across various institutions, school placements often include specific criteria for assessing inclusive practices and UDL criteria. These placements allow student teachers to implement inclusive teaching methods and strategies, reflecting on their experiences and the inclusivity of their practices with the guidance of mentors and placement tutors.
- Many HEIs have a School Placement Officer who monitors and tracks each placement across the programme to ensure a diversity of school placement experiences.
- Practical Application through School Placements: In some HEIs, student teachers are required to engage in placements in special schools and/or special classes in mainstream schools.

Action Research and Collaboration: HEIs encourage staff-led research and collaborations with community organisations to advance inclusive practices within educational settings. The importance of developing teachers as researchers is emphasised, with students encouraged to use inclusion as a lens for their capstone research projects in some HEIs

- Student-Led Research: Students are often encouraged to focus their research projects on aspects of inclusive education, guided by their curriculum and supervised by faculty.
- Courses aim to help students to bridge the gap between integrating theory and practice, with an emphasis on reflecting on their experiences, particularly during/after school placement, to improve their teaching practices.

Modular Examples of Inclusive approaches to placement

- One HEI's School Placement 2 focuses on The Inclusive Teacher, requiring students to plan curriculum considering diverse pupil needs and reflect on inclusive practice. Inclusive learning and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are assessed criteria during school placement. School Placement and Experience phases allow student teachers to implement inclusive practices, which are assessed and discussed with School Placement Tutors and Treoraithe.

- Additionally, in one HEI's Year 3, students reflect on their experiences on School Placement 1 via two Inclusive Education modules which supports students to learn and reflect on intersectional dimensions of diversity — 'race', ethnicity, national identity, language, socio-economic status, gender, sexuality, religion, ability. The modules also consider the continuum of SEN support assessments and interventions are examined. Deficit-laden approaches are challenged by exploring the Capability Approach and UDL while evidence-based practices to support SEN learners (particularly neurodiverse learners) are promoted. Following School Placement 2, a capstone diversity module facilitates a more intersectional understanding of diversity, building from the comprehensive focus on ability and neurodiversity to explore other facets of diversity along the lines of 'race', ethnicity, gender, sexuality.

Modular Examples of School Placement within SEN settings

While all HEIs cover SEN as part of their programmes, some also have placements within a SEN setting as part of the programme or encourage student teachers to seek an alternative placement in these settings.

- In one HEI, student teachers have a discrete placement in a special school or a special class within a mainstream setting as part of one of their modules. This placement aims to bridge the gap often cited between theory and practice. This includes a placement in the Special Education Department of partnering schools whereby student teachers develop student-support plans for children with SEN in a collaborative, agreed manner. This module is continuously assessed, and focuses more on the experience of the student teacher, rather than a project etc.
- In another HEI, student teachers are encouraged to engage in an alternative placement in Year 3, which may include special classes/schools, Youthreach, etc. in order to expedite their ability to problem-solve, critically reflect, engage in innovative pedagogies, learn from their experiences, and be agents of change in relation to inclusive education.
- Finally, one HEI requires student teachers to be placed in a Special Education setting for one week in Year 2 of their BEd. This placement is supported by additional modules which seeks to develop students' understanding of how mainstream and special primary schools in Ireland are currently structured and staffed to support individual and special needs of pupils. Students are encouraged to develop their knowledge about the range of learning ability, as well as knowledge of key strategies for supporting this varied learning potential.

Taisce and School Placement

Each HEI integrates Taisce activities with their school placements specifically around Inclusive Education and Working with Parents to ensure that student teachers not only learn about inclusive education theoretically but also apply these concepts practically in various educational settings, enhancing their ability to support all learners effectively.

Modular Examples of Taisce

- In one HEI, following their third placement, students identify potential research areas such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and evidence-based approaches. They

discuss these areas with their research supervisor. Each placement module provides planned experiences for engaging in inclusive practices in schools and working with parents and education stakeholders through their Taisce. These experiences are further explored in post-placement seminars through collaborative, critical reflection with peers and tutors. Similarly, in a PME program, students engage in systematic research on their practice, demonstrating an explicit connection between established theories and their chosen area of interest, such as SEN, lesson planning, and catering for diversity in the classroom.

