



*Empowerment for a better world through
Adult and Community Education.*

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Position Paper:

Towards a Sustainable Framework for Embedding
Development Education in Initial Teacher Education
programmes in the Irish Adult & Community Education
Sector

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.

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List of abbreviations & acronyms

ACE: Adult & Community Education

AEO: Adult Education Organisers

BTEI: Back to Education Initiative

CEF: Community Education Facilitators

CEN: Community Education Network

CFE: Colleges of Further Education

CSO: Central Statistics Office

CTC: Community Training Centres

CWI: Community Work Ireland

DE: Development Education

DES: Department of Education and Science

DFA: Department of Foreign Affairs

EAEA: European Association for the Education of Adults

EMSSGDE: European Multi-Stakeholder Steering Group on Development Education

ERSI: Economic and Social Research Institute

ETB: Education & Training Boards

EU: European Union

FE: Further Education

FET: Further Education & Training

GCE: Global Citizenship Education

GDPR: General Data Protection Regulation

IA: Irish Aid

IDEA: Irish Development Education Association

LDC: Local Development Company

NFQ: National Framework of Qualifications

NI: Northern Ireland

PLC: Post Leaving Certificate

PPN: Public Partnership Network

RoI: Republic of Ireland

RTC: Regional Training Centre

SDGS: Sustainable Development Goals

UN: United Nations

UNESCO: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

VTOS: Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

Part 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Development Education (DE) has been prioritized by Irish policymakers for some time now with the Rep. of Ireland (henceforth RoI) receiving recognition for its leadership and strategic approach in this area (Krause, 2010; GENE, 2015; GENE 2019). This is guided by, among other things, a commitment to achieving UN-UNESCO Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7 which aims to equip all learners with the skills and knowledge to promote sustainable development, sustainable lifestyles, gender equality and so forth (UN 2015a). This commitment is encapsulated in successive *National Strategy* documents (IA, 2007; 2016) which seek to provide direction, coherence and guidance for ensuring that all Irish citizens are exposed to quality DE by 2030. While there has been some attempt to provide direction and support for the large RoI Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector, this nonetheless lags behind developments in the formal school system with no equivalent provision for embedding DE in teacher education (TE) programmes for those working with adult learners. This refers to a long-standing, coordinated effort on the part of policymakers, NGOs, HEIs and others to include DE at the primary and second levels via the DICE and UBUNTU initiatives, respectively. Briefly, these projects aim to include DE as an integral part of ITE programmes and that this is then embedded in curricula, in syllabi and in teaching and learning methodologies that encourage school-aged learners to think critically about DE topics and issues (see for example: Martin et al, 2016). Of particular relevance for this paper and the proposed *Framework* is the UNBUNTU model and approach which incorporates thirteen HEI providers of ITE (PME) at the second level.¹

At the same time, recent moves towards professionalization of ACE has now allowed for a more strategic, joined up approach to embedding DE in ITE in this sector. More specifically, there are eight HEIs providing formal teacher training for professionals who are currently working, or hoping to work, with adult learners across a broad range of (formal, non-formal/informal) education provision across RoI.² This means that in any given academic year, several hundred newly qualified ACE practitioners enter the profession for the first time while already established professionals can now gain accredited teacher status via the Teaching Council of Ireland (TCI).

¹ See Appendix I, Figure 1 for a graphic illustration of the Ubuntu Framework for embedding DE in (2nd Level) ITE programmes

² A list of relevant providers and respective courses appears in Appendix II.

1.2 Purpose of the Paper

Given the above, this paper sets out the rationale (purpose) for a *Framework* for embedding DE in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes for those working in the diverse RoI-ACE sector. In specific terms, this will help to inform policymakers, ITE providers and other stakeholders of the need for an intervention and approach that is specifically geared towards those working with adult learners across a broad range of formal, informal and non-formal education settings. This in turn reflects domestic as well as international policy which seeks to extend DE to all learners at all levels and where the concept of lifelong learning has become the overarching framework for achieving this (UN, 2015a; IA, 2016; UNESCO, 2014). While the primary focus here is on informing the process of developing a *Framework* for embedding DE in the ACE-ITE sector, it is hoped that this will make a broader contribution to the emergent research dealing with this aspect here in RoI and elsewhere.

1.3 Guiding Questions

Bearing in mind recent policy developments as well as changing Government priorities for DE in RoI and elsewhere, this paper is guided by the following questions:

1. What is the rationale (purpose) for the development of a *Framework* for embedding DE in the Irish ITE-ACE sector?
2. Taking into account existing models and frameworks: how might this be achieved? and;
3. What are the necessary processes and procedures required to implement this *Framework*?

