Report of Validation Panel

By Remote Meeting (via Microsoft Teams) **– Date of Meeting: 3 June 2020**

Award Type:	Bachelor of Education (Honours)
Programme Title:	**Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Montessori Education**
Award Class:	Major
NFQ Level:	8
Intakes Commencing:	September 2020
ECTS/ACCS Credits:	240
Award Standard(s):	Generic NFQ Level 8 Descriptors

Embedded Exit Award: It is envisaged that an embedded NFQ Level 7 exit award (BEd in Montessori Education, 180 ECTS) will be submitted for validation at a future date.

PANEL CHAIR

Name, Function, Institution/Organisation
Mr Tim Moran, Team Leader, Wallaroo Playschool, Cork / Lecturer, Cork College of Commerce

PANEL MEMBERS

Name, Function, Institution/Organisation
Dr Annie Cummins, Lecturer/Researcher, UCC
Ms Ida Greehy, Owner/Practitioner, Greenhill Montessori School, Fermoy, Co. Cork/ Lecturer, Cork College of Commerce
Ms Patsy Baissangourov, Lecturer, Letterkenny IT
Ms Eva Juhl, Institutional Review Facilitator, CIT (Registrar's Office Representative)

PROPOSING TEAM MEMBERS

Name, Function, Institution/Organisation
Dr Cian O' Neill, Head of Department of Sport, Leisure & Childhood Studies
Dr Judith Butler, Lecturer, Department of Sport, Leisure & Childhood Studies
Ms Marian Quinn, Lecturer, Department of Sport, Leisure & Childhood Studies
Dr Vanessa Murphy, Lecturer, Department of Sport, Leisure & Childhood Studies

PANEL DECLARATIONS ON GDPR AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

a) The chair and members of the New Programme Validation Panel confirm that they agree to the publication of their name, relevant professional function(s) and affiliated institution/organisation in connection with the present validation review, as required under the statutory quality assurance obligations of Cork Institute of Technology as a public provider of higher education in Ireland.

b) In submitting this report, the chair and members of the New Programme Validation Panel furthermore confirm that no real or apparent conflict of interest is present which would prevent, or could be seen to prevent, the panel's independent and impartial evaluation of the proposed programme(s) and award(s).

BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME

Drivers of Development

In September 2012, CIT commenced delivery of a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Montessori Education, at the time hosted by the Department of Social Studies. This existing two-year, 120-credit, add-on Honours degree, encompassing Stages 3 and 4 only, was specifically designed as a specialist 'progression degree' for applicants who have successfully completed a QQI Level 6 programme in Montessori Education in relevant Colleges of Further Education (CFE's) nationally. The BA (Honours) aims to produce highly skilled Montessori teachers for children aged 6 – 12 years with the requisite knowledge, skills, and competencies to work effectively to meet the requirements of children in a variety of Irish or International education and care settings.

During the last programmatic review of the BA (Honours) in Montessori Education (April 2016), the PR Panel strongly recommended that CIT should develop and provide the two initial stages of the Montessori degree to reduce the dependence of the CIT intake on the throughput of the external feeder programmes. In addition, development of an ab-initio degree offering would enable CIT to eliminate noted inconsistencies and gaps in content, focus and the pace of academic progression, such as the complete absence of material on the 0 – 3 age group between the FETAC courses and the CIT progression degree. Development of a four-year ab-initio programme to replace the 2-year progression degree also received support in feedback obtained from industry partners, Guidance Counsellors, graduates and students.

Added to these internal drivers, a number of national policy documents were published in the years after programmatic review which further impelled and influenced development of the new programme. Primarily these were (i) the "Action Plan on School Age Childcare" (DCYA, 2017); (ii) the "First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families" (DCYA, 2018), and finally (iii) the "[Professional Award Criteria and Guidelines for Initial Professional Education 1 (Level 7 and Level 8) Degree Programmes for the Early Learning and Care (ELC) Sector in Ireland](#)" (PACG) (DES, 2019).

Overall Programme, Award, Progression and Employment Opportunities

The proposed new **Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Montessori Education** is designed as a four-year, ab-initio programme of studies at NFQ Level 8, with the intention to also validate an embedded exit award at NFQ Level 7, under the proposed title of Bachelor of Education in Montessori Education.

