

Group Professional Masters in Education (PME), Education Department

Department Education Department

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Overview CTL has worked closely with colleagues from the Education Department for several years. CTL colleagues have a clear understanding of the discipline of Education and what it means to write in this discipline.

In academic year 2023-24 Alison Farrell is working with Education Department colleagues to better understand the writing requirements for their Professional Masters in Education (PME) programme students and to collaborate with Department colleagues to support those students as writers, primarily through a series of discipline-specific writing workshops which will be offered by Department tutors in semester 2 (2023-24).

Process The process began with a conversation between Angela Rickard, who is the current course leader for PME Year 1, and Alison Farrell in order to explore a potential collaboration towards supporting Education Department postgraduate students as writers. Angela explained how she wanted to further integrate writing support into the PME programme offerings in a way which was targeted, discipline-specific, collaborative and on-going. Semester 1 involved discussions between Angela, Alison and the team of Department tutors or academic mentors (all of whom are working with PME Year 1 students on the four Foundation Discipline modules within the programme) in order to identify key topics which could be explored as part of a series of workshops. The mentors, who are all PhD candidates in Education, support the PME 1 students and liaise with the lecturers in each of the four disciplines (Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy and History of Education) over the academic year. Over the course of the first semester, in meetings held on a more or less fortnightly basis, the topics were agreed and a workshop for each topic designed by the tutors in a collaborative fashion. The topics to be covered in the semester 2 workshops are:

- Conventions
- Stance
- Reflective Practice
- Feedback

Mapping to WEC features

Maynooth University is adopting an institutionally-sensitive approach to WEC while also drawing on the work by Anson and Flash on key WEC features (see below Table 1). Mapping to these features provides a useful framework for examining and articulating the work being completed in the collaborations between CTL and departments.

Table 1. Core Features of the WEC model by Anson and Flash, taken from Anson, 2021, p. 10 and adapted to include detail on localisation with PME, Education Department, Maynooth University

Feature	Feature explained	Localisation with Education Department
Locus	Locates within academic departments and empowers and gives ownership to the faculty (and students) to name and describe relevant writing aims, and to determine their curricular integration and terms of assessment.	Education Department colleagues identified the writing aims and challenges, and workshops respond to these. Curricular integration is addressed through the use of discipline and course-specific materials, specific reference to and targeting of the course written outputs, and through the inclusion of writing-focused workshops and other writing support into credit-bearing modules. The workshops contribute to students' achievement of the module outcomes and associated assessment.
Orientation	Conceptually-oriented: recognizes the power of writing-related assumptions to drive or block the integration of writing instruction across the disciplines and is designed to draw out often tacit knowledge about writing that defines ways of knowing and doing in the discipline.	The workshops are situated within the discipline as well as emphasizing transfer of learning to the profession. The topics are immediately reflective of the foundation disciplines of Education and, of Education as a discipline in itself. Exploration of the topics will not only address students' development as writers but may influence their future professional practice as supporters of second level students' literacy, irrespective of the subject they will teach.
Data Use	Collects local data (including writing assignments, student writing, survey data, direct assessment of student writing) and involves faculty in recurring episodes of data interpretation and analysis.	Currently there is no plan to gather data on this process.
Mediation	Involves an intermediary (a writing expert) who facilitates the work of articulating writing	Colleagues from CTL and the Education Department collaborated to articulate

	knowledge, planning interventions, assessing results, and engaging in an ongoing partnership with departmental stakeholders.	writing knowledge and to consult on the planning of the workshops. Engagement has been ongoing with the Department and ideally will continue to be so.
Support	Is bolstered by the ongoing partnership of writing and teaching support offices, and by administrative, financial, and other support for individual units, but is not entirely dependent on these.	Collaborative model with CTL working in partnership with Education Department colleagues. The model is reciprocal with colleagues from each department learning from each other. This is a model of inter-dependence rather than one of dependence by either party.
Sustainability	Promotes long-term practices, scales gradually, is sensitive to internal change and inertia, and periodically or regularly revisits and revises the original efforts.	The relationship between CTL and Education Department is ongoing. The WEC Framework and related scholarship and processes could contribute to its sustainability.

This work is ongoing with a planned completion date of May 2024.

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