



*An Chomhairle Mhúinteoireachta*  
**The Teaching Council**

**Final Report of the Review Panel to the Teaching Council following  
a review of reconceptualised Initial Teacher Education  
Programmes at Mater Dei Institute**

**Bachelor of Religious Education and English  
Bachelor of Religious Education and History  
Bachelor of Religious Education and Music**

**March 2014**

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## 1. Background

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

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

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

- (a) review and accredit the programmes of teacher education and training provided by institutions of higher education and training in the State,
- (b) review the standards of education and training appropriate to a person entering a programme of teacher education and training, and
- (c) review the standards of knowledge, skill and competence required for the practice of teaching,

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

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

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

### 1.2. *Review and Accreditation Strategy*

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

### **1.3. National Policy Framework**

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

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

### **1.4. Accreditation Criteria**

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

- prescribe those areas of study which will be mandatory in programmes, including numeracy and literacy, behaviour management, parents in education, ICT and inclusive education
- set out for the first time the expected learning outcomes for graduates of all ITE programmes
- propose raising the minimum requirements for persons entering programmes of ITE at primary level and a literacy and numeracy admissions test for mature entrants
- require a 15:1 student-staff ratio

- call for the development of new and innovative school placement models, involving active collaboration between HEIs and schools, and an enhanced role for the teaching profession in the provision of structured support for student teachers
- require that student teachers should spend at least 25% of the programme on school placement, and that such placements should be in a minimum of two schools
- require increased emphasis on research, portfolio work and other strategic priorities.

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

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

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

In 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**

Mater Dei Institute (hereinafter also referred to as 'the Institute' or 'MDI') is a college of Dublin City University (DCU). Currently, the provision of a Bachelor of Religious Education (B. Rel. Ed.) degree programme forms the core activity of the Mater Dei Institute. The college offers the following three courses of study to students who wish to pursue a Bachelor of Religious Education degree:

- Bachelor of Religious Education and English, (240 ECTS Credits)
- Bachelor of Religious Education and History, (240 ECTS Credits)
- Bachelor of Religious Education and Music, (265 ECTS Credits)

Each of the three courses prepares students to teach religious education and one other subject (English, History or Music) to honours Leaving Certificate level in post-primary schools. Admission to the programme is administered through the Central Applications Office (CAO) system and the majority of students enter on the basis of their Leaving Certificate results. A number of places are reserved for mature students, students entering through the higher education access route (HEAR), the disability access route to education (DARE) and through the FETAC entry route. Approximately 90 students in total are accepted into the programme each year.

The programme is comprised of four major strands:

- (a) Religious Studies (Theology and Philosophy),
- (b) Second academic subject (English, History or Music),
- (c) Foundation and Professional Studies in Education, and
- (d) School Placement.

The programme has been in existence in a variety of forms since 1966. Initially, it was offered as a three-year Diploma in Religious Education; then it became a four-year Bachelor of Religious Science; then, following the 1999 agreement for institutional linkage between MDI and Dublin City University (DCU), it became the Bachelor of Religious Education. In February 2013, the DCU Academic Council approved a reconceptualisation of the programme to take account of the criteria and guidelines for initial teacher education set out by the Teaching Council in 2011.

In reconceptualising the programme, MDI not only considered the Council's criteria and guidelines, it also took account of the findings and recommendations of a review of its original Bachelor of Religious Education programme that was conducted by the Teaching Council in 2011. Among the changes that have been made are:

- the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits for the elective subjects (English, History or Music) have been increased;
- extended school-placement periods have been provided;
- greater weight has been given to on-going assessment practices;
- pedagogical preparation for literacy and numeracy has been incorporated;
- ICT practices are embedded in the Education and academic modules;
- the issue of social inclusion is comprehensively addressed.

MDI together with St Patrick's College, Drumcondra and the Church of Ireland College of Education, is actively engaged in a process that will eventually lead to the full incorporation of the three colleges into DCU through the establishment of a new Institute of Education and an enhanced Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. The proposed new Institute, which will include DCU's existing School of Educational Studies, will constitute a new Faculty of Education in DCU.

