

Master in Education Studies (MES)

Marino Institute of Education



Handbook 2020-2021

MES (Early Childhood Education)

Contents

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Message from the President of Marino Institute of Education..... | 1 |
| Programme staff..... | 2 |
| MES (Early Childhood Education: ECE) | 2 |
| Delivery format and credit weightings | 3 |
| Student Services | 4 |
| Early Childhood Education Calendar for 2020 – 2021 | 5 |
| Assessment and Marking Procedures..... | 6 |
| Submission of course work..... | 7 |
| Assignment due dates, Year 1 | 7 |
| Academic Progression..... | 9 |
| Study requirements | 11 |
| Appendix 1: MES (Early Childhood Education), Programme Content, Year One | 12 |
| Aims and learning outcomes | 12 |
| Course aims..... | 12 |
| Course learning outcomes | 12 |
| Module 1: Early Childhood Education - Policy and Practice | 12 |
| Module 2: Psychology of Early Childhood | 15 |
| Module 3: Language and Literacy in the Early Years | 18 |
| Module 4: Inquiry Based Learning..... | 20 |
| Appendix 2: Guideline Criteria for Marking: Year One Assessments | 23 |
| Marking Criteria Guide Module 4 M.ES in ECE (Inquiry-based Learning)..... | 25 |
| Programme Content, Year Two | 30 |
| Research Dissertation | 33 |
| Guideline Criteria for Marking: Research Dissertations | 37 |

Message from the President of Marino Institute of Education



A Mhicléinn, a chara,

On behalf of my colleagues I extend a warm welcome to you to Marino Institute of Education (MIE). I am very pleased that you have elected to continue your studies at MIE. Tá súil agam go mbainfidh tú taitneamh agus tairbhe as an am a bhéas tú anseo linn.

As a student within MIE you are part of a vibrant and innovative community which continues to design and develop new courses. We now have more than 1000 students registered on our courses which include; the Bachelor in Education degree, the Bachelor in Science (Education Studies) degree, the Bachelor in Science (Early Childhood Education) degree, the International Foundation Programme, the Professional Masters in Education – Primary Teaching, five Masters in Education Studies courses (Intercultural Education, Early Childhood Education, Visual Arts, Inquiry-Based Learning and Leadership in Christian Education) and the Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education). We are committed to educating leaders for the twenty-first century who share a professional belief in, and moral commitment to, working towards excellence, equity, diversity and social justice within educational settings and communities at home and abroad.

Living through Covid-19 this year has taught us a lot about the value of education, the importance of the physical space of schooling and education, but more importantly, it has taught us the value of educational relationships where students and staff form a binding community, where empathy, communication and connectivity enable friendships to grow and students to flourish. We also realise afresh the importance of engaging with our peers, friends, families and communities in the arts, sports, social activities, all the aspects of life that we had to forego during the restrictions in order to contain the spread of the Coronavirus. In this context, I congratulate you for selecting to undertake your Master in Educational Studies (Early Childhood Education) programme here at MIE, because our core values of care, community, and commitment to excellence, are now more important than ever. This forthcoming year will be very challenging as we navigate our way through the new 'normal' of academic life. The easy interactions that we have taken for granted in the past will not be possible. However, we are committed to ensuring that you will be in face-to-face lectures and on campus as often as possible, so that you and your peers will be in a position to learn together, collaborate, and connect with staff and other students.

Our lecturers are very approachable and are dedicated to provide you with a top quality educational experience. Please engage with them and with your fellow students to enrich your own learning and to broaden your understanding of what it means to be a student.

In closing, I wish you well in your studies and I hope that your time at Marino Institute will prove both enjoyable and rewarding.

Guím gach ráth ar an uile dhuine agaibh, ar bhur gcúram agus ar bhur saothar.

Dr Teresa O'Doherty
President

Programme staff

Registrar & Vice President of Academic Affairs

Dr Seán Delaney

Director of ICT and E-learning

Dr Alison Egan

Coordinator of Masters courses

Dr Rory McDaid

MES (Early Childhood Education: ECE)

Course Leader

Dr Joan Kiely

Assistant Course Leader

Dr Karin Bacon

Lecturer

Dr Siobhan McGovern

Lecturer

Dr Dean Mc Donnell

Lecturer

Ms Mairéad Nally

Lecturer

Ms. Clara Fiorentini

Lecturer

Dr Rory Mc Daid

Lecturer

Dr Maja Haals Brosnan

Lecturer

Ms. Melanie Eggleston

Lecturer

Ms. Rhona Mc Ginn

Delivery format and credit weightings

The format of delivery will be over two academic years, part-time. The total credit weighting for the Master's programme is 90 ECTS credits. These credits are distributed among taught components and the dissertation. The taught component carries 60 ECTS credits consisting of four modules (15 ECTS credits each). The remaining 30 ECTS credits are allocated to the research dissertation. Typically, the teaching activities are organised outside of normal school hours, and classes are normally held at MIE.

In summary:

| | ECTS Credits |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Year 1 | |
| Module 1 | 15 |
| Module 2 | 15 |
| Module 3 | 15 |
| Module 4 | 15 |
| Year 2 | |
| Dissertation Module | 30 |
| TOTAL | 90 |

Student Services

A range of student services and facilities are in place in MIE to enhance the student experience. These include:

(a) Library

Students will have full access to TCD library facilities. The library in MIE provides a range of services and facilities to support student learning. The main collection consists of over 30,000 items and is focused on meeting the reading requirements of all students. The library subscribes to journals on education. An introduction to the library facilities at MIE will form part of the student induction in September 2020 and students will also be shown how to access electronic journals from the Trinity database. The library in MIE opens until 6pm on Fridays and until 2pm on Saturdays.

(b) Virtual Learning Environment

Moodle is the virtual learning environment (VLE) used to support teaching and learning on this Master's programme. This VLE will contain all course materials and will be used to keep students informed and involved with all aspects of their course. It will also contain supplementary lecture material which is additional to the face-to-face contact. Moodle will be used as the forum for asynchronous discussion and engagement. A training session on using Moodle as a VLE will be offered as part of the induction to the MES.

(c) Academic Support

Students will receive formal sessions and feedback on the skills of academic reading and writing in Year 1 of the MES.

Students from English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) backgrounds

Students from ESOL backgrounds will, where necessary, be assigned an academic tutor who will be available to provide additional tutorial support up to five occasions (1-hour sessions) during each academic year.

(d) Registrar's Office

The Registrar's Office supports students in relation to admissions, registration, examinations and records.

Early Childhood Education Calendar for 2020 – 2021

Year 1 students:

Registration online. Induction online: Saturday September 5th at 10.30am.

Module 1 (Online delivery on Friday evenings is likely except for Friday 18th September)

Friday 18th & Saturday 19th September
Friday 2nd & Saturday 3rd October
Friday 16th & Saturday 17th October

Module 2

Friday 6th & Saturday 7th November
Friday 20th & Saturday 21st November
Friday 4th & Saturday 5th December

Saturday: January 9th Psychology Presentations (examination)

Module 3

Friday 15th & Saturday 16th January 2020
Friday 29th & Saturday 30th January
Friday 12th & Saturday 13th February

Module 4

Friday 12th & Saturday 13th March
Friday 26th & Saturday 27th March
Friday 16th & Saturday 17th April

Easter Sunday is April 4th

Year 2 students 2020-2021

Research Methods

Weekend 1: 4th and 5th September 2020

Weekend 2: 11th and 12th September

Weekend 3: 25th and 26th September

Thesis proposal submission date: Monday 2nd November 2020

Proposal Assessment Committee: Week beginning November 9th

Assessment and Marking Procedures

- Students will receive grades for assignments within five weeks of submission, where possible, along with detailed formative evaluation. This process ensures that students receive comprehensive feedback about their strengths and areas for improvement. The timescale ensures that this feedback informs students' work as they engage with their subsequent assignment(s). Individual tutorials will be offered to students who have particular difficulties with academic writing.
- Assignments for individual modules will be graded as distinction, pass or fail. The pass mark for each module will be **50%**.
- The pass level for the overall course will be set at **50%**
- In order to complete the course, students must pass each module of the programme including the dissertation module
- Students may be given provisional marks as they progress through the course. Such marks are provisional until they have been confirmed by the Court of Examiners following the visit of the external examiner(s).
- A student who fails to meet the passing grade for one module (and only one module) may be permitted by the Court of Examiners to resubmit or repeat, as determined by the module coordinator, that one module assignment. If a student fails any additional module, no further repeat is possible and the student must exit the course following the court of examiners meeting. The grade on a resubmission is capped at pass level only. A student who fails on resubmission will be required to withdraw from the course. Compensation between modules is not permitted.
- In calculating the end of year result for first year, the average of the three highest assignment marks are counted. However, where a student decides to exit with a postgraduate diploma at the end of the first year, the average of all four assignment marks will be used to calculate the exit mark.
- Students will be provided with a provisional grade for each assignment, which will be subject to confirmation at the Court of Examiners. This Court will take place in MIE at the end of the academic year to discuss and ratify student's grades; it will be attended by the staff team, the MIE Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), the MIE Registrar, and the External Examiner.

