



EDUCATION MAGAZINE



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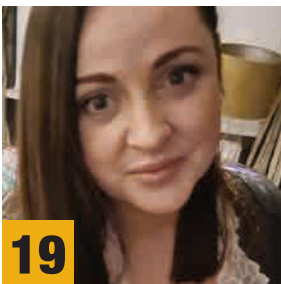
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WELCOME

Dear Principals, Deputy Principals, Co-operating Teachers, and School Community. I am delighted to welcome you to the latest edition of our newsletter, which provides a glimpse of various initiatives in our Department during academic year 2023-2024. You will find stories about exciting projects where our students, staff, and alumni are making a difference in their schools, communities, and beyond.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support for the Department of Education students. For yet another year they benefitted from dedication, leadership, and care from within the school community. Your support is essential to our mission of creating an engaged and thoughtful community of learners, researchers, professionals, and leaders of education.

I encourage you to take time to explore the contents of this newsletter, and to stay connected with us through our social medial channels and other communication platforms.

Wishing you a restful summer, and looking forward to working with you again next year.

Maija Salokangas

Dr Maija Salokangas
Maynooth University
Department of Education



A NOTE OF THANKS FROM FIONA, OUR PLACEMENT OFFICER

Dear Principals, Deputy Principals, Co-Operating Teachers and School Community, as we draw to the close of another busy year I would like to commend you for your commitment to our students.

During this past year they have witnessed leadership, adaptability, flexibility and dedication from within the school community. They, in turn brought creativity, ingenuity, dedication and provided a valuable support to the teaching staff and your students. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you all. I hope the summer will be a restful one and I look forward to working with you again next year.

If you would like to discuss future placements, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Fiona Casey

Fiona Casey
Placement Officer
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ARTIST IN RESIDENCE (AIR) AT MU EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



Colm Keegan, Conor Harrison, Sarah Timmins, Georgina Sherlock, Céline Healy

We were delighted to have the opportunity to work with Colm Keegan, poet, novelist, playwright, again this year with the sponsorship of the Arts Council. Colm worked with students and staff from across the department leading us in imaginative conversations and poetry composition as part of the Young People Children and Education Programme (YPCE).

The aim was to enable students and staff of MU Education Dept. to explore how to incorporate creative, artistic approaches into their practice. Working with an artist helps student teachers to become more open to the possibility of collaborating with an artist in the context of their current and future practice in schools.

In a celebration of these wonderful creative collaborations, MU Dept of Education organised a Show-Case event in association with the MU Dept of Froebel. This innovative event combined poetry, music, shadow theatre, shadow puppetry and installation pieces in an uplifting evening that simultaneously entertained and nourished the spirit.

Student and staff poetry was displayed on boards and plinths in the exhibition space. Poems were read aloud. Videos of student creations were

presented. The beautiful art installation piece, co-created by Froebel artist in residence Vera McEvoy and lecturer Laura Thornton was at the centre of the exhibition.

Addressing the assembled group, AiR co-ordinator, Dr Céline Healy, invited us to make space for creativity in our lives as an antidote to the fog of business which can too often cloud our vision and imagination.

The student and staff poetry is currently adorning the corridors of the department and is the subject of many a chat as we pass by. Poetry helping us to make space for creativity, conversation, communication, collaboration.

Many thanks to Colm Keegan, Vera Mc Evoy, colleagues in the Froebel Dept. and especially to the Arts Council.



Artists Colm Keegan, Vera McEvoy, Laura Thornton



Student David Swift reads one of his poems aloud



'Embodiment' by Laura Thornton and Vera McEvoy.

LANGUAGES CONNECT: CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING

At the end of August, in collaboration with Post-Primary Languages Ireland, MU Department of Education organised a day-long, on-campus Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Symposium for student language teachers and language methodology lecturers.



PME2 Student Language Teachers smiling as they receive an ovation from their workshop participants



Prof. Kim Bowers circulating in a full lecture room

CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010, p. 1). Student language teachers and their lecturers from MU, DCU, UCC, UCD, UofG, UL and TCD came together at Maynooth University to explore how they could integrate CLIL into their practice. Our guest lecturer was Professor Kim Bowers, CLIL expert. This bringing together of student language teachers from across 7 universities to collaboratively reflect on and develop their practice represented a first in language teacher education in Ireland. It was very well received by all participants and is an initiative that we will continue to build upon.

As an immediate follow-on, MU Department of Education offered a pilot CLIL module, facilitated by Dr Céline Healy, for MU PME students from across all subject areas, to deepen their understanding of CLIL principles and practice. At the end of this module participants designed a

poster to summary on CLIL for sharing with other student teachers. In addition, as part of a PME2 showcase event, they facilitated a CLIL workshop for students and staff and prepared a CLIL study pack for them.

The participants in the pilot CLIL module sat the Cambridge TKT CLIL exam in May. This is the first time that PME students have prepared for this qualification.