Graduates of relevant Level 6 courses offered by Colleges of Further Education will be able to apply for advanced entry into the new ab-initio degree, albeit into Stage 2 (rather than Stage 3), in line with comparable arrangements in other CIT programmes.

The award type of Bachelor of Education (Honours) is a first for Cork Institute of Technology, and reflects the specific theoretical focus of the programme on Montessori philosophy and pedagogy, which underpins and consistently informs Montessori practice through all stages of the programme.

Graduates of the new BEd (Honours) in Montessori Education will be industry-prepared as a result of the applied nature of the programme, as well as the significant focus on experiential learning in the Stage 2 and 3 placements. Graduates may progress directly into a variety of professional roles, or apply for postgraduate study level in the areas of (i) Teacher Education (PME Primary Teaching at Mary Immaculate College, Maynooth University, Dublin City University and Marino Institute of Education, amongst others), (ii) Intervention (Masters in Play Therapy at CIT, MSc in Speech & Language Therapy (Professional Qualification) at University of Limerick, amongst others), and/or (iii) Leadership (MA in Leadership in Early Years Education and Care at IT Carlow, IT Sligo and TU Dublin).

Graduates of the BEd (Honours) in Montessori Education will typically be able to fill the following professional positions: ECCE practitioner; ECCE manager; SAC practitioner; SAC manager; Montessori teacher in both early childhood and primary education settings; development worker with Municipal/County Council Childcare Committees; Quality Specialist with Better Start; Inclusion Specialist with Better Start; Early Years Specialist with the Tusla Inspectorate; Tutor and Research Assistant.

Curriculum and Thematic Streams

The curriculum of the BEd (Hons) in Montessori Education was developed in response to the qualification requirements for ECEC and SAC as set out in the relevant national policies or emerging from national discussion, and the programme will be uniquely placed to advance the policy objectives for both sectors.

The "First 5 Strategy" of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs commits to professionalising both the ECEC and SAC workforces with the introduction of increased qualification levels and regulatory requirements. Following on from this, the DES requirements for L7 and L8 ECEC degree programmes in "Professional Award Criteria and Guidelines for Initial Professional Education …" state that graduates who lead ECEC practice require "academic attributes (e.g., establishing sound academic principles), professional practice attributes (e.g., planning and developing a curriculum for children) and professional personal attributes (e.g., an ethical practice framework to inform their practice, the capacity for reflection and critical thinking)" (p. 11). A professional Level 8 award in ECEC should "facilitate the achievement of 240 ECTS" (PACG, p. 23). Policy development in relation to professionalisation of the SAC workforce is currently underway.

The proposed BEd (Honours) in Montessori Education graduates will have a foundation in ECEC in general, but will also have specialist knowledge and practices in relation to the Montessori approach to education and care, with the Montessori philosophy and pedagogy embedded throughout all the practice modules. The programme also anticipates the qualification requirements for SAC and will position graduates of the programme as pedagogical leaders in both the ECEC and SAC domains.

The thematic structure of the programme facilitates opportunities for scaffolded learning in the domains of Montessori Pedagogy, Inclusion, Creative Arts, Personal and Professional Development, Placement, Child Health and Development, ICT, Physical Activity, Research, and Management. These embedded streams run across all programme stages, continuously intersecting with each other as well as with additional discrete subject areas (Law, An Ghaeilge and Sociology), resulting in a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to studying the theory and practice of early and middle childhood.

Core Differences between Existing 'Progression Programme' and Proposed Ab-Initio Degree

The core differences between the current BA (Hons) Montessori Education (Stages 3 and 4 only) and the proposed BEd (Hons) in Montessori Education programme (four years ab initio) are:

- In the current '2+2' model, the students study early childhood at QQI L5 and L6 in CFE and middle childhood at QQI L7 and L8 in CIT. This means that the level of knowledge and skills relating to early childhood is at a lower academic level than that for middle childhood. The proposed four-year ab-initio programme redresses this imbalance.

- 'Personal and Professional Development' is a central feature of the proposed programme, which is not the case in the current programme model.

- The Creative Arts stream is extended across all years, which is again not currently the case.

- The proposed programme incorporates an increased number of modules exploring Montessori pedagogy and relating to contemporary ECEC practices.

- There is also an increased focus on children with additional needs and children from disadvantaged and marginalised families in the proposed programme.