Submission of course work

All course work must be submitted by the due date to avoid imposition of penalties. Should work not be submitted by the due date, the penalties that apply are as follows:

- Ten percent of the marks awarded will be deducted from work which is submitted up to one week after the submission due date
- Twenty percent of the marks awarded will be deducted from work that is submitted between one and two weeks after the submission due date
- Assignments will not be accepted more than two weeks after the due date and the student will be returned as fail

With advance notice and with good reason, due dates may be extended by the lecturer concerned at her/his discretion in consultation with the particular student and the Registrar as appropriate. Requests for an extension must be made in writing to the lecturer and may be gained on medical grounds (supported by a certificate from a medical doctor) or in respect of *ad misericordiam* situations (with the approval of the programme director).

Assignment due dates, Year 1

Assignment titles are usually given on the second weekend of each module. Local arrangements may be made from time to time to allow a change in the dates below.

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Module 1: | 6th November 2020 |
| Module 2: | 9th January 2021 |
| Module 3: | 12th March 2021 |
| Module 4: | 17th May 2021 |

Appeals procedure

Students who wish to appeal either decisions or grades, should in the first instance do so in writing to the relevant MES Course Leader. The grounds for the appeal should be clearly stated and supported where necessary by documentary evidence. The Course Leader will discuss the request with the relevant parties and attempt to find a resolution.

If the problem is not resolved, the Course Leader can refer the case to the Postgraduate Appeals Committee, none of whom has sat on the Court of Examiners for the MES. This Committee consists of

- A senior lecturer in MIE (Chair)
- A lecturer on another Postgraduate programme in MIE
- A postgraduate student or a student representative on the Governing Body

This Committee shall convene as and when necessary. Appellants should submit their case in writing to the Chair of the Committee outlining the grounds for the appeal and supporting documentation on the Academic Appeal Form.

However, if students do not consider the matter satisfactorily resolved after that, they have the right to appeal the decision to an Institute Appeals Committee, none of whom is involved in the Postgraduate Appeals Committee or the Court of Examiners for the MES. This committee consists of:

- A principal lecturer in MIE (non-voting Chair)
- A senior lecturer in MIE
- A postgraduate student or a student representative on the Governing Body
- A member of MIE governing body

Such an appeal can be presented on three grounds:

1. The student's case is not adequately covered by the ordinary regulations of the College;
2. The regulations of the College were not properly applied in the applicant's case;
3. *Ad misericordiam* grounds.

The student cannot make an appeal other than on *ad misericordiam* grounds against the normal application of College academic regulations approved by the University Council.

Procedures followed in appeals applications must be in line with the following guidelines:

Where a graduate student has failed on the coursework component, and feels that there are mitigating circumstances, he/she may make a request, in writing, to the Course Leader for permission to repeat the examination(s) and/or assessment(s). The reasons for the request must be clearly stated and supported where necessary by documentary evidence. If the graduate student is granted a supplemental examination, the results of that examination will be considered to be final, i.e., repetition of the year will not be permitted. Where a graduate student has passed the coursework component but has failed on the assessment of the dissertation, and is dissatisfied with the manner in which the dissertation was examined, he/she may make a request, in writing, to the Course Leader. The reasons for the request must be clearly stated and supported where necessary by documentary evidence. If the Course Leader refuses to grant a request, the student may make an appeal to the Postgraduate Appeals Committee. If the Postgraduate Appeals Committee refuses to grant the appeal, or the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal process, he or she may appeal the decision of the Committee in writing to the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), clearly stating under what grounds of (1) to (3) listed above they are appealing and what remedy they are seeking. If the Director of

Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) denies the appeal, the student may appeal this decision to the College Appeals Committee. The College Appeals Committee for Graduate Students will not consider appeals concerning decisions made more than four months previously, except in the most exceptional of circumstances.

Academic Progression

(i) All students register on the MES programme. Students must successfully pass all the requirements of their first year in order to progress to the second year of the Master's programme.

(ii) Progression to Year 2: The Court of Examiners, including the external examiner and the programme committee, will meet at the end of Year 1 to moderate assignment marks from the taught modules of the course, and in order to record end-of-year results and to confirm each student's progression from Year 1 to Year 2.

Students wishing to progress to the dissertation year must have all of their completed coursework for the taught component of the programme (4 modules) submitted by July 31st of the year following entry to the programme, and must have achieved at least a 'pass' in each module.

Some students may choose to stagger the completion of the MES by leaving an interval of one year between successfully passing the four modules of Year 1 and completing the research requirements of Year 2. In this way these students will complete the MES over a three-year period.

(iii) Exit award after Year 1: Students who have successfully passed the four taught modules of the course and accumulated 60 ECTS credits and who do not wish to proceed to the dissertation stage in Year 2, will be considered for a Postgraduate Diploma (exit award). Should a student wish to exit the course with a postgraduate diploma award, this should be notified to the Registrar's office prior to the annual court of examiners in June. Students may apply to be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma by 31 July of the year in which first year is successfully completed. The overall mark for the Diploma is based on the average mark of the four modules taken in first year.

Any such student who wishes to return to the Master's course at some future date will be required to rescind the exit award of the Postgraduate Diploma before graduating with the Master's degree (this is in accordance with procedures in Trinity College). Following successful completion of the Master's requirements, the student will inform the Registrar of his or her intention to rescind the Postgraduate Diploma and have the credit obtained during the Postgraduate Diploma integrated into the Master's degree. A time limit for re-registering to complete the credits required for the Master's degree will normally be five years following completion of the Postgraduate Diploma. An application for re-entry will be considered by the course committee, taking into account course quotas, the calibre of the candidate and the supervisory capacity for research dissertations.

Alternatively some students may apply to stagger the completion of the MES by leaving an interval of one year between successfully passing the four modules of Year 1 and completing the research requirements of Year 2. In this way these students will complete the MES over a three-year period. In such a case, a student may apply to defer proceeding to the second year of the MES course up to 31 July following completion of first year, without being awarded the Postgraduate Diploma. An application for re-entry will be considered by the course committee, taking into account course quotas, the calibre of the candidate and the supervisory capacity for research dissertations.

(iv) A student may request to go "off books" or defer part of their studies during the academic year (in first year or second year) on certified medical or ad misericordiam grounds. Normally in such circumstances, the student will be required to repeat the year in full and to pay full fees for doing the year again. First year students only who have successfully completed a given module and received a

grade for it, may be exempted from taking that module the second year and their fees will be reduced pro-rata. Second year students may re-join the programme at two points only; at the beginning of the academic year or in January of second year. Only students who were already at an advanced stage of their dissertation would be eligible to re-join the programme at the latter part of the second academic year. Students who join at the beginning of the year must pay full fees for the year and those who join in January pay €2,500.

When applying to go off books, a student should be mindful that a course may not have an intake of students every year.

(v)Exit award with distinction: Students who have achieved an aggregate of at least 70% of the available marks in all taught modules passed will be eligible for consideration of the award of Postgraduate Diploma with distinction. Postgraduate Diploma with distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed any assignment during the period of study. Postgraduate Diploma with distinction is only awarded on exit from the programme.

Master's Degree with distinction: The Pass award of a Master's Degree with distinction shall require the achievement of a distinction for the dissertation, and an aggregate of at least 70% of the available marks in all of the four taught modules. A distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed any assignment during the period of study.

Study requirements

Use of Moodle

As stated, Moodle is the virtual learning environment (VLE) used to support teaching and learning on the MES. It contains course materials and is used to keep students informed and involved with all aspects of their course.

Moodle will also contain supplementary lecture material which is additional to the face-to-face contact. This includes a sample of papers and articles relevant to the module topic. Nevertheless, it is essential that students do not limit their study to the material available on Moodle. It is expected at Master's level that students will carry out their own research using the TCD search engines and that course assignments and research dissertations will reflect this in-depth engagement with literature in the field.

Self-directed learning

Self-directed learning is an essential element of the MES. Lecturers will ask students to read material between weekends and to present their views on their reading during the face-to-face sessions.

Appendix 1: MES (Early Childhood Education), Programme Content, Year One

The Masters in Education Studies (Early Childhood Education) in MIE represents a unique opportunity for those working in early education to enhance their learning and their qualifications to meet the growing needs of the sector and the children and families they serve.

Aims and learning outcomes

Course aims

1. To provide students with a deep theoretical understanding and critical awareness of key issues in early childhood education.
2. To assist students in building on their knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to educating children in early years' settings.
3. To add to the body of expertise nationally in the area of early childhood education.
4. To encourage students to engage in further study in the area of Early Childhood Education and to initiate research projects.