- Additionally, in another HEI, the confidence and competence of student teachers to respond to diversity are embedded within the programmatic pedagogical pillars of curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment. This approach prepares students to engage meaningfully in school placements, evidence their learning for Taisce, and progress to NQTs equipped with a solid foundation of knowledge and pedagogical skills.

Global Citizenship Education (GCED)

Céim describes Global Citizenship Education as 'to include Education for Sustainable Development; Wellbeing (personal and community); Social Justice, Interculturalism. There should be demonstrable integration between Inclusive Education and Global Citizenship Education rooted in the principle of care for others.

'GCED aims to empower learners of all ages to assume active roles, both locally and globally, in building more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure societies.

'GCED ensures that "all learners are provided with the knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development" (UNESCO).'

Global Citizenship Education as a concept and as an activity

GCED often connects with Inclusive Education in HEIs as both a broad concept and a practical activity within the programmes of ITE. GCED as a broad concept aims to develop globally awareness, socially responsibility, and ethical decision making. Practically, it is implemented through interdisciplinary modules, sustainable practices, community engagement, artistic initiatives, workshops, and voluntary activities that collectively promote the principles of global citizenship education.

- One HEI focuses on Integrating Special Educational Needs, Development Education and Intercultural Education, as part of a compulsory 5 ECTS module which explicitly addresses skills and competencies associated with GCE. The module raises students' awareness of global and social justice issues as they pertain to primary education and enables them to develop competence in inclusive practice. Lectures are informed by sociocultural perspectives on education, situating language in its cultural and social contexts, and grounded in culturally responsive pedagogy. Through lectures, dialogue and personal study, student teachers learn to critically interrogate the complexity of 'development' as a concept, they critically analyse some of the causes of global poverty, and they incorporate an awareness of development education and intercultural education into their classroom planning and practice.
- Additionally, another HEI requires their students to engage with Global Citizenship Education from an educational methodology lens recognising and reflecting on a variety of approaches to supporting Global Citizenship Education's implementation across the curriculum. Students are equipped with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to appreciate the agentic child in the context of increasingly diverse and globalised societies. Students are supported to come to respect, celebrate and recognise the normality of diversity across society through the promotion of human rights by paying particular attention to the relevance of evolving controversial global citizenship topics to the primary classroom.

- Finally, one HEI takes an approach to GCE by requiring students to engage in four Visual Culture modules. They use this as a means to engage students in a different way, with the view to trying to expand their understanding of diversity in the world, as well as exploring the effects of globalisation. Students are then asked to select a seminar from a dozen or more specialist electives on current themes and issues in art, design, film and technology. The range of themes is extensive and includes topics on Global Citizenship, ESD, Social Justice and Interculturalism.

Sustainable Development Goals and Quality Education

- Some HEIs place an emphasis on Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 (Education for Sustainable Development), focusing on issues such as poverty, inequality, migration, climate change, and sustainable living.
- One HEI integrates sustainable living in disciplines like Home Economics, examining family resource management and food studies from a sustainable and global perspective.
- One HEI has actively integrated GCED into existing curriculum and recognises the special role that teachers play in positively contributing to a more sustainable, and inclusive society (Climate Action Plan, 2020; The National Action Plan against Racism, 2021; the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2021; UNESCO's Education 2030 Agenda and Framework for Action, 2016, etc.)

The significant contribution of the Ubuntu Network – a national association from Education Departments in HEIs who are dedicated to embedding GCE in Post-primary ITE - to Post-Primary partner institutions is noteworthy in embedding Global Citizenship Education within programmes of initial teacher education.