This is achieved by a review of the relevant literature on the matter with a particular focus on the growing research relating to embedding DE in ITE programmes. This is further supplemented with findings from an initial scoping exercise with ACE-ITE programme coordinators in the period March-April, 2021 and which helped to establish the particular challenges as well as opportunities presented in developing and implementing a *Framework* for embedding DE in the RoI-ACE sector.

1.4 Rationale for the proposed Framework: a summary

Based on the above questions, this paper will demonstrate that:

- The proposed framework will help bring the RoI-ACE sector in line with developments in other parts of Irish education, for scaling of DE activity and to extending its reach to adult learners participating across a broad range of (formal/non-formal/ informal) learning provision. This includes those ‘hard to reach’ groups whose participation in the RoI education system remains marginal³ as well as ‘third-age’ learners whose participation in DE is often overlooked⁴
- A capacity building approach for students-teachers as well as teacher-educators is proposed and that a multi-agency, partnership between all relevant stakeholders offers the best chance for developing, implementing and sustaining this intervention

³ See DES (2019) for a detailed exploration of inequality and barriers to education for marginal groups in the RoI context

⁴ For a fuller exploration of this point see: Scheunpflug et al.(2009).

- The need for further investigations and researches along with other measures to ensure a *Framework* and an approach that is tailored to the specific needs of those working in the sector.

1.5 Framework Implementation: Timeframe; Approach

This paper sits within a specific timeframe and actions for achieving the proposed *Framework* (Figure 1, Appendix III). This demonstrates how this will be further developed through the remainder of 2021 with a view to its implementation on a pilot basis in the academic year 2022-2023. In the meantime, further consultations with the relevant ITE providers as well as other stakeholders will take place on foot of this paper in order to provide additional guidance on the *Framework* development, structure, resourcing, implementation and so on.

1.6 Outline of the Paper

The paper is presented in three further sections. By way of context, Section two looks at some of the key developments in RoI-ACE and the potential this has for scaling of DE activity in this sector. Section three focuses on the task of embedding DE in ITE programmes, opportunities as well as challenges, while the final Section (Four) presents a summary of the key points arising from the research and concurrent consultations (scoping) with the respective ITE providers.

Part 2 Development Education: The role and place of Adult Learning & Education

2.1 DE: A lifelong learning approach

While there are numerous definitions and descriptions available, a glance at the relevant Rol-based literature shows a distinct preference for Irish Aid's definition of DE as:

A lifelong educational process which aims to increase public knowledge and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live. By challenging stereotypes and encouraging independent thinking, DE helps people to critically explore how global justice issues interlink with their everyday lives. (IA, 2016, p.6).

A similar description is employed by UNESCO for Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and which invites 'everyone of all ages and backgrounds to assume active roles, both locally and globally, to face and resolve global challenges and ultimately to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world' (UNESCO, 2014a, p.15). This in turn reflects an increasing readiness on the part of policymakers globally to see the concept of lifelong learning as providing the overarching framework for achieving the goals associated with DE (UNESCO, 2014; UN; 2015b). This further reflects the view that Adult Learning & Education (or ALE) represents an important arena for DE given the potential that this has for engaging a broader range of learners and 'hard to reach' groups through a range formal, informal as well as non-formal education interventions (EAEA, 2019; Bridge 47, 2019; UNESCO, 2019; ICAE, 2020). To take one example, in their recent *Manifesto for Adult Learning* the European Association for the Education of Adults suggest that in addition to making a significant contribution to social inclusion, active citizenship as well as personal benefits, adult education is an important driver in the interconnections of the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environment. The Association further notes the significant role played by adult education in achieving the UN 2030 SDG Agenda:

Adult education provides information, debating spaces and creativity to develop new lifestyles, new projects, and new approaches necessary for sustainable development. Looking at the global Agenda 2030 ...adult learning contributes to the achievement of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by building the foundations of change in the social, political, economic, ecological and cultural spheres (EAEA, 2019. p.18).

Elsewhere, UNESCO (2019) note how ACE professionals form the 'backbone' of efforts to integrate GCED and SDG 4.7 themes effectively in ALE settings, and that this includes facilitators trainers, educators as well as managers working in this area.

2.2 DE in ALE Worldwide: A lack of progress...

Despite this emphasis in policy, there is some concern around the progress or rather a lack of progress in extending DE beyond the formal school system and to ALE contexts (UNESCO, 2019; LLLP, 2020; ICAE, 2020). In their fourth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* (or *GRALE 4*) UNESCO note that while there had been some progress in achieving the broader aims for adult education set out by the earlier UN Framework: ‘Only in respect of SDG target 4.7, concerning access to education for sustainable development, human rights, gender equity, peace and global citizenship does the survey provide little or no sign of progress in ALE’ (2019, p.174). Given this lack of progress, the UNESCO Report urged policymakers to put ALE at the centre of efforts in achieving the UN-SDGs as well as on expanding adult learning provision to include those groups whose participation in education remains marginal

This report has argued that a focus on participation in ALE is key to achieving the SDGs. This must mean reviewing policies in the light of the evidence on participation, and investing in sustainable provision that is accessible to learners from all backgrounds, as well as systematically supporting demand among those who have been the most excluded in the past. This will enable ALE to play its full, and wholly essential, part in achieving the SDGs (2019, p.171).

