School of Education
Trinity College Dublin

Postgraduate Diploma/Master in Education
(Teaching and Learning in Higher Education)

Rationale

This strand of the Masters in Education is designed for academics teaching in higher education to foster a critical understanding of the theory and practice of pedagogy and the scholarship of learning and teaching in higher education.

The programme is designed both to support academics (including postdoctoral staff), who are new to the area of teaching and learning in higher education and more experienced colleagues who wish to consolidate, develop and enrich their own practice. The programme will be of particular appeal to those who wish to earn formal recognition for a more studied approach to their teaching.

The programme follows a growing trend within higher education institutions (and more specifically within the area of continuing professional development) to provide academics with a structured approach to enhance their work as educators. The rationale which underpins this development is intended to:

1) support and augment the teaching and learning experience;
2) encourage academic awareness and critiques of pedagogical theory and practice;
3) facilitate the incorporation of discipline specific research/knowledge, where appropriate, into teaching and learning activities.

From an institutional perspective, the programme marks a positive contribution to underpinning a professional and informed approach to teaching.

The programme content has been designed to provide academics with a balance between theory and practice, which in turn is split between two dimensions. The first dimension provides the historical, sociological and philosophical context of contemporary teaching practice, curriculum design and research within higher education. The second dimension focuses on the practice of designing teaching modules; the use of blended learning; analysis of different modes of assessment; development of research supervision skills and construction of a teaching portfolio. The programme will also explore the relationship between research and teaching, exploring how research strategies and activities within the disciplines can be used to support student learning. Careful attention will be given to the discipline contexts of
students and the pedagogies of the disciplines to avoid the programme becoming too generic.

**Structure**

The taught component of the course contains four modules, with each module containing approximately 25 hours of contact time. Students will be involved in practice focused workshops and seminars that address both critical and theoretical studies of pedagogy and practice in higher education.

The course is designed with an exit point on completion of the four taught modules. Participants completing their studies at this stage may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

Typically, students take the four course modules over two years. The third year is devoted to the completion of a dissertation under the guidance of a supervisor. The dissertation would usually be carried out using a practitioner action research approach.

**Module titles**

Module 1 - Traditions, Power and Context

Module 2 – Designing curriculum, assessment and supervision in higher education

Module 3 – Reflecting on practice in learning and teaching

Module 4 – Linking teaching and research within and beyond the disciplines

**Teaching and learning strategies**

Students will be involved in practice focused workshops and seminars, interactive learning environments and blended learning. Each of the four modules is individually assessed. A wide variety of assessment methods are employed, including projects, essays, case studies, portfolios and reflective diaries. The integration of theory and practice is stressed in the content of the modules and in the assessments.

For enquiries about applications and course content, please contact Dr. John Walsh (walshj8@tcd.ie: 01-8961221).