

*Report of the Review Panel to the
Teaching Council following a review of
an Initial Teacher Education
programme*

Name of HEI: **Mary Immaculate College**

Name of Programme: **Bachelor of Education (Primary
Teaching)**

Date: December 2023

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.

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Programme Overview

This report relates to the review of the following programme provided by Mary Immaculate College:

Bachelor of Education (Primary Teaching) hereinafter referred to as ‘the programme’.

Background

Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education sets out the standards which programmes of initial teacher education in Ireland must meet in order to gain accreditation from the Teaching Council. It is also a benchmark for anybody seeking to register as a teacher in Ireland.

The Teaching Council’s *Procedures for the Professional Accreditation of Programmes of Initial Teacher Education* (hereinafter referred to as the *Procedures*) sets out the process by which programmes are reviewed.

Mary Immaculate College submitted a completed pro forma, toolkits and appendices which mapped the programme against each of the standards outlined in *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*. The programme was reviewed by the Review Panel following the *Procedures*.

The Review Process

The review of **Bachelor of Education (Primary Teaching)** at **Mary Immaculate College** took place between April 2023 and November 2023 in accordance with the Council's *Procedures for the Professional Accreditation of Programmes of Initial Teacher Education*.

Step 1 Notification	The Council notified Mary Immaculate College of its intention to review the Bachelor of Education (Primary Teaching) on 15 November 2022.
Step 2 Preliminary Meeting	A preliminary meeting was held between the Council executive staff and Mary Immaculate College on 5 December 2022 to provide an overview of the submission documentation and answer queries from Mary Immaculate College.
Step 3 Submission	Mary Immaculate College submitted the proforma and supporting documentation for the Bachelor of Education (Primary Teaching) , on 21 April 2023.
Step 4 Desk-based Review	A desk-based review was conducted by the Council staff on 10 May 2023 and a letter requesting clarifications was sent to Mary Immaculate College on the 19 May 2023. Mary Immaculate College submitted their response on 2 June 2023
Step 5 Appointment of Review Panel	The process was formally initiated when the Review Panel (hereinafter referred to as 'the panel') was appointed by the Teaching Council's director, with Dr Claire Connolly, Ms Mary Dunne, Mr Ciarán Flynn and Ms Eleanor Parks, Prof. Kenneth Muir as panel members. The panel was briefed by Teaching Council staff.
Rapporteur	The review panel was supported in their role by Ms Niamh Harkin as rapporteur. The rapporteur's functions included liaison with Mary Immaculate College maintaining records of meetings and drafting and finalising the panel's report in conjunction with the panel Chairperson. The panel was also supported in its deliberations by external subject experts and by the Director of the Teaching Council and their executive staff nominees.
Step 6 Review panel meeting 1	The panel met on 24 August 2023 to consider the submission. They requested clarifications from Mary Immaculate College on 11 September 2023 Mary Immaculate College responded to this request on 13 October 2023.
Step 7 Engagement with the HEI	The Panel Chair and Rapporteur held a pre-meet with Head of Education and the Manager of School Education along with a number of programme managers on 16 October 2023 to discuss arrangements for a site visit.

Site Visit	The panel conducted a site visit to Mary Immaculate College on 23 October 2023. This was also attended by the Rapporteur and Teaching Council staff. The panel had a tour of the facilities and met with representatives from the University management team, the programme teams, the school placement team and some students and recent graduates of the programmes. The following attended on behalf of the university: • President, MIC • Vice President of Academic Affairs, • Vice President of Administration & Finance • Dean of Education (Early Childhood & Teacher Education) • B.Ed Course Leader; Associate Professor and Lecturer in Maths Education. • B.Ed International Course Leader; Assistant Professor and Lecturer in Education Methodology. • B.Ed and Psychology Course Leader; Assistant Professor and Lecturer in Psychology. • Course Board Member (BEd in Ed & Psych); Assistant Professor and Lecturer in Psychology. • Assistant Dean; Course Board Member (BEd and BEd in Ed & Psych); Associate Professor and Lecturer in Sociology of Education. • PME Course Leader; Assistant Professor and Lecturer in SPHE. • Course Board Member (PME); Assistant Professor and Lecturer in History. • Director of School Placement; Associate Professor. • Assistant Professor and Lecturer in School Placement. • Assistant Professor and Lecturer in Science Education. • Assistant Professor and Lecturer in Education Methodology and Micro-teaching. • Director of Buildings & Estates • School Placement Tutors and school principals • Students and Graduates from the programme
Step 8: Review panel meeting 2	The panel met to consider the clarifications and agree recommendations immediately after the site visit on 23 October 2023.
Step 8 Reporting	The report was drafted and issued to the HEI for the 30-day feedback period. It was finalised when the final response was received from Mary Immaculate College.
Step 9 Education Committee	The Chair will present the report at the next meeting of the Education Committee. They may decide to: accredit the programme, accredit the programme with requirements or not accredit the programme.

