Marino Institute of Education

Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education) Review
1-2 March 2022
Peer Review Report

1   Overview and Introduction

As an award of Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin (Trinity), the Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education) must be reviewed on a periodic basis, approximately on a five-to-seven-year cycle. This re-validation process determines if the award can continue to be offered in respect of the standards required by the designated awarding body (Trinity), and the linked provider (Marino Institute of Education).

1.1 Members of the Peer Review Group (PRG)

The PRG was made up of four experienced practitioners:

- Dr Paul Gormley, Academic Director in Adult Training and Education, NUI Galway
- Dr Nuala Hunt, Head of Department of Continuing Education, NCAD
- Dr Fiona Maloney, Director of Further Education and Training Support Services, Education & Training Boards Ireland
- Dr David Powell, Senior Lecturer in Teacher Education, University of Huddersfield, England

Dr Paul Gormley acted as Chair for the panel and allocated the areas of responsibility for the PRG. Each member was allocated two areas of responsibility to lead on during the meetings and when reviewing the documentation. Specifically, Dr Gormley looked after teaching and practice and resources and facilities, Dr Maloney was responsible for monitoring and feedback and experience of students and staff, Dr Powell focused on programme content and structure and educational placements, and Dr Hunt took responsibility for strategic context and planning and management.

1.2 Terms of Reference

Marino Institute of Education are invited the Peer Review Group to assess the Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education) and make recommendations to the MIE under the following categories:

(i)   review the academic standards of the programme and the extent to which they align with the relevant level of the National Framework of Qualifications;

(ii)   assess the strategic direction of the programme in the context of MIE strategy and internal and external developments;

(iii) review the effectiveness of the programme's governance, management and administration structures in delivering and supporting the achievement of the programme strategy and mission;

(iv)   assess the quality of the programme's teaching, learning and assessment provision, learning resources and learning environment, both internal and external to campus, that underpin the delivery of the curriculum and the attainment of the programme learning outcomes;

(v)   review the resources available to the programme such as finance, facilities, administrative support and human resources to enable delivery of the programme's academic mission;

(vi)   review students' overall experience of the course and the Institute.

2   Regulatory Context

Marino Institute of Education (MIE) is recognised as a Linked Provider of Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin (hereafter referred to as Trinity), under the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training Act, 2012)*. Trinity is MIE's designated awarding body and validates all of MIE's academic programmes leading to an Award on the National Qualifications Framework (www.irq.ie).

MIE is required under the *Quality & Qualifications Act 2012* to "establish procedures in writing for quality assurance for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of education, training, research and related services the provider provides". The quality assurance systems and quality review procedures at MIE also incorporate the *QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines April 2016*; the *ESG Standards and Guidelines for QA in the European Higher Education Area 2015*; the *QQI Code of Practice for provision of programmes of education and training to international learners and the QQI Policy on Access, Transfer and Progression*. Trinity approves those procedures and is responsible for conducting effectiveness reviews of the implementation of those procedures in MIE.

The review of the Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education) (PDE (FE)), is being conducted under the [MIE QA Procedure for the Review of Validated Programmes](). The Review Report will be approved by governance committees at MIE and Trinity and will be published in the public domain. Recommendations arising from the review will be incorporated into an Implementation Plan and progress on the implementation of recommendations will be monitored to completion. The review and follow-up actions will form part of the evidentiary base that MIE can provide to demonstrate effective implementation of approved quality procedures and a culture of continuous quality improvement.

3   Findings of Review - Approach

The findings of this PRG are based on:

3.1 An initial review of the documentation provided by MIE. This included the original validation document submitted in 2013; a Quality Review Self-Assessment Report prepared by the course leader, the Vice-President for Education and Strategic Development and other staff from MIE; an Education Placement handbook; MIE's Strategic Plan 2021-26, and accompanying documents related to the programme and quality assurance.

3.2 A two-day 'online' Quality Review with MIE staff, current and former students and principals from partner colleges. Key conversations took place with the President, who provided an introduction to MIE and its strategic priorities; the course leader and members of the teaching team; Placement Assessors; current and former students; principals from colleges, and members of MIE's senior leadership team.

3.3 A meeting with the course leader to test out the preliminary findings, commendations and recommendations before they were shared with the senior leadership team.

The PRG have worked together in the post review period to finalise the writing up of this report.

