



Mary Immaculate College  
South Circular Road  
Limerick, Ireland

www.lincprogramme.ie  
E: linc@mic.ul.ie  
T: +353 61 204545

## LINC Programme: External Expert Quality Assurance Review and Report

### About the LINC Programme

The Leadership for INclusion in the Early Years programme, LINC, is a Level 6 Special Purpose Award (Higher Education), to enable early years educators to perform the role of Inclusion Coordinator. The development of the programme is part of an Irish governmental response to local, national and international demands for high quality education and training leading towards graduate pathways in the combined field of early childhood care and education (ECCE). The programme seeks to address the need for continuing professional development (CPD) in relation to the inclusion of children with additional needs. LINC is part of a national Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) which is targeted at ensuring the inclusion of children with additional needs in the early years. Further information on AIM is available at <http://aim.gov.ie/>.

The LINC Programme is a one-year part-time blended learning programme, with 80% delivered online. The classroom-based learning component of the programme takes place in 9-10 centres across Ireland each year. The students undertaking the programme are all full-time early childhood teachers, and on graduation from LINC will become their service's INclusion COordinator (INCO).

Offered free to students, the programme recruits approximately 900-1000 students annually, and aims to reach 80% of all early years' services in Ireland over the period of 2016-2020. Commencing in the 2016/17 academic year, the programme is now at a midpoint, having two cohorts completed (2016/17 and 2017/18) with the third cohort due to start in September 2018.

Further information on the programme, including learning outcomes and module descriptors is available at: <http://lincprogramme.ie/>

### Overview of Services Required

While a series of evaluations, review and monitoring is taking place, with positive reviews from students/graduates, employers and external examiners, the Programme Steering Group now wishes to contract a suitably qualified international expert(s) to review the programme, validating any identified good practices and highlighting potential areas for improvement.

Responses are welcome from individuals, organisations or consortia as appropriate.



### Specification of work required

- 5 consecutive days on site in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, Ireland comprising of
  - Days 1-2: Programme material and assessment review, overview and review of quality documentation (student evaluation, employer evaluation, external examiner reports), other documentation review as required.
  - Day 3: Meeting with Graduates/Current students, along with children, in their early years services.
  - Day 4: Meeting with Programme Team (including representatives from Steering Group, National Programme Coordinator, Tutors, Educational Technologist, Administrative Team) and other stakeholders (to be confirmed).
  - Day 5: Compilation of findings, overview, presentation to programme management
- Following visit to campus, compilation of final report, drafting and submission of draft, opportunity for factual comments/feedback from Programme Management, incorporation of comments into final draft and submission of final report.
- It is anticipated that the visit to campus will take place in October 2018, with the report being submitted by November 2018, however, this will depend on availability of the internal team and reviewers.

### Required Experience of Principal Investigator(s):

- Internationally recognised experience in the field of early childhood care and education, with experience in the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- High-quality publications in the area of ECCE
- Experience of conducting relevant reviews and production of reports
- Practical experience of supporting the continuing professional development of early childhood teachers in practice.
- Experience of advising in relation to the development of publicly-funded ECCE and/or CPD programmes at a regional or national governmental level.

### Format of Quote/Submission

- Overview of organisation/individual(s) proposed to conduct the study
- Experience of Principal Investigator(s) including prior work completed conducting similar reviews/reports

- Proposed dates / timeline for the visit and report.
- CVs of Principal Investigator(s)
- Financial section including a full price to conduct the study, outlined in the specification above, to include all travel and subsistence, translation (if applicable) and any other costs associated with the work. Price should be exclusive of VAT (if applicable) and should state the VAT rate (if applicable).
- Full contact details for correspondence (email, post, phone).
- Note: Submissions should be no more than 2,500 words, excluding CVs, Finance, Bibliography

### Evaluation of Responses

- Responses will be considered in light of the information provided, in order to provide the best quality of services and ensure value for money is achieved. While lower responses are anticipated, responses valued above €12,000 will not be considered. It may be necessary to conduct interviews with a short list of responses, and if so, respondents will be notified by email.

### Submission of Responses

- Submission should be sent to Fintan Breen, National Programme Coordinator, LINC Programme at [linc@mic.ul.ie](mailto:linc@mic.ul.ie) by 12noon, Friday, 10 August 2018. Acknowledgement of the response should occur within 1 working day and if this is not received, please contact us urgently.