Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH)
PROGRAMME MANAGER
(36-month, full time post)

JOB SPECIFICATION AND 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 menu of educational programmes expand across two impressive campuses, one based in the heart of Limerick City and one in Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The diverse student community is made up of more than 5,000 learners, participating in twelve undergraduate degree programmes and a wide range of postgraduate programmes up to and including doctoral level. Academic staff members engage in professional academic research activities, and research underpins all teaching and learning at the College.

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

Following the Sahlberg report (2012) UL, MIC and LIT established the National Institute for Studies in Education (NISE) in April 2014. Nationally UL, MIC and LIT annually graduate between 35-40% of all (state funded) student teachers for the teaching profession and the existing figures for new entrants via non-traditional routes across the three NISE members indicate a strong commitment to enhancing access. NISE secured significant finance from the PATH 1, Phase 1 initiative and 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 National Institute for Studies in Education (NISE), comprising LIT, MIC and UL, has been awarded a continuation of funding from the HEA, for a further three years, to widen participation to initial teacher education (ITE). NISE's suite of 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 proposed 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

Further detail of each individual project is provided below.

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 NISE, Mary Immaculate College wishes to fill the position of Programme Manager for the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) Strand 2 on a 36-month, fulltime, fixed term basis commencing August 2021.

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 in the National Access Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019 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 2015-2019 and applied to the ITE context.

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 Gaeilge 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 leaners and will be achieved by developing an 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 in NISE.

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 NISE 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 NISE 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. 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 contribute to the development of the Becoming a Teacher programme. He/she will also assume responsibility for the development of the Mentoring Network which is a key overarching element of all strands and will play a key part in the successful mainstreaming of the overall programme.   Post-entry academic supports noted in the plan will build on existing resources available in the partner institutions in NISE.   In order to scaffold research supports for LSAD LIT students some funding in the form of academic support will enable the organisation of conferences, symposia and student publications. This is to support all art and design student-teachers articulate their research to a wider audience and to enable their transition to artist-researcher-teacher in the a/r/tography model posited by Springgay *et al*, (2007).

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

- A qualification at least Level 8 on the NFQ or higher in Education/Community work, Social work, Youth work, or a cognate area;
- Leadership/project management experience in an education context;
- A minimum of 3 years' relevant experience in one of the following areas, education, community work, social care or a cognate area;
- A deep understanding of the education system in Ireland; particularly in the area of transitions, access policy, access mechanisms and peer-to-peer mentoring;
- A proven record of interest in the field of educational disadvantage /access to higher education;
- The skills to lead and collaborate in the research dimension of the project, and have an appreciation of the value of evaluative research for the full implementation of the project;
- Strong leadership, negotiation and people management skills including resource development, effective collaboration, public relations and media management;
- Excellent quantitative and qualitative data analysis skills and experience in using data interrogation tools such as Microsoft Excel, Survey Monkey, SPSS and other similar tools;
- Excellent report-writing and document presentation experience with familiarity in using productivity tools such as Microsoft Word, SharePoint, PowerPoint and Visio;
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills;
- Proven administrative skills with the ability to prioritise, manage and complete a variety of tasks at times of high pressure plus ability to maintain high levels of confidentiality and discretion;
- Strong financial and budget management skills;
- Capability to work effectively as a leader and member of a team and on his/her own initiative;
- Commitment to working during the summer period as required by the core projects;
- Ability to work flexibly across campuses.

It is desirable that candidates will also have:
- Experience of working in cross sectoral partnerships;
- A 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 Director of Student Life (DSL) to whom (s)he reports, and to whom (s)he is responsible for the performance of these duties in the first instance. In addition, the appointee will attend regular progress meetings with relevant staff in UL. Within MIC, the appointee will report through the DSL to the Dean of Education, NISE/Mid West Cluster and the College President and/or such other College Officers as the President may designate from time to time.   Within UL, the appointee will also link to a designated person within the School of Education. 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 Programme Manager will

