



Dioplóma Gairmiúil i gCeannaireacht Scoile

Postgraduate Diploma in School Leadership

Programme Details 2021+



**NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh**



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Welcome

The Postgraduate Diploma in School Leadership (**PDSL**)/ Dioplóma Gairmiúil i gCeannaireacht Scoile (**DGCS**) is designed for aspiring school leaders. The programme is framed to address the development of leadership capacity outlined by the Department of Education and Skills in 2016. The programme is designed to support participants to progress their careers through a variety of learning experiences that include:

- Lectures: delivered by leading lecturers in education as well as a diverse mix of professional tutors
- A robust mix of academic and practical learning including leadership visits in a school other than the participant's own and a non educational setting
- Engaging in professional development in a flexible format: delivered both online and in regional centres across the country.

The programme is managed and coordinated by the School of Education and the Graduate & Professional Studies Department, University of Limerick.

Partnership

Developed and delivered in partnership with National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG), University College Dublin (UCD) and jointly awarded by NUIG, UCD and UL, this programme is funded by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) through the Centre for School Leadership (CSL).

The programme is part-time (18 months) with blended learning delivered locally in regional locations throughout the country. In addition, there is specific provision for teachers in Irish-medium schools in NUI Galway.

A partnership of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) has been established for the purpose of delivering this course, having distributed centres for the delivery of teaching and tutorial support in the regions.

The full list of centres is available on our website www.ul.ie/pdsl

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Overview

The programme has a spiral dimension in that themes introduced in the first semester are revisited in more depth in subsequent modules along with new content in order to provide an integrative learning experience. Themes will initially focus on acquiring key knowledge, reflexivity and skills in the area of Personal Growth and Development and Leading Learning in the Irish Context before progressing to explore issues related to Managing the Organisation and Mentoring and Coaching. Building on this knowledge, the final modules focus on capacity building and leading development.

The centrality of situated learning to the overall learning outcomes is aligned with this structure based on the following rationale. The focus on the participants' own school during modules Leading Learning and Teaching in the Irish Content and Leading School Development will lead participants from an initial focus on their own context for leadership, to the broader field of leadership through their first situated leadership learning visit in semester 2 (in a school other than their own) and continuing in Semester three in a setting outside of education. These all culminates in the recording and critiquing of this learning in associated modules and in their portfolio.

Structure

The Postgraduate Diploma in School Leadership is a part-time, blended learning programme consisting of **6 taught modules delivered in 12-week semester-long blocks** during the academic year. Students attend an induction day in the University of Limerick prior to commencement in year 1.*

Semester 1: Sept. - Dec

- Induction - University of Limerick
- Leading Learning and Teaching in the Irish context
- Professional Growth and Development
- Leading International Expert in Leadership Webinar

Semester 2: Jan - May

- Leading School Development
- Mentoring and Coaching
- Situated Learning - School Based
- Leading International Expert in Mentoring/Coaching Webinar

Semester 3: Sept. - Dec.

- Managing the Organisation
- Developing Leadership Capacity
- Situated Learning - Organisation
- Leading International Expert in in School Development/Leadership Culture Webinar

See module outlines below for additional details

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Lectures

Lectures & associated reading and resources will be released weekly online for students to view at their convenience prior to scheduled classes.

Tutorial Sessions

Tutorials will be held on a Wednesday evening. There will be 8 face-to-face sessions per module & 4 online tutorials. The Sraith Ghaeilge will be delivered predominantly online with some face to face meetings. *

Invited keynote speakers

A number of invited keynote speakers from a panel of international experts on leadership will be invited to contribute to the programme across modules as appropriate.

Situated Leadership Learning

The situated leadership component of the programme is organised logically around participants' own site as professional practice in school as the 'foundational' site for reflection on practice through the programme and the other placements

- one in a non-education organisation
- and the second on another school,

will provide generative reflection through judicious comparison and contrast with the participants' own site of daily practice. Reflection sheets and assignments throughout will be designed to optimise reflection on leadership across the three situated leadership learning sites - their own school, a non-education organisation (e.g., arts, sporting, cultural, business or other organisation) and another school.

Mode of Delivery

The programme is taught in blended learning format. It comprises 70% face-to-face and 30% online (with interactive break out rooms for discussion and content engagement). Core pedagogies include, flipped classroom model, collaborative learning and action research, leadership visitation, portfolio development, discussion forum, interactive reflective practice.

Modes of Assessment/Progression

Students are assessed by submission of both group and individual assignments. These include presentations, reading for others, reflective writing, scholarly essays, and portfolio development. Progression within the programme is based on the successful completion of all modules at the appropriate standard.

Students who successfully complete the programme can continue to master's studies offered by each accrediting partner. These Master's builds on the PDSL content.

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Award Achieved

On successful completion students will be awarded a level 9 Postgraduate Diploma in School Leadership jointly accredited by UL, UCD and NUIG.

Learning outcomes

The Programme will...

1. Prepare aspiring school leaders for practice as leaders in Irish primary and post-primary schools
2. Foster the knowledge, skills and dispositions consistent with initial leadership education in the context of the continuum of leadership education
3. Prepare participants on the programme for future leadership education both in terms of continuing professional education as well as accredited academic programmes at masters and doctoral levels
4. Foster active and critical engagement with the policy environment, professional practice and scholarly literature relevant to educational leadership
5. Create and foster sustainable educational leadership professional learning community for programme participants across PDSL cohorts.
6. Develop participants' capacity in the use of key leadership practices across that programme specifically: self-awareness, decision-making, reflection on practice, collaborative action inquiry, reading, participation in leadership networks/professional learning community.