Course learning outcomes

On successful completion of the MES (Early Childhood Education), students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a critical knowledge of current theory and practice relating to early childhood education
2. Evidence a systematic understanding of children's learning and development
3. Reflect upon and self-evaluate their own work as an early childhood practitioner in the light of new insights gained and new skills developed and amend their practice as appropriate
4. Be equipped to undertake further independent study in the area
5. Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups working in the field of early childhood education; lead and initiate activity
6. Apply the skills of research, study and reflection required in a sustained piece of academic writing to a high level
7. Demonstrate a thorough expertise in their chosen area of research.

Module 1: Early Childhood Education - Policy and Practice

Module 1: ECTS credits 15

Module 1 Co-ordinator: Joan Kiely

Module 1 Lecturer: J Kiely.

This module comprises five themes. It involves 375 student effort hours equivalent to 15 ECTS credits and these are distributed as follows:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Contact time (including on-line learning) | 35 hours |
| Personal study | 260 hours |
| Assessment tasks | 80 hours |

Rationale

Students on the Masters in Early Childhood Education will critically examine contemporary theoretical perspectives on early childhood. These perspectives challenge many of the traditionally accepted ideas that permeate Early Childhood Education. Students will also examine early childhood policy and practice in Ireland and in other countries in order to gain an understanding of the evolution of thinking in relation to early childhood education. This knowledge establishes the context for the course.

The remainder of the module will focus on the use of play as a learning tool in the early years and the image of the child as competent, having rights and autonomy. The child's right to play is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The publication of Aistear, a curriculum framework for children aged 0-6 years, published in 2009, brought a renewed focus on the importance of a play-based approach to learning in the early years. Theme 4 of this module will focus on Aistear, the early childhood curriculum framework.

Research indicates that a play-based approach to teaching and learning develops self-regulation (Barnett, Jung, Yarosz, Thomas, Hornbeck, Stechuk & Burns, 2008³). Theme 5 looks at the literature and the practice around the development of the self-regulated learner. The OECD report (2004), criticised early childhood teaching methodology in Ireland for being overly didactic. A didactic approach can have a deleterious effect on a child's sense of self and relationship with power (Roskos and Christie, 2007⁴). The self-regulated learner has a powerful sense of his/her agency and this agency is nurtured through a play-based approach to learning. It is hoped that this knowledge will ultimately improve school practice.

Philosophy

This module is structured to challenge students' assumptions about childhood, best practice in early childhood and the role of play in the life of the child. A post-structural approach will allow students to examine and critically analyse their thinking against theoretical approaches in the field of Early Childhood Education.

Aims of Module 1

- To provide the student with an overview of the development of Early Childhood Education in Ireland and internationally to date.
- To develop in the student a critical theoretical and practical understanding of the role of play in the early years.
- To enable the student to critically analyse Aistear and to compare it with other national and international curriculum models.
- To enable the student to organise an early childhood setting and its young learners effectively to facilitate the development of self-regulation and self-efficacy.

Module learning outcomes

On completion of module 1, students will be enabled to:

- analyse current early childhood policy and develop their own philosophical position in relation to Early Childhood Education
- compare and contrast models of Early Childhood Education from national and international sources.
- clearly articulate a rationale for play in the classroom with reference to relevant theory.

³ Barnett, W., Jung, K., Yarosz, D., Thomas, J., Hornbeck, A., Stechuk, R., & Burns, S. (2008). Educational effects of the Tools of the Mind Curriculum: a randomized trial. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23(3), 299–313.

⁴ Roskos, K. & Christie, J. (2007). *Play and literacy in early childhood: research from multiple perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

- organise, manage and facilitate a play-based learning environment conducive to self-regulation.
- consistently analyse and self-evaluate his/her work through reflective practice.

Outline of Module 1

Module 1 is divided into five interlinked themes as follows:

Theme 1: Interrogating the concept of best practice in Early Childhood Education

Theme 2: Early Childhood Education Policy & Practice in Ireland

Theme 3: Play: Theory and Practice

Theme 4: Aistear – a play based curriculum framework

Theme 5: Role of the educator in developing the self-regulated learner

Lecturers reserve the right to alter the course at any stage during the year.

Core texts (a full reading list will be distributed at the beginning of the module)

Government of Ireland (2019). *First 5 Strategy (2019-2028) Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families*. Retrieved from <https://assets.gov.ie/26691/98d3322cc8b64637976cf23f33f084f6.pdf>

Hirsh-Pasek, K., & Golinkoff, R. M. (2013). Embracing complexity: Rethinking the relationship between play and learning: Comment on Lillard et al. (2013). *Psychological Bulletin*, 139, 35–39. doi:10.1037/a0030077

Jarmila Bubikova-Moan, Hanne Næss Hjetland & Sabine Wollscheid (2019). ECE teachers' views on play-based learning: a systematic review, *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 27:6, 776-800, DOI: 10.1080/1350293X.2019.1678717

Leong, D.J.; Bodrova, E.; (2012). *Assessing and Scaffolding Make-Believe Play*. NAEYC: Young Children
Lillard, A. S., Lerner, M.D., Hopkins, E.J., Dore, R.A., Smith, E.D., & Palmquist, C.M. (2013). The Impact of Pretend Play on Children's Development: A Review of the Evidence. *Psychological Bulletin* 139 1–34.

Moss, P. (2009). *There are alternatives! Markets and democratic experimentalism in early childhood education and care*. Working Paper No. 53. The Hague, The Netherlands: Bernard van Leer Foundation and Bertelsmann Stiftung. Retrieved 2-10-2013 from http://dev.buergerstiftungen.de/bst/de/media/xcms_bst_dms_29684_29685_2.pdf

Moss, P. (2008). Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care – Languages of Evaluation *New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work*, 5(1), 03-12.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, (2009). *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* Dublin:NCCA. Retrieved from <http://www.ncca.biz/Aistear/>

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards (language)*.

OECD (2004). Starting Strong. Curricula and Pedagogies in Early Childhood Education and Care: Five curriculum outlines. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/31672150.pdf>

Tobin, J. (2010). Quality in Early Childhood Education: An Anthropologist's Perspective. *Early Education and Development*, 16(4), 421-434. DOI:10.1207/s15566935eed1604_3

Waller, T. (Ed.). (2005). *An introduction to early childhood*. London:Sage (See chapters 1,5,7 and 9).

Module Assessment

This module will be assessed by a 5,000-word written assignment based on the content of module 1.

Module 2: Psychology of Early Childhood

Module ECTS credits: 15

Module Co-ordinator: Melanie Eggleston

Module Lecturer: Dr Dean Mc Donnell

This module comprises four themes. It involves 375 student effort hours equivalent to 15 ECTS credits and these are distributed as follows:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Contact time (including on-line learning) | 35 hours |
| Personal study | 260 hours |
| Assessment tasks | 80 hours |

Rationale

Recent years have seen calls for a greater focus in education on the development of *practical* competencies (Ball and Forzani 2009⁵; Grossman 2011⁶; Kazemi, Franke and Lampert 2009⁷; Lampert and Graziani 2009⁸; Windschitl, Thompson and Braaten 2011⁹), with the “foundation” modules such as Psychology sometimes even deemed “nonessential” (Walsh and Jacobs 2007¹⁰). However, some writers such as Zeichner (2012¹¹), Ryan and O’Toole (2013¹²) and Kelly (2009; 112¹³) maintain that such approaches reduce educators to “technician rather than professional, operator rather than decision-maker, someone whose role is merely to implement the judgments of others and not to act on his or her own”. As Olson and Bruner (1996, 17¹⁴) point out

simply demonstrating ‘how to’ and providing practice at doing so is known not to be enough. Studies of expertise demonstrate that just knowing how to perform skilfully does not get a learner to the same level

⁵ Ball, D. L. and Forzani, F. M. (2009). The work of teaching and the challenge for teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60, 5, 497-511.

⁶ Grossman, P. (2011). A framework for teaching practice: A brief history of an idea. *Teachers College Record*, 113, 12. Available from <http://tc.record.org>

⁷ Kazemi, E., Franke, M. and Lampert, M. (2009). Developing pedagogies in teacher education to support novice teachers’ ability to enact ambitious teaching. In R. Hunter, B. Bicknell and T. Burgess (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 32nd Annual Conference of the Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia*, 1, 12-30. Palmerston North, NZ: MERGA, July 2009.

⁸ Lampert, M and Graziani, F. (2009). Instructional activities as a tool for teachers’ and educators’ learning. *Elementary School Journal* 109, 491-509.

⁹ Windschitl, M., Thompson, J., and Braaten, M. (2011). Ambitious pedagogy by novice teachers. *Teachers College Record* 113, 7, 1311-1360.

