



## **Director Irish Institute of Pastoral Studies (5 Year Full-Time Fixed Term Contract)**

### **GENERAL ROLE DESCRIPTION Duties and Terms & Conditions of Employment**

#### **1. PREAMBLE**

Mary Immaculate College is an autonomous, university-level, Catholic College of Education and the Liberal Arts. Founded in 1898, and linked academically with the University of Limerick, MIC is the oldest higher education institution in Limerick. Significant expansion in recent decades has seen the College's offerings expand across two modern campuses, one based in Limerick City and one in Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The student community consists of more than 5,000 learners, participating in fifteen undergraduate degree programmes and several postgraduate programmes extending to PhD/Doctoral level. Academic staff engage in a wide range of academic research areas, and research underpins all teaching and learning at MIC.

MIC seeks to prepare its students for professional excellence and to nurture their capacity to lead flourishing lives.

#### **2. CANDIDATE PROFILE AND SCOPE OF THE ROLE**

Mary Immaculate College invites applications from suitably qualified candidates for the position of **Director, Irish Institute of Pastoral Studies (IIPS)**. This is a Senior Lecturer (SL) appointment, on a 5-Year Fixed Term Basis (with opportunity for a further appointment of 5 years subject to satisfactory performance), based principally at the St Patrick's Campus (Thurles) and reporting to the President of the College.

Established in 2016, the IIPS has a proven record in accredited lay formation, most notably through its Certificate in Pastoral Ministry, delivered in partnership with dioceses across the several dioceses since 2019. The Institute now enters a new phase of development, supported by a renewed five-year partnership with the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly, and the Director will lead that development: extending the Institute's programmes to new audiences, locales and modes of delivery; building a research agenda in pastoral theology and related disciplines; and positioning IIPS as the national centre for pastoral formation, professional learning and public theology within Irish Catholic higher education.

This is an exceptional opportunity to lead and grow a distinctive Institute at a defining moment for the Church and for Catholic education in Ireland. The successful candidate will be a scholar of standing in pastoral theology, practical theology, religious education or a cognate field, combining strategic and operational capability with established ecclesial and academic networks, and with a collaborative, synodal style of leadership. They will find in MIC a College for which this work is a matter of shared mission.

#### **Essential Qualifications & Skills**

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- a) A doctoral degree (PhD or equivalent) with specialist expertise in pastoral theology, practical theology, religious education, ecclesiology or a closely cognate discipline.
- b) A demonstrable record of academic leadership in a higher education institution or comparable formation institution, including programme leadership and quality

assurance.

- c) A research record commensurate with appointment at Senior Lecturer level, including peer-reviewed publication, postgraduate supervision (or evidenced readiness for doctoral supervision), and engagement with externally-funded research.
- d) Demonstrated effectiveness in working with ecclesial leaders, religious congregations, school patrons and Catholic education sector partners, informed by a strong working understanding of the Irish Catholic education and pastoral landscape, its institutional architecture, and its current pressures and opportunities.
- e) Experience of designing or delivering formation programmes for lay people, religious, or clergy in a manner that is academically rigorous, pastorally credible and personally formative.
- f) A demonstrated capacity to work collaboratively and credibly across boundaries — across academic departments, professional services and units within a HEI, and across academic, ecclesial and lay contexts that are increasingly religiously, culturally and ecclesially diverse — with a working appreciation of the ecumenical, interreligious and intercultural dimensions of contemporary Irish pastoral and educational practice.
- g) Deep familiarity with the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and with contemporary magisterial teaching on education, evangelisation, ecclesial life, dialogue, and the safeguarding of the human person in the age of artificial intelligence — including *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si'*, *Fratelli Tutti*, *Nostra Aetate*, *Drawing New Maps of Hope*, the documents of the Synod on Synodality, and *Magnifica Humanitas* (2026).
- h) Strategic and operational capability sufficient to lead an institutional unit through a substantive phase of development — including financial planning, partnership development and organisational design — supported by excellent written, oral and public communication skills across academic and public-facing discourse.