Overall Findings

The Panel recognises and appreciates the positive, professional engagement of Mary Immaculate College's leadership and programme team with the review and accreditation process. The Panel praises the deep commitment of the staff to providing high quality Initial Teacher Education in MIC.

The panel was impressed by the openness and rigour with which MIC, Limerick used the accreditation process to reflect, review, and reimagine their original conceptual framework to ensure that the overall programme structure and design fully and clearly aligns with the *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*. The conceptual framework has a clear vision of education as a force for transformation and the teacher as an agent of change, and this vision serves as the guiding purpose for the programme. The key principles of the conceptual framework are effectively embedded across the programme and are designed to develop student teachers as learners, teachers, researchers and leaders, who willingly promote principles of social justice, empathy, care, equity and democracy in their classrooms and beyond.

The Panel praises the detailed and comprehensive documentation provided which shows high levels of coherence and progression within the programme and a spiral approach across areas of study and placement.

The Panel noted the enthusiasm and dedication of the B.Ed team members as they demonstrated a student-centred, pastoral focus responding to student health and well-being while also nurturing the individual growth of each student. This attention to personal development is paralleled by high expectations and standards thus scaffolding students' professional development as reflective practitioners.

Programme Design

	Comment	Standard addressed?
1.1.1 The Programme	The Programme received academic accreditation from MIC and was submitted to the Teaching Council for professional accreditation and is in line with the Council's Registration Regulations 2016.	Yes
1.1.2 Conceptual Framework	The programme is supported by a clearly defined conceptual framework. In the application, Mary Immaculate College demonstrated how 'Education as a force for positive transformation lies at the heart of our conceptual framework. A strong ethic of care and equity is at the forefront of this transformative education. The development of authentic caring relationships in education must start with teacher education. ITE students are encouraged to develop, to flourish, and to be supported in their quest to be better "ethical selves".' Mary Immaculate College demonstrated how the programme is informed by research and the Council's <i>Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education</i> both of which underpin the conceptual framework. This 'is based upon research from our Faculty of Education, national and international research, Teaching Council documentation, and the Primary Curriculum Framework. It is also informed by the views of our partners in education (including school principals, and teachers), the student body and engagement with our external examiners. From this research and consultation, we have identified nine key principles that will inform our vision for our ITE primary programmes into the future... '1. The recognition that the child, their voice and agency is at the centre of our vision; 2. The acknowledgement that knowledge is a fundamental component of teacher education and undergraduate psychology; 3. The recognition of, and respect for, the dignity of the individual; 4. The exploration and development of teacher identity in the context of a globalised and diverse outward looking society; 5. The development of critical reflection and reflective practice; 6. The appreciation and exploration of the role and contribution of the graduate to society, locally, nationally and globally, in promoting a sustainable future for all citizens; 7. The recognition, appreciation, and acknowledgement of a diverse and constantly changing society and the promotion of an education system and practices that include all children and celebrates partnership with parents; 8. The recognition of the pivotal contribution of educational and psychological research to professional identity formation; 9. The understanding of leadership as an intrinsic component of teacher education.'	Yes

	MIC clearly evidence the core idea/ principle that being and becoming a teacher is a lifelong process involving knowledge and skills as well as the development of teacher voice and agency and a commitment to the needs of all learners and the <i>Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers</i>. The application demonstrated how the conceptual framework provides a rationale for the model of ITE which has been adopted and how it enables student teachers while on placement to demonstrate the link between the sites of practice (HEI and School) 'Our ITE primary education programme provides opportunities for students to interrogate what inclusion means and their responsibilities in the classroom. This is enacted particularly in their final school placement, where they work with special education teachers in the strand element of their placement. Through our school placement, foundation discipline, professional studies and early childhood modules, our ITE students receive a strong grounding in the theory and practice of facilitating and enabling child agency and active engagement in learning.' The application shows how school placement is the fulcrum of the continuum of teacher education and how key themes are revisited over the programme. The review process determined that the submission demonstrates how the professional studies aspect of the programme gives student teachers sufficient opportunities to actively learn from practising teachers about relevant and innovative methodologies, appropriate to their practice. 'We acknowledge the importance of both subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in the teaching process, and endeavour to allow for the fusion and the exploration of both concepts within the Professional Studies modules. There is significant emphasis on bridging the theory-to-practice divide by focusing on theory-in-action. For instance, utilising Lesson Study has supported ITE students in developing content knowledge and innovative pedagogies for use in primary classrooms. Through small group teaching within the Professional Studies modules, teacher educators, the majority of whom are qualified primary teachers, model a range of pedagogies such as: active learning, collaborative and cooperative learning, guided discovery learning, problem-based learning and inquiry-based learning.'	
1.1.3 Programme Aims	The review process determined that the submission clearly defines the aims of the programme, demonstrating where the aims are closely aligned with the conceptual framework and are reflected in specific learning outcomes. The application demonstrated how the programme caters for curriculum development, to include the learning outcomes-based curricula and national priorities.	Yes