4 Key findings

4.1 Strategic context

Marino Institute is one of a small number of higher education institutions (HEIs) offering further education and training (FET) initial teacher education (ITE) qualifications validated by the Teaching Council. The FET qualifications are a relatively recent addition to established ITE programmes. MIE remains a committed member of the FET forum, which engages in progressing strategic and systemic issues facing FET HE providers. MIE offers a level 8 PDE (FE) programme which has grown and expanded since its introduction. The expansion in student numbers and the scale of the MIE programme is impressive, and recently a new member of staff has been recruited to the team to support this growth and the senior leadership team's vision for further developments at Level 9. Indeed, the review team found that based on expanding numbers MIE is now one of the main providers of FET qualifications offering a full-time and part-time route. MIE plans to consolidate the existing PDE (FE) qualification and develop a progression route to Masters level 9 to attract FE professionals who aim to advance their leadership and research skills. In light of expansion and growth of FET, the initiative proposed by MIE appears timely. However, expansion of the programme offer to include L9 will require better and more flexible access to campus-based support and services to meet the diverse needs of these staff and students.

MIE appointed a new President in 2018 who has set about introducing new layers of management, communication and development to enhance and grow the organisation. A new mission was devised and adopted to advance key strategies. TRUST (Teaching, Research, Universal Access, Sustainability and Technology) carries the five strategic priorities for MIE and informs the ethos of the organization. The PRG found a strong commitment to quality teaching, a desire to transform teaching within FE and a commitment to advancing access, inclusion and social justice within the PDE (FE) programme. MIE had begun to upgrade technology across the campus and integrate technology as a core part of the teaching and learning experience. COVID-19 accelerated this and evidence indicates students have benefitted from technology enhanced learning, with larger numbers enrolling through part-time flexible modes. However, staff indicated the PDE (FE) programme was not yet fully integrated and visible comparable with other ITE options at MIE. It was unclear whether this

was the result of being part-time and flexible, or if FET was a recent addition to an established suite of teacher programmes. The 'research' priority included in the mission statement was less visible across the PDE (FE) programme.

4.2 Planning and Management

The programme is well led. Since taking up leadership of the programme, the course leader provides clear leadership to the team and has identified a number of areas where planning and management could be strengthened. Already steps have been taken to improve communication amongst staff, enhance the quality of teaching materials and the introduction of a series of continuous professional development (CPD) activities to support delivery and programme coherence. This good work needs to continue and further support provided to strengthen and firmly establish a CPD programme for all staff involved in delivery and assessment.

All applicants are interviewed, though the timeframe from application to an offer being made for the programme needs to improve. The Course Leader is aware of this and is reviewing the application process to identify how and where it can be sped up.

Other areas where action is being undertaken to improve the quality of the programme include reviewing the number of modules and the associated learning outcomes to remove any duplication, reviewing the current assessment practices; improving the speed and quality of student feedback, and managing the students' assessment workload by implementing a modularised academic calendar.

The use of rubrics for assessment purposes, though consistently implemented, may not be the most appropriate way of feeding back to such a diverse cohort of students.

4.3 Programme content and structure (including off-campus learning)

The programme consists of nine modules, seven of which carry a small module tariff of 5 credits. These modules were written some time ago and are now in need of a refresh. For example, the module reading lists have very few post-2010 texts. The current structure is shaped by the awarding body's stipulations that no module can be more than 10- credits. This makes the programme rather clunky and it seems that some modules are assessing the same (or very similar) learning outcomes. This is leading to over assessment, an issue identified by students and reported in the self-assessment report. The plan to semesterise the programme has not been effectively implemented. Consequently, the sequencing of assessment and submission dates of assignments requires attention.

Because of the awarding body's stipulations, there is limited scope to combine modules. However, it would seem sensible for Development of a Reflective Stance in a Specialised Area (Module 8) to run like a thread through the programme alongside Educational Placements. If

possible, these modules might be renamed Education Placement and Reflection 1 (10 credits) and Educational Placement and Reflection 2 (10 credits).

The development of subject specialist pedagogy is recognised as an important aspect of the practice of teaching by the Teaching Council. We acknowledge this is a particular challenge within FE ITE. Taking into consideration the strong support voiced by the principals we met, we would encourage the team to explore how subject specialism might be strengthened within the programme. One way of doing this would be for the modules in year 2 to be explicit about subject specialist pedagogy. So, for example, Contemporary Issues in Education might be renamed Contemporary Issues in the Teaching of a Subject. If the team choose to develop subject specialism within the programme, they might find the work of Professor Kevin Orr and his colleagues at the University of Huddersfield helpful. One report worth looking at by this team is https://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/subject-specialist-pedagogy-in-ite-final-project-report.pdf. Another resource that might be worth looking at is https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/latest/subject-specialist-pedagogy-resources-for-ite-trainees-now-available.

