



PATH 1 Project Officer – Executive Officer

Fixed Term, 18 month contract Full Time Post

GENERAL JOB 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 fourteen 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 & SCOPE OF THE POSITION

Nationally UL, MIC and TUS annually graduate between 35-40% of all (state funded) student teachers for the teaching profession. The existing figures for new entrants via non-traditional routes across the three Mid-West Cluster members indicate a strong commitment to enhancing access. The continuation of PATH 1 into a second phase reflects a significant expanding shared focus and institutional engagement with access to higher education in the mid-west region.

Building on PATH 1, Phase 1, the Mid-West Cluster has been awarded a continuation of funding from the HEA, to widen participation to initial teacher education (ITE). The PATH 1 projects are framed in terms of four distinct and inter-related phases: (i) promotion & recruitment at pre-entry, (ii) application and selection at pre-entry, (iii) initial transition upon entry to ITE and, (iv) on-going support through ITE and into the first year of teaching. Within that framework, the three programmes are:

- (i) Thinking of Teaching (1) Urban and Rural Disadvantage and Access to ITE,
- (ii) Thinking of Teaching (2) - Enhancing Progression from FE to HE
- (iii) Becoming a Teacher – Transition and Support for Student Teachers

The proposed set of cross-institutional programmes will be undertaken collaboratively by a team of staff working across all three programmes with clearly focused remits within the programmes.

On behalf of the Mid-West Cluster, Mary Immaculate College wishes to fill the position of Project Officer for the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) 1 Phase 2 on an 18-month, fulltime, fixed term basis commencing October 2023.

These projects will clearly operationalise and build on the initial steps taken in phase 1, towards the fulfilment of a multitude of policy recommendations outlined in the National Access Plans and the Call for Funding Proposals. Furthermore, each project is clearly aligned with one or more of the goals identified in the National Access Plan.

The projects are as follows:

Project 1:

Thinking of Teaching (1): Building on Phase 1 of PATH 1 (2017/8-20), *Thinking of Teaching* will target key stakeholders from across the education spectrum. The project will engage with primary schools, secondary schools, the FE sector, the LCDCs, Engage in Education and other community-based organisations. The project will have a particular focus on second-level students who are potential entrants to ITE through the provision of classes, to improve Gaelge proficiency, provide opportunities for the students to participate in a wide range of ITE ‘taster’ courses, and provide practical information on HEAR/DARE/SUSI supports.

Thinking of Teaching (2) - Enhancing Progression from FE to HE: This project aims to facilitate the transition from Further Education (FE) to ITE (post primary) through the creation of new pathways for QQI qualified students and in particular FE mature students. This will be achieved by promoting ITE as a viable career option to QQI qualified students and in particular FE mature learners and will be achieved by developing alternative entry routes to ITE which will accept QQI levels Five and Six as alternatives to the traditional Leaving Certificate entry requirements. This will build on the work achieved in Phase 1 of the project. It will consolidate this work and expand on the options available to QQI entrants. It will also liaise with other national initiatives in this area and will actively work with the FE to HE National Working Group with a view to making the application process and entry requirements consistent and equitable for all QQI applicants to ITE programmes. The project will also build on the partnership developed with LCETB in relation to the delivery of the special purpose Mathematics for Stem Award for the purpose of adding to the skill set of QQI applicants to ITE programmes and the Teacher Education Access Programme (TEAP), co-delivered with the LCETB. Prospective students will compete for a number of places on post-primary ITE programmes but as QQI applicants. The revised project implementation plan notes the sharing of a project co-ordinator across the other strands of the proposal. The Senior Programme Manager will lead the development of the admittance route into the second level ITE programmes. Activities noted in the plan will build on existing resources available in the partner Institutions.

Project 2:

Becoming a Teacher – Transition and Support for Student Teachers

The Becoming a Teacher programme will build on the success of the University of Limerick’s Transition to University Course and its innovative ‘First Seven Weeks’ programme and the model of extended Orientation for first year students at MIC. Becoming a Teacher will be an ongoing experience open to all successful new ITE entrants, to Teacher Education Programmes across the three Mid-West Cluster Institutions, from the National Access Plan’s target groups. In addition, a research element will be introduced to capture the emerging learnings from the PATH 1 programme.