	‘MIC plays a key role in curriculum development, which is evident in staff membership of various committees including, NCCA curriculum development groups and in staff coordination of various NCCA, Education Centre, and Teaching Council funded projects. Our ITE programme centres around the 4 themes of student as learner, teacher, researcher and leader. Within these themes across all years, modules reflect current thinking, and research in relation to all curricular areas and national priorities. For instance, one example is the area of child protection. This is core to our work in preparing student teachers for all school placement modules. Most importantly, it is a capstone module before students enter the teaching profession.’ Mary Immaculate College have demonstrated how the programme will enable newly qualified teachers to facilitate quality teaching and learning for all pupils, how it prepares student teachers for teaching, learning, reflective practices, and assessment in their schools, and prepares them for entry to their professional role. The application demonstrates how the programme aims foster student teachers’ agency and mind-set to be open to professional growth and learning over the course of their careers, to reflect on their own professional learning and that of their pupils, and to support their pupils in achieving their full potential. ‘Foundation Studies, Professional Studies and School Placement are all features of a final TAISCE that a student will present on completion of their studies in Year 4 of the programme. Tasks move from questions based on reflecting on assumptions students had about schools, teachers, teaching and children before starting their ITE programme, through to the presentation of research on their practice that students complete on their extended placement in Year 4 of the programme. The weaving of mentoring, research, and reflective practice into aspects of TAISCE prepares graduates for the Droichead process. This ensures our graduate are prepared to embark on the next stage of their teaching journey, as reflective practitioners who are conscious of the need to continuously examine and reflect on their practice.’	
1.1.4 Programme Duration & Balance	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that the concurrent programme meets the criterion of a minimum of four years duration, and demonstrates how the models of teaching, learning and assessment set out in the conceptual framework are evident in the programme structure. The concurrent four-year B. Ed. Programme consists of 240 credits and is balanced to reflect the requirements of ITE	Yes

	programmes, as set out in CEIM: Standards for Initial Teacher Education (Teaching Council), the breakdown of credits are Foundation and Professional Studies (59%), School Placement (34%) and Discretionary Time (7%).’ Mary Immaculate College demonstrated that all areas of study are relevant to students’ future work as teachers, that the programme will facilitate student teachers’ personal development and their growth and wellbeing into their professional role, enabling them to become responsible, trustworthy, and reflective practitioners who are prepared for life in the classroom. ‘Each year of the programme is structured around a particular theme. In Year 1 of the programme the student is focused on being a learner and understanding the learner. This is explored in modules such as School Placement 1 where, not alone is the initial focus of lectures on preparing students for engaging in School Placement but, engaging in a series of lectures focused on the personal and professional development of student teachers. Life Skills and Academic Writing for example aim to ease the transition into tertiary level studies.’ The panel is satisfied that the submission demonstrated the programme prepares students for life in the classroom and active engagement in teaching within a professional learning community, reflecting the core values of trust, care, respect and integrity. ,	
1.1.5 Tréimhse Foghlama sa Ghaeltacht	The programme provides for an immersive educational experience through the medium of Irish in a Gaeltacht setting of a minimum of four weeks duration, ‘students undertake two Gaeltacht placements (two separate blocks of two weeks) and create a learning portfolio to document their learning in the Gaeltacht. The portfolio supports the process of reflection and invites students to identify areas of Irish language competence and Irish language teaching in which they may need additional support.’ MIC demonstrated in their submission that ‘MIC has a dedicated space for the promotion and use of Gaeilge outside of the classroom environment. An Seomra Caidrimh is located in the library building and the language of this space is Gaeilge. Events are held regularly in this space for members of the College community. Events are held in collaboration with Chaplaincy, Mary Immaculate College Students' Union (MISU) and the Health Promotion Centre. Seachtain na Gaeilge is celebrated and is well supported by the entire College community. The Irish Language Officer works closely with MISU and other departments in organising a wide range	Yes

