



**Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin**

Minutes MIE ACDC

A meeting of the Marino Institute of Education, Associated College Degrees Committee (MIE ACDC) was held on 11 Feb 2025 at 10 am at Marino Institute of Education in meeting room 5.

Present: Professor Neville Cox, Registrar (*Chair*)
Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies
Professor Vinny Wade, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies
Professor Teresa O'Doherty, President of MIE
Dr Seán Delaney, Registrar, MIE
Professor Ann Devitt, Head of the School of Education, Trinity
Professor Michael Shevlin, Second Representative School of Education, Trinity
Mr Grant Goodwin, Quality Officer, Trinity
Ms Rima Fitzpatrick, Assistant Academic Secretary, Trinity
Dr Aimie Brennan, MIE Further Education
Ms Amanda Ryan, MIE Quality Officer
Dr Clíodhna Martin, International Foundation Programme, MIE
Dr Gene Mehigan, Postgraduate Taught Programmes, MIE
Dr Joan Kiely, Undergraduate Programmes, MIE

Apologies: Ms Nora Varga, Student Recruitment and Admissions Manager, Trinity Global,
Mr Conn McCluskey, School of Education Manager, Trinity.

Attendance: Secretary: Ms Ellen Kampinga, Academic Affairs, Trinity, Ms Shauna Cassidy, Assistant Registrar, MIE, Mr Brendan White, MIE IFP Programme Manager (for item 011)

Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Marino Institute of Education for hosting the meeting. Apologies from Ms. Ms Nora Varga, Trinity Global were noted.

The Chair welcomed Grant Goodwin, the new Trinity Quality Officer, to the meeting and committee members introduced themselves.

The Chair noted the commencement ceremonies held in the previous week in which students from MIE received certificates and diplomas. He thanked the many MIE colleagues for attending. He noted that Professor Teresa O'Doherty, President of MIE, gave an incredible speech at the ceremony.

MIE/ACDC/24-25/009

Draft Minutes 19 November 2024

The minutes of the 12th of November 2024 were approved, subject to minor corrections.

MIE/ACDC/24-25/010

Matters arising

The MIE Registrar adds a matter arising on AI Policies and Procedures. The MIE governing body approved a policy and procedure on academic integrity and given the urgent need for this policy and procedure they are being applied in the 2024-25 academic year. Feedback has been received from Trinity on the policy and procedure and this will be taken on board before the policy and procedure are approved for use in the 2025-26 academic year. The previously approved plagiarism policy is insufficient in an era of artificial intelligence notes the MIE Registrar. The Senior Lecturer will share the Trinity Artificial Intelligence statement and insights on the process and communications related to the work and implementation with MIE. The MIE Registrar will share the current policy and procedure with the Senior Lecturer.

The Chair noted other matters arising from the last meeting.

- A revised MIE Attendance Policy and Procedure was considered and approved by Council on the 20 November.
- A revised Recognition of Prior Learning Policy had been approved by the Graduate Studies Committee on the 17 October and was considered and approved by Council on the 20 November.
- Updates to the assessment for BO8310 - Sociology of Education and Sociolinguistics – will go to 25 Feb USC.
- Logos and size of certificates for Professional Diplomas in Further Education were previously questioned and the registrar explained that they depend on the degree and diploma.

MIE/ACDC/24-25/011 Standing update on International Foundation Programme by the Recruitment and Admissions Manager, Global Relations & MIE IFP Manager

An update was provided Mr Brendan White, MIE IFP Programme Manager on both memorandums circulated, in the absence of Ms Nora Varga, Student Recruitment and Admissions Manager, Trinity Global.

The Chair welcomed Mr Brendan White, MIE IFP Programme Manager to the meeting.

Mr White noted that 115 students were registered on the IFP course this year. The new academic calendar with semester exams is in its second year, showing a positive impact on students. The programme starts later and runs for 13 weeks, with Semester 1 extending to 15 weeks of teaching.

The application for the new mark TrustED is under review by the Quality Committee at MIE. A proposal to review the maths progression requirements is being refined for the next academic year.

It was noted that there is a 50% increase in confirmed student deposits, reflecting improved communications and recruitment efforts. Ms Varga, in her memorandum, highlighted successful recruitment events and school visits for current cohorts.

