



**Marino Institute of Education
Associated College Degrees Committee**

A meeting of the Marino Institute of Education, Associated College Degrees Committee (MIE ACDC) took place on 24 February 2026 (10am-12pm) at the Maple Room at Marino Institute of Education, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9.

Present: Professor Neville Cox, Registrar, Trinity (*Chair*);
Professor Teresa O'Doherty, President of MIE;
Dr Seán Delaney, Registrar, MIE;
Professor Vincent Wade, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies;
Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies;
Professor Ann Devitt, Head of School Education;
Ms Amanda Ryan, Quality Officer, MIE;
Dr Michael Cleary-Gaffney, Interim Quality Officer, Trinity;
Dr Aimee Brennan, Dean of Education: Policy, Practice and Society, MIE;
Dr Craig Skerritt, Head of Department of Policy and Practice, MIE.

Attending: Dr Cliodhna Martin; Ms Nora Varga, Student Recruitment & Admissions Manager, Trinity Global for item 15; Mr Brendan White, MIE IFP Programme Manager for item 15; Ms Rima Fitzpatrick, Assistant Academic Secretary, Trinity; Ms Ellen Kampinga, Education Support Officer (*Secretary*).

Apologies: Ms Shauna Cassidy, Assistant-Registrar, MIE; Ms Patricia Maguire, Academic Secretary, Trinity; Professor Michael Shevlin, Second Representative, School of Education; Dr Gene Mehigan, Vice President for Education & Strategic Development, MIE; Mr Conn McCluskey, School Manager, School of Education.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/012 Welcome and Changes to Membership

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies. Introductions were made.

The Chair also noted the new Dean of Education: Curriculum and Childhood will be Professor David Aldridge. He will be taking up the position in early April.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/013 Minutes of the Meeting 1 December 2026

The Committee approved the minutes without amendments.

Action/Decision

013.1 The minutes of the meeting 1 December 2026 were approved.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/014 Matters Arising

No matters were noted.

The Student Recruitment & Admissions Manager at Trinity Global, and the International Foundation Programme (IFP) Programme Manager joined the meeting.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/015 Standing Update on IFP

The Chair welcomed Ms Nora Varga, Student Recruitment & Admissions Manager at Trinity Global, and Mr Brendan White, International Foundation Programme (IFP) Programme Manager to the meeting to present on the memoranda circulated.

The Student Recruitment & Admissions Manager outlined recent developments in student recruitment. Since the memorandum was issued, the number of deposit payments has increased. Although overall applications and offers are lower than last year, the cohort shows greater diversity in countries of origin. Applications for Film and Psychology have now closed. The Chair noted that the rise in deposits was encouraging. The MIE Registrar added that applications from the United States and China have declined, while applications from Turkey, the UK, African countries, and Vietnam are increasing. Trinity officers confirmed that these trends mirror broader shifts in Trinity's application patterns.

The IFP Programme Manager then spoke to the International Foundation Programme memorandum. This year, Semester 1 exams were scheduled later to allow for January assessments, a change that has been well received as it gives students more time to settle after arrival. Approximately 80% of the cohort is on track to progress to a Trinity bachelor's programme, consistent with recent years. Pathway A has seen a larger selection this year, and the new Programming module continues to grow in popularity.

He reported no significant issues but noted a decline in attendance compared with previous years. While visa regulations require students to maintain 80% attendance, there is anecdotal evidence that attendance data is not always requested during visa renewal, which may contribute to student attitudes. Trinity members observed a similar fall in attendance across the wider student population, possibly due to hybrid learning models, longer commutes, and large class sizes. Various approaches to improving attendance were discussed, such as using attendance lists or interactive classroom apps, the latter helping reduce administrative workload by allowing data to be exported directly. The Chair thanked both presenters for their updates.

The Student Recruitment & Admissions Manager at Trinity Global, and the International Foundation Programme (IFP) Programme Manager left the meeting.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/016 Annual Programme Review Reports 2024-25

The Chair invited the MIE Registrar to present the External Examiner Response Reports and the new Annual Programme Review Reports, along with the accompanying summary and action table.

The Registrar explained that the documents in item (a) relate to the Bachelor in Education through the Irish Medium and the Professional Master of Education, both of which continue the established practice of issuing direct responses to external examiner reports. The documents in item (b) follow the new reporting format introduced this year, which includes an executive summary. Questions were welcomed from members.

