Mark Kearns
Criomthann Morrison

November 2021

Embedding Development Education-Global Citizenship Education in Accredited QQI (Minor) Awards

Saolta is a Development Education strategic partnership programme for the Adult and Community Education sector in Ireland.

Development Perspectives (DP) is the lead partner in the partnership consortium, which also includes AONTAS, Concern Worldwide, Irish Rural Link and the Adult and Community Education Dept. of Maynooth University.

Mark Kearns is the research officer with Saolta and has a background in adult and community education as well as in higher education. In addition to his role with DP-Saolta, Mark works as an associate lecturer and teaching placement supervisor on the ITE programme for adult and community education practitioners (PDE-FE) in Marino Institute of Education in Dublin.

Criomthann Morrison is a recent postgraduate and participant in Saolta's 2021 SDG Advocate Programme and has a background in research and policy analysis.

Introduction

Development Education-Global Citizenship Education (DE-GCE), is increasingly a focus for governments and policymakers worldwide (UN, 2015; UNESCO, 2018). This is certainly the case in the Rep. of Ireland (RoI) context where DE-GCE is well established at the first (primary) and second (secondary) levels via the DICE and UBUNTU initiatives, respectively. The recent inclusion of DE-GE as a core (mandatory) element of teacher training programmes in these respective sectors further underlines this point (TCI, 2020). Reflecting international policy developments, there is now an increased focus on lifelong learning and ensuring that leaners of all ages and backgrounds have the opportunity to consider how issues of global significance impact on their daily lives and on taking action for positive change (IA, 2016; UNESCO, 2019). It is anticipated that this approach will be further reinforced in future *National Strategy* documents that will guide domestic policy and practice developments in this area over the next decade or so (IA, 2021 Forthcoming; DES, 2022 Forthcoming). This is also in line with the latest Further Education and Training (FET) strategy which calls for the embedding of sustainable development principles across all provision in this sector so that students are equipped with environmental awareness and 'green skills' to drive future change (Solas, 2020). Of further relevance is the development of a *Framework* for embedding DE-GCE in ITE programmes for those working in Adult & Community Education (ACE), including those working in the large FET provision (Kearns, 2021). Briefly, this aims to ensure that those undertaking teacher training to work with adult learners are equipped with the knowledge and tools to embed DE-GCE in their own teaching and site of practice.

Purpose

Given the above, the purpose of this short briefing paper is to consider, as a starting point, how DE-GCE is reflected in current QQI accredited programmes and courses for adult learners in formal as well as non-formal Adult and Community Education (ACE) settings, including FET. More specifically, this reports on the findings from a cursory audit of QQI (Minor) awards for DE-GCE content focusing especially on awards at levels 4-6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). In particular, QQI modules with a strong, existing DE-GCE-focus are identified along with those with potential scope for including DE-GCE themes and topics. This is supplemented with examples and case studies of how these Minor awards may be revised or developed to better integrate DE-GCE into their learning objectives and learning outcomes. While this might be considered a small intervention, this nonetheless forms an important aspect of scaling of activity in this area in line with the policy and practice developments described above.

Definitions / Descriptions

While there are many definitions and descriptions available, Development Education (DE) can be described simply as 'a transformative, participatory learning process aimed at activating people to play a role in achieving global justice, equality and sustainability' (McNeill, 2020). This is similar to Global Citizenship Education (GCE or sometimes GCED) which is employed by UNESCO to describe a 'holistic framing paradigm…which encapsulates how education can develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners need for securing a world which is more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable' (UNESCO, 2014a). Notwithstanding the differences in emphasis and approach, these definitions nonetheless share common themes and goals of: social justice, social inclusion; inequality; issues of sustainability and global interconnectedness. There is also a recognition of the integral part played by DE-GCE in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals and specifically Target 4.7 which aims

> *'by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.' (UN, 2015)*

To restate, this reflects a lifelong learning approach to ensure that adults as well as school-aged children have the opportunity to learn and act on the issues that affect their lives locally as well as globally.

Methodology; Findings

Evidence is based on a cursory audit of existing minor awards in the Qsearch listings conducted in the period September-October 2021. Using the Qsearch function on the QQI website, from a total of n=1355 of existing Level 4-6 Minor Awards, almost 1 in 5 (n=243) awards were identified as having at least some relevance to DE-GCE themes and topics. Table 1 demonstrates the further designation (D) of these awards according to the strength of DE-GCE content, D1 having a Direct DE-GCE focus and D4 having no DE-GCE content, but with potential for this to be included in future award reviews.