- Manage and coordinate project staff. It is envisaged that two staff in addition to the Programme Manager will be appointed to this project;
- Work with the school communities, further education sector, faculties across higher education institutions and external stakeholders to ensure that the targets outlined in the project plans are adhered to;
- Develop and deliver programmes/workshops/training in collaboration with other stakeholders;
- in consultation with the NISE Project Steering group, carry out baseline research with staff and programme participants to identify ongoing strengths, challenges and learning associated with each project;
- Plan, review and monitor progress in consultation with the project staff and the NISE Project Steering group. The Programme Manager will be responsible for writing progress and drafting financial reports as required;
- Take a lead position in the production of publications, including the project report and information pamphlets as well as disseminating findings at local, national and international fora;
- Be responsible for identifying professional development opportunities in consultation with the NISE Project Steering group that may build staff capacity and expertise to carry out this work;

- Liaise and partner with support organisations and agencies. The Programme Manager will build on existing partnerships and nurture additional partnerships in order to progress the work of NISE;
- Keep a record of all income and expenditure and prepare reports and or presentations for NISE and other stakeholders, if required;
- Maintain detailed project plans throughout the time span of the project;
- Assist with the management and reporting on all PATH activities including PATH 1, PATH 2 and PATH 3 initiatives where applicable.

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 employment. 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.

Due to current public health restrictions the appointee may be required to discharge some or all of their working hours from home until such time as public health restrictions are no longer in effect.

Exclusivity of Service and Outside Work

The person appointed will be required to devote his/her 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 Vice President Administration and Finance, 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 has received the permission of the Vice President Administration and Finance (VPAF) of Mary Immaculate College 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

The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of the standard 9 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 employment during the probationary period will be at the discretion of the College. An abridged version of the disciplinary procedure will apply to employees on probation who have been employees of the College for less than 12 months.

Hours of Attendance

Full time hours are 37 hours per week.

The normal hours of duty are Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5.15pm and Friday 9am to 4.45pm with a 45 minute lunch break each day. The duties attaching to the position are such that the post holder may be required to work occasional evenings or weekends to meet service needs. Subject to College policy, the post holder may avail of "Time-Off-In-Lieu (TOIL)" or overtime where working hours exceed 37 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 Education 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.

This post is at Higher Executive Officer (HEO) grade. With effect from 1st October 2020, the annual salary scale for Higher Executive Officer (Grossed up) is:

€49,846; €51,303; €52,757; €54,210; €55,668; €57,123; €58,577; €60,979 (LSI); €62,775 (LSI)

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 Service 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 27 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 & Skills 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 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.

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 least Level 8 on the NFQ or higher in Education/Community work, Social work, Youth work, or a cognate area;*
- *Leadership/project management experience in an education context;*
- *A minimum of 3 years' relevant experience in one of the following areas, education, community work, social care or a cognate area;*
- *A deep understanding of the education system in Ireland; particularly in the area of transitions, access policy, access mechanisms and peer-to-peer mentoring;*
- *A proven record of interest in the field of educational disadvantage /access to higher education;*
- *The skills to lead and collaborate in the research dimension of the project, and have an appreciation of the value of evaluative research for the full implementation of the project;*
- *Strong leadership, negotiation and people management skills including resource development, effective collaboration, public relations and media management;*

- *Excellent quantitative and qualitative data analysis skills and experience in using data interrogation tools such as Microsoft Excel, Survey Monkey, SPSS and other similar tools;*
- *Excellent report-writing and document presentation experience with familiarity in using productivity tools such as Microsoft Word, SharePoint, PowerPoint and Visio;*
- *Strong financial and budget management skills;*
- *Experience of working in cross sectoral partnerships;*
- *A working knowledge of Gaeilge;*
- *Full, clean driving license with access to own transport.*

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.

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 Programme Manager – Higher Executive 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.

Making of Applications

Applications must be submitted in typed format. Handwritten applications will not be accepted. Incomplete applications, will not be accepted. 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 recruitment@mic.ul.ie.

Application forms for this post may be accessed on the Mary Immaculate College website www.mic.ul.ie/about-mic/vacancies. Please fully complete the application form and send it to recruitment@mic.ul.ie with the subject title – **PATH Programme Manager -** no later than:

<div align="center">

2p.m. on Tuesday, 11th May 2021

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Late applications will <u>not</u> 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 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.

April 2021