- The new programme includes additional modules on leadership and management in recognition of the leadership roles that graduates will play in the ECEC and SAC workforces.

- Students will now undertake 4 to 5 placement blocks in a broad range of settings including ECEC centres, schools/units for children with additional needs, primary schools (Infant/Senior classes) and SAC centres.

- Due to the broader placement options, students will have the opportunity to participate in the ERASMUS traineeship programme and complete a placement at a Montessori school in Cologne, Germany.

Derogations

Lastly, in connection with specific professional education requirements set out in the DES "Professional Award Criteria and Guidelines …", derogations from certain features of the standard CIT curriculum model were sought by the proposers and granted in principle by the Academic Council.

1. In connection with placement, a <u>derogation for the introduction of a 'failed element'</u> into the two placement modules in Semesters 3 and 6 (Modules *Placement: Relationships*, 30 ECTS, and *Placement: Leadership*, 20 ECTS) was sought. This concerns the need to separately pass the professional practice element of both long placements, which is in keeping with the stated PACG requirement that

    "*[…] students must pass the professional practice placement element of the programme independent of all other elements in order to progress to the next year of the programme or to graduate. Students who fail professional practice placement should be offered mentoring and support if they are afforded the opportunity to repeat the professional practice placement.*" (PACG, p. 26)

Students who fail the professional practice element of the placement modules will have an opportunity to repeat this element prior to the completion of the academic year to ensure they have the opportunity to progress to the next academic year.

2. Secondly, the PACG require that a minimum of 35% of an ECEC degree programme must be dedicated to Professional Practice Placement (p. 24), and also present a list of essential programme content that must be included (p. 15-23). The PACG relate to programmes for children from birth to six years of age.

    The proposed Montessori Education programme spans birth to twelve years of age. In order to meet the PACG requirements while also providing the students with the knowledge(s), practices and values for working with children aged six to twelve years, there is limited scope for including electives on the programme. Thus, _derogation from the Free Choice requirement_ was sought for all programme semesters with exception of Semester 8, where two language-based modules are available.

Findings of the Panel

*NOTE: In this report, the term "**Requirement**" is used to indicate an action or amendment which in the view of the Panel **must be undertaken** prior to commencement of the programme, as a **condition of validation**.*

*The term "**Recommendation**" indicates an item to which the Institute, academic unit or programme board should give serious consideration. Normally it is expected that recommendations will be implemented as soon as possible. Progress will be monitored and will be discussed in programmatic review.*

Requirements and recommendations should be accompanied by a <u>short</u> summary of the observations and findings giving rise to them.

*Panels may also make **Commendations** on instances of good design or practice which may merit wider dissemination, and may record any other findings which they deem important for the QA record.*

The Panel has considered the documentation provided and has discussed the programme with the proposers. Based on this, the Panel has arrived at a number of Findings, Requirements and Recommendations as follows.

1. Programme-Level Findings

1.1   NEED FOR THE PROGRAMME

> **Validation Criterion:** Is there a convincing need for the programme with a viable level of applications?
>
> Overall Finding: Yes

Findings: The programme team made a very good case for the proposed programme in the documentation and the panel meetings. The Panel heard that the desirability of the programme had been confirmed to the proposers through various consultations, e.g. at a recent national Guidance Counsellor event.

The Panel notes that, amongst others, the proposed CIT Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Montessori Education will be the only Montessori degree programme in the South, and currently also the only degree programme in the South of Ireland to address School-Age Care (SAC).

The new ab-initio BEd (Honours) degree will also be included on the Level 8 CAO list, and will therefore be far more visible and accessible to Leaving Certificate students than the existing two-year BA (Hons) 'progression' programme. The Panel expects that increasingly more school leavers will themselves have experienced a Montessori education, and may thus possess a greater overall awareness of the Montessori pedagogy than previous generations of students.

For these reasons, the Panel feels that introduction of the new ab-initio Honours degree will more than offset the recent drop-off in demand from FE Colleges to the existing two-year 'progression' programme due to decreasing demand at FETAC Levels 5 and 6, and will enable CIT continue to offer a Montessori qualification to what will be a broader spectrum of entrants.

