



Date: 10/02/2020

Circular 0009/2020

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, 2020/2021

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

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.

1. The Programme 2020-2021

In the school year 2020-2021 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 2020 to early June 2021.

Please apply online via www.dcu.ie/ise/gceas

Deadline for applications is 9th March 2020.

Eighteen places are available in the Programme year 2020/2021.

2. Funding

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

3. 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** at the programme venue and **full participation** in the distance elements of the course, completion of selected tasks and written assignments and supervision of their work in school. Further details may be found on the following web page https://www.dcu.ie/courses/Postgraduate/institute_of_education/Graduate-Certificate-Education-Pupils-Autism-Spectrum

4. Duration and Organisation

The programme is one-year, part-time from September 2020 to June 2021, and consists of 5 modules. The course is delivered through distance learning modes, on-site learning at DCU Institute of Education, St Patrick's Campus and

considers teachers' practical engagement with pupils in schools. The programme requires that participants are released from their schools for three weeks of the academic year.

The programme will include face-to-face tuition, tutorials and visits to other educational settings to observe examples of exemplary practice. The distance element of the course will include online synchronous and asynchronous engagement (course materials, online lectures and discussion fora).

5. 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 website www.teachingcouncil.ie for further information.

This programme is for registered teachers who hold a post currently funded by the Department of Education and Skills and who are currently working with pupils on the Autism Spectrum 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 teaching role in relation to pupils on the AS.

(a) Primary:

Teachers will be required to upload a copy of their Registration Certificate or Confirmation of Registration letter¹ from the Teaching Council, when submitting their application form. If the "Education Sector(s)" 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 their probationary period.

(b) Post-primary:

Teachers will be required to upload a copy of their Registration Certificate or Confirmation of Registration letter (see footnote below) from the Teaching Council, when submitting their application form. If the "Education Sector(s)" 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 their Induction and Post Qualification Employment (PQE)

(c) Special Schools:

Teachers will be required to upload a copy of their Registration Certificate or Confirmation of Registration letter (see footnote below) from the Teaching Council, when submitting their application form. If the "Education Sector(s)" 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 their probationary period.

While teachers are completing this programme and for a reasonable period of time following completion of the programme, it is advised that school management 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 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.

¹ Confirmation of Registration letter is available to download from the Registered Teacher Login Facility on the Teaching Council website www.teachingcouncil.ie

6. Applications and Selection

Applications from eligible candidates nominated by their school authorities are via online submission at www.dcu.ie/ise/gceas

Closing date for applications is March 9th 2020.

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.

7. Fees

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

8. 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. Please note for any travel and subsistence, the training rate is applicable.

9. Extra Personal Vacation

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

10. 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 and Skills where a teacher takes personal leave during the block release element of the Programme.**

11. 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 and Skills.

12. 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.

Margarita Boyle
Acting Principal Officer

February 2020