¹⁰ Walsh, K. and Jacobs, S. (2007). *Alternative certification isn’t alternative*. Vol. 44. Dayton Ohio: Thomas B. Fordham Institute.

¹¹ Zeichner, K. M. (2012). The turn once again toward practice-based teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education* 63, 5, 376-382.

¹² Ryan, A. and O’Toole, L. (2013). *Towards Integrated Learning: Linking Psychology, Sociology and School Experience in Initial Teacher Education*. *Proceedings of Association for Teacher Education in Europe Spring Conference: Teacher of the 21st Century, Quality Education for Quality Teaching*, Riga, 10th-12th May, 2013.

¹³ Kelly, A. V. (2009) *The curriculum: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Limited.

¹⁴ Olson, D. R., and Bruner, J. S. (1996). Folk psychology and folk pedagogy. In D. R. Olson and N. Torrance (Eds.), *The Handbook of Education and Human Development: New models of learning, teaching and schooling*

of real skill as learning to perform skilfully while knowing in some conceptual, reasoned way *why* one performs as one does.

As such, a thorough grounding in the Psychology of Early Childhood is vital for the development of excellent early years' practitioners.

Philosophy

Pedagogy is never 'innocent' – i.e. devoid of theory (Olson and Bruner 1996, 23¹⁵):

Each form of pedagogy inevitably communicates a conception of learners that may in time be adopted by them as the appropriate way of thinking about themselves, their learning, indeed their ability to learn.

The assumptions that educators carry into their work can communicate subtle messages to young children about their value as individual learners (Toshalis 2010¹⁶) which are in turn internalised by children, forming the basis of their academic self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura 1994¹⁷). As Bourdieu and Thompson (1991, 52¹⁸) put it, education “instead of telling the child what he must do, tells him what he is”. As such, it may be argued that if, during their professional development, educators are not exposed through the foundation modules to appropriate theories about young children's development and learning and the complexity of factors impacting on this learning, they are likely, as a consequence of the 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975; 2002¹⁹) of their own school days, to simply bring potentially naive, incomplete and indeed erroneous 'theories' or understandings developed then to their future educational practice. Olson and Bruner (1996²⁰) refer to this as the use of 'folk psychologies' to guide pedagogy. It is reasonable to argue therefore, that at the very least it is critically important to offer educators an opportunity to uncover and interrogate with respect to the formal perspectives of Psychology, their potentially powerful incoming assumptions and implicit theories about psychological factors relating to child development, teaching and learning in the early years, and to reflect on these so that if necessary, they may be addressed and appropriately advanced for the betterment of their educational practice.

Aims of Module 2

The module aims are as follows:

- To further develop in students an understanding of various psychological perspectives and their interconnections and implications in early childhood education

¹⁵ Olson, D. R., and Bruner, J. S. (1996). Folk psychology and folk pedagogy. In D. R. Olson and N. Torrance (Eds.), *The Handbook of Education and Human Development: New models of learning, teaching and schooling* (pp 9-27). Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.

¹⁶ Toshalis, E. (2010). From disciplined to disciplinarian: the reproduction of symbolic violence in pre-service teacher education. *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 42, 2, 183-213.

¹⁷ Bandura, A. (1994). *Self-efficacy*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

¹⁸ Bourdieu, P. and Thompson, J. B. (Eds.) (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

¹⁹ Lortie, D. C. (1975 / 2002). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

²⁰ Olson, D. R., and Bruner, J. S. (1996). Folk psychology and folk pedagogy. In D. R. Olson and N. Torrance (Eds.), *The Handbook of Education and Human Development: New models of learning, teaching and schooling* (pp 9-27). Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.

- To facilitate understanding of the processes of learning and development of young children from a psychological perspective, particularly fostering a holistic understanding of the links between emotion, behaviour, development and learning
- To inform the practical application of such understanding in the field of early childhood education by exploring specific aspects of professional practice in early childhood education through the lens of psychological knowledge (e.g. cooperative learning; behaviour management; working with parents etc)
- To familiarise students with up-to-date research in the psychology of early childhood, and to foster a rigorous, research-informed approach to their future work in the field.

Module learning outcomes

On successful completion of Module 2, Psychology of Early Childhood, students should be able to:

- Elucidate theoretical issues of learning and development in young children from various psychological perspectives, and have a clear sense of how theories interact to provide holistic understandings of young children.
- Identify the multitude of psychological factors interacting with, and impacting on, young children's learning and development, and understand the links between emotion, behaviour, context, development and learning.
- Critically analyse the implications and potential applications of specific psychological theoretical perspectives for early childhood education.
- Draw on psychological insights gained with respect to the dynamics and issues of home, school and classroom life, to facilitate a bio-ecological understanding of the child in context.
- Confidently research, interrogate, synthesise and interpret the findings of up-to-date journal articles and other sources in the psychological literature, and explore application of these insights to their work in early childhood education.

Outline of Module and Content of module themes

Theme 1: *Revisiting key debates and concepts in Psychology*

Theme 2: *Learning theories: How do young children learn?*

Theme 3: *Emotional and behavioural development in early childhood*

Theme 4: *Early childhood in context*

Lecturers reserve the right to alter the course at any stage during the year.

Core texts (a full reading list will be distributed at the beginning of the module)

Up-to-date Developmental and Educational Psychology textbooks such as:

Berk, L. E. (2009). *Child Development*. New York: Pearson.

Minton, S. J. (2012). *Using Psychology in the Classroom*. London: Sage.

O'Donnell, A., Reeve, J. and Smith, J. (2012). *Educational Psychology: Reflection for Action*. NY: Wiley

Santrock, J. W. (2010). *Child Development*. London: McGraw Hill

Slavin, R. E. (2012). *Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Module assessment

This module will be assessed through group-based presentations, taking place following delivery of Themes 2, 3 and 4. Student effort hours will be comparable to effort hours involved in writing a 5,000-word assignment.

Module 3: Language and Literacy in the Early Years

Module 3: ECTS Credits 15

Module 3: Co-ordinator: Dr Joan Kiely

Module 3: Lecturer: Dr Siobhan Mc Govern

This module comprises five themes. It will involve 375 student effort hours equivalent to 15 ECTS credits and these are distributed as follows:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Contact time (including on-line learning) | 35 hours |
| Personal study | 260 hours |
| Assessment tasks | 80 hours |

Rationale

Language and literacy development are the bedrock on which success at school and ultimately in the working world, is founded (Anderson & Freebody, 1983²¹; Hart & Risley, 1995²²; Nagy & Herman, 1987²³). For this reason, language and literacy development are key components to this Masters in Early Childhood Education.

It is clear that language and literacy are key components of both curricula and are central to the child's developing understanding of the world he/she inhabits. It is therefore an indispensable condition of good professional practice that practitioners who work with the Primary school curriculum and with Aistear would be conversant with the latest research and theory behind language and literacy. That is the focus of this module on language and literacy.

Philosophy

Literacy, like language, is a skill for living. This module will give students an opportunity to reflect on the different ways that children learn. Reading and research will furnish students with a holistic picture of the reading child and arm them with the ability to deconstruct the reading process and reconstruct taking into account children's diverse and individual learning needs.

Aims of Module 3

- To develop in students a critical knowledge of some of the literature on language and on literacy development.
- To enable students to deconstruct language so that they can organise language into meaningful units of learning, structured as Form, Vocabulary and Use.
- To enable students to deepen their knowledge and understanding of emergent literacy and of the elements of literacy so that they can transform that understanding into enhanced, effective teaching of literacy.
- To familiarize students with the debate around formal and informal literacy skills.
- To broaden students' understanding of the importance of story in children's lives.
- To enhance students' metacognitive understanding of story and to assist them in becoming skilled dialogic story readers and trainers.

²¹ Anderson, R. C., & Freebody, R. (1981). Vocabulary knowledge. In Comprehension and reading, edited by J. T Guthrie. Newark, Del.: International Reading Association.

²² Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing

²³ Nagy, W. E., & Herman, P. A. (1987). Breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge: Implications for acquisition and instruction. In MG McKeown & ME Curtis (eds.), The nature of vocabulary acquisition, pp. 19-36. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Module learning outcomes:

On completion of module 3, students will be enabled to:

- use the literature to articulate what is meant by a socio-cultural approach to learning language and literacy
- describe an emergentist approach to language and literacy and its implications for pedagogy
- deconstruct language into form, vocabulary and language use in order to embrace all important aspects of language teaching in the primary school.
- explain the importance of phonological awareness for developing readers
- identify best practice in relation to the teaching of vocabulary to young children
- articulate a view about the importance of oral language and decoding skills in relation to children's reading ability at a young age and later at around ten years' old
- be conversant with some academic literature on the role of story in children's lives, and have an enhanced teaching ability in the area of dialogic story-reading

Module Length and Structure

This module on language and literacy will be delivered in part online and in part face-to-face with students.

