

Master in Education Studies

Early Childhood Education



Programme Handbook

2025-2026



*An Associated College of
Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin*

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A Note on this Handbook

This handbook applies to all students taking the Masters in Education Studies. It provides a guide to what is expected of you on this programme, and the academic and personal support available to you. Please retain for future reference.

The information provided in this handbook is accurate at the time of preparation. Any necessary revisions will be notified to students via Moodle and/or email.

Introduction to Marino Institute of Education

Guiding Principles

Marino Institute of Education is a centre for teaching, learning and research in education under the co-trusteeship of the Irish Christian Brothers and Trinity College Dublin. The work of the Institute is under pinned by seven guiding principles. They are to:

- Be ecumenical and respectful of people of other faiths.
- Provide a strong element of teacher education.
- Be supportive of the mission of Catholic education by assisting the processes to articulate the ethos of Catholic education and by proposing models to implement it.
- Provide education programmes to encourage and empower the disadvantaged and the poor.
- Build a community of learning which is person-centred, respectful of differences and accessible to people who are disadvantaged.
- Assist parents to fulfil the responsibilities of their role as educators.
- Respect all truth seekers and defend their right to pursue new knowledge wherever it may lead.

General Information about Marino Institute of Education

Marino Institute of Education (MIE) is a teaching, learning and research community committed to promoting inclusion in education. We have a long and proud involvement with education, specifically initial teacher education (ITE).

Our association with Trinity College Dublin began in 1976, when the first intake of lay students registered for the Bachelor in Education (B.Ed.) course. In July 2011, this relationship was further strengthened with the formalisation of an agreement, which places MIE under the joint trusteeship of the Congregation of Christian Brothers Province and Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin.

In the last decade, the academic mission and scope of MIE's activity has been re-envisioned to encompass a deeper understanding of education in and beyond the classroom, to incorporate the continuum of teacher education and the education of specialist education practitioners at early years, primary and further education levels. This is allied with a commitment to education studies encompassing non-traditional education settings and the wider education environment in a pluralist context.

Message from the President of Marino Institute of Education

A Mhac léinn, 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 bheas 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 1300 students registered on our courses, which include:

Undergraduate Programmes:

- Bachelor in Science (Early Childhood Education).
- Bachelor in Education (Primary Teaching).
- Bachelor in Science (Education Studies).
- Baitsiléir san Oideachas Trí Mheán na Gaeilge (Bunmhúinteoireacht).
- Trinity International Foundation Programme.

Postgraduate Programmes

- Master in Education Studies (Primary Mathematics Education).
- Master in Education Studies (Intercultural Learning and Leadership).
- Master in Education Studies (Early Childhood Education).
- Master in Education Studies (Inquiry-Based Learning).
- Master in Education Studies (Visual Arts).
- Master in Education Studies (Christian School Leadership).
- Master in Education Studies (Further Education)
- Professional Master of Education (Primary).
- Máistreacht Ghairmiúil san Oideachas (Conair trí Mheán na Gaeilge)
- Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education).

We are committed to educating leaders for the 21st 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.

As a teaching institution, we have always prioritised education and its associated values. The recent pandemic re-enforced for us all the importance of the physical space of schooling, personal interaction and ultimately it has taught us the value of educational relationships where students and staff form a binding community albeit real or virtual, where empathy, communication and connectivity enable friendships to grow and students to flourish. We also renewed the importance of actively engaging with our peers, friends, families and communities in the arts, sports, social activities and all of the aspects of life that enrich us holistically. In this context, I congratulate you for selecting to undertake your studies here at Marino Institute of Education. Our core values of care, community, and commitment to excellence will ensure that you will be in face-to-face lectures and on campus as often as possible, so that you and your fellow classmates will be in a position to not just learn together but to actively collaborate, and connect with staff and other students. Rest assured that we also have the technological expertise and ‘know-how’ to pivot to online learning should another world event demand it so that you can continue your studies seamlessly and that we are constantly striving to enhance the digital services that we provide. Whilst Marino Institute of Education’s roots are steeped in history, our ambition is to prepare our students for changes and challenges the future holds.

We also hope that you enjoy the many amenities that our campus has to offer. Situated on a parkland site close to the city centre with beautiful grounds and several playing fields, MIE has several computer labs, a specifically designed early childhood education room, a designated art room, a modern library, a sports hall and gym, an excellent canteen and a Costa Coffee outlet to cater for all tastes.

Our lecturers are very approachable and are dedicated to providing 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 the educational journey you are about to embark on. Our counselling and chaplaincy services are also on hand to assist you through some of the unique personal challenges that you may encounter on your learning path.

