



School of Education, TCD Postgraduate Diploma/Master in Education

Higher Education

Rationale

This strand of the Master in Education (M.Ed.) is designed to support academics (including postdoctoral staff), who are new to teaching in higher education and more experienced colleagues who wish to consolidate, develop and enrich their own practice.

The Higher Education course has been constructed to enhance the work of academics as educators through:

- 1) supporting and enhancing the teaching and learning experience at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels;
- 2) fostering a critical understanding of the scholarship of learning and teaching in higher education;
- 3) encouraging academic awareness and critiques of pedagogical theory and practice;
- 4) facilitating the incorporation of discipline specific research/knowledge, where appropriate, into teaching and learning activities.

The course will appeal particularly to those who wish to earn formal recognition for a more studied approach to their teaching. From an institutional perspective, the programme marks a positive contribution to underpinning a professional and informed approach to teaching.

Course content

The programme content has been designed to provide academics with a balance between theory and practice, which in turn reflects two distinct 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; use of blended learning methodologies; 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 participants and the pedagogies of the disciplines to avoid the programme becoming too generic.

Postgraduate Diploma

The taught component of the course comprises four modules, with each module containing approximately 25 hours of contact time. Participants usually take the four course modules over two years. The course is designed to provide a balance between theory and practice, addressing critical and theoretical studies of teaching and learning in higher education.

The course is designed with an exit point on completion of the four taught modules. Participants successfully completing their studies at this stage will be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Studies.

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

Master in Education

The third year is devoted to the completion of a dissertation under the guidance of a supervisor. The dissertation is 20,000 words in length and may explore any of the themes covered by the course. The project may be carried out using a practitioner action research approach.

Strategies for Academic Practice

Participants will be involved in practice focused workshops and seminars, interactive learning environments and the use of blended learning methodologies. The course employs a variety of innovative approaches, including problem based learning and micro-teaching sessions.

The integration of theory and practice is emphasised in the content of the modules and in the assessment. The course encourages academic colleagues to learn from each other in an environment of reflection, peer review, and shared analysis. Each of the four modules is individually assessed. A wide variety of assessment methods are employed, including presentations, essays, case studies, teaching portfolios, blogs and reviews of micro-teaching.

Admission

The course is open to academic staff at all levels within the higher education system, as well as appropriately qualified professionals who aim to pursue an academic career. Postdoctoral or contract researchers who have a strong interest in developing expertise in the theory and practice of education are welcome to apply.

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