### **Desirable Criteria**

- a) A Licentiate in Theology (STL) or equivalent from a Pontifical or Catholic university.
- b) Established national and international networks across the Catholic education and pastoral landscape.
- c) Direct experience of intercultural, interreligious or ecumenical formation work in pastoral, chaplaincy or Catholic education contexts.
- d) Experience of contemporary modes of formation and delivery — including micro-credential design, blended and online provision, and Recognition of Prior Learning frameworks — and of the digital sphere as a domain of pastoral and educational practice, in the spirit of *Magnifica Humanitas* (2026).
- e) A track record of successful externally-funded research applications.
- f) Working competence in the Irish language, or in another language relevant to the Institute's international engagement.

## **3. JOB DESCRIPTION**

The Director, Irish Institute of Pastoral Studies will report directly to the College President. The Director will hold academic affiliation with the Department of Theology and Religious Studies (Faculty of Arts) and the Department of Learning, Society and Religious Education (Faculty of Education), and will

work in close collaboration with both. The post holder will work closely with the Vice-Presidents and other College Officers as appropriate, and will liaise widely with Deans of Faculties, Department Heads, Chaplaincy, Student Life, Course Leaders/Coordinators and relevant College bodies in carrying out the duties of the position.

Reporting relationships may be subject to review in line with the evolving academic and organisational structures of the College.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

The Director will exercise leadership across seven interconnected domains. The relative weight of these domains will evolve over the term of the appointment as the Institute moves from revitalisation, through consolidation, to sustained operation. Priorities will be agreed annually with the President.

### **1. Strategic, Academic and Operational Leadership**

- Provide strategic, academic, and operational leadership for the Institute, aligned with its founding vision and ethos and ensuring its future growth and impact.
- Develop and implement the Institute's strategic plan, with milestones consistent with MIC Strategic Plan 2030 and the Institute's partnership agreements; lead its operational management, including staffing, digital infrastructure, and partnership operations.
- Establish and chair the IIPS External Advisory Board and represent the Institute at relevant MIC committees and governance fora.

### **2. Internal Collaboration and Cross-MIC Integration**

- Operate the IIPS as a relational entity within MIC, in structured collaboration with the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, the Religious Education team within the Department of Learning, Society and Religious Education, Chaplaincy and Student Life — complementing and extending existing College provision.
- Contribute the Director's disciplinary expertise to the wider teaching, learning and research life of the College, including curriculum consultation, doctoral supervision, guest teaching by invitation and participation in MIC's research community.
- Support the formational, pastoral, and synodal dimensions of MIC's wider mission, by agreement and in a manner that is sustainable alongside the Director's principal remit.

### **3. Programme Design, Delivery and Academic Governance**

- Review, consolidate and extend the Certificate in Pastoral Ministry as the Institute's flagship offering, reaching new locales, audiences, and modes of delivery.
- Develop a coherent learner journey across NFQ Levels 6–10 — from short courses and micro-credentials through embedded modules to postgraduate and research pathways.
- Develop targeted programmes for the Catholic schools sector, and offerings that form ministers, educators, and chaplains for pastoral practice in digital culture and the age of artificial intelligence, in the spirit of *Magnifica Humanitas* (2026).
- Scope, in Year 1, a partnership-validated pathway in chaplaincy formation, recognising the multi-faith character of contemporary chaplaincy practice.
- Lead validation, periodic review, and quality assurance of IIPS programmes through

#### **4. Research and Scholarship Leadership**

- Lead an impactful interdisciplinary research agenda in pastoral theology and related disciplines, on themes consistent with the Institute's trajectory — including lay ecclesial ministry, Catholic education identity, synodality, pastoral theologies of care, and Catholic witness in pluralist and digital contexts.
- Supervise doctoral candidates, mentor early-career researchers, pursue externally-funded research, publish in peer-reviewed venues, and convene the Institute's annual conference and public lecture series.

