An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Initial Teacher Education Policy Statement

Reflecting on a decade of change and creating a vision for the future

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Foreword from Minister for Education Norma Foley

It is hard to overstate the importance of high-quality teaching, and we are deeply fortunate in Ireland to have such a highly skilled, engaged, and committed teaching workforce. It is of immense benefit to our children and young people and to our society as a whole. We must continue investing in the quality of our profession, and initial teacher education is a vital step in this.

Initial teacher education is a formative experience, one that enables student teachers to grow and develop, and ultimately to determine their style, their strengths and how best to channel their passion for teaching and learning. Our student teachers deserve the best possible experience, in a system that is well structured, resourced and planned.

The policy statement presents my Department's ambitious vision for initial teacher education, which sets out our commitment to ensuring that student teachers at primary and post-primary level have the skills to support all of our children and young people as learners in the years ahead. It recognises the progress which has been made through the Teaching Council's accreditation of programmes and the structural reform which has been embedded in the system over the past decade, as well as the actions to meet challenges of teacher supply and COVID-19.

I would like to acknowledge the commitment to quality evidenced across the sector: from those in higher education institutions providing ITE; teachers, schools and other stakeholders supporting school placement; and, crucially, the bright and motivated student teachers who take on the mantle of teaching the next generation.

The statement identifies a range of guiding principles which support the vision and will underpin enhanced collaboration between my Department, the Teaching Council and other Government Departments involved across all education sectors, from early years to further and higher education.

High-level goals for the next seven years are set out, along with an implementation plan detailing actions. The implementation plan itself is a phased one, with actions for the first phase set out in the policy statement. Results from phase 1 will inform the formulation of actions for phase 2 and phase 3.

Through this policy statement and implementation plan, my Department's focus is to ensure that ITE programmes will prepare all student teachers for the challenge of meeting all children and young people's needs as learners, in primary and post-primary schools. I firmly believe that student teachers must spend time on placement within special education settings and have included actions in phase 1 of the plan to make this happen. This will build on the work carried out to enhance inclusive education under *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education.*

I am strongly committed to supporting a teaching profession that reflects the diversity of our society. We are actively seeking to overcome perceived barriers to accessing ITE, particularly for students from groups that have lower participation in higher education.

My overarching objective in developing this statement is to improve the overall quality of initial teacher education in Ireland through practical measures which will improve available evidence and enhance the already strong collaboration within the sector, building on the work which has gone into the second phase of ITE accreditation which is being led by the Teaching Council at the moment. This will ensure that our newly qualified teachers have the necessary tools to support them in their aim to inspire, enlighten and prepare pupils and students to succeed in life.

Norma Foley TD
Minister for Education

Foreword from Secretary General Bernie McNally

I am delighted to launch this policy statement for initial teacher education (ITE), which is the culmination of several years of work across the Department of Education.

Over the last number of years, there have been extensive changes to the structure of ITE, as well as wide-ranging reform of the curriculum, including the introduction of the Junior Cycle, the redevelopment of the primary curriculum and the recently announced policy for redevelopment of the Senior Cycle. The Irish education system continues to evolve to meet the existing and future needs of children and young people, schools, teachers and parents, with relevant, quality and timely initiatives and strategies being developed that reflect the ongoing changes in our society and in our economy

Our country has transformed over the last 20 years. It is critical that we equip our teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to perform in today's schools, and take steps to ensure that the teaching profession reflects the Ireland of today. The actions included in this policy statement strive to achieve this.

This policy statement draws heavily on an extensive consultation process with a comprehensive range of stakeholders from across the education system. It recognises the important roles of the higher education institutions, teacher educators, management bodies, current teachers and advocacy groups within education, who work in a policy framework involving the Teaching Council and a number of Government Departments. The statement also commits to improving the student teacher voice in the development and implementation of ITE policy.

The Department's goal in developing this statement is to ensure that teaching remains an attractive and accessible profession. Through the actions outlined in this document, we intend to ensure that for student teachers, the ITE programme you follow will give you the knowledge, skills and confidence to assist all learners reach their full potential.

I look forward to working with all stakeholders over the coming period to implement the measures outlined in this policy statement.

Bernie McNally
Secretary General

List of acronyms and initialisms

DCEDIY – Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

DEIS – Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools

DFHERIS – Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

ELC – early learning and care

ERC – Educational Research Centre

FET – further education and training

HEA – Higher Education Authority

HEI/s – higher education institutions

ITE – initial teacher education

NCCA – National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

NQT – newly qualified teacher

PATH – Programme for Access to Higher Education

PME – Professional Master of Education

QQI – Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Executive summary

Executive summary

There have been significant developments in the provision of initial teacher education (ITE) in Ireland, since 2011.

The Teaching Council has reviewed and revised standards for ITE, placing increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy, school placement, reflective learning and research-based practice. All new primary and post-primary ITE programmes must now meet the standards outlined in *Ceím: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*. All existing programmes of ITE are aligned with *Céim* for first year intakes since 1 September 2022. The review process leading to accreditation in accordance with *Céim* for those programmes commenced in 2021 and will conclude at the end of 2023.

The structure of ITE provision has changed markedly following the 2012 publication of the *Report of International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland,* known *as* the *Sahlberg I Report.* Since then, there has been considerable progress in creating teacher education centres of excellence as confirmed by the *Sahlberg II Report* which was published in 2019.

In 2020 the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) was formed, assuming responsibility for policy, funding and governance of the Higher and Further Education and research sectors, and for the oversight of the work of the State agencies and public institutions operating in those areas, including the Higher Education Authority (HEA), and the National Access Plan. The Department of Education retained lead policy responsibility for ITE.

During this time, there has also been significant curricular reform across the primary and post-primary sector, such as the announcement of Senior Cycle reform and the launch of the Primary Curriculum Framework.

Acknowledging all of these developments, along with the ever present demands placed on the system by the ongoing challenge of teacher supply, the Department of Education recognised the need for an overarching ITE policy statement to bring together all of the current policies, strategies and initiatives relating to initial teacher education, and to bring clarity to a complex area.

In addition to describing the current policy context, this statement outlines a vision for the ITE sector to 2030. It also sets out high-level goals that aim to continue the development of the sector into the future to and ensure that Ireland's provision of ITE can compare with the best teacher education systems internationally

The development of this initial teacher education policy statement has been an extensive process that began in 2019. At that time a steering committee was formed to oversee the process. It comprised representatives of key areas within the Department of Education and the now DFHERIS, along with the Inspectorate and the Teaching Council. The Department also met with each of the higher education institutions (HEIs) providing initial teacher education and each of these providers, along with other stakeholders, furnished written submissions. This fed into a consultative forum, attended by each of these stakeholders, where the themes from the submissions were explored further, assessed and considered.

Following the consultations, the Department's Teacher Education section conducted an in-depth and extended internal review of the feedback and relevant recent research. Further consultations also took place with a range of advocacy groups to ensure that a wide spectrum of contributors were included in the formulation of the policy statement.

Vision

The development of the policy statement has shown the strong commitment among those involved in ITE to provide high-quality support and preparation of student teachers for their professional life, while recognising that ITE is the first step on the continuum of teacher education. Arising from this process, the Department has set out an ambitious vision for ITE to 2030.

Our Vision

All student teachers in Ireland will experience high-quality initial teacher education, within university-led centres of excellence, to equip them with the foundational competencies and learning experiences that will help them to embrace the constantly evolving challenges of supporting all learners in the 21st century, underpinned by professional collaboration, research, reflective practice, creativity and wellbeing.

Guiding Principles

Supporting the Department's vision is a range of guiding principles which include, among others, the desire to attract high-quality, diverse candidates to the teaching profession; recognition that ITE is the first step on a continuum of learning for teachers that continues throughout their careers; all ITE programmes will meet the standards of *Céim*; and continuous improvements in standards will be informed and supported by all stakeholders.

It is expected that ITE provision will be led by a small number of university-led centres of excellence, as envisaged by the *Sahlberg II Report*. The Department also expects that ITE provision will have due regard to the needs of the school system. The Department also acknowledges that a coherent whole-of-Government approach will be needed to implement the vision and goals of this policy statement.

Goals

Six high-level goals have been set to guide progress over the coming years to 2030.

6 Initial Teacher Education Goals

Goal 1: Attractive and Accessible

Initial Teacher Education is attractive for high-quality candidates and accessible to students from a diversity of backgrounds.

Goal 2: 21st Century Ready

ITE Programmes will prepare student teachers to embrace the constantly evolving challenges of supporting all learners in the 21st century.

Goal 3: Connected and Relevant

ITE is strongly connected with and relevant to the needs of the education system

Goal 4: Structured for High-quality provision

Initial Teacher Education structures are well placed to enable high-quality ITE provision

Goal 5: A Collaborative and Communicative System

Systems and policies are in place to enable collaboration across the different sectors of education and to improve communication

Goal 6: Programmes based on Research

SGoal 6. A strong research base is established to support ITE programme and policy development and design into the future

The Department will take a phased approach to achieve these goals over the next seven years.

A three-phase implementation plan is envisaged, with actions for the first phase set out in the policy statement. Indicators have also been developed to ensure progress can be tracked. A report will be published at the end of phase 1 to outline progress made. Findings from phase 1 will inform the formulation of actions for phase 2 and phase 3.

To oversee the implementation of the policy statement, an Advisory Group on ITE will be established, with representatives from all relevant sectors, including student teachers.

An Initial Teacher Education Working Group will coordinate reporting on the implementation plan, supported by the Teacher Education (ITE and Professional Development) Section in the Department of Education.

In addition, HEIs are asked to commit to a process of annual dialogue around the actions of this policy statement, with the Department of Education, Teaching Council, DFHERIS and HEA, along with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth as applicable.

Introduction

Introduction

Quality teaching has a key contribution to make to good educational outcomes[1]. Every day, all over Ireland, teachers bring the curriculum to life in schools. They implement a variety of teaching strategies and approaches to cater to the needs of all learners. They empower children and young people to build on areas of strength, equip them to overcome areas of challenge and actively support them to reach their full potential.

Initial teacher education (ITE) is the first formal step into the teaching profession[2]. For the purposes of this policy statement, ITE refers to initial education for primary or post-primary teachers. ITE needs to be sufficiently broad and deep so that newly qualified teachers can function effectively from the outset of their careers to support teaching, learning and assessment for all learners, using the most relative, effective and up-to-date pedagogical approaches. It also needs to prepare student teachers for ongoing reflection and dialogue on their pedagogical and professional practice, as the first step on a journey of lifelong professional learning that will carry on into their early years as a teacher (*Droichead*) and throughout their careers as teachers and leaders (*Cosán*).

Policy related to ITE is complex. ITE sits at the intersection of policies on early learning and care, primary, post-primary, further education and training and higher education, across both English-medium and Irish-medium schools and settings. All ITE programmes are subject to professional accreditation from the Teaching Council[3], as well as the academic accreditation standards of the relevant higher education institution (HEI).

There have been significant changes across many of the key policies relating to ITE since 2011. The impact of reforms to the State-funded institutions providing ITE was assessed by Professor Pasi *Sahlberg* and a report of the findings was published in 2019 in the report, *Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform*[4] (referred to as the *Sahlberg II Report*). The professional accreditation standards for ITE were reviewed by the Teaching Council and updated standards were published in 2020: *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*[5] (referred to as *Céim* in this document).

With the establishment of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) in 2020, policy relating to primary and post-primary education, on the one hand, and further education and training and higher education on the other, came to be led

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[1] OECD (2005) Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers: Overview https://www.oecd.org/education/school/34990905.pdf

[2] For the purposes of this policy statement, ITE refers to initial teacher education for teachers of primary and post-primary

[3] Teaching Council (2011, revised 2017) Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers; criteria-and-guidelines-for-programme-providers-march-2017-.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)   Teaching Council (2020) Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[4] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform HEA – The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform

[5] Teaching Council (2020) Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

by two separate Government Departments. In addition, lead policy responsibility for early learning and care lies with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

During this time, there has been significant curricular reform with the introduction of the Primary Language Curriculum, the Framework for Junior Cycle, the Primary Curriculum Framework, the introduction of new Senior Cycle subjects and a significant redevelopment of Senior Cycle also announced.

Appreciating the complexity in this policy space and the many changes experienced by the sector, in 2019, the Department commenced work to develop a policy statement for ITE. The aim of the policy statement is to reflect on the significant level of reform that has taken place in ITE since 2011 and, taking account of the *Sahlberg II Report, Céim* and other developments, to provide clarity around a vision for ITE over the remainder of the decade ahead (2023-2030).

This policy statement for ITE seeks to achieve that aim. The policy statement is set out in the following sections:

- Section 1   What do we mean by initial teacher education
- Section 2   Why do we need a policy statement for ITE
- Section 3   Current ITE provision and policy.
- Section 4   Vision to 2030: guiding principles and goals
- Section 5   Implementation plan for phase I: 2023-2024
- Section 6   Feedback from the consultation process
- Section 7   Summary of relevant research and reports.

While the policy statement looks at ITE as the education of primary and post-primary teachers, it also acknowledges the overlap between primary and post-primary and other sectors of education (early learning and care, and further education and training). The importance of supporting effective transitions between these different stages of the education system will be a key focus over the coming years.

Section 1: what do we mean by Initial Teacher Education

Section 1: what do we mean by initial teacher education

Initial teacher education (ITE) refers to the foundation stage of learning to become a teacher. ITE is recognised as the first formal step on the 'continuum of teacher education'. The continuum of teacher education describes the formal and informal educational and developmental activities in which teachers engage, as lifelong learners, during their teaching career[6]. The continuum encompasses ITE, induction (*Droichead*[7]) and teachers' professional learning (*Cosán*[8]). Teachers' lifelong learning and career development is a key priority within the EU and internationally.

Student teachers engage in a recognised teacher education programme provided by a higher education institution (HEI)[9]. This process involves completing a programme in a HEI ('ITE programme') that has been accredited by the Teaching Council in accordance with the relevant standards for ITE, currently: *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*[10].

Teachers who have qualified outside of Ireland can also be registered, following an assessment by the Teaching Council that their qualifications are of a comparable standard to those achieved by graduates of accredited programmes in Ireland.

The main focus for this policy statement is the ITE experience/provision for primary and post-primary teachers: those who can be registered under Route 1 or 2 of the *Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016*[11] and paid the qualified rate to teach in a recognised primary or post-primary school or centre for education.

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[6] Teaching Council (2011) Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education, policy-on-the-continuum-of-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[7] Teaching Council (2017) Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/_fileupload/droichead-2017/droichead-the-integrated-professional-induction-policy.pdf.

[8] Teaching Council (2016) Cosán: Framework for Teachers' Learning cosan-framework-for-teachers-learning.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[9] Teaching Council (2011) Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education, policy-on-the-continuum-of-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[10] Teaching Council (2020) Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[11] Teaching Council (2016) Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016 revised-teaching-council-registration-regulations-2016.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

Figure 1: The Continuum of Teacher Education

ITE: start of professional learning journey → **Droichead**: the integrated professional induction framework for newly qualified teachers → **Cosán**: teachers' ongoing learning throughout their career
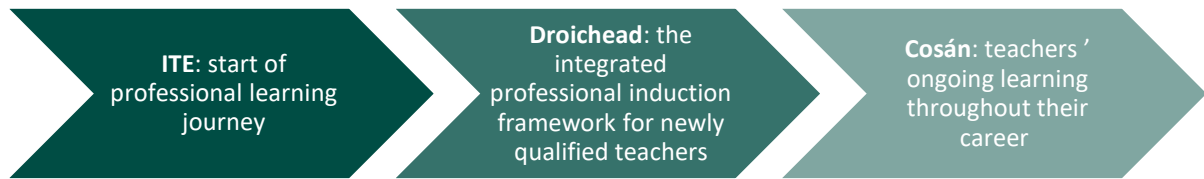
Situating ITE clearly within this continuum recognises both its crucial importance as the foundation step in teacher education and its limits: 'given the rapid changes in education and society, teachers' development must be viewed in terms of lifelong learning and continuing education, with initial teacher education acting as the foundation for ongoing learning, rather than the summit of professional development"[12].

There are strong parallels between ITE for primary and post-primary and the preparation of educators for other education sectors such as early learning and care and further education and training. Each of these sectors has been developing in accordance with its own evolutionary trajectory and the connection between each sector will be considered as part of the policy statement.

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[12] OECD (2020) TALIS 2018 Insights and Interpretations Page 19
https://www.oecd.org/education/talis/TALIS2018_insights_and_interpretations.pdf

Section 2: why do we need a policy statement for ITE

Section 2: why do we need a policy statement for ITE

2.1 Rationale for a policy statement

The Department of Education has a long history of multifaceted engagement with ITE provision and providers. ITE is an important component of achieving the Department of Education's strategic policy goal to support the provision of high-quality education and improve the learning experience to meet the needs of all students, in schools and early learning and care settings[13].

ITE continues to occupy a unique position as policies from higher education and the school sector are all directly relevant, with a need also for integration of ITE policies in relation to early learning and care (ELC) and further education and training.

There have been significant developments specific to ITE since 2011, across areas such as professional accreditation, programme reconceptualisation and extension and structural reform. There have also been many changes to other education policy which impact on ITE, such as curriculum development and policy reform.

For example, building on and strengthening assessment literacy among the teaching profession will be a key element to deliver on the initiatives recently announced in regard to Senior Cycle, ITE has a significant role to play in order to ensure that teachers are fully prepared in this area of their professional competence. The revised specification for Junior Cycle Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is due to be published shortly and the recent publication of the Primary Curriculum Framework will also impact on ITE over the coming years. Teachers must be prepared to support the introduction of new subject areas across both primary and post-primary schools.