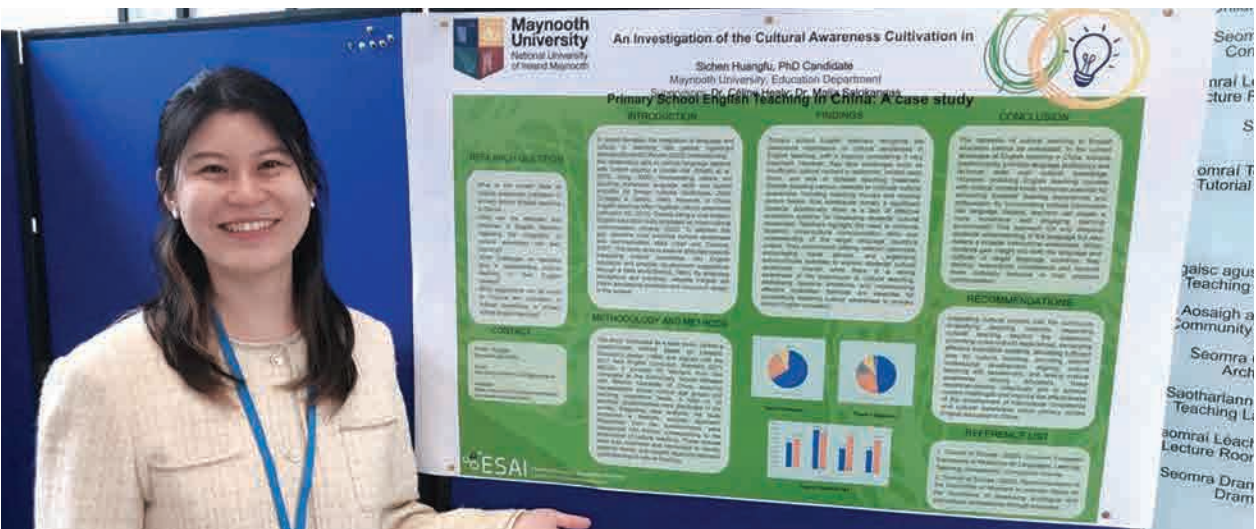
Exploring the potential for greater CLIL use in Irish post-primary schools is a key action point for Languages Connect, Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026. Maynooth University will continue to grow our offerings in CLIL for student teachers and for experienced teachers. A micro-credential module in CLIL is being prepared and further details of this and other CLIL workshops will be advertised on the MU Department of Education website. For further details contact celine.healy@mu.ie



PhD in Education Researchers Ngoc Thao (Jessie) Du, Ahmed Al-Awthan, Emer Byrden, Jessica Harrison & Melanie Groening McKenna

MU DOCTORAL STUDENTS CONTRIBUTE THEIR KEY INSIGHTS AT THE ESAI ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

We are delighted to celebrate the contribution that our doctoral researchers made at the ESAI 2024 conference at Maynooth University. Presentations included topics such as Initial Teacher Education and Social Sustainability (Jess Harrison); Racial Microaggressions and Counternarratives (Melanie Groening McKenna); Cultural Awareness in Language Teaching (Sichen Huangfu); Relations of Care in Education (Emer Byrden); Postcolonial education and identity (Jessie Du); and Teachers as Curriculum Makers (Nikoloz Maglaperidze). The Department is proud of the rich insights provided by these doctoral scholars to the field of education both at the national and international levels.



PhD in Education Researcher Sichen Huangfu

CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OUR DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (EDD) GRADUATES

In September 2017, we welcomed our first cohort of students to the four-year Doctor of Education programme and since that time, the programme has continued to develop and grow. March 2022 saw our first EdD graduate walk across the stage to accept his parchment from the President of the University and since then, eleven more have followed. By the end of this year's graduation ceremonies, another nine will join the ranks of Doctor of Education from the Department of Education, Maynooth University.

The title Doctor represents more than the work that our graduates have put in over the course of their studies, it is also about their contribution to what we as educators across the system know about practice, professionalism, and policy. Because of their research, we know more about making the process of school self-evaluation meaningful (Dr Vincent Thorpe) and the experience and effect of external evaluation on teachers' practice (Dr John Mescal).

We understand the motivations of those who changed careers to become teachers (Dr Annette Geoghegan) and the narrated experiences of teachers from low-income backgrounds (Dr Deirdre Murphy). We are better informed about how to support new principals as leaders of learning through mentoring (Dr Tiernan O'Donnell) and how life skills and leadership development of our young people transfer to other aspects of their lives (Dr Stacey Cannon). The pedagogic understandings and practices of experienced teachers (Dr Maureen Kenneally) and student teachers

(Dr Colm Dooley, Dr Eddie Costello) has also been developed and expanded. We have a deeper understanding of teacher professional development (Dr Sharon Coffey), including the experiences of teachers seconded from schools (Dr Ciara O'Donnell) and how teacher wellbeing is conceptualised and supported (Dr Annemarie Doran). And that is just the first twelve...

Their work is linked on our **Doctor of Education LinkedIn Page** and we will add the links for our next set of graduates after the September and November Conferings. We currently have 29 students enrolled on the programme at various stages of completion and we will welcome our fifth cohort to the department in September 2025. If you are interested in learning more about our Doctor of Education programme, **click the link forms.office.com**, leave your name and email address and we will send you details about our online information evening and proposal writing workshop that are happening in September 2024.



From top left: Dr Annette Geoghegan, Dr Annemarie Doran, Dr Colm Dooley, Dr Ciara O'Donnell, Dr Stacey Cannon, Dr Deirdre Murphy, Dr John Mescal, Dr Tiernan O'Donnell, Dr Eddie Costello, Dr Vincent Thorpe, Dr Maureen Kenneally, Dr Sharon Coffey.

THE EDUCATIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND (ESAI) ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024 ON APRIL 4TH, 5TH, 6TH AT MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY



In April, Maynooth University was very proud to host the three-day ESAI Annual Conference 2024. The ESAI is the principal academic association for the advancement of education research in Ireland. The conference theme 'Education for more just societies: the roles of imagination, innovation and collaboration' brought together 400 delegates from across Ireland and the globe to share, reflect, discuss, and debate insights.

This very successful conference, representing a growth in membership and interest in the association, was the biggest ever ESAI annual conference. ESAI is almost 50 years old and more dynamic than ever. The organisation of the conference was led by the president of ESAI Dr Céline Healy, MU Department of Education.

The range of experience in education was well represented as we welcomed founding members of ESAI, former presidents, seasoned academics and early career researchers, as well as volunteer student helpers from primary, post-primary and third-level. We were also delighted to welcome representatives from ESAI sister associations.