- One HEI focuses on integrating Global Citizenship Education into the incorporation of social justice and intercultural issues in their methodology modules. This initiative emerges out of an ongoing project with the Ubuntu Network that seeks to meaningfully incorporate such issues into face-to-face teaching strategies that marry subject content knowledge with culturally aware pedagogies. This inclusive approach to teaching is further enhanced by a suite of activities that allow student teachers to contribute meaningfully to Social Justice Week held annually. During this week, both students and lecturers run events that explore the importance of education for working toward global citizenship and social justice.
- Another HEI uses their membership of the Ubuntu Network to work closely with student teachers on developing innovative pedagogical approaches, evidence-based projects and collaborative professional alliances (not least with Non-Governmental Organisations, such as the One World Centre and World Wise Global Schools; and professional associations, such as the NCCA, JCT, PDST, PST, etc.).

The Irish Aid funded DICE project promotes the integration of development education and intercultural education into programmes of ITE, and global and intercultural perspectives and themes into the practices of student teachers. By targeting the skills, knowledge and values of people involved in education, DICE seeks to promote global solidarity, human rights and

sustainable development, and to support people to recognise and challenge discrimination and inequality, locally and globally.

Interdisciplinary and Pedagogical Approaches and Methodologies

Most HEIs integrate GCE across various programmes such as language, primary, physical education, biology, and science education. For instance, modules on equality studies, sociology of education, and social environmental and scientific education include GCE components.

Some offer discrete modules covering global citizenship, sustainability, and social justice.

- In one HEI, students engage with content that connects biological and physical education topics to global citizenship, such as the impact of human activities on the environment and the importance of sustainable practices.
- In another HEI Global Citizenship Education is integrated and incorporated across several areas of the programme. In a discrete module, students are exposed to theoretical and practical understandings of the key principles that underpin the primary school curriculum and the Irish Aid Global Citizenship Education Strategy 2021–2025.
- In one HEI Global Citizenship Education is embedded across the primary programmes to ensure graduates can assume active roles in building more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, and secure societies. This is achieved by embedding Global Citizenship Education in Foundation Studies, Professional Studies (Religious Education, Education about Religions, Beliefs and Ethics, Geography and History) and Educational Methodology.
- Additionally, one HEI offers a range of mandatory, elective, and integrated modules in Global Citizenship Education incorporated across the primary programmes, such that student teachers are equipped with the knowledge, competencies, attitudes and values necessary to integrate global and intercultural education across the primary-school curriculum.
- In another HEI all methods lecturers must also ensure that they teach GCE as it relates to their subject in their methods lectures. This may manifest by integrating wellbeing seamlessly into lessons; embedding interculturalism and English as an Additional Language; and interrogating social justice issues such as inequality, across all subjects where applicable.
- Finally, one HEI's GCE elements are core course components including attendance at global citizenship education workshops and lectures; facilitation and evaluation of global citizenship education focused lessons; integration of global citizenship education into lesson planning; incorporation of global citizenship education into schemes of work; and subject methodology assessment with a global citizenship education focus.

Connections between Inclusive Education and GCE:

- HEIs promote the development of inclusive, secure, and peaceful societies by embedding these values in foundation studies, professional studies, and educational methodology. They aim to cultivate critical consciousness and ethical values among learners.
- Some projects focus specifically on the inclusion of students from the Traveller and Roma communities. For example, projects like TOBAR in one HEI are designed to support the inclusion of these communities, analysing and critiquing social justice, equity, sociology, and inclusion as they pertain to these groups.
- In one HEI students are exposed to contemporary themes in GCE and are educated to employ these methodologies effectively. The focus extends to inclusive education, sustainable development, and wellbeing from the early stages of the programmes.
- In another HEI Global Citizenship Education is integrated with Inclusive Education in a distinct module. The integration of Inclusive Education and GCE rooted in the principle of care for others is a feature of all Professional Preparation and Practice modules.

Voluntary and Extracurricular Activities:

- GCE is also a part of the 'hidden curriculum' experienced through voluntary groups, sustainability committees, and international partnerships in one HEI. Students participate in projects such as the Green Campus Committee and Fairtrade initiatives, enhancing their practical understanding of global citizenship. They also partner with colleagues in Africa and USA to ensure scholarship programmes are available for their students to access additional learning in a range of locations.
- The commitment to social justice practices through community initiatives, Youthreach activities, provide opportunities for local pupils to engage with e.g. digital resources, coding, Lego leagues and STEM initiatives was also noted.