1.2   AWARD AND PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

> **Validation Criterion:** Are the level and type of the proposed award appropriate? Do the minimum intended programme outcomes adequately describe the intended graduate profile, and do they align with the relevant award standard(s) (incl. for any embedded exit awards)?
>
> Overall Finding: Yes, but with regard to the Level 8 target award only.

Updated programme documentation which now also included a set of programme outcomes for the envisaged L7 exit award (Bachelor of Education in Montessori Education), a summary table of mandatory modules in Stages 1 – 3 comprising the embedded programme, and a statement outlining the professional value of the Level 7 award was received from the programme team post-panel on 5 June 2020.

The Panel members conducted a desk-review of the updated submission. Based on this, they consider that they are unable to recommend validation of the exit award at this point in time however.

The Panel supports provision of a BEd in Montessori Education as a Level 7 exit award for the proposed ab-initio Honours degree programme in principle, but considers that more evidence would need to be supplied with regard to the adequacy of the mapping of the intended programme outcomes against the CIT Award Standards for an Ordinary (Level 7) degree. In the Panel's view, the Level 7 programme outcomes as submitted to it on 5 June are not yet sufficiently distinct from, and are indeed closer to, the outcomes of a Level 8 Honours programme.

One of the Panel's concerns is that with the tightening of DCYA requirements for ECEC and SAC professionals in the landscape, CIT must ensure that the student is fully protected as regards suitability for particular positions and for the higher capitation, whichever NFQ level they graduate at.

Therefore, when the embedded exit award is brought forward again for validation, the Panel suggests that it would be necessary for the statement of intended programme outcomes to map to the CIT Level 7 Award Standards more clearly and robustly. Inclusion of a mapping of the individual Module Learning Outcomes to the intended Level 7 programme outcomes would help the programme team further demonstrate how the outcomes of the embedded exit award specifically are supported by Stages 1 – 3. Lastly, the documentation for the embedded award may also need to outline more specifically how a graduate who wishes to exit with a L7 award meets the academic and professional requirements for entering the workplace at that time. This is to protect any student exiting at Level 7 and to ensure that their specific award is appropriately evident in the programme documents pertaining to the validated awards.

1.3   LEARNING EXPERIENCE

> **Validation Criterion:** Is the learning experience of an appropriate level, standard and quality overall?
>
> Overall Finding: Yes, subject to certain Requirements and/or Recommendations.

The proposed Programme Outcomes as presented to the Panel are attached as Appendix 1.

Findings, requirements and recommendations concerning individual modules (if any) are recorded in Section 2 below.

Finding: The delivery and assessment mechanisms proposed are appropriate and well adapted to the needs of the programme and its learners, as well as the profession. In this context, the Panel was very impressed

with the proposers' in-depth knowledge and awareness of the professional practice requirements and guidelines as exhibited during discussion.

Commendation: Detailed thought has been given to the delivery of practice-based programme elements via alternative mechanisms which will accommodate current distancing requirements while allowing students to meet the intended programme outcomes and DES requirements; the Panel commends this.

Commendation: The Panel commends the good range of assessment formats and the quality and variety of the resource listings within the module descriptors.

Commendation: The practice-based and experiential nature of the programme are commended, as is the fact that the programme strongly supports the formation of reflective practitioners, not least through the reflective thread evident in all the placement modules.

Recommendation: In relation to placement for students with additional needs, the Panel recommends that the Placement Coordinator(s) should proactively make connections with the Institute's Disability Support Service and the relevant student(s) to best support their needs. Support should also be offered to work placement organisations and work-based placement supervisors, so that they can adequately accommodate students with additional needs. In this context, consideration should also be given to a process for disclosure in the work placement, should a student wish to make a disclosure.

1.4   PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Validation Criterion: Is the programme structure logical and well designed (including procedures for access, transfer and progression)?

Overall Finding: Yes, subject to certain Requirements and/or Recommendations.

The Semester Schedules as proposed are in Appendix 2.

Finding: The new programme will retain an advanced entry opportunity for graduates of relevant Level 6 programmes offered by Further Education Colleges. Due to changes in the content, organisation and academic demands of the new BEd (Honours) degree, Level 6 FE graduates will enter Stage 2 (rather than Stage 3) of the new ab-initio degree, however, in line with arrangements in other comparable CIT programmes. The Panel notes this.

