

EDUCATIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

LETTER FROM THE ESAI PRESIDENT

Dear Colleagues,

It is that time of year again – time to put up the Christmas tree, to abandon the diet and, most importantly, to prepare for the annual ESAI conference and to visit our new PayPal site to renew your membership!

This has been a challenging year for all of us but it has also been a year of great achievement for the ESAI. We ran a highly successful 35th Annual Conference in Dundalk which attracted one of the largest number of delegates in the history of the Association. In addition, despite the enormous financial and time pressures being experienced by our profession, we have managed to keep our membership numbers at the same level as last year and to actually grow our membership in both the associate and corporate categories. This bodes well for the future of the Association and I feel it is a tribute to the service offered to members that we continue to prosper.

36th Annual Conference 2011 – Church of Ireland College of Education, Dublin

The 36th Annual Conference of the Association will take place next April 14th-16th in the Church of Ireland College of Education, Dublin which is celebrating its bicentennial in 2011. The theme of the 2011 Conference is ***Partnerships: Relationships of Educational Purpose***. By choosing this theme we are seeking to acknowledge the fact that one of the defining characteristics of Irish education has been the number and range of mutually enriching partnerships that have been forged with stakeholders both within and beyond our broad professional community. These partnerships have taken many forms ranging from short-term internal processes to address specific issues of curricular and research interest to national and transnational

policy fora which have led to substantive and long-lasting systemic change. This conference will seek to explore the extent and nature of partnerships that exist within Irish Education and beyond.

As an Association we are particularly delighted to be holding the Annual Conference in CICE. This year marks the 200th Anniversary of the College and it is appropriate that the ESAI help celebrate that milestone with a vibrant and enjoyable meeting. We are also greatly indebted to Dr. Anne Lodge, the Principal of the College, for her enthusiastic help in organising the conference. Among the most significant of these contributions has been her assistance in arranging a symposium on Friday April 15th which will examine the role of the different faith groups in Irish education. A panel comprising of representatives of a range of bodies and including both the Catholic and Church of Ireland Archbishops of Dublin, the CEO of Educate Together and the Muslim community in Ireland will take part in what we hope will be a lively discussion.

As a former President of ESAI, Anne is also fully aware that the most significant educational discussions take place after 6pm and for this reason she has helped arrange a number of social events for delegates including a reception in the crypt of Christchurch Cathedral on the opening night of the Conference.

Please send conference proposal forms (paper/poster /symposium presentations) on or before Friday 28th January 2010, to Dr. Majella McSharry, Academic Coordinator, ESAI Annual Conference: conference.esai@gmail.com.

Proposal forms are published in this newsletter (pages 11-14) or can be downloaded from the ESAI website (www.esai.ie).

Irish Educational Studies Special Issue: 'Race', migration and education in a globalised context

On behalf of the Association, I would like to congratulate the Editorial Board of *Irish Educational Studies* on the publication of the Journal's second special issue. The theme of the special issue is 'Race', migration and education in a globalised context. In particular, I'd like to thank Dr. Gill Crozier and Dr. Kalwant Bhopal (Guest Editors), and Dr. Dympna Devine (General Editor) for their work in bringing together this timely set of high quality articles.

The Journal has maintained its excellent reputation as one of the premier education journals available in Europe and it continues to provide Irish researchers with an opportunity to present their work to a wide international audience. As importantly, its increasing visibility within the broader community of educational researchers has resulted in a number of high profile international contributions to recent issues. Sincere thanks to the Editorial team, led by Dr. Dympna Devine, for their continued hard work on all of our behalves.

Research Section

This newsletter sees the inclusion for the first time of a series of reports on research currently being undertaken in Irish education. This section has been included as a way of recognising the breadth of research currently being undertaken by members of the Association. We begin this month with reports from two collaborative research projects which were recently completed. In future months it is hoped to draw from the diverse range of research practice in Irish education and to publish reports from areas such as practitioner research and resource development. As it is intended that this will become a regular section in our newsletter any members interested in contributing should contact Dr. Majella McSharry. We are particularly interested in receiving contributions from

completing or recently completed Graduate students and we will endeavor to publish at least one report in each newsletter from this section of our membership.