Section 4: Gaeilge in the primary curriculum

Céim states that student teachers' confidence and competence in Irish, including oral Irish, needs to be developed to a sufficient level to enable them to teach the Gaeilge primary curriculum.

This includes, but is not limited to, language learning as part of the Tréimhse Foghlama sa Gaeltacht.

Tréimhse Foghlama sa Gaeltacht

- All Primary consecutive and concurrent teacher education programmes include a Tréimhse Foghlama sa Gaeltacht (Learning Period in the Gaeltacht) and adhere to the official syllabus.
- The Tréimhse Foghlama sa Gaeltacht (hereinafter referred to as the Tréimhse) is a required component of all primary Irish teacher education programmes. The aim is to immerse student teachers in both the language and the culture, enhancing their linguistic competencies and cultural understanding, which are essential for teaching the Irish language.
- All programmes follow the official syllabus, 'Na Siollabais Oifigiúla', which outlines the expected competencies, content, and learning outcomes for the duration spent in the Gaeltacht. This syllabus ensures that the programmes are not only consistent in terms of what is taught but also meet the national standards for language proficiency and cultural knowledge.

Taisce and Fillteán Foghlama

- Student teachers use the Fillteán Foghlama developed during their Tréimhse to enhance and document their learning journey. This process links their practical, immersive experiences in the Gaeltacht with learning within their programme of ITE. Student teachers use their Fillteán Foghlama as a resource to add to and build on their Taisce.

Integration of Tréimhse with HEI

- HEIs demonstrated how student teachers are provided with various opportunities to meaningfully integrate their Tréimhse experiences into their learning at their respective HEIs. This integration primarily occurs through reflection, peer-to-peer presentations, and the use of spoken language, which are incorporated into their coursework and assessments.

Modular Examples of Integration

1. Personal Reflection

All HEIs encourage their student teachers to create a learning portfolio to document their learning in the Gaeltacht, to support the process of reflection and to identify areas of Irish language competence and Irish language teaching in which they may need additional support. The period of immersion in the Gaeltacht will enhance students' communicative competence, in the context of their future role as teachers of Gaeilge and of other subjects through the medium of Gaeilge, as well as users of Gaeilge as a living language in the school community.

2. Peer-to-peer Presentations

HEIs place much importance on the requirement for their students to deliver a presentation based on their learning portfolio from the Gaeltacht Period at the beginning of the semester in the second year. The goal of these presentations is to give students the opportunity to reflect on their oral skills allowing them to augment their confidence as Irish speakers. The presentations also give students the opportunity to show the part of their learning period which most left an impression on them as language learners and as student teachers. This practice is a demonstration as well for the students of the clear and practical link between the Learning Period in the Gaeltacht and the academic practice of language on campus.

3. Continued language development

An integral part of the language integration is the use of the *Fillteán Foghlama* as a working document for student teachers. It contains, among other things: notes taken down in class; vocabulary and new sayings learned in class or in the host house in the Gaeltacht; examples of rich idiomatic expressions; proverbs; songs; poems; local placenames; names of local flora and fauna; local history; dialect particularities; grammar notes; creative writing efforts; drafts of sketches; research results.

The *Fillteán Foghlama* also contains notes pertaining the four obligatory tasks of Na Tréimhsí Foghlama sa Ghaeltacht: notes and drafts of speeches for participation in debates; drafts of questions to be used when interviewing a native speaker from the locality and draft presentations to peers based on those interviews; resources for the teaching of Irish, how to use those resources, the language required by the teacher when using those resources and the language which is expected from the children; reviews of language board games and playground games - the final two tasks relating to professional aspects of the ITE programme.

Additional language scaffolding

Language Competency Modules: Several HEIs link language competency modules directly to the Tréimhse experience. An example of this is where one HEI's assessment includes tasks that reflect the language and cultural engagement from the Gaeltacht, reinforcing the spoken language skills.