This programme will support new students during their higher-level education experience, their specific course of study and introduce them to their mentoring, pastoral and academic support framework. The programme will maximise student engagement through reflecting on teaching methods, piloting innovative practice while also providing an integrated mentoring network and other supports.

In order to be considered for this position candidates must have:

- A qualification at Level 7 on the NFQ or higher in Education/Community work, Social work, Youth work, or a cognate area or a significant level of experience;
- A minimum of 3 years' relevant experience in the field of education, community work, social care or a cognate area;
- Experience of and participation in comparable projects in an education context;
- A broad understanding of the education system in Ireland;
- A keen understanding of the area of widening participation; in particular of transitions, access programmes/initiatives and of peer-to-peer mentoring;
- Experience and skills in event organisation, collaboration, external engagement and promotion of project initiatives;
- Excellent report writing skills and experience in desk-based research;
- Excellent administrative and organisational skills including budgeting and IT skills;
- Demonstrable ability to plan effectively and to prioritise, manage and complete a variety of tasks at times of high pressure and to work effectively both as part of a team and on own initiative;
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills and the ability to maintain high levels of confidentiality and discretion;
- Commitment to working during the summer period as required by the core projects;

It is desirable that candidates will also have:

- Experience of working in partnerships;
- Working knowledge of Gaeilge;
- Full, clean driving license with access to own transport.

Cuirfear fáilte faoi leith roimh iarratais ó dhaoine go bhfuil inniúlacht acu sa Ghaeilge. Applications are welcome from people who have a competence in Irish.

Candidates must clearly indicate in their applications how they meet each of the above criteria.

3. **JOB DESCRIPTION**

Reporting Relationship

The appointee is required to carry out the duties attached to the post, under the general direction of the Programme Manager to whom (s)he reports, and to whom (s)he is responsible for the performance of these duties in the first instance. Within MIC, the appointee will report through the Programme Manager to the Mid-West Cluster, the Dean of Education and the College President and/or such other College Officers as the President may designate from time to time. The appointee will also provide reports and/or oral presentations to the Project Management Committee and other stakeholders, as required.

As required, (s)he will liaise with the Heads of Departments and those in leadership/management positions within the Faculty of Education, the Dean of Education, and other College personnel and with relevant

College bodies in carrying out the duties attaching to the post. In the case of there being a crossover in terms of the duties and responsibilities of other post holders within the College, the College President will adjudicate on same.

The reporting relationship may be subject to review from time to time, in line with service needs and developments in the College.

Duties and Responsibilities

The PATH 1 Project Officer will

- plan, manage and coordinate projects with the Programme Manager;
- assist the Programme Manager in working with the school communities, further education sector, faculties across higher education institutions, access professionals and external stakeholders in order to ensure that the targets outlined in the project plans are adhered to;
- work with the Programme Manager to develop and deliver programmes/workshops/training in collaboration with other stakeholders;
- carry out baseline research, as directed by Programme Manager to identify ongoing strengths, challenges and learning associated with each project;
- review and monitor progress and assist in the evaluation of the different strands in the initiative;
- assist in the development of publications, resource materials and disseminate findings from projects under the direction of the Programme Manager;
- participate in professional development opportunities as required;
- work closely with the Programme Manager to keep a record of all income and expenditure and prepare reports and or presentations if required;
- maintain detailed project plans throughout the time span of the project under the direction of the Programme Manager.

The work is broadly defined and the list of duties is not exhaustive. The performance of the entire range of duties is not necessarily confined to any one individual, as the work requires that the staff function in a flexible manner, and work together as a team. The College retains the right to assign new duties and/or to re-assign staff to other areas of the College, in response to service needs.

4. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

General

All persons employed will sign an appropriate contract, which will contain terms and conditions of the appointment. A job description is given to all applicants for employment and this will form part of the contract documentation.

Place of Work

The appointee's place of work will be Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. 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.

