



Circular 0034/2021

**To: The Managerial Authorities, principal teachers and teaching staff of
Recognised Voluntary Secondary Schools, Community and Comprehensive
Schools and Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards**

Updated Entry Criteria for the Gaeltacht Entry route to the (English Medium) Primary Bachelor of Education

The Department of Education wishes to inform the management authorities of all post-primary schools of changes to entry criteria for the Gaeltacht Entry Route to the (English Medium) Primary Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) (general stream) with effect from September 2022, which have been approved by the Minister for Education. These changes primarily relate to the introduction of a new criteria which increases the required Leaving Certificate grade in Gaelige.

The Department requests school authorities to bring this circular to the attention of all teachers of Irish and career guidance counsellors.

Information on the Gaeltacht Entry Route

The Gaeltacht Entry Route is a separate CAO entry route to the Primary B.Ed (English-medium) programmes on Initial Teacher Education in State-funded higher education institutions (HEIs) as follow:

- Marino Institute of Education, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9
- Mary Immaculate College, South Circular Road, Limerick
- DCU Institute of Education, DCU St Patrick's Campus, Drumcondra, Dublin 9
- Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, Maynooth University

Up to 10% of places in these programmes are reserved for candidates from the Gaeltacht, who normally reside in an official Gaeltacht designated area and whose normal language of the home is Irish.

The entry route was designed specifically to attract students into Primary teaching who are from the Gaeltacht and who speak Irish as their first language.

The aim of the Gaeltacht Entry route is consistent with the Department of Education's - Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022, which sets out a number of actions to support the use of Irish as the primary language of Gaeltacht communities through the provision of high quality and relevant Irish-medium education in Gaeltacht primary and post-primary schools, including actions to enhance the quality of teaching through Irish.

Updated Entry Criteria with effect from September 2022

Applicants wishing to commence the Primary B.Ed. (English Medium) through the Gaeltacht Entry Route from September 2022 must meet the following updated criteria in order to be eligible to apply for entry to the programme, which is done through the CAO process.

- a) **Be resident in a Gaeltacht Language Planning area, and**
- b) **Must obtain at least a H3 in Leaving Certificate Irish.**

Apart from the requirement to meet both of the two criteria listed above, applicants must also meet all the other requirements for entry to the Primary B.Ed. as normal and any particular matriculation requirements for the HEI they are applying to.

Selection process

Once Gaeltacht Entry route applicants meet all entry requirements for the programme, they may be eligible to complete through the CAO for one of the 10% of places on these programmes reserved for candidates from the Gaeltacht.

Students wishing to apply for this entry route to the Primary B.Ed must do so by submitting a CAO application for their chosen HEI. The Gaeltacht Entry Route is a separate entry route to that of the general entry route to the (English Medium) Primary B.Ed. Each of the HEIs providing programmes of primary Initial Teacher Education have their own separate CAO code for the Gaeltacht Entry Route, which are as follows:

Course Code	Description of Course
CM002	Marino Institute of Education – Bachelor of Education (Gaeltacht Applicants)
MI006	Mary Immaculate College – Bachelor of Education (Gaeltacht Applicants)

MH002	Maynooth University – Froebel Dept of Primary and Early Childhood Education Bachelor of Education (Gaeltacht Applicants)
DC003	Dublin City University Bachelor of Education (Gaeltacht Applicants)

As part of the Entry Criteria, applicants to this Gaeltacht Entry Route must be resident in a Gaeltacht Language Planning Area. The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media will confirm whether applicants meet this Entry Criteria. In order to assist in this process in determining eligibility, applicants to this route are requested to provide their Eircode when applying through the CAO.

Once this step has been completed, the CAO will be informed. Subsequently the CAO will check the applicant has met the entry requirements for the course, including H3 in Irish, before points are calculated. Successful applicants will be notified through the normal CAO offer process.

The terms of the Gaeltacht Entry Route as outlined will be kept under review in the context of the development of Department of Education policy in relation to the Irish Language and Irish-medium education.

Issued by: Martin McLoughlin, Teacher Education Policy Section

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