Finding: In the Panel's opinion, the new ab-initio degree will give the Department greater control in building learners' academic abilities and shaping their academic progression through the programme than in the existing progression degree, where CIT has no influence over the Stage 1 and 2 inputs.

Finding: Following discussion, the Panel considers that the integration of the Montessori philosophy with other pedagogical approaches and settings throughout the programme has been well considered.

Recommendation: The Department should use the next programmatic review as an opportunity to review the programme structure with a view to enabling greater elective choice throughout the programme (e.g. for delivery of a language stream).

Recommendation: The Panel notes that the proposed BEd (Honours) in Montessori Education includes Intermediate-level modules from Semester 1 onwards (one 5-credit Intermediate module in Semester 1, one 10-credit Intermediate module in Semester 2).

The Panel recommends that the Department should keep a very close eye on the academic progress of students in Stage 1, using every opportunity for formative feedback, to ensure that the comparatively 'steep' academic profile and high degree of academic challenge from the very outset do not cause undue attrition or progression issues. The Panel also recommends that the academic performance of the first cohort of students in Stage 1 should be reviewed after a year, with these considerations in mind.

1.5   PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Validation Criterion: Are the programme management structures adequate?

Overall Finding: Yes

Finding: The proposed management structures for the new programme and for the management of work placement within it, are built on the structures developed within the Department's existing programme complement. Following discussion with the proposers, the Panel considers that these structures are very strong and should also serve the proposed programme and its learners very well.

Finding: The Panel was also impressed by the integration of student consultation into the programme design process, and by the mechanisms in place in the Department to ensure the voice of all students is heard.

1.6   RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Validation Criterion: Are the resource requirements reasonable?

Overall Finding: Yes

The Panel was assured on behalf of the President and Head of Faculty/School that appropriate resources in terms of staffing and facilities will be put in place when the programme is validated.

Finding: The Panel heard that there is currently extra capacity available in the Department. This will allow for concurrent delivery of the existing and new Montessori programmes during a transitionary period and will also make the projected growth in student numbers on the new degree sustainable. One additional WTE staff member will be required at commencement of delivery, and a second additional WTE staff member is to be recruited as student numbers rise from the start of delivery of Stage 3 (academic year 2022/23).

1.7   IMPACT ON THE INSTITUTE

Validation Criterion: Will the impact of the programme on the Institute be positive?

Overall Finding: Yes

Finding: The development of the proposed ab-initio Honours programme in Montessori Education realises a long-held ambition of the Department, and its impact on the standing and the resources of the Department of Sport, Leisure & Childhood Studies will, in the Panel's view, be very positive.

2. Module-Level Findings

The Panel notes that 6 modules on the proposed programme are pre-approved modules which may be delivered across several CIT programmes.

The new draft modules have been the subject of internal scrutiny by the CIT module moderator, and their content has been externally reviewed by Dr Annie Cummins, UCC, and Ms Patsy Baissangourov, LYIT, prior to being presented to the overall Validation Panel in the context of the overall programme.

In exercising its brief to consider the overall standard and appropriateness of modules, the Panel wishes to add the following findings, requirements and recommendations.

2.1 ALL MODULES

Requirement: Any revisions to Module Descriptors or Semester Schedules made to address the recommendations and requirements in this validation panel report require sign-off from the CIT Module Moderator and the Registrar's Office prior to approval by the CIT Academic Council.

Recommendation: The Panel asks for the assessment descriptions across the programme to be reviewed to ensure that they are at a sufficiently comparable level of detail. Amongst others, this will aid presentation of the programme as a cohesive unit to prospective students and other stakeholders.

4. Conclusion

Based on the above findings, the Panel has arrived at the following Conclusions:

- The Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Montessori Education meets the required standards for an award in its field of study at Level 8 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

- The Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Montessori Education meets the criteria for validation of a new programme adopted by the Academic Council of Cork Institute of Technology.

The Panel therefore recommends that the named Programme be validated for five academic years, or until the next programmatic review, whichever is soonest, subject to implementation of the Requirements above, and with due regard to the Recommendations made.

Implementation of Requirements and Recommendations

*NOTE: This section is **co-completed by the Academic Department and the CIT Registrar's Office**.*

It records the implementation of any panel requirements and the completion of the internal programme and module moderation process. Confirmation of completion by the CIT Registrar's Office is required for both before the programme is submitted to the CIT Academic Council for validation.