There was a variety of presentation types including paper presentations, poster presentations, pre-recorded presentations, symposia and special interest group (SIG) presentations.

The keynote speakers were Professor Sharon Todd, MU Department of Education and Professor Stephen McKinney, University of Glasgow, School of Education.

The very popular recipient of the ESAI Lifetime Achievement Award was Professor Áine Hyland and MU MEd graduate, Colm O Ríain won an Early Career Researchers' Commendation Award.

Many thanks to the Maynooth University Community for their support in the hosting of this great event.

Further details on the ESAI website on www.esai.ie and following the conference hashtag #esai24 on X.

UDL ACROSS BORDERS AND SEAS

In September 2023 the Education Department partnered with Ulster University, Northern Ireland and Lasell University, USA to create and deliver the pilot postgraduate certificate in Universal Design for Learning with the expertise of Margaret Flood and her colleagues in Ulster and Lasell. Six teachers from Northern Ireland and six teachers from the Republic of Ireland took part. The programme began with a two-day residential in Maynooth University followed by weekly online sessions and culminating with a five-day residential in Lasell University and explored UDL, technology and leadership for inclusion. The course finished with the group presenting their Capstones at Lasell University during their Connected Learning Symposium before receiving their certificates of completion. Congratulations to everyone who took part in making this programme a success and we look forward to welcoming our second cohort in September 2024.



NI and Rol Teachers receiving their certificates at Lasell University, Boston

MICROCREDENTIAL IN TRAUMA- INFORMED CARE



Following the success of our first micro-credential course in Trauma Informed Care in 2023, we are offering the course again in September-October 2024.

The course is aimed at practitioners who are working in contexts where trauma is impacting on the individuals and communities they serve. It explores the nature, prevalence and impact of trauma, drawing on the latest theory and research in the field. Through discussion, reflection, and embodied/experiential learning,

participants will develop an understanding of people's lived experience through a trauma lens, and explore the implications for trauma-informed education, care, or service design within their organisations.

The course will be delivered by Catriona O'Toole on Wednesday evenings, starting September 25th in MU Department of Education. More details are available [here](#). If you wish to register your interest in participating, please do so [here](#)

ANOTHER YEAR WITH GENERATIVE AI

Over the last year there have been significant developments both in the capability and utility of generative AI models alongside a growing awareness of the challenges they pose. OpenAI have just released their ChatGPT4o model, arguably the most powerful model available and made it freely available for everyone to use. It has already demonstrated its capabilities for coding, data analysis, real-time translation alongside implementing omni-model features. This means it can effectively work with multiple forms of data (image, text, audio) natively within the model without the need to outsource it to other programmes/models.

We should expect developments from the other key players in the field and their models such as Anthropic's Claude 3 (just released in Europe), Google's Gemini 1.5 and Meta's Llama 3 (open source). Needless to say, there will be continued interest in educational applications – however these should be approached cautiously and critically in order to determine whether and how they can be implemented effectively.

In response to the continued and envisaged impact on the educational landscape an elective module was developed for students this past year to provide them with an opportunity to critically engage with AI in Education and understand both the opportunities and challenges it presents. This includes:

- An understanding of how the models work
- What they can and can't do
- How they can be applied in educational contexts
- The moral, ethical and legal implications of how they were developed and trained
- Their environmental impact/energy usage
- Considering the impact engaging with these technologies could have on human skill development.

All the students who participated in the module created incredibly useful resource booklets for teachers and were encouraged to share them with colleagues, so hopefully you might get the chance to see one of them!

Throughout the year there has also been engagement with multiple schools and organisations (NAPD, ISTA, ASTI) to provide



**Registration of
Interest Micro-
Credential in
Generative AI in
Education**

information sessions and training on the use of Generative AI and it is anticipated that these will continue next year. Work is also being completed on the development of a micro credential for teachers focused on Generative AI in Education. If this might be of interest to you, scan the QR code, complete the form and we'll contact you once more information is available.

As we collectively move forward with the developments of AI in Education it is important that we continue to consider a cautious embrace of these technologies. It is unlikely that they are going to go away or can be ignored, but we must not blindly adopt them. There will be a need to regulate these technologies in educational contexts to protect fundamental rights, and the EU AI Act has started this process, deeming some educational use cases high risk.

However, over the year so many teachers have demonstrated the novel and creative ways they are implementing these models into their workflows, alongside using them to enhance the educational experience of their students. This gives confidence that collectively we can navigate this landscape, directing these technologies in useful and responsible ways.

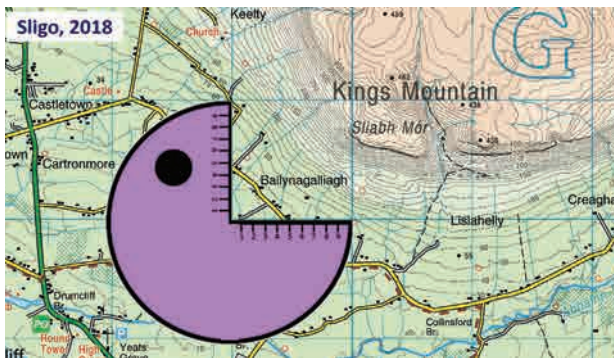
If you would like to partner on any projects or initiatives that you are working on in this space, or would just like share some of the work you are engaged in please feel free to reach out and **contact me: keith.young@mu.ie**

CREATIVE APPROACHES IN PME1 GEOGRAPHY METHODS

Conor Harrison shares here two creative approaches he's using in the teaching and learning of Geography with our PME student teachers. The first 'PacMan OS Map Helpers' is to help post-primary students as they develop their map reading skills. The second 'Kolkata Paper Bag-Making Simulation' is to help them develop empathy and understanding for people, in particular children and young people, living and working in the slums of Kolkata in India

(1) PacMan OS Map Helpers

How often do students struggle to understand Ordnance Survey Maps and 6-figure Grid References? They sometimes struggle with the last figure of the Easting and the last figure of the Northing. While looking at the posts of some geography teachers on 'X', formerly Twitter, I came across these amazing little helpers, 'PacMan OS Map Helpers' to be precise with thanks to @MrDelapGeo for sharing. They are absolute game changers for many students. To create *PacMan OS Map Helpers* for use with the 1:50,000 OS Maps the radius of the circle is 2 centimetres (diameter is 4 centimetres).