At the moment, it is unclear how the student teachers are adequately prepared to teach in the diverse range of settings that characterise the sector.

Teacher professionalism – the 'sayings, doings and relatings' of being a teacher - is implicit within the programme, though there is little evidence of a focus on and learning outcomes related to it being assessed.

4.4 Teaching and Practice

https://www.nuigalway.ie/media/celt/files/coursedesign/LearningOutcomes.pdfhttps://www.nuigalway.ie/media/celt/files/coursedesign/LearningOutcomes.pdf

The current course leader encourages lecturers to use a wide variety of methods in their teaching (both in face-to-face and online synchronous and asynchronous lessons) for delivery of the curriculum. Zoom is effectively used by most staff as an online teaching platform, though some students reported that their teacher talked through a 50-slide PowerPoint with few opportunities for active learning. Bearing in mind the programme's decision to adopt a blended learning approach to delivery, more work needs to be done to envision it and then plan a rich and diverse curriculum that harnesses the best technology-enabled learning and face-to-face teaching offer.

4.5 Educational Placements

Student teachers on the full-time programme are required to find their own placement before the commencement of the course. The suitability of a placement is normally checked before a placement begins. Any issues that arise during a placement are normally quickly resolved by the placement assessor. All student teachers must have clearance from the Garda before they start a teaching placement and the assessors check this is in place.

Placement assessors undertake the assessment of student teachers' teaching during the placement. This is judged using clearly prescribed assessment criteria, though the diet of observations seems rather traditional and, as such, might be perceived to be narrow and repetitive. Additionally, there seems to be no explicit link between the student teachers' development as a teacher and to what extent they are meeting the Teaching Council's professional standards. This is something that should be addressed. On the other hand, Phase 1 of the Educational Placement – the observation – provides a very good opportunity for the student teachers to learn from the practice of 'looking' at how an experienced (co-operative) teacher teaches. This is assessed through an extended piece of writing. However, current students and alumni detailed concerns regarding placements. A placement framework and tool-kit would benefit both the students and placements.

4.6 Monitoring and feedback

It is widely acknowledged that students improve most when they are given clear and prompt feedback on their progress. The feedback and monitoring processes in MIE should enable staff to provide timely and appropriate feedback, letting students know how they are doing and what else they need to do to advance their learning. Consistency across staff in these processes underpins the value to students. However, there are some inconsistencies in the assessment practices within the programme. For example, the decision to use an examination to assess how adolescents and adults learn module seems incongruous. Also, the use of drafts and the speed of feedback is inconsistent. Students and alumni consistently referred to the lack of, or extremely delayed, and insufficient feedback. This needs to be addressed as an urgent priority.

There are currently 37 Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and 81 Learning Objectives (LOs) for students to meet to successfully complete this programme. The team might want to look at the following resource as they try to simplify the assessment within the programme

https://www.nuigalway.ie/media/celt/files/coursedesign/LearningOutcomes

4.7 The experience of students and staff

Systems for capturing the experience of staff and students in order to evaluate teaching and course quality is driven internally by MIE, in addition to the requirements from DFHERIS, Trinity College Dublin and QQI. The need for increased transparency, accountability and quality assurance underpins this activity. There are several mechanisms by which this feedback can be gathered including quality council, course documentation review processes and curriculum design processes, teaching and learning committees etc. The collation of student feedback forms was presented as a routine practice in MIE. However, an enhanced systematic collection and appropriate processing of student and staff feedback should be implemented. End of module questionnaires alone are an inadequate channel of feedback to support programme improvement. This practice might be replaced with one that supports initial informal feedback supported by more formal qualitative statements about how the course might be improved. Current and former students felt their voice was not always heard or valued. We heard a number of examples about how student feedback was not acted upon.

4.8 Resources and facilities

The remote nature of the review meant that the PRG were unable to see the actual teaching spaces used and the other facilities, though a virtual tour gave a sense of the classroom used.