#### **5. Partnership and Ecclesial Relations**

- Serve as the principal MIC interface with the Archbishop of Cashel and Emly and the Dioceses of the Cashel Province, and extend formal partnerships with dioceses, religious congregations and Church agencies nationally, in line with the Institute's national vocation.
- Lead engagement with the Catholic Education Partnership, patron and Trust bodies, and relevant national education bodies; build ecumenical and interreligious working relationships germane to the Institute's remit.
- Develop strategic international partnerships with peer institutions.

#### **6. Resource Development and Financial Sustainability**

- Steward the Institute's funding architecture in full compliance with its partnership agreements, and develop a diversified income base — programme fees, micro-credential funding, sponsorship, philanthropy and externally-funded research — to secure the Institute's long-term sustainability.

#### **7. Public Theology**

- Serve as the principal public voice of the Institute in national discussion of Catholic education, pastoral renewal and the wider trajectory of the Church in Ireland, modelling a synodal, listening and discerning style of leadership.

## **4. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

### **General**

All persons employed will sign an appropriate contract, which will contain terms and conditions of the employment.

### **Place of Work**

The appointee's primary place of work will be Mary Immaculate College, St. Patricks Campus Thurles while there may be an occasional requirement to deliver programmes on our Limerick campus. The College reserves the right to require the appointee to work from any other location.

It is a requirement of the College that the appointee must reside within a reasonable distance of the College.

### **Exclusivity of Service and Outside Work**

The person appointed will be required to devote their full-time attention and abilities to their duties during their working hours in the College and to act in the best interest of the College at all times. Therefore, for as long as the successful applicant is working in the College, they may not, without the prior written consent of the College, be actively engaged or concerned in any way, either directly or indirectly, in any other business or undertaking where this is or is likely to be in conflict with the College's interests or the performance of the duties that the person has been employed for.

Apart from the occasional giving of lectures elsewhere, the writing of books and occasional literary materials, the appointee will not, during their tenure of office, undertake paid outside work unless they have received the permission of Vice President Academic Affairs (VPAA) to undertake such work on the terms and conditions as agreed for the particular undertaking in question. In every case, it is the duty of the appointee to seek in writing the prior permission of the VPAA. It is also the duty, in every case, of the appointee to inform the person or body for whom the work is being undertaken, that the work is being conducted in a private capacity and that the College cannot in any circumstances be responsible for such work.

### **Probationary Period**

The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of the standard 6-month probationary period. The probationary period may be extended at the discretion of the College but will not in any case exceed 11 months. Absences during the period of probation will extend the probationary period. Performance and conduct during the probationary period will be reviewed through a process of assessment meetings. Termination of employment during the probationary period, for any reason or no reason, will be at the discretion of the College. The disciplinary procedure will not apply to a dismissal during probation where the probationary employee has been employed by MIC for less than 12 months.

### **Hours of Attendance**

The normal working week is 39 hours per week or 7.8 hours per day, Monday to Friday. The appointee is expected to be habitually present and available to staff and students alike during normal College hours, Monday to Friday. The appointee may be required to work occasional evenings and weekends.

Academic staff members are required to supply students with an MIC e-mail address at which they can be contacted. They must also provide the College Authorities with a telephone number at which he/she may be contacted during non-semester times. However, under no circumstances will contact telephone numbers be given to students by College Authorities.

### **Salary**

The Salary scale for this position has been approved by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Higher Education Authority in line with Government Policy on Public Sector remuneration. The appointment will be made on the salary scale at a point in line with current Government Pay Policy. In keeping with all other branches of the Civil and Public Service, individual bargaining for salary increases is not allowed. New entrants to the Civil or Public Sector, as defined in Circular 18/2010, will commence on the first point of the salary scale.

With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026 the annual salary scale for Senior Lecturer is:

€87,397, €90,866 €94,344, €97,834, €101,288, €104,776, €108,253, €111,730, €115,201 (9 points).

Increments are awarded in line with national pay agreements.