## 2. The Review Process

The review of the Bachelor of Religious Education programmes took place between July 2013 and February 2014, in accordance with the Council's review strategy. The process was formally initiated when the Review Panel (hereinafter referred to as 'the panel') was appointed by the Teaching Council's director, with Professor Áine Hyland as Chairperson.<sup>1</sup> To assist and support the work of the panel, Risteard Ó Broin was appointed as Rapporteur. His functions included liaison with MDI, maintaining records of meetings, and drafting and finalising the panel's report in conjunction with the panel Chairperson. The panel was supported in its deliberations by external subject assessors for religious education, English and history. A member of the Review Panel is an inspector of music in the Department of Education and Skills and her expertise in that subject was of great assistance to the work of the panel. Valuable support was also provided by the Director and staff of the Teaching Council.

Documentation relating to the application was submitted to the Teaching Council by MDI in July, 2013. The documentation was furnished electronically and in hard copy to the panel. The members of the panel were asked to review the documentation and submit their observations, comments or concerns to the rapporteur. Panel members also considered the report published following a Teaching Council review of Mater Dei's concurrent programmes in 2011. In the course of reviewing the documentation, the panel maintained contact on a systematic basis both by e-mail and phone. The views of the panel were collated and submitted to MDI prior to meetings with staff of the Institute on Monday, 7 October 2013 at the MDI campus on Clonliffe Road, Dublin. At the meetings, further information was provided on issues raised by the panel in the following areas:

- (a) Features of the programmes: the process of reconceptualisation, the increased allocation of ECTS credits to academic subjects, student workload, the 80 ECTS credits allocated to music, pedagogical preparation for literacy and numeracy, the balance between continuous assessment and terminal examinations.
- (b) Institute structures: details about the proposed incorporation into DCU.
- (c) School placement: how students are prepared to teach in all-Irish schools, the programme of induction for school placement tutors, the role of the cooperating teachers and schools.
- (d) Details about staffing and students: the teaching qualifications of staff, the systems in place for the continuing development of staff, the role of external examiners, student participation in the Erasmus programme, further information about the professional e-portfolio and the METIS system<sup>2</sup>.

The Review Panel also met separately with staff members from each of the subject areas and they provided details about course content and structures. Finally, the panel toured the Institute and reviewed the facilities and resources. The visit schedule is included in Appendix 2.

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<sup>1</sup> Details of the Review Panel membership are included in Appendix I

<sup>2</sup> METIS is an interactive, custom-built IT system which has been developed within MDI to cater for the needs of the concurrent initial teacher education programmes at the Institute. It forms a central data repository where information relating to all school placements undertaken by the students over the four years of the programmes can be stored and accessed.



### **3. Publication of this Report**

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

### **4. Documentation**

The documentation submitted in July 2013 by MDI was in accordance with the template provided by the Teaching Council in the Pro Forma and Guidelines which accompany the Council's review strategy. Key areas of focus were:

#### **4.1. *Inputs***

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

#### **4.2. *Processes***

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

### 4.3. Outcomes

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

## 5. Overall Findings

Having regard to the documentation that was initially submitted by MDI, together with the supplementary material that was provided, the meetings with programme staff and advice received from subject assessors, the panel adjudges that the programmes satisfy the criteria set down by the Teaching Council in its *Criteria and Guidelines* and in its curricular subject requirements in respect of religious education, English, history and music. Accordingly, it recommends to the Teaching Council that the following pathways which lead to three awards at honours level 8 be granted accreditation:

- Bachelor of Religious Education and English
- Bachelor of Religious Education and History
- Bachelor of Religious Education and Music

The commendations in Section 6 below relate to areas of particular strength which the panel has identified.

With regard to the recommendations in Section 7, the panel submits that the Teaching Council should require the Institute 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 programmes fall due for re-accreditation.

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

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

## 6. Commendations

Having regard to the pro forma documentation which was submitted, the supplementary material provided, the reports of the subject assessors and the information gleaned during the visit to MDI, the panel notes a number of particular strengths of the programmes as follows:

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

The panel received full cooperation from MDI on all aspects of the review. Documentation was completed in accordance with the Teaching Council's pro-forma and very well presented in a clear, reader-friendly manner. The Institute facilitated the panel in conducting meetings with management and academic staff and panel members were afforded full access to all Institute facilities and resources.