In their earlier *GRALE 3* document, UNESCO (2017) report that ALE still receives only a small proportion of public funding with 42% of countries spending less than 1% of their public education budgets on ALE, with only 23% spending more than 4%, and thus the need for significant investment in the sector. Elsewhere, ICAE (2020) note how progress towards achieving the aims of the UN-SDGs has been significantly impacted by the continuing marginalisation of adult education and of CSOs and networks within the education and development global network.

2.3 Recent Developments in the RoI-ACE sector

Indeed the relatively poor position of RoI-ACE has been consistently highlighted by domestic commentators with the sector typically depicted as the ‘Poorer Princess’ or ‘Cinderella’ of the Irish education system.⁵ This refers to poor resourcing and structures as well as precarious funding streams that particularly impact on the functioning and longevity of community-based education organisations and initiatives (Mallows, 2018; McGrath & Fitzsimons, 2010). However, recent developments have served to place the sector on a firmer footing, including the establishment of SOLAS in 2013 to oversee developments in this area. Of particular note is the publication of successive FET strategy documents (SOLAS, 2014; 2020a) while the incorporation of further education into a new government department along with higher education is also seen as a positive development.⁶ In addition, the professionalization of the sector forms part of a strategy for *Professional Development for Further Education and Training* (SOLAS, 2016; 2020c) along with new regulations introduced by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the Teaching Council of Ireland (Teaching Council, Regulation 5, 2011). As such, it will be increasingly the case that those entering the profession will have undertaken formal TE and while Irish ACE practitioners may not yet enjoy the same status and job security as their primary and second-level counterparts, this move towards professionalization is particularly welcome in a sector historically defined by part-time and casual work with little security of tenure, limited opportunities for career development and a lack of structured career paths (Murphy, 2017). Given the often tenuous funding streams that underlie much provision in the sector, to what extent this contributes towards fairer, sustainable working practices for ACE practitioners remains a

⁵ See for example: Fleming (2012); O’Sullivan (2017)

⁶ Now the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

moot point. However, it does mean that, in the context of DE, an opportunity now presents to bring ACE-ITE in line with developments in the first and second levels and for extending its reach to a broader range of adult education provision and learners.

2.4 RoI-ACE: Provision; Scale & Scope for DE

Despite its marginal status the ACE sector nonetheless delivers a broad range of education and training services to many thousands of adult learners across RoI. Guided by the dual policy objectives of labour market need and social inclusion (DES, 2000; 2016; SOLAS, 2020a), this includes further education, skills-based training as well as ‘second chance’ education for adults returning to education or the workplace following redundancy or a period of unemployment. The sector also includes a broad spectrum of community-based education providers and initiatives as well as NGOs/CSOs with a national/international remit. Moreover, ACE plays a key role in targeting hard to reach or marginal groups, including early school leavers, those from low socio-economic groups, single parents, migrant groups, ethnic minorities as well as those living in rural isolation. Bearing in mind this complexity of provision and providers, Table 2 attempts to demarcate, in tentative fashion, the various sectors/ subsectors that comprise ACE in RoI.

Table 2: RoI Sectors; Subsectors

Provision	Description
FET Sector Adult Education	Administered by the ETBs through Further Education & Training Centres (FETs); Colleges of Further Education (CFEs); (Regional Training Centres (RTCs); Local Training Centres (LTCs); Specialist Training Centres Skills focused and includes vocationally-related training, Apprenticeship programmes as well as VTOS, BTEI and Literacy Skills provision
Colleges of Further Education (CFE)	ETB administered Colleges providing post-Leaving Cert PLC programmes from NFQ Level 5+. CFEs may also host Adult Education and Community
Community Education	Includes a broad range of programmes usually focussing on specific local need or demand and/or specialist need
Other ACE Provision Community Education	Non-ETB administered but may be funded or part-funded by an ETB. This includes the large Community Education Network (AONTAS)
Community Development/Community Work	Local Development Companies (LDCs), Partnerships & Committees (LCDCs). Specific programmes include: SICAP and Leader PPNS: Networks of Community Groups affiliated to the County Councils. Includes a broad range of activities and groups categorised as: Community, Environment or Social Inclusion initiatives
County Councils	County Council run projects and initiatives
NGOs/CSOs/Voluntary/Other	Providers with a National and/or International Remit Providers with a Regional-Local Focus