HEIs support student teachers in enhancing their language skills and pedagogical competencies with various strategies. Some of the key initiatives and support mechanisms include the following:

- **Publication Opportunity:** At one HEI, student teachers have the opportunity to become published authors of language resources. This initiative allows them to apply their linguistic and pedagogical skills in creating materials that are professionally published, enhancing their credentials and providing practical experience in language resource development.
- **Upskilling in Labhairt and Scríobh na Gaeilge:** One example of support, is where a HEI offers additional upskilling classes in oral and written Irish. These classes are designed to address student teachers' apprehensions about their language proficiency, particularly in immersive settings like the Gaeltacht.
- **Support Tutorials:** Extra support is provided through tutorials, especially for students participating in the Tréimhse, helping them to strengthen their language skills in a focused and supportive environment.
- **Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL):** One HEI has a Departmental Tréimhse Foghlama sa Ghaeltacht Co-ordinator who plays a key role in preparing student teachers for their Gaeltacht experience, including training in CLIL methodologies. This approach integrates the learning of subjects through Irish, enhancing both language skills and subject knowledge simultaneously.
- **Irish Language Promotion Space:** Most HEI's have a dedicated space known as 'An Seomra Caidrimh' for promoting and using the Irish language within the college. This space hosts regular events that are integrated with various college departments, enhancing the visibility and usage of Irish in everyday campus life.
- **Event Organisation:** An Irish Language Officer at a HEI collaborates with the student union and other departments to organise events that promote the Irish language and culture, contributing to a vibrant community of language practice and learning.

School placement in the Gaeltacht and/or Gaelscoileanna

- Several HEIs offer specific school placements in Irish-medium schools or in the Gaeltacht, which are designed to enhance the linguistic and cultural competencies of student teachers.
- One example is a HEI that includes a week-long placement in a Gaelscoil as part of the student teachers experience. This placement is particularly designed to connect with their Tréimhse Foghlama sa Ghaeltacht, allowing them to apply and reflect on their language skills and cultural knowledge in a practical, educational setting.
- Whilst another HEI provides options for student teachers to complete placements in the Gaeltacht or Irish-medium schools. These placements are supported with appropriate resources and guidance to ensure that student teachers can effectively teach in environments where Irish is the primary language of instruction.
- Finally, another HEI offers a scholarship that supports student teachers to complete their spring placement in a Gaeltacht school. This initiative is aimed at improving

teaching competence and awareness of Gaeltacht culture, providing financial support to alleviate the costs associated with living and studying in the Gaeltacht.

Section 5: Research in School Placement

- Research activities during School Placement are focused on improving teaching practices through empirical studies and evidence-based strategies.
- Common research topics include Universal Design for Learning, wellbeing, inclusive education more broadly, and the application of evidence-based strategies in the classroom. Research methodologies encompass action research and other educational research methodologies, emphasising the integration of theory with practice.
- The research process is both collaborative, and reflective, encouraging student teachers to align their research with personal and professional growth.

Modular Examples of Research Projects

In all HEIs, student teachers undertake research projects aligned with their teaching practice. These projects involve collecting and analysing data to enhance their teaching and learning methods.

- In one HEI, students will prepare to conceptualise, design and plan a final year research project. It will develop student capacity to understand how self-reflective action research can improve teaching. Students will develop an understanding of how educational values impact practice by engaging in critical reflection on the connections between the personal self and the professional self. Students will question why they do what they do in the classroom and to ask how they can be a better teacher. Students will choose a research topic, organise a literature search and literature analysis and formulate research questions. Students will prepare a plan to address the research questions while on school placement, in the context of best ethical principles and practices. Students will engage in the practical applications of a self-reflective action research study. They are asked to describe, refine and justify their research plan, before gathering and analysing data. Following this they critically reflect on their findings in light of the literature and engage in a reflective cycle. Students are then asked to demonstrate an understanding of the ethics of engaging in research before finally preparing a research report that describes and critically analyses their findings and make recommendations for further research.
- Another HEI requires students to engage in systematic research on their teaching practice. This involves designing research studies to gather empirical data in response to identified challenges. The research is conducted during their placements, and the findings are used to make research-informed decisions about pedagogical strategies for improvement. Students also participate in a formal Lesson Study Research Project. This project involves collaborative group research on their practice, supported by research methods training. This project allows student teachers to critically examine In the Advanced School Placement module,