In addition, as Irish schools have become more diverse, the needs of pupils and students continue to evolve. The challenge of supporting children with very different learning abilities and needs, often in the same classroom, is evident in the schools of 2023. The wellbeing of all the children and young people who attend our schools must be at the forefront of teachers' work, as evidenced by the recently published *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying*[14] and quality ITE programmes that provide a foundation for knowledge, respect, equality and inclusion will be a key contributor to the realisation of our ambitions.

All of these developments have resulted in a high level of complexity around policy for ITE and strong potential for mismatch of expectations. With this in mind, it is considered that a policy statement is important, to bring together the relevant policies and to highlight the many actions that have occurred, since 2011, that have enhanced provision for ITE.

It provides an opportunity to be ambitious, to look forward to the rest of the decade, to 2030, and set clear expectations about what can be further achieved.

It is a chance to build on existing collaboration in a way that can drive continuous improvement and ensure ITE in Ireland compares favourably with best practice internationally.

It is important to restate that ITE is the first step on the continuum of teacher education and that there will be many opportunities after ITE for further professional learning by teachers. Nevertheless, it is vital for student teachers to get the best possible start through high-quality ITE.

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[13] Department of Education (2021) Statement of Strategy 2021-2023 https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/56137-department-of-education-statement-of-strategy-2021-2023/

[14] Department of Education (2022) Cineáltas :Action Plan on Bullying https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/52aaf-cinealtas-action-plan-on-bullying/?referrer=http://www.gov.ie/actionplanonbullying/#

2.2 The development of the policy statement

Following some preparatory work, the Department established a steering committee to oversee the development of the policy statement (see Appendix 1 for a list of members). The terms of reference of the ITE policy statement steering committee were:

- To inform, provide direction and advise Teacher Education Policy section in relation to the work of the development of the ITE policy statement;
- To input into decision making on the policy statement; and
- To provide advice and direction in relation to any other issues around the development of the policy statement, as they may arise.

The Department engaged in an in-depth consultation with key stakeholders across 2019. This included meetings to discuss key themes and inviting written submissions from the providers of primary and post-primary ITE. A list of all the bodies from which written submissions were received can be found at Appendix 2. A one-day national consultative forum took place in November 2019 to discuss the main themes that emerged in the consultation process. This included policy makers, HEIs providing ITE, support services, management bodies, statutory bodies including the Teaching Council and National Council for Special Education, unions, students and teachers.

The process of consultation helped to clarify the current picture of ITE provision and policy, as well as identifying themes for further consideration and discussion. The next steps in the process were considerably delayed, primarily due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this has allowed the policy statement to include reflection on key developments up to 2023.

Figure 2: Timeline for policy statement development

Timeline for development of the ITE policy statement	
May 2019	Steering committee established
June - July 2019	Informal meetings with HEIs providing ITE
Aug - Sept 2019	Written submissions by providers and stakeholders
Nov 2019	Consultative forum to discuss themes from submissions
Dec 2019 – Aug 2021	In-depth research review and feedback from consultation process
Sept 2021 - Nov 2022	Further engagement with stakeholders and process to finalise
March 2023	Publication of policy statement

Section 3: current ITE provision and policy

Section 3: Current ITE provision and policy

To set current provision for ITE in context, this section provides a brief overview of key developments in ITE provision from the early years of the Irish State. It outlines the main policy developments and reforms that have impacted on ITE since 2011 and describes the current position in relation to providers and ITE programmes. Together, these give a sense of the scale of reform and the complexity of the ITE landscape. Parallel developments in relation to early learning and care (ELC) and further education and training (FET) are outlined at the end of the section.

3.1 Oversight of ITE

3.1.1 Historical context

From the early years of the Irish State, the Department of Education had a direct role in funding and oversight of the colleges of education/teacher-training colleges which provided all primary ITE. Preparation of teachers for post-primary took place largely in universities[15].

Reforms in the 1960s and 1970s saw adjustments to primary ITE programmes and increased State attention on post-primary ITE programmes, due to the introduction of free second-level education. In the 1960s, the content of teacher training at primary level was reformed to include courses in psychology, sociology and history of education and placed greater emphasis on pedagogical skills. In 1971, driven by wider reforms across the education system, the Higher Education Authority (HEA) was established.

During the 1970s, the teacher-education programme was expanded from two to three years and each teacher-training college was affiliated to a university. In 1974, the Bachelor of Education degree programme was introduced in all teacher-training colleges. At post-primary, the university education departments were faced with growing demand to supply a considerably expanded teaching force.

The Higher Diploma in Education (H. Dip) programme (a requirement for post-primary teaching), which had been provided on a part-time basis, was restructured as a full-time one-year programme and also included supervised teaching-practice placement. During the 1970s, the Department of Education identified a need to provide training for teachers of practical subjects in post- primary schools. This training was provided as concurrent programmes which included teacher-placement opportunities and applied to subjects such as Physical Education, Woodwork and Home Economics.

The 1980s was a period of retrenchment, as the country was in the grip of an economic recession. At primary level, Carysfort College was closed and at post-primary level, the numbers taking the Higher Diploma in Education were controlled.

During the 1990s, a number of important educational reforms took shape, arising from consultation, policy reform and legislation progressed by the Department of Education and as a result, provision for ITE began to expand. By the end of the decade, there were five colleges of education providing primary ITE programmes and seven university education departments were

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[15] Coolahan, J (2007), A Review Paper on Thinking and Policies Relating to Teacher Education in Ireland: paper prepared by Professor John Coolahan for the Teaching Council. https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/publications/research/documents/a-review-paper-on-thinking-and-policies-relating-to-teacher-education-in-ireland.pdf

providing post-primary ITE programmes. In addition, there were two specialist colleges of home economics, three colleges of art and design, and one college for teachers of religious education.

ITE in Ireland expanded considerably from 2000 to 2010. By 2012, some 19 publicly funded HEIs provided programmes for primary and/or post-primary teachers as well as private providers that were not State funded. However, this growth was not co-ordinated and evolved in a piecemeal manner resulting in a variety of models of provision by a variety of providers.[16]

In 2004, the first private provider of teacher education was accredited by the Higher Education Training Awards Council for the provision of a primary ITE programme.

The Teaching Council was established on a statutory basis in March 2006 under the Teaching Council Act 2001. Its early work included the introduction of the Register of Teachers and producing codes of professional conduct for teachers. In exercising its functions, the council works within the context of its Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education[17] published in 2011.

3.1.2 Current oversight arrangements

Today, a number of Government Departments and agencies have oversight roles with regard to ITE:

Department of Education

The Minister for Education has statutory responsibility for setting national education policy, supported by officials of the Department of Education. Work relevant to ITE includes:

- responsibility for overall policy and strategy in relation to ITE for primary and post-primary teaching, as well as in relation to teacher education more generally. Within this framework, the Teaching Council has been granted significant statutory functions;
- responsibility for the quality of initial training for early learning and care in collaboration with the DCEDIY;
- approving curricula for early learning and care, primary and post-primary education developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), and supporting implementation through professional development support for teachers
- development and oversight of national policies on education for children of school age. A list of key policies is included at Appendix 3.
- promoting ongoing development and improvement of education in early learning and care and school settings through the work of the Department's Inspectorate[18];
- introducing measures which support the supply of teachers in target areas, under the *Teacher Supply Action Plan*[19] and other policies, such as the *Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022*[20];

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[16] Hyland, A. (2012) A Review of the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland: Background Paper for the International Review Team May 2012

[17] Teaching Council (2011) Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education, policy-on-the-continuum-of-teacher-ducation.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[18] Department of Education (2021) Inspectorate Strategic Plan 2021-2024 gov.ie - Inspectorate Strategic Plan 2021-2024 (www.gov.ie)

[19] Department of Education and Skills (2018) Teacher Supply Action Plan https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9e39b3-teacher-supply-action-plan/

[20] Department of Education and Skills (2017) Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022 https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/5cfd73-policy-on-gaeltacht-education-2017-2022/

- collaborating with HEIs in relation to setting minimum entry requirements for primary ITE, numbers of students in primary ITE for State-funded providers and continuation of the primary Professional Master of Education (PME); programme in State-funded providers;
- direct funding of Marino Institute of Education.

Teaching Council

The Teaching Council was established as the professional standards body for teachers under the Teaching Council Act 2001. Working within the overall policy framework established by the Department of Education, the Teaching Council is the independent regulator for the teaching profession. Responsibilities include:

- registration of teachers for primary, post-primary and further education, including those who have qualified abroad;
- registration of student teachers who have completed the first two years of an accredited concurrent programme of primary or post-primary ITE;
- promotion of the teaching profession;
- development of policy on teaching, including the *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers* and the *Policy[21] on the Continuum of Teacher Education[22]*;
- setting the standards for ITE programmes and reviewing and accrediting these programmes for the purpose of teacher registration;
- setting curricular subject registration requirements for post-primary level;
- providing advice to the Minister for Education in relation to setting minimum entry requirements for ITE programmes;
- applying registration conditions such as the Irish-language requirement, the History and Structure exam and qualification shortfalls for teachers who have qualified abroad;
- commissioning research on matters relevant to the objects of the Council and, as it considers appropriate;
- conducting inquiries into and, where appropriate, imposing sanctions in relation to the fitness to practice of registered teachers.

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)

The DCEDIY has lead responsibility for policy on early learning and care. Work includes:

- governance, funding and policy development in all Early Learning and Care (ELC) settings other than those in primary schools;
- responsibility for the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme, the National Childcare Scheme and the Access and Inclusion Model[23] ;
- lead policy role in the quality of provision and workforce development for ELC settings.

As outlined above, the Department of Education shares some policy responsibility in relation to early learning and care and has a key role in assessing and advising on the quality of the education provision in the ELC sector including initial teacher education of Early Years Educators

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[21] Teaching Council (2016) Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers code-of-professional-conduct-for-teachers1.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)
[22] Teaching Council (2011) Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education, policy-on-the-continuum-of-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)
[23] Early Childhood Care and Education programme (gov.ie - Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE) (www.gov.ie)

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS)

The Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science has responsibility for the higher education and further education sectors. Relevant work includes:

- developing higher education and further education and training strategy and policy;
- funding and governance of the Higher and Further Education and research sectors and for the oversight of the work of the State agencies and public institutions in those areas;
- funding the provision of financial supports for students in higher education;
- developing policy to promote wider access to higher education among under-represented groups, including access to ITE;
- quality and qualifications oversight;
- oversight of the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and Solas.

Higher Education Authority (HEA)

The HEA is the lead agency in the creation of a co-ordinated system of HEIs with clear and diverse roles appropriate to their strengths and national needs, all of ITE being provided within this system. The HEA engages in a process of strategy and performance dialogue with HEIs in order to improve institutional and system performance, enhance system accountability, and to enable the HEA to manage risks. HEIs agree a mission-based compact with the HEA that relates the strategy of the individual HEI to the national priorities and key objectives of Government for higher education. In support of their mandate, the HEA exercises functions in respect of:

- funding of HEIs with whom the HEA works under statute or who are in receipt of core public funding through the Recurrent Grant Allocation Model;
- accountability;
- the quality of outcomes;
- policy research and advice to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science;
- data analytics and knowledge management;
- advocacy and communicating policy on higher education;
- co-ordination of interaction between public bodies and the higher education system.

In line with the Higher Education Authority Act (1971), the HEA has a statutory function in relation to oversight of places in the higher education system for HEIs under its remit, but this is not used to determine the number of places on particular programmes such as ITE. This function is retained in the new Higher Education Authority Act 2022.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

All HEIs providing ITE operate within the framework of quality assurance overseen by the QQI. QQI also serves as an awarding body for certain ITE programmes. This includes a process of institutional oversight from QQI on those bodies, through the process of providing an annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report and engaging with QQI cyclical reviews as required. QQI has established a forum for engagement with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) such as the Teaching Council who all have a combined focus on quality and standards in higher education and further education and training qualifications.

Solas

Solas is the State agency tasked with building a world-class further education and training (FET) sector in Ireland. Relevant work includes:

- development and implementation of the *National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy*[24];
- funding and co-ordination of further education and training provision;
- oversight of workforce planning related to further education and training.

3.2 ITE Programmes

As set out in Table 1 there are currently 14 HEIs in the State providing ITE programmes to student teachers for primary and post-primary education[25].
(Except where indicated, the HEI provides both concurrent/undergraduate and consecutive/postgraduate programmes of ITE. Those marked with * provide concurrent programmes only[26]. Those marked with # provide consecutive programmes only

Table 1: list of all primary and post-primary ITE providers[27])

Primary-level ITE providers	Post-primary level ITE providers
• Dublin City University (DCU) Institute of Education • Hibernia College # • Marino Institute of Education (MIE) • Maynooth University (Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education) • Mary Immaculate College (MIC)	• Atlantic Technological University * • DCU Institute of Education • Hibernia College # • Maynooth University • MIC (St Patrick's College, Thurles) * • National College of Art and Design (NCAD) • St Angela's College, Sligo* • Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest (TUS) • Trinity College Dublin (TCD) • University College Cork (UCC) (which is linked with Munster Technological University #) • University College Dublin (UCD) • University of Galway (UG) • University of Limerick (UL)

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[24] SOLAS (2020) Future FET: Transforming Learning The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/64d0718c9e/solas_fet_strategy_web.pdf
[25] Graduates of programmes from one Montessori college are currently entitled to be recognised under Route 4 which allows them to teach in special education settings. This was a legacy provision which is coming to an end in 2023.
[26] Note that St. Angela's College, Sligo, has students enrolled on a 5 year ITE programme which includes both concurrent and consecutive elements. However, this programme has ceased accepting students and all programmes open to new entrants are in the 4 year concurrent model.
[27] Note that this list reflects the current progression of a number of former Institutes of Technology into Technological Universities. The Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science has approved an approval in principle for the incorporation of St. Angela's College, Sligo into IT Sligo, this process is still ongoing.

ITE generally follows one of two main models: the concurrent model, where practical and pedagogical education are studied alongside disciplinary studies (undergraduate (Level 8) qualification); or the consecutive model, where practical and pedagogical education follow the disciplinary studies (postgraduate (Level 9) qualification). A small number of hybrid models, which include both concurrent and consecutive elements, have been developed.

In accordance with the *Teacher Supply Action Plan 2018*[28], the strong policy preference is for four-year concurrent programmes at post-primary, rather than a longer, hybrid programme.

All ITE programmes that lead to teacher registration, must satisfy the Teaching Council accreditation requirements. The Teaching Council's *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers (Criteria and Guidelines)*[29] set out the standard for all ITE programmes accredited between 2011 and 2020. All ITE programmes must also have academic accreditation from the relevant HEI or awarding body. The detailed requirements for registration are set out in the *Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016*[30].

In October 2020, the Teaching Council published *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*[31], along with revised *Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-primary)*[32] *('Curricular Subject Requirements')*.

All new primary and post-primary ITE programmes must now meet the standards outlined in *Ceím: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*. All existing programmes of ITE are aligned with *Céim* for first year intakes since 1 September 2022. The review process leading to accreditation in accordance with *Céim* for those programmes commenced in 2021 and will conclude at the end of 2023.

Céim builds on the 2011 Criteria and Guidelines in the following ways:

- The previous 16 mandatory elements have been reimagined and enhanced as seven core elements that underpin all aspects of programme design which include: inclusive education, global citizenship education including education for sustainable development, professional relationships and working with parents, professional identity and agency, creativity and reflective practice, literacy and numeracy, and digital skills.
- *Céim* provides more detailed guidance around the integration within programmes of key priority areas:
    - student teachers must demonstrate an understanding of inclusive education and working with parents as part of school placement, through their Taisce (portfolio of learning);
    - and all student teachers at primary are explicitly required to keep a Fillteán Foghlama, a record of their learning journey as part of the Gaeltacht learning period, and to link this to their overall portfolio of learning as a student teacher.
- the requirements with regard to the facilities and staff within HEIs that provide initial teacher education have been further elaborated upon:
    - in respect of ITE programmes, HEIs are expected to meet the student-staff ratio of 15:1 or to provide a timeframe for when this will be achieved;

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[28] Department of Education and Skills (2018) Teacher Supply Action Plan https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9e39b3-teacher-supply-action-plan/

[29] Teaching Council (2011, revised 2017) Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers criteria-and-guidelines-for-programme-providers-march-2017-.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[30] Teaching Council (2016) Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016 revised-teaching-council-registration-regulations-2016.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[31] Teaching Council (2020) Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[32] Teaching Council (2020) Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-Primary) https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/curricular-subject-requirements.pdf

- HEIs must have staff development policies in place for ITE staff;
- as of May 2022, at least 50% of school-placement tutors must be registered teachers and at least one assessment of student teachers on placement is to be carried out by a registered teacher.

The Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (post-primary)[33] ('Curricular Subject Requirements') outline the qualifications needed to be a teacher of a post-primary subject. For concurrent post-primary ITE programmes, content must be aligned with the Teaching Council requirements. For consecutive programmes, entry criteria must be aligned with those requirements.

HEIs are encouraged to develop programmes which meet the needs identified within the system. The *Procedures for the Professional Accreditation of Programmes of ITE[34]*, published in 2021, specify that for new programmes, "the decision as to whether a HEI should be encouraged to proceed with more detailed programme planning and the submission of a pro forma, will take into account a range of considerations, including supply issues". From time to time, the Department has also provided funding to establish or to encourage programmes of ITE in response to particular policy needs. *Under the Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022[35]* , the Department of Education procured the provision of a four-year concurrent Irish-medium ITE programme for primary, which commenced in September 2019. *Under the Teacher Supply Action Plan[36]*, HEIs have been encouraged in recent years to develop new post-primary concurrent ITE programmes in targeted subjects, including mathematics, Irish and modern foreign languages.

Different aspects of the standards for ITE are discussed later in the policy statement.