In terms of participation, the sheer diversity of providers and provision in the sector makes participation levels difficult to quantify, particularly with respect to the Community Education/Community Work (sub-)sector, but some statistics are available:

- Eurostat (2020) report that c.12.6% of Irish adults aged 25-64 are involved in some form of formal (accredited) as well as informal (non-accredited) learning, though this remains somewhat short of say, Sweden (34.3%) as well as remaining short of the EU target of 15% of adults participating in lifelong learning by 2020 (EC, 2011).
- This equates to c.327k adults in the 25-64 age group participating in some form of lifelong learning activity in RoI in 2019.
- SOLAS estimate that in the statutory ETB- administered Further Education & Training (FET) sector alone c.180k adult learners participated in full and part time courses across a broad spectrum of vocational as well as non-vocational courses and programmes in 2018 (SOLAS, 2019).
- There are approximately 10,000 people working in FET in a multiplicity of roles, categorised into three main groups: learning practitioners, managers and support/administration staff (SOLAS 2020).
- The AONTAS- sponsored CEN network includes over 100 independently managed community education providers and while no firm statistics are available, this is likely to include hundreds of front-line ACE practitioners working with many thousands of adult learners across a broad spectrum of adult learning contexts.⁷

All of this means that there remains significant scope for scaling DE activity in RoI-ACE and that a *Framework* for embedding this in relevant ACE-ITE provision represents an effective and sustainable way to achieve this. This was one of the key findings of a recent initial mapping of DE activity in the Irish ACE sector and which highlighted the potential for scaling of DE activity in this area (Kearns & O'Halloran, 2020). Kearns and O'Halloran suggest that the task of 'educating the educators' should remain a priority for policymakers as this aspect holds the greatest potential for extending the reach of DE to a greater proportion of RoI adults in an effective, sustainable way (2020, p.41). This in turn follows trends where teacher education is increasingly positioned as a key arena for embedding DE in educational systems and provision worldwide, though this task is not without its challenges (Schugurensky & Wolhuter, 2020; UNESCO, 2017; 2018; Bourn, et al, 2017; Goren & Yemini; 2018),

⁷ The forthcoming (June, 2021) AONTAS report on Community Education in RoI will provide some clarity here

Part 3: Development Education & Initial Teacher Education

3.1 Embedding DE in ITE programmes: Problems and Possibilities...

In their meta review of developments in this area, Bourn et al (2017) point to a greater emphasis on the part on policy-makers for the inclusion of DE in ITE programmes, citing as evidence a diverse range of initiatives and programmes in Canada (Mundy et al., 2007); Finland (Alasuutari, 2011); Scotland (Bourn et al, 2016;); South Africa (Lotz-Sistka, 2011); South Korea (Sung, 2015) as well as in Ireland (Martin et al, 2016). This acknowledges the key role played by teachers - and by extension teacher-educators - as the focus for achieving a sustainable DE practice in schools and in other education contexts (Bourn et al, 2017; Chiba et al 2021; Edwards et al, 2020; Yemini et al, 2019). In this regard, Yemini et al (2019) suggest that teachers may be the most influential agents of DE, determining both the way and the extent to which it is implemented in classrooms. Yemini et al. (2019) found that professional development programs aimed at fostering DE among teachers and preparing them for teaching DE have been shown to significantly impact teachers' predispositions towards and understanding of these fields. While all of this gives some cause for optimism, Edwards et al (2020) post a note of caution when they suggest that achieving this will be particularly difficult if policymakers are not attentive to both the ways in which teachers learn to teach about sustainability issues as well as the ways in which students acquire this knowledge and are assessed.

On this last point, Bourn et al (2017) note that teacher educators themselves do not get the focus they deserve but that 'motivated and enthusiastic teacher educators are more likely to include global issues and themes in their ITE programmes and curricula in a meaningful way'. Despite the consensus for the need to embed DE in ITE, relevant studies show that significant challenges remain in this task as summarised in Table 3, below.

Table 3: Challenges and Barriers to Embedding DE in ITE Programmes

Challenge/Barrier	Relevant studies
Limitations in student-teachers' knowledge or awareness of DE issues	Walter et al, 2020; Varadharajan & Buchanan, 2016
Lack of confidence in teaching DE related issues	Chiba 2021; Bourn, 2016
Shortcomings in teachers' pedagogical skills and positive attitudes towards DE	Appleyard & McLean, 2011; Brown, 2011; Bourn et al, 2017
An over-crowded, subject-based curriculum that hinders a cross-curricular, holistic approach to embedding DE in ITE	Ferguson-Patrick et al, 2014; Thomas and Banki, 2020
A lack of depth and scope of DE in ITE programmes; 'surface' or 'uncritical' approaches to DE	Damiani, 2018; Bourn, 2014; Scoffham, 2014; Estelle & Fiechman, 2021
Gaps in teacher-educators' understandings of DE as well as resource issues	Bourn et al, (2017, pg12)