	of events that celebrate and promote Irish language and culture.' The review process determined that the programme provides opportunities for student teachers to meaningfully integrate their experience into their learning in the HEI as 'students attend modules dedicated to Gaeilge prior to both Gaeltacht placements which raise students' socio-linguistic awareness and offers students an understanding of the context of Gaeltacht areas.' Tá an Painéal sásta go bhfuil an Tréimhse Foghlama sa Ghaeltacht ag teacht go hiomlán leis na caighdeáin atá leagtha síos i Céim: Caighdeáin d'Oideachas Tosaigh Múinteoirí	
1.1.6 Integration and Diversity of Programme Content	Mary Immaculate College have demonstrated that foundation studies are integrated into the programme in a way that is meaningful for student teachers and their practice; that the programme design follows a spiral learning approach and that the programme allows student teachers to experience a variety of teaching, learning and assessment modes as 'A scaffolded approach from Learner through to Leader ensures the student teacher develops into a confident and competent graduate. All areas of study including Foundation Studies, Curricular Studies and School Placement are spiral in nature and explored throughout the programme at stages where the student teacher can confidently engage with the content'	Yes
Aptitude test	Mary Immaculate College completed an 'Aptitude Test' declaration form, confirming that the programme design allows for the provision of 'aptitude tests' for teachers who have qualified outside of the State.	Yes
<u>1.1.7 Required Areas of Study</u>	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated how the Foundation Studies, Professional Studies & School Placement elements of the programme meet the requirements of this standard. <u>Foundation Studies</u> The programme provides research informed insights to support student teachers' understanding of the practices of teaching, learning and assessment for all pupils. This suite of modules build students' capacity to live as active, socially engaged global citizens, and while encouraging students to think critically, analyse, and problem solve around central issues in the field of social justice. These modules support students to develop a range of prevention, intervention and response strategies to manage classroom and individual student behaviours, to foster positive relationships and partnerships, and to collaboratively develop a safe and caring classroom culture and climate.'	Yes