A discussion ensued on whether to offer more places to qualified candidates due to higher attrition rates at the start of the programme. The target is 120 students, with final offers made to a 135 maximum capacity. The aim is to have 135 1st instalment payments (not offers) for 2025/26 intake to ensure meeting target in case of attrition and visa issues. Currently, 111 students are registered. It was noted that a contribution to such attrition rates might be the fact that Visa turnaround times vary by country, affecting student arrivals. This has resource implications as resources were allocated for 120+ students, rather than the 111 students who registered.

The Chair thanked Mr White for his contribution.

MIE/ACDC/24-25/012
Quality Office

Standing Update on Quality Assurance of Linked Providers by

The Chair invited Mr. Grant Goodwin, the new Quality Officer to share the Standing Update on Quality Assurance of Linked Providers by the Quality Office

Mr Goodwin noted that the TrustED application has been submitted for Trinity. He noted the ample window remaining until the end of March for MIE to finish their application.

The Quality Officer noted that whereas he was new to the role, he would be engaging with MIE and Academic Affairs in relation to the linked provider policy. This was particularly pertinent following last year's very positive quality review report received by MIE.

There is an ongoing discussion in the Quality Committee about the oversight process for academic and non-academic policies and procedures, which will be reviewed with input from MIE stakeholders.

The Chair thanked the Quality Officer for his update.

MIE/ACDC/24-25/013

Response to External Examiner Reports

The Chair invites Dr Seán Delaney, Registrar, MIE to discuss the memorandum as circulated, accompanied by the responses per report.

Starting next academic year, each programme will undergo an annual programme review, including the External Examiner process, staff feedback, student status and progression, and student assessment and feedback. The MIE Registrar invited questions from the committee regarding the traditional report circulated.

The Dean of Graduate Studies inquired about a comment regarding the overlap of optional modules in the Professional Master of Education (Primary Teaching) programme. It was recommended to review the use of non-credit bearing optional modules.

The Dean raised a question in relation to the Religion Certificate for the Bachelor of Education, noting that it is essentially an existing micro credential.

The MIE President explained that the Religion Certificate is not a credit bearing component of the Bachelor in Education but due to the Irish teacher-training context it is an associated offering alongside the programme and it is a known workload for prospective students and recognized by patron representative bodies like Educate Together and the Catholic Primary School Managers Association (CPSMA). It was suggested that the External Examiner might not have fully understood the context in which the certificate was offered.

The mechanism was questioned for raising CAO points by 20 points with respect to the BSc Early Childhood Education (page 17 of the Response Document). The MIE Registrar explained that a minimum point requirement was set due to historical reasons, and that the proposal was to take in fewer students which would, in turn, mean that the minimum threshold for entry would rise and this would, in turn, avoid lowering points if vacant places were offered.

A discussion took place in relation to the possibility of reducing the number of assessment opportunities (page 15 of the response document). The MIE Registrar explained that the current process permitted up to 4 attempts of assessments, including off-books and reassessment cycles, similar to Trinity. The MIE President noted that placements, as defined by the teaching council, allow

only one repeat. The MIE Registrar confirmed that any reduction in the number of attempts would need not be reviewed for one programme alone. This was a consideration within a clarification, not a proposed initiative.

The assessment modalities for Capstone assignments were discussed. In an attempt to mitigate AI use, the Bachelor in Science (Education Studies) programme offers an option to combine a viva with an 8,000-word thesis or to complete a 10,000-word thesis. The Quality Officer advised monitoring the 10,000-word theses for potential AI misuse.

The MIE Registrar emphasized that the revised academic integrity policy treats AI use seriously, especially from the third year onwards. Initial years focus on educational responses with feedback and minor penalties. He noted that even with the 10,000-word thesis option, final-year students might still have to defend their work in a viva if unethical AI use (or any other breach of academic integrity) is suspected.

It was noted that in the current semester, most students had opted for the 10,000-word thesis as it is perceived to be easier than the viva.

The Quality Officer adds that on Benchmarking Grades, the use of QQI infographics for additional comparator award data by discipline areas and subsets for education to defend benchmarks might be useful to MIE.

Minor corrections were noted for the timelines under the Diploma in Education, stating it should be 2024/25 instead of 2023/24. MIE confirmed they will update these minor corrections.