3.2.1 ITE programmes: primary

Upon graduation from an accredited primary ITE programme, newly qualified teachers (NQTs) will be qualified to teach the range of primary school subjects in all settings and be registered under Route 1 of the *Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016[37]*.

Listed below are the number of graduates from Primary ITE programmes over the last nine years.

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[33] Teaching Council (2020) Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-Primary) https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/curricular-subject-requirements.pdf
[34] Teaching Council (2021) Professional Accreditation of Programmes of ITE Page 6 https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/publications/ite-professional-accreditation/procedures.pdf
[35] Department of Education and Skills (2017) Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022 https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/5cfd73-policy-on-gaeltacht-education-2017-2022/
[36] Department of Education and Skills (2018) Teacher Supply Action Plan https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9e39b3-teacher-supply-action-plan/
[37] Teaching Council (2016) Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016   revised-teaching-council-registration-regulations-2016.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

Table 2: primary ITE graduates 2013-2021

Number of primary ITE graduates per year										
		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
State-funded HEIs	Concurrent programmes	1055	963	96	926	1005	975	974	971	1024
	Consecutive programmes	232	217	226	321	214	217	225	231	221
	Total	**1287**	**1180**	**332**	**1247**	**1219**	**1192**	**1199**	**1202**	**1245**
Non State-funded HEIs	Total (consecutive programmes only)	338	546	598	681	680	632	598	683	721
	Total graduates	**1625**	**1726**	**920**	**1928**	**1899**	**1824**	**1797**	**1885**	**1966**

For primary ITE, the Minister for Education has set minimum entry requirements for Irish, English and mathematics. This is to ensure that primary teachers have the capacity to lead learning in these particular subjects which are considered as core curricular areas. These entry requirements increased for concurrent programmes from September 2019 and for consecutive programmes from September 2021 (Appendix 4). These are in addition to any entry requirements across all programmes set out by the HEIs.

An exception to the minimum entry requirements for Irish was made for a pilot bachelor of education programme that commenced in DCU in 2019. For this programme, Irish Sign Language (ISL) is accepted as an alternative to the minimum entry requirement for Irish once certain criteria have been met[38]. This provides an entry route to primary teaching specifically for deaf and hard-of-hearing students who communicate through ISL. For the Irish-medium ITE programme at primary, which was established under the *Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022*[39], additional Irish-language entry and exit criteria have been put in place. These are assessed independently through the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL).

Widening participation has been a priority for HEIs in recent years. As a means of widening participation in third level, participating HEIs have developed a range of initiatives, including the following supplementary admission routes: Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a college and university admissions scheme for school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is a third-level alternative-admissions scheme for school leavers whose disabilities have had a negative impact on their post-primary education. HEIs also have routes to encourage mature students to access higher education.

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[38] The minimum entry requirements for English and mathematics must be met.
[39] Department of Education and Skills (2017) Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022
https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/5cfd73-policy-on-gaeltacht-education-2017-2022/

There are a number of specialised entry routes to primary ITE in addition to the schemes outlined above. These include: an entry route for students from Gaeltacht areas (which also has a higher minimum requirement for Irish) and an entry route for students from Church of Ireland and other reformed Christian church traditions.

3.2.2 ITE programmes: post-primary

In line with the *Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016*[40], candidates have to fulfil the Curricular Subject Requirements[41] for at least one post-primary subject in order to be eligible to be registered as a teacher at post-primary. Upon graduation from an accredited post-primary ITE programme, newly qualified teachers (NQTs) will be qualified to teach at least one curricular subject to pupils or students from first year to sixth year and to be registered under Route 2 of the *Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016*[42].

Listed below are the number of graduates from post-primary ITE programmes over the last nine years.

Table 3: post-primary ITE graduates 2013-2021

Post-Primary ITE Graduates 2013-2021		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
State-funded HEIs	Concurrent programmes	545	559	548	551	532	537	607	678	741
	Consecutive programmes	1205	1245	91	789	792	749	796	896	907
	Total	**1750**	**1804**	**639**	**1340**	**1324**	**1286**	**1403**	**1574**	**1648**
Non State-funded HEIs	Total (consecutive programmes only)	222	254	203	165	180	160	132	157	188
	Total graduates	**1972**	**2058**	**842**	**1505**	**1504**	**1446**	**1535**	**1731**	**1836**

The concurrent route to a teaching qualification at post-primary has been offered traditionally for programmes that contain practical, workshop and laboratory elements such as Physical Education or Construction Studies. However new concurrent programmes are now being made available in other subject areas (e.g. modern foreign languages). In addition, a number of hybrid models have been made available by HEIs, where the student completes a combined

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[40] Teaching Council (2016) Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016 revised-teaching-council-registration-regulations-2016.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)
[41] Teaching Council (2020) Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-Primary) https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/curricular-subject-requirements.pdf
[42] Teaching Council (2016) Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016 revised-teaching-council-registration-regulations-2016.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

undergraduate and post-graduate programme, with the teaching qualification at the end of the post-graduate part, typically taking five years in total.

At post-primary level, while no caps or targets on numbers are usually set for programmes, HEIs have been encouraged in recent years to develop new four-year concurrent ITE programmes in targeted subjects, including mathematics, Irish and modern foreign languages.

3.3 ITE policy developments 2011-2023

This section sets out the evolution of policies that have impacted on the content and delivery of ITE since 2011. These include policy developments specific to ITE and some of those relevant to the education system as a whole. In this section, the developments over that period have been divided into three separate phases.

3.3.1 Setting the direction 2011-2013

In 2011, the Teaching Council published its *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education*[43]. This clearly presented teacher education as a continuum from ITE through to induction and later career development, across the duration of a teacher's career. The realisation of the continuum has led to the reconceptualisation of programmes of initial teacher education, the development of *Droichead*[44], the national professional induction framework for newly qualified teachers and the development of *Cosán*[45], the national framework for teachers' learning.

The reconceptualisation and extension of ITE programmes was recommended in *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young people (2011-2020)*[46] (Literacy and Numeracy Strategy) and enacted in the *Teaching Council's Criteria and Guidelines*[47], both of which were published in 2011. The programme adjustment facilitated additional time to be devoted to core areas, and allowed for:

- extended school placement periods;
- an increased emphasis on portfolio-based learning and reflective practice, and research/enquiry-based learning';
- an increased emphasis on the key strategic priorities of literacy and numeracy, ICT and inclusion;
- a greater variety of modes of delivery to enable wider access to programmes of teacher education.

The Teaching Council then began a process of accrediting all ITE programmes in accordance with these requirements.

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[43] Teaching Council (2011) Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education, policy-on-the-continuum-of-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[44] Teaching Council (2017) Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/_fileupload/droichead-2017/droichead-the-integrated-professional-induction-policy.pdf.

[45] Teaching Council (2016) Cosán: Framework for Teachers' Learning cosan-framework-for-teachers-learning.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[46] Department of Education and Skills (2011) *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young people (2011-2020)* https://assets.gov.ie/24521/9e0e6e3887454197a1da1f9736c01557.pdf

[47] Teaching Council (2011, revised 2017) Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers criteria-and-guidelines-for-programme-providers-march-2017-.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*[48] set the direction for the transformation of the higher education system. This involved a:

- strategic vision for the sector rooted in innovation in research and teaching and learning, and enhanced internationalisation;
- a proposed restructuring of the higher education landscape and the incorporation of smaller institutions to create critical mass and scale to meet individual and societal needs, alongside those of industry and enterprise for collaboration to enhance quality and cost effectiveness.

The HEA then published an implementation paper for the 2030 strategy to support this[49].

In 2012, at the request of the then-Minister for Education and Skills, the HEA established an international review panel, chaired by Professor Pasi Sahlberg, to advise on the structure of ITE provision in the State. The panel's report, Report of the International *Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland*[50], published in 2012 (referred to as the *Sahlberg I Report*) envisaged that by 2030, Ireland would have a network of internationally comparable teacher-education institutions offering research-based teacher education and also professional development services on the continuum ranging from early childhood to primary, post-primary to adult education and to in-service training of teachers and leaders. The report recommended that the then-19 separate publicly-funded ITE institutions be reconfigured to provide six new centres of excellence for teacher education. It was envisaged that teacher education would be facilitated at one location within each restructured setting as a 'Centre for Teacher Education' or 'Institute of Teacher Education' and that a strong research base be embedded in each centre. The then-Minister accepted the recommendations and asked the HEA, in consultation with the HEIs, to develop a plan for implementation. Funding of €17.25 million was made available by the HEA up to the end of 2019 to support these projects.

In relation to individual student supports, the grant for students attending a required Gaeltacht placement that had been available from State-funded HEIs was ceased from the 2012/2013 academic year due to financial constraints. This was part of a suite of measures implemented during the recession to achieve reductions in public expenditure.

The Student Grant Scheme (SUSI Grant) arrangements were also changed, in the same period, resulting in a significant reduction in the availability of student grants for postgraduate study.

3.3.2 Moving to implementation 2014-2017

In 2013, the Teaching Council established and introduced a new model of induction for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) entitled *Droichead*. The *Droichead*[51] framework has been implemented by the Council on a phased basis since 2016/2017, supported by the Department of Education, and is now the sole route of induction for all newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

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[48] Department of Education and Skills (2011) Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 National-Strategy-for-Higher-Education-2030.pdf (hea.ie)
[49] Higher Education Authority (2012) Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/04/Towards-a-Higher-Education-Landscape.pdf
[50] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf
[51] Teaching Council (2017) Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/_fileupload/droichead-2017/droichead-the-integrated-professional-induction-policy.pdf

The Council also published *Cosán, the National Framework for Teachers' Learning*[52]. Subsequently, *Cosán* was the subject of a development process, where teachers led a conversation on what *Cosán* might look like in practice. That process involved workshops for schools, as well as national shared learning days and stakeholder events. In October, 2021, the Teaching Council and the Department of Education formally launched the *Action Plan to Support the Growth Phase of Cosán: the National Framework for Teachers' Learning* [53]). That plan marks the transition of Cosán to a growth phase and sets out the role of key support services in supporting that transition.

The Teaching Council completed its first process of accreditation of all ITE programmes in 2015.

Increasing diversity in ITE was a key focus in the third *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019*[54] (National Access Plan) (subsequently extended to 2021). Under the National Access Plan, the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH), was established in 2017 to provide funding support. PATH is broken into three strands of which PATH 1 is specific to ITE. Funding of €5.4 million has been allocated to PATH 1 over a six-year period from 2017/18. The objectives of PATH 1 are to:

- increase the number of students from under-represented groups entering initial teacher education;
- provide more role models for students from these groups, demonstrating that there are pathways open to them to realise their potential through education.

The Department's Inspectorate published *Looking at Our School 2016: a Quality framework for Primary (and equivalent for post-primary)*[55] *(referred to as Looking at Our School)*, in 2016. The framework provides a unified and coherent set of standards for two dimensions of the work of schools: teaching and learning and also, leadership and management. The framework and the supporting material are designed for teachers and for school leaders to use in identifying and implementing the most effective and engaging teaching, learning and assessment approaches and in enhancing the quality of leadership in their school and to support the School Self-Evaluation

In 2016, the Department's Inspectorate was expanded to incorporate early learning and care and specifically education inspections of settings providing the universal Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme.

The Department of Education published several overarching strategies with implications for all of education, including ITE, such as the *Digital Strategy for Schools*[56], the *STEM Education Policy*

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[52] Teaching Council (2016) Cosán: Framework for Teachers' Learning cosan-framework-for-teachers-learning.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[53] Department of Education and Teaching Council (2021) *Action Plan to Support the Growth Phase of Cosán: the National Framework for Teachers' Learning* https://assets.gov.ie/214940/3a830db4-1f83-4902-a5f6-51265d2d5f80.pdf

[54] Department of Education and Skills and Higher Education Authority (2015) National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019 https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Plan-for-Equity-of-Access-to-Higher-Education-2015-2019.pdf

[55] Department of Education and Skills (2016) School Self-Evaluation and Looking at our School 2016: a Quality framework for Primary / Post-Primary http://schoolself-evaluation.ie/

[56] Department of Education and Skills (2015) Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020 https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/69fb88-digital-strategy-for-schools/

Statement[57] and the *DEIS Plan 2017*[58]. A list of key strategies and policies is included at Appendix 3.

New curriculum frameworks and specifications were introduced to schools, including the Primary Language Curriculum, the Framework for Junior Cycle and new subjects at Senior Cycle (Politics and Society, Computer Science). These developments have required adjustment from all in education to successfully integrate new learning-outcome-based approaches in the classroom and their introduction has been matched by substantial continuing professional development opportunities provided by Department-funded teacher-education support services.

Striking the Balance (Teacher Supply in Ireland: Technical Working Group Report), was produced by the Teaching Council and published in 2017[59], to progress development of a model for teacher supply and demand. The Department's *Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022*[60] aimed to increase the supply of teachers who can deliver high-quality Irish-medium education in primary and post-primary schools, including Gaeltacht schools.

3.3.3 Moving on 2018-2023

In 2018, Professor Sahlberg was commissioned by the HEA to review the extent to which the recommendations of the *Sahlberg I Report*[61] had been implemented. The report *The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform* (referred to as the *Sahlberg II Report)*[62], published in 2019, noted considerable progress overall and modified the recommendations in some key respects. It found that the recommendations regarding restructuring had been implemented fully in relation to three centres: DCU Institute of Education; Maynooth University; and University College Cork/Cork IT.

Policy in relation to further and higher education has evolved considerably over this period. Legislation providing for the establishment of technological universities (TUs) was enacted in 2018. A TU has a mission and ethos that is aligned and consistent with the current mission and focus of institutes of technology, but will provide programmes at all levels of the National Framework of Qualifications from Levels 6 to 10. In 2020, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) was established. DFHERIS has responsibility for policy for the higher and further education sectors, which were previously under the remit of the then-Department of Education and Skills. DFHERIS provides funding to the HEA, which in turn allocates core funding to HEA designated State-funded HEIs (Marino Institute of Education is not HEA designated). The Department of Education retained lead policy responsibility for ITE.

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[57] Department of Education and Skills (2017) STEM Education Policy Statement 2017-2026 https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/4d40d5-stem-education-policy/
[58] Department of Education and Skills (2017) DEIS Plan 2017 https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/24451/ba1553e873864a559266d344b4c78660.pdf#page=null
[59] Teaching Council (2017) *Striking the Balance. Teacher Supply in Ireland: Technical Working Group Report* https://assets.gov.ie/24682/d0040b68e60642078a17b8b422a5536e.pdf
[60] Department of Education and Skills (2017) Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022 https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/5cfd73-policy-on-gaeltacht-education-2017-2022/
[61] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf
[62] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform Publications | Higher Education Authority (hea.ie)

DFHERIS has responsibility for the *National Access Plan*[63] and the *Action Plan for increasing Traveller Participation in Higher Education*[64]. The fourth higher education *National Access Plan*[65] was published by DFHERIS and the HEA in August 2022. The plan builds on the gains made under the previous plan and will act to continue to support inclusion and diversity within the student body at third level, including student teachers[66].

The Teaching Council completed its review of the standards for programmes of ITE and, in 2020, published *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*[67], along with revised *Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-primary)*[68]. All new ITE programmes submitted to the Teaching Council for accreditation must now be in alignment with *Céim*. Existing programmes were realigned in accordance with *Céim* for first year intakes from 1 September 2022. The review process leading to accreditation in accordance with *Céim* for those programmes commenced in 2021 and will conclude at the end of 2023. In addition, a number of working groups have met to progress actions outlined in the *Report and Action Plan of the Working Group on School Placement* [69], which was published jointly by the Minister for Education and the Teaching Council in 2021.

The Department of Education established the Teacher Supply Steering Group in 2018 and published the *Teacher Supply Action Plan*[70] to support the alignment of teacher demand and supply in primary and post-primary schools. The implementation of the plan has required close co-operation between the Department and a range of education partners, including the Teaching Council, HEA, HEIs and school-management bodies and ongoing consultations with stakeholders, including the teacher unions. A range of measures to support the supply of teachers has been implemented, including the creation of substitute teacher supply panels at primary level, the provision of programmes to upskill post primary teachers to teach an additional subject and work on improving data to support the development of a model of teacher demand and supply[71].

The grant to cover the cost of the Gaeltacht Learning Period at primary was restored from the 2020/2021 academic year. Changes to the student grant scheme (SUSI grants) since 2020 have brought more students into postgraduate grant eligibility and increased the fee contribution available towards their studies.

Curriculum and policy development continued to evolve. In 2022, the Minister for Education announced the planned reform of the Senior Cycle programme. In March 2023, a new *Primary Curriculum Framework*[72] was launched by the Minister. The framework is designed to cater for all

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[63] Department of Education and Skills and Higher Education Authority (2015) National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019 https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Plan-for-Equity-of-Access-to-Higher-Education-2015-2019.pdf

[64] Department of Education and Skills (2019) Action plan for increasing Traveller participation in higher education (2019-2021) gov.ie - Action plan for increasing Traveller participation in higher education (www.gov.ie)

[65] Department of Further and Higher Education Research Innovation and Science (2022) National Access Plan: A Strategic Action Plan for Equity of Access, Participation and Success in Higher Education 2022-2028. gov.ie - National Access Plan, 2022 to 2028 (www.gov.ie)

[66]

[67] Teaching Council (2020) Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[68] Teaching Council (2020) Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-Primary) https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/curricular-subject-requirements.pdf

[69] Teaching Council (2021) Report and Action Plan of the Working Group on School Placement Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group - Teaching Council

[70] Department of Education and Skills (2018) Teacher Supply Action Plan https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9e39b3-teacher-supply-action-plan/

[71] Department of Education (2021) Developing a Teacher Demand and Supply Model for Ireland 2021-2038 A Technical Report https://assets.gov.ie/136246/69e07296-94b9-4ebd-8e6c-4bd789161893.pdf

[72] https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/027ad-primary-curriculum-framework/#draft-primary-curriculum-framework

primary and special schools and sets out the vision and principles for a redeveloped, modern curriculum including the introduction of modern foreign languages at primary level. *Aistear*,[73] the early childhood curriculum framework for ages birth to six years is also in the process of being updated by the NCCA.