This highlights for example: limitations in student-teachers' knowledge or awareness of DE issues (Walter et al, 2020; Varadharajan and Buchanan, 2016) and an associated lack of confidence in teaching DE topics in the classroom setting (Chiba et al, 2021; Bourn, 2012); shortcomings in teachers' pedagogical skills and positive attitudes towards DE (Appleyard & McLean, 2011; Brown, 2011; Bourn et al, 2017); and an often over-crowded, subject-based curriculum that hinders a cross-curricular, holistic approach to embedding DE in ITE programmes (Ferguson-Patrick et al, 2014; Thomas and Banki, 2020). Still other research points to a lack of depth and scope of DE in ITE programmes and the need to avoid token or 'surface' approaches to DE-ITE (Scoffham, 2014; Estelle & Fischman, 2021). On this last point, Scoffham (2013, p32) found that despite partaking in a mandatory module on the subject, many of the student teachers in her study emerged with only a 'surface' knowledge of DE issues and with 'very little critical appreciation of the particular power-interests that underpin global relations'. Elsewhere, Estelles and Fischman (2021) warn against the dangers of an oversimplified, depoliticised approach to DE in ITE which merely promotes a type of "entrepreneurial self" and where each individual is responsible for themselves and the future for all as a means of solving global issues. For Estelles and Fischman, the emphasis on self-determination and individualized active citizenship to be found in many ITE-DE interventions often performs as a 'technology of subjection' that minimizes the responsibilities of government and the public sphere (2021, p.232.).

3.2 The need for a critical approach to DE in ITE programmes

These last contributions underline how a critical approach remains the hallmark of a meaningful DE and where students have the opportunity to consider, among other things, the broader structural factors that underlie the many issues which this attempts to address.⁸ Writing specifically in the context of DE-ITE and globalisation, Ferguson-Patrick et al (2014) distinguish between a 'skills-based approach' and the notion of a 'critical GCE'. In the first conception, the focus for DE is on the production of globally competent citizens armed with key skills in STEM as well as intercultural communication skills. The objective here is to develop individual as well as national capacity to be economically competitive at a global level. This skills-based approach is in turn accompanied by standardised outcomes, assessment and professional teaching and teacher standards. 'This is part of what we do in our teacher education programmes' suggest Ferguson-Patrick et al (2014, p.471). For Ferguson-Patrick and her colleagues, it is therefore important that teacher educators embrace a critical approach that focusses on the negative impacts of globalisation which they consider vital for developing citizens committed to social justice and human rights advocacy within a democratic process. For Ferguson-Patrick et al (2014) a key issue then is exactly how we can do all these things in TE and 'not be open to criticism of resultant programmes as being simply tokenistic? (2014, p.471.)

3.3 DE in ITE- ACE: Scoping experience with ACE-ITE Providers

Indeed, the need to avoid a tokenistic approach and for a meaningful DE practice was further emphasised in an initial scoping exercise conducted with seven of the relevant ACE-ITE providers (March-April, 2010).⁹ This process identified a broad range of policy, institutional as well as programme factors for consideration, including variations in provider capacity programme format(s), length, design and modules as well as differing levels and depth of understanding of DE, DE issues. In keeping with relevant studies on the matter, the challenges involved in embedding DE across existing curricula and modules in a meaningful, sustainable way were emphasised, with a clear potential for embedding DE in some ITE modules but a less that obvious 'fit' in

⁸ The work of Andreotti (2016) remains seminal here while Oxley & Morris (2013) provide a solid overview of the various conceptual approaches to DE-GCE

⁹ See Appendix IV for a summary of this scoping exercise with ITE providers

others. Given the diversity of teaching practicum, there was some consensus around the need for a capacity building approach that would allow student-teachers to ‘reimagine’ or ‘reinvent’ DE in the context of their own (vocational, non-vocational) subject areas, though the unique position of NCAD is noted. This in turn implies a more generic model and approach compared with say, a subject-based approach at the second level and where there already exists clear and obvious links between DE and curricula, learning outcomes. A similar capacity building approach would also apply to teacher educators in terms of guidance and support for embedding DE into existing ITE modules. In short, the scoping exercise underlines the need for a unique, tailored approach that will allow ITE providers working in this sector to evolve their DE practice according to institutional as well as staff and programme needs, existing DE focus and so forth. Thus, while some may be well placed to start this process as per the established timeframe others may need further time, support and guidance in implementing any proposed intervention. It is also anticipated that initial levels of engagement may differ among the respective providers and that some form of piloting may be the best way forward here.

3.4 Building DE Capacity for Student-Teachers & Teacher-Educators

Bearing in mind the challenges involved, Table 4 attempts to delineate the particular capacity building measures for embedding DE in ITE. This may also serve as a starting point for determining the overall programme learning outcomes in the final *Framework* document.