Membership

As with all voluntary organisations of our type, ESAI relies on a strong membership base to keep going. This year we have sought to make the process of renewing easier by introducing a "PayPal" option for members. Individuals wishing to take out or renew membership can now do so electronically at www.esai.ie. There is no need to fill out any additional forms and renewal / application should only take a few moments. For those of you who wish to continue using the cheque payment method, we have kept the forms on the site and we would be only too happy to facilitate you in this manner.

In recognition of the challenging times faced by members we have decided to keep membership rates at current levels. We feel that this represents excellent value for money providing members with access to the Journal, reduced conference rates and an increased range of online services through the website. Full details of membership costs etc can be found at www.esai.ie.

ESAI Executive

I would like to finish this note by paying a particular tribute to my colleagues on the ESAI executive. In common with all other voluntary organisations, the ESAI relies on the commitment and dedication of a range of individuals who freely give of their time in order to maintain and enhance the Association. This year has seen a number of new members join the Executive and bring a range of insights and experiences to our discussions. We welcome these new members while at the same time acknowledging the contribution of those who have recently stepped down. In particular I would like to thank Dr. Paul Conway, Dr. Alison Montgomery and Dr. Tom Daly for all of their hard work over many years with the Association.

I look forward to working with you in planning and preparing for ESAI's 36th Annual Conference.

On behalf of all on the Executive may I offer our best wishes for a restful Christmas and peaceful 2011.

Dr. Joe O'Hara, ESAI President
joe.ohara@dcu.ie



IRISH EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

The Journal is attracting an increasing number of submissions, both nationally and internationally and this puts it on a solid platform for further development. This is reflected in the forthcoming move to publishing four issues per year, providing increased capacity to accommodate more papers, as well as build in the publication of at least one special issue per volume. To date two special issues have been published – Education and the Law; and Race, Migration and Education in a Globalised context – both of which have sought a good paper balance between international and national perspectives. Forthcoming special issues planned for the next three volumes include Higher Education (call for papers now closed), Teacher Education and Evidence based policy and research in Education. Calls for papers, which will go through the usual peer review process, will be issued over the coming months through the ESAI website, and Informa world (RoutledgeTaylor and Francis). Additional suggestions from ESAI members for special issues are very welcome that could perhaps link in also with symposia at the annual conference. Please contact the General Editor for ideas/suggestions for such issues: dympna.devine@ucd.ie

The increasing submissions rate to the Journal, coupled with the move to Special issues, has created a considerable additional workload for the core editorial team. Special thanks for their time and commitment in supporting authors through to review and publication are due to Paul Conway, Emer Smyth and Aisling Leavy and to Maeve O'Brien for her role in sourcing and editing book reviews. Declan Fahie, as Journal Administrator, carries a significant administrative load, with exceptional care and attention. All papers that are considered for publication undergo review by national and international reviewers. This has been a core policy in terms of profiling the Journal and the research work of members of the Association both nationally and internationally. It is a time consuming process however, dependent on the goodwill and availability of reviewers. Our sincere thanks to all those who have helped with the review process to date. We are constantly seeking additional reviewers and would welcome the addition of members who have not yet indicated their availability to review, or who have colleagues in their field internationally that would also be willing to help out. Please mail Declan.fahie@ucd.ie to have names added to our reviewer list.

Downloading papers from the journal

It is important that the Journal is actively drawn upon and used by members of the Association. A recent

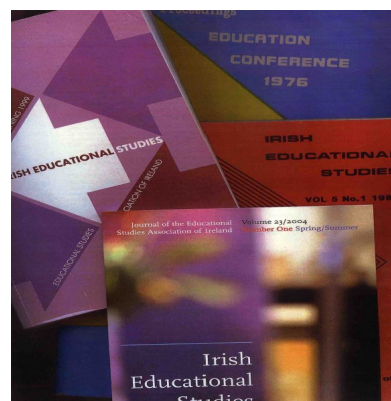
report from Routledge indicated very good download activity for Irish Educational Studies from each of the main universities in Ireland, as well as from universities in the UK, Netherlands, Australia and Canada. This is an indication of the potential that exists for the further development of the Journal. Please encourage usage through student reading lists and through your contacts with other professional associations in education. Citing papers that have been published in IES in your own writing also adds to the profile of the Journal and of the quality research work that is on-going in Irish education.