It was noted that there were no major recommendations requiring action. The MIE Registrar highlighted that the new reporting process represents an additional workload for programme leads, arising from the recommendations of the institutional review to incorporate more data and feedback into annual reporting on programmes. The reports were approved by the MIE Academic Council in January. MIE will review the effectiveness of this new format at a future meeting to determine whether it represents an improvement or requires further development.

The Trinity Interim Quality Officer commended the quality of the reports and the extensive data provided, noting their value for upcoming programme reviews. In the area of academic integrity, the

number of cases reporting was considered high. A question was raised about whether MIE maintains an overview of the types or patterns of academic misconduct. The MIE Registrar reported that suspected, unethical use of generative AI represents the most frequent concern. Indicators have included fabricated references, Americanised language, and unusually high-quality submissions. In such cases, meetings are held with students to discuss concerns (without alleging AI use). Members asked whether students disclose AI use; the MIE Registrar noted that a self-declaration mechanism exists and that MIE has a detailed academic integrity policy outlining when and how AI can be ethically used and disclosed. AI issues arise mostly in essays, and in response, MIE is beginning to move away from essay-based assessment and towards performance assessments rather than reverting to exams.

Trinity members noted similar challenges in their own programmes, acknowledging that detecting sophisticated AI use is increasingly difficult. Trinity policy allows academic staff to request a follow-up conversation with students to verify their understanding, though this is resource-intensive and depends on the assessment design. Tools such as Turnitin may help identify repetitive patterns from similar prompts, although their usefulness is limited to less sophisticated use of GenAI. A wider discussion followed on the impact of AI on learning and assessment quality.

A query was raised regarding student complaints about access to Trinity services, particularly the library. MIE confirmed that initial access issues had arisen for a handful of MES students but were resolved with support from the Trinity Librarian, alongside additional orientation and support sessions for students. It was confirmed that MIE students do participate in Trinity library orientation activities.

Members commented that the table summarising feedback types and associated actions was particularly useful. While the detailed reporting was acknowledged as time-consuming, the value of the data and evidence included was emphasised. It was noted that the Trinity School of Education uses a spreadsheet version of a similar report for recent reviews, and this approach was recommended.

The MIE Registrar closed by thanking the Assistant Registrar, Shauna Cassidy, for her work in compiling the review reports.

Action/Decision

016.1 Secretary to share review report spreadsheet template as mentioned by Head of School of Education with MIE.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/017 MIE Calendar Entries 2026/27

The Chair asked the MIE registrar to update on the MIE Calendar Entries for 2026/27. He noted that the memorandum on the continued suspension for the MES in LCE will proceed to GSC after being addressed by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Only minor changes were identified within the calendar entries. The Chair asked the MIE Registrar for additional comments, and he indicated that the updates were straightforward.

The Head of School of Education advised caution in how expectations are communicated to applicants. While the documentation outlines the relevant criteria for prior education, Teaching Council recognition cannot be guaranteed by MIE. The MIE President confirmed that although eligibility is checked at the point of admission, occasional exceptions may arise indeed.

The memorandum concerned the continued suspension of the MES in Leadership in Christian Education (LCE). The MIE Registrar hoped that either recruitment will resume next year or that the programme will be replaced with the online MES Christian School Leadership, and appreciation was expressed for the patience shown throughout the suspension period. The Dean of Graduate Studies noted that while a three-year cutoff normally applies, she is prepared to support exceptions in genuinely exceptional circumstances. She therefore indicated her willingness to permit one final extension on the suspension period, noting that a decision will be required early in 2026/27 on future plans for this programme.

The Committee agreed that the item should proceed to the Graduate Studies Committee.

Action/Decision

017.1 The continued suspension of the MES in LCE for one further exceptional year was approved and recommended for progression to the Graduate Studies Committee for approval.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/018 Proposed Changes to Modules

The Chair asked the MIE registrar to speak to the suggested changes to modules as circulated.

Action/Decision

018.1 The ACDC approved the proposed reframing changes to the module on the BSc Education Studies numbered ES8302 and titled Childhood.

018.2 The ACDC approved the proposed new modules in replacement of the module numbered ES8303 and titled Education as Liberation of Oppression.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/019 Standing Update on Quality Assurance of Linked Providers

The Chair invited the Trinity Interim Quality Officer to give his update. He reported no new information from QQI regarding last year's consultation papers and acknowledged the considerable work MIE has undertaken in developing policies to support its TrustEd application. He also noted progress on the Trinity Linked Provider Framework, with consultations planned in April and approval expected in May.