The DEIS programme was also expanded in March 2022 to include a further 322 schools as of September 1, 2022[74].

In 2019, students were first enrolled on the new Irish-medium primary Bachelor of Education programme, established as a key action under the *Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022*[75]. Work was also begun on the development of a comprehensive policy on Irish-medium education for areas outside of the Gaeltacht, with an intradepartmental group established in 2021. This work will include consideration of the effectiveness of ITE programmes for Irish-medium education, an understanding of the level of Irish required to teach in Irish-medium primary and post-primary schools on exit from ITE programmes and students'/graduates' views on teaching in Irish-medium schools.

In addition to planned developments, the entire education system faced unprecedented challenges due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The periods of school closures and accompanying remote learning, from 2020, highlighted the need for teachers to have strong digital competency and to ensure that appropriate strategies are in place to engage with the education of those with additional needs. *The Annual Report of the Special Rapporteur on Child Protection 2021*[76] highlights the challenges to children and young people's learning which resulted from the lockdown and move to remote learning, but notes that these were not evenly spread and that children with special educational needs and children from disadvantaged backgrounds suffered most.

In relation to ITE programmes, all content had to move online, as HEI on-campus facilities were closed for periods of time. HEIs had to develop the flexibility to operate in keeping with evolving public-health advice, to ensure that there would be a continued supply of teachers for the system while maintaining standards. Adjusted arrangements involved a significant level of collaboration from HEIs and other stakeholders with the Teaching Council and both departments (DE and DFHERIS), focusing on addressing teacher-supply pressures, developing a new online Gaeltacht placement programme at primary and developing guidance on school placements. *A School Placement Innovation Report*[77], published by the Teaching Council in September 2021, showcased the many ways in which HEIs developed innovative practices in response to the practical challenges to programme delivery due to the pandemic. Student teachers provided significant supports to the school system, across this period, in carrying out substitution in schools, both in parallel with their normal coursework. All policy work under development will have to reflect on the experiences from the pandemic. A new *Digital Strategy for Schools*[78], published in April 2022, is particularly important in this regard, as is the inclusion of digital skills as one of the core elements in *Céim*.

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[73] National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2009) Aistear https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Early-Childhood/

[74] Department of Education (2022) The Refined DEIS Identification Model gov.ie - Extension of DEIS to further schools (www.gov.ie)

[75] Department of Education and Skills (2017) Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022 https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/5cfd73-policy-on-gaeltacht-education-2017-2022/

[76] Special Rapporteur on Child Protection (2022) Annual Report of the Special Rapporteur on Child Protection 2021 https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/214234/9e893871-ecb7-4a28-879a-d0a83d5bc7e2.pdf#page=null

[77] Teaching Council (2021) School Placement Innovation Report school-placement-innovation-report-2021.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[78] Digital Strategy for Schools to 2027 gov.ie - Digital Strategy for Schools to 2027 (www.gov.ie)

A list of key policies and strategies relevant to ITE is included in Appendix 3. The list includes publications from the Department of Education and publications led by other departments/agencies which have direct implications for ITE.

All of these reforms and developments have the capacity to impact on ITE programmes and may necessitate the development of new approaches, such as a stronger focus on assessment literacy within post-primary ITE programmes or the additional of modern foreign language elements to primary ITE programmes, or even new programmes in some instances.

3.4 Connecting ITE across the continuum of education: Early Learning and Care and Further Education and Training

While this policy statement is focusing on ITE in respect of the primary and post-primary school sector, it is clear that there are strong connections and overlaps with developments in early learning and care and further education and training.

First 5,the Whole of Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families,[79] places a strong emphasis on the importance of supporting positive transitions between early learning and care and schools.

A similar situation arises relating to the crossover between post-primary and further education and training, for those aged 16 and above.

Early Learning and Care

In the last 10 years, a number of very significant structural and policy changes have taken place in the ELC sector in Ireland, and public investment in the sector has now increased to over one billion euro per year to support these. However, the sector is still at a relatively early stage of development, in terms of initial training of early years educators, although ambitious plans have been published for upskilling the workforce over the years ahead.

The vision for the sector, and a roadmap to achieve it, are set out in *First 5*[80], which is a whole-of-Government strategy, led by Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), covering the period 2019-2028. *First 5* committed to a Workforce Plan which would bring the sector towards a graduate-led workforce, raise the profile of careers in the sector and aim to ensure sufficient numbers of staff at all levels within the sector. There is a much greater number and range of qualifications for the early learning and care sector than is the case for primary and post-primary, and a wider range of institutions providing those qualifications. As acknowledged in *Nurturing Skills: The Workforce Plan for Early Learning and Care and School-Age Childcare 2022-2028*[81], there is no clear consensus on the terminology to describe the profession, which will be a matter for a future decision by a professional body for the sector. The

[79] Government of Ireland (2019) First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028 https://assets.gov.ie/31184/62acc54f4bdf4405b74e53a4afb8e71b.pdf

[80] Government of Ireland (2019) First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028 https://assets.gov.ie/31184/62acc54f4bdf4405b74e53a4afb8e71b.pdf

[81] Government of Ireland (2021) Nurturing Skills: The Workforce Plan for Early Learning and Care and School-Age Childcare 2022-2028 gov.ie - Nurturing Skills: The Workforce Plan for Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Age Childcare (SAC), 2022-2028 (www.gov.ie)

workforce plan settled on a working title of early years educator, for those working in centre-based ELC.

In accordance with *First 5*, Professional Award Criteria and Guidelines (PACG)[82] for Initial Professional Education (Level 7 and 8) degree programmes for ELC were published in 2019, following approval by both the then-Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister for Children, and Youth Affairs. All programmes will in future have to be consistent with the PACG in order to be relevant to DCEDIY funding schemes and to this end, the two Ministers established a Qualifications Advisory Board (QAB), to which course providers were invited to submit proposals for programmes for review. Since being established in 2020, the QAB has approved almost 40 ELC degree programmes (at level 7 and 8). Providers continue to engage with the QAB and programmes continue to be submitted for approval. Under the terms of reference the QAB will be commencing an Implementation Review Process of approved programmes to ensure their continued adherence to the PACG, and will include site visits. The PACG require that all students have structured and supervised professional practice placement.

A number of the institutions that provide ITE at primary and post-primary level also provide initial education and professional development programmes for those working in early learning and care. Unlike at primary and post-primary, the Teaching Council has no remit in relation to qualifications or standards for the early learning and care sector.

Nurturing Skills[83] has set out further plans:

- to support the further development and application of the career frameworks across the sector, and to strengthen career pathways and career development opportunities for early years educators and school-age childcare practitioners;
- to raise the qualification levels in the sector;
- to develop a national continuous professional development (CPD) system;
- to support recruitment, retention and diversity of staff;
- for incremental movement towards regulation of the sector.

The workforce plan also looks at the specific needs of the Irish-medium sector.

The planned improvements in the ELC sector are supported by a new funding stream, Core Funding, which was launched in September 2022. Among other objectives, Core Funding supports ELC services to meet the cost of increases in minimum rates of pay in the sector that are set out in Employment Regulation Orders (EROs) for Early Years Services, which also came into effect in September 2022. The EROs resulted from a process begun by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth that led to establishment of a Joint Labour Committee for Early Years Services.

Aistear[84] was developed by the NCCA in 2009. The framework uses four interconnected themes to describe children's learning and development: well-being; identity and belonging; communicating; and exploring and thinking. *Aistear* includes suggestions on ways in which parents can support their children's early learning. Since its development, *Aistear* has supported quality on many levels across the range of services that support the learning and care of children from birth to six years old, including early learning and care settings and primary schools. The

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[82] Department of Education and Skills (2019) Professional Award Criteria and Guidelines for Initial Professional Education (Level 7 and Level 8) Degree Programmes for the Early Learning and Care (ELC) Sector in Ireland gov.ie - Professional Award Criteria and Guidelines (www.gov.ie)
[83] Government of Ireland (2021) Nurturing Skills: The Workforce Plan for Early Learning and Care and School-Age Childcare 2022-2028 gov.ie - Nurturing Skills: The Workforce Plan for Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Age Childcare (SAC), 2022-2028 (www.gov.ie)
[84] National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2009) Aistear https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Early-Childhood/

NCCA is currently in the process of updating *Aistear*, which will include consideration of the links between *Aistear* and the primary curriculum.

Measures to support the use of *Aistear* are rolled out in an integrated way with supports for the *Síolta* national quality framework under the *National Síolta Aistear Initiative* (NSAI)[85] led by the Department of Education and funded by the DCEDIY. *Aistear* is embedded in initial/pre-service training programmes (leading to qualifications at Levels 5, 6, 7 and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications/NFQ) and in a range of training courses aimed at the continuing professional development of early years educators.

The Department of Education Inspectorate has carried out inspections of Early Learning and Care services that provide the ECCE programme since 2016, and from 2023 is carrying out inspections of all publicly funded ELC services. The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate is the statutory regulator for ELC and carries out inspections of all registered ELC services. The inspection frameworks for both the Department of Education Inspectorate and the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate are both informed by *Aistear* and *Síolta*[86], the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education

Further Education and Training

Further education and training (FET) is defined as tuition for learners, who are normally 16 years of age or older, and attending education and training settings outside post-primary schools. In the main, FET provision is offered across the 16 education and training boards. The system currently supports around 200,000 unique learners every year and provides a continuum of learning opportunities from Level 1 to Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Since 24 January 2014, all teachers working in recognised schools or centres of education are required to hold registration with the Council in order to receive a State-funded salary.

The Teaching Council registers teachers under further education in line with the Teaching Council Acts and the *Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016*[87]. Registration under Route 3 requires a teacher-education qualification suitable for the purposes of teaching in FE settings and can be completed as part of an undergraduate degree or in addition to an undergraduate degree accredited in accordance with the *Further Education: General and Programme Requirements for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Qualifications*[88].

A number of ITE providers for primary and post-primary are accredited by the Teaching Council to provide programmes that lead to a qualification as a further education teacher under Route 3:

- DCU
- Maynooth University
- Mary Immaculate College
- Marino Institute of Education
- NCAD
- University of Galway

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[85] Department of Children Equality Disability Integration and Youth (2016) National Síolta Aistear Initiative https://www.aistearsiolta.ie/en/introduction/overview/
[86] Department of Education and Skills (2006) the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education. Final Handbook (siolta.ie)
[87] Teaching Council (2016) Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations 2016 Registration - Teaching Council
[88] Teaching Council (2011). Further Education: General and Programme Requirements for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Qualifications further-education-general-and-programme-requirements-for-the-accreditation-of-teacher-education-qualifications.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

In addition to the above institutions, there are two further HEIs accredited to provide a Further Education Teacher qualification as recognised by the Teaching Council:

- South East Technological University [89]
- National College of Ireland.

FET practitioners, such as resource persons or tutors, working in non-teacher roles within recognised schools, or in contexts which are not designated as 'recognised schools', such as adult education or training centres, do not need to be registered with the Teaching Council in variability in terms of roles and requirements can be seen....

The Future FET: Transforming Learning: the National Further Education and Training Strategy (2020-2024[90]), includes three key strategic priorities of building skills, fostering inclusion and creating pathways.

The role of ITE is linked to the creating-pathways priority. One of the four enabling themes of the strategy is staffing, capabilities and structures. This theme sets out the following priorities with regard to staffing:

- to facilitate a more flexible deployment of staff to meet evolving needs of learners, it is imperative that there is agreement on an appropriate future staffing framework, which breaks down the barriers between different FET settings and programmes. As part of this, the strategy refers to looking at the role of all grades providing tuition across FET settings, and how these roles can evolve and be effectively deployed across FET settings, and within an integrated FET college of the future;
- to further enable the expertise and commitment of FET practitioners, a keen focus on professional development is required;
- the quality assurance structure across FET is fundamental to developing curricula, teaching, learning and assessment, maintaining standards and enhancing quality. There has been significant progress in developing education and training board (ETB) capability in quality assurance, with a reengagement process with QQI, quality enhancement plans agreed, and ETB-wide quality reviews now underway.

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[89] Formerly Waterford Institute of Technology
[90] SOLAS (2020) Future FET: Transforming Learning The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/64d0718c9e/solas_fet_strategy_web.pdf

Section 4: vision, guiding principles and goals to 2030

Section 4: vision, guiding principles and goals to 2030

There is a strong commitment and drive among those involved in ITE to provide high-quality support and preparation of student teachers for their professional life. While recognising that ITE is the first step on the continuum of teacher education, there is a clear interest from all stakeholders in working together to ensure high-quality ITE that is responsive to the needs of the education system, and that recognises developments in other sectors of education.

In supporting the commitment and drive of all those involved in ITE, the Department of Education now sets out our Vision for ITE to 2030, which is underpinned by a series of guiding principles. From this, we have developed six high-level goals, which will guide our progress over the next seven years.

In developing this vision, the Department reflected on the themes emerging from the consultation process as set out in Section 6 and the findings from relevant recent research and reports that impact on ITE as highlighted in Section 7.

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Our Vision

All student teachers in Ireland will experience high-quality initial teacher education, within university-led centres of excellence, to equip them with the foundational competencies and learning experiences that will help them to embrace the constantly evolving challenges of supporting all learners in the 21st century, underpinned by professional collaboration, research, reflective practice, creativity and wellbeing.

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Guiding principles underpinning our vision

1:   We are firm in our desire to attract high quality, diverse candidates to the teaching profession.

2:   We recognise that ITE is the first step on the continuum of teacher education, the teacher's lifelong learning journey as a professional.

3:   We expect all current and future ITE programmes to fully meet the standards outlined in *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*.

4:   ITE will prepare student teachers for entry into a teaching profession underpinned by a Code of Professional Conduct.

5:   In addition to meeting the standards in *Céim*, we envisage strong collaboration of ITE with other stakeholders to inform and support continuous improvement.

6:   We expect ITE provision to have due regard to the needs of the school system, in particular teacher supply needs.

7:   ITE will continue to need both concurrent and consecutive programmes. This includes continued focus on the provision of four-year concurrent programmes at post-primary.

8:   We expect ITE provision to be led by a small number of university-led centres of teacher education excellence, each of which will have a critical mass to provide for good teaching, research and international co-operation and structures to ensure meaningful collaboration across education sectors from ELC to FET. The centres will be based on the seven centres as recommended in the *Sahlberg 2* report (see Appendix 5).

9:   We recognise the need for consistency of approach in policy on ITE, insofar as is appropriate in a sector with established public and private provision.

10:   We acknowledge the need for funding arrangements to recognise the needs of ITE.

11:   We believe that there should be better evidence available on ITE, as regards outcomes from ITE programmes and to underpin current and future policy developments.

12:   We recognise that a coherent whole-of-Government approach will be needed to implement the vision and goals in this policy statement.

6 Initial Teacher Education Goals

Goal 1: Attractive and accessible

■ Initial Teacher Education is attractive for high-quality candidates and accessible to students from a diversity of backgrounds

Goal 2: 21st century ready

■ ITE Programmes will prepare student teachers to embrace the constantly evolving challenges of supporting all learners in the 21st century.

Goal 3: connected and relevant

■ ITE is strongly connected with and relevant to the needs of the education system

Goal 4: Structured for high-quality provision

■ Initial Teacher Education structures are well placed to enable high-quality ITE provision

Goal 5: A collaborative and communicative System

■ Systems and policies are in place to enable collaboration across the different sectors of education and to improve communication

Goal 6: Programmes based on research

■ A strong research base is established to support ITE programme and policy development and design into the future

In order to ensure a strong focus and achieve measurable progress across the timeframe to 2030, we will take a phased approach to implementation by developing actions, under these goals, across three phases:

- Phase 1 – actions for the period from 2023-2024
- Phase 2 – actions for the period from 2025-2027
- Phase 3 – actions for the period from 2028-2030

An implementation plan which will be developed for each of the three phases will be used to measure progress against the high level goals of the policy statement. At the end of each period, a review of the implementation plan will be published.

Indicators will also be used to track progress. As part of the implementation plan in phase 1 we will focus on the development of the relevant datasets and baselines for indicators to be used throughout the lifecycle of the policy. It is envisaged that these will be used to a greater degree throughout phase 2 and phase 3. Phase 1 will also focus on establishing systems for greater collaboration and discussion on a range of issues. It is envisaged that this collaboration will lead to a shared understanding of the relevant issues amongst stakeholders and will allow for the development of more defined actions for phase 2 and 3.

Section 5: implementation plan – phase 1 (2023-2024)

Section 5: implementation plan – phase 1 2023-2024

This implementation plan sets out the actions that will be taken to progress the high-level goals of the policy statement for the first phase: 2023-2024. Each of the goals has a number of associated actions for delivery within the period. To ensure that we are making and tracking our progress, we have developed a set of indicators against each goal. At the end of phase 1, a report will be published to outline progress made.

Goal 1: Initial teacher education is attractive for high-quality candidates and accessible for those from a diversity of backgrounds

Objective:

Attracting high-quality candidates to teaching remains a key driver of quality in the education system and is a priority. This includes attracting students with high levels of proficiency in the Irish language to cater for the teaching of Irish and through Irish in our schools. We recognise there are challenges with regard to diversity in the teaching profession. The lack of diversity deprives the system of potential role models. We need to be clear that the selection processes for ITE must be fit for purpose. We need to understand the impact of perceived barriers to accessing ITE and how to address these to attract and retain high-quality candidates from more diverse backgrounds.