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF PANEL REQUIREMENTS

No.	Note	Page	Panel Comment	Programme Team Response
1	*REQ*	10	Any revisions to Module Descriptors or Semester Schedules made to address the recommendations and requirements in this validation panel report require sign-off from the CIT Module Moderator and the Registrar's Office prior to approval by the CIT Academic Council.	Noted and Agreed. This is in line with standard Institute procedures. *Completion of Req. 1 and Recomm. 5 reconfirmed by Ann Toebes, Curriculum Development Facilitator, 20 Nov. 20*
2	*REC*	8	In relation to placement for students with additional needs, the Panel recommends that the Placement Coordinator(s) should proactively make connections with the Institute's Disability Support Service and the relevant student(s) to best support their needs. Support should also be offered to work placement organisations and work-based placement supervisors, so that they can adequately accommodate students with additional needs. In this context, consideration should also be given to a process for disclosure in the work placement, should a student wish to make a disclosure.	Noted and Agreed with regard to each of the points made here. The SLCS Dept. currently has a very strong working relationship with the Institute's Disability Support Services (DSS). In fact this Placement-specific Recommendation is already in place with regard to our existing ECEC programme, whose Placement experience is identical to the proposed placement operation across the 4 years on this programme. Further, an existing Community of Practice for the existing BA Montessori Education and BA ECEC programmes is already in existence and this will naturally extend to the proposed BA (Hons) in Montessori Education programme. Finally, the Programme Team will review the current process for disclosure in the work placement, should a student wish to make a disclosure.
3	*REC*	8	The Department should use the next programmatic review as an opportunity to review the programme structure with a view to enabling greater elective choice throughout the programme (e.g. for delivery of a language stream).	Noted and Agreed. This will form a specific component of the next Programmatic Review process, including an overarching review of Elective Modules that may be appropriate to both this programme and also the existing ECEC programme.

| 4 | *REC* | 9 | The Panel notes that the proposed BEd (Honours) in Montessori Education includes Intermediate-level modules from Semester 1 onwards (one 5-credit Intermediate module in Semester 1, one 10-credit Intermediate module in Sem. 2). The Panel recommends that the Department should keep a very close eye on the academic progress of students in Stage 1, using every opportunity for formative feedback, to ensure that the comparatively 'steep' academic profile and high degree of academic challenge from the very outset do not cause undue attrition or progression issues. The Panel also recommends that the academic performance of the first cohort of students in Stage 1 should be reviewed after a year, with these considerations in mind. | Noted and Agreed in both cases. With regard to the former, this reflective task, incorporating a statistical approach (relative to other related programmes), in addition to a qualitative approach incorporating the reflections of both students and staff, will be conducted on both a semesterised and annualised level. With regard to the latter, a similar thorough and comprehensive analytical and reflective process will be conducted at the end of Year 1 of this programme. |
| 5 | *REC* | 10 | The Panel asks for the assessment descriptions across the programme to be reviewed to ensure that they are at a sufficiently comparable level of detail. Amongst others, this will aid presentation of the programme as a cohesive unit to prospective students and other stakeholders. | Noted and Agreed. This task is currently in process and will be completed in the days ahead. Refer to the REQ. above for the further level of oversight in this regard. |

2. SIGN-OFF ON FINAL PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION (INCLUDING MODULES)

The CIT Registrar's Office confirms that:

- The Programme and Module Moderation Process for this proposed programme is complete; and

- The final Programme Specification and associated Module Descriptors are deemed ready to be submitted to Academic Council for approval.

Signed: Eva Juhl   **Date: 20 Nov. 20**

Notes/Commentary:

APPENDIX 1 – PROPOSED PROGRAMME OUTCOMES – BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (HONOURS) IN MONTESSORI EDUCATION (NFQ LEVEL 8)

Programme Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this programme the graduate will be able to demonstrate... :