Resources to support teaching and learning include

(i)   Programme and module specifications
(ii)   An Educational Placement handbook
(iii)   Lists of information resources/reading lists, such as books, journals, databases, video links, web sites., though the current readings in the module specifications are dated
(iv)   A virtual learning environment, Moodle, stores digital materials used in the teaching and learning on the programme. Lecturing staff communicate their module specific requirements and curricular materials through the organisational virtual learning environment (VLE), namely, Moodle.
(v)   Students communicate with lecturing staff through their MIE issued email address.
(vi)   Support with academic writing, including referencing and academic integrity.
(vii)   Trinity College offers specialised support for learners with learning disabilities and additional learning needs.

Non-teaching spaces available to the students when they are on-campus include a library; computer rooms, catering services, sport, leisure and fitness facilities, and the Spirituality, Reflection and Meditation space.

Students have access to a number of non-teaching spaces and areas when they are on-campus. These include a Library; computer rooms, catering outlets, sport, leisure and fitness facilities, and the Spirituality, Reflection and Meditation space. The main restaurant on the MIE campus, Blasta, provides hot meals from 8am – 2pm during weekdays. At the weekend, the Cloister Café serves sandwiches, light snacks and beverages from 8am to 4.30pm. However, some weekend students highlighted that they did not have access to these services.

5   Executive Summary

This review of the Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education) programme at MIE was undertaken over a two-day period in March 2022. The realities of the pandemic meant an early decision was made for this review to take place remotely, with assistance before, during and after the event provided by MIE's Quality Officer and an administrator.

Prior to the review, the PRG was afforded access to detailed programme documentation including module content, student feedback and examiners reports in advance of commencing the review. All necessary documentation and access to relevant stakeholders was organised in a timely and efficient manner. Using Zoom, the two-day remote review

involved structured conversations with the MIE's senior leadership team, the Course Leader and the course team, current and former students and principals from stakeholder colleges. This enabled the PRG to form a clear picture of the strategic context for the programme; its planning and management; the programme content and structure; research-informed teaching and practice; monitoring and feedback, the experience of students and staff, and the resources and facilities.

There is strong commitment and institutional support for the Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education). It has expanded from relatively modest beginnings to enrolling around ninety students in 2021-22, a reflection of its close working relationship with the sector and how it is meeting their needs. Strategic plans at MIE aim to build on and grow the potential reach of the programme, with plans underway for a progression route at Master's level, subject to programme approval being attained through their linked provider Trinity College Dublin. The programme structure is shaped by the regulations of Trinity College Dublin, the awarding body. This has resulted in a rather clunky programme, with some over assessment. Some of the assessment practices are dated and need to be more inclusive, some of the feedback practices need to be faster and more consistently implemented. Future assessment practices should model and reflect current practices from the sector. Further thought should be given to how best to engage and listen to students so their voices are heard and inform the design and delivery of the programme. It is a challenge to run a blended learning programme at the weekend. Whilst this model gives access to a diverse student cohort, it does have implications for student access to the on-campus facilities, many of which seem to run a reduced service at the weekend.

The PDFE prepares student teachers well for professional practice in a context that continues to change. The programme has a good reputation within the sector, employers and students praising the Course Leader and the programme staff. There is much to commend in the programme content and delivery and scope for improvement too. Potentially, this programme and its institution could be a market leader in FE ITE in the future. This report concludes with a list of the commendations and recommendations for MIE's consideration.

5. Commendations and Recommendations

The PRG have identified 14 commendations and 26 recommendations. The commendations and recommendations derive from the PRG's findings and are presented under the following eight headings, which were suggested to reflect the Terms of Reference of the review: 'strategic context for the programme; its planning and management; the programme content and structure; research-informed teaching and practice; monitoring and feedback, the experience of students and staff, and the resources and facilities.'

Commendations:

Leadership and management

1. There is strong strategic leadership of the programme. The course leader meets with senior management for planning and review of programme development on a regular basis. The PDE (FE) programme has progressed and grown over time. Senior managers are committed to programme review and renewal. The PDE (FE) programme is of strategic importance to MIE and is responsive to external developments in the wider FE context.

2. There is evidence of clear lines of communication, decision-making and planning within the programme and at programme level. The course leader offers support and guidance to staff, encourages staff meetings to ensure consistency in messaging.

3. Students praised the course leader's prompt response to their day-to-day concerns and questions.

4. The programme has established positive relationship with ETB's and employer bodies (similar comment in educational placement take one of these out).

5. The programme's commitment to inclusion and diversity.

Programme Design and delivery

6. The flexible and innovative design of this programmes recruits and accommodates a diverse student profile.

7. Programme staff are to be commended for their commitment and the quality of their teaching support for students during the pandemic.