1.1	Attract high-quality candidates to ITE			
	1.1.1	Review existing research to better understand the link between current entry standards and progress in ITE	DE	Q4 2024
	1.1.2	Look at options for attracting students with a high level of Irish language proficiency including consideration of the existing minimum entry requirement for Irish at primary in light of the proposed development of new Leaving Certificate specification/s by the NCCA, ongoing implementation of the Policy on Gaeltacht Education and the development of the policy on Irish medium education	DE	Q4 2024
	1.1.3	Commission Teaching Council and Department of Education joint longitudinal research project into beginning teachers educational and professional journeys	DE, TC	Q2 2023
	1.1.4	Consider how the proposed Teaching Council and Department of Education joint longitudinal research project can improve understanding of the attractiveness of different models of ITE	DE,TC	Q4 2023
	1.1.5	Monitor the level of applications, enrolments to and graduations from ITE programmes	DE	Ongoing

47	**1.1.6**	Design and sustain a promotional campaign to promote the teaching profession as a potential career to second and third level students and career changers	TC, DE, School Management Bodies, HEIs	Ongoing
1.2	**Increase the diversity of student teacher cohort**			
	1.2.1	Further develop baseline data on diversity in initial teacher education programmes from priority groups, under the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2022-2028	DFHERIS, DE, HEA, HEIs	Q4 2023
	1.2.2	Commence dialogue to explore whether baseline data on diversity in ITE across other groups (male/female/ethnicity, etc.) can be established	DE, DFHERIS	Q2 2023
	1.2.3	Through the evaluation of PATH 1, consider the impact of PATH 1 initiatives on students from priority groups' ability to access ITE, including their ability to meet entry requirements and overcome any perceived barriers to accessing ITE, under the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2022-2028	DFHERIS	Q4 2024
	1.2.4	Commission research which will improve the available evidence of how initial teacher education programmes support the supply, diversity (e.g. socio-economic status/gender/ethnicity, etc.) and retention of NQTs in teaching during their early careers	DE,TC	Q4 2024
	1.2.5	Promote diversity in the teaching profession by developing awareness amongst schools, National Access Plan priority groups and guidance counsellors of pathways to teaching through PATH 1	HEIs, DE, DFHERIS, TC, School Management Bodies	Ongoing
	1.2.6	Consider international examples of entry routes to the teaching profession which facilitate those who need greater flexibility in access, while maintaining standards set by the Teaching Council	DE,TC	Q4 2023

Indicators:

- the number of applicants to primary and post-primary ITE programmes;
- the number of enrolments in ITE from students of diverse backgrounds.

Goal 2: Initial teacher education programmes will prepare student teachers to embrace constantly evolving challenges in supporting all learners in the 21st century

Objective:

High-quality ITE programmes fully meet the Teaching Council's accreditation standards, as set out in Céim, and are prepared for continuous update and improvement, informed by strong feedback loops within ITE and between ITE and schools, support services, education partners and policy.

2.1	Continue to ensure ITE programmes are of the highest quality		
	2.1.1	All ITE programmes will be submitted for the second cycle of accreditation under *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*	HEIs, TC	Q4 2023
	2.1.2	Establish a consultative forum to collaborate and share expertise of ITE providers and policy makers on the achievement of learning outcomes from ITE programmes and the evidence available of standards at exit, mindful of HEI autonomy, across areas such as inclusive education, mathematics and Irish (in English-medium schools, Irish medium schools and Gaeltacht settings)	TC, DE, HEIs, student teachers, education partners, relevant stakeholder groups	Q4 2024
2.2	Ensure student teachers are prepared to support pupils' transitions between stages of education		
	2.2.1	Report on student teachers' ability to support transitions across early learning and care, primary, post-primary and further education and training in both the English-medium and Irish-medium contexts	HEIs	Q3 2023
2.3	Seek to increase internationalisation of ITE programmes		
	2.3.1	Consider current international links in ITE programmes and how these can be strengthened, including through participation in the Erasmus+ Teacher Academies programme	HEIs, DE, TC	Q3 2023
	2.3.2	Review the experience of those Irish HEIs engaging in projects under the initial round of funding from the Erasmus + Teacher Academies programme	DE	Q4 2023
	2.3.3	Continue to engage with and monitor developments at EU level in respect of the concepts of the European Education Area and a European Teacher	DE	Ongoing

	2.4		**Work towards a consistent quality experience of school placement across diverse settings, including special classes and DEIS schools**		
		2.4.1	Progress the recommendations of the School Placement Systems Working Group	Placement Systems Working Group members	Q4 2023
		2.4.2	Progress the recommendations of the Treoraithe Professional Learning Group in relation to a model of professional learning for Treoraithe and school-based personnel	Treoraithe Professional Learning Group members	Q3 2023
		2.4.3	Support Treoraithe in using *Cosán* to guide and acknowledge their learning, as outlined in the *Cosán Action Plan.*	DE, TC, HEIs	Ongoing
		2.4.4	Progress the recommendations of the School Placement Implementation Group	TC, DE, HEIs, Management Bodies, Unions, Student Teachers	Q1 2024
		2.4.5	All student teachers, for a period of two weeks, should observe the teaching of one of the following: a) teacher in a special school; b) special class teacher in a mainstream school; c) special education teacher as part of their extended school placement during the second half of their programme.	TC, HEIs	Q4 2024
		2.4.6	Work towards requiring that student teachers at primary and post-primary level spend at least one placement in a special education setting	TC, DE	Q4 2024
	2.5		**Continue to ensure that ITE prepares student teachers to meet the needs of all learners**		
		2.5.1	Improve the availability of data on the diversity of school placement settings including DEIS and special education settings	TC, DE	Q1 2024
		2.5.2	Explore how the core element of inclusive education in *Céim* is helping to prepare student teachers to teach students of all abilities and in all settings (including special-	TC, DE	Q2 2024

			education settings), through their initial teacher education		
2.6	**Strengthen student teachers' understanding of the importance of research to their work as teachers**				
		2.6.1	Report on how student teachers' understanding of the importance of research to their journey as professionals is developed through their ITE programmes	HEIs	Q3 2023

Indicators:

- the number of ITE programmes meeting the standard required by Céim in the second cycle of accreditation;
- relevant stakeholders engage in dialogue on exit standards;
- student teachers experience a diverse range of school placements.

Goal 3: Initial teacher education is strongly connected with and relevant to the needs of the education system

Objective:

The provision of ITE should be informed by the needs of the education system. This should take into account the emerging data in relation to teacher supply and demand.

3.1	**Continue to update the existing model of forecasting teacher demand and supply at both primary and post-primary levels**				
		3.1.1	Continue to research and review projections of primary-teacher demand and supply and post-primary teacher demand and supply, at a subject level	DE,TC	Ongoing
		3.1.2	Use existing and new datasets for improved data matching and more streamlined data analysis of teacher supply and demand	DE, TC & other stakeholders	Ongoing
		3.1.3	Use regional projections for primary and post-primary teacher demand and supply for ITE planning	DE,TC	Ongoing
		3.1.4	Examine how the supply of teachers and other staff with a high standard of Irish can be increased to meet demand in Irish-medium education settings	DE. TC	Ongoing
3.2	**Develop a framework for engagement with ITE providers to ensure supply of NQTs is aligned with identified needs of the system**				
		3.2.1	Consider the need for a legal framework to ensure that any consideration of new or expanded ITE provision has due regard to the available data on teacher-supply needs	DE, TC	Q4 2024

	3.2.2	Funding policy for initial teacher education should be informed by and take account of the identified needs of the system regarding teacher supply in both the English-medium and Irish-medium sectors.	DFHERIS, DE	Ongoing
3.3	**Encourage development of ITE programmes in priority areas**			
	3.3.1	Progress delivery of second contract for Irish-medium B.Ed. in primary teaching following procurement process	DE	Q3 2024
	3.3.2	Commence a rolling review of the *Curricular Subject Requirements*, with early emphasis on new subjects and languages	TC	Q3 2024
	3.3.3	Expand the current *Curricular Subject Requirements* to reflect Senior Cycle reform plans and consider further expansion to targeted areas where there is a need for teachers	TC	Q4 2023
3.4	**Share information on innovative collaborations between HEI, school and teacher education support services**			
	3.4.1	Collate information on innovative collaboration projects between: HEIs and schools; HEIs and teacher-education support services; and HEIs, schools and teacher-education support services	DE, HEIs	Q4 2023
	3.4.2	Showcase these innovative collaborations and share best practice with others	DE, HEIs	Q4 2024
3.5	**Explore whether ITE providers can play an increased role in development and provision of professional development supports to teachers**			
	3.5.1	Review existing examples of ITE providers' involvement in providing professional development supports to teachers, including the development of teachers' Irish-language proficiency	DE	Q4 2023
	3.5.2	Examine how ITE providers can play a role in supporting professional development for teachers relating to new policy initiatives such as Senior Cycle reform including, specifically, the development and strengthening of assessment skills necessary to support those reforms	DE, HEIs, NCCA, Support Services	Q2 2023
	3.5.3	In line with curricular reforms at school level, enhance the development of assessment literacy and ITE student experience of displaying such literacy, in formative and summative terms.	DE,HEIs	Q4 2023

Indicators:

- the gap between teacher demand and supply
- there is new ITE provision in response to identified needs;
- post-primary curricular subject requirements are expanded to cover new; subjects/areas;
- enhanced awareness of collaborative practices between HEIs and other education stakeholders.

Goal 4: ITE structures are well placed to enable high-quality ITE provision

Objective:

The role and responsibilities of teacher educators is clear and the linkages between ITE and other education sectors are strong. There is a focus on achieving the vision of seven centres of excellence for ITE, each of which has embedded a strong structure of collaboration across the different sectors of education. Finally, it is important to ensure that the model of funding for higher education takes appropriate account of ITE needs.

4.1	Increase clarity on the role of the teacher educator in ITE			
	4.1.1	*Céim* review will examine the relationship between teacher educators and new curricular developments and policy initiatives impacting the primary and post-primary sectors. This will contribute to a national understanding of the role of the teacher educator in ITE	TC, DE, HEIs	Q4 2024
4.2	Strengthen links between teacher educators in ITE and services providing professional development supports to teachers			
	4.2.1	Explore existing links between teacher educators in ITE and Department-funded teacher-education support services, with emphasis on the areas of inclusion including special education, curriculum reform and Irish	DE	Q2 2024
4.3	Continue to progress the vision of seven centres of ITE, with structures in place to support integration and collaboration			
	4.3.1	Establish a framework for ongoing dialogue on matters relating to ITE, including progressing the vision for seven centres of excellence for ITE, through yearly meetings with each centre of excellence and with any private provider	DE, TC, DFHERIS, HEIs	Q3 2023
	4.3.2	Put structures and systems in place to support meaningful collaboration within each centre	HEIs	Ongoing

	4.3.3	Consider how the provision for designation as a "designated institution of higher education" under the Higher Education Authority Act 2022 can progress the recommendation in the *Sahlberg II Report* regarding Marino Institute of Education, when the relevant sections are commenced	DE, DFHERIS, Marino Institute of Education	Q2 2023
	4.3.4	Consider revising Teaching Council legislation to ensure that relevant developments and actions resulting from this ITE policy statement and implementation plan will inform accreditation of new programmes from ITE providers	DE, TC	Q4 2024
4.4	**Funding structures are appropriate to support high-quality ITE**			
	4.4.1	Support implementation of *Funding the Future*, the funding and reform framework for higher education, with a view to enhancing the sustainability of core system funding and appropriately recognising the funding requirements for ITE	DFHERIS, DE	Ongoing
4.5	**Coherence across public and private ITE provision**			
	4.5.1	Work with the existing private provider to further develop its alignment with the vision of the policy for centres of excellence in ITE	DE, TC, Hibernia College	Q1 2024

Indicators:

- level of engagement between HEI teacher educators, support services and other relevant stakeholders;
- framework developed for engagement between DE, other stakeholders and ITE centres of excellence;
- level of engagement between DE, other stakeholders and ITE centres of excellence
- level of engagement between DE, other stakeholders and private providers.

Goal 5: systems are in place to improve communication and collaboration across all sectors of education

Objective:

To meet the vision for ITE in this policy statement, linkages within ITE and between ITE and other parts of the education system are strong.

5.1	**Improve communication within ITE and between ITE and other key education stakeholders**			

	5.1.1	Convene annual meeting between HEIs, Teaching Council and Department of Education for updates on curriculum developments, key policy developments and relevant research findings (for example, Primary Curriculum Framework, PISA, TIMSS)	TC, DE	Q2 2023
	5.1.2	Establish an Advisory Group on ITE to support progress on the actions coming from this policy statement	DE and stakeholders	Q4 2023
	5.1.3	Gather information on current arrangements for partnership and feedback between ITE providers and schools to inform future phases	HEIs, DE, TC	Q3 2023
	5.1.4	Consider actions to improve internal communication within HEIs on curriculum and policy developments in ITE	HEIs	Q3 2023
	5.1.5	Consider ways to improve structures for ITE to contribute to curriculum and assessment developments	DE, NCCA, HEIs	Q3 2023
	5.1.6	Continue to invite increased contributions from ITE to the development of Department policies and strategies.	DE	Q2 2023
	5.1.7	Continue to collaborate with teacher education support services to ensure that linkages between ITE and *Droichead* are clear for student teachers and that there is a shared understanding of the depth and breadth of provision on areas of common interest and to avoid any duplication	HEIs, DE	Q3 2023
	5.1.8	Engage with HEIs to ensure consistency of message re *Cosán* and the building of reflective practice methodologies into ITE and other programmes for teachers' professional learning, as outlined in the *Cosán Action Plan*	DE, TC, HEIs	Q4 2023
5.2	**Ensure student representation in the development and implementation of ITE policy**			
	5.2.1	Student-teacher representation will be requested for the Advisory Group on ITE	DE	Q4 2023
5.3	**Further develop collaboration across the different education sectors**			

	5.3.1	Representatives from early learning and care and further education and training will be represented on the Advisory Group on ITE to be established.	DE, DCEDIY, DFHERIS	Q4 2023
	5.3.2	As recommended by the OECD, encourage some joint training/courses in the preparation for early years educators and primary teachers to help raise the recognition of work done by early years educators, inform professional practices of staff in different levels of the education system and support transition practices	DCEDIY, DE, HEIs	Q4 2023

Indicators:

- annual information sharing meetings between DE and HEIs/ITE providers established;
- Advisory Group on ITE established and meeting
- breadth of stakeholder representation within the Advisory Group.

Goal 6: strong research base is established to support ITE programme and policy development and design into the future

Objective:

The evidence base for what is happening currently in ITE is clear and is used to inform potential future innovations. There is access to and use of the research already taking place in ITE by the policy-development process, and new instruments are developed to support system-wide research.

6.1		Create stronger links between ITE research and others in education		
	6.1.1	Assess current opportunities to link research in ITE with others in the education system	DE	Q1 2024
	6.1.2	Increase awareness of platforms for sharing of research findings between ITE and others in education (e.g. T-Rex)	DE	Q2 2024
	6.1.3	Initiate a policy discussion on how best to enable and benefit from research in ITE	DE, TC, HEIs, Support Services, NCCA	Q4 2024
6.2		Strengthen evidence base to inform future ITE developments		

	6.2.1	Consider participation in international reviews to expand information available on teaching and teacher education (e.g. OECD research) as compared to the experience in other jurisdictions	ERC, DE, TC	Q4 2024
	6.2.2	Commission research as part of the proposed Teaching Council and Department of Education joint longitudinal research project which will consider the strengths of various models of ITE	TC, DE	Q4 2023
	6.2.3	Examine international examples of ITE programmes, which allow for increased flexibility between educators in early learning and care, primary, post-primary and further education	DE, DCEDIY, HEIs	Q4 2024
	6.2.4	Continue to engage with relevant OECD research project and policy-development work and review OECD research findings	DE	Ongoing

Indicators:

- level of ITE-based research being shared with other relevant stakeholders in the education system;
- level of international research opportunities being engaged with by Ireland.

Implementation of the policy statement

A 'whole-of-Government' approach, with close collaboration between the three relevant Departments, the Teaching Council and other partners will be key to the successful implementation of the vision and goals of this policy statement, as will the commitment of HEIs, student teachers, support services and other education partners.

An Advisory Group on ITE will be established, with representatives from all relevant sectors, including student teachers, to oversee the implementation of the policy statement.

An ITE Working Group will drive the implementation of actions and co-ordinate reporting on the implementation plan, supported by the Teacher Education Policy (ITE and Professional Development) Section in the Department of Education.

HEIs are asked to commit to a process of annual dialogue, around the actions in this policy statement, involving the Department of Education, Teaching Council and DFHERIS along with DCEDIY as applicable.

Development of phase 2: actions for the period 2025-2027

The focus of Phase 2 of the implementation plan will be to build on the learnings from Phase 1. As indicated earlier, monitoring and review will allow actions to be established in line with identified needs

Section 6: summary of consultation process

Section 6: summary of consultation process

This section outlines the main issues emerging from the consultation process under the broad themes of student teachers, programmes and staffing and structures.

This first theme examined is that of the student teacher. Within this theme, the main topics explored relate to: selection/entry requirements; diversity of student teachers; and ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of teachers to meet the needs of the system.

The second theme focuses on the content of ITE programmes. This section recognises the critical importance of the Teaching Council standards, ITE programmes, the models of ITE provision and linkages with other sectors of education (early learning and care and further education and training).

The third theme relates to the role of the teacher educator, the culture of research within ITE, the wider structures within which ITE operates, notably, the HEIs providing ITE programmes and the overarching policy framework.