We are with you every step of the way.

Ní neart go cur le chéile

Teresa O'Doherty

Professor Teresa O'Doherty

President

Staff Contact List*

Name	Role	Email	Phone	Office
Dr Seán Delaney	Registrar & Vice President of Academic Affairs	Sean.delaney@mie.ie	805 7722	M115
Dr Craig Skerritt	MES Programme Coordinator	Craig.skerritt@mie.ie		M108
Dr Clara Maria Fiorentini	MES Early Childhood Course Leader	Clara.fiorentini@mie.ie	853 5172	M216
Registrar's Office		registrars@mie.ie		M105/M106
Education Office		educationoffice@mie.ie		M13
IT and eLearning Department		Log on to www.mie.ie/helpdesk to log your query		M100
Library		librarydesk@mie.ie	805 7753	St Patrick's Building
Reception			805 7700	St Mary's Building

*For a full list of individual staff contact details please go to [Staff Directory - Marino Institute of Education \(mie.ie\)](#)

Communicating with staff members & fellow students

One of Marino Institute of Education's guiding principles is to build a community of learning which is person centred, respectful of individual differences and accessible to people who are disadvantaged. MIE expects students to have dignity and respect towards all people they engage with and interact with in the course of their studies in MIE. Students have a responsibility to promote an environment in which diversity and respect is practised, and to set standards of behaviour which are acceptable.

Behaviours such as the following will not be tolerated: any kind of verbal abuse/insults and name calling; demeaning remarks; persistent criticism; dissemination of malicious rumours, gossip or innuendo; written insults by electronic messaging; aggressive behaviour or physical intimidation; shouting in public and/or in private. The [MIE Dignity and Respect Policy \(Students\)](#) may be invoked in response to such behaviours. Where bullying, harassment or sexual harassment have been identified, the MIE's Disciplinary Procedure may be invoked, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Academic Support Services

Library Services

Located in St. Patrick's building, MIE Library supports teaching, learning and research at MIE with a range of services and resources. These include interlibrary loan, digital extract, reading list services, and a loanable 'library of things' offering equipment and teaching materials. The collection includes nearly 30,000 physical items including reference materials, short- and long-loan academic texts, adult fiction, and teaching resources. These are complemented by digital access to over 7 14,000+ eBooks and 11,000+ eJournal titles. Facilities include; group study room, reading room, PC area and quiet reading nook. Library staff offer expert support in developing research skills and using scholarly resources. For more information and for opening hours please see the [library website](#) Learning Tools

MIE uses a variety of online tools to deliver asynchronous and synchronous learning content to students. MIE utilises the following learning tools that are based on research in eLearning on instructional design principles, where a pedagogy first approach to technology integration is preferred in MIE

Moodle is MIE's learning management system (LMS). All programme learning content will be made available to students via Moodle and this platform is used to host online classes, manage assignments, provide learner supports and create interactive content.

MIE also uses the video conferencing platforms integrated into the Institutional VLE to support online classes. Panopto is MIE's video content management software. All lectures that are recorded will be made available to students via the Panopto Moodle plugin. Panopto's recording functionality will also enable students to submit video presentations for assignments.

MIE utilises Turn-it-in, a plagiarism checking and prevention service of essay-based assignments.

All students in MIE are provided with a free Office 365 licence for the duration of their studies. Office 365 allow access to online versions of Microsoft suite applications such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint for content creation, Outlook for email, OneDrive for cloud document storage

and Teams for collaboration. Office 365 licence holders may sign into Office on any device or download Office to a device for offline access.

All students also have access to an online virtual induction before they can log into any of MIE's IT & eLearning systems.

Education Office

The Education Office is located in St Mary's building and is a central hub offering a number of services to students, including book sales and assignment submissions/collections. We also work closely with the Registrar's Office to monitor student absences and ensure that attendance records are up to date.

Within the Education Office are the placement administrators who monitor all of the B.Ed, B.Oid, PME, ECE, PDEFE and Ed Studies placement arrangements. Also located in the office are dedicated administrators who offer support to our international students.

We provide varied support to the wider staff throughout the year and therefore Education Office staff can often be found helping out at events, covering the main reception desk or providing extra assistance in classrooms.

The office is open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 5.00pm.

