



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION COURSES FOR PRIMARY TEACHERS 2026

CAO COMPETITION

1. Application for admission to a Bachelor of Education Programme

Applications are being sought for admission to a four-year full-time course leading to a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree awarded by the following Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for primary teachers:

- Marino Institute of Education, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9
- Mary Immaculate College, South Circular Road, Limerick
- DCU Institute of Education, DCU St Patrick's Campus, Drumcondra, Dublin 9
- Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, Maynooth University.

(Contact details for the Higher Education Institutions are set out at *Appendix 1*).

Persons who successfully complete the course may be registered by the Teaching Council under Route 1: Primary. Link to Website: <https://www.teachingcouncil.ie>

Applications are made through the Central Applications Office (CAO). Applicants must be at least 16 years of age by 15 January of the year in which the application is made **(15 January 2026 for entry in autumn 2026)**.

2. Minimum Grades required in essential subjects - General Entry Route to the primary B. Ed programme.

(a) Minimum grades required in essential subjects in the Leaving Certificate.

Subject	Irish	Mathematics	English
Minimum Grade ¹	H4	H7 or O4	H7 or O4
% Mark	60%< 70%	30%<40% 60%<70%	30%<40% or 60%<70%

H – Higher Level

O – Ordinary Level

(b) General grades required in the Leaving Certificate.

In addition to meeting the minimum grades required in Irish, English and Mathematics, students must have achieved the following grades across their overall results.

- Grade H5 (50%<60%) on a Higher-Level paper in not less than three subjects.
- Grade O6 (40%<50% Ordinary Level) or H7 (30%<40% Higher Level) in three other subjects in accordance with the Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools.

The best six subjects in a single sitting of the Leaving Certificate Examination will be counted for points purposes in accordance with CAO procedures. While the minimum grades in the subjects Irish, English and Mathematics specified above need not be obtained at the same sitting of the Leaving Certificate examination, applicants should note the requirement to achieve a minimum of Grade H5 on three Higher Level papers and Grade O6/H7 in three other subjects in a single sitting of the Leaving Certificate.

The grades and % marks in the 1992-2016 grading scheme and the new 2017 scheme are set out at Appendix 3.

GCSE and GCE, AS Level and A Level Examinations – the minimum requirements are set out in Appendix 2.

¹ See Appendix 3 for equivalent grades in pre-2017 marking scheme.

(c) Additional Requirements for the Gaeltacht Entry Route to primary B. Ed programme.

Please note that applicants wishing to apply for the **Gaeltacht Entry route to the primary B.Ed (English Medium)** must meet the two criteria listed below as outlined in Circular 34/2021 Updated Entry Criteria for the Gaeltacht Entry Route to the (English Medium) Primary Bachelor of Education.

- (a) Be resident in a Gaeltacht Language Planning area **and**
- (b) Must obtain at least a H3 in Leaving Certificate Irish

Apart from the requirement to meet both criteria listed above, applicants must also meet all the other requirements for entry to the Primary B.Ed. and any particular matriculation requirements for the HEI they are applying to.

Up to ten per cent of places on the Bachelor of Education programme may be reserved for applicants from the Gaeltacht.

3. CAO Selection Procedure

Grades obtained in the Leaving Certificate or GCE Examinations will be converted in accordance with the points scale of the appropriate Higher Education Institution. Where two or more applicants obtain the same points total, if necessary, the CAO will apply the random selection procedure.

Successful applicants will be notified by the CAO, in accordance with its normal procedures. Initial offers of places will be included in the CAO "first round" offers. Depending on the response, further offers may be made in subsequent rounds.

Successful applicants who accept places are required to enter the Higher Education Institutions in autumn (actual dates available from the individual Institutions). In special circumstances, at the discretion of the Institution authorities, the date of entry may be deferred for a limited period.

4. Additional Information

1. Proficiency in spoken Irish:

1.1. Tréimhse Foghlama sa Ghaeltacht (Gaeltacht Learning Period): All students who gain entry to the B. Ed programme are required to complete two placements in the Gaeltacht. Each placement will be of two weeks' duration. It should be noted that this is a **compulsory** part of the programme. A grant is payable by the

Department of Education and Youth for students on State-funded primary Initial Teacher Education programmes to cover the cost of the placements.

1.2. Oral Irish Test: In addition, applicants should note that students will be required to undergo an oral Irish test at the end of their first year of initial teacher education and must pass this test in order to continue to the second year of the course. Students who fail this oral Irish test may, at the discretion of the Institution, be allowed to repeat the test.