Table 1: Designation Category Descriptions

Designation Categories	Description
D1. Directly DE-GCE	A dedicated module that has DE-GCE as its primary focus or purpose *Example: Global Development Issues 5N4187*
D2. Strong DE-GCE Focus	A module that has a strong DE-GCE focus but is not primarily designated as DE-GCE *Example: Intercultural Awareness 3N0534*
D3. Some DE-GCE- related content	Some content that is related to DE-GCE topics and issues *Example: International Trade Practice 5N2072*
D4. No direct DE-GCE content	This has no DE content but which addresses aspects of this. This also includes those modules that can be readily adapted to include DE-GCE themes and topics *Example: Child Development 5N1764*

In specific terms, the audit identified a small (n=6) number of Minor awards with a direct DE-GCE focus (D1) and a larger number (n=22) with a substantive DE-related content (D2). These awards are listed in Appendix 1, Tables 2 & 3, respectfully. The listed Awards are further categorised in terms of broad 'type' of DE-GCE or 'pillar' as A, B & C as follows:

DE-GCE Pillar	*DE-GCE Themes & Topics*
A. Social, Political & Cultural	*Social Justice & Equality; Equity & Fairness; Peace & Human Rights; Sustainable Living/Sustainable Lifestyles; (Global) Active Citizenship*
B. Economic	*Sustainable Economies; Sustainable Development; Sustainable Work Practices*
C. Environmental	*Sustainable Water, Land & Air Resources*

With some exceptions, these awards are somewhat dated i.e. c. up to 10 years old and in some cases do not reflect significant, recent policy and practice developments in the area of DE-GCE. To give one example, the *UN Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) for 2030 (UN, 2015) has now supplanted the previous *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) stated in the learning outcomes for the module *Global Development* (6N4126). This suggests, among other things, that future reviews of this and other similar modules need to reflect key policy and practice developments in this area. The audit further underlines the potential for embedding DE-GCE in a wider range of other Minor awards at the 4-6 level (D3 and D4), but which are not specified here. More specifically, the remaining (n=215) audited awards were found to have a small DE-GCE-related content (D3), or no DE-GCE content (D4), though future reviews might readily include DE-GCE themes and topics. This grouping potentially holds the most potential, indicating the breadth of DE-GCE instruction possible across ACE provision. Appendix 2 provides illustrative case studies of how an award in each of the respective categories may be approached to enhance or adapt pre-existing learning objectives and outcomes for greater DE-GCE instruction and content.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As part of a broader remit to embed DE-GCE in the FET-ACE sector, the audit highlights the scope for embedding DE-GCE in accredited (QQI) Minor awards and for scaling of activity in this area. Four specific recommendations are offered at this point:

Specific recommendations.

1. Focusing in particular on awards at levels 4&5, the timely revision of designated D1 and D2 Minor awards identified in the audit to reflect recent policy and practice developments in the area of DE-GCE;

2. Consideration is given to including DE-GCE themes and topics in other awards designated at D3 & D4 and in line with QQI's standard review process;

3. The establishment of an advisory panel with relevant expertise in DE-GCE to ensure the standard review process includes DE-GCE-related content across the full range of fields and disciplines represented within the QQI listings;

4. Further consultation with key stakeholders to review the paper and findings and to establish the next steps in the process of embedding DE-GCE in QQI Minor awards.

As the lead partner in the strategic partnership programme for the ACE sector here in Ireland, Saolta is committed to working with towards these outcomes in conjunction with all relevant stakeholder groups. More specifically, it is anticipated that a formal process of consultation and review will be instigated in the first quarter of 2022 to further the recommendations from this briefing paper, above.

Appendix 1: Tables of Awards with D1 & D2 Catergorisation

Table 2 Minor Awards with Directly Related to DE-GCE (D1)

Code	Title	Level	Pub	Review	Field of learning	DE-GCE Pillar
6N6949	Environmental Studies	6	12-2012		Engineering,	A,B,C
5N1442	Environmental Studies	5	12-2012		Natural Sciences	A,B,C
5N4187	Global Development Issues	5	07-2012		Social Sciences	A,B,C
6N4126	Global Development	6	07-2012		Social Sciences	A,B,C
4N3186	Local & Global Development Awareness	4	09-2016	12-2018	Social Sciences	A,B,C
5N5905	Sustainable Development	5	08-2013		Business Admin & Law	A,B,C

Table 3 Minor Awards with Strong GE-GCE Focus (D2)

Code	Title	Level	Pub	Review	Field of learning	DE-GCE Pillar
5N1553	Applied Permaculture	5	11-2016		Natural Sciences	C
5N2553	Biodiversity & the Natural Environment	5	11-2016		Multidisc	C
5N1568	Biological Diversity	5	11-2016		Multidisc	C
3N0520	Challenging Discrimination	3	4-2017	12-2018	Health & Welfare	A
5C21921 524	Children's Rights, Legislation & Regulations	5	7-2021		Education	A
6N20257	Costal & Marine Ecosystems & Culture	6	7-2016		Services	A,C
5N1439	Ecological Field Methods	5	12-2012		Multidisc.	C
6N3645	Ecology & the Environment	6	07-2012		Forestry	C
5N0631	Ecotourism	5	12-2012		Travel, Tourism & Leisure	C
5N1775	Equality & Diversity in Childcare	6	09-2016	10-2018	Health & Welfare	A
6N1974	Equality & Diversity in Childcare	5	11-2016	10-2018	Health & Welfare	A
6N2248	Environment & Sustainable Farming	6	07-2012		Crop & Livestock Production	C
3N0534	Intercultural Awareness	3	04-2017	12-2018	Personal development	A
5N0765	Intercultural Studies	5	04-2012		Law	A
NF-	Inclusive Early Learning & Care	6	07-2021		Education	A
5N1617	Permaculture Design	5			Natural Sciences	C
5N20374	Soils & the Environment	5	12-2016		Agriculture, forestry, fisheries (AFF)	C
6N3626	Sustainable Horticulture	6	07-2012	-	AFF	C
6N20463	Sustainable Farming in the Environment	6	12-2016		AFF	C
5N3398	Sustainable Forestry	5	03-2012		AFF	C
5N5027	Sustainable Water Management	5	12-2012		Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction	C
4N1121	Understanding Interculturalism	4	07-2017	12=2018	Personal Skills & Develop.	A