PO1	**Knowledge - Breadth**	
	(a)	Display a comprehensive knowledge of the theory, policies, concepts and pedagogical methods pertaining to Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) incorporating the Montessori Philosophy of Education.
	(b)	Select and utilise relevant knowledge sources and applications of key principles relating to equality and diversity, additional needs, EAL (English as an additional language), children's rights, outdoor learning, physical movement and adapted physical education.
	(c)	Develop and justify a comprehensive, personal world view, centred on international evidence-based best practice in the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) domains.
PO2	**Knowledge - Kind**	
	(a)	Apply appropriate theoretical concepts and utilise the necessary skills to plan for instruction and design ECEC and SAC prepared environments that promote critical thinking, autonomy, care of self, well-being, and respect for others and the setting.
	(b)	Acquire, evaluate and apply knowledge through research, critical thinking and problem solving to design, implement and evaluate inclusion, equality and diversity practices that positively support children with a range of abilities and additional needs across a variety of education and care settings.
PO3	**Skill - Range**	
	(a)	Apply operational and leadership principles to effectively manage in the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) domains.
	(b)	Demonstrate practical and technical competence in a range of skills and tools relating to curriculum design, differentiated learning and assessment, and an analytical engagement with Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) practice frameworks.
PO4	**Skill - Selectivity**	
	(a)	Exercise appropriate judgement, and select appropriate solutions using evidence-based best practice, in a number of complex planning functions relating to service provision and operational design of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) settings.
	(b)	Analyse complex issues relating to Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) and develop appropriate solutions through the disciplines of differentiated teaching, transition, assessment and monitoring educational progress.
	(c)	Recognise and act, within a critically reflective process, on personal and sectoral development actions in keeping with national and international best practice.
PO5	**Competence - Context**	
	(a)	Organise and manage people and processes in the transient and constantly changing sectors of the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) domains.
	(b)	Conduct advanced research, incorporating Montessori theory and concepts and problem-solving skills in a professional, accountable and creative manner in a wide range of contexts within the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) domains.
PO6	**Competence - Role**	
	(a)	Work independently or as a member of a team, both ethically and professionally, in the processes of contributing to, coordinating and initiating effective change within the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) domains.
	(b)	Apply effective leadership and communication skills when working with a variety of educational settings, leading groups, managing teams, initiating and driving change within the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) domains.
PO7	**Competence - Learning to Learn**	
	(a)	Display the attributes of a reflective, autonomous, self-directed learner possessing the appropriate competencies, confidence and discipline to broaden and deepen knowledge and expertise in the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) domains.
	(b)	Engage in continuous professional development (CPD) and utilise appropriate new learning opportunities to re-focus, re-frame and/or contextualise prior learning.
	(c)	Identify and assess the training needs of staff and colleagues in the relevant work environment and foster a 'learning organisation' culture to develop a sense of empowerment, initiative and entrepreneurship.
PO8	**Competence - Insight**	
	(a)	Display self-confidence and an appropriate assertiveness when managing work-related problems, while demonstrating an appreciation of the ethical and legal issues involved in the sensitive management of work colleagues, collaborating with various educational settings, and/or communicating with parents.
	(b)	Relate Montessori's concept of 'the society of social cohesion' in the context of solidarity and empathy with child groups.

APPENDIX 2 – SEMESTER SCHEDULES

Semester Schedules

Stage 1 / Semester 1

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Contact Hours	PT Contact Hours	Course Work	Formal Exam
CMOD6001	Creativity Innovation&Teamwork (Approved)	MARESE BERMINGHAM	Fundamental	5.0	3.00	0.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Child Development & Learning (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Fundamental	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Montessori:The Infant Child (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Fundamental	5.0	4.00	4.00	100.0	0.0
XXXX	Learning to Move (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Introduction to the Arts (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Fundamental	10.0	6.00	6.00	100.0	0.0

Stage 1 / Semester 2

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Contact Hours	PT Contact Hours	Course Work	Formal Exam
EDUC6009	Inclusion:Equality & Diversity (Approved)	Cian ONeill	Fundamental	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Lifespan Psychology (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Fundamental	5.0	3.00	3.00	35.0	65.0
No Code Yet	Pers & Prof Dev: Foundations (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Fundamental	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Sociology of Childhood (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Fundamental	5.0	3.00	3.00	60.0	40.0
No Code Yet	Montessori:The Preschool Child (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	10.0	8.00	8.00	100.0	0.0

Stage 2 / Semester 1

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Contact Hours	PT Contact Hours	Course Work	Formal Exam
No Code Yet	Placement: Relationships (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	30.0	0.50	0.50	100.0	0.0