6.1 Student teachers

6.1.1 Selection/entry requirements

The consultation process identified the importance of setting minimum entry requirements to primary ITE and its links with upholding standards in our education system. At the same time, contributors also cautioned that the rigid prescription of entry criteria may mitigate against increasing diversity in the profession and teacher supply. As all students are expected to attain a minimum standard to graduate, it was contended that greater flexibility around entry requirements would not impact on educational outcome, although it was also noted that greater supports would then be required to help ensure all students were provided with the opportunity to succeed. Meanwhile, concern was raised that lowering CAO thresholds for entry into ITE programmes, even modestly, may have adverse reputational consequences, even if the impact on the quality of teaching is not discernible.

The prescriptive nature of the *Curricular Subject Requirements*[91] at post-primary was cited as a barrier to participation, impacting on teacher supply in particular subject areas. There was some information provided to suggest that the requirements are too detailed, and that there are difficulties for those with high-level (e.g. a PhD) or professional (e.g. accountancy) qualifications or international students to gain admittance to ITE. It is worth noting here that the main consultation took place before the Teaching Council had published their updated requirements in 2020.

6.1.2 Diversity of the student-teacher cohort

The lack of diversity across the student-teacher cohort was highlighted consistently in the consultation process.

It was pointed out that a range of issues impact on the entry of minorities to third level in general, and not just ITE. These include social and cultural expectations, the traditional role of women as homemakers and caregivers, identity consciousness and potential for discriminatory experiences, and the lack of early education and cost.

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[91] Teaching Council (2020) Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-Primary) https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/curricular-subject-requirements.pdf

The cost of the PME in particular was reported as a factor that impacts negatively on the diversity of the student-teacher cohort, which may impact on a reduction in applications from mature students and students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The relatively high points needed for entry to ITE, along with the requirement for higher level Irish for primary teaching was noted as an obstacle to a more diverse population of student teachers in Ireland.

Some called for additional supports to be provided to assist ethnic minorities to acquire the requisite standard of Irish needed to become teachers. Others advised that it should be easier for candidates with varied life experiences or who have qualified abroad to be registered as teachers in Ireland.

Several advocacy groups made the point that the curriculum/specifications need to be updated to promote and reflect positive images of minority groups.

The benefits associated with the funding targeted at ITE through PATH were referred to, and it was argued that funding for this programme be increased. Information was also provided with regard to innovative projects which are supporting increased diversity, such as Turn to Teaching in Maynooth University, Tobar in Marino Institute of Education (MIE) (both of which are supported by PATH funding), as well as the Migrant Teacher Project in MIE.

6.1.3 Teacher supply

The need to develop a national strategy on teacher supply to address the needs of the system as a whole was consistently highlighted through the consultation process. Providers cautioned that forward planning was critical as there are constraints on how quickly ITE can respond to system needs. A perceived lack of consistency was raised, in relation to the Department's control over programmes and number of entrants as this applies only to State-funded providers at primary level. It was expected that this would become more problematic in the context of expected oversupply at primary as a result of lowering primary enrolments.

The need to consider the long-term impact of teacher-supply measures was also raised, as it was felt that increased availability of programmes could lead to lower CAO points and potentially impact the status of the profession. Concern was raised that employment prospects, pay on graduation and challenges in finding full-time employment at post-primary level were impacting on the overall attractiveness of the profession.

Through the consultation process, it was suggested that more flexible models of entry to ITE and upskilling in particular subject areas (for post-primary) should be available, given the particular demands for teachers in particular subject areas and to meet the needs of Irish-medium education. A number of subject areas for which there is no ITE accreditation available at present were also referenced.

6.2 Programmes

6.2.1 Quality of Content in ITE

All programmes of ITE must meet the Teaching Council's standards for ITE accreditation as now set out in *Céim*[92]. HEIs also outlined how they must meet quality assurance measures for their institution including academic accreditation and external examiners. These standards match the standards that are in place across the Irish higher-education system as a whole, overseen by QQI.

It was noted that ITE providers' capacity to respond to policy change can be hindered by staff levels and the complexity around programme accreditation. Areas identified through the consultation process as requiring closer attention included:

- keeping pace with curricular reform;
- preparedness to teach in increasingly diverse classrooms (e.g. in DEIS schools, special education classes and schools, EAL pupils etc.);
- familiarity with school self-evaluation and the quality framework Looking at our School;
- the need for stronger linkages between ITE, *Droichead* and *Cosán*.

It was suggested that HEIs should provide evidence-based content accredited by relevant expert stakeholders in the area of supporting learners with additional needs.

Some felt that insufficient time was given to this area in existing ITE programmes and called for mandatory modules for student teachers on supports for specific groups of children with learning difficulties.

It was also suggested that ITE should include mandatory assessed modules on anti-racism, equality intercultural awareness, and belonging and inclusion – with particular modules at ITE being delivered by representatives from those communities.

Other contributors acknowledged that it would be difficult for HEIs to include this level of instruction, given the length of ITE programmes and perhaps it may be more appropriate for teachers to access additional supports through professional development throughout their teaching careers.

It was noted that ITE is just one step on the teacher-education continuum, with suggestions that there should be an explicit statement in the strategy about the type of knowledge, skills and values that a teacher is expected to have at the beginning of his/her career. There was a strong commitment to developing the role of student teachers as researchers, contributing to a vision of the student teacher as researcher and lifelong learner throughout their career.

There were differing views on the Teaching Council's post-primary *Curricular Subject Requirements*[93], which must form part of the content of concurrent post-primary ITE programmes and the level of detail needed for these. Where the view was expressed that the requirements need greater detail, this was to ensure that student teachers are well equipped to meet the needs of the classroom.

It was also noted that there is no structure in place for feedback or dialogue between education stakeholders, such as the Department's Support Services and providers of ITE, or links between

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[92] Teaching Council (2020) Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)
[93] Teaching Council (2020) Teaching Council Registration: Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-Primary) https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/curricular-subject-requirements.pdf

schools and higher education teacher-educators, which would help higher education teacher-educators stay up to date with curriculum developments.

Support was expressed for projects that would improve the evidence available to the education system to inform policy but some cautioned against its use for comparison between institutions.

6.2.2 Models of ITE

There was support for the continuation of both concurrent and consecutive entry routes to ITE, with both felt to have different strengths.

Benefits of concurrent models identified included: depth of treatment of the subject matter; lower cost to students; and more efficient route towards qualification. Several providers have developed new four-year concurrent models for post-primary subjects, in response to teacher supply policy. There was a question raised in relation to whether the four-year two-subject concurrent model at post-primary was trying to fit too much into a short space of time.

The value of the two-year consecutive programmes, compared to the shorter programme pre-2011, was highlighted in the consultation process. As the introduction of the Professional Master of Education (PME) coincided with the extension of the programmes to two years, it is difficult to separate discussion of the extended programme from that related to the need for a masters-level qualification. There were a number of comments related to the impact of the two-year programme on diversity of the student-teacher cohort, in particular the number of mature students entering the PME, at both primary and post-primary. To encourage mature and industry-experienced personnel to join the teaching profession, the creation of transfer-into-teaching pathways was proposed in some of the feedback received. However, others counselled against 'fast-track' programmes that would impact on the concept of teaching as a profession.

While there was some explicit support for the introduction of a masters-level qualification for all, other feedback advocated further consideration of this proposal. Perceived advantages of a universal masters-level qualification include enhanced status for the teaching profession, potential impact on student attainment, capacity for extended school placement and the research dimension associated with a masters' qualification. Other contributors suggested that candidates with PME qualifications have an advantage in interviews for teaching posts. Nevertheless, reference was also made that potential lost income, due to the length of the course and fees, are a significant deterrent to students who are considering the PME pathway to teaching. The reduced access to SUSI student grant support for postgraduate study and for part-time study, which coincided with the extension of programme duration, was noted. However, it should be noted that the availability of supports for postgraduate study has increased again recently.

6.2.3 School placement

The critical role of school placement was acknowledged widely, as was the importance of ensuring that student teachers experience a broad range of contexts and class levels. The importance of achieving school placement experience across a variety of settings, e.g. special-education settings, DEIS, Irish-medium education etc., was referenced. Indeed, some called for student teachers to be required to complete a placement in a special-education setting to better prepare student teachers for assignments to those settings upon graduation.

Nevertheless, providers cautioned that meeting the demand for varied experiences, in addition to extended placements, was challenging, both in securing placements and also balancing the need for variety with depth of experience. As there is no requirement on schools to facilitate placement, HEIs rely on establishing relationships with them and on their goodwill. It is very clear

that HEIs appreciate their partnerships with schools. There are different approaches to these partnerships, with some underpinned by written agreement and others on a more informal basis.

The Teaching Council's *Guidelines on School Placeme*nt[94] were welcomed. However, it was felt that there is still scope for greater consistency in the quality of placement experience and that the council should introduce a mandatory assessment activity as part of the school placement process. It was also suggested that additional supports should be provided to student teachers from diverse backgrounds while on school placement.

A systemic gap in structures was noted at national level to support co-operating teachers[95]. A national framework to provide support for school-based teacher educators was suggested. Costs associated with school placements was also reported as a concern for students, as was the reported reticence on the part of some parents to have a student teacher in their child's class. It was noted that the work of the School Placement Working Group should help to address some of the difficulties in this area.

6.2.4 Student-teacher research

There was strong feedback from providers on their commitment to developing the role of student teachers as researchers, contributing to a vision of the student teacher as researcher throughout their career. There were also references to fostering a research mind-set in student teachers that goes beyond research literacy and towards the vision of the teacher as researcher throughout their career. The concept underpinning this approach is that teachers are autonomous professionals who are reflective and systematic in their practice, and are prepared to use a research-based approach in their future work.

However, the sustainability of the current format for supporting student-teacher research in ITE was questioned; this was linked to challenges around funding of ITE.

6.2.5 Linkages between programmes of ITE and ELC/FET

The consultation process provided clear evidence that providers are willing to engage in collaboration with other education sectors, such as early learning and care and further education and training. It was noted that many teacher education programmes are now addressing issues of educational transition from one sector to another more directly than might have been the case in the past. Some institutions have established formal links or cross-delivery of programmes between different parts of the education continuum, e.g. ELC and primary. Others have looked at ways to develop bridging programmes between post-primary and further education teacher programmes. It was also suggested that further research could help to better understand this aspect of learners' experience.

It was also noted, however, that there are important distinctions between the roles applicable to the different sectors and that these need to be recognised.

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[94] Teaching Council (2013) Guidelines on School Placement https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/publications/ite-professional-accreditation/guidelines-on-school-placement.pdf
[95] Teacher from the host school who supports and guides the student teacher during their school placement, now known as Treoraí

6.3 Staffing and structures

6.3.1 Teacher educators in ITE

There was broad agreement on the need for additional clarity around the role of the teacher educator in ITE. It was felt that there is value in having a mix of both subject expertise (e.g. expert in science as a discipline) and professional experience as a teacher available to ITE. There were a range of views relating to the optimum balance between these.

It was noted that the unique workload of a teacher educator in ITE, combined with the university focus on research publications, posed challenges for teacher educators, in particular for promotional prospects. The part-time nature of staffing in ITE (typically placement tutors or part-time lecturers) poses difficulties for ensuring consistency in the provision for students.

Keeping up to date with curriculum and policy developments can also be difficult for teacher educators according to submissions received. It was noted that a national programme of professional learning supports for teacher educators would be helpful in this respect. It was also suggested that there would be value in increased mobility and collaboration between teachers and teacher educators.

6.3.2 A culture of research in ITE

Feedback received through the consultation process reflected a strong commitment to ITE that is research based. However, it was cautioned that Government funding for ITE should be ring-fenced to facilitate the staffing levels necessitated by the nature of such a programme. It was noted that there are challenges associated with the lack of dedicated research funding for ITE. It was suggested that a specific funding model for research in ITE should be considered and/or a research strategy for ITE, on the basis that these would help raise the status and profile of educational research.

It was noted also that the research which is already taking place within ITE is not being harnessed for policy at present.

6.3.3 Funding of ITE

The funding of ITE, within higher education, was raised as an ongoing challenge for HEIs in feedback on the consultation process. It was noted that ITE is expected to meet Teaching Council accreditation requirements, support school placement and prepare students as research practitioners. ITE is also expected to be a research-rich environment with teacher educators involved in research and collaboration, in their own practice, as well as supporting students. It was argued that the HEA funding model does not adequately recognise the specific requirements of ITE which do not apply to many other areas.

6.3.4 ITE landscape

There was considerable feedback, through the consultation process, of the benefits of university-led ITE as opposed to ITE that is focused on the more technical aspects of teaching.

Many examples were provided of how HEIs seek to respond to system needs. There was evidence of collaboration within and across the institutions, with examples ranging from the creation of new cross-sectoral thematic research centres, to specific projects and joint action plans for ITE between different HEIs as part of centres of excellence. It was noted that staff

linkages can be facilitated more easily than student-student linkages. Internationalisation of ITE was referenced as a challenge.

Differences in treatment of institutions by the Department were highlighted, with areas such as the limit on the number of entrants to primary ITE programmes in State-funded providers mentioned.

6.3.5 Policy coherence

A more cohesive collaboration at national level was recommended, particularly among the Department of Education, the HEA and the Teaching Council, and also with the teacher-education support services (note there are now two Departments with oversight, as outlined in subsection 3.3.3 above). It was suggested that there was scope for improved alignment across current policies for ITE, *Droichead* and *Cosán*. It was noted that the Department does not link its main professional learning offerings for teachers to universities, as these are instead provided by Department-funded support services.

The point was also made that student voice needs greater prominence in national dialogue on ITE and in particular in any consultation processes on policy changes in ITE relating to both English-medium and Irish-medium education.

Section 7: relevant research and reports

Section 7: relevant research and reports

This section looks at the main issues emerging from current research literature and reports under the same three broad themes that emerged from the consultation process of student teachers, programmes, staffing and structures. Given the significant level of reform in the ITE sector since 2011, as outlined previously in Section 3, this section looks at more recent research and reports in particular.

7.1 Student teachers

Selection/entry requirements

Attracting high-achieving candidates to teaching is recognised as a feature of high-quality education systems[96]. The literature contends that selection criteria and procedures for regulating entrance into ITE can serve to strengthen and steer the quality of the profession[97] by helping establish whether applicants possess the necessary motivation, skills, personal qualities and subject knowledge[98]. Research also indicates that affective and motivational competences are also relevant and need to be considered in selection of candidates[99].

In 2016, the ESRI published a report commissioned by the Teaching Council, on entry requirements to programmes of ITE[100]. This report concluded that international research provided little evidence of a link between specific entry criteria and performance during and/or after ITE programmes. Consequently, the report found that it was difficult to argue that more stringent entry criteria would be required in Ireland, especially in a context where entrants already have high levels of prior achievement. It also concluded that more stringent entry criteria were also likely to lead to less diversity in the teaching profession, especially a reduction in those entering from DEIS schools.

The high calibre of entrants to ITE in Ireland was noted in both the *Sahlberg I Report*[101] and *Sahlberg II Report*[102], although the latter report noted that this was perhaps not quite as high as in 2011 (in both cases, CAO points achieved on the Leaving Certificate were used as an indicator of calibre). In both reports, it was noted that issues related to supply/demand could impact on the attractiveness of teaching as a career and on the calibre of those aspiring to become teachers.

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[96] Barber, M and Mourshed, M, McKinsey (2007) How the World's Best-Performing Schools Systems Come out on Top?
https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/industries/public%20and%20social%20sector/our%20insights/how%20the%20worlds%20best%20performing%20school%20systems%20come%20out%20on%20top/how_the_world_s_best-performing_school_systems_come_out_on_top.pdf.

[97] European Commission (2015), Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching: A guide on policies to improve initial teacher education, Education and Training 2020 - Schools Policy, Brussels, https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/files/Shaping%20career-long%20perspectives%20on%20teaching.pdf

[98] OECD (2011), Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers, Pointers for Policy Development https://www.oecd.org/education/school/48627229.pdf

[99] OECD (2019) A Flying Start: Improving Initial Teacher Preparation Systems https://www.oecd.org/education/a-flying-start-cf74e549-en.html

[100] Teaching Council/ESRI: Darmody, M and Smyth, E (2016) Entry to Programmes of Initial Teacher Education https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/publications/teacher-education/documents/entry-requirements.pdf

[101] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf

[102] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf

Diversity of the student-teacher cohort

The diversity within the student-teacher cohort can encompass a number of different dimensions, including their:

- socio-economic background;
- ethnicity;
- gender;
- sexuality;
- mature students;
- membership of a particular group or community (e.g. Traveller or Roma).

In Ireland, as in several other OECD countries, the teaching force remains largely homogenous whilst the student population is becoming increasingly diverse. This was reflected in the findings of research conducted by Heinz and Keane in NUI Galway[103], published in 2018, which indicated that 99% of student primary teachers identify as 'white Irish' while the 2016 Census reported that 82.2% of Ireland's population identified similarly. Their findings indicated a need to look critically at Ireland's teacher education and school system, and explore barriers that may prevent individuals from under-represented/minority groups from considering teaching as a career. The research literature highlights the importance of teacher diversity, as findings indicate that same-race teachers have positive effects on ethnic-minority students and on low-income students in terms of motivation, role-modelling and performance[104].

Since 2017, a range of initiatives and partnerships to increase the proportion of students from target groups in ITE have been supported through PATH funding as part of the National Access Plan[105]. These target groups are:

- entrants from socio-economic groups that have low participation in higher education;
- first-time mature students;
- students with disabilities;
- part-time/flexible learners;
- further education and training award holders;
- Irish Travellers.

ITE projects which have been supported by PATH funding include:

- direct entry routes from further education to ITE;
- extra support for students from target groups to transition from school into ITE, including meeting minimum entry requirements;
- strengthening links between HEIs and DEIS schools in their catchment areas.