2. Student Grants:

SUSI (Student Universal Support Ireland) is Ireland's single national awarding authority for all higher and further education grants. Students are advised to submit a fully completed online grant application to SUSI so that their eligibility for grant assistance can be assessed. It is anticipated that the 2026/27 Scheme will open for applications in spring 2026. Further information regarding the Student Grant Scheme is available on the SUSI website at www.susi.ie.

3. Fitness to Practise:

3.1. Garda Vetting: Before a Higher Education Institution can complete a student registration, the Higher Education Institution requires that all incoming teacher education students undergo a process of Garda vetting in order to establish whether they have any convictions or criminal charges pending. Where this process confirms the existence of such, the matter is referred to a Vetting Committee within the Higher Education Institution which decides whether the student can continue with his/her programme of study.

3.2. Medical Requirements and Disabilities: Some Higher Education Institutions require that all incoming teacher education students complete a medical information form, indicating whether they have any significant ongoing illnesses or disabilities which might adversely impact their capacity to meet the requirements of the course, including School Placement. Entrants who declare significant health conditions, disabilities or psychological conditions will be assessed on an individual basis to evaluate whether, with reasonable accommodations, they would have the ability to undertake the demands of the programme. Individuals will not be excluded on the grounds that they have a particular condition or disability if it is deemed likely that it would be possible for that person to fulfil the requirements of the course with reasonable accommodation(s). The Institutions will advise students as to the procedure to be followed in this regard.

4. Marino Institute of Education - Bachelor in Education through the Medium of Irish (Primary Teaching)

The Bachelor of Education through the Medium of Irish (Primary Teaching) course at Marino Institute of Education is a 4-year initial teacher education programme through the medium of Irish. This course forms part of the implementation of the Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022.

Applications are invited from the above course through the CAO (CAO course codes: CM003/CM004). The minimum entry requirements for this course include a H3 in Leaving Certificate Irish. In addition to the minimum entry requirements, candidates must also achieve 50% or higher in the Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge (TEG) Level B1 examination. Application form available in January 2026 (see: www.teg.ie/oid). Full details regarding this course are available online at www.mie.ie/oid.

Appendix 1

Higher Education Institutions – Contact Details

Marino Institute of Education

Griffith Avenue

Dublin 9

Telephone: (01) 805 7742

Email: admissions@mie.ie

Website: www.mie.ie

**Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education
Maynooth University**

Maynooth

Co Kildare

Telephone: (01) 4747400

Email: froebel.department@mu.ie

Website: www.maynoothuniversity.ie/froebel-department-primary-and-early-childhood-education.

Mary Immaculate College

South Circular Road

Limerick

Telephone: (061) 204348 / 205137

Email: admissions@mic.ul.ie

Website: www.mic.ul.ie

DCU Institute of Education

DCU St. Patrick's Campus,

Drumcondra,

Dublin 9.

Telephone: (01) 7009161

Email: ioe@dcu.ie

Website: www.dcu.ie

Appendix 2

Minimum Qualifications in GCSE and GCE AS and A Level Examinations for admission to the Bachelor of Education Degree Course

General

- Six subjects must be presented, at least three subjects at GCE A Level and the remaining subjects at GCE AS or GCSE level. The six subjects must include Irish, English and Mathematics.
- A subject may be counted from only one of the examinations, GCSE, GCE AS Level or GCE A Level.
- Only subjects taken at one sitting of a particular examination, GCSE, GCE AS Level or GCE A Level, will be accepted. Examinations taken in the same academic year are regarded as the same sitting.

Specific Requirements in Irish, English & Mathematics

- Grade C at GCE A level in at least three subjects, including Irish.
- Grade C at GCSE Level in both English and English Literature, or Grade B at GCSE Level in either English or English Literature.
- Grade D at GCSE Level in Additional Mathematics or Grade C at GCSE Level in Mathematics.
- Grade C in one other subject at GCSE level.

Applicants must satisfy the matriculation requirements of the University to which the Higher Education Institution is affiliated.

Appendix 3

Leaving Cert Grading Schemes (1992-2016 Scheme and New Scheme 2017)

1992 – 2016 Scheme	% Awarded	New Scheme 2017 onwards	% Awarded
A1	90-100	H1 / O1	90-100
A2	85<90	H2 / O2	80<90
B1	80<85		
B2	75<80	H3 / O3	70<80
B3	70<75		
C1	65<70	H4 / O4	60<70
C2	60<65		
C3	55<60	H5 / O5	50<60
D1	50<55		
D2	45<50	H6 / O6	40<50
D3	40<45		
E	25<40	H7 / O7	30<40
F	10<25	H8 / O8	0<30