Student Support Services

For all student services, see https://www.mie.ie/en/student_life/student_support_services/

Student Medical Services


Fairview Medical Centre offers a health service for all MIE-registered students. The Medical Centre has a team of doctors and nurses on duty. Services available include illness review & fitness to attend college, phlebotomy, injections, clinical dressings, well woman services, asthma services, etc. Colds and flu are both viruses and do not generally need a doctor's visit. Each student can avail of three free visits for each academic year under this arrangement. Additional visits are possible at a reduced fee. There is a local pharmacy across the road from the Institute, on Philipsburgh Avenue, for over-the-counter remedies. Fairview Medical Centre is a 15-minute walk from the College and is open from 9.00am -5.00pm on weekdays. There is an emergency service on Saturday mornings. The centre's website is <https://fairviewmedicalcentre.com/>

Student Counselling Service

The Student Counselling Service is free, confidential, and open to all registered MIE students. You can talk to a counsellor about anything that's on your mind—whether it's personal, academic, or something else that's affecting you.

Where to Find Us

The Student Counselling Service is based in Rooms 36, 41 & 42 on the top floor of the St Patrick's Building (same building as the library).

 Don't forget your student ID to access the building.

How to Make an Appointment


You can book your first appointment online here:


 <https://scs.mie.ie/firstappointment>

Or drop by during our Drop-In Hour, Monday to Friday, 12:30pm–1:00pm (term time).

No need to book—just show up. It's first come, first served.

Appointment Times

 Counselling appointments run Monday to Friday, 09:30am – 5:00pm

 On Tuesdays during term time, we're open until 6:00pm for students who need a later slot.


Getting in Touch

 **Email:** marinocounselling@mie.ie

If something is urgent, include that in your message and we'll respond as soon as we can.

Support Outside Counselling

If you need support outside regular counselling hours, there are other options:

 **Crisis Text Line 50808** – Free, 24/7 support by text. Just text MIE to 50808 to connect with a trained volunteer.

 **TalkCampus** – A 24/7 global peer support platform available in multiple languages.

You can talk anonymously with other students around the world about whatever you're going through—day or night.

 It's free for MIE students and professionally moderated to keep the space safe.

Sign up here: <https://www.talkcampus.com/sign-up>

Disability Services

Since 2012, MIE has partnered with Trinity College Dublin's Disability Service to support students with disabilities. We offer tailored support based on individual needs, including meetings with a Disability Officer and referrals to Assistive Technology (AT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) services in both MIE and Trinity.

If you have a disability that may impact your college experience, we encourage you to register with the MIE Disability Service. Visit our Disability Service Moodle page or email access@mie.ie to learn more.

Reasonable Accommodations

MIE is committed to providing equal access to student life for all, in line with the Disability Act 2005, Equal Status Acts 2000 (as amended), and the Universities Act 1997.

We welcome applications from students with disabilities and support them through a range of reasonable accommodations that are designed to remove barriers and help every student reach their full potential as future educators.

Key supports include:

- Needs assessments on entry
- Assistive technology training
- Academic and pre-placement support
- Liaison with lecturers for accessible materials
- Extended library loans

To access support, students must register with the Disability Service and upload evidence of their disability via their MAESTRO student portal. Accommodations are arranged only after full registration is complete.

For more information, contact Simon Yeates, Access Officer at access@mie.ie or by phone on 01 805 7752

Chaplaincy

MIE Chaplaincy Service has a full time Chaplain who works in close co-operation with other student support services on the College Campus. It offers pastoral and spiritual support to students and staff of all faiths and none in the MIE community.

The Chaplaincy Service offers support through a number of initiatives including:

- Pastoral care and wellbeing initiatives.
- Spiritual support.
- Regular creative rituals and Liturgies.
- Inter-faith initiatives.
- Bereavement support.
- Outreach projects – social justice and volunteering.
- Pilgrimages and immersion projects.
- Care of the Earth – supporting the sustainability vision of MIE.

The full time Chaplain is located in Room 109A and can be contacted at chaplaincy@mie.ie

Dr Marie Whelton may also be contacted especially at times of bereavement at (01) 8535158 or at marie.whelton@mie.ie.

Student Writing

MIE provides support for students developing study skills through the TCD Counselling service. This is complemented by specific writing workshops, which are available to all students based on demand. For further information email writingworkshop@mie.ie.

Careers Advisory Service

The aim of the Careers Service's is to support, guide and empower MIE students to develop the skills, competencies, attitudes, and self-belief to engage successfully with the world of work and to make informed career decisions. The Careers Service works alongside academic staff to encourage students to become confident and competent learners and take charge of their own professional development.

You can use the Careers service all throughout your studies. We [can](#) support you with exploring your careers options as well as making applications for further study or employment.

Where to find us

The Careers Advisor is based in Room P9 St Patrick's Building (same building as the library, you will need your student ID to access the building)

How to make an appointment

The service is available on Thursdays. You can book your appointment online [here](#).

