

Policy Title:	Mentoring Policy for Students on School Placement
Description:	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students whose grades on school placement fall on or below 49% are supported to meet the professional and academic requirements of their course
Author (Position):	Director of School Placement
Version:	2
Approved By:	MIE Governing Body
Policy Approval Date:	January 2019
Reapproval Date:	June 2025
Date of Next Policy Review:	June 2027 (or as necessary)

Mentoring Policy for Students on School Placement

1 Context

- 1.1 School placement is a mandatory component of the Bachelor in Education (Primary) (BEd), Baitsiléir san Oideachas Trí Mheán na Gaeilge (Bunmhúinteoireacht) (BOid), Professional Master of Education (Primary) (PME) and Máistreacht Ghairmiúil san Oideachas (MGO) (Bunmhúinteoireacht)- Conair lán- Ghaeilge (Bunmhúinteoireacht) (MGO) courses. The Teaching Council (2017) requires students to spend 30 weeks on school placement on the BEd and BOid courses and 24 weeks on the PME (Primary) course.
- 1.2 Students are assessed in the areas of Planning & Preparation and Teaching & Learning.
- 1.3 It is compulsory for students whose school placement marks for the previous year fall on or below 49% in Planning & Preparation and/or Teaching & Learning to engage with the Mentoring Programme.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students whose grades on school placement fall on or below 49% are supported to meet the professional and academic requirements of their course.

3 Benefits

- 3.1 To support identified students in a range of basic teaching skills which would enable students to deliver more effective teaching.
- 3.2 To provide the student with an opportunity, through the mentoring support system, to reflect on the basic teaching skills.
- 3.3 To provide an opportunity for the practice of these basic skills and to provide feedback through discussion with mentor.
- 3.4 To encourage the student to reflect on the teaching/learning process as a complex activity.
- 3.5 To provide support by elaboration, explanation and 'demonstration' of these basic skills

4 Scope

School placement is a mandatory component of initial teacher education courses. It is obligatory for students who experience difficulty and who attain a mark of 49% or lower to engage with structured mentoring support provided by MIE. Students who receive a fail because of a lack of preparation are not guaranteed access to the Mentoring Intensive Programme

5 Principles

5.1 There is no such thing as the ideal teaching personality.

5.2 Teaching has its repertoire of skills

5.3 It is possible to isolate, describe and demonstrate some of these skills.

5.4 It is possible through study, practice and evaluation to acquire, improve and refine some of these skills

6 Definitions

6.1 A glossary of definitions relating to school placement is provided by The [Teaching Council](#) (2013, pp. 6-7).

6.1.1 The mentor liaises and coordinates the schedule of visits with the Placement tutor.

7 Policy

7.1 . It is compulsory that students selected for the mentoring programme avail of the supports on either Mentoring Enrichment Programme or Mentoring Intensive Programme

7.2 There are two mentoring pathways based on the previous placement's marks in Planning & Preparation and Teaching & Learning:

7.3 [Mentoring Enrichment Programme](#): This programme is designed for students scoring 49% or below in Planning & Preparation and/or Teaching & Learning. The programme comprises a five-week enrichment course, each session lasting 50 minutes, organised by the school

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placement team. It features guest speakers. In exceptional cases, the mentoring enrichment programme may be proposed as a reasonable accommodation by the MIE Disability Service.

7.4 Mentoring Intensive Programme: This programme is intended for students who failed Planning & Preparation and/or Teaching & Learning. It includes a pre-placement meeting, an in-person mentoring visit to the school placement site, and an online mentoring session via MS Teams. In exceptional cases, the mentoring intensive programme may be proposed as a reasonable accommodation by the MIE Disability Service.

7.5 Clarifying Roles: Placement Tutor & Mentor:

- The roles of the mentor and the placement tutor are separate and distinct.
- The mentor plays no part in assessing the student's preparation or performance during the placement.
- Placement tutors should provide regular feedback to their mentored students while being mindful not to overwhelm them.
- The mentor can access the student's SP file to gain information on areas of difficulty being experienced by the student to help focus their forthcoming work.
- The mentor liaises and coordinates the schedule of visits with the placement tutor.