	The Panel is satisfied that the programme provides the basis of a strong professional ethic in teaching and learning and includes curriculum studies, the history and policy of education, philosophy of education, psychology of education and sociology of education. The programme, enhances students' understanding of the Irish education system, locates it in context and enables students to think critically about it. The submission states 'Initial modules explore the ideas of key philosophers, sociologists and historians to enhance their understanding of the Irish education system, locate it in context, and think critically about it. They introduce students to the theories and frameworks within developmental psychology, with specific focus on theories of child development and learning enabling students to understand children's development, learning and behaviour, and provide a framework for their observation and teaching of children in class.' <u>Professional Studies</u> Mary Immaculate College demonstrated in the submission that the Professional Studies elements of the programme develop the pedagogical expertise of student teachers, including subject specific pedagogical content knowledge. For example the submission states 'Student engagement with Life Skills in Year 1 is integral to their personal and professional development. This module initiates the development of professionals that are confident in their engagements with schools, communities, and associated services, as they embark on placement from Years 1- 4. Exploration of essential classroom techniques in Pedagogical Practice Modules in Years 1 and 3 also continues this development. Students will understand the interdependence of teacher, pupil and parent in relation to, the social and policy contexts that influence the nature and purposes of education.' Students are afforded the opportunity for reflection and engagement in and with research to develop their adaptive expertise. 'Students engage with the building of TAISCE from Year 1 of the programme. The many elements of TAISCE, which will reveal their journey through their Initial Teacher Education Programme, include their presentation, in their final year, of their engagement with research on their practice. Students are supported on their research journey via the specialism that they chose, their engagement with research based	
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	teaching over the course of the programme and dedicated research and portfolio support modules in Year 3 (Research Methods and Portfolio - Exploring Teacher Professional Growth; School Placement 4). School Placement 4 includes preparatory sessions on conducting research on practice and engaging with their TAISCE.' <u>School Placement</u> Mary Immaculate College demonstrated how the school placement model on the programme provide opportunities for student teachers to experience a high support/high challenge model of placement and engage in research on their own practice, making connections between the sites of practice. Students are given the opportunity to observe experienced teachers and plan for and undertake class teaching, learning and assessment in a diversity of class settings and subject levels, to assist them in establishing classroom management strategies. 'Students have the opportunity to teach all class levels from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. In addition, all modules across years and semesters feed into School Placement, including foundation and professional studies modules. School placement places incremental responsibility on the student for the organisation of teaching and learning.' Mary Immaculate College demonstrated that student teachers are encouraged to reflect critically on their practice and programme of study, reflecting on feedback from discussions and identify areas for further professional learning for Droichead through their electronic portfolio or "Taisce". 'On School Placement, students teach all curricular areas whilst understanding the need to promote a positive classroom climate through playful pedagogies and are imbued to establish positive relationships with the school community. At all stages, students are developing their TAISCE (School Placement element) by engaging with reflective tasks (Appendix 14) related to planning, classroom management, strategies for teaching and learning; and their evolving identity as a student teacher.' <u>Core elements of programmes of ITE</u> The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that the following elements underpin all aspects of the programme.	
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	1. Inclusive Education Mary Immaculate College demonstrated that inclusive education permeates their ITE programme. ‘All B.Ed. programmes have been designed in the recognition that all learners should be facilitated to reach their full potential and achieve the maximum benefit from their attendance at school... the first dedicated module to Inclusive Education - Including Every Child in Year 2 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. This, and a subsequent module, are underpinned by Hornby's (2015) Framework of Inclusive Special Education, which flexibly combines the most useful elements of special and inclusive education, centralising the child's strengths and needs in decision making.’ 2. Global Citizenship Education The application evidenced how global citizenship education and education for sustainable development is integrated into the programme. ‘Global Citizenship Education is embedded across the programme 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. The first integrated module in Year 1 aims to build students' capacity to live as active, socially engaged global citizens by supporting students to develop their personal awareness and understanding about why the world is shaped the way it is in order to think critically, analyse and problem solve around central issues in the field of social justice, as an individual and as a member of a team. 3. Professional Relationships and working with parents Mary Immaculate College showed that the core element of establishing professional relationships and working with parents is integrated into the programme. ‘Within the suite of Foundation Studies modules is a core module dedicated to Professional Relationships, Partnerships and Communication (Year 3 Semester 2). This module is dedicated to developing students' capacity to engage fully with partnership activities and processes in schools and to understanding the interdependence of teacher, pupil and	
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	parent in relation to the social and policy contexts that influence the nature and purposes of education. Students learn how to develop positive relationships, meaningful interactions and effective communication techniques with pupils and all education partners that are based on mutual trust and respect in the context of developing a positive school culture for partnership.' 4. Professional identity and agency The application demonstrated that the programme includes support for the development of the teacher as a self-reflective autonomous professional. 'From entry into the programme, School Placement places significant importance on specific professional and academic skills required of a student teacher. Life skills are explored for students own personal and professional development. This is initially helpful as they transition from being a second level student to third level education. Academic writing classes support the development of key literary skills associated with success in third level education. Embedded within a student's preparation for engaging as a professional on school placement is time for reflection on the college's Code of Conduct for Student Teachers, the School Placement Handbook and, the principles of learning that underpin the Primary School Curriculum.' 5. Creativity and Reflective practice Mary Immaculate College have demonstrated how the programme fosters a creative mindset among student teachers as reflective practitioners, innovators, and researchers: 'The utilisation of a spectrum of assessment methods across the many modules on the programme allows students with different learning styles and talents to flourish and further develop their individual teaching styles. It also ensures that student learning is assessed appropriately in specific areas in Professional Studies, Foundation Studies or School Placement. The presentation of a student teacher's final TAISCE is a revelation of their learning journey and engagement with the themes of the programme.' 6. Literacy and Numeracy The programme design shows a commitment to enhance students' own literacy and numeracy while also ensuring that they learn techniques to develop their future pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.	
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	'Inquiry based learning approaches develop critical thinking skills and key pedagogical practices that promote the development of conceptual understanding. The use of visual case studies throughout a student's engagement with the teaching of the mathematics curriculum provides valuable insights into the enactment of these mathematical practices in primary classroom settings. Critical to all mathematics modules is the development of the teacher as digital learner through the use of technology to support exploration and manipulation of all areas of mathematics. Modules encourage students to develop a range of strategies to support, monitor and assess pupils' approach to learning and their progress.' 7. Digital Skills Mary Immaculate College have demonstrated that digital skills are incorporated into the programme to support teaching and learning for all students. 'In Year 3 of the programme, students engage with the concept of creativity and explore a selection of approaches and tools through a dual lens of STEAM and digital technologies. Embedded across the exploration of curricular methods modules is the appropriate use of digital resources and skills to enhance teaching and learning of specific subject areas. For example critical to all mathematics modules is the development of the teacher as digital learner through the use of technology to support exploration and manipulation of all areas of mathematics.'	
1.1.7 Primary Programme Requirements	<u>Gaeilge</u> The submission demonstrated how the programme develops student's confidence and competence in Irish. 'Students engage with the most common teaching methods utilised to teach Gaeilge as a second language, according to the recommendations of the Primary Language Curriculum. Ways in which to accommodate children of different abilities and children in multi-class settings are also explored. The importance of language awareness, cultural awareness, informal use of Gaeilge and teaching through Gaeilge in learning a second language are discussed. All themes of the language curriculum, from infants through to the senior classes, are analysed with best practice available on video case studies.' <u>Early Childhood Education</u> The submission showed how early childhood education modules on the programme explore the relationship between young children's (birth to six years) development and learning.	Yes