Early indications are that these programmes are having an impact on target groups' access to ITE. However, it is also clear that these projects may require some years to have full impact, as partnerships must be built up between HEIs and schools[106]. In addition, a number of phases of the Department's Teaching Transforms campaign to promote the teaching profession, ongoing from late 2018 under the *Teacher Supply Action Plan*, have also sought to promote diversity in

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[103] Heinz, M and Keane, E (2018) Socio-demographic composition of primary initial teacher education entrants in Ireland https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03323315.2018.1521731?journalCode=ries20
[104] Department of Education and Skills (2017) DEIS Plan 2017 https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/24451/ba1553e873864a559266d344b4c78660.pdf#page=null
[105] Department of Education and Skills and Higher Education Authority (2015) National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019 https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Plan-for-Equity-of-Access-to-Higher-Education-2015-2019.pdf
[106] Assessment of Early Stage Implementation of PATH 1.

the teaching profession. In 2019/2020, 6.1% of new entrants to primary ITE and 8.7% of new entrants to post-primary ITE were considered disadvantaged compared to 10.8% of new entrants across all of higher education.

Table 4: Number of Teachers by Gender appointed to
Teaching Posts Primary[107] and Post-primary[108] 2020/2021

	Total no of female teachers	%	Total no of male teachers	%	Overall total
Primary	35,518	85%	6,494	15%	42,012
Post-primary	15,367	69%	6,991	31%	22,358

- Note 1: The above figures include principal posts and have been extracted from payroll databases which includes contracted and casual teachers.
- Note 2: There are significant differences within the gender balance of specific subjects at post-primary, e.g. Engineering and Home Economics. [109]

Having a teaching profession which is majority female is not unique to Ireland[110]. It is also a feature of ELC, where 98% of centre-based ELC is provided by women[111]. Research in 2007 explored gender differences in the perception of, and attitudes to, primary teaching among school pupils and students in the colleges of education in Ireland[112]. Drudy's findings indicated that prior educational achievement by young men played a significant role in their patterns of entry into ITE. They also found that significantly more girls were attracted to teaching of all kinds and that more boys than girls considered that primary teaching was best suited to women. Recently published research explores the issue of gender balance and the underrepresentation of males in teaching as one that "requires a much more dynamic and flexible conceptualisation of gender, men, male teachers, and masculinities in education to be recognised"[113]. The research appreciates the potential benefits of increased representation of males, but emphasises the need to move beyond gender assumptions as part of this dialogue.

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[107] Post-primary School Gender Breakdown includes Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools and excludes teachers working in ETB run post-primary schools
[108] While only 2020/2021 figures are represented here, the gender breakdown proportions have remained stable across the past four years of data.
[109] Heinz, M, Keane, E and Davison, K (2021) Gender in initial teacher education: entry patterns, intersectionality and a dialectic rationale for diverse masculinities in schooling, European Journal of Teacher Education, https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2021.1890709
[110] European Parliament (2020) Teaching careers in the EU: Why boys do not want to be teachers https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/642220/EPRS_BRI(2019)642220_EN.pdf
[111] Government of Ireland (2021) Nurturing Skills: The Workforce Plan for Early Learning and Care and School-Age Childcare 2022-2028 https://assets.gov.ie/206497/c2e401c3-335d-46d5-9648-437db4ebccff.pdf
[112] Drudy, S (2006), Gender Differences in Entrance Patterns and Awards in Initial Teacher Education, Irish Educational Studies, v25 n3 p259-273.
[113] Heinz, M and Keane, E (2018) Socio-demographic composition of primary initial teacher education entrants in Ireland https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03323315.2018.1521731?journalCode=ries20

There are also research findings that suggest that student teachers who identify as non-heterosexual are underrepresented in ITE in Ireland[114], and that there are persisting cultural and institutional barriers for sexual-minority (student) teachers in Irish schools and in ITE.

It is widely acknowledged that the teaching profession could be enriched by a greater influx of mature students to ITE, people with varied work and life experiences. However the Progress Review of the National Access Plan and Priorities to 2021[115] published in 2018, reported a drop in mature-student participation in higher education overall. A follow-up study was carried out by Indecon, *Study of Mature Student Participation in Higher Education*[116], to understand this decrease. The findings highlighted the availability of employment as a major influence but also identified cost and managing family/work responsibilities as barriers to mature-student participation. Most mature students (over 80%) took on full-time programmes, with 20% taking on part-time programmes. Older mature students were more likely to study part time.

Teacher supply

Projecting teacher supply and demand is very complex and, not surprisingly, many countries experience problems of teacher shortages, oversupply and unbalanced distribution[117]. While student demographics is a key driver, projecting teacher supply and demand requires in-depth analysis across a range of factors[118]. At post-primary level, subject specialisms and projecting their selection by school students complicate the process further. Research indicates that some caution is needed in balancing the desirable objective of flexible entry which can contribute to teacher supply in shortage areas, but can risk reducing the value of teacher education and so have negative impacts in the longer term[119]. The relative and perceived attractiveness of the teaching profession can also impact on teacher supply. Because of the complexities involved, there is no universal method to project teacher supply and demand.

To address the delicate balance, the OECD advises policy makers to develop longitudinal information systems that facilitate the collection and use of comprehensive data across institutions and over time[120].

The *Sahlberg I Report*[121] expressed concern that the issue of teacher supply and demand had not been addressed in Ireland. To maintain an adequate supply of high-calibre entrants, including those with required subject specialisms, to the teaching profession, it recommended that a more

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[114] Heinz, M, Keane, E and Davison, K (2016) Sexualities of initial teacher education applicants in the Republic of Ireland: addressing the hidden dimension of diversity in teaching, Journal of Education for Teaching https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2017.1251103

[115] Higher Education Authority (2018) Progress Review of the National Access Plan and Priorities to 2021 https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/01/HEA-Progress-Review-2021-NAP.pdf

[116] Higher Education Authority (2021) Study of Mature Student Participation in Higher Education https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2021/06/Study-of-Mature-Student-Participation-in-Higher-Education_June-2021.pdf

[117] OECD (2019), A Flying Start: Improving Initial Teacher Preparation Systems, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/cf74e549-en

[118] *These include: pupil demographics, teacher leave/work patterns (e.g. career breaks), the number of new graduate teachers, number of retirees and resignations from the profession, adjustments to the pupil teacher ratio, geographical location, mobility of teachers across jurisdictions and across other professions and the introduction of new subject specialisms and the perceived attractiveness of the teaching profession.* Department of Education and Skills (2021) Developing a Teacher Demand and Supply Model for Ireland -2021-2038 https://assets.gov.ie/136246/69e07296-94b9-4ebd-8e6c-4bd789161893.pdf

[119] See footnote 117

[120] OECD (2019), A Flying Start: Improving Initial Teacher Preparation Systems, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/cf74e549-en

[121] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf

effective modelling system be developed and that ITE providers be made aware of, and involved in the calculation of supply. It also recommended that HEIs, when considering new ITE programmes, liaise with the relevant authority/authorities in relation to their desirability and viability cautioning that it is a waste of precious staff time and effort to develop programmes for which there is no national need.

The *Sahlberg II Report* [122] acknowledged the work that had been undertaken, under the oversight of the Teacher Supply Steering Group, to ensure that there is an adequate supply of quality teachers to meet the needs of primary and post-primary schools. The report also noted that there was an increase in costs which was felt to be prohibitive for many students.

Since the publication of the *Sahlberg II Report*, efforts have continued to secure a better match of supply with the demand for teachers, as outlined in subsection 3.3.3.

7.2 Programmes

Quality of content in ITE

As outlined above, the Teaching Council's *Criteria and Guidelines* [123] and now *Céim: Standards for Initial Teaching Education* [124], set out the standards against which all programmes of ITE are accredited.

Putting in place structures for ITE to continuously improve is a challenge in all systems [125]. 'An effective and fair means to collect evidence on Initial Teacher Preparation (ITP) programme impact is important to improve ITP systems [126]'. However, the conditions under which increased accountability results in increased quality and outcomes for ITE are not straightforward.

According to the OECD, in ITE systems that use an accreditation process, there is a risk that ITE programmes have few incentives to improve beyond the minimum, represented by the accreditation process. While a robust accreditation process is strongly recommended by the OECD for successful ITE, several countries also have measures related to assessment of outcomes in ITE programmes, which are additional to those within the relevant ITE provider. In South Korea, an employment examination at the end of ITE seeks to ensure that there is a fair assessment of all candidates [127]. In order to graduate in Australia, all students in ITE must have successfully completed a national test to show their personal literacy and numeracy skills [128].

In terms of verifying the impact of programmes, the *Sahlberg II* Report also noted that, "While most centres referred to anecdotal evidence to indicate the success of their restructured

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[122] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf
[123] Teaching Council (2011, revised 2017) Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers criteria-and-guidelines-for-programme-providers-march-2017-.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)
[124] Teaching Council (2020) Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)
[125] European Commission (2015), Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching: A guide on policies to improve initial teacher education, Education and Training 2020 - Schools Policy, Brussels, https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/files/Shaping%20career-long%20perspectives%20on%20teaching.pdf
[126] OECD (2019), A Flying Start: Improving Initial Teacher Preparation Systems, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/cf74e549-en
[127] OECD (2019), A Flying Start: Improving Initial Teacher Preparation Systems, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/cf74e549-en
[128] Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australia (2021) Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education https://www.dese.gov.au/teaching-and-school-leadership/literacy-and-numeracy-test-initial-teacher-education-students

programmes, it was notable that no centre produced empirical evidence to support their claims. "… As of now, the review team's knowledge as to whether students experience their studies and develop as student teachers differently than before, is quite limited"[129].

A significant piece of research was commissioned by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE)[130] to look at how inclusion focused practice featured in ITE provision, with the final report published in 2019. The research found that ITE programmes do provide a broad foundation for student teachers to develop a clear understanding of the attitudes, knowledge and skills required to cater effectively for the inclusion of all learners. However, students were sometimes critical of their ITE programmes in relation to how well it prepared them for specific skills in inclusive practice. They perceived a lack of preparedness in terms of practical skills and indicated a need for greater alignment between programme and placement learning. Overall, the authors argued that the quality of school placement and the extent to which partnership between schools and ITE providers aligns with the student experience in relation to inclusive practice, was as important as specific curriculum content or organisation. The development of *Céim* has sought to strengthen the emphasis on inclusive teaching in ITE, including as part of school placement.

Other research strongly emphasises the need for meaningful partnership involving dialogue and feedback between different stakeholders within and across the ITE landscape (within HEIs, between HEIs and schools) which can help to ensure coherence between theory and practice for the student teacher[131].

In some areas, such as under the *Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020*[132], the Department worked directly with teacher educators in ITE to consider how the Department policy can be aligned with and implemented through ITE provision. To support this, a *Guiding Framework for Pre-Service Teachers' Professional Digital Competence* was developed, through collaboration between the Department and ITE. However, challenges have also been noted in communicating across all in ITE, outside of the group with specific interest in a given area.

There are other reports which signal areas where additional focus may be needed for education as a whole, such as the Chief Inspector's Reports or the findings from studies such as the *Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Trends In International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) or the Progress In International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)*. For example, the Chief Inspector's Report 2016-2020[133], expressed concerns about the teaching of Irish at both primary and post-primary, indicating that standards in Irish were poorer than those in English and mathematics. In PISA 2018, Ireland ranked 4th out of 36 OECD countries for reading literacy, compared to 16th out of 37 OECD countries for mathematics. There may be scope to improve the communication of these findings with ITE providers which may lead to a stronger focus on improving standards in those areas.

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[129] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf
[130] National Council for Special Education (2020) Research Report No. 27: Initial Teacher Education for Inclusion Final Report to the National Council for Special Education https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/04611_NCSE-Initial-Teacher-Education-RR27.pdf
[131] European Commission (2015), Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching: A guide on policies to improve initial teacher education, Education and Training 2020 - Schools Policy, Brussels, https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/files/Shaping%20career-long%20perspectives%20on%20teaching.pdf
[132] Department of Education and Skills (2015) Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020 https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/69fb88-digital-strategy-for-schools/
[133] Department of Education (2022) Chief Inspector's Report September 2016 to December 2020 gov.ie - Chief Inspector Reports (www.gov.ie)

Models of ITE

International research suggests that structural features of teacher education including the type of qualification and degrees earned matter for student learning[134]. Across OECD countries, ITE for pre-primary and primary teachers is typically organised according to the concurrent model[135] while the consecutive model[136] of ITE is more typical for post-primary teachers. In Europe, ITE qualifications are typically four-year or five-year degree programmes; 15 countries require at least a bachelors degree and 17 require at least a masters degree[137].

The *Sahlberg I Report*[138] envisaged that all teachers be educated to masters level initially or through continuing professional development. The *Sahlberg II Report*[139] noted the impact of changes to the duration of ITE, which involved all consecutive ITE programmes moving to masters level, while concurrent programmes are awarded at bachelors-degree level. The report went on to state '"It may now be timely to consider whether all ITE qualifications (primary and post-primary) should be awarded at masters level". As noted in subsection 3.2, a small number of hybrid programmes have been developed, which involve concurrent and consecutive elements.

School placement

Research commissioned by the Teaching Council on school placement[140], sums up the importance of school placement to ITE:

> *Evidence from students themselves demonstrates that SP (school placement) is a significant and positive experience for the vast majority. It is the space where theory and practice meet for them. It is hugely affirming and life-enhancing: it powerfully communicates to them in the most direct way what their strengths and skills are as emerging teachers; equally, it exposes their weaknesses but it clarifies what they need to do to overcome them; it reminds and re-affirms their idealism, optimism and passion about their chosen career.*

In accordance with the Teaching Council's accreditation requirements, all student teachers must successfully complete school placement to graduate from an ITE programme. The requirements for school placement are:

- at least 25% or 30 weeks or equivalent[141] in concurrent programmes;
- or at least 40% or 24 weeks or equivalent[142] in consecutive programmes.

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[134] OECD (2019), A Flying Start: Improving Initial Teacher Preparation Systems, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/cf74e549-en
[135] Where practical and pedagogical training are studied alongside courses in specific subject matter.
[136] Where practical and pedagogical training are studied alongside courses in specific subject matter.
[137] Where practical and pedagogical training follow the courses in specific subject matter
[138] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf
[139] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf
[140] Hall, K, Murphy, R, Rutherford, V, and Ní Áingléis, B.N. (2018) School placement in initial teacher education https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/Website/en/Publications/Teacher-Education/Documents/School-Placement-in-Initial-Teacher-Education.pdf.

[141] 'or equivalent', for post-primary only

[142] 'or equivalent', for post-primary only

Within the overall requirements of the *Teaching Council's Guidelines on School Placement*[143], each HEI has established its own arrangements for school placement, ranging from regular time periods each week over a full school year to specific blocks of 10 weeks. Approximately 15,000 individual placements for student teachers are facilitated each school year. Schools have traditionally accepted student teachers on a voluntary basis. Co-operating teachers (now known as Treoraithe) in the placement school provide informal support and guidance, while assessment of the ITE student's practice is completed by school placement tutors, employed by HEIs.

The *Sahlberg II* Report[144] noted a number of challenges relating to school placement; for example, the reported increasing difficulty for ITE providers in Dublin in arranging placement for students, especially for the 10-week block in the final year. It also noted the extent of the models of school placement used and the partnership arrangements in place with schools varied between ITE providers and even programmes within providers. In addition, it noted the absence of a national structure to support or recognise the work of teachers who mentor student teachers on placement. The report suggested that consideration be given to establishing clinical-teacher-education schools to provide teacher training, similar to how clinical training occurs in modern medical schools.

The Report and Action Plan of the Working Group on School Placement[145] made a number of recommendations, in response to the issues raised. The report envisages the creation of a national central school placement system which would facilitate the smoother allocation of placements, while also seeking to protect HEI-school partnerships. In order to investigate, design and create a demo model that could be extended on a national scale, the School Placement Working Group recommended the establishment of a School Placement Implementation Group (SPIG) to oversee two working groups.

The Placement Systems Working Group was established to develop a specification for this national central school-placement system. The second working group is due to develop a professional learning programme to support those in school, in particular Treoraithe (previously called co-operating teachers), with the school-placement experience.

To enhance the school placement experience, the research literature recommends more overt and deliberate forms of partnerships between schools and ITE institutions; such partnerships can contribute to common standards and higher quality ITE[146].

Student teacher research

In most European countries, ITE programmes are required to develop student teachers' knowledge of educational research and enable them to engage in practice-based research. ITE providers have a role in providing opportunities for student teachers to engage in, and with, research to support their learning and practice. This will, in turn, strengthen the agency of teachers and enable an innovative teaching and learning environment in ITE and schools[147].

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[143] Teaching Council (2013) Guidelines on School Placement https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/publications/ite-professional-accreditation/guidelines-on-school-placement.pdf
[144] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf
[145] Teaching Council (2021) Report and Action Plan of the Working Group on School Placement https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/2021/report-and-action-plan-of-the-school-placement-working-group.html
[146] OECD (2019), A Flying Start: Improving Initial Teacher Preparation Systems, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/cf74e549-en
[147] Caena, F (2014) Initial teacher education in Europe: an overview of policy issues: European Commission ET2020 Working Group on Schools Policy https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Dickson_Adom/post/What-is-

The *Sahlberg I Report*[148] advocated research-based teacher education so that teachers would be able to use educational research as part of their work in school, enabling them to reflect critically on their own thinking and learning and teaching. The *Sahlberg II Report*[149] noted that, while students in all centres were required to undertake some research, not all appeared to understand fully the value of a research approach. The report recommended additional focus on ensuring that students be enabled to develop a mature understanding of why teaching should be a research-based profession.

Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education[150], makes clear the role that research must play in the development of programme content, and that student teachers must engage in research on their own practice that connects the sites of practice (HEI and school). By the end of their ITE programme, *Céim* specifies that student teachers should be able to conduct and apply relevant research to their teaching context, engage in various forms of data gathering and critically analyse and evaluate relevant knowledge and research.