8. Former students hold the programme in high regard and their 'word of mouth' seemed to promote the course to potential students. Students had very positive comments about the quality of the learning experience, the programme, lecturers and guidance provided. In particular, students acknowledged the feedback on placement from the teaching staff.

Teaching and practice

9. The use of current practitioners from the sector to deliver and assess the course ensures the currency of the programme.

10. The focus on special educational needs within the programme is a strength.

11. Principals from colleges commented that students were well prepared for taking up professional roles within FE. Specifically, they commented on how impressed they were with the energy, ideas and skills of the students being placed in their colleges.

Educational Placement

12. The placement assessors have established excellent working relationships with the leaders and colleges they work with.

13. The placement assessors are experienced teachers with a very good knowledge of the colleges.

Resources and facilities

14. All lecturers on the PDE (FE) have personal MIE Zoom accounts to facilitate the teaching of online synchronous live lectures and support learning. They can also use Zoom to facilitate one-to-one and small group meetings with students as the need arises.

Recommendations:

Leadership and management

1. In response to growth in part-time flexible student numbers the scheduling of access to services and student supports outside of weekdays and day-time working hours may be scaled up.

2. Student representation on the programme board is important and should be retained. In order to ensure students make the most of their input to programmes board, it may be helpful to have induction guidelines for the role of student representation, a feedback loop for students in relation to issues raised at programme level and a mechanism to address potential matters of conflict amongst the student body in relation to their learning experience at MIE.

3. It is acknowledged that MIE offers a flexible programme to facilitate participation while students continue to work and study. It may be possible to organise Initiatives that support belonging-integration at key moments (beginning, middle, end) in the academic year or by strengthening links with other MIE programmes (schedule cross over when two programmes can link in on related themes-subjects) or by using campus-based resources (library etc.) to facilitate student integration.

4. Inducting cooperating teachers into their role should be offered by MIE. Also, MIE could offer training to existing and potential mentors to increase the number and range of placements available and their quality.

5. Placement assessors need to have the required knowledge, competencies, and disposition relevant to observe in different settings. Where practicable attention should be paid to ensuring the placement assessors with the appropriate skills, experience and contacts go to the selected placement. Placement assessors should be carefully aligned with specific contexts i.e., that the individuals with the appropriate level of competency undertake specific placement assessments.

6. If the blended learning model of delivery continues, an enhanced orientation/induction programme is needed to help all new students settle into the programme so they appreciate how it works and what is expected of them as a learner.

7. Design and offer a suite of professional development sessions on critically reflective professional practice, to ensure MIE teachers remain informed by the latest research and so equipped to model and demonstrate both current and best practice.

8. Leaders, teachers and students to work together to reflect on what has been learned during the COVID 19 pandemic. A consultative process of reflection and feedback on the learnings from COVID-19 with both staff and students would support the programme into the future particularly with regard to pressure experienced due to

closures in placements, minimum numbers of students required for a placement class to be recognised for credits. A sample of students expressed disappointment with the behaviours modelled by some MIE staff in the delivery of the programme during C-19 and acknowledged it jarred with the skills they were expected to demonstrate in the FET setting.

Programme Design and delivery

9. Working within the regulations set out by Trinity, and recognising the professional autonomy of the programme board, we recommend the programme board consider some revisions to the sequencing and content of modules with the programme so they more accurately reflect the phases a new teacher goes through on their journey to becoming and being a teacher. The four proposed changes we are recommending are:

    i.   Historical and Philosophical Understandings is taught within Semester 1 of the full-time programme and Semester 1 and Year 1 of the part-time programmes.

    ii. Contemporary Issues in Education is taught in Semester 2 of the full-time programme and in Semester 1 of the second year of the part-time programme. See later note in bullet point iv regarding this module becoming subject specific.

    iii. Reflection should run as a thread throughout the programme. One way of doing this is to combine Developing a Reflective Stance in a Specialised Area with the Educational Placement modules. This might look as follows: Educational Placement and Reflection 1, a combined module of 10 credits, in Semester 1 of the full-time programme and Educational Placement and Reflection 2, another combined module of 10-credits, in Semester 2 of the full-time programme.

    iv. Semester 1 of the full-time programme and Year 1 of the part-time programme focuses on developing generic teaching knowledge, skills and behaviours and Semester 2 modules for the full-time programme and Year 2 modules of the part-time programme focus on the development of subject specialist pedagogy. This subject specialist focus would require changes to some of the module's titles, for example, Contemporary Issues in Education would become Contemporary Issues in the Teaching of a Specialist Subject, and some changes to content and assessment.

