



**Circular 0012/2023**

**To: The Managerial Authorities of Recognised Primary, Secondary,  
Community and Comprehensive Schools  
And  
The Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards**

**Graduate Certificate in the Education of Pupils on the Autism  
Spectrum (AS) for teachers working with Pupils on the AS in  
Special Schools, Special Classes or as Special Education  
Teachers in mainstream Primary and Post-Primary Schools,  
2023/2024**

**Introduction**

This programme will aim to provide substantial theoretical and practical professional development for teachers working with pupils on the AS and, thereby, will be in a position to contribute to the school's overall capacity in this area.

**The Programme 2023-2024**

In the school year 2023-2024 a Graduate Certificate in the Education of Pupils on the Autism Spectrum will be offered in DCU Institute of Education, DCU St Patrick's Campus, Drumcondra, Dublin 9. The Programme will run from September 2023 to early May 2024.

Please apply online via [www.dcu.ie/ise/qceas](http://www.dcu.ie/ise/qceas)

Deadline for applications is 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Eighteen places are available in the Programme year 2023/2024.



## Funding

Funding for the programme is provided by the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education.

## Aim and Content

The aim of the programme will be to provide substantial theoretical and practical training for teachers working with pupils on the Autism Spectrum and, thereby, to contribute to the school's overall capacity in this area. A qualification of Graduate Certificate will be awarded by Dublin City University. Participants will be assessed on the basis of **full attendance** and **full participation** in all elements of the course. Candidates are advised that recordings may be required for assignments. Further details on the course and data protection may be found on the following web page [https://www.dcu.ie/courses/Postgraduate/institute\\_of\\_education/Graduate-Certificate-Education-Pupils-Autism-Spectrum](https://www.dcu.ie/courses/Postgraduate/institute_of_education/Graduate-Certificate-Education-Pupils-Autism-Spectrum).

## Duration and Organisation

This is a National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) Level 9, one-year, part-time programme delivered from September 2023 to May 2024, and consists of 5 modules. These modules are assessed through practical and writing assignments to a level 9 standard. The programme requires that participants are released from their schools for three weeks of the academic year (September, November and February). There are evening lectures and tutorials (1-2 per month) normally held on Tuesdays and two observations of practice in your school.

The course is delivered in a blended model through on campus learning at DCU Institute of Education, St Patrick's Campus and online synchronous and asynchronous activities.

## Eligibility

Please note that all teachers must be registered in accordance with Section 31 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001-2015. Please refer to the Teaching Council's website [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie) for further information.

This programme is for registered teachers who **hold a post currently funded by the Department of Education and who are currently working with pupils on the Autism Spectrum (AS) or who will be working with pupils on the AS for**



**the duration of the Programme in recognised Primary Schools including Special Schools and recognised Post-Primary Schools.** The programme is designed specifically to assist teachers in meeting the learning and teaching needs of pupils on the AS. Potential applicants must therefore have a significant teaching role in relation to pupils on the AS.

**Primary:**

Teachers will be required to upload a copy of their Registration Certificate<sup>1</sup> from the Teaching Council, when submitting their application form. If the “Route” field is blank, teachers will be required to provide evidence that they have qualifications suitable to teach in either the mainstream primary sector or to teach pupils with Special Educational Needs.

Applicants from Primary Schools should have successfully completed a recognised induction process in accordance with the requirements as set out by the Teaching Council in their publication Post-qualification Professional Practice and hold a position in a sanctioned post in an area of special education or be taking up such posts in September 2023.

**Post-primary:**

Teachers will be required to upload a copy of their Registration Certificate (see footnote below) from the Teaching Council, when submitting their application form. If the “Route” field is blank, teachers will be required to provide evidence that they have qualifications suitable to teach in either the mainstream post-primary sector or to teach pupils with special educational needs in the post-primary sector.

Applicants from Post-Primary Schools should have successfully completed a recognised induction process in accordance with the requirements as set out by the Teaching Council in their publication Post-qualification Professional Practice Procedures and Criteria.

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<sup>1</sup> Certificates of Registration are available to download by logging into the My Registration Section on the Teaching Council website [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie)



### Special Schools:

Teachers will be required to upload a copy of their Registration Certificate <sup>2</sup> from the Teaching Council, when submitting their application form. If the “Route” field is blank teachers will be required to provide evidence that they have qualifications suitable to teach either in the mainstream primary or post-primary sectors or to teach pupils with special educational needs in the primary or post-primary sector or to teach in special school settings.

Applicants from Special Schools should have successfully completed a recognised induction process in accordance with the requirements as set out by the Teaching Council in their publication Post-qualification Professional Practice Procedures and Criteria.

### Deployment of Teachers Undertaking the Graduate Certificate Programme:

While teachers are completing this programme and for a reasonable period of time following completion of the programme, it is advised that school management in all types of recognised schools make every effort to ensure that pupils on the Autism Spectrum continue to benefit from the teacher’s knowledge and expertise in this area, through assigning the learning and teaching of pupils on the Autism Spectrum to the teacher concerned. Collaborative practices, such as team-teaching, can also form a part of these arrangements.

In nominating a teacher to participate, the school principal must give a commitment that the teacher will be deployed/timetabled to teach in a special education role for the duration of the programme and for a reasonable period into the future, in accordance with the needs in the school.

In order to participate in the programme, teachers will need access to a computer and the Internet.

Candidates should note that evidence of having completed Garda vetting is required for participation in the course.

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<sup>2</sup> Certificates of Registration are available to download by logging into the My Registration Section on the Teaching Council website [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie)



## Applications and Selection

Applications from eligible candidates nominated by their school authorities are via online submission at [www.dcu.ie/ise/gceas](http://www.dcu.ie/ise/gceas).

Closing date for applications is 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Normally, applications will be accepted from not more than one teacher per school who meets the requirements outlined in this Circular.

Applicants for this programme are not required to attend for interview.

## Fees

No fee or registration charges will apply for applicants eligible under the terms of this Circular.

## Travel and Subsistence

Travel and subsistence will be provided for any of the face-to-face elements of the programme in accordance with the Department of Finance Travel and Subsistence Circular 11/82. The updated travel and subsistence rates are recorded in Circular 23/2021 for Domestic Subsistence rates and Circular 16/2022 for Motor Travel rates. Please note for any travel and subsistence due under this Circular, the training rate is applicable.

## Extra Personal Vacation

No extra personal vacation will be allowed in respect of participation in this Course.

## Substitution

Substitution, which must be approved by the managerial authority of the school/ETB, will be allowed. The substitution must be deemed necessary to cover the approved periods of absence of the teacher from teaching duty for attendance at the course. Documentation from the college specifying the absence details must be retained by the school. **It should be noted that paid substitution cover will not be provided by the Department of Education where a teacher takes personal leave during the block release element of the Programme.**



## **Salary Arrangements**

All teachers on release from their school under the terms of this Programme will continue to receive their salary in the usual way.

Please note that successful completion of this Programme will not result in any entitlement to additional remuneration from the Department of Education.

## **Master's Programme**

On the successful completion of the Graduate Certificate in the Education of Pupils on the Autism Spectrum teachers may be eligible to apply for the Master of Education in Autism (M.Ed. in Autism) at the DCU Institute of Education.

**Jill Fannin**  
**Principal Officer**

**24 February, 2023**