	'Within Early Childhood Education (ECE) modules 1 & 2, students' critical awareness of the fundamental principles of early childhood education including, the whole child perspective, the agentic child, relational pedagogy and the importance of play for children's early learning and development, are developed. Particular attention is focused on the Irish context in terms of policy and curriculum; in addition to, an appreciation of the continuum of education within the early childhood phase through supporting transitions between ECE and primary education.'	
1.1.8 Learning and Assessment Strategies	Mary Immaculate College demonstrated how the principles, beliefs, and values about teaching, learning and assessment which are set out in the conceptual framework are evident in the teaching, learning and assessment modes used in the programme. 'The rationale for assessment is considered by individual lecturer, module teaching teams, and year groups at the beginning of every semester, in order to ensure that there is variety in the form of assessment, and that where coursework is being sought, that submission dates are staggered to ease students' workload. In compliance with College regulations, assessment procedures are clearly outlined at the beginning of every module. Assessment criteria vary depending on the nature of the assessment, but many assessments require students to demonstrate sound knowledge of the topic, provide evidence of critical thinking, be able to make quality argument and have the capacity to make a professional judgement. Grade descriptors and statement of standards, are used to complement assessment criteria outlining standards students need to meet in order to achieve particular grades' The submission demonstrated the relationship (constructive alignment) between the learning opportunities and the assessment criteria which student teachers are expected to meet, and how the assessment processes and procedures are coherent and integrated using a variety of assessment modes. 'From the perspective of the student, a variety of assessments enables a more inclusive educational experience, as it allows more latitude for students to display their learning. Across the entire B.Ed. programme, it is essential that assessment method are sufficiently diverse to achieve the balance of assessing a wide range of learning while also, supporting students' learning through multi-modal representation. Both summative and formative type assessments are utilised within the programme, as evidenced in the Book of Modules.'	Yes

Programme Resourcing

	Comment	Standard addressed?
1.2.2 Staffing	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that the programme meets this standard by providing: • programme staff qualifications and experience • evidence that currently 51.83% of school placement tutors on this Mary Immaculate College programme are registered with the Teaching Council. The application demonstrated the staff distribution mechanisms they have in place to show that prior to qualification, while on school placement, a student teacher will be summatively assessed at least once by a registered teacher. The application demonstrated that the student: staff ratio on the programme is a current ratio average of 17.7:1. As this ratio is greater than the required standard of 15:1, MIC should comply with the plan outlined in the Requirement section below. Mary Immaculate College demonstrated the staff development policies that are in place to ensure that staff continue to enhance their knowledge and expertise.	No, subject to requirement.
1.2.3 Facilities	Mary Immaculate College demonstrated that appropriate facilities are available to support research, teaching, and learning, providing the following: Main library Limerick Campus, Tailteann Sports Complex, dedicated rooms for digital technologies, Halla drama and the Lime Tree Theatre. MIC Campus also has dedicated silent booths, a chapel, dedicated science lab and a sensory room along with an outdoor training pitch and walking track.	Yes
1.2.4 Student Support and Guidance Systems	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that provisions are in place for the personal and social development and pastoral care of student teachers. Mary Immaculate College have a wide range of student supports and services including the following services and provision: ‘Within the Faculty of Education, students have access to a range of supports and guidance systems. The programme leader, Assistant Dean and the Education Office are important points of contact for students. Students are also assigned a mentor (from the faculty) in first year. The mentor also oversees the development of the student's Taisce portfolio throughout their programme. ITE students study Life Skills and Academic Writing (as part of their school placement	Yes

	module) during their first semester. Life Skills focus on their personal and professional development and, supports the transition from second level to third level education. ‘ MIC have demonstrated how a student teacher might transfer to an alternative programme in line with the University’s policies and procedures.	
1.2.5 Communication and Decision-making Structures	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated the structures that are in place to facilitate the participation of staff and students in relevant deliberation and decision-making processes. ‘There are extensive structures in place to facilitate the participation of staff and students in deliberation and decision making at all levels within the college....At formal College level, students are represented by the Students' Union (MISU). MISU represents students' views on An Bord Rialaithe, An Chomhairle Acaduil and UL Academic Council. MISU are also represented on Faculty Board. In 2020 the College established the Student Learning Partnership and Dialogue Charter between MIC and MISU. One of the most important elements is the Staff Student Forum which facilitates dialogue and constructive feedback from students to faculty. This forum meets once a semester.’	Yes
1.2.6 Financial Resources	Mary Immaculate College demonstrated that the programme is adequately resourced to ensure that programme aims are met through student fee income and state grants.	Yes