There is also a drop-in time for quick queries /CV checks Thursdays 1-2pm (term time).

Getting in touch

 **Email:** careersadvisor@mie.ie

MIE Policies

For a review of all MIE academic policies and procedures related to the MES programmes and student progression, please consult the following link:

https://www.mie.ie/en/about_us/quality_assurance/policies_and_procedures/academic/

This page has links to many aspects of student life in MIE. It is the place to go to find out about policies on plagiarism and academic integrity, attendance, appeals, placement and so much more.

MES Calendar 2025- 26

Orientation: 6 September 2025

Year 1 students

Module 1: week beginning 15th September 2025

Module 2: week beginning Monday 3rd November 2025

Module 3: week beginning Monday 5th January 2026

Module 4: week beginning Monday 23rd February

MES Programme 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.

	ECTS Credits
Year 1	
Module 1	15
Module 2	15
Module 3	15
Module 4	15
Year 2	
Dissertation Module	30
Total ECTS	90

Assessment and Marking Procedures

1. 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.
2. Assignments for individual modules will be graded as distinction, pass or fail. The pass mark for each module will be **50%**.
3. The pass level for the overall course will be set at **50%**.

4. In order to complete the course, students must pass each module of the programme including the dissertation module.
5. 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).
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Following the second year of study, where an overall degree result is on a passing, borderline mark (i.e. 59, or 69), for any of the following degrees
 - Master in Education Studies (Intercultural Learning and Leadership)
 - Master in Education Studies (Visual Arts)
 - Master in Education Studies (Early Childhood Education)
 - Master in Education Studies (Inquiry-Based Learning)
 - Master in Education Studies (Primary Maths Education)
 - Master in Education Studies (Christian School Leadership)
 - Master in Education Studies (Further Education)

the following process will be applied in determining whether the mark should remain as a borderline or whether it should be raised to the next higher grade (i.e. Pass II.1 or Distinction).

If the student has the next higher-grade band in the dissertation, the overall degree borderline grade (i.e. 59 or 69) will be raised to 60 (II.1) or 70 First (I).

9. 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.

Guideline Criteria for Marking Year One Assessments

Marking Criteria: MES Assignments

Distinction: 70%+

<p>Structure / Organisation (organisation and structure of the text; logic)</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Analysis (Coherence of argument; reflection, distillation, criticality. Range and understanding of sources)</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Application (perceptive appraisal of implications of theory in practice)</p>	<p>Demonstrates excellent ability to apply learning to their own practice. Excellent problem-solving skills are demonstrated with very strong application to practice and the ability to engage in critical reflection.</p>
<p>Presentation (length, use of presentation conventions, referencing, spelling, grammar, language)</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>OVERALL</p>	<p>Work of outstanding quality, showing perceptive and critical insight.</p>

Pass: 50% - 69%

<p>Structure / Organisation (organisation and structure of the text; logic)</p>	<p>Planning and structure are clear. Text and argument structured in a sustained way; all major structural elements present.</p>
<p>Analysis (Coherence of argument; reflection, distillation, criticality. Range and understanding of sources)</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Application (perceptive appraisal of implications of theory in practice)</p>	<p>Demonstrates competent ability to apply learning to their own practice. Good problem solving skills are demonstrated with good application to practice and evidences some ability to engage in critical reflection.</p>
<p>Presentation (length, use of presentation conventions, referencing, spelling, grammar, language)</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>OVERALL</p>	<p>Work of good quality, showing knowledge and understanding.</p>

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 their 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.

External Examiners

Course	External Examiner	Affiliation
MES – Early Childhood Education	Professor Jennifer Pope	Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

Academic Progression

General Information

1. All students register on the MES programme.
2. Students must successfully pass all the requirements of their first year in order to progress to the second year of the Master's programme.
3. 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 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 course work for the taught component of the programme (four modules) submitted by July 31st of the year following entry to the programme and must have achieved at least a 'pass' (50%) in each module.
4. 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. They will be "off books" during the intervening year.

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. When exiting the course, the Court of Examiners may at its discretion round up a student's degree mark i.e. 69% to a First Honours.

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 their 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 to the programme will be considered by the course committee, taking into account course quotas, the calibre of the candidate and the supervisory capacity for research dissertations.

Exit award with Distinction

Students who have achieved an average of at least 70% of the available marks in all 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.

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 applies are as follows:

- Ten percent (10%) of the marks awarded will be deducted from work that is submitted up to one week after the submission due date.
- Twenty percent (20%) of the marks awarded will be deducted from work 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 a non-submission (NS).