Composition of the Editorial and Associate Editorial Board

In the past year the following changes have been made to the editorial board to include the addition of Professor Marie-Parker Jenkins (UL) and Muiris O'Connor (HEA). Dr Jim Gleeson has stepped down after many years of service to the journal and his support and contribution has been very much appreciated.

The associate editorial board has been expanded to include the addition of Professor Andrew Pollard (IOE), Professor Yong Zao (Michigan State), Professor Jim Cummins (Ontario), Professor Finbarr Sloane (University of Colorado), Professor Hau Fai Law (Hong Kong) and Professor Antonio Portuala (University of Murcia).

Dr Dympna Devine, General Editor
dympna.devine@ucd.ie



ESAI MEMBERSHIP NEWS DECEMBER 2010

Maintaining a healthy membership is essential for any organisation and these challenging times have forced the Executive to consider how we might best serve our membership in order to maintain their commitment to the Association. Despite causing more than a few sleepless nights earlier in the year when our numbers looked to be dropping, this process of re-evaluation has ultimately been a positive one for us. As a direct result of our drive to recruit new members, while at the same time retaining our existing membership base, a number of crucial decisions have been made. These include:

- ◆ The introduction of an online payment option for members on our website using PayPal.
- ◆ The decision to maintain membership rates at last years levels – this has been done in recognition of the increasing financial challenges facing members and despite the Association facing increased costs across a range of areas.
- ◆ The transfer of many of the administrative tasks associated with the maintenance of the membership register to the Drumcondra Teachers Centre.
- ◆ The decision to specifically target the corporate membership category with a view to increasing the links between the Association and the key providers at all levels of Irish Education.

As an Association we rely on the goodwill and enthusiasm of our membership to survive and prosper and we are hugely appreciative of the enormous amount of support offered to the ESAI by its membership. We would particularly like to acknowledge the role played by our corporate members who have chosen to support us at a time when there are great demands on their increasingly scarce resources.

The future of the Association is secure only with the continued support of our members and we are grateful for the support, particularly at present. Also, we encourage each member to do what they

can to promote the Association and to encourage colleagues, fellow researchers and students to get involved. A more detailed report on membership and on our recruitment campaign for next year will be presented at our Annual Conference in Dublin in April 2011.

Finally the Executive would like to publically thank Dr. Aidan Seery for the enormous amount of work he has undertaken in his role as membership secretary for the past number of years. Aidan has been efficient and polite at all times and demanding when necessary, ensuring that we as an Association have been able to maintain and increase our profile within Irish Education and beyond.

The ESAI Executive

PS Don't forget to visit www.esai.ie to renew your membership!

Call for WERA-IRN Proposals

International Research Networks for the World Education Research Association

The World Education Research Association (WERA) invites proposals to establish International Research Networks (IRNs). The purpose of WERA-IRNs is to advance education research worldwide on specific scholarly topics. IRNs are temporary collaborative groups of scholars working on a specific research topic primarily through virtual communication. IRNs synthesize knowledge, examine the state of research, and stimulate collaborations or otherwise identify promising directions in research areas of worldwide significance. IRNs are expected to produce substantive reports that integrate the state of the knowledge worldwide and set forth promising research directions. Also, WERA-IRNs may present their work at a WERA symposium or keynote session or may meet at a WERA "Focal Meeting" held in cooperation with a WERA member association.

Overview of WERA-IRN Proposals

Proposals to establish International Research Networks may be submitted by scholars interested in the formation of a new research group or by scholars from an existing group. Proposals should set forth the education research topic, the general outline of a plan for researchers with different expertise and backgrounds to work together in primarily virtual space (including through e-mail, electronic media, conference calls, and so forth).

Proposals also need to indicate the outcomes expected from establishing an IRN. In addition to preparing a written product, an IRN could contribute to the development of a research conference, form new collaborations, or help stimulate future research. IRN proposals will typically be submitted by co-organizers with complementary expertise and from different countries or regions of the world. Proposals should set forth a process that would permit other experienced and emerging scholars, including graduate students, to join, once an IRN is selected and announced. The duration of an IRN can vary, with a maximum of 3 years.