These *PacMan OS Map Helpers* definitely help students with their accuracy when giving 6-figure grid references. But if you decide to use them in your geography class be sure to wean your students off them in good time before they become dependent upon them. Naturally they will not be able to bring them into any examination hall!

PacMan OS Map Helpers in action on the Sligo OS Map Extract for the Leaving Certificate, 2018

(2) Kolkata Paper Bag-Making Simulation

I find this activity really useful in helping students to understand better the plight of poor families and child workers living in Kolkata in India and to create empathy for people living in the developing world.

Context: According to the 2011 Indian census*, Kolkata is the seventh-most populous city in India, with a population of 4.5 million residents within the city limits, and a population of over 14.4 million residents in the Kolkata Metropolitan Area, making it the third-most populous metropolitan area in India.

[Note: *The next Census was due in 2021. It was delayed to 2022 and then further delayed to 2023 due to the Covid-19 pandemic in India. There is a general election in 2024 so the census cannot take place now until late 2024.]



Paper-bag seller, Kolkata, India

There are 3,500 unregistered slums with as many as 250,000 children roaming the sprawling city's streets and slums, many of which lack basic sanitation. Many workers have no employer or regular wage. Instead they work as street vendors: shining shoes, selling newspapers or recycling waste materials.

In the Indian city of Kolkata, some people earn a living making paper bags out of recycled wastepaper – such as old newspapers – and selling them to shopkeepers.

The aim of the *Paper Bag-Making Simulation Activity* is to show how people work so hard, yet earn so little. Using real cost-of-living prices and wages, participants can get an idea of how they would manage if they had to survive making and selling paper bags.

In real life, paper bags are sold in batches of 22, called 'gistas'. On average, one child makes 200 bags a day, earning up to 1.5 rupees per gista – that's 13 rupees (less than €0.15) a day.

For the purpose of this simulation activity we will round it up to 1 rupee per batch of 10 bags. So, no matter how poor the participants feel at the end of the activity, the real-life situation for the bag makers is even worse!

The task is to survive for a day by making and selling as many paper bags as possible. The 'family' has 30 minutes to do this! There is quite a bit of preparation involved in setting the Kolkata Paper Bag-Making Simulation up, but the learning makes it all so worthwhile, as my PME1 students discovered!



PME1 Geography Methods students participating as 'families' in the Kolkata Paper Bag-Making Simulation (Image from Conor Harrison)



For all of the instructions on how to organise this simulation follow this link

INNOVATION IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

MU Education Department, in collaboration with the University of Uppsala, were very pleased to build on last year's successful pilot programme by welcoming two further cohorts of Swedish student language teachers during this academic year.



David Larsson, Jonas Bystrom, Peter Joelsson



Noah Yakhni, Ebba Robsarve, Marta Paskoska, Laura Karstedt

These are student teachers of English as a foreign language. They come to Maynooth to participate in an intensive language education programme which combines a focus on plurilingual competence, language methodology and intercultural competence. They collaborate in sessions with other student teachers from across our initial education programmes which they value as a means of building relationships and learning about another education system.

A key part of their intensive three-week programme is spending two days observing and helping in post-primary schools. This would not be possible without the co-operation and hospitality of participating post-primary schools: Mercy Secondary School Inchicore; Dominican College, Griffith Avenue; Maryfield College, Drumcondra; Salesian College, Celbridge; Scoil Dara, Kilcock; Blackrock ETSS; Maynooth Community College; Kingswood CC; Old Bawn Community School.

Thank you! The students are so grateful for the wonderful experience this enables them to have. We are very much appreciative of the warm welcome shown to them by management, staff, and students. Thanks also to our school placement officer, Fiona Casey.

As the numbers participating in the Innovation in Language Education Programme grow, we welcome expressions of interest from schools who would like to host a student language teacher. Please contact the programme co-ordinator celine.healy@mu.ie



Sanna Holm and Sandra Jobs



MEET JOSEFINE, AN EDUCATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGIST

I am Josefina Wagner, PhD from the Department of Teacher Education and School Research at the University of Innsbruck in Austria. I'm a visiting postdoctoral researcher at Maynooth University, co-hosted by the Department of Education and the Department of Anthropology, from January to June 2024. As an educational anthropologist, I currently conduct research in schools in Ireland and Austria on the topic of Learning Friendship: A Cross-Cultural Study on Social Belonging in Education.

Over the course of my time at MU, I have been very lucky to work with an Irish secondary school to gather about 100 hours of fieldwork. This time spent throughout the busy lessons of the school day has helped me to understand the everyday life in school and the very particular experiences of children with different needs in educational settings.

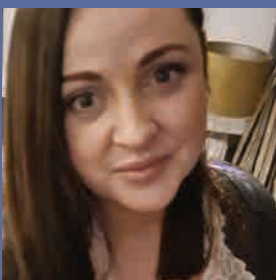
Some of the most memorable experiences of my time include observing how the power of the group can make a difference in keeping up the bond of individual students with their peers in moments of crisis; how the near invisible wink of an educator towards a student can create a

sense of safety and belonging for a child; how the absence of jeering and mocking encourages ongoing participation and respect for each other; and how the softly murmured responses of individual students can reveal so much about attention and awareness of children that seem otherwise absorbed or disengaged from classwork. I have also come to wonder how in the absence of early performance-tracking in secondary education, as is the case in Austria, students are differently motivated, disciplined, and encouraged to pursue individual strengths in Ireland.