MIC operates a blended working policy which offers scope for the post holder to combine office attendance with remote working, subject to the provisions of the policy.

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.

The appointee will not, during their tenure of office, undertake paid outside work unless they have received the permission of the Vice President Administration and Finance (VPAF) 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 VPAF. 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

This 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 monitored through a process of assessment meetings. Termination of this appointment 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

Full time hours are 35 hours per week.

The normal hours of duty are Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5 pm with a 1-hour lunch break and Friday 9am to 4.45pm with a 45-minute lunch break. However, the duties attaching to the position are such that the post holder may be required to work evenings/weekends on occasion to accommodate service needs. Subject to College policy, the post holder may avail of “Time-Off-In-Lieu (TOIL)” or overtime where working hours exceed 35 hours per week.

The College reserves the right to adjust starting and finishing times or days of duty to meet service needs.

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 rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. The appointment will be made on the salary scale at a point in line with current Government Pay Policy. New entrants to the Civil or Public Sector, as defined in Circular 18/2010, will commence on the first point of the salary scale.

The grade for this post is at Executive Officer (EO) grade. With effect from 1st March 2023, the annual salary scale for Executive Officer (Grossed up) is:

€34,580; €36,788; €38,885; €40,764; €42,581; €44,391; €46,163; €47,954; €49,697; €51,491; €52,692; €54,404 (LSI 1), and €56,125 (LSI 2)

The grade for this post is at Executive Officer (EO) grade. With effect from 1st March 2023, the annual salary scale for Executive Officer (New Entrants Grossed up) is:

€31,643; €33,812; €34,580; €36,788; €38,885; €40,764; €42,581; €44,391; €46,163; €47,954; €49,697; €51,491; €52,692; €54,404 (LSI 1), and €56,125 (LSI 2)

Increments are awarded in line with national pay agreements.

Salary will be paid on a monthly basis on the 25th of each month, or the previous Friday if 25th 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 appointed 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. Details of this scheme can be obtained from the College’s website.

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. Details of the regulations concerning the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme may be obtained from the College's Human Resources Office.

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

Annual Leave

The annual leave entitlement for this grade is 25 working days per leave year. 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

There is a discretionary sick pay scheme, details of which are available from the Human Resources Office. 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.

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, 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 policies are outlined on the College's Staff Portal for College employees. All employees are required to familiarise themselves with the contents of Policies and Procedures, on the College's Staff Portal.

Termination of Employment

At least two calendar months written notice is required to resign this employment.

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 their control when the employment is terminated.

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:

- A qualification at Level 7 on the NFQ or higher in Education/Community work, Social work, Youth work, or a cognate area or a significant level of experience;
- A minimum of 3 years' relevant experience in the field of education, community work, social care or a cognate area;
- A keen understanding of the area of widening participation; in particular of transitions, access programmes/initiatives and of peer-to-peer mentoring;

- Experience and skills in event organisation, collaboration, external engagement and promotion of project initiatives;
- Excellent report writing skills and experience in desk-based research;
- Demonstrable ability to plan effectively and to prioritise, manage and complete a variety of tasks at times of high pressure and to work effectively both as part of a team and on own initiative;

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.

The selection process may include an aptitude assessment of one or more of the essential competencies for the post.

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 permanent and temporary appointments to the position of **PATH 1 Project Officer** may be filled during the life of the panel (12 months).

Candidates must produce satisfactory documentary evidence of all training and experience claimed by them, if required.

Medical Examination

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

Garda Vetting

All 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 that 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 \(enterprise.gov.ie\)](#)

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 accessed on the Mary Immaculate College website www.mic.ul.ie/about-mic/vacancies Applications must be submitted by e-mail to recruitment@mic.ul.ie with the subject title **PATH 1 Project Officer** no later than: **2 p.m. on Monday 25th September 2023**

The Human Resources Office will acknowledge receipt of your application by sending an email to the email address provided. 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 of your application form within 2 working days, please contact hr@mic.ul.ie

Late applications will not be accepted.

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

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 their favour will lead to disqualification from the competition. Any representations made on behalf of a candidate, without their 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.

August 2023