It comprises 35 hours contact time.

Outline of Module 3

It is divided into five interlinked themes as follows:

Theme 1: Literacy as social practice

Theme 2: Emergent literacy

Theme 3: Oral language development

Theme 4: Formal and Informal literacy skills

Theme 5: The importance of story in the early years

Lecturers reserve the right to alter the course at any stage during the year.

Core texts (a full reading list will be distributed at the beginning of the module)

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2013). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction* (2nd edition ed.). New York & London: The Guildford Press.

Dickinson, D. K., Golinkoff, R. M., & Hirsh-Pasek, K. (2010). Speaking out for language: Why language is central to reading development. *Educational Researcher*, 39(4), 305-310.

Flynn, K. S. (2011). Developing children's oral language skills through dialogic reading: Guidelines for implementation. *Teaching exceptional children* 44(2)

Neuman, & Dickinson (Eds.), (2002). *Handbook of early literacy research volume 1* New York: The Guildford Press.

Neuman, & D. Dickinson (Eds.), (2006). *Handbook of early literacy research volume 32* New York: The Guildford Press.

Neuman, & D. Dickinson (Eds.), (2011). *Handbook of early literacy research volume 3* New York: The Guildford Press.

Hollich, G., Hirsh-Pasek, K., Tucker, M. L., & Golinkoff, R. (2011). The change is afoot: Emergentist thinking in language acquisition. In: Anderson, P. B. Emmeche, C., Finnemann, N. O. and Voetmann Christiansen, P. (eds.): *Downward causation*. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press: 143-178.

Mar, Raymond & Oatley. (2008). The function of fiction is the abstraction and simulation of social experience. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* (3) 173-192

National Early Literacy Panel (2008). *Developing early literacy: Report of the national early literacy panel*. Washington D.C: National Institute for Literacy.

Shiel, G.; Cregan, A.; Mc Gough, A.; Archer, P. (2012). Oral language in Early Childhood and Primary Education (3-8 years) (Research Report No. 14). Retrieved from http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Primary_School_Curriculum/Language_Curriculum_Research_Reports_/orallangreport.pdf

Module Assessment:

This module will be assessed by a 5,000-word written assignment based on topics explored; literacy and language development in the early years.

Module 4: Inquiry Based Learning

Module 4 ECTS credits: 15

Module 4 Co-ordinator: Dr. Karin Bacon

Module 4 Lecturers: Dr. Karin Bacon, Mairéad Nally

This module comprises six themes. It will involve 375 student effort hours equivalent to 15 ECTS credits and these are distributed as follows:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Contact time (including on-line learning) | 35 hours |
| Personal study | 260 hours |
| Assessment tasks | 80 hours |

Rationale

Inquiry as a theme of educational research has attracted considerable interest particularly in recent years [Audet, 2005; Erickson, 2008; Lindfors, 1999; Parker, 2007]. It is the object of growing interest in a number of countries such as the UK, the US and Ireland in which there is a lively debate about pre-determined outcomes and teaching standards and standardised testing that are often contrasted with inquiry and discovery approaches to learning. Finally, it currently influences curriculum development and teaching approaches and methodologies in a number of recent innovative programmes to construct new models of teaching and learning [Pataray-Ching & Roberson, 2002; Sausele Knodt, 2010]. This has led to research and development of inquiry based curricula and the argument in support of inquiry based learning is being heard increasingly and recognised as an appropriate pedagogical approach.

Module philosophy

This module will strengthen educators' capacity to promote and critique children's inquiry in an Early Childhood setting. The Module will assist in the development of critical and creative practitioners. They will have requisite knowledge, skills and capacities for reflection necessary to develop positive engagement with Inquiry Based Learning.

Structure of module

This module will comprise a mix of theoretical and practical content, offered in a 'blended approach' of face-to-face and distance learning. The six module themes will draw on approaches which seek to equip students with an understanding of theoretical perspectives on inquiry based learning, within a variety of Early Childhood settings.

Aims of Module

- To provide students with a critical understanding of Inquiry Based Learning
- To familiarize students with the philosophical underpinnings and history of Inquiry Based Learning
- To familiarize students with a number of standard models of the process of Inquiry Based Learning
- To assist students in identifying the resources necessary to create an environment where Inquiry Based Learning can take place for young children
- To exemplify Inquiry Based Learning in two specific domains [Mathematics and Science]
- To promote reflective practice in the context Inquiry Based Learning.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of Module 4: Inquiry Based Learning, students should be able to:

- Identify the key stages within different models of the process of inquiry.
- Develop practical strategies and methodologies for planning and teaching in a way that will promote Inquiry Based Learning.
- Examine the implications of Inquiry Based Learning educators in early childhood settings.
- Examine and critique Inquiry Based Learning in the domains of Mathematics and Science.
- Demonstrate reflective practice in relation to students' own working situations.

Module length and structure

Module 4 is made up of six separate themes, and comprises 35 hours of contact time, including online learning.

Outline of Module 4:

THEME 1: Key philosophical underpinnings and history of Inquiry Based Learning

THEME 2: Key pedagogical principles underpinning Inquiry Based Learning

THEME 3: Standard different models of the process of inquiry

THEME 4: Creating and resourcing an Inquiry Based environment

THEME 5: Assessment in Inquiry Based Learning

THEME 6: Inquiry Based Learning exemplified in two domains [Mathematics and Science]

Lecturers reserve the right to alter the course at any stage during the year.

Core texts (a full reading list will be distributed at the beginning of the module)

Costa A. L. & Kallick B. (2009). (Eds.), *Habits of mind across the curriculum*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Garhart M.C. (2000) *Theories of Childhood: An Introduction to Dewey, Montessori, Erikson, Piaget and Vygotsky*, Red Leaf Press

Erickson, L. (2007). *Curriculum and Instruction for the Thinking Classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Lipman, M. (2003). *Thinking in education* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (1998). *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Module assessment

This model will be assessed by a 5,000-word written assignment. Students will critique a chosen model of inquiry and apply this model in a domain of their choice. The student will identify the key stages of this model in the light of its philosophical underpinnings and pedagogical research.

From the student's own practice, they will outline in detail a lesson or series of lessons and show how they have addressed all elements of their model. This should include: considerations in creating an environment for inquiry based learning; the strategies, methods and resources used; and the implications of using that model. They will reflect upon and debrief the lesson using the model and show how it is evident in the lesson.

Appendix 2: Guideline Criteria for Marking: Year One Assessments

Marking Criteria: MES assignments

Distinction: 70%+

| | |
|--|--|
| Structure / Organisation (organisation and structure of the text; logic) | Planning and structure is excellent. Text and argument systematically and explicitly organised; without any significant lacunae or repetition. Identifies and discusses pertinent issues in depth. |
| Analysis (coherence of argument; reflection, distillation, criticality. Range and understanding of sources) | Critical review and synthesis of ideas; coherent, realistic and well-supported argument. Independent judgement and logical conclusions are consistently demonstrated. The student shows insight, imagination and creativity, with some evidence of original thinking. Critical coverage of all major sources; systematic, analytical use of these sources. |
| Application (perceptive appraisal of implications of theory in practice) | Demonstrates excellent ability to apply learning to her / his own practice. Excellent problem-solving skills are demonstrated with very strong application to practice and the ability to engage in critical reflection. |
| Presentation (length, use of presentation conventions, referencing, spelling, grammar, language) | Competent control of length. Clarity of language is consistently of a high standard throughout. Appropriate use of referencing conventions. Accurate grammar, spelling and use of language. |
| OVERALL | Work of outstanding quality, showing perceptive and critical insight. |

Pass: 50%+

| | |
|--|--|
| Structure / Organisation (organisation and structure of the text; logic) | Planning and structure are clear. Text and argument structured in a sustained way; all major structural elements present. |
| Analysis (coherence of argument; reflection, distillation, criticality. Range and understanding of sources) | Ideas organised and grouped into a coherent, realistic and well-supported argument; incorporating some critical analysis and relevant / appropriate use of supporting sources. Some critical thinking in evidence; independent judgement and logical conclusions are demonstrated; there is some evidence of insight, imagination and creativity. Use of a range of sources in the literature, though there may be some minor gaps; systematic, analytical use of these sources. |
| Application (perceptive appraisal of implications of theory in practice) | Demonstrates competent ability to apply learning to her / his own practice. Good problem solving skills are demonstrated with good application to practice and evidences some ability to engage in critical reflection. |
| Presentation (length, use of presentation conventions, referencing, spelling, grammar, language) | Length requirements observed. Satisfactory use of language. Appropriate presentation and use of referencing conventions although there may be some errors. Grammar and spelling are accurate in the main. |
| OVERALL | Work of good quality, showing knowledge and understanding |