With advanced notice and good reason, due dates may be extended by the lecturer concerned at their discretion in consultation with the particular student and the course leader (and Registrar, if required), if 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 course leader). In cases where an extension has been granted, the revised date becomes the due date for submitting the assignment.

Word Count

If an assignment exceeds the prescribed word count by more than 10%, marks will be deducted. Where the word limit is expressed as a range (e.g. 2000-2500), the penalty will be applied if the upper limit has been exceeded by 10% or more. The same deduction applies if an assignment is more than 10% under the minimum prescribed word count. The number of marks deducted is determined by the lecturer and this should be clearly stated in the assessment brief provided to the student.

Study Requirements

Use of Moodle

As stated previously, 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 MIE search engines and that course assignments and research dissertation 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.

Academic Integrity

Please read the following policy that has been developed in relation to Academic Integrity. This should be read in conjunction with the MIE Academic Integrity Procedure, which is available on the MIE website. [A-Z List - Marino Institute of Education](#)

Context

Students refer to the work of other people when drafting assignments, writing essays, completing projects, creating performances and answering examination questions. Academic work and reports that influence our thinking and writing are acknowledged formally using scholarly conventions, such as those developed by the American Psychological Association (APA). In addition, many of us draw on informal sources to assist us in our work. This might be a friend who discusses ideas with us, a family member who proofreads our work, a neighbour who advises on the layout of our work, a librarian who helps us find a difficult-to-find source or a writing centre where we get advice about scholarly writing. In addition to supportive people, some tools can also help us to develop aspects of our work from organising our ideas, to translating text, to suggesting points of relevance, to paraphrasing content. When academic work is submitted for a module assessment, students take responsibility for the quality of their work regardless of any tools used. Such tools include artificial intelligences, World Wide Web interfaces, and software. In assessments where students are permitted to use all available supports and tools, they will not be penalised for doing so, provided they are explicit about acknowledging how such supports and tools were deployed in their work and provided they work within the parameters of the set assessment. Given the range of supports that can be used, and to highlight their own contribution, students are required to acknowledge the full range and extent of formal and informal supports they draw on when doing scholarly work. Students should make clear their individual contribution to their work by stating what tools they used and how they used them for a specific piece of work. Doing this gives credit to those who help, and it contributes to the integrity of academic work.

Definition

Academic integrity has been defined as: “the commitment to, and demonstration of, honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting” (Writing Center, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill) and “the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner”

(Penn State University). One of MIE’s guiding principles is to respect all truth seekers and defend their right to pursue new knowledge wherever it may lead. Academic integrity is critical to the reputation of higher education, and to the recognition of a graduate’s academic learning and resulting qualifications” (QQI, 2021). This is particularly strong in a higher education institution like Marino, where the key purpose is to educate educators. During their time in Marino Institute of Education, students should be supported in finding their own voice and become confident in expressing it in multiple genres, while building on and acknowledging the work of others in an ethical manner.

Academic integrity is a central pillar of research ethics and as such these principles complement other work done on ethics in MIE such as MERC (Marino Ethics in Research Committee) and SERC (Student Ethics in Research Committee). 2.

Academic Integrity can be breached in a number of ways. These include

- a) Copying and pasting material from sources without acknowledgement.
- b) Using paraphrasing software without acknowledgement
- c) Engaging the services of an essay mill for contract cheating purposes.
- d) Impersonation or copying in an examination.
- e) Fabricating or falsifying data.
- f) Submitting work of another party (e.g. essay mill, large language model, person) as one’s own without acknowledgement.
- g) Bribery.

Few, if any, students deliberately set out to breach academic integrity. However, threats to academic integrity may occur for reasons related to knowledge, timing and format of an assessment, opportunity, time, and other factors. Although not an exhaustive list, such threats may include:

- a) Students not having skills to summarise, evaluate and write in an academic mode.
- b) Lack of clarity on what academic integrity is.
- c) Students not understanding self-plagiarism.
- d) Unclear guidelines for groupwork.
- e) Lack of knowledge of scholarly conventions.
- f) Overassessment and lack of feedback.

- g) Lack of transparency on assessment criteria.
- h) Disproportionate focus on assessment result over learning process.
- i) Predictable assessments.
- j) Availability of ways to breach academic integrity.
- k) Perception that a breach will not be detected.
- l) Student workload.
- m) Lecturer workload.
- n) Procrastination with assignments
- o) Part-time employment.
- p) Challenge of completing academic work with a learning disability.
- q) Challenge of completing academic work when speaking English or Irish as an additional language.