Proposal Review and Criteria

Proposals for WERA-IRNs may be submitted all year round. Proposals will be reviewed within 2 months of receipt by the WERA Committee on International Research Networks. The following criteria will guide selection:

- ◆ The world significance of the proposed research topic (in terms of the nature of the research problem, its worldwide perspectives and the state of the body of knowledge, future developments, etc)
- ◆ The track record or previous work of the initial members constituting the group and the group's potential to grow internationally and regionally
- ◆ The feasibility of the plan for interested researchers of diverse expertise working together in primarily virtual space and other conference events across countries and regions and stimulating international collaboration in research
- ◆ The expected outcomes and impacts from the activities of this WERA-IRN in synthesizing knowledge, critically examining the state of research, stimulating collaborations, identifying promising research directions, and so forth.

Once proposals have been reviewed and accepted by the Committee on International Research Networks, WERA-IRNs will be formally announced and their work launched under WERA. In addition to selecting WERA-IRNs, the Committee will also advise WERA-IRNs and foster their inclusivity. WERA-IRNs will be highly recognized by WERA and visible on the WERA website. While IRNs do not receive direct funding, they draw upon and benefit from WERA human and financial resources. On occasion, IRNs may receive support to convene or present at WERA meetings.

Elements of WERA-IRN Proposals

Research Topic/Title of IRN:

Abstract (maximum 150 words):

Name(s) of Organiser(s):

(Name, Affiliation, Position, Address, E-Mail)

Description and Purpose (maximum 1,500 words, excluding any references):

Significance of the proposed research topic worldwide

Aims and objectives of the WERA-IRN

Relevant research literature or initiatives

Outreach and process for adding scholars (including

emerging scholars and advanced graduate students)

Work plan and expected outcomes/scholarly products

Initial Participants List:

Name, Affiliation, Position, Address, E-Mail)

Curriculum Vitae (CVs) as Attachment

(No more than one-page CV for organiser [s] and each initial participant that includes key publications, research, or experiences relevant to the research topic or to leading/participating in such an International Research Network.)

Submissions and Questions

WERA-IRN proposals must be submitted electronically via e-mail to vera@aera.net. Please include the surname(s) of the organiser(s) in the subject line of the e-mail in the format "WERA-IRN Proposal – SURNAME(S)." As noted above, proposals may be submitted at any time and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Questions to the WERA Committee on International Research Networks should also be directed to vera@aera.net.

FORTHCOMING EDUCATION CONFERENCES

'Navigating Pathways for Transformative Action: the Role of Doctoral Research in Education', 3rd All-Ireland Doctoral Conference

Call for Papers

The above conference, jointly hosted between the School of Education UCD and the School of Education in QUB is now in its third year. It provides a relaxed and supportive environment for doctoral students in education to engage, debate and share their research work, highlighting areas of mutual concern North and South.

Supported by SCoTENS and the ESAI, it is to be held on May 13th and 14th 2011 in the School of Education, Roebuck Castle, UCD.

The key note address is being provided by Professor Diane Reay, Cambridge University. A selected number of bursaries to support student accommodation and travel will be awarded.

For details on submission of abstracts (due by February 28th 2011) please contact doctoralconference@gmail.com or contact dympna.devine@ucd.ie and/or caitlin.donnelly@qub.ac.uk.

Researching Histories of European Educational Spaces, Discourses and Sources

University of Birmingham, UK
9 to 12 June 2011

This conference is for postgraduate history of education researchers registered at European universities and

post-doctoral historians of education who are interested in the histories of European educational spaces and discourses and new ways of working with images, artefacts and archives.

Leading international historians of education will offer advice about the research process, including publication, and there will be opportunities for students to discuss their research topics and to network.

This conference follows on from the very successful summer school held in Ghent in 2010. It is again supported by the European Educational Research Association, the Paedagogica Historica Foundation and the International Standing Conference for History of Education (ISCHE). Additional support this year is offered by the journal Educational Review. The event is organised by EERA Network 17 'Histories of Education' and the Universities of Birmingham, Cambridge, Leuven and Oxford.

How to apply:

The conference is free. Students will only have to cover the cost of their travel to Birmingham. Places are limited to 25 students. In order to apply please fill in the application form and submit it together with a letter of your supervisor.

Please find the Application Form at: <http://www.eera-ecer.eu/summer-spring-schools/histories-of-education/>

Closing date for applications is **31 December 2010**. All applications need to be sent to: summerschool-birmingham@eera.eu Successful applicants will be notified in February 2011.