Salary will be paid on a monthly basis on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month, or the previous Friday if 25<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend, using the Paypath facility. Payment of salaries and wages are subject to statutory deductions, i.e. Income Tax (PAYE), Superannuation Contributions, Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) and Universal Social Charge (USC)

## **Superannuation**

New entrants to the public service will be required to participate in the Single Public Service Pension Scheme and pay Superannuation contributions at the appropriate rates in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act, 2012.

All other eligible appointees are automatically included in the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme on taking up appointment. In compliance with the Colleges of Education Pension Scheme, deductions amounting to 6.5% are made from salary.

The appointee will be required to pay Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) under the provisions of the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017.

Appointees who commenced employment in the public service between 1st April 2004 and 31st December 2012 and have not had a break in employment of greater than 6 months will have no mandatory retirement age. All other appointees will have a mandatory retirement age of 70.

## **Pension Abatement**

If an appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public Service and that appointee is entitled to or in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during the appointee's re-employment that pension will be subject to abatement in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012.

In applying for this position, you are acknowledging that you understand that the abatement provisions, where relevant, will apply. It is not envisaged that the College will support an application for an abatement waiver in respect of appointments to this position.

## **Annual Leave**

In addition to Public Holidays, a minimum of 20 working days will be allowed per annum. Annual leave should be taken when students are off campus and the taking of leave must have the prior approval of the relevant Line Manager.

Public Holidays are granted in accordance with the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

## **Sick Leave**

Employees who have a minimum 3 months continuous employment with the College may be granted sick pay subject to the terms of the Public Service Sick Leave Scheme. Sick pay is contingent on full cooperation and compliance with the Colleges absence management procedures.

## **Termination of Employment**

At least **three** calendar months written notice is required to resign this post.

On the termination of employment but before departing from the College, staff members are required to return to the College all books, reports, memoranda, correspondence, papers, records, reports, files including data held on electronic files, computer disks, electronically recorded discs, and any other documentation, and all other property, including office keys, belonging to the College or relating to its business or affairs which are in the possession of a staff member or under his/her control when the employment is terminated.

## **Confidentiality**

In the course of working in Mary Immaculate College, the person appointed may have access to or hear

information concerning staff and/or students and/or the functioning and the business of the College. Such information acquired in the course of employment with the College, including any aspect of the College's responsibilities or operations, is considered to be confidential information. On no account must information concerning students, staff or other College business be divulged or discussed except in the performance of normal duties and, unless authorised to do so, this information shall not be communicated to a third party. In addition records must never be left in a manner that unauthorised persons can obtain access to them and must be kept in safe custody when no longer required.

### **Health & Safety**

Mary Immaculate College attaches the highest regard to the safety, health and welfare of its employees. It is the duty of each employee to take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of themselves and of other people in the workplace. Each employee must comply with all health and safety policies and procedures in operation in Mary Immaculate College and familiarise him/herself with the Safety Statement.

Employees are obliged to wear any PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) that they may be provided with and no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing or other equipment provided in the workplace for health and safety purposes. Employees are statutorily/legally obliged to ensure that any accidents/incidents which may occur are reported promptly to the Health and Safety Officer on the MIC Accident/Incident Report Form.

### **College Policies, Rules and Regulations**

The College is a Public Sector employer and is bound by National Agreements. It is also bound by regulations, circulars and directives issued on behalf of Government by the Department of Finance, the Department of Education, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Higher Education Authority.

Employees are at all times subject to the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Staff, College policies, rules and regulations. These policies include but are not confined to Disciplinary & Grievance Policies, Dignity at Work, Examination Rules & Regulations, Policy on Responsible Computing and Use of Information Technology Facilities. All employees are required to familiarise themselves with the contents of Policies and Procedures, available on the College's Staff Portal.

## **5. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

### **Method of Selection for Recommendation**

#### *Shortlisting*

An expert group will convene to conduct shortlisting of applicants, measured against pre-determined criteria.