Stage 2 / Semester 2

Mandatory									
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Contact Hours	PT Contact Hours	Course Work	Formal Exam
EDUC7014	Inclusion: Additional Needs (Approved)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
LEGS6005	Early Childhood Law (Approved)	Cian ONeill	Fundamental	5.0	4.00	4.00	50.0	50.0
EDUC7013	Montessori and Technology (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Pers & Prof Dev: Intermediate (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Montessori & ECEC Models (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	0.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Learning through Creativity (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0

Stage 3 / Semester 1

Mandatory									
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Contact Hours	PT Contact Hours	Course Work	Formal Exam
PSYC7006	Child Psychology (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	3.00	3.00	40.0	60.0
No Code Yet	Pers & Prof Dev: Advanced (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
N/A	Montessori Principles Outdoors (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Partnerships for Inclusion (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Montessori: Middle Childhood (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	4.00	4.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	The Arts-Based Curriculum (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Intermediate	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0

Stage 3 / Semester 2

Mandatory									
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Contact Hours	PT Contact Hours	Course Work	Formal Exam
No Code Yet	Placement: Leadership (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	20.0	0.50	0.50	100.0	0.0
CHLD8004	Management in ECEC (0-12yrs) (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	10.0	2.00	3.00	100.0	0.0

Stage 4 / Semester 1

Mandatory								
Mod Code	**Module Title**	**Co-ordinator**	**Level**	**Credits**	**FT Contact Hours**	**PT Contact Hours**	**Course Work**	**Formal Exam**
EDUC8029	Montessori Research Skills (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Montessori & Transformation (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Montessori: Informed Practice (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Health and Wellbeing (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Arts-Rich Learning Environment (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Montessori + ICT (6-12 years) (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0

Stage 4 / Semester 2

Mandatory								
Mod Code	**Module Title**	**Co-ordinator**	**Level**	**Credits**	**FT Contact Hours**	**PT Contact Hours**	**Course Work**	**Formal Exam**
CHLD8006	APE for the Young Child (Approved)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
EDUC8034	Montessori Dissertation (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	10.0	1.27	1.27	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	Montessori and Leadership (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
MGMT8060	Enterprise for ECEC (0-12yrs) (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0

Elective								
Mod Code	**Module Title**	**Co-ordinator**	**Level**	**Credits**	**FT Contact Hours**	**PT Contact Hours**	**Course Work**	**Formal Exam**
LANG6014	An Ghaeilge (Approved)	Cian ONeill	Fundamental	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
No Code Yet	EAL: Inclusive practice (Draft)	Cian ONeill	Advanced	5.0	3.00	3.00	100.0	0.0
FREE6001	Free Choice Module (Approved)	PAUL GALLAGHER	N/A	5.0	4.00	0.00	50.0	50.0

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APPENDIX 3 – PANEL TIMETABLE

Remote Validation Event for: **Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Montessori Education**

Date: **Wednesday, June 3rd, 2020**
Modalities: **Teams Meeting**

Panel Timetable

Date / Time	Session
Tue, June 2nd (ca. 2 hours)	Private Pre-Panel meeting - identification of key discussion areas, distribution of key questions
Wed, June 3rd **9:45 am - 11:00 am** (1 hour 15 mins)	**Panel Session 1** **Need for programme (inc. regulatory/professional context); prog. management arrangements; resourcing & facilities; award level & type; impact; access, transfer & progression.** To incl. short programme presentation (max. 10 mins, e.g. PP) - overall concept; intended graduate profile and typ. employment; award; professional regulation/registration status; links/efficiencies with other prog's in School; staffing; resources & facilities. Can include pics of key equipment/facilities if available.
11:00 am - 11:30 am	*Break (with short private panel discussion if nec.)*
11:30 am - 12:00 pm (30 mins)	**Panel Session 2** **Award standards; programme outcomes; graduate profile**
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	*Lunch break - (incl. private panel discussion) -*
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm (1 hour)	**Panel Session 3** **Programme structure, subject mix and thematic strands; teaching, learning & assessment strategy** (inc. any interim arr's for remote delivery)**; learning experience & supports; specific progr.-critical modules if relevant** (esp. final year theses/projects, placement, key specialist or professional modules). May include 5-min summary of interim delivery arrangements due to Covid-19.
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Private Panel close-out meeting
3:00 pm - 3:05 pm	**Brief feedback to proposers**