It has been a formative experience for me to hear teachers speak of the humanity of their students that matters to them most, while they also expect performance and achievement. School leadership, educators, and students have been extraordinary partners in my experiences with schooling and education in Ireland. It is thanks to the ambitious leadership and the visionary deputy principal that I have been able to observe and engage with this unique school community. Many thanks to Hana Cervinkova,

PHD STORIES

RUTH SHERRIDAN SECURES HUME MAP SCHOLARSHIP



Ruth Sherridan has secured a prestigious John and Pat Hume Scholarship to support her PhD research. Ruth's research will focus on the challenges faced by Irish Traveller students in relation to school experiences and outcomes. Ruth will work with selected schools to co-design, implement, and evaluate, interventions aimed at breaking down barriers to Traveller students' school attendance and engagement. We look forward to Ruth joining the Department in September 2024.



NATIONAL EDUCATION AWARDS

The Teaching and Learning for the 21st century programme (TL21) was a finalist in the recent National Education Awards (2024).

TL21 is university-school-Education Support Centre engagement programme focused on supporting and promoting cultures of innovative pedagogic practice in post-primary school communities across Ireland. It is the largest voluntary programme of its kind in Ireland has been running since 2003. It is a Maynooth University led programme built on principles of partnership, the chief partners being post-primary schools across Ireland, a network of Education Support Centres (ESC), and the Teacher education Section, Department of Education (Ireland).

A hallmark of the TL21 programme is its ability to be organisationally agile, adaptive, and responsive to changing contexts and needs. The programme has continued to grow since 2003 from an initial four teachers across four subjects in 15 schools, all of which were in the Leinster area. Within the last eight years, in particular, the programme has expanded to all parts of Ireland and has been successfully run in centres as far north as Donegal, as far south as West Cork, as far west as Mayo and in the east such as Blackrock. It has engaged with every centre in four of the six ESC national regions, and we are currently engaged with the largest ever number of ESCs since the programme began.

In 2019 the Department of Education, commissioned an independent review of the TL21 programme. This review (Partners in Progress) highlighted the “strategic national importance” and “demonstrable impact” of TL21 for the teaching profession; its “national and international significance”; its “skilful, sophisticated design”, its capacity to adapt and respond to changing system needs and the awareness and in esteem which the programme is held at senior education stakeholder level.

Evaluations gathered over the lifetime of the programme reveal very high levels of positivity and amongst participant teachers. Inspectorate and other independent reports (ETBI, CEIST, etc.) show how these teachers have developed their capacity as resourceful, articulate, and innovative practitioners, with the confidence to publicly share illuminating and convincing accounts of their professional work.

Being shortlisted and a finalist in the National Education Awards (2024) is testament to the incredible work of all programme partners.



ENACTING LESSON STUDY WITH POST PRIMARY DEIS SCHOOLS

Dr Diarmaid Hyland and Dr Tom Delahunty are involved in an Irish Research Council funded project which has been working with 10 post-primary DEIS schools across Ireland to enact Lesson Study in Mathematics. The project (led by Dr Aoibhinn Ni Shuilleabhain at UCD) provided a one-day workshop in Lesson Study to more than 30 teachers who spent this academic year completing a cycle of Lesson Study. In addition to the training day in UCD, the teachers in each school were supported by a Mathematics Education Researcher, and linked with a Research Mathematician who was available to the teachers as an external resource.

PROFESSOR KERI FACER, “EDUCATING THE TEMPORAL IMAGINATION: TEACHING TIME IN A WARMING WORLD”

Professor Keri Facer, University of Bristol, held the inaugural talk in the Department of Education new seminar series supported by the Maynooth University Network and Collaboration Fund.



Focusing on one of our research themes, Prof Facer’s talk attracted colleagues from across the Faculty of Social Sciences. In it, she questioned some of our most basic understandings of time and how they need to be rethought in light of teaching in the age of climate emergency.

While she was here Prof Facer also offered an in-depth workshop on time and education with our PhD students. At once both scholarly and creative, Prof Facer’s contributions provided a wonderful opportunity to pursue lasting collaborative links with her and the funded projects she is leading.

Prof Facer also holds appointments at the Swedish Agricultural University in Uppsala and the innovative environmental high education institution Black Mountain College.

CONFERENCE TO LAUNCH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RESOURCES DEVELOPED BY MU DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TEAM



Keynote speakers at the Limerick School Attendance Conference (left to right): Dave Cashman (school principal) Catriona O’Toole (Associate Professor MU), Tara Ćirić (PhD candidate, MU), Katriona O’Sullivan (Associate Professor, MU), Vivienne Hogan (school principal), Jennifer McMahon (Senior Lecturer, UL), David Studer (Limerick CYPSC)
Photograph credit: Keith Wiseman

Limerick Children and Young People’s Services Committee (CYPSC) commissioned MU team, Catriona O’Toole and Tara Ćirić, to conduct research into the lived experience of educators, practitioners, parents and young people to explore issues around school avoidance and other attendance difficulties. A Conference took place on Thursday, April 25, 2024, at Thomond Park in Limerick to launch the research report and accompanying guidance for professionals and parents. These documents can be found [here](#). The conference brought together local partners who work with children, young people, and families to address school attendance issues. It featured an exciting lineup of speakers, presentations, and workshops throughout the day. The goal was to break down barriers to attendance, and promote better educational experiences and outcomes for all students.

RETIREMENT RECEPTION

In 2023 we said farewell to two much loved colleagues: Mary Reilly and Suzanne Thorn. Many graduates of the Department of Education will be familiar with both. Suzanne and Mary both worked as tutors and between them visited many schools and classrooms over the years.