Table 4: Capacity Building in DE for ACE Student Teachers & Teacher Educators

Programme Learning Outcomes
<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Critically engage with DE, DE issues and debates;• Recognise the value and role of DE in terms of achieving the broader aims and objectives of education, the role of the educator and so forth;• Explore how DE ‘fits’ in their own teaching and site of practice in an authentic, meaningful way;• Utilise DE teaching methodologies and approaches that encourages students to develop creative, action-oriented responses to DE; DE issues• Apply DE to their own practice and reflect on this;• Respond reflexively to developments in DE, DE policy and practice

This further reflects the views of the providers that took part in the scoping exercise and who emphasised the need for an authentic DE experience where student teachers’ recognise the value of DE and how this ‘fits’ within their own teaching and specific site of practice. This would seem to be especially relevant in the context of teaching in the ACE sector where there may not be an obvious correlation between DE and the subject matter they are teaching. Equally, these capacity building measures apply to teacher educators’ who themselves may be unfamiliar with DE issues and themes, but who play an important role in modelling a DE approach within ITE modules and content. Whatever final form this will take, it would also seem imperative that these efforts are underlined by a joined-up, partnership approach to embedding DE in ITE programmes.

3.5 Embedding DE in ITE programmes: A Multi-Agency, Partnership Approach

Certainly the available evidence would indicate that the best chance of achieving success lies in a nationally coordinated, strategic partnership approach and where HEIs remain the focal point of embedding DE in ITE (Tarozzi & Inguaggiato, 2018; Tarozzi & Mallon, 2019; GENE, 2017; UNESCO 2019; Spira and Sirkka, 2018; Bourne et al, 2017). Spira and Sirkka (2018) note that partnerships continue to represent an important mechanism for the scaling of quality, sustainable DE and for extending the reach of educational interventions in this area. Similarly, Bourn et al note that unless there is a national drive or external input for DE/ESD in teacher education, then provision by teacher educators tends to be ‘ad-hoc and limited’ (2017 p.8). Tarozzi & Inguaggiato go further when they suggest that any attempt to embed DE in ITE needs to be framed within a national, long-term strategy and coordinated approach comprising all stakeholders.

Our research shows the efficacy of adopting a national strategy, setting clear objectives at national level with a large consensus, phased in long-lasting steps, supported politically and financially for more than a decade, involving all the strategic political actors, both institutional and noninstitutional, at every political level from intergovernmental to local communities and horizontally, involving all the agencies of the territory, and particularly NGOs. (2018, p.35)

This last contribution recognises the importance of NGOs here as major drivers in promoting DE in ITE programmes and the multiple roles these organisations play in terms of initiating, developing and helping to manage projects, providing expert guidance and support, monitoring and evaluation, research and funding and so forth (also: Kieu & Singer, 2017; Tarozzi, 2019; Tarrozi and Mallon, 2019; Bourn, 2016; UNESCO 2019; Buchanan et al 2018). In specific terms, Bourn et al (2017) note the importance of NGOs in terms of providing help in adopting pedagogical approaches and methods that are congruent with DE and which can help foster teacher agency through a transformative, values-based approach. Kieu & Singer (2017) go further when they note the capacity for deeper NGO involvement, for example in supporting student and staff research as well as hosting student placements and internships.

While NGOs will no doubt continue to play an important role in driving and supporting DE in formal as well as non-formal/informal education settings, it is nonetheless HEIs that remain key to achieving a sustainable approach to embedding this in ITE programmes (Bourn et al, 2017; Chiaba et al 2021). Citing the Rol-based DICE project as an exemplar, Bourne et al (2017) note that HEIs remain pivotal actors in the collaborative development of sustainable approach to embedding DE in teacher education and that those initiatives that have been more university-led have tended to be more sustainable because the outcomes have been built into follow up courses. In this regard, Chiba et al (2021) call on HEIs to recognise the important role that they have to play in teaching DE-related themes, the need to allocate more resources for formal teacher training as well as aiding teachers with adequate resources for these purposes. This discussion further points to the need to consider other constituencies who have a key role to play in ensuring that, once teachers reach the classroom they retain the scope and the capacity to embed DE in their practice and that this is supported and understood. This refers specifically to those at the executive and management levels in the ACE sector, for example: FET directors, FE college principals, training centre managers and so on. Again the phrase ‘educating the educators’ is apt here. On a final note, Waltner et al (2020) point to the need to consider the student voice and student perspectives as a starting point for any intervention and that a more pragmatic, ‘bottom-up’ rather than ‘top-down’ approach is required to understand the challenges involved in teaching DE in the classroom. The need for further research focusing specifically on student-practitioners is given further consideration in the final section, below.

