

May 2010

Update on new regulations issued by the Teaching Council of Ireland and status of WIT/NALA programmes

The Teaching Council is the national body responsible for the professional standards of teaching in Ireland. It was established in March 2006 to promote teaching as a profession at primary and post-primary levels, to promote the professional development of teachers and to regulate standards in the profession.

The Council has recently issued new regulations dealing with registering as a teacher. Regulation Five covers teacher registration in the Further Education sector. The Further Education sector deals with educational areas and programmes which are not within Post-primary mainstream and are not part of third level education. Typically, programmes include:

- Post-leaving certificate courses leading to FETAC awards
- Back to Education Initiative
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
- Youthreach
- Senior Traveller Training Centres
- Adult Education including some literacy, numeracy and basic education

In relation to adult education and literacy, numeracy and basic education, it is important to note that this regulation only applies to those teaching programmes that lead to FETAC awards (or equivalent recognised accreditation) on the National Framework of Qualifications.

This means that it does not apply to volunteer adult literacy tutors or part-time tutors who are not teaching FETAC or equivalent accredited programmes. Teachers delivering hobby, pastime and self-financing (i.e. no cost to the State) courses are not required to register.

The regulation requires those wishing to register with the Teaching Council (prior to and including 01 April 2013) to possess a minimum of a level 7 (NFQ) award containing 180 ECTS. (The WIT/NALA B.A. Ordinary in Adult Education meets this requirement).

The regulation also sets out a new requirement which will come into force after 1 April 2013 which requires that anyone wishing to register as a teacher in Further Education possess a minimum of a level 8 (NFQ) award containing 180 ECTS and a teacher education qualification. A person may also apply to register if they hold a Level 7 (NFQ) award plus an appropriate additional qualification or certified accreditation of prior learning based on a minimum of three years experience in a workplace or instructional setting which is relevant to the candidate's qualifications. A relevant teacher education qualification will also be required after 01 April 2013.

This Teacher Education Qualification (TEQ) will be a new requirement for the Further Education sector.

The Teaching Council is currently developing the framework/criteria for what is required in the new Teacher Education Qualification and this should be published before the end of 2010.

Once the criteria has been approved at Council level these new TEQ's for Further Education will be developed by a number of Colleges including WIT and will be available in the coming months. These new qualifications will have to be accredited by the Teaching Council.

The WIT/NALA project is actively working on a new programme which will meet the requirements of the new Teacher Education Qualification. We are looking at the possibility of incorporating the requirements of the TEQ into our existing programmes. The principal change would be the addition of teaching practice.

It is important to note a number of points:

Since there is no recognised post of Adult Literacy Tutor within the VEC structures at present, there is not a requirement for adult literacy tutors who are teaching on programmes leading to FETAC awards to register with the Teaching Council as a teacher (the Teaching Council Act, 2001 refers only to teachers). However we understand there is some evidence of employers (VEC's) looking for tutors to register with the Teaching Council.

However given current changes within the adult education service in VEC's, should new teaching posts be created in adult education including adult literacy, it is likely that they will be required to meet the above Teaching Councils requirements.

The current situation is that anyone in possession of the B.A. Ordinary (level 7) or B.A. Honours (level 8) is eligible to apply to register under Regulation Five with the Teaching Council.

We hope to offer a level 7 and a level 8 programme with a built in Teacher Education Qualification in the next year. We are exploring how we can incorporate the new requirements of Regulation 5 into our existing programmes.

For anyone in possession of a level 7 or level 8 qualification who is a graduate of our programmes we are also working on a stand- alone Teacher Education Qualification that will meet the Teaching Council's requirements.

For those in possession of our level 7 or level 8 qualification who are already registered with the Teaching Council there is not a statutory requirement to complete a Teacher Education Qualification however prospective employers in the VEC sector may look for individuals to possess this new TEQ in their future recruitment for the sector.

For any queries on this issue please contact:

Helen Murphy

Literacy Development Centre, WIT

Email: hmurphy@wit.ie

Meeting May 28, 2010 WIT

Participants:

Helen Murphy, WIT

John Fitzgibbons, City of Cork VEC, IVEA

New regulation from the TC and implications for those teaching in the FE sector.

- Current status of teaching staff in VEC's
- New TEQ requirement
- Programmes under development at WIT to meet TEQ requirements
- MALT
- BA Hons and BA Ord
- Model for Teaching Practice in FE
- An appropriate model for the FE sector (reflecting diversity of learners)
- Teaching Practice for part-time tutors (in literacy and basic education)
- Mentor based TP model
- Mentors based in FE schools and colleges (probably holding a TEQ) – need agreement and support at IVEA level
- Mentoring module at WIT
- Quality Assurance by WIT – team in WIT working with Mentors

Issues to consider

- What is the current policy in VEC's re teaching practice?
- Will the VEC's be supporting teachers who want to complete a TEQ?
- Will the VEC's require teachers to possess a TEQ in adult basic education?
- What resources will the VEC's need to implement a Mentor type model?
- Are there appropriately experienced people currently available to do this?
- Will they need to be paid in addition to their current workload/teaching hours?