The Chair thanked the MIE Registrar for presenting the External Examiner reports and noted that from next academic year the ACDC would see the annual programme review format.

MIE/ACDC/24-25/014 MIE Programme entries for Calendar Part II and III for 2025/26

The MIE Registrar clarified that there was an error on the memorandum cover page and that the MES in “Christian School Leadership” is going ahead, while the “Leadership in Christian Education” course is suspended.

The Assistant Academic Secretary suggested that admission regulations for the Professional Masters in Primary Teaching might be reviewed, noting repetition and the need for clarity on English language requirements for the Irish pathway.

The differences in Master in Education Studies (MES) dissertation word count were questioned. The MIE Registrar explained that older accredited programmes have higher word counts, while newer ones have more modules with fewer credits each and a lower dissertation wordcount.

The workload was questioned for part-time postgraduate programmes. The MIE Registrar clarified that 60 ECTS is technically full-time, but part-time means classes are offered outside normal hours over two years. The Dean of Graduate Studies noted that, many part-time postgraduate programmes, may still involve a substantial workload.

The Dean of Graduate Studies suggested considering a framework structure of 30 credits per year over three years for flexibility as present in Trinity for similar part-time Masters programmes. The MIE President noted recruitment challenges for the Masters and the potential benefit of a progression framework.

The Chair noted that there is time to review and resubmit entry requirements for the last USC meeting of the academic year in April.

Action/Decision

014.01 The Committee moves for resubmission of the MIE Programme entries for Calendar Part II and III for 2025/26 to the next meeting to allow review.

MIE/ACDC/24-25/015

Standing Update on Communication

The Chair invited the MIE President to share an update on collaboration by MIE and the Trinity School of Education.

The Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) Conference is scheduled for 26th-29th August 2025. Two Trinity Staff members are part of the planning committee, namely Dr Una Murray and Dr Louise Heeran-Flynn. The abstract submission deadline is 21st February 2025.

The Tobar Project is ongoing, with more funding expected for the next phase.

On the Irish Upskilling Project, one MIE staff member is involved in a module. Staffing may change next year, but support for the project will continue.

A pilot for foreign languages will run next year. MIE is surveying students and hope to liaise with Trinity for language teachers. The MIE President noted the need for expertise and support for the foreign languages project. The Dean of Graduate Studies suggested consulting Lorna Carson, Head of the School of Linguistics, for guidance on language training and the required levels.

The Chair invited an update from the Senior Lecturer/ Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

The Senior Lecturer noted that the AI statement has been passed by the board and is now live, integrated into the academic integrity suite. Training for AI is available for academic staff.

In a change to the Academic Year structure, for 2025-26, teaching will start one week later than currently (on September 15, 2025), to create more space between supplemental exams and the publishing of results. Study week in Semester 1 will overlap with the school midterm break, and the reporting of exam results will be moved to December 22.

The upgrade to Blackboard Ultra is ongoing, with streamlined training for staff. Comments from the pilot stage are positive overall.

The Trinity College Strategic Plan 2025-2030 is close to publication. The education pillar focuses on making Trinity a lifelong learning destination, with an emphasis on digital transformation and flexible access, with shared responsibility from the Senior Lecturer and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Council has agreed to establish a hub for research innovations in teaching and learning, with open calls for projects and potential connections to MIE will be possible.

The Assistant Academic Secretary mentioned the suite of assessment policies. The Senior Lecturer added the need for transparency and alignment between student expectations and academic accommodations in the current context. The policy will be discussed at USC in February and may require further iteration.

The Chair thanked the Senior Lecturer for the update, and especially the work on the AI statement and the changes to the Academic Year. The Chair invited the Dean of Graduate Studies to provide an update on postgraduate education and regulations.

The Dean noted that her update overlapped largely with that of the Senior Lecturer. She noted a change in the approach to English language requirements for PG entry. A new framework was developed through the PG renewal Project, including 3 bands for English language, 6.5, 7.0, or 7.5 minimum entry requirements and the English language policy is being reviewed to align.

The Chair thanked the Dean of Graduate Studies for her update.

MIE/ACDC/24-25/016 AOB

The Chair invited any matters for other business.

The Chair thanked Marino Institute of Education for hosting the meeting and thanked the secretary for organising the meeting and circulating the papers.

The next meeting on the 15th of April will be online.