Fail: 49% or below

| | |
|--|--|
| Structure / Organisation (organisation and structure of the text; logic) | Poor or weak organisation / structure. Significant gaps or repetition in the argument. |
| Analysis (coherence of argument; reflection, distillation, criticality. Range and understanding of sources) | Some evidence of understanding of ideas although mainly descriptive with limited critical analysis and support. Arguments and conclusions are weak. There is generally an absence of insight, imagination and creativity. Some evidence of reading in the field but largely descriptive. Little or no analysis or understanding evident. |
| Application (perceptive appraisal of implications of theory in practice) | Demonstrates unsatisfactory ability to apply learning to her / his own practice. Problem solving skills are not in evidence; there is no evidence of critical reflection on practice |
| Presentation (length, use of presentation conventions, referencing, spelling, grammar, language) | Basic command of presentation conventions and referencing; presentation marred by language / spelling errors affecting comprehensibility. The essay generally lacks fluency. |
| OVERALL | The work does not achieve the standards required at MES level |

Marking Criteria Guide Module 4 M.ES in ECE (Inquiry-based Learning)

Organisation: 10% [15%]

| Grade/Mark | Descriptor | Comments/Evidence Questions to consider |
|------------|--|---|
| I | Planning and structure are excellent. Layout is extremely clear. Excellent ability to integrate information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is inquiry defined (own/others' definitions) and connected to teaching and learning?</i> • <i>Is the connection made between inquiry definition/learning and inquiry cycles?</i> • <i>Is the rationale for selection of inquiry cycles articulated?</i> • <i>Are the difference/similarities between models summarized?</i> • <i>Are the connections: between philosophy, inquiry, and curriculum identified?</i> • <i>Are there connections between models (Part A) and the plan for teaching?</i> • <i>Is there an overall planning tool/format?</i> |
| 2.I | Planning and structure are very well laid out | |
| 2.II | The planning and structure of the assignment are good. The student shows good ability to integrate information. | |
| III | The student has laid out the structure of the essay in a satisfactory way. There may be errors in planning The student may demonstrate a weakness in integrating information | |
| F | The student does not clearly outline the structure of the essay and there are significant weaknesses in overall planning. The student is unable to integrate information | |

Analysis/Synthesis: 25% [40%]

| Grade/Mark | Descriptor | Comments/Evidence Questions to consider |
|------------|--|---|
| I | The student demonstrates excellent comprehension of key elements and issues and the ability to think critically is clearly apparent. Independent judgement, reasoned arguments and logical conclusions are consistently demonstrated. The student shows insight, imagination and creativity, with some evidence of original thinking. Relevant theory is very clearly explained. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are the stages and features of the models described?</i> • <i>Are connections made to the philosophical underpinnings of the models of inquiry?</i> • <i>Are the roles of the teacher/students in the models articulated</i> • <i>Are the commonalities and differences between models summarized?</i> • <i>Is IBL and the nature of inquiry critiqued and the alignment/non-alignment with Aistear/PSC examined?</i> • <i>Are argument[s] supported with references?</i> • <i>Is the synthesis of ideas supported with evidence/logical argument?</i> |
| 2.I | The student demonstrates very good comprehension of key elements and issues, with the ability to think critically apparent at times. Independent judgement, reasoned arguments and logical conclusions are demonstrated at times. The student shows some evidence of insight, imagination and creativity. Relevant theory is clearly explained. | |
| 2.II | The student demonstrates good comprehension of key elements and issues. Some critical thinking in evidence but this could be stronger. Reasoned arguments and logical conclusions are sometimes demonstrated. Insight, imagination and creativity could be stronger. Relevant theory is competently explained. | |
| III | The student demonstrates satisfactory comprehension of key elements and issues. There is an absence of critical thinking. Arguments and conclusions could be further developed. There is | |

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| | generally an absence of insight, imagination and creativity. Relevant theory is satisfactorily explained. | |
| F | The student demonstrates unsatisfactory comprehension of key elements and issues. There is a clear absence of critical thinking. Arguments and conclusions are weak. There is no evidence of insight, imagination or creativity. Relevant theory is unsatisfactorily explained. | |

Application: 35% [15%]

| Grade/Mark | Descriptor | Comments/Evidence Questions to consider |
|------------|---|---|
| I | The student demonstrates excellent ability to apply learning to his/her own practice. Excellent problem-solving skills are demonstrated with very strong application of theory to practice. Excellent examples are included. Demonstrates ability to critically reflect on practice in a consistent manner throughout | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is the background and context described?</i> • <i>Is the plan:</i> • <i>structured and appropriate to the students?</i> • <i>framed by conceptual understandings and key questions?</i> • <i>designed around a topic which is engaging, relevant and challenging to the particular learners?</i> • <i>Does the plan:</i> • <i>incorporate one/more inquiry cycles into the learning engagements?</i> • <i>demonstrate understanding of IBL?</i> • <i>demonstrate how challenges which arise were overcome and incorporated into learning?</i> • <i>provide insights into teacher's learning and speculates on alternative approaches?</i> • <i>document reflection on own and the children's learning?</i> |
| 2.1 | The student demonstrates very good ability to apply learning to his/her own practice. Very good problem-solving skills are demonstrated with strong application of theory to practice. Very good examples are included. Demonstrates ability to critically reflect on practice. | |

| | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| 2.II | The student demonstrates good ability to apply learning to his/her own practice. Good problem-solving skills are demonstrated with competent application of theory to practice. Good examples are included. Some ability to critically reflect on practice is in evidence but this is not consistent throughout the essay. | |
| III | The student demonstrates satisfactory ability to apply learning to his/her own practice. Satisfactory problem-solving skills are demonstrated with limited application of theory to practice. A limited number of examples are included. The ability to critically reflect on practice is somewhat in evidence. | |
| F | The student demonstrates unsatisfactory ability to apply learning to his/her own practice. Problem-solving skills are not demonstrated. There is an absence of application of theory to practice. The ability to critically reflect on practice is not demonstrated. | |

Presentation: 20% [15%]

| Grade/Mark | Descriptor | Comments/Evidence Questions to consider |
|-------------|---|--|
| I | Quality of writing is excellent. Clarity of language is consistently of a very high standard throughout. The essay is fluently and lucidly written. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is the supporting documentation annotated and explained?</i> • <i>Is the language used precise and clear?</i> • <i>Is there evidence of teaching tools and of individual/group thinking and learning?</i> • <i>Is the paper engaging?</i> • <i>Do the ideas flow?</i> |
| 2.I | Quality of writing is very good. Clarity of language is consistently of a high standard throughout. The essay is fluently written. | |
| 2.II | Quality of writing is good. Clarity of language is of a good standard but there may be some errors. The essay is generally fluently written. | |
| III | Quality of writing is satisfactory. Clarity of language is generally of a satisfactory standard with some errors. The essay lacks fluency at times. | |

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| F | Quality of writing is unsatisfactory. Clarity of language of an unsatisfactory standard with many errors. The essay generally, lacks fluency. | |
|----------|---|--|

Referencing: 10% [15%]

| Grade/Mark | Descriptor | Comments/Evidence Questions to consider |
|-------------|--|---|
| I | Use of relevant reading is excellent. Use of academic conventions is applied consistently throughout with no errors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the paper indicate wide and in-depth reading from module and beyond?</i> • <i>Does the paper draw on appropriate references which are accurately cited?</i> • <i>Are the planning tools and student work fully referenced?</i> • <i>Is the paper fully edited?</i> |
| 2.I | Use of relevant reading is very good. Use of academic conventions is generally applied consistently with no errors. | |
| 2.II | Use of relevant reading is good. Use of academic conventions is generally applied consistently but there may be some errors. | |
| III | Use of relevant reading is satisfactory. Use of academic conventions is inconsistent and there are some errors. | |
| F | Use of relevant reading is unsatisfactory. Use of academic conventions is inconsistent and there are many errors. | |

Programme Content, Year Two

Dissertation Module, 30 ECTS

This module comprises 750 student effort hours and takes place during the second year of the Master in Education Studies. These effort hours are distributed between direct contact time in research seminars and supervision sessions, online research tutorials, personal study, and writing the dissertation.

Rationale

A critical component of the MES is the development of the necessary practical skills required for the completion of a research dissertation. In Year 2, students will be provided with a comprehensive introduction to the research methodologies most commonly employed by researchers in the field of education. Quantitative and qualitative approaches will be explored in detail. Central to this module will be the application of these research paradigms to the critical examination and exploration of educational research and policy nationally and internationally. The module aims to ensure that students have the practical research techniques/skills to undertake their research dissertations. It further aims to familiarise students with the current theoretical and ethical debates in educational research and to equip students with the necessary research skills to undertake future independent research projects.