They also worked together on modules on campus as part of the PME programme. Mary in particular will be remembered by very many teachers from Maynooth given that her role here extends back not only a number of years but a number of decades! Mary started working in the Education department in the late 1990s as a lecturer and as a tutor.

Just before we broke up for the Christmas Holidays we invited them back to the department for an informal reception to mark their retirement. Thanks to Conor Harrison whose fine skills as an orator gave the occasion an appropriately reflective speech and amusingly modelled it on the ideal Christmas lesson plan – Christmas jumper to match! We followed this with a small presentation of flowers to signal our collective appreciation of both of our dear colleagues.



From left Tutors Donncha O'Callaghan, Maria Lyle, Sarah Timmins, Céline Healy, Suzanne Thorn, Mary Reilly and Conor Harrison



Mary Reilly showing us one of her many note-filled copybooks as she reflected upon her time in MU Department of Education and expressed her gratitude



Suzanne Thorn sharing some reminiscences on her work with PME students and conveying her thanks on her retirement from MU Department of Education.



Pictured here are the STInt Interns for summer 2024. Nicole Carr, Aoife Mullally, Michael Sherlock, Claire Eagan, Doireann O'Brien, Kerry Liew.

STEM TEACHER INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

The STInt programme provides primary and post primary teachers with paid summer internships, in STEM roles, in a wide variety of industries across Ireland. It is important that teachers know about careers in STEM so they can support their students making informed choices. Since 2016 thirty-one of our student teachers have enjoyed this opportunity.

This year, seven Maynooth Student teachers will take part in the STInt Aoife Mullally, Claire Eagan, David Swift, Doireann O'Brien and Kerry Liew from our BScEd course and Michael Sherlock and Nicole Carr from the PME class. They will be working at Bank of Ireland, Alesion Pharma, Suir Engineering, Vodafone, Workday ad National Transport Authority.

The programme is open to recent graduates and final year STEM student teachers. If interested contact Majella Dempsey majella.dempsey@mu.ie our STInt lead in MU.

PME YEAR 2 SHARED LEARNING DAY CONFERENCE

One of the many privileges of working in Teacher Education is witnessing key moments of the professional growth of student teachers. One such moment occurred recently in the guise of a Shared Learning Conference led by the Professional Master of Education Year 2 (PME2) students.



From left: Eimear Broderick, David Ward, Emily Kinsella and S rcha Guilfoyle-Donaghy

Over the course of the day (25th April 2024) 31 PME2 students, individually and in teams, took up the opportunity to create and lead an hour and half-long professional development workshop. Brave pioneers in what is the first event of its kind on the programme, their contribution is all the more impressive given how busy this time of year is for student teachers completing end of year assignments.

The themes and activities explored in the workshops were based on a new series of elective courses offered in Year 2 of the newly accredited PME programme. There were workshops with evocative titles such as The Art of Listening, and No Learner Left Behind. Approaches to Dialogic Teaching and teaching controversial and contentious topics were also explored.

Other areas covered included Second Language Acquisition, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as well as Game Based learning to teach Sustainability Education. One group also explored the possibilities for using Generative AI in teaching and planning lessons and activities for the Music and Language classroom. Delegates were introduced to 'embodied learning', drawing on drama and storytelling in education to teach STEM subjects. One workshop gave a flavour of the very popular elective called 'The Body Project' which is based on a youth wellness programme devised by psychologists and educators in Stanford University. This was combined with a Koru Mindfulness session that is as welcome for teacher well-being as it is for students!

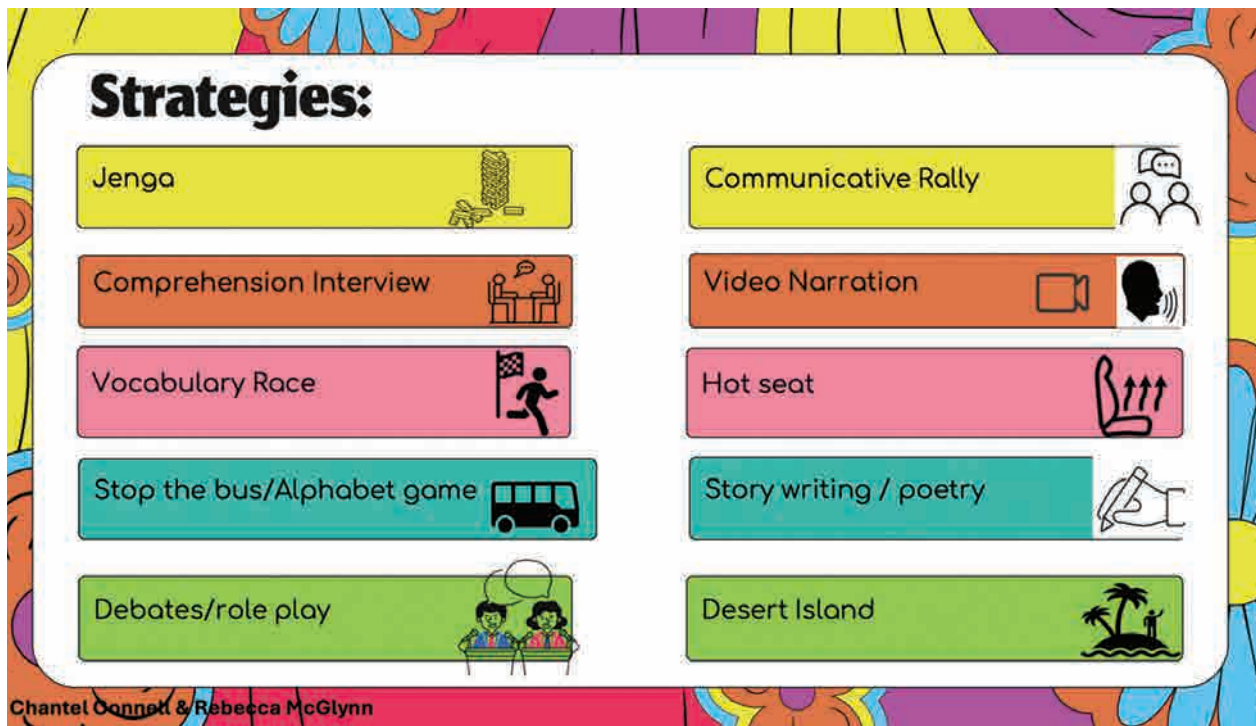
The PME2s put together a very fine programme and have inspired us to embed this Conference as an annual event from now on. The module of electives that gave rise to the day were facilitated by faculty in the department of education with colleagues from Applied Social Studies, MU Counselling Service, Trócaire, and Crooked House Theatre Company. The day was organised by the module Coordinator Angela Rickard and PME Year 2 Coordinator Dr Joe Oylar.