- Additionally, one HEI's student teachers, before commencing their first School Placement, are asked to brainstorm any ideas/interests that they may have. These ideas may have come from programme content or professional conversations with peers or colleagues. This essentially serves as a list to guide and help student teachers to formulate a plan for their Research thesis. Student teachers are encouraged to revisit this throughout their School Placement and participate in professional conversations. Student teachers are encouraged to be on the lookout for a 'lightbulb moment' for a dilemma of practice whilst they are out on School Placement. At the end of School Placement, students revisit their ponderings on their thesis and reflect upon emerging dilemmas of practice
- Finally, one HEI's students carry out a research project, typically on an aspect of their experience of learning on a research site. Students are encouraged to cooperate with each other in their research and collaborative themes within the cohort will be identified and facilitated. While a certain degree of collective endeavour will be facilitated in projects and the implementation of research instruments, each student will be required to deliver a project result based on personal, authentic and original research. Additionally, a dedicated research methods component takes place. This is designed to facilitate students investigating their field of interest and designing their research project. The final research project focuses on an aspect of teaching / collaborative practice as a research site.

Section 6: Requirements and programme resourcing

- In certain circumstances, the Teaching Council may grant accreditation of a programme subject to requirements. This can occur where a programme standard has not been adhered to in full.
- Nineteen programmes across nine universities were granted accreditation with requirements. The majority of the requirements were in relation to the programmes not meeting the student:staff ratio of 15:1. There were also requirements placed on a small number of programmes in relation to facilities.
- Within six months from the date of the published report, the HEI must notify the Teaching Council that the requirements have been addressed by submitting the 'Accreditation Requirements Addressed' template for review. The Teaching Council staff review the template and contact the HEI if any further information is required.
- Where a requirement has clearly been fulfilled, this will be noted by the Director of the Teaching Council and Head of ITEI. If there is ambiguity around the fulfilment of a requirement, an additional review may take place.

Conclusion

Through the review and accreditation process, HEIs across the country demonstrated that programmes meet the minimum standards outlined in *Céim*.

Céim programmes encompass content knowledge, high-level decision-making skills, and researcher skills to meet complex and diverse needs of the modern classroom.

Their initial teacher education emphasises the importance of being agentic, reflective teachers, who actively shape and respond to the educational settings they encounter.

Céim places a significant emphasis on the role of the teacher as a researcher. Graduates are supported to adopt a research-informed approach, integrating current educational research into their daily practice.

In conclusion, the programmes are designed to provide foundational competencies and best practices in initial teacher education.

Appendix A: Dates of Cycle 2 and List of Accredited Programmes

Date Review commenced	Higher Education Institute	Programmes	Subjects	Sector
November 2021	ATU St. Angela's	BEd in Home Economics	Home Economics	Post-primary
		BEd in Home Economics & Religious Education	Home Economics Religious Education	
		BEd in Home Economics & Gaeilge	Home Economics Gaeilge	
		BEd in Home Economics & Biology	Home Economics Biology	
March 2022	Maynooth University	BSc with Education & Professional Master of Education	Biology Physics Chemistry Mathematics Applied Mathematics Computer Science	Post-primary
		Professional Master of Education	Various	
		Bachelor of Education (Primary) (Froebel)	n/a	Primary
		Professional Master of Education (Primary) (Froebel)	n/a	
May 2022	University of Galway/ Ollscoil Na Gaillimhe*	Bachelor of Education (Computer Science & Mathematical Studies)	Computer Science	Post-primary
			Mathematics	
		Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics & Education	Applied Mathematics Mathematics	
		Professional Master of Education	Various	