Aims of Dissertation Module

The module aims are as follows:

- To build on the work carried out in Year 1 by introducing students to the opportunity to carry out their own empirical or conceptual research in their area.
- To foster, through research and critical self-reflection, the development of a positive school / organisational climate for all students and the extended community.
- To facilitate access to the knowledge required for a robust and targeted small scale research project.
- To enable students to acquire the skills necessary to engage in an ethically informed piece of practice-based research resulting in positive change.
- To facilitate students in carrying out their research dissertations with appropriate guidance from their supervisor.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Identify and select appropriate methodologies for research projects both current and future.
- Defend and justify these choices in the light of current debates and discourses.
- Compare and contrast the efficacy of their choices against other research paradigms.
- Construct valid arguments in the light of the data collected and analysed.
- Evaluate their own research process through active and informed reflexivity.
- Devise, develop and complete a substantial, intellectually challenging research project related to their particular field of study, within a set time-frame, and with appropriate guidance from a supervisor.
- Assimilate and selectively apply concepts, theories, methods and subject-specific terminology appropriate to their particular field of study.
- Sustain a coherent argument that draws on engagement with and critical appraisal of existing knowledge relevant to their research project.
- Relate their specific research topic to wider issues, debates and concerns in the general field.

- Reflect on and self-critically manage their own learning in the context of limited access to constructive feedback.

Outline of Dissertation Module

Research Methods Course: seminars and tutorials; preparation of research proposal

Dissertation of 20,000 words

Students will be required to submit a research proposal during Term 1, indicating their research question, an overview of some of the literature they intend to review, proposed methodologies, ethical considerations and preliminary bibliography. This will comprise approximately 2,000-3,000 words and will be assessed by the Proposal Assessment Committee on a Pass / Fail basis.

Dissertation

The Master's dissertation offers students the opportunity to demonstrate the following:

- Knowledge and understanding that is founded upon, extends and enhances that associated with the Bachelor's level, and which is at the forefront of education.
- A critical awareness of current issues and new insights, new tools and new processes in a particular aspect of the field.
- Application of their knowledge and understanding, their critical awareness and problem-solving abilities, within the context of research, or in the development of professional skills, related to an aspect of the field.
- The ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, to reflect on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements within the field.
- To communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge, the rationale and processes underpinning these, to wider audiences, in Ireland and overseas.

Choosing a research area

During the Michaelmas term of Year 2, students will be supported by members of the supervision panel in identifying a suitable research topic for their dissertation. Members of the panel will meet with the Master's Degree students, and will work with them in identifying possible areas of study.

Students will be encouraged to pursue areas of study within the field which are compatible with the areas of expertise of the panel.

Research proposal

Students will be required to submit a research proposal during the Michaelmas term. This should include the following information: a provisional title (subject to change), the general area of investigation, the aims and objectives of the proposed study, an overview of relevant literature along with a preliminary bibliography, an overview of the proposed methodology, and reference to any ethical considerations involved.

Assessment of research proposals

On submission of research proposals in the Michaelmas term, Year 2, the course coordinators will convene a meeting of the Proposal Assessment Committee in order to assess the quality of the proposals and to allocate supervisors to students.

Ethical considerations of the proposed research topics will be discussed at this forum. Any research proposal which is deemed not to be of the standard required for a Master's dissertation shall be returned to the student concerned and a re-submission will be requested to the Committee before the first supervisory meeting takes place.

Ethical considerations are particularly important given the context in which the research will be carried out, as it will, for the most part involve children, parents / guardians and teachers. Some of the proposed

research participants will be drawn from minority ethnic communities and from minority language groups. It is essential that ethical issues are given due consideration in students' research proposals and that arrangements are made, for example, for translation of documents into minority languages, and also that provision of interpreters for interviews, where necessary, has been factored into the proposals.

Individual supervision

The primary focus for this module is to design and complete a research dissertation. Consequentially, much of the mediation of this work will involve guidance being offered by individual supervisors. Regular supervision meetings will be organised in order to provide guidance to students during the research process. As this work progresses, the students will be offered formative critiques of their evolving research projects.

Research tutorials

The research proposal sets the foundation for further planning and realisation of the research project. A research seminar will be organised for students focusing on analysis of data.

Module assessment

The module will be assessed by a research dissertation of 20,000 words, offering the student the opportunity to work on his/her particular field of interest.

The research dissertation will be assessed by an internal examiner and a second reader (who is the student's supervisor) according to approved criteria. This allows for an independent critical evaluation of the study. A third-marking will be arranged by the course co-ordinator in the event of a discrepancy between the readers. The pass mark is 50% and this mark cannot be compensated with marks from year 1.

Research Dissertation

1. Preamble

The following guidelines for supervisors and Master's Degree students in MIE are extracted broadly from the University of Dublin, Trinity College Calendar Part 2 for Graduate Studies and Higher Degrees 2010-2011, from the Good Research Practice Guidelines 2002, issued by the Graduate Studies Office, Trinity College, and from the Best Practice Guidelines on Research Supervision for Academic Staff and Students, 2006, also issued by the Graduate Studies Office in Trinity College.

2. Introduction

A dissertation of 20,000 words is submitted at the end of Year 2. The dissertation module represents a substantial component of the Master's programme and all students must achieve a pass in the dissertation in order to receive the Master's Degree.

5.1 Role of Proposal Assessment Committee

The Proposal Assessment Committee shall comprise the programme co-ordinator and/or the assistant course co-ordinator, a member of the Ethics in Research Committee, the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) and a member of the course teaching staff.

Ethical considerations in the proposed research topics will be discussed at this forum. If the Proposal Assessment Committee has ethical concerns about a research proposal, the proposal may be referred to the Ethics in Research Committee where this will be considered in more detail.

6. Role of supervisors

Supervisors have responsibility for guiding their students in the choice of topic and in the identification of a viable research question.

6.1 Relationship of supervisor to student

The relationship of supervisor to supervisee is best thought of as one of mentorship or apprenticeship, which depends on professional competence and trust between the partners. Supervisors will be available to students for consultation, advice and assistance. The supervisor shall provide support and assistance to the assigned student throughout the period of study. Meetings between supervisor and student shall take place on a regular basis until the dissertation has been submitted. It is the student's responsibility to maintain adequate contact with his / her supervisor(s).

The supervisor will provide advice and guidance on matters relating to the student's chosen area of work and shall support the student in ensuring that the quality of work reaches Master's level. This involves commenting constructively and promptly on a student's written work.

Supervisors will also advise students on college regulations. All reasonable written requests shall be responded to without undue delay.

Students who reside outside Dublin are expected to attend MIE for at least two face-to-face supervision sessions during the year.

6.2 The supervisor shall assist with the following:

- Ensuring that the proposed research project is manageable, and that the chosen methodology is appropriate for answering the research question.
- Ensuring that ethical issues have been planned for and attended to appropriately.

- Supporting the student in setting up achievable goals within an agreed timeline.
- Guiding the student on how to source relevant literature and how to engage with same in a critical and investigative manner.
- Supporting students in presenting their arguments in a logical and coherent manner.
- Reading drafts of students' work and providing timely feedback.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that work is presented in line with academic conventions and is proof-read and edited to the required high standard.

7. Supervision Panel

MIE supervisors are academically competent in their supervisory role and act within their area of professional and academic competence. Every student will have access to a supervisor from the supervision panel.

7.1 Complaints concerning supervision

Complaints about the adequacy of supervision should normally be made first to the course coordinator. If this person is unable to resolve the problem, or if the course coordinator is the supervisor concerned, the student should contact the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) (or another senior faculty member nominated by the Registrar if the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) is supervising the student). The Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) should attempt to resolve the problem through consultation with the student. If this fails, the student should make a formal complaint in writing to the Registrar. Complaints about the adequacy of supervision will not be entertained once the dissertation has been submitted for examination.

7.2 Appeals procedure

Students, who wish to appeal either decisions or grades, should in the first instance do so in writing to the MES coordinator. The grounds for the appeal should be clearly stated and supported where necessary by documentary evidence. The coordinator will discuss the request with the relevant parties and attempt to find a resolution.

7.3 If the problem is not resolved, the co-ordinator can refer the case to the College's Postgraduate Appeals Committee, none of whom has sat on the court of examiners for the MES. This Committee consists of

- A senior lecturer in MIE (Chair)
- A lecturer on another Postgraduate programme in MIE
- A postgraduate student or a student representative on the Governing Body

This Committee shall convene as and when necessary. Appellants should submit their case in writing to the Chair of the Committee outlining the grounds for the appeal and supporting documentation on the Academic Appeal Form.

7.4 If students do not consider the matter satisfactorily resolved after that, they have the right to appeal the decision to a College Appeals Committee, none of whose members are involved in the Postgraduate Appeals Committee or the court of examiners for the MES. This committee consists of:

- A principal lecturer in MIE (non-voting Chair)
- A senior lecturer in MIE
- A postgraduate student or a student representative on the Governing Body
- A member of MIE governing body
-

Such an appeal can be presented on three grounds:

1. The student's case is not adequately covered by the ordinary regulations of the College;

2. The regulations of the College were not properly applied in the applicant's case;

3. *Ad misericordiam* grounds.