*The criteria that will be used to shortlist candidates for this appointment are:*

#### *Qualifications & Skills:*

- a) A doctoral degree (PhD or equivalent) with specialist expertise in pastoral theology, practical theology, religious education, ecclesiology or a closely cognate discipline.
- b) A demonstrable record of academic leadership in a higher education institution or comparable formation institution, including programme leadership and quality assurance.
- c) A research record commensurate with appointment at Senior Lecturer level, including peer-reviewed publication, postgraduate supervision (or evidenced readiness for doctoral supervision), and engagement with externally-funded research.
- d) Demonstrated effectiveness in working with ecclesial leaders, religious congregations, school patrons and Catholic education sector partners, informed by a strong working understanding of the Irish Catholic education and pastoral landscape, its institutional architecture, and its current pressures and opportunities.
- e) Experience of designing or delivering formation programmes for lay people, religious, or clergy in a manner that is academically rigorous, pastorally credible and personally formative

- f) Strategic and operational capability sufficient to lead an institutional unit through a substantive phase of development — including financial planning, partnership development and organisational design — supported by excellent written, oral and public communication skills across academic and public-facing discourse

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the College may decide that a limited number will be called to interview. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable to undertake the job, rather that there are some candidates, based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is incumbent, therefore upon the applicant, to ensure that all relevant information is included in their application and that they clearly identify how they meet the specified candidate criteria.

### *Interview*

A recommendation for appointment will be made by an Interview Board. The appointment will be based on this recommendation, except where considerations of health or an unsuitable record in previous employment warrants a departure. A panel will be formed from which appointments to the position of **Director Irish Institute Pastoral Studies** will be filled during the life of the panel (12 months).

### **Pre- Employment Health Screening**

For the purpose of satisfying requirements as to health, successful candidates, before being appointed, will be required to undergo pre-employment health screening.

### **Garda Vetting**

Successful applicants may be required to participate in Garda vetting. Specific instruction on this process will be given at the appropriate time. Applicants who do not comply with the College's requirements in this regard will be excluded from consideration for appointment. Applicants who have resided outside Ireland for a cumulative period of 36 months or more over the age of 18 years must furnish a Foreign Police Clearance (FPC) from the country or countries of residence. Please note; any costs incurred in this process will be borne by the applicant.

### **Applicants Outside European Economic Area (EEA)**

Mary Immaculate College welcomes applications from candidates outside the EEA, however such applicants should familiarise themselves with relevant Government policy before making an application. Further information from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is available here: [Economic migration policy - DETE \(enterprise.gov.ie\)](https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/economic-migration-policy)

### **Making of Applications**

Applications must be submitted on an official application form in typed format. Handwritten or incomplete applications will not be accepted. Application forms for this post may be downloaded from the Mary Immaculate College website. [www.mic.ul.ie/about-mic/vacancies](http://www.mic.ul.ie/about-mic/vacancies). Applications must be submitted by e-mail to [recruitment@mic.ul.ie](mailto:recruitment@mic.ul.ie) with the subject title **Director Irish Institute of Pastoral Studies** no later than:

**2pm on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2026**

Late applications **cannot** be accepted.

Applications will be acknowledged within 2 working days of submission. Please be sure to check Spam and Junk folders as it may be redirected here by your account preferences. If you do not receive an acknowledgement within 2 working days of submitting your application, please contact the HR Office by emailing [hr@mic.ul.ie](mailto:hr@mic.ul.ie).

The College will not be responsible for any expenses, including travelling expenses, which candidates may incur in connection with their candidature.

Canvassing will disqualify. Any attempt by a candidate either personally or through any other person, on

their behalf, to canvass or otherwise influence the outcome of the selection/interview process in his/her favour will lead to disqualification from the competition. Any representations made on behalf of a candidate, without his/her knowledge will be ignored.

Mary Immaculate College is an equal opportunities employer. Mary Immaculate College holds an Athena SWAN Bronze Institution award in recognition of our commitment to advancing equality and opportunity for all in higher education.

*July 2026*