10. The course team reviews its assessment requirements for each module and where appropriate updates them so assessment briefs are written in plain and accessible language and the tasks are inclusive, diverse and model contemporary practice from the FE sector. For example, a series of blog posts might be an alternative to an extended piece of reflective writing. As part of this exercise, the course team should undertake a mapping exercise to show how the programme's learning outcomes and the Teaching Council's Code of Conduct standards are being met and assessed within individual modules, and to identify where over assessment might be taking place and address this.

Teaching and practice

11. FE is a diverse context inclusive of a wide range of learners with different needs, arguably the practice of supporting FE students' diverse needs, should become more visible and explicit within the PDEFE programme. For example, the development of students' literacy and numeracy, and mental health and well-being.

12. The teaching team to identify what constitutes effective practice when teaching online and ensure all team members adhere to this.

Educational Placement

13. A more sustainable and strategic approach to placement identification and consistent briefing for placement supervisors to meet students' expectations and needs. Student teachers should be enabled to undertake placements that offer awards from, at minimum, level 3 through to Level 6. Full-time FET provision tends to focus on level 3 upward.

14. Students should be actively directed to the placement framework and tool-kit prepared by MIE both at induction and prior to placements.

15. We suggest you look at other ways of observing such as Matt O'Leary's (he is at Birmingham City University) model of unseen observations and Murphy's (2016) co-teaching model, in which student teachers work with an experienced colleague (co-operative teacher), ideally from the same subject specialism as the student teacher, to co-plan, co-deliver and co-reflect on a session.

16. Ensure student teachers are observed by an experienced teacher from their subject specialism at least twice during the programme. This will support the student teacher develop their own subject specialist pedagogy.

17. Widen the breadth of students' teaching experience (both what they observe and what they teach). For example, they may undertake placements in an FE college and another FE setting. Alternatively, if undertaking a second placement in an external FE college (i.e. different to the one they may be employed within) is not possible, the student teacher should visit and observe another teacher teaching their subject (or a similar subject) in a different FE setting to learn about how context shapes pedagogical practices. The associated learning from this broadening of experience could be assessed within the Educational Placement and Reflection II module.

18. Lesson observation planning and feedback sheets should make explicit links to the Teaching Council's teaching standards so it is clear to what extent the student teacher is making progress towards them during an observation.

19. Student teachers should complete a personal development plan to show how their teaching is progressing against each of the Teaching Council's standards during the course. There might be four levels of judgement against each of the standards: Standard not met yet; Standard being met; Standard being exceeded; Exemplary practice against the standard.

Monitoring and feedback

20. Steps should be taken to enhance student feedback and student engagement within and across the programme – that the student voice becomes more evident at various levels and stages within the programmes. Feedback to students needs to be faster, detailed and consistent. We would recommend feedback is provided within three working weeks of submission, which is common practice in other HEIs, and that the team agree a common approach to feeding back to ensure consistency. Each module specification to be refreshed so it better reflects this fast-evolving and diverse sector. All modules should provide students with the following key information on i) a rationale and aims; ii) the learning outcomes being assessed; iii) the method of assessment and its indicative word count or where the word count equivalence for assessments such as the creation of a digital learning objects and the accompanying presentation for the Communication and Technology in Education module; iv) an electronic reading list that can be updated so it reflects the latest and current texts without the module being revised. Some universities use MyReading and this seems to work well. Other information that should be provided in a module specification or programme handbook is how they will learn within each module, for example, the number of hours for the face-to-face classes, the online classes and the amount of independent study, and the links between the module and the Teaching Council's professional standards.

21. The course team to identify how and where understanding and managing student behaviour fits into the programme – our view is that it might sit best within the combined Educational Placement and Reflection modules 1 and 2.

Students and staff experiences

22. The Team should consider how they can support students who are unable to attend class physically on campus, due to illness or other serious issues, so they can catch up with the learning they have missed.

Resources and facilities

23. This blended learning programme should support technical and academic opportunities as part of the student's induction. This includes: accessing IT support; and using online platforms; and engaging with stakeholders. We recommend that the students' induction should signpost, support, discuss and access the relevant TEL academic sessions and communication.

24. Further CPD is required to support the teaching and assessing team's delivery of the programme.