### 6.2. *Inputs*

#### 6.2.1. *Conceptual Framework*

The conceptual framework underpinning the programmes is clearly articulated in the MDI documentation. It is based on sound educational principles recognising initial teacher education as the first phase on the continuum of teacher education. The conceptual framework supports the professionalisation of teaching and fully endorses the Teaching Council's *Code of Professional Conduct*. Student teachers are supported in developing their own vision for teaching and are encouraged to commit to reflective practice and ongoing study and research in education.

#### 6.2.2. *Programme Design*

The panel notes that the three courses of study are carefully designed to meet the Teaching Council's criteria for the education and subject content of initial teacher education programmes. Two of the programmes (Bachelor of Religious Education and English and also the Bachelor of Religious Education and History) each deliver a total of 240 ECTS credits over four years. The programmes are appropriately designed with 60 ECTS credits in each of the four years. The Bachelor in Religious Studies and Music programme has a weighting of 265 ECTS credits with the credits appropriately distributed over the four years as follows: year one (70 ECTS credits), year two (60 ECTS credits), year three (70 ECTS credits) and year four (65 ECTS credits). The additional ECTS credits are required for this programme to meet the Teaching Council's subject criteria for music (which has a minimum ECTS requirement of 80 ECTS credits), when combined with a second subject (which has a minimum ECTS requirement of 60 ECTS credits).

#### 6.2.3. *Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies*

The Mater Dei Institute has carefully considered subject content and teaching methods for all its academic courses. Modules designed to equip students with the necessary skills and competences to teach religious education, English, history and music are satisfactorily provided. The panel commends the religious education programme which provides a broad and well-rounded understanding of the subject for student teachers. In music, the panel noted some very valuable modules which will equip students with the

necessary skills to teach in a post-primary setting. In history, the panel commends the good chronological spread from late medieval to early modern history which will well prepare graduates for teaching the second-level history syllabus. The panel commends MDI for the delivery of a comprehensive, challenging and original programme in English ranging from the study of film to the more traditional areas of enquiry. The key skills that the programme aims to inculcate are central to high-quality teaching.

#### **6.2.4. School Placement**

The school placement component of the programmes has been carefully planned and is implemented in a well-organised, professional manner and satisfies all the criteria set down by the Teaching Council. Students are given experience of micro-teaching, observing and teaching in a primary school setting and observing and teaching for extended periods in a variety of post-primary school settings. A comprehensive set of documentation has been provided to support school placement, including: a *School Placement Handbook for Students*, a *Guide for Cooperating Schools*, a *Guide for Cooperating Teachers* and a *Code of Best Practice for School Placement Tutors*.

#### **6.2.5. Facilities**

The very fine library and archive facilities at MDI were highly commended by the review panel. This rich resource is of great benefit to the current students providing them with access to many primary sources. The online library catalogue can be used not only to check library holdings in MDI but students can also check library holdings in St Patrick's College, Drumcondra and in DCU.

#### **6.2.6. The METIS system**

Panel members were very impressed by the technological supports available through the Mater Dei Education for Teaching Information System (METIS). This interactive, custom-built IT system has been developed within MDI to cater for programme needs. It forms a central data repository where information relating to all school placements undertaken by the students over the four years of the programme can be stored and accessed. There are plans to adapt the system to ensure its wider application and to make it suitable for use in other ITE colleges.

#### **6.2.7. Literacy, Numeracy, ICT and Inclusion**

The panel commends Mater Dei for ensuring that there is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy in the programmes in line with the national strategy on literacy and numeracy. Since literacy and numeracy was commented on by the panel which reported in 2011, the current panel paid particular attention to this aspect of the programmes. The panel also notes that ICT skills are embedded in many education and subject modules. Addressing issues of social inclusion has long been a feature of teacher education in Mater Dei and the reconceptualised programmes have strengthened the focus in this area.

### ***6.2.8. Student Support and Guidance Systems***

A noteworthy feature of MDI is the ethos of support for the welfare and wellbeing of students. Due attention is paid to the personal and professional development of students, and facilities are in place to monitor student progress in this regard throughout their time on the programmes. Students are represented on almost all committees of the Institute including an elected student representative on the MDI Governing Board.

### ***6.2.9. Collaboration with other programme providers***

The panel notes the pro-active position adopted by MDI on the collaboration with St Patrick's College, the Church of Ireland College of Education and DCU. The panel commends the systems that have already been put in place to establish closer alliances between the colleges and to facilitate the smooth transition to the full incorporation of the three HEIs into the new faculty of education at DCU.