The MIE Quality Officer then updated the committee on the TrustEd application. MIE remains on track for the March deadline, with the Quality Committee having met last week and leadership team approval expected shortly. She congratulated Trinity on being among the first institutions to receive TrustEd accreditation. MIE continues to implement feedback from its February Quality Committee meeting, supported by an external consultant and ongoing stakeholder engagement. Work is underway to strengthen international related content on the website and ensure alignment across Erasmus, IFP, and institutional quality areas. A draft application is complete, and a meeting with QQI is scheduled for 25 February. With fewer institutions applying in this round—many of them English language colleges—the process is expected to be quicker.

Trinity officers asked how they might further support MIE. The MIE Quality Officer expressed appreciation for ongoing assistance from the Trinity Academic Secretary and Interim Quality Officer, noting that last year's preparatory work has been invaluable. She also thanked Trinity for expediting policies through its Quality Committee. Trinity reported that feedback from their own TrustEd review varied by panel, though common themes included issues around foreign qualifications, which MIE has already begun addressing.

The MIE President highlighted the importance of transparency regarding IFP recruitment, which is managed by Trinity, while MIE provides the academic and student support. With Trinity now TrustEd accredited, it is hoped this arrangement will be clearly understood in the review process. It was

noted that some IFP providers use external delivery models, and additional detail may be required to clarify the structure of responsibilities.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/020 Standing Item on Communication

a. Inter-institutional Collaboration

The Chair asked the MIE President to share their update on inter-institutional collaboration.

The MIE President reported progress on the upskilling Irish language programme, which is being delivered in collaboration with the Trinity School of Education and is now recruiting. The Head of the School of Education noted that application numbers are very strong. The programme is designed for post-primary teachers seeking to develop Irish language skills and is directly funded by the Department of Education.

Engagement is ongoing with the Department to clarify arrangements for the next phase of funding. The Department originally required the programme to begin in January, but with MIE's support the start date has been shifted to September. This adjustment will result in two overlapping cohorts next year. Annual funding cycles continue to present challenges for multi-annual planning, and confirmation is still needed on timelines for future funding availability.

The Chair asked the Head of School of Education to share their update on inter-institutional collaboration.

The Head of School of Education noted two book launches.

- One book launched on 15 January, titled: *Reimagining Teacher Digital Competence: Unpacking the Complexities of the Digital Transformation Agenda*, edited by Alison Egan, PhD, Director IT & eLearning, Marino Institute of Education, Keith Johnston, PhD, Associate Professor, School of Education, Trinity College Dublin and Oliver McGarr, PhD, Professor, School of Education, University of Limerick, Ireland.
- The other one is an upcoming publication. Titled: *Implementing Design-Based Research in Education: Practical Tools and Strategies* by Ann Devitt (School of Education, TCD), Catherine O'Reilly (formerly School of Education, TCD) and Jen O'Sullivan (Marino)

b. Policies and Procedures relevant to MIE

The Chair asked the Senior Lecturer and Dean of Graduate Studies to share their update on Policies and Procedures relevant to MIE.

The Senior Lecturer provided an update on current policy developments going to GSC and USC, including the policy on recording lectures. Students have been requesting a formal policy, and discussions with the student union took place 23rd February. The policy is intended to apply to all students and key issues include students independently recording lectures, concerns from academics of being recorded, and the potential impact on attendance. The policy can be shared with MIE once further developed.

The Senior Lecturer also noted that students have been asking for modular repeats, and an investigation of feasibility in the system is underway. The primary challenges are systems related rather than academic. Trinity currently does not allow students to carry failed modules, which creates difficulties for weaker students. A workable model has now been identified, and discussions are ongoing with Academic Registry, SITS and Finance regarding implications. A similar proposal went to Board in 2018 but was blocked by the Students' Union; this time, the SU is supportive. It was highlighted that OBA students are fully dissociated from the University community and must repeat their full programme, whereas modular repeats would offer significant benefits. MIE confirmed that modular repeat arrangements already exist within their regulations.

The Dean of Graduate Studies shared her update on the Policies and Procedures relevant to MIE. She reported no substantive changes at this time.

She noted the development of a new resource relating to new course proposals. While Trinity's structure may differ from MIE's processes, these resources might still be of interest, particularly in relation to potential developments such as the MES in Literacy.

The Dean also highlighted updates to the Appeals policy and the newly developed guidelines on procedures for school-level postgraduate appeals committees. She suggested that some elements of these policies may be useful for MIE, particularly where there may be crossover in practice.

MIE/ACDC/25-26/021 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The next meeting will be online on Tuesday the 14th of April 2026.

The meeting closed at 11am.