Despite the range of potential threats to academic integrity, the Institute, lecturers and students may mitigate many of the threats through efforts such as the following, (although not an exhaustive list)

- a) Training for staff and students.
- b) Creating assignments that explicitly design artificial intelligence in or out of assessments.
- c) Students participating in an academic writing programme.
- d) Engaging in relevant online and/or video tutorials and quizzes.
- e) Focus by module leaders on writing quality.
- f) Visible procedures for monitoring breaches of academic integrity.
- g) Encouraging collegiality, cooperation and independent thinking among students.
- h) Academic Writer Software (for training on using scholarly conventions of the American Psychological Association Publications Manual).
- i) Offering feedback clinics where individual or collective feedback on assessed work is offered to students.
- j) Providing clear assessment rubrics.
- k) Managing submission dates for assessed work.
- l) Including some continuous assessment.

- m) Students volunteering for external work commitments keeping assessment due dates in mind.
- n) Incorporating principles of Universal Design for Learning.
- o) Setting English language requirements that support student success.

MIE is embedding academic integrity in the curriculum, especially for undergraduate students. The Institute is mindful that the workplace graduates will be entering is one in which mobile technologies and artificial intelligence are ubiquitous, and students will need to be equipped to think critically and to know how to use such developments in ways that are beneficial to their future colleagues, students and the wider community.

Students are expected to uphold academic integrity in their work at all times.

Staff are expected to uphold academic integrity in their own work and to promote it in students' work at all times.

The Institute aims to prevent breaches of academic integrity. This is done in the following ways

- a) Educate students on what constitutes academic integrity
- b) Communicate the penalties associated with breaches of academic integrity
- c) Explain the difference between group work and plagiarism
- d) Discuss with students how to acknowledge work that draws on the work of others (or their own previous work).

The Institute monitors potential breaches of, or threats to, academic integrity. Month the ways this is done are:

- a) Lecturers monitor external study sites and ask for copyright materials to be removed.
- b) The Institute reserves the right to invite students to undertake a viva voce assessment at any time, either randomly or where suspicion of a breach of academic integrity exists.
- c) Students are asked to cite all supports used in creating work submitted of assessment purposes.
- d) Requiring work to be submitted through plagiarism-detecting software

A separate procedure has been created for responding to possible breaches of academic integrity. This can be access via this link <https://www.mie.ie/media/s1gbqqr/academic-integrity-procedure-ay-25-26.pdf>

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	Due Date (week commencing)
Module 1	Week of Monday 3 rd November 2025
Module 2	Week of Monday 5 th January 2026 (presentations or equivalent)
Module 3	Week of Monday 23 rd February 2026
Module 4	Week of Monday 27 th April 2026

MES (Early Childhood Education)

Programme Content, Year 1

Course Leader Information

MES Course Leader	Dr Clara Maria Fiorentini
Email	Clara.fiorentini@mie.ie
Office	St Mary's Room 216
Telephone	01 8535165 018535172

Introduction

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.

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 practices 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.

MES (Early Childhood Education) Year 1 Module Information

Module 1 Name:	Early Childhood Education: Policy and Practice			
Module Code:	EC9101	ECTS:15	Module Type	Core
Module Description				
Rationale				
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Research indicates that a play-based approach to teaching and learning develops self-regulation (Barnett, Jung, Yarosz, Thomas, Hornbeck, Stechuk & Burns, 2008¹). 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, 2007).²The self-regulated learner has a</p>				

¹ 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.

² Roskos, K. & Christie, J. (2007). *Play and literacy in early childhood: research from multiple perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

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.

Link to full module:	https://mie.learnonline.ie/course/view.php?id=2416
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Module 2 Name:	Psychology of Early Childhood Education			
Module Code:	EC9102	ECTS:15	Module Type	Core
Module Description				
<p>Recent years have seen calls for a greater focus in education on the development of <i>practical</i> competencies (Ball and Forzani 2009³; Grossman 2011⁴; Kazemi, Franke and Lampert 2009⁵; Lampert and Graziani 2009⁶; Windschitl, Thompson and Braaten 2011⁷), with the “foundation” modules such as Psychology sometimes even deemed “nonessential” (Walsh and Jacobs 2007⁸). However, some writers such as Zeichner (2012), ⁹Ryan and O’Toole</p>				

³ 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.

⁴ 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>

⁵ 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

⁶ Lampert, M and Graziani, F. (2009). Instructional activities as a tool for teachers’ and educators’ learning. *Elementary School Journal* 109, 491-509.