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Module Outlines

Leading Learning and Teaching in the Irish context

Recognising the learning and teaching are the foci of work in schools, this module will examine the dynamics of leading learning and teaching with a particular emphasis on building learning capacity through leadership in the curricular context of primary and post-primary schooling in Ireland. Participants will learn about the most influential perspectives on learning in the last one hundred years (behaviourist, cognitive & socio-cultural) and understand the implications of these for how teachers, students, schools and other education stakeholders foster learning in 21st century. Particular attention will be paid to how perspectives on learning have guided, or not, curriculum policy and practices in schools vis-à-vis teaching, learning and assessment over time at both primary and post-primary levels in Ireland.

Among the themes to be addressed on the module will be: participants own stance on learning, understanding learning in the context of curriculum and assessment policies, leading learning in the school context (both locally & in via networks of schools), In addressing the key learning perspectives and concepts guiding contemporary pioneering perspectives and initiatives on learning the module will provide participants with a number of examples centred on the dynamics of leading teaching and learning in order to address the structural, cultural and organisational dimensions of building learning capacity.

Professional Growth and Development

The module focuses on critically engaging with different dimensions of leadership in order for each participant to develop their own personal sense of themselves as a leader. Participants will develop a more nuanced view of their own identity as leaders and become more aware of ideas such as leadership efficacy, care of self and care of others as well as overall wellbeing in what are difficult and demanding roles. A range of leadership theories, perspectives and research are explored in this module in order to lead the participants in a critical engagement with the content so as to enable them to develop a range of ideas about leadership and a keen awareness of how to respond to different contexts and situations in appropriate ways different ways drawing on their emergent identity as a leader.

A key issue outcome of this module is to extend and enhance the view of leadership to include designated leaders as well as teacher leadership, student leadership while maintaining a strong focus on the core imperative of leading pedagogy in schools. The module questions what leaders do and what activities they might engage in that are most likely to be most productive in terms of leading learning for a quality school experience

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Leading School Development

All leadership endeavour within the school community and beyond, should contribute to individual and collective capacity to lead, thus building professional community as well as forging leadership trajectories for members of the entire school community, students as well as adults. The core of this module revolves around School Self Evaluation as a policy and practice and will interrogate both through the lens of the tensions between accountability and professional responsibility, thus building on the work in module three in particular SSE, and Looking At Our School. As part of this focus, an integral element of the module, and its assignment will be an emphasis on evidence informed decision making at the level of the school, what constitutes evidence, and the decision-making processes engaged in to identify priorities.

Participants will be required to undertake an investigation of the identification of priorities, School Improvement Planning and the strategies adopted for implementation, particularly the allocation of resources, human and other, particularly how such initiatives are arrived at, planned for, a timeframe agreed, implemented, monitored and evaluated. A further integral element of this focus will be the extent to which such endeavours enhance professional responsibility, as well as capacities to lead, while rekindling school vision, as well renewing commitment to building sustainable community and leadership praxis

Mentoring and Coaching

Mentoring and Induction in the Continuum of Teacher Education are internationally recognised as an effective process for engaging teachers and school leaders in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and co-inquiry across their professional lifetime. Premised on the assumption that transformational leadership involves building capacity for leadership widely among teachers in a school, this module will focus on the ways in which mentoring, and coaching are key leadership tools in fostering the development of teaching and leadership.

Participants will explore current theory, policy and practice of mentoring in the Irish system and will examine international best practice models. The module will pay particular attention to how mentoring and induction are integral to teacher professional development and will examine Driochad as a model that has shown greater levels of improvement in teaching and learning and lower stress levels for participants (as per the ESRI evaluation 2016). Participants will examine national supports and practices for mentoring /coaching particularly connecting with supports offered by the CSL and will look to ongoing relevant developments in the JCT and PDST. The module will also examine the role of coaching in the promotion of sustainable and empowering leadership practices and will link the centrality of coaching skills as invaluable to effective distributive leadership practices in schools. Participants will also examine international expertise in coaching and will practice goal setting and the giving and receiving of coaching feedback.

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Managing the Organisation

This module builds on the learning outcomes of Mentoring & Coaching in particular and is foundational also for further capacity building undertaken in Leading School Development. In particular, it builds on foundational work that identifies the language and logics of accountability and responsibility, while adding to the tools for thinking, more recent work on deliberative communication, and deliberative leadership, while recognising the significance of 'webs of commitment' and the necessity for forging 'legitimate compromises' as a means of building community and as a means of building capacities for resolving disagreement in respectful and sustained deliberative dialogue.

Developing Leadership Capacity

This module is delivered after with the Leading School Development module and these are closely integrated through a number of themes, particularly building the collaborative vision, leading change and partnership development.

The module integrates also with Professional Growth and Development and the themes of personal development, self-awareness and evaluation as well as the theory and practices of school leadership.

The two mentioned modules above provide a foundation for the leadership capacity building elements within this module- collaborative engagement, team engagement, decision making negotiation, delegation and interpersonal and communication skills, such as dialogue, listening and persuasion

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