Linkages between programmes of ITE and ELC/FET

Part of the vision for ITE, as outlined in the *Sahlberg I Report*[151], seeks to increase coherence across the different sectors of education, from ELC through primary and post-primary education and on to further and higher education. As outlined in Section 3.4 above, each of these sectors has developed in accordance with its own set of circumstances and there continue to be significant differences, as regards regulation and career pathways. However, some providers of ITE also provide programmes in early learning and care and/or further education and training. In some cases, there is strong overlap between these programmes, with students from both ELC and primary taking some of the same modules.

The *Sahlberg II Report*[152] noted that even though almost all centres provide programmes across the continuum of early learning and care, primary, post-primary and further education, only one centre (Maynooth University) showed concrete evidence of significant interaction between staff and students at all levels of the continuum from ELC through to further and adult education. The Sahlberg review team emphasised that it is necessary that all centres providing ITE seriously consider, and are supported by the authorities, to build sustainable bridges across the whole spectrum of teacher education in the future, even if not all centres provide ITE programmes for each level.

The importance of positive transitions from early learning and care to primary school is recognised in *First 5*[153].

wrong-with-Initial-Teacher-Education-ITE/attachment/5a69882e4cde266d58862ac0/AS%3A586590921441280%401516865582382/download/initial-teacher-education_en.pdf

[148] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf

[149] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf

[150] Teaching Council (2020) Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

[151] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf

[152] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf

[153] Government of Ireland (2019) First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028 https://assets.gov.ie/31184/62acc54f4bdf4405b74e53a4afb8e71b.pdf

An "effective early childhood system will support the transition to school by enabling greater communication between ELC settings, primary schools and parents, particularly for children with additional needs; supporting more play-based, child-centred learning in the early years of primary school; equipping primary schools to accommodate young children through smaller class sizes, more time and space to play, and interactive teaching style".

Under objective 9, the strategy recognises the need to focus on these transitions, including introduction of measures for exchange of information between ELC settings and primary school and looking to increase continuity in curriculum and pedagogy across ELC settings and the early years of primary school.

A report by the OECD published in 2021, *Strengthening Early Childhood Education and Care in Ireland: Review on Sector Quality[154]*, suggested that "linkages across preparation programmes for ECEC and primary education, and interactions among staff and students on these programmes, would also be beneficial, potentially supporting a greater understanding of each other's work, transition practices and professional practice". The report recommended that some joint training/courses in the preparation for ECEC staff and primary teachers should be encouraged.

7.3 Staffing and structures

Teacher educators

The selection and professional development of those who educate teachers is a prerequisite for raising the quality of teaching and improving learning outcomes[155].

As stated in subsection 6.3, the group that may be described as 'teacher educators' have a mix of backgrounds, qualifications and experience. As outlined at an EU Presidency conference on Professional Identity of Teacher Educators held in 2013[156], "teacher educators are sometimes called 'the hidden profession'", as the role relates to a very heterogeneous group that can include higher education staff, subject specialists, researchers in education, supervisors of school placement, curriculum developers, Treoraithe[157], those who offer continuing professional development (CPD) courses for teachers and school leaders and more.

Teacher educators play a key role in maintaining and improving the quality of the teaching workforce and can have a significant impact on learning outcomes[158]. The OECD, in its 2019 publication on ITE, highlighted the importance of establishing competence standards, criteria and procedures for becoming a teacher educator[159]. It also advocated that institutions providing ITE acknowledge and support teacher educators in their diverse roles.

A survey of teacher educators, conducted as part of the research on initial teacher education for inclusion, indicated a mismatch between the importance teacher educators placed on inclusive

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[154] OECD (2021) Strengthening Early Childhood Education and Care in Ireland: Review on Sector Quality https://doi.org/10.1787/72fab7d1-en

[155] European Commission (2012) Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes http://eose.org/ressource/supporting-the-teaching-professions-for-better-learning-outcomes/

[156] Teaching Council (2013) Conference on Integration, Innovation and Improvement — the Professional Identity of Teacher Educators: Conference Brochure https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/publications/strategic-plan/documents/eu-presidency-conference-brochure.pdf

[157] Cooperating teachers, in the context of school placement

[158] European Commission (2012) Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes http://eose.org/ressource/supporting-the-teaching-professions-for-better-learning-outcomes/

[159] OECD (2019) A Flying Start: Improving Initial Teacher Preparation Systems https://www.oecd.org/education/a-flying-start-cf74e549-en.html

teaching, and the degree of confidence they expressed in their capacity to deliver it, suggesting a need for more targeted support in certain areas[160].

A partnership approach between institutions providing ITE and schools-based educators is important in providing a more coherent experience for student teachers[161]. Such partnership could enable ITE-based teacher educators to keep in touch with school-based developments while contributing to school-based teacher educators' own professional growth. The OECD suggested that both university-based and school-based teacher educators be provided with opportunities to extend their knowledge and also engage in collaborative enquiry and reflection to improve initial teacher preparation[162].

The *Sahlberg I Report*[163] recognised the important contribution of university-based professionals who are themselves engaged in a research culture, as well as of experienced school teachers to ITE. The panel reported that many programmes were heavily dependent on part-time staff; while acknowledging that the experience of and expertise of teachers was a valuable resource, it noted that part-time staff were not properly integrated into the scholarly culture of a university. To improve quality across all aspects of ITE, the report recommended that a more balanced approach be adopted in the employment of full-time and part-time staff and thereby improve quality across all aspects of ITE. It recommended that expertise in subject knowledge should reside in institutions with a critical mass of subject knowledge experts, in effect, in universities. Thus ITE provision should be supported by connections to, and interaction with, the faculties/subject departments in the university, except in the case of the creative arts where the subject specialists would be located in the specialist institutions.

The *Sahlberg II*[164] Report acknowledged a significant increase in the number of ITE staff with doctoral qualifications noting that this can help ensure student teachers are supervised by staff with qualifications at a higher level. The report recommended that the professional learning and development of higher education teachers have a permanent place within the national teacher education strategy and as part of the HEIs' core functions.

As outlined in subsection 3.3, *Céim* has set out additional requirements of teachers educators in ITE:

> *Lecturers and other staff shall have a qualification and experience that demonstrate their capacity to teach student-teachers to the required qualification level. This should include experience of teaching in the relevant sector. Appropriate staff development policies should be in place to ensure that staff continue to enhance their knowledge and expertise including that relating to reflective practice, research, curriculum development, inclusive education and professional development.*

During their programme of initial teacher education, *Céim*[165] also requires that a student teacher shall be assessed summatively at least once by a registered teacher.

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[160] Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australia (2021) Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education https://www.dese.gov.au/teaching-and-school-leadership/literacy-and-numeracy-test-initial-teacher-education-students
[161] OECD (2018) Effective Teacher Policies: Insights from PISA https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264301603-en
[162] OECD (2018) Effective Teacher Policies: Insights from PISA https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264301603-en
[163] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf
[164] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf
[165] Teaching Council (2020) Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education   ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf (teachingcouncil.ie)

A culture of research in ITE

The *Sahlberg I Report*[166] was clear that, in order to support the student teacher as a research-based practitioner, there:

> *should be a culture of research in teacher education where staff are familiar with current research and are engaged in research on critical areas of teaching and teacher education: their own practice; teachers' professional learning; Irish and international education policy, and the fundamentals of teaching, learning and assessment.*

However, it noted that the then configuration of ITE provision lacked a critical mass in terms of research capacity, and that the HEIs did not share a common understanding of the research terminology. This vision was that by 2030 each of the re-configured ITE 'centres' would be university-led and would offer research-based teacher education in internationally inspiring environments. The report further advocated for a national policy for research on teaching and teacher education and argued that each 'centre' of ITE would have proper resources to adequately address research as one of the criteria for core funding.

The *Sahlberg II Report*[167] found convincing evidence of research activity in all the ITE providers visited and that in virtually all centres a majority of staff had completed doctoral studies. However, it observed that research-based approaches to teacher education required further strengthening overall.

Funding of ITE

The *Sahlberg I Report*[168] argued that the new ITE structures must be given particular attention, with regard to the funding of higher education, so as to secure proper resources for each new centre and to adequately address research as one of the criteria for core funding.

The *Sahlberg II Report*[169] noted that the review of the funding model for higher education had been completed. The new recommended approach to the funding model aims to embed lifelong learning and support skills development. It will also recognise and respond to demographic challenges, improve access, support research and innovation, and allow for enhanced institutional development. It also referred to the system-performance framework for the higher education system, which allows HEIs to identify their specific mission and agree a performance compact aligned with funding from the HEA. The report could not find evidence to conclude whether the external incentives, both material and non-material, were sufficient to encourage the ITE providers to further develop key aspects of ITE, for example, increased collaboration between education sectors. The report noted that certain funding decisions could be seen as "not rewarding good work", such as the award of certain tenders or research projects.

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[166] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf

[167] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf

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[169] Higher Education Authority (2019) The Structure of Teacher Education in Ireland: Review of Progress in Implementing Reform https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/05/HEA-Structure-of-Teacher-Education.pdf

ITE landscape

The ITE Landscape refers to the collective of HEIs providing programmes of primary and post-primary ITE across Ireland, spanning 14 HEIs[170] across different locations. As referenced in subsection 3.3.1, there have been significant changes to the ITE landscape over the past decade, which evolved from the recommendations of the *Sahlberg I Report*[171].

The *Sahlberg II* Report[172], assessing the structural changes that had taken place advised that there should be seven centres, rather than six, and that the "reform era concerning those institutions which accomplished the earlier goals should be, for the time being, over." In essence, the view was that the key strategic focus would be better placed on creating a coherent range of ITE provision from ELC to further and higher education teacher preparation. The report also recommended that Marino Institute of Education be brought under the remit of the HEA for funding and governance oversight.

The *Sahlberg I and II Reports* were focused on existing State-funded providers of ITE, and no recommendations were made regarding existing providers expanding their provision (e.g. starting to provide programmes at primary or post-primary for the first time). Technological Universities have also now entered the higher education landscape, as outlined in Section 3.3.3 above. With regard to the only accredited private provider, Hibernia College, the *Sahlberg II Report*[173] recommended that an "additional review of Hibernia and its impact on ITE and especially teacher demand and supply issues could be considered".

Policy coherence

"A coherent ITP [Initial Teacher Preparation] system needs to establish cross-institutional and multilevel partnerships to engage stakeholders who belong to different contexts in a whole-of-system perspective"[174].

The *Sahlberg II Report*[175] proposed that the centres of excellence for ITE would have more autonomy from State-level central administration but that national authorities would provide continuous feedback to the centres.

As outlined in subsection 3.3.3, strong collaboration between Departments, Teaching Council, HEA, HEIs, education partners, student teachers, teachers and school leaders, has been an essential part of meeting recent challenges relating to teacher supply and the COVID-19 pandemic.

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[170] Note that this does not include Munster Technological University, which is linked to provision of programmes for art education and home economics with UCC. It also does not include programmes which are accredited under Route 4 and who have not through an accreditation process.

[171] Higher Education Authority (2012) Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland https://assets.gov.ie/25013/6e0e25a092e7409ea4212db97cdad1b0.pdf

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[173] See footnote 172

[174] European Commission (2015), Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching: A guide on policies to improve initial teacher education, Education and Training 2020 - Schools Policy, Brussels, https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/files/Shaping%20career-long%20perspectives%20on%20teaching.pdf

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Appendix 1: ITE policy statement steering committee

Sections/organisations represented

Department of Education:

- Teacher Education Policy (ITE and Professional Development)
- Teacher Education Policy (Digital and Teacher Supply)
- Early Years Education Policy
- External Staff Relations
- Inspectorate

Initially Department of Education, now DFHERIS:

- Higher Education, Policy and Research
- Higher Education, Funding, Governance and Qualifications
- Higher Education, Equity of Access
- Higher Education Capital and PPPs
- Further Education and Training

Other organisations:

- HEA
- Teaching Council

Appendix 2: submissions received as part of the consultation process

- ADHD Ireland
- AsIAm
- Association of Mixed Race Irish/DPAD
- Mary Immaculate College
- University of Limerick
- Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) Crawford/ University College Cork (UCC)
- Dyspraxia/DCD Ireland
- Down Syndrome Ireland
- Dublin City University
- Dyslexia Association of Ireland
- Enable Ireland
- Epilepsy Ireland
- Galway Mayo Institute of Technology
- Higher Education Authority
- Hibernia College
- Involve
- Irish Society for Autism
- Irish Traveller Movement
- Junior Cycle for Teachers
- Limerick School for Art and Design
- Marino Institute of Education
- Maynooth University Department of Adult and Community Education
- Maynooth University Department of Education
- Maynooth University Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education
- National Induction Programme for Teachers
- National Teacher Education and Teacher Educator Forum
- National College of Art and Design Dublin
- Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre
- Professional Development Service for Teachers
- St Angela's College Sligo
- Trinity College Dublin and Marino Institute of Education
- Teaching Council
- University College Cork School of Education
- University College Dublin School of Education
- University of Galway
- University of Limerick

Appendix 3: Department of Education and other relevant strategies and policies

Government of Ireland (2015) National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making
https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9128db-national-strategy-on-children-and-young-peoples-participation-in-dec/

Government of Ireland 2018) First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028
https://assets.gov.ie/31184/62acc54f4bdf4405b74e53a4afb8e71b.pdf

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Department of Education (2021) Statement of Strategy 2021-2023
https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/56137-department-of-education-statement-of-strategy-2021-2023/

Department of Education and Skills (2011) Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young people (2011-2020) https://assets.gov.ie/24521/9e0e6e3887454197a1da1f9736c01557.pdf

Department of Education (2022) Digital Strategy for Schools to 2027
https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/69fb88-digital-strategy-for-schools/

Department of Education (2022) The Refined DEIS Identification Model
gov.ie - Extension of DEIS to further schools (www.gov.ie)

Department of Education (2022) Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying
https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/52aaf-cinealtas-action-plan-on-bullying/?referrer=http://www.gov.ie/actionplanonbullying/#

Department of Education and Teaching Council (2021) *Action Plan to Support the Growth Phase of Cosán: the National Framework for Teachers' Learning*
https://assets.gov.ie/214940/3a830db4-1f83-4902-a5f6-51265d2d5f80.pdf

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https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/69fb88-digital-strategy-for-schools/

Department of Education and Skills (2017) STEM Education Policy statement 2017-2026
https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/4d40d5-stem-education-policy/

Department of Education and Skills (2017) Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022
https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/5cfd73-policy-on-gaeltacht-education-2017-2022/

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https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/c09af4-national-siolta-aistear-initiative/

Department of Education and Skills (2017) DEIS Plan 2017
https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/24451/ba1553e873864a559266d344b4c78660.pdf#page=null

Department of Education and Skills (2010) 20 year strategy for the Irish Language - Implementation Plan – Department of Education and Skills https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/24380/865cef555ba845af8c1e71088f9a6e9d.pdf#page=null

Department of Education and Skills (2018) Teacher Supply Action Plan https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/25072/500d6d553cae42cea9f3dae8fbdb6918.pdf#page=null

Department of Education and Skills (2017) Languages Connect: Irelands Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026 https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/47795/96d80f5eced24e09a8906983a7b4b4d2.pdf#page=null

Department of Education and Skills (2014) The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland, 2014-2020 https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/70926/7e8f9ccf9069441e960d7f32a38dc7b9.pdf#page=null

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Department of Education and Skills – Languages Connect strategy 2017-2026

https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/dd328-languages-connect-irelands-strategy-for-foreign-languages-in-education-2017-2026/

Department of Justice (2017) Migrant Integration Strategy https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/983af-migrant-integration-strategy/

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Department of Further and Higher Education Research Innovation and Science(2022) National Access Plan A Strategic Action Plan for Equity of Access, Participation and Success in Higher Education 2022-2028.
gov.ie - National Access Plan, 2022 to 2028 (www.gov.ie)

Government of Ireland (2022) 2nd National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development – ESD to 2030 https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/02952d-national-strategy-on-education-for-sustainable-development-in-irelan/

Department of Education (2023) Primary Curriculum Framework https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/027ad-primary-curriculum-framework/#draft-primary-curriculum-framework

Appendix 4: minimum entry requirements for primary ITE

Subject	Leaving Certificate Grade	%
Irish	H4	60<70
English	O4	60<70
	or	
	H7	30<40
Maths	O4	60<70
	or	
	H7	30<40

Appendix 5: Seven Centres for ITE – as outlined in *Sahlberg II*

1. DCU Institute of Education: A centre comprising of Dublin City University (DCU); St. Patrick's College Drumcondra (SPD); Mater Dei Institute of Education (MDIE) and Church of Ireland College of Education.

2. Maynooth University: A centre comprising National University of Ireland Maynooth (NUIM) – now called Maynooth University (MU); and the Froebel College.

3. National Institute for Studies in Education: A centre comprising University of Limerick (UL) Mary Immaculate College of Education (MIC); and Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest (formerly Limerick Institute of Education (LIT)).

4. A centre comprising University College Cork (UCC) and Munster Technological University (formerly Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)).

5. A centre comprising University of Galway (UG), Atlantic Technological University (ATU), formerly Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and St Angela's College Sligo. (The centre, for the purposes of ITE, will continue to be led by UG).

6. A centre comprising Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and Marino Institute of Education (MIE).

7. A centre comprising University College Dublin (UCD) and the National College of Art and Design (NCAD).

Within this overall picture, smaller institutions may wish to adjust their alignment from what is envisaged in *Sahlberg II*, but this must involve linking to another centre in a way that supports efficient and high-quality delivery of ITE.

Technological Universities will be in a position to provide subject expertise to ITE but any plans for entirely new ITE provision must be led by a centre of excellence.

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