School Placement

	Comment	Standard addressed?
1.3.1 A Shared Vision for School Placement	Mary Immaculate College school placement model supports the shared vision for school placement. The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that student teachers experience a supportive model of placement which facilitates professional conversational engagement between all partners. ‘Placement affords the student teacher appropriate, and varied learning and development opportunities. School Placement is a partnership based on mutual trust, respect and inclusion that is enriching for all partners, MIC, schools and student teachers. Partnership recognises the central role that cooperating schools and host teachers play in the formation of teachers.’	Yes
1.3.2 Duration	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that the duration of the school placement is in compliance with the Teaching Council’s	Yes

	requirements and includes both school-based and HEI-directed activities, thus meeting the requirements of this standard. ‘The School Placement element of the B.Ed. programme is planned to give students experience of teaching all class levels. Students also experience School Placement in all Years of the B.Ed. programme.’ In Year 1 Semester 1 of the programme (School Placement 1) students engage in College preparation for placements with lectures and tutorials addressing professionalism, preparation, reflective practice and engaging with school personnel. In Year 1 Semester 2 (School Placement 2) students experience a gradual introduction to whole class teaching in middle classes. In Year 2 Semester 2 (School Placement 3), students observe, teach and participate in whole school learning activities over a period of six weeks. Students normally teach a middle-senior class during this period. On this occasion, the student sources the school and it is a non-partnered practice. In Year 3 Semester 2 (School Placement 4) students assume the role of assistant in settings where they experience early years primary settings and special education contexts. The student sources the school and it is a non-partnered practice. In Year 4 Semester 1 students undertake their extended School Placement (School Placement 5 & 6) over the course of the entire College semester (September-November).’	
1.3.3 Elements of School Placement	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that the school-based and HEI-directed activities included as part of the placement experience are as outlined in the <i>Guidelines on School Placement</i> and regarding the stage the student teacher is at on the programme.	Yes
1.3.4 School Placement Models	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that school placement models are developed using a partnership approach, whereby the HEI and schools actively collaborate in the organisation of the school placement. ‘Student teachers receive many opportunities for systematic observation in the school and have the opportunity to work in collaboration with school staff. The shift in focus of School Placement 4 to that of assistant gives students the opportunity to observe practice in early years and special education settings, which precedes their final extended placement. Here, students develop an awareness of needs (either relating to Infant classes, special educational and/or other additional needs). They build on this experience in the	Yes

	first element of their extended placement at the beginning of Year 4.'	
1.3.5 Securing of Placement	The review process determined Mary Immaculate College assumes overall responsibility for the placement of student teachers.	Yes
1.3.6 Diversity of Placement Settings	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that the programme meets the requirement of a minimum of two placement settings incorporating a variety of teaching situations, class levels and school contexts, including Irish medium schools. 'School placement is the fulcrum of the Bachelor of Education programme and engagement with School Placement accounts for 34% of students time at MIC. Students engage in a school placement module in every year of the programme from Years 1-4.'	Yes
1.3.7 Taisce in School Placement	The review process determined that the submission provided evidence of the approaches Mary Immaculate College is using to enable the student teacher to demonstrate, using their Taisce • an understanding of inclusive education as applicable to that context • an understanding of working with parents 'The activities that students engage with in reflective practice represent the TAIISCE element of School Placement.'	Yes
1.3.8 Research in School Placement	Mary Immaculate College demonstrated that the student teacher engages in research on their own practice that demonstrates the connection between the sites of practice during at least one school placement module. 'Concepts and skills addressed in educational psychology, educational methodology, micro-teaching and all Professional and Foundation Studies modules are linked via school placement modules. The timing of school placement varies across the four years of the programme. In Year 1, School Placement is scheduled for mid-Spring semester. This allows for supported reflection on students' return to campus in subjects explored on this placement including Gaeilge, English, Mathematics and the Creative Arts.'	Yes
1.3.9 School Placement: Evaluation and Assessment	The review process determined that the submission demonstrated that all student teachers are supported and assessed by two or more placement tutors, and at least once by a registered teacher. It outlined the	Yes

	teaching enrichment and mentoring support offered to students who fail a module of school placement. ‘A particular example of how MIC students foster a love and joy of learning in all students is the opportunity to bring a curriculum focus to their chosen school, during the extended school placement. This focus is an opportunity to develop a concept or a skill which is related to, but perhaps not part of, the formal curriculum. Normally it is an interest or talent of the ITE student and culminates in a showpiece, presentation or performance at the conclusion of their practicum. The initiative is supported by the school and student teachers collaborate with the Treoirí to create and implement a plan on their chosen focus.’	
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Recommendation

Having regard to the documentation that was submitted, the panel adjudges that the programme meets the standards set down by the Teaching Council in *Céim: Standards* for Initial Teacher Education.