Sincere congratulations to all those presenting this year (listed below). We really do appreciate the privilege of seeing such high calibre professional learning and are proud to see it being led by such outstanding students!

We would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Ubuntu Teacher Education Network enabling us to cover catering and other resources for this event. Thanks too to the colleagues and students who attended.

The full programme consisted of the following workshops:

Second Language acquisition with Rebecca McGlynn & Chantel Connell. **Changing the game: bringing games into the classroom** with Sinead Phibbs, Shannan Gallagher, Julia Camama, Sarah Alsbyury, Shane Hughes & Aidan O'Neill. **Facilitating constructive classroom discussion** with Leanne O'Connor, Aidan Dunlea, Ciaran Burns & Jack Farmer. **The Art of Listening** with Moya O'Sullivan. **CLIL in the classroom** with Ciara Flaherty, Shona Breaw, Hannah Cusack & Craig Smith. **Lowering the stakes, to spotlight the skills for disagreement** with Orla Farrelly. **No Learner Left behind** with Órla Galligan. **Approaching controversial issues through dialogic teaching** with Nía Murray & Cathal Crowe. **Embodied Teaching: Integrating Drama and Theatre Techniques in the STEM Classroom** with Aishling Laura Gillen & Dearbhla McQuaid. **Introduction to The Body Project & Koru Mindfulness** with Emma Brooks, Aine Lawlor, Danielle Hyland & Alannagh Claxton. **AI for Teachers, by Teachers** with Emily Kinsella, Eimear Broderick, Sórcha Guilfoyle-Donaghy & David Ward.



From left: Eimear Broderick, David Ward, Emily Kinsella and Sórcha Guilfoyle-Donaghy

TARA ĆIRIĆ WINNER OF IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL'S (IRC) EDA SAGARRA MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE 2023



Tara Ćirić accepting her award

The Department of Education is thrilled that one of our PhD students, Tara Ćirić, won the Irish Research Council's (IRC) Eda Sagarra Medal of Excellence for 2023. She received the prestigious award for being the top-ranking postgraduate scholar in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) in this year's IRC Government of Ireland funding programme. Tara received the medal for her research and work with children and young people in care. She said her research is grounded in the belief in young people's capacity for decision making and the commitment to their right to be heard and involved in their care and education.

Welcoming the award, she explained: "My approach to this research is committed to acknowledging children and young people in care as experts in their own lived experience as well as in the institutions of care and education in which they live and study. By working with them as co-researchers and collaborators, whose voice and analysis holds as much weight as policymakers and other professionals, I believe wider society will gain valuable insights into possibilities for future practice and policy. To me, this award underlines the importance of this field of research.

Children and young people in care, in particular residential care, are seldom heard in the education space or in the space of research, and tend not to get many opportunities to research, discuss and analyse the issues affecting their lives. We need more research to understand how to better deliver care and other services for this population, and to learn from children and young people who have so much to offer the research space."

Well said, Tara!

TEAM TEACHING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN BOYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOL – OCTOBER 2023



Team Teaching Workshop in Boyne CS

In October 2023 Boyne Community School engaged in a Teaching and Learning Professional Development Day. The morning sessions were delivered by Oide representatives while in the afternoon the Teaching and Learning (TL) team from the school had their moment to shine!

Both students and teachers have been assisted with team teaching for the 2023/24 academic year in Boyne Community School. The TL team drew on resources developed in the Department of Education in Maynooth University (MU). Liaising with Angela Rickard in MU, we explored the resources and the academic research provided in the MU Team Teaching Toolkit produced by Angela and her colleague Dr Tom Walsh. The Toolkit is based on work done with two schools under the auspices of a CROÍ grant from the Teaching Council and was published in 2021. The resources are available to all schools on the Department of Education MU webpage.

In Boyne CS we wanted our colleagues to explore varying Team Teaching models whilst learning from other subject specialists so we arranged mixed-department groups of six teachers with each group facilitated by a member of the TL team. We started with a student voice recording which focused on how Boyne CS students feel they benefited from an additional teacher in their classroom this year. The feedback suggests it has been both positive and rewarding. For the afternoon workshop we decided to gamify the process of going through the different Team Teaching models. Individual teachers were presented with a set of unique hypothetical statements or leading questions for each model. Questions like: 'This model works best for practical subjects';

'This is the least common model' etc. The colleague who turns the question/statement opens the conversation and then the question/statement is probed further by the rest of the group. The mixed department groupings enabled organic conversations to emerge across the different subject areas. We felt that working in subject specific departments might limit discussions of particular models and potentially close down the conversation. The card game approach added an element of surprise.

The outcome from the afternoon's work was an agreement of Team Teaching expectations which the TL team collated to produce a final agreed list. These expectations are used by teachers to support each other, and more importantly the students. We also created an online collaborative space where staff can share their stories of exploring the different Team Teaching approaches and reporting on both the successful and the not so successful experiences.