Appendix 2: Case Studies

D1 Direct DE-GCE Focus: *Sustainable Development (5N5905)*

This Level 5 Minor award was originally published in 2013 and is in need of updating in terms of incorporating key theories and practices that have informed the field of DE-GCE in the interim period. For example, the language of 'developed' and 'developing' countries in Learning Objectives (LOs) 3 and 11 is seen as outdated, with the World Bank dropping this terminology since its 2016 edition of World Development Indicators in favour of more geographically-based descriptors of regions. In addition, key concepts from current discourse need to be added, including 'Planetary Boundaries', 'Just Transitions', 'climate justice', 'climate-induced issues' such as conflict and migration, ecosystem services, silviculture, and permaculture. The role of the circular economy and sustainable / social small- and medium-sized enterprise (SMEs) also needs to be integrated into the curriculum. LO 8 specifically mentions 'fair-trade cooperatives' and can be adapted to give a broader and more inclusive view of social/sustainable SME forms and purposes. Importantly, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), published in 2015 should underpin the entire curriculum so learners are aware of and can critically engage with the larger goals and their key targets.

D2 Strong DE-GCE Focus: *Biodiversity and the Natural Environment (5N2553)*

This Level 5 Minor Award was originally published in 2016 and can be updated in the leading theories and practices in sustainable development and conservation. Key concepts which can be interwoven with the existing material include ecosystem services, the role of social/sustainable SMEs in promoting a healthy natural environment, silviculture and permaculture. Learners may particularly benefit from covering topics in circular economy and social enterprise as models of approaching our relationship with the natural environment. International developments could also be integrated, such as the UN SDGs (most notably SDGs 13-15, namely 'Climate Action', 'Life Below Water' and 'Life On Land') and international responsibilities such as to the EU Birds and Habitats Directives (EU Nature Directives) and the UN's recent resolution to recognise the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

D3 Some DE-GCE related content: *International Trade Practice (5N2072)*

In this Level 5 award, Learning outcome 1 *'Explore the principal historical and current developments in world trade'* contains scope for exploring, among other things, the development (unequal) trade relations between the Global-rich North and the so-called 'Developing' countries.

Also, following the World Trade Organisation (WTO, 2018) this could explore how trade contributes to delivering key Sustainable Development Goals across the three DE-Pillars, for example Poverty Reduction (SDG 1), Decent Work & Economic Growth (SGD 9) & Life Below Water (SDG 14).

D4 No DE-GCE related content but which has the scope for readily including DE-GCE themes and topics: *Child Development (5N1764)*

DE-GCE themes and topics may readily be explored in LO2 for example: Explore the effects of a range of genetic, social, cultural and environmental factors on the holistic development of the child

As well as forming a key component of SDG 4 'Quality Education' this module and learning outcome explores the role played by other factors such as poverty (SDG 1) inequality (SDG 10) on education and life outcomes for children. This might also explore aspects of catering for diversity and in particularly relevant for childcare practitioners working an increasingly secular, multicultural Irish society.

References

IA (Irish Aid) (2016). *Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017 – 2023*. Dublin: Irish Aid. Retrieved from:
https://www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/allwebsitemedia/20newsandpublications/publicationpdfseng lish/Development-Education-Strategy-2017-2023.pdf

Kearns, M. (2021). Towards a Framework for Embedding Development Education in Initial Teacher Education programmes in the Adult and Community Education Sector. Drogheda: Saolta.

SOLAS (2020a). *Future FET: Transforming Learning: The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy.* Retrieved from: https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/64d0718c9e/solas_fet_strategy_web.pdf

Teaching Council of Ireland (2020). *Ceim Standards for Initial Teacher Education.* Maynooth: Teaching Council. Retrieved from: https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf

UNESCO (2019). *4th Global Report on Adult Learning and Adult Education* (GRALE). Paris: UNESCO Publications.

UNESCO (2014a). *UNESCO Education Strategy 2014-2021*. Paris: UNESCO Publications. Retrieved from: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000231288

United Nations (2015a). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1*. New York: The United Nations. Retrieved from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication

World Trade Organisation (WTO) (2018). *Mainstreaming trade to attain the Sustainable Development Goals*. Geneva: WTO. Retrieved from:
https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/sdg_e.pdf