## 7. Recommendations

Having regard to the documentation which was submitted, and the information gleaned during the visits and meetings with the HEIs, the panel, based on the advice of the subject assessors, has noted the following areas of the programmes which it recommends be developed by MDI:

### 7.1. *Areas of Study*

#### **(a) Music**

While the panel is satisfied that the programme covers all the mandatory areas set out in the Teaching Council's subject requirements, it recommends that the Institute should broaden and vary the range of resources used in the modules dealing with conducting so that students experience a wide range of music genres to assist them in teaching singing lessons and in conducting choirs in schools.

The panel notes that there is an emphasis on methodology in a range of modules provided by the Music Department and the School of Education. It recommends that the Institute maintain this emphasis, particularly in Years 1 and 2, to ensure that students are provided with the skills to teach the listening and composing components of the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate syllabi.

In view of the importance of good communication between members of the music department and those involved in the delivery of music methodologies, the panel welcomes the assurance given by MDI that cooperation and inclusiveness are central to the design, development, delivery and integration of music modules. It notes that several modules are co-taught and are underpinned by a positive emphasis on staff consultation both prior to the commencement of the semester, and throughout the course of the modules. The panel recommends that the programme documentation reflect these practices.

While recognizing and commending MDI on including a wide range of online music and resources as well as searchable databases in its reading lists, it recommends that specific reference be made, where appropriate, to contemporary literature on music.

#### **(b) English**

The panel recommends that the Institute should review its assessment policies and practices for English which currently are heavily weighted towards terminal examinations. The dependence on terminal examination is out of line with disciplinary norms and emerging national policy directions (in the context of junior cycle reform) and should be addressed in the longer term. Additionally, some broader focus on research skills would be very beneficial, in order to enable graduates to respond independently and creatively to curriculum changes.

## **8. National Issues**

Having regard to the documentation that was submitted, advice received from the subject specialists who advised the panel, and information gleaned during the meeting with MDI, the panel has noted the following issues which it believes merit further attention by the Teaching Council and/or other national stakeholders.

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

In the context of the proposed changes to the Junior 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 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.

### ***8.2. Duration of concurrent post-primary programmes***

While the panel is aware of the rationale behind MDI's decision to extend the RE and Music programme to 265 ECTS credits, in the context of the Teaching Council minimum ECTS credit requirements for those two subjects, it believes that this places an exceptionally heavy workload on students. It recommends that the duration of concurrent post-primary ITE programmes be reviewed by the Council, especially in the case of two-subject programmes which include subjects where the minimum criteria of the Teaching Council require students to achieve more than 60 ECTS credits in that subject.

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

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

Amanda Geary is currently a Post-Primary music and SPHE inspector with the Department of Education and Skills. This role involves undertaking various types of evaluations. In addition, she is currently the Department's representative for the Arts at post-primary level and is actively involved in other projects including curriculum development. Prior to this, Amanda taught in a number of post-primary and primary schools.

### **Rapporteur**

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



## Appendix 2 - Visit Schedule

Teaching Council Review Panel

Monday, 7 October 2013

Mater Dei Institute

### Schedule

10.00 – 11.00	Meeting with Director, Programme Board Chair and Administrative Registrar
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 – 13.00	Meeting with Head of the School of Education and School Placement Coordinator
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Meeting with heads of subject departments
	Group 1      English                      14.00 – 14.20
	Group 2      Religious Education      14.20 – 14.40
	Group 3      Music                              14.40 – 15.00
	Group 4      History                            15.00 – 15.20
	Group 5      Erasmus                         15.20 – 15.30
15.30 – 16.00	Tour of College facilities
16.00 – 16.30	AOB and private meeting of Review Panel

The following personnel attended the meeting with the Review Panel:

Dr PJ Sexton (Programme Chair)

Dr Andrew McGrady (Director)

Ms Annabella Stover, Administrative Registrar

Dr PJ Sexton Head of School of Education

Dr Sabrina Fitzsimons, Lecturer and School Placement Coordinator

Dr Kevin Williams, Senior Lecturer in School of Education

Dr Elaine McDonald, Lecturer in Special Education

Dr Enda Donlan, Lecturer in Education

Dr Michael Hinds, Head of Department of English

Dr Gearóid Ó Flaherty, Department of English

Dr Ian Leask, Lecturer in Philosophy

Dr Gareth Byrne, Head of RE in Education Department

Dr Ethna Regan, Head of School of Theology

Donal Hurley, Head of Music Department  
Dr Róisín Blunnie, Lecturer in Music

Stephen Stewart, Head of History and Erasmus Coordinator  
Prof. Michelle O' Riordan, Lecturer in History

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

### 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 pass<sup>1</sup> 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 syllabus<sup>2</sup> to the highest level in post-primary education (see [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of a 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.