The student cannot make an appeal other than on *ad misericordiam* grounds against the normal application of College academic regulations approved by the University Council.

8. Procedure for examination of research dissertations

A dissertation submitted for a Master's Degree must show evidence of rigour and discrimination, in-depth knowledge of the chosen topic, and an appreciation of the relationship of the subject to the wider field of knowledge. It must make some contribution to knowledge and scholarship; it must be clear, concise, well-written, and must be the student's own work.

9. Research Integrity

Research integrity covers many issues including research misconduct, plagiarism, and research ethics. MIE has an Ethics in Research Committee which oversees matters regarding research ethics (section 9.4).

9.1 Research misconduct

This is defined as but is not limited to fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.

9.1.2 Fabrication is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.

9.1.3 Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing, distorting, dishonestly misinterpreting or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.

9.1.4 Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit, or dishonest use of unacknowledged sources. Plagiarism is addressed separately in section 9.2.

9.2 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is interpreted by MIE as the act of presenting the work of others as one's own work, without acknowledgement. Plagiarism is considered as academically fraudulent and an offence against University discipline. MIE considers plagiarism to be a major offence and subject to disciplinary procedures.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that he/she does not commit plagiarism.

9. 2.1 Why is plagiarism regarded as such a serious offence?

It is clearly understood that all members of the academic community use and build on the work of others. It is commonly accepted also, however, that they build on the work of others in an open and explicit manner, and with due acknowledgement. Many cases of plagiarism that arise could be avoided by following some simple guidelines:

(1) Any material used in a piece of work, of any form, that is not the original thought of the author should be fully referenced in the work and attributed to its source. The material should either be quoted directly or paraphrased. Either way, an explicit citation of the work referred to should be provided, in the text, in a footnote, or both. Not to do so is to commit plagiarism.

(2) When taking notes from any source it is very important to record the precise words or ideas that are being used and their precise sources.

(3) Although the Internet often offers a wider range of possibilities for researching particular themes, it also requires particular attention to be paid to the distinction between one's own work and the work of

others. Particular care should be taken to keep track of the source of the electronic information obtained from the Internet or other electronic sources and ensure that it is explicitly and correctly acknowledged.

9.2.2 How can plagiarism arise?

Plagiarism can arise from deliberate actions and also through careless thinking and/or methodology. The offence lies not in the attitude or intention of the perpetrator, but in the action and in its consequences.

Plagiarism can arise from actions such as:

- (a) Copying another student's work in full or in part and presenting it as one's own
- (b) Submitting the same work as a peer without having sought the approval of the lecturer and without having sufficiently individualised the work
- (c) Enlisting another person or persons to complete an assignment on the student's behalf
- (d) Quoting directly, without acknowledgement, from books, articles or other sources, either in printed, recorded or electronic format
- (e) Paraphrasing, without acknowledgement, the writings of other authors.

9.2.3 Is information available about plagiarism?

Advice about how to avoid plagiarism is available from the librarians, lecturers, teachers and supervisors. Advice is also available about the appropriate methodology for students to use for their work.

It is the students' responsibility to make sure their work is not used by others without acknowledgement. The student whose work is used unreferenced by another is considered an accomplice in the act of plagiarism.

9.3 Policy and procedure for inquiring into allegations of research misconduct

If research misconduct is suspected, the following actions will be taken. First, an informal meeting will take place between the programme coordinator and the student. If issues are not resolved at that stage, there will be a meeting with the student, their supervisor and the course co-ordinator with the Registrar and two members of the MIE Ethics in Research Committee (who are not involved in the programme) to give the student a chance to answer. The student may bring a representative from the Students' Union with them instead of their supervisor.

If the Registrar and the members of the MIE Ethics in Research Committee decide that research misconduct has been committed, they must inform the President, in writing, and include all the information about the case as well as suggestions as to how the problem can be rectified. The President will interview the student if there is any disagreement. The Registrar shall then follow the following steps e.g. the student shall be returned as Fail by the Board of Examiners and shall be required to re-submit work as determined by the Board of Examiners. The grade of the second attempt allowed shall not exceed 40%.

Only those directly involved in the inquiry should be aware that the process is being conducted or have access to any information during the course of the investigation.

9.4 Ethics in Research Committee, MIE

The Ethics in Research Committee in MIE is comprised of six members of the academic staff of Marino Institute of Education. The Ethics in Research Committee shall be represented at the Proposal Assessment Committee in evaluating the research proposals from students on the course (section 5.1)

10. Presentation of the dissertation

The dissertation should be 20,000 words in length. You are required to submit **two bound copies** of your dissertation.

The dissertation should be printed on A4 paper (29.7cm x 21cm) using double spacing and font size 12. Typing must be on one side of the paper only. The margin on the 'binding side' must not be less than 3.5cm and not less than 2cm on the other three sides, both for typescript and diagrams. The typed copies should be read carefully, and any errors made in copying should be corrected, making sure that corrections are made in all copies.

The pages must be fastened together firmly and bound using spiral binding, so that the dissertation can be opened and read in comfort and does not fall to pieces when handled.

Two bound copies of the dissertation are to be handed in to the **Education Office in June 2021 (date to be advised)**.

In addition, you are asked to submit an electronic copy of your dissertation. This can be emailed to dissertations@mie.ie and **must be received by 4.30pm in June 2021 on date to be advised**.

Guideline Criteria for Marking: Research Dissertations

| | FAIL | PASS | DISTINCTION |
|---|--|---|---|
| Introduction 10 marks | The student does not clearly outline the focus of the study. Links between the purpose of the study and the specialist field are weak. Context is not well established. | The focus of the study is clearly articulated. The purpose of the study is related to the specialist field. The research context is well established. | The focus of the study is excellently articulated. The purpose of the study is very clearly related to the specialist field. |
| Review of Literature 25 marks | The literature is unacceptably narrow, lacks focus in terms of the research topic and omits key texts and contributors. The author fails to demonstrate understanding of relevant theory. There is no critique of the literature | The chosen literature is sound in terms of its relevance to the research question. The author demonstrates command of relevant theory. The paper contains good critique of the literature, with some critical evaluation of alternative positions. The literature is up-to-date and is comprehensive in terms of breadth and depth. | The literature is excellently chosen in terms of relevance to the research question. The author demonstrates an excellent command of relevant theory. He / she engages with the literature in a critical and authoritative manner. Alternative positions are critically evaluated. The literature is up-to-date and is outstanding in terms of breadth and depth. |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Research Methodology 20 marks</p> | <p>The methodology is inappropriate in terms of the research topic. Scant attention has been paid to the methodology literature and there are serious gaps in terms of the limitations and ethical implications of the methodology. Researcher positionality is not addressed. Data analysis processes are omitted.</p> | <p>The methodology has been well chosen in terms of relevance to research topic, taking into consideration a sound range of methodological literature. The arguments made in support of the choice of methodology are logical and well made. Researcher positionality is clearly explained. The data analysis processes are cogently explicated. Pertinent ethical issues are coherently discussed.</p> | <p>The methodology has been excellently chosen in terms of relevance to research topic, taking into consideration a wide range of methodological literature. A comprehensive argument is made in support of the choice of the methodology. Researcher positionality is very clearly explained. The limitations of the methodology are clearly outlined. The data analysis processes are excellently explicated. All pertinent ethical issues are excellently discussed.</p> |
| <p>Findings, Analysis and Discussion 30 marks</p> | <p>The data are presented in a confusing manner. The author fails to use the literature in critiquing the data. Conclusions are inappropriate in terms of the data presented.</p> | <p>The data are presented clearly and cogently. Very good use is made of the literature in order to offer critical examination of the data. A range of insightful arguments are made within the discussion and solid links are established between the conclusions and the data. Some original thinking is evident in places.</p> | <p>The author presents the data in an excellent manner. Superb use of the literature is used to critically examine the data. The author is highly insightful in terms of the arguments made within the discussion and there are excellent links between the conclusions and the data. There is evidence of original thought emerging from the analysis of data.</p> |
| <p>Presentation and Format 15 marks</p> | <p>Academic conventions are generally ignored. The dissertation is disorganised. The reference list is weak and references are inaccurate or absent. Length requirements are not observed.</p> | <p>The author displays skilled use of academic conventions with format and structure followed consistently throughout. The dissertation is systematically organised. The author has paid attention to the accurate formation of the reference list and referencing system. Competent control of length. Some minor errors in evidence.</p> | <p>The author displays skilled use of academic conventions with format and structure followed superbly and consistently throughout. The dissertation is systematically and clearly organised. The author has paid excellent attention to the accurate formation of the reference list and referencing system. Competent control of length.</p> |

The lecturers reserve the right to alter the programme and dates during the year