Thanks to Maynooth University's Department of Education for the collaboration and support. We look forward to building on this partnership in the future.

Article text by Darren Keane for the Teaching & Learning Team, Boyne Community School

LEARNING FROM POLISH TEACHER EDUCATORS

As part of an Erasmus project, Dr Majella Dempsey, Dr Thomas Delahunty, and Dr Diarmaid Hyland (Department of Education at Maynooth University), hosted colleagues from the University of Warsaw School of Education in November 2013 before visiting them in March 2024.



Pictured here are the Polish and Irish teams during the visit to the School of Education in the University of Warsaw.

During the visits, the Polish and Irish education systems were described, and similarities and challenges were discussed. Clíodhna McManamon from Oide met the group and discussed the professional development supports available to teachers in Ireland. The group visited Sandymount Park Educate Together Secondary School where they observed different classes and met with leadership teams. There was great interest in Transition Year Programme. Of particular interest to the Polish contingent was the Irish Curriculum, upon which their upcoming curriculum is heavily modelled. Dr Dempsey and Dr Delahunty gave a follow-up webinar to Polish policy makers and academics in April going into further detail on our recent and ongoing reforms.

During the visit to Warsaw, the Maynooth Team attended a school and observed multiple lessons, including a “Thinking Classroom” (pictured below). This is a student-centred pedagogical approach utilised by Polish teachers in mathematics lessons. The unusual classroom layout allows for students to work in groups at their own whiteboard as the teacher (and student teacher) navigate the room.

This project success has led to the Maynooth team being invited to participate in a larger ERASMUS+ Teacher Academy bid, involving institutions in Poland, Portugal, Turkey, and Ireland, and Slovenia. This is due to be submitted in June 2024.



Pictured here with the Polish team is Majella Dempsey, Principal of Sandymount Park ETSS, Paula Mulhall and Conor Maxwell, Science, Maths and Coding teacher a Maynooth University Alumni.





Maynooth University
National University
of Ireland Maynooth



Engagement

Representation

Action & Expression

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Maynooth University was abuzz with excitement on June 8th and 9th, 2023, as it played host to the inaugural UDL International Symposium. Welcoming 200 enthusiastic participants from various corners of the globe, this two-day event was a vibrant celebration of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in action.

UDL, a framework championing inclusivity and flexibility in education, took centre stage as presentations and workshops delved into its application across diverse learning environments—from early childhood to higher education. Participants engaged in enriching discussions on UDL's role in research and practice, exploring innovative approaches to address the needs of every learner.

The symposium served as a melting pot of insights, with practitioners, researchers, and experts sharing their experiences and expertise. From interactive workshops to thought-provoking presentations, attendees immersed themselves in topics ranging from UDL implementation to trauma-informed practices and its intersection with STEM education.

Building on the success of the inaugural symposium, we are thrilled to announce the 2nd UDL International Symposium: "Including Every Learner." Scheduled for September 16th and 17th at the Westgrove Hotel, Clane, Co. Kildare, this event promises to be another enriching gathering for educators, researchers, and advocates alike.

Registration is now open, offering an opportunity to delve deeper into the transformative potential of UDL and connect with like-minded individuals dedicated to inclusive education. For more information and to reserve your spot, visit the UDL International Symposium: Including Every Learner page on Maynooth University's website or reach out to us at UDLsymposium@mu.ie.

Join us in embracing diversity, fostering inclusion, and unlocking the boundless possibilities of Universal Design for Learning.

Maynooth University

CALLING ALL TREORAITHE!



ARE YOU A TREORAÍ (CO-OPERATING TEACHER)?

As part of our research, we will offer free professional development to support treoraithe (co-operating teachers) during the 2024/25 school year.

If you or your staff are interested email
elizabeth.obrien@mu.ie or fiona.casey@mu.ie

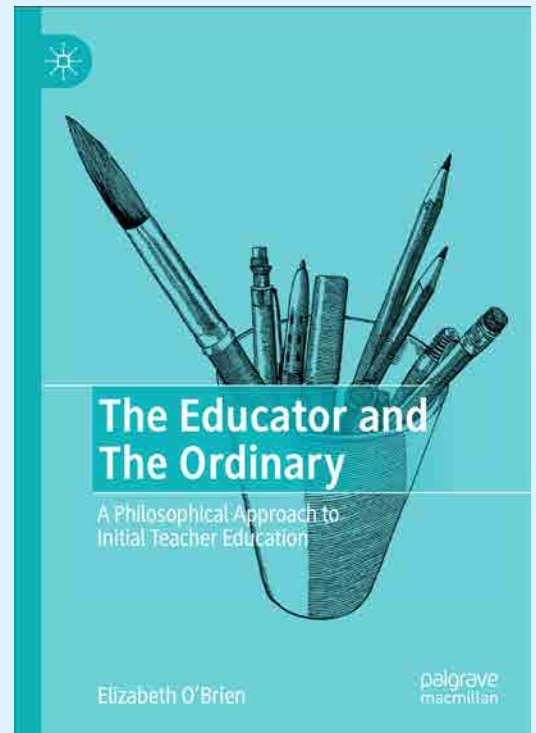
NEW Release

In Elizabeth's recently published book she shares some ideas on supporting student teachers during their time in school. The book describes a series of capabilities, combining both competence and confidence, including Imagination, Interruption, Attention and Uncertainty.

The great and persistent challenge of an educator's career, Elizabeth writes, is to be capable of The Ordinary, and so we must support student teachers to appreciate everyday life in the school in all its complexity and hope.

The Educator and The Ordinary is available in hardback now, and will come out in paperback in August, just in time for its official launch in September!

If you are interested in coming to the launch please email elizabeth.obrien@mu.ie





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