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

⁸ Walsh, K. and Jacobs, S. (2007). *Alternative certification, K isn't alternative*. Vol. 44. Dayton Ohio: Thomas B. Fordham Institute.

⁹ Zeichner, K. M. (2012). The turn once again toward practice-based teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education* 63, 5, 376-382.

(2013)¹⁰ and Kelly (2009; 112¹¹) 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, 17)¹² 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 of 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, 23¹³):

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 2010¹⁴) which are in turn internalised by children, forming the basis of their academic self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura 1994).¹⁵ As Bourdieu and Thompson (1991, 52¹⁶) put it, education “instead of telling the child

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ Kelly, A. V. (2009) The curriculum: Theory and practice. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Limited.

¹² 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

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

¹⁶ Bourdieu, P. and Thompson, J. B. (Eds.) (1991). Language and symbolic power. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

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; 2002¹⁷) 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 (1996¹⁸) 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.

Link to full module:	https://mie.learnonline.ie/course/view.php?id=2415
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Module 3 Name:	Language and Literacy in the Early Years			
Module Code:	EC9103	ECTS:15	Module Type	Core
Module Description				
Rationale				
<p>When it comes to literacy and language, those who work with very young children have the unique opportunity to get it right, and get it right from the start (French, 2013; Hayes, 2011). Literacy and language development in the early years are critical for eventual success in school and beyond. During these formative early years, children develop the foundation for communication, thinking and learning. It is imperative that educators working with the Primary Language Curriculum (2019) and the Aistear Framework (2024) would be conversant</p>				

¹⁷ Lortie, D. C. (1975 / 2002). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

¹⁸ 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

with the latest research and theory behind language and literacy (i.e. The Science of Reading). **Philosophy**

Literacy, like language, is a skill for living. This module will give students an opportunity to consider and critically examine what research and evidence has demonstrated about how the development of language and literacy across early childhood and the role of the adult in this fundamental journey. 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.

Link to full module:	https://mie.learnonline.ie/course/view.php?id=2413
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Module 4 Name:	Inquiry-Based Learning			
Module Code:	EC9104	ECTS: 15	Module Type	Core

Module Description

Module 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.

Link to full module:	https://mie.learnonline.ie/course/view.php?id=2414
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MES Year Two

Dissertation Module

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

The module aims are as follows:

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- 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

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.

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- 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 3,000 words and will be assessed by the Proposal Assessment Committee on a Pass / Fail basis.

Dissertation

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 semester 1 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 semester 1. 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. Students must also submit a MERC application with their research proposal.

Assessment of Research Proposals

On submission of research proposals and MERC application form in semester 1, 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. It is essential that ethical issues are given due consideration in students' research.

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 practice-based research dissertation of 20,000 words, offering the student the opportunity to work in their 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 coordinator in the event of a discrepancy between the readers.

A student who fails the dissertation will be permitted to re-submit for the re-assessment Court the following September. The student will receive formative feedback to inform their re-submission.

The pass mark for the dissertation is 50%. The dissertation must be passed. Students cannot compensate with marks from Year 1.

Research Dissertation Guidelines

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.

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.

Role of Proposal Assessment Committee

The Proposal Assessment Committee shall comprise the MES Programme Coordinator, the individual programme coordinator and/or the assistant course co-coordinator, a member of the Marino Ethics in Research Committee 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 Marino Ethics in Research Committee where this will be considered in more detail.

Role of Supervisors

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

Relationship of Supervisor to Student

The relationship of supervisor to student 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 their 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.

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.

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- 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 proofread and edited to the required high standard.

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.

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 MES Course Leader (or another senior faculty member nominated by the Registrar if the MES Course Leader is supervising the student). The MES Course Leader 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.

Appeals Procedure

The [Postgraduate Appeals Policy](#) policy provides full details of appeals processes for postgraduate students.

Ethics in Research, MIE

MIE requires all research activity involving people as participants to be subjected to ethical scrutiny. The Marino Ethics in Research Committee (MERC) has overall responsibility for this scrutiny within the Institute. MERC shall be represented at the Proposal Assessment

Committee in evaluating the research proposals from students on the course. The relevant [Research Policies and Procedures](#) should be viewed in association with this handbook.

Presentation and submission of the Dissertation

The dissertation should be 20,000 words in length. All MES graduates are requested to submit (in person or by post) one hard copy of their thesis as submitted for assessment. One hard copy of the thesis should be handed into the Education Office on a date to be advised in year 2.