Part 4: Summary

By way of a summary, this final section presents the key points vis-à-vis the guiding questions stated in the introductory section as follows:

4.1 Rationale for the Framework

- To restate, it is envisaged this process and the resultant framework will to help bring the sector in line with developments in DE in RoI at the first (primary) and second (secondary) levels, respectively. This is also in keeping with domestic as well as international policy objectives and the emphasis on a lifelong approach to DE for all learners at all levels.
- The ACE sector thus represents a ‘good fit’ for extending the reach of DE to learners across the lifespan as well as engaging those groups who may otherwise remain excluded from the process. On this last point, the need to engage ‘hard-to-reach’ groups has been emphasised in recent submissions to IA’s interim review of the latest *National Strategy* for DE (Forthcoming June 2021) and it would seem likely that this will form an important aspect in future policy pronouncements on the matter.
- Moreover, the proposed *Framework* will allow for the scaling of DE activity and for a partnership approach where HEIs will remain the focal point for achieving a sustainable approach to embedding DE in ITE programmes. The role of policymakers, NGOs and others is thus to ensure that strong structures are put in place to support providers including long-term funding, ongoing trainings for staff and students, evaluation as well as future research and development. This is in keeping with studies that highlight the need for a nationally coordinated, multi-stakeholder, multi-agency approach to the task of embedding DE in ITE.

4.2 Achieving the Framework

- While the extant models (e.g. UBUNTU) for embedding DE in ITE provide a strong template, the scoping exercise with the seven of the eight ACE-ITE providers highlights the need for a tailored approach that takes account of institutional as well as programme factors, provider capacity, programme structure, scope, student throughput and so forth.
- This process also revealed some differences in understanding of DE and how this may be embedded in existing provision and in future programme development. The resultant framework should also reflect the fact that with some exceptions, teacher training in ACE-ITE programmes follows a generic rather than subject-based approach to teaching and learning with adults. This in turn indicates that an approach that allows teachers practicing across a broad spectrum of ACE to first interpret and then embed DE in their own teaching and site of practice.
- Following other examples, a capabilities approach will therefore allow for students to engage with DE, DE issues in a critical way that is meaningful and relevant to their own teaching and site of practice. The same sentiments apply to teacher-educators who remain key to ensuring the implementation and long term sustainability of the proposed *Framework*
- All of this indicates a flexible approach is required rather than the imposition of a ‘one-size fits all’ model and which allows for a DE-based provision to gradually evolve and develop to meet the

particular needs and requirements of individual providers. It is anticipated that some providers may already be well placed to implement some or all of the elements set out in the framework in the initial phase of rollout in 2022-23, while others will need more time and guidance for this. However, it remains an aspiration that all ITEs are involved in some way in the pilot phase in 2022 as this remains crucial for research and evaluation purposes.

4.3 Processes and procedures; next steps

- Further consultations and investigations with HEI providers is required so that the process of mapping DE onto existing programmes and curricula can begin. In keeping with the UBUNTU Framework and other approaches, this will allow for embedding DE in extant programme modules without changing the teaching content in any substantive way. The phrase ‘teaching differently for a DE perspective’ is apt here. At the same time, it is anticipated that programme review would include a strong DE focus and that this is represented in changes or addition to module objectives and learning outcomes.
- Furthermore, the *Framework* should allow for supporting providers in the development of a specific DE module or other interventions based on need. As per the outline, further consultations with key stakeholders and others will take place to help inform the development of the *Framework* as well as building consensus around the need for this. This includes, but is not confined to: Irish Aid; Saolta Consortium; SOLAS; Teaching Council of Ireland; QQI; FET Directors; FE College Principals. This paper also points to the need for other researches and investigations to help inform practice, including practitioner-based research, illustrative case studies and other reviews of the research on the matter.

Concluding Remarks



This position paper and the accompanying scoping exercise represents an important first-step in developing an effective and sustainable *Framework* for embedding DE in ITE programmes for ACE practitioners in the Irish context. This further signposts the need for additional research and consultations with key stakeholder groups to ensure a broad consensus for any proposed intervention and that this is in keeping with the latest policy and (good) practice in this area.

To return to the timeframe for implementation, is it anticipated that a draft *Framework* will be completed by the end of 2021 before a pilot phase is implemented in the academic year 2022-2023. It is hoped that some or all of the respective providers will be involved with this pilot phase but that this is ultimately based on existing capacity, resources and so forth. Finally, thank you to those who helped to guide and advise on the production of this paper and to coordinators and staff within the seven HEIs who gave generously of the time to the scoping exercise and follow-up feedback process.