Structures/Procedures

- The school placement team will issue emails to all identified students.
- The school placement team will support mentors in contacting school principals to explain why they will be visiting the school and why certain students may receive one extra visit and to request that confidentiality be maintained.
- Students will be invited to request a meeting with members of the school placement team before seachtain ullmhúcháin.
- During the course of the placement there will be an individual pre-placement meeting with designated mentor, a virtual mentor meeting which will occur before the first tutor visit and an in-person mentor visit before the second tutor meeting; total of three engagements. However, this sequence might change at the discretion of the mentor based on the individual needs of each student

- Student will bring a completed 'Initial Self-Assessment Profile Form' and one piece of long term and one piece of short term planning to the pre-placement meeting.
- At this meeting the Mentor and Student will agree a small number (3-4) of areas of particular concern which will be focused on during the Mentoring visits.
- Mentors will spend up to a maximum of one hour on a mentoring visit (virtual and in-person). During the in-person visit time will be divided between observation and feedback at the discretion of the mentor based on the individual needs of each student.
- At the end of the in-person visit, the mentor will give the student the blank Tuairisc Chomhairleora form. The student will complete their section of the form before the end of placement and return it to the school placement team.
- The Mentor will complete the mentoring duplicate form at the end of the in-person visit and the student will get a copy of this form.
- Students will be sent a short questionnaire which must be completed. This will be used to improve the programme for future years.

8 Responsibility

The overall responsibility for this policy lies with the Director of School Placement.

9 Related Documents

9.1 The Teaching Council [Guidelines on School Placement](#) (2013)

9.2 The Teaching Council [Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers](#) (2017)

9.3 [Consent to Disclose and Share Disability Information](#)

9.3 [Tutor System Policy](#)

9.4 [Tutor System Procedure](#)

9.5 [Mentoring Policy for Students on School Placement](#)

9.6 9.6 Tuairisc Chomhairleora Form

Appendix

This appendix offers suggestions concerning specific ideas regarding teaching skills that could be incorporated into the mentoring programmes based on student need.

Study Skills	Encourage students to review lecture notes from curriculum specialists and professional development
Observation Skills	Enable students to observe and reflect on "in-task" activities, such as children at work, the class teacher's handling of the class, and the implications of decisions made. Enhance their awareness of the teaching/learning process
Practice Skills	Guide students in the use of appropriate language register and basic effective teaching strategies
Evaluation Skills	Teach students how to be more analytical and aware
Refining Skills	Help students identify specific skills and discuss incremental steps towards refinement
Participation	Maximise student participation in both the mentoring programme and school placement by promoting a proactive approach
Planning Skills	Assist students in developing clear objectives, organising preparation, developing structure, understanding differentiation, assessing student learning, and reflecting on planning
Non-Verbal and Extra Verbal Communication	Exhibit teacher liveliness; utilise effective teacher movement; maintain consistent eye contact; use an engaging teacher voice; incorporate stimulus variation; implement strategic teacher silence
Introduction and Closure	Describe skills of introduction and conclusion; evaluate and provide feedback
Explanations and Explaining	Discuss aspects of explanations and explaining; describe key aspects of 'good' explanations; present, discuss, and evaluate an explanation of a selected concept/topic

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Lesson Planning	Write objectives and design lessons; identify appropriate resources and materials; sequence lessons logically and progressively; incorporate varied teaching methods; plan for assessments; align lessons with curriculum standards; incorporate various pedagogical methods; plan for differentiation; integrate technology where appropriate
Questions and Questioning	Understand the role of teachers in questioning; distinguish between open and closed questions; apply effective questioning techniques; maintain eye contact during questioning; distribute questions evenly; use clear and fluent vocabulary; manage timing in questioning
Collaboration in Teaching	Engage in professional conversations with peers, teachers, and administrators; observe experienced teachers for strategies; collaborate on lesson planning and assessment; utilise technology for collaborative planning and resource sharing; promote student collaboration in the classroom
Classroom Climate	Discuss factors contributing to an effective class lesson; describe the use of positive and negative reinforcement; discuss variation in pace of delivery; articulate the role of humour in a class; discuss teacher's role in mixed-ability contexts; prepare and execute a lesson on a selected topic; explore classroom management issues