

**Research Project Title:** A Case Study Analysis of the Provision and Efficacy of Literacy and Numeracy Training in the Initial Teacher Education Programme at GMIT, Letterfrack.

**Research Student:** Ms. Patricia O'Regan

**Research Supervisors:** Dr. Pauline Logue & Dr. Susan Rogers

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) released a strategy plan in 2011 entitled *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy Among Children and Young People 2011-2020*. Its purpose was to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of the Irish youth. One element of the DES strategy plan was to facilitate more effective literacy and numeracy training, in the context of Junior Cycle curriculum reform. To that end, literacy and numeracy skills are identified as two of the Junior Cycle eight 'key skills'. The academic year 2019-2020 marks the fifth and final phase of the Junior Cycle subject roll out, and two technical subjects pertinent to Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology's initial teacher education programme are among those - Graphics and Wood Technology - with implications for initial teacher education training.

This research critically assesses Higher Education (HE) perspectives on literacy and numeracy in teacher education, from international and national perspectives. The research project further examines multiple practitioner perspectives on literacy and numeracy training, with a view to enhancing delivery on the GMIT Letterfrack *BSc in Education (Hons.) (Design, Graphics & Construction)* programme. The research is framed as a case study that employs a predominantly qualitative paradigm. Data gathering methods include student and staff questionnaires, circle table focus groups and expert interviews.

One data gathering strategy involved convening stakeholders at the Connacht Hotel, Galway, on 19/02/2020. Professional experts, GMIT Letterfrack management, programme lecturers, school placement tutors and initial teachers (