Mark Kearns

Drogheda, May 2021

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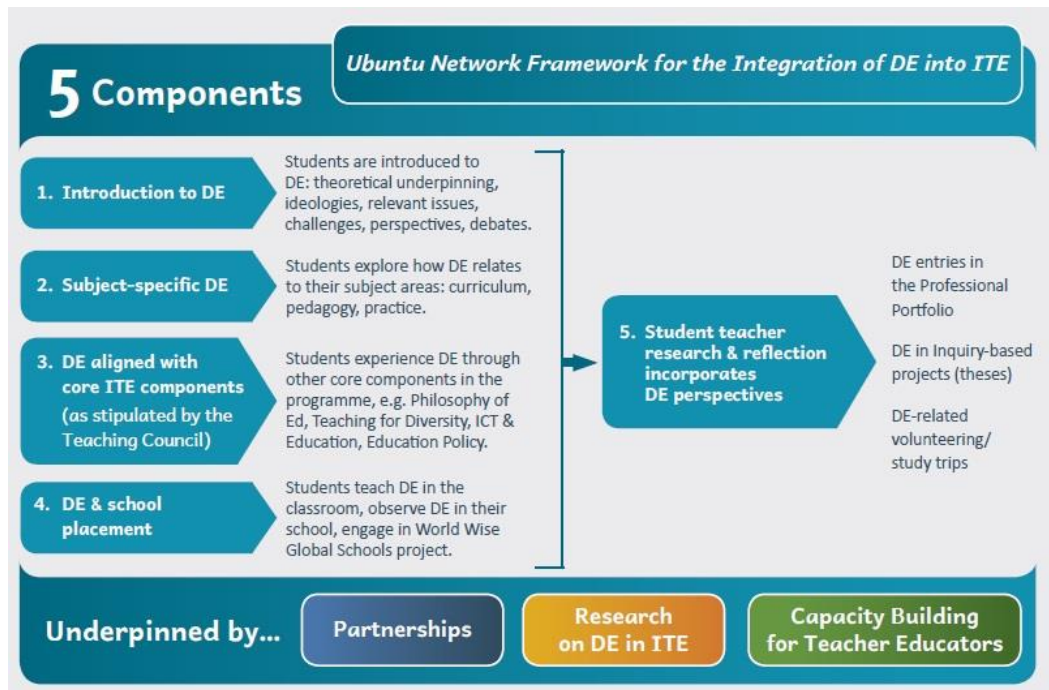
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Appendix 1

Figure 1: Ubuntu Network Framework for Integrating DE in ITE (second level)



Appendix II

Table 1: ACE-ITE Providers (RoI)

HEI	Department/School	ITE Programme
Waterford Institute of Technology	Education and Lifelong Learning	PG Diploma in Teaching in Further Education
Dublin City University	Institute of Education	MSc in Education Training Management
NUI Galway	Centre for Adult Learning and Professional Development	Training and Education - Degree/Diploma/Certificate
Mary Immaculate College	Faculty of Education	Graduate Diploma in Adult & Further Education
National College of Ireland	Education Department	Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Practice in Teaching for Further Education
Marino Institute (affiliated to TCD)	Marino Institute of Education	Postgraduate Diploma in Further Education
National College of Art and Design	School of Education	MA in Socially Engaged Art + Further Education
Maynooth University	Dept of Adult and Community Education	Higher Diploma in Further Education

Appendix III

Figure 2: Timeframe for developing a Framework for Embedding Development Education in the Adult & Community Education Sector



Appendix IV

Table 3: Initial Scoping of ITE providers March-April 2021

Themes & Topics

Macro <i>(policy; executive)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to engage key stakeholders at a policy/executive level e.g. FET Directors; FET Managers' & College Principals; SOLAS; Teaching Council • Continuing evolution of FET sector; FET strategy • Impending Teaching Council review of ITE-FE provision • Development and review of QQI programmes and modules • Amalgamation of Further Education & Higher Education
Meso <i>(sectoral, institutional;)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A highly diverse ITE-FE provision with significant variations in programme format, length, design, modules, student-profile • The need to take account of specific education contexts and approaches to TE i.e. Art & Design • Significant variations in institutional understandings as well as existing approaches to DE
Micro <i>(programme; staff; students)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding DE in a meaningful (critical), holistic and sustainable fashion • The challenge of embedding DE in programmes and implementing a cross-curricular approach to this • Mapping existing DE activity in extant programmes and modules • The clear potential for DE in some modules; less obvious 'fit' in others • Potential changes to programme and module specifications and (potentially) lengthy process involved • CPD in DE, DE-related issues for teacher educators, tutors, and the time/cost involved to HEIs/staff • Capacity building for Teacher Educators and Student Teachers to 'reinvent' or 'reimagine' DE in their own teaching practice, context • Time and resource issues for mature student-teachers • Variations in student as well as staff interest in DE; capacity for same (staff-student 'buy-in') • Research potential for staff and students



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