Accordingly, it recommends to the Teaching Council that the programme be granted accreditation subject to the following requirement and recommendation

Matter	Requirement
SSR	Not later than six months from the date of accreditation, the Teaching Council requires MIC to submit a clear plan that details the recruitment measures being undertaken and associated timelines involved to ensure that sufficient staff members have been recruited to bring the programme in line with the Céim Standard 1.2 Programme Resourcing, Student: Staff ratio of 15:1.

Appendix 1 - Review Panel Membership

Chair: Dr Claire Connolly

Claire is the School Experience Co-ordinator at St Mary's University College (SMUCB), Belfast. Prior to working in Initial Teacher Education, she worked in primary schools in both Northern Ireland and Texas. She has extensive experience in designing and evaluating policies and procedures to ensure the quality of teacher education programmes in SMUCB. Claire has been involved in organising North/South Student Teacher Exchanges over the last twenty years which has allowed her to work with, and learn from, School Placement Coordinators, students, placement tutors and Treoraí. She has been an external examiner for several Initial Teacher Education programmes in both Ireland and Scotland. She has extensive knowledge of the Teaching Council's review and accreditation role, having previously served on review panels for the Council.

Panel Member: Ms Mary Dunne

Mary's career has been spent primarily in the Primary School sector. While working as a teacher in a multi-class setting, and later as a teaching-principal, the skills of multi-tasking came to the fore and became finely honed. Having a strong belief in the importance and impact of the local environment on children's learning, Mary had the opportunity to work with the Department of Education's support service for primary schools. The launch of the Social, Environmental and Scientific Education curriculum (SESE) provided the opportunity to work with teachers and schools in many different contexts. Following this work with primary schools, Mary worked for a number of years as a primary school inspector, advising, evaluating and supporting schools. For a number of years also, Mary was deployed to work in an advisory capacity with the Department's Teacher Education Section (TES) in Athlone

Panel Member: Mr Ciarán Flynn

Ciarán Flynn, Educational Consultant, retired from his eight-year tenure as General Secretary of the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS), where he advised and supported the Boards of Management and Principals of the 96 post-primary schools in the Association. He acted as a Management nominee on the Teaching Council for a three-year term, chairing the Audit and Risk Committee. He chaired the TC/DE research on "Teacher Supply", chaired the Placement System Working Group and the Droichead QA panels for 5 years. He was Principal of Navan Community College and the founding Principal in 1994 of Ashbourne Community School. He completed his Masters in Education Management in the University of Ulster in 1994. He worked for an eight-year period as a Part-Time Lecturer in DCU on the M.Sc. in Educational Training and Management programme.

He was a member of the national Leadership Development for Schools Team for a three-year period working with newly appointed Principal and Deputy Principal teachers countrywide on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. As an Educational Consultant he has worked for and with individual schools, regional and national educational bodies in carrying out investigations, supporting and promoting professional development. He also carries out work for the Department of Education and Science in a number of areas and for the State Examinations Commission as a member of the Audit and Risk committee. He is the Chairperson of the boards of management of two schools in the Leinster area and recently retired from Chairpersonship of the Le Chéile Schools Trust.

Panel Member: Ms Eleanor Parks

Eleanor Parks worked as a Home Economics Teacher with Co. Kilkenny ETB in Slieverue Vocational School, Co. Kilkenny and then in Abbey Community College, Ferrybank, Waterford (Abbey Community College is the amalgamation of Slieverue Vocational School and SHM Secondary School, Ferrybank Waterford.) From there Eleanor worked as Examinations and Assessment Manager for Home Economics with the State Examinations Commission.

Panel Member: Professor Kenneth Muir

Ken Muir was Chief Executive and Registrar of the General Teaching Council for Scotland between 2013 and 2021. Similar to the Teaching Council in Ireland, GTC Scotland has the responsibility for registering and regulating the Scottish teaching profession as well as for accrediting all teacher education programmes. Prior to this, he worked for Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and was Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland. Ken began his teaching career as a teacher of Geography and Geology and has held various senior posts over his career, working in schools and local authority education departments. He has been a member of many national and international education groups and has a particular interest in the Finnish education system where he has worked with Helsinki University and the Finnish National Board of Education. On his retiral in 2021, he was commissioned as independent Adviser to the Scottish Government to produce his report, Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education, which was published in February 2022. Ken holds an Honorary Professorship at the University of the West of Scotland and was made a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2021 Queen's Birthday Honours List for his services to education.