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<sup>1</sup> which includes pass by compensation.

<sup>2</sup> As approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

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)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>Applicants who have commenced a programme of initial teacher education prior to 01/09/2014 carrying less than 120 ECTS credits may be exempted from this requirement at the Council's discretion.

## History

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

1.
  - (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with History studied up to and including third year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
  - (b) The qualifying degree must be equivalent to at least Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and with a minimum pass<sup>6</sup> result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of History.
  - (c) (The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of History 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 History during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the History syllabus<sup>7</sup> to the highest level in post-primary education (see [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of a minimum of 15 ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Irish History.
3. Applicants must also have completed a programme of post-primary initial teacher education (age range 12-18 years) carrying a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>8</sup>.

## Environmental and Social Studies (ESS)

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

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<sup>6</sup> which includes pass by compensation.

<sup>7</sup> as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

<sup>8</sup> Applicants who have commenced a programme of initial teacher education prior to 01/09/2014 carrying less than 120 ECTS credits may be exempted from this requirement at the Council's discretion.

## Music

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

1.
  - (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Music studied up to and including third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
  - (b) The qualifying degree must be equivalent to at least Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and with a minimum pass<sup>9</sup> result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Music.
  - (c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Music comprising at least 80 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 Music during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Music syllabus<sup>10</sup> to the highest level in post-primary education (see [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of all of the following:
  - (a) Instrumental and/or Vocal Performance
  - (b) Harmony and Composition
  - (c) Aural, Basic Keyboard and Music Technology Skills
  - (d) Western Art Music
  - (e) Irish Traditional Music.
3. Applicants must also have completed a programme of post-primary initial teacher education (age range 12-18 years) carrying a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>11</sup>. The programme should include a module(s) on the teaching of Music carrying a minimum of 5 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> which includes pass by compensation.

<sup>10</sup> as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

<sup>11</sup> Applicants who have commenced a programme of initial teacher education prior to 01/09/2014 carrying less than 120 ECTS credits may be exempted from this requirement at the Council's discretion.

<sup>12</sup> Applicants who have completed a specialist concurrent degree in Music must meet all of the requirements as detailed above. This course should be equivalent to a minimum of 240 ECTS credits.

## *Religious Education*

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

1.
  - (a) Applicants must hold a degree-level qualification, with Religious Education or Theology or Religious Studies studied up to and including third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
  - (b) The qualifying degree must be equivalent to at least Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and with a minimum pass<sup>13</sup> result in all examinations pertinent to the subject of Religious Education.
  - (c) The qualifying degree must carry at least 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (or equivalent) with the specific study of Religious Education comprising at least 60 ECTS credits (or equivalent) and with not less than 10 ECTS credits studied at third-year level or higher (or modular equivalent).
2. The study of Religious Education or Theology or Religious Studies during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Religious Education syllabus<sup>14</sup> to the highest level in post-primary education (see [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)). To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of all of the following:
  - (a) Sacred Texts including the Bible
  - (b) Christianity – Origins and Contemporary Experience
  - (c) World Religions
  - (d) Secular Belief Systems
  - (e) Ethics
  - (f) Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion.
3. Applicants must also have completed a programme of post-primary initial teacher education (age range 12-18 years) carrying a minimum of 120 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>15</sup>. The programme should include a module(s) on the teaching of Religious Education carrying a minimum of 5 ECTS credits (or equivalent)<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> which includes pass by compensation.

<sup>14</sup> as approved by the Minister for Education & Skills, and published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

<sup>15</sup> Applicants who have commenced a programme of initial teacher education prior to 01/09/2014 carrying less than 120 ECTS credits may be exempted from this requirement at the Council's discretion.

<sup>16</sup> Applicants who have completed a specialist concurrent degree in Religious Education must meet all of the requirements as detailed above. This course should be equivalent to a minimum of 240 ECTS credits.