		Máistreacht Gairmiúil san Oideachas	Various	
July 2022	University of Limerick (UL)	BSc (Education) in Mathematics & Computer Science	Mathematics Computer Science	Post-primary
		BEd in Languages	Gaeilge French German Spanish Japanese	
		BSc in Physical Education (with English, Gaeilge, Geography or Maths)	Physical Education + Mathematics or English or Gaeilge or Geography	
		BSc (Education) in Biology & Chemistry or Physics or Ag Science	Biology + Chemistry or Physics or Agricultural Science	
		BSc with Teacher Education (in Chemistry & Physics)	Physics Chemistry	
		BEd in Graphics & Construction Technology	Design & Communication Graphics Construction Studies	
		BEd in Graphics, Engineering & Technology	Design & Communication Graphics* Engineering* Technology	
		Professional Master of Education	Various	
June 2022	University College Cork (UCC)	BEd. (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education / Bachelor of Education (Hons) in PE Sports Studies & Arts.	Physical Education + English or French or Irish or Mathematics or History	Post-primary
		Bachelor of Science Education	Biology Chemistry Computer Science Mathematics Physics	
		BEd Gaeilge	Gaeilge + French or	

			German or Italian or Spanish or Mathematics	
		Professional Master of Education	Various	
	University College Cork (UCC) & Munster Technological University (MTU)	Professional Master of Education (Art & Design)	Art (Incl Crafts)	
September 2022	Dublin City University (DCU)	B.Ed in Gaelge & French, Spanish & German	Gaelge + French or Spanish or German	Post-primary
		B.Ed in Technology, Engineering & Graphics	Technology* Engineering* Design & Communication Graphics*	
			All 3 Subjects	
		BSc in Science Education	Mathematics + Physics or Chemistry	
		BSc in Physical Education with Biology or Maths	Physical Education + Biology or Mathematics	
		Bachelor of Religious Education & English / History / Music	Religious Education + English or History or Music	
		Professional Master of Education	Various	
		Bachelor of Education, Primary	n/a	Primary
		Professional Master of Education (Primary)	n/a	Primary
October 2022	Hibernia College	Professional Master of Education (Primary)	n/a	Primary
		Professional Master of Education (Post-primary)	Various	Post-primary
November 2022	University College Dublin (UCD)	Bachelor of Education in Education, Gaelge & Modern Languages	French Gaelge German Italian Portuguese Spanish	Post-primary

		BSc in Mathematics & MSc in Mathematics & Science Education: Computer Science	Applied Mathematics Biology Chemistry Computer Science Mathematics Physics	
		Professional Master of Education	Various	
		MSC in Mathematics & Science Education:	Applied Maths & Maths	
		MSC in Mathematics & Science Education:	Biology & Maths	
		MSC in Mathematics & Science Education:	Chemistry & Maths	
		MSC in Mathematics & Science Education:	Physics & Maths	
April 2023	Atlantic Technological University (ATU) incl GMIT	BEd (Honours) in Art, Design and Graphics	Art (Incl Crafts) Design & Communication Graphics	Post-primary
		BSc in Education (Design Graphics & Construction)	Design & Communication Graphics Construction Studies	Post-primary
April 2023	Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) (incl LIT)	BEd Art & Design	Art (Incl Crafts)	Post-primary
		Professional Master of Education (Art & Design with Digital Media)	Art (Incl Crafts)	Post-primary
March 2023	National College of Art & Design (NCAD)	BA (Joint Hons) in Education & Fine Art or Design	Art	Post-primary
		Professional Master of Education (Art & Design Education)	Art	Post-primary
March 2023	Marino Institute of Education	Bachelor of Education	n/a	Primary
		Baitsiléir san Oideachas Trí Mheán na Gaeilge	n/a	

		Professional Masters in Education (Primary Teaching)	n/a	
March 2023	Trinity College, University of Dublin	Bachelor in Music Education	Music	Post-primary
		Professional Master of Education	Various	Post-primary
April 2023	Mary Immaculate College (MIC)	Bachelor of Education and Psychology (Primary)	n/a	Primary
		Bachelor of Education (Primary)	n/a	
		Professional Master of Education (Primary)	n/a	
		BA in Education (Post-primary) (Thurles)	Business Accounting Religious Education Mathematics Gaeilge Home Economics	Post-primary