Educational Studies Association of Ireland 36th Annual Conference

April 14th -16th 2011

Church of Ireland College of Education,
Dublin

Partnerships: Relationships of Educational Purpose

One of the defining characteristics of Irish Education has been the number and range of mutually enriching partnerships that have been forged with stakeholders both within and beyond our broad professional community. These partnerships have taken many forms ranging from short-term internal processes to address specific issues of curricular and research interest to national and transnational policy fora which have led to substantive and long-lasting systemic change.

As we negotiate our way through a period of severe instability and widespread retrenchment, the importance of these partnerships as mechanisms for achieving shared educational aims increases. As a professional community, it is arguable, therefore, that the time has come to examine the purpose and effectiveness of these partnerships and, where possible, to celebrate their existence as evidence of the continued importance of relationships of educational purpose to society as a whole.

This conference will seek to explore the extent and nature of partnerships that exist within Irish Education and beyond. Delegates are asked to speak to their experience of working in partnership with other stakeholders and to assess the importance of these experiences to their professional practice, thought and to the process of shaping policy. In practical terms this might involve:

- ◆ An examination of the purposes, processes, outcomes and impact of research partnerships at individual, institutional or system level
- ◆ Identifying and exploring the meaning of the relationships that have developed between different stakeholder groups including schools, higher education institutions, parents groups, policy making groups, professional bodies, teacher unions, community and voluntary sector and other constituencies within civil society

- ◆ Critically examine how the principles of respect, reciprocity and inclusion are established and maintained within partnerships drawn from diverse constituencies
- ◆ Investigating the range of intra and cross disciplinary teaching and research relationships that have developed with allied fields of social and academic discourse
- ◆ Consider the impact of context and external factors, e.g., resources/funding mechanisms on the process of partnership-building and their sustainability
- ◆ Consider how the concept of partnership is realised in the context of the teacher-learner relationship
- ◆ Exploring the educational meaning of a range of longstanding and systemically important partnerships such as those that have developed between education providers and a range of faith groups

Examining the increasingly complex relationships that have developed between educational professionals and a range of statutory bodies and NGO's

With its broad theme, we hope that the conference can bring together educational professionals from a range of sectors and roles (i.e., researchers, policymakers, teachers, leaders etc) from North and South in Ireland and beyond to discuss these important educational questions.

Please be advised that there are two distinct submission forms (available on pages XXX of the newsletter or on www.esai.ie): one for presentation of a single/joint paper and the other for symposium presentations, each consisting of two pages. We also have a poster option which we would encourage delegates to consider using.

Completed submission forms should be sent to Dr. Majella McSharry, Dublin City University, on or before Friday 28th January 2011: conference.esai@gmail.com

RESEARCH SECTION

***No Way Back?* The Dynamics of Early School Leaving**

Delma Byrne* and Emer Smyth#

*National University of Ireland Maynooth (NUIM)

Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)

A recent study on early school leaving directs researchers and policy makers to consider the student experience when devising strategies to improve retention rates and enhance the educational experience of young people at school. The study titled '*No Way Back?*' uses a mixed methodology approach, combining detailed survey information from a longitudinal study of second-level students with in-depth life history interviews with young people who left the education system. Gaining significant insights through the use of this methodology, the study highlights many new findings relating to early school leaving. This study represents a departure from previous national studies by placing attention on the dynamic processes shaping early school leaving, namely, on the interaction of family, individual and school factors.

From a policy perspective, the study highlights the persistence of early school leaving in the Irish context. While considerable progress was achieved in improving retention rates between the early 1980s and the mid 1990s, the proportion of young people staying on in school has remained relatively stable since the late 1990s. Using School Leaver Survey data, we estimate that every year approximately 9,000 young people leave school before taking the Leaving Certificate examination.

Importantly, this study also highlights persistence in the social composition of early school leavers over time. Early leaving rates continue to differ markedly by social class background, with much higher levels among young people from working-class and unemployed households. Working-class young men are particularly likely to leave school early. These patterns are found to reflect the fact that early school

leaving has its roots in early experiences of educational failure and struggle with schoolwork, often as far back as primary level.