In addition, students who have been awarded a mark of 65% or higher for their dissertation are asked to submit a corrected final version of their thesis (PDF) to genevieve.larkin@mie.ie for digital archiving in Trinity's Access to Research Archive (TARA). Please ensure that you have submitted a signed thesis deposit licence when submitting hard and soft copies of your thesis. Details on the time and date of submission will be advised in Year 2. All dissertations will be submitted via Turnitin.

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.

Deferral of Submission of Dissertation

A student may request to defer the submission of the dissertation. The student must apply in writing to MES Course Leader at least two weeks in advance of the submission deadline. The student must provide a detailed account of the argument to support the application for deferral. This application must be supported, in writing, by the supervisor. Where the request for deferral is granted, the student must submit their dissertation on the first day of the supplemental examinations period. This submission must be in line with general submission requirements, meaning that both soft- and hard-copy of the dissertation must be submitted. Where a student has been granted permission to defer the submission of their dissertation, the student will not be entitled to receive any supervision support after the end of June.

Guideline Criteria for Marking: Research Dissertations

	F (Fail) <50%	2:2 (Pass) 50-59%	2:1 (Pass) 60-69%	First (Distinction) >70%
Introduction 15%	The student does not clearly outline the focus of the study. The context is not well established. The student does not obviously identify how the project relates to their own practice.	The student clearly states the focus of the study. The context within which the study takes places is well-established. The student provides a good account of how the project relates to their own practice.	The focus of the study is very well articulated. The research context is very well established. The student provides a very good account of how the study relates to their own practice.	The focus of the study is excellently articulated. The purpose of the study is clearly related to the student's own practice, the context of which has been excellently outlined.
Literature Review 25%	While some literature has been reviewed, the scope is unacceptably narrow, much of the relevant literature has been omitted. There is a lack of critique of any of the literature.	The literature is good in terms of relevance and consistency with the research topic. Some of the literature is up-to-date and good in terms of breadth and depth. There is occasional critique of the literature chosen.	The chosen literature is very good in terms of its relevance and its consistency with the research topic. The literature is up-to-date and is very good in terms of breadth and depth. The paper contains very good critique of the literature.	Literature is excellently chosen in terms of relevance and consistency with the research topic. The literature is up-to-date and is outstanding in terms of breadth and depth. The author demonstrates an excellent level of critique in engaging with the literature.
Research Methodology 15%	The methodology chosen is not well suited to the research topic. While choice of methodology is discussed, the	The methodology is quite relevant to the research topic. A good review of the methodology literature is	The methodology has been very well chosen in terms of relevance to research topic, taking into consideration a very	The methodology has been excellently chosen in terms of relevance to research topic, taking into consideration a wide range of

	<p>selection of methodology literature is too limited.</p> <p>Discussions of the limitations and ethical implications of the methodology are too limited.</p>	<p>provided with some arguments made in support of the methodology. The author provides good discussion of the limitations and ethical implications of this methodology.</p>	<p>good range of methodological literature. The arguments made in support of the choice of methodology are logical and very well made. Any pertinent ethical issues are coherently discussed.</p>	<p>methodological literature. A comprehensive argument is made in support of the choice of methodology. The limitations of the methodology are clearly outlined. Any pertinent ethical issues are excellently discussed.</p>
<p>Findings, Analysis and Discussion</p> <p>30%</p>	<p>The data are not presented in a coherent manner. There is very little integration of the literature in the discussion of the data, with scant critical examination of the data. Links between the data and conclusions are weak.</p>	<p>The data are presented in a clear and unambiguous manner. The author makes good use of the literature to offer some critical examination of the data. Some insightful arguments are made within the discussion, and appropriate links are evident between the conclusions and the data.</p>	<p>The data are presented very 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 very good links are established between the conclusions and the data.</p>	<p>The author presents the data in an excellent manner. The use of literature to critically examine the data is superb. The author is highly insightful in terms of the arguments made within the discussion and there is a clear link between the conclusions and the data.</p>
<p>Presentation and Format</p> <p>15%</p>	<p>Academic conventions are adhered to in a sporadic fashion. The dissertation is not well organised. The bibliography is weak, and many</p>	<p>The author displays good use of academic conventions with format and structure followed well and relatively consistently throughout. The dissertation is organised well throughout. The</p>	<p>The author displays very good use of academic conventions with format and structure followed consistently throughout. The dissertation is systematically organised. The</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</p>

	mistakes are evident in the references presented.	bibliography is relatively well presented, and the referencing system is relatively well followed. However, some mistakes are evident.	author has paid very good attention to the accurate formation of the bibliography and referencing system.	paid excellent attention to the accurate formation of the bibliography and referencing system.
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