The study sheds new light on the triggers of early school leaving, derived from the perspective of the young person. Disengagement from school is more often than not triggered by academic struggle, which can manifest from as early as primary school onwards. All of the young people we spoke to had struggled academically at school. However, for some, the interaction between personal life and school life also contributes to a higher risk of early school leaving. As well as academic struggle and poor interaction with teachers and peers, high-impact personal issues, such as bereavement, may trigger early school leaving, reflecting the complexity of the circumstances faced by some young people. Job opportunities were also found to precipitate early school leaving but only where young people are already disaffected with school.

While underachievement at earlier stages of a young person's educational career is a strong predictor, the early school leaving rate varies considerably across individual schools, even taking into account differences in their student profiles. This suggests that even when student intake is considered, some schools are more successful at retaining their at-risk students than others. The study points to a number of school organization and process factors which may account for this difference.

First, ability grouping (allocating students to base classes according to their academic ability) has a significant effect on school drop-out. In the study, we find that students allocated to lower stream classes experience a climate of low expectations and negative student-teacher interaction, and are much more likely to leave school early. Importantly, young people are acutely aware of the streaming practices used in schools and see this as a signal of what is expected of them. Second, the school climate, that is, the quality of relations between teachers and students, also emerges as a key factor in young people staying in education. Negative interaction with teachers is commonly reported by early school leavers, with many feeling they did not receive the help they needed or were not listened to. Third, while a disruptive classroom environment has a strong influence on school disengagement, the study finds that in some cases, school disciplinary procedures, such as suspension or expulsion, can in fact trigger early school leaving. Finally, poor interaction with peers, through being isolated or bullied, also contributes to early school leaving. It was evident from the interviews that many early school leavers had experienced difficulties in interacting with their fellow classmates, which in turn led to further school disengagement or lack of

attachment to school life.

No Way Back? contains many more insights into the processes shaping early school leaving. The authors highlight issues for policy development with regard to early school leaving. In particular, they suggest that a positive school climate, more active teaching methods and flexible ability grouping would help to engage young people with learning and encourage them to complete second-level education. The report also points to the importance of providing clear pathways back into education and training for early school leavers.

Byrne, D. and E. Smyth (2010) *No Way Back? The Dynamics of Early School Leaving*, Dublin: The Liffey Press in association with the Economic and Social Research Institute. Available online at: <http://www.esri.ie/UserFiles/publications/BKMNEXT163.pdf>

Learning to Teach and Its Implications for the Continuum of Teacher Education: A Nine-Country Cross-National Study

Paul F. Conway, Rosaleen Murphy, Anne Rath and Kathy Hall,
School of Education, University College Cork
(UCC)

In 2007 the Teaching Council commissioned a team of researchers from the School of Education, UCC, to undertake a detailed cross-national study on the continuum of teacher education in Ireland and internationally, including initial teacher education (ITE), induction and continuing professional development. The Teaching Council is the professional body for teaching in Ireland, established on a statutory basis in March 2006 to promote teaching as a profession at primary and post-primary levels, to promote the professional development of teachers and to regulate standards in the profession. The full report on this research has been available on the Teaching Council's website since July 2009. Along with a background paper on the history of policy developments in teacher education in Ireland prepared by Prof. John Coolahan, the report was commissioned to inform the work of the Teaching Council on developing a policy on the continuum of teacher education including approaches and protocols for the review and accreditation of initial teacher education programmes. The nine countries included in the study were Ireland, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, New Zealand, Finland, the United States, Singapore, and Poland. Some of these operate similar systems to the Irish one and some are very different, but all have interesting insights to offer. The report also focused on

research into quality teacher education, with particular emphasis on initial teacher education and induction. It discusses learning outcomes in relation to teacher education in these countries, and looks at the role of teaching councils in the accreditation of teacher education courses in those countries where this was part of their function. The report's Appendices include profiles of the education systems in the nine countries. It also includes a bibliography of research on teaching and teacher education in Ireland from the 1990s onwards.

The report begins with an exploration of what "quality" means in relation to teaching and teacher education as one of five key dimensions in framing the teaching continuum (i.e. the four other dimensions identified were: teacher role, relationships, teacher learning and teacher development). It is evident that the quality of knowledge integration, opportunities for observation, thoughtful feedback from mentors (as well as peers) and critical reflection on classroom/school situations and professional values and identity are central to quality teacher education. Crucially, all of these need to take place over an extended period. In essence, learning to teach is best done when undertaken as a social, interactive and assisted accomplishment rather than as a solo 'sink or swim' endeavour. Consequently, the induction phase is crucial; a National Induction Programme (see www.teacherinduction.ie) was introduced in September 2010 to support the induction of newly qualified teachers into the teaching profession in primary schools in Ireland. Internationally, research shows that the support or lack of it that newly qualified teachers receive in their first year of teaching is crucial to their professional satisfaction and to their decision to stay in teaching. Several of the countries in our study (notably Scotland, New Zealand, Poland) have structured programmes of induction in place, and some (e.g. Northern Ireland, Poland) also formally recognise another distinct phase, that of early professional development. Initial teacher education, induction and early professional development all take place in the context of teaching as a collegial

profession, and of the school as a place of learning and development not just for the pupils but for the teaching staff. The partnership between schools and teacher education providers is also central to this concept of a learning community.

While it is important to have a clear view of what constitutes excellence in teaching and teacher education, the report warns against the idea that teaching can be reduced to a number of discrete competences or standards. There are major differences between countries in relation to the specification of competences; some adopt a comparatively 'light touch', setting out broad generic standards, while others are more prescriptive. It is interesting to note that Finland (generally acknowledged to have high standards in education, and where teachers are educated to Masters level) falls into the former category, setting high standards but allowing teacher educators a considerable degree of autonomy within this overall framework, while countries where there are many different routes into teaching (e.g. England, USA) or where there is more concern about the quality of teacher education and of teaching in schools are inclined to adopt a more prescriptive approach. In Ireland, the *Codes of Professional Conduct for Teachers* (published by the Teaching Council in March 2007 and now being reviewed) and the draft standards for accreditation of ITE programmes between them set out for the first time in Ireland at a system-wide level what is expected of teachers in terms of values, knowledge, understanding, skills and professional conduct. A further phase of consultation is planned in relation to the revised draft strategy and it is understood that that will commence in the coming months.

The role of the Teaching Council with respect to the accreditation of initial teacher education is an area of particular interest as alternative pathways into teaching become available in Ireland. Existing programmes that were already recognised for registration purposes were deemed to have current accreditation, pending their review by the Teaching Council, while new programmes must be presented to the Council for review prior

to accreditation. A pilot Review and Accreditation process is now underway in several colleges. The report emphasises that the accreditation system should recognise the professional competence and expertise of teachers and teacher educators and that it should have the potential to have a positive effect on their practice, professional development and morale.

In raising these and other issues and in making recommendations for the work of the Teaching Council, the commissioned report recognises that there is much to learn from international comparisons, but emphasises the need to look at these findings in context. Caution is needed in relation to borrowing international policy and it is important to recognise the distinctiveness of the Irish local and national context when drawing up policies for the future.

Conway, P.F., Murphy, R., Rath, A. & Hall, K. (2009) *Learning to Teach and Its Implications for the Continuum of Teacher Education: A Nine-Country Cross-National Study*. Report commissioned by the Teaching Council. Available online at: <http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/research/default.asp?NCID=553>

References

Coolahan, J. (2007) *A Review Paper on Thinking and Policies Relating to Teacher Education in Ireland*. Paper commissioned by the Teaching Council. Available online at: www.teachingcouncil.ie
Teaching Council (March 2007) *Codes of Professional Conduct for Teachers*. Maynooth: Teaching Council.

ESAI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2010/11

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SUBMISSION FORM FOR PRESENTERS FOR 2011 ESAI ANNUAL CONFERENCE

(Church of Ireland College of Education Dublin,
14-16 April 2011)

(page one of two)

Name(s):	
Institution/Organisation:	
School (if applicable):	
Address for correspondence:	
Contact telephone number:	
Email address:	
Biographical details: <i>(3 sentences maximum)</i>	
Type of presentation:	Paper _____ Poster: _____
Title of paper:	
Technical requirements:	

Abstract 1: (300 word abstract for consideration by reviewers for inclusion in the conference)

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CONFERENCE**

**(Church of Ireland College of Education Dublin,
14-16 April 2011)**

(page one of two)

Name(s):	Paper 1: Paper 2: Paper 3:
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School (if applicable):	
Address for correspondence:	
Contact telephone number:	
Email address of contact person for each paper (please indicate overall	
Biographical details: <i>(3 sentences maximum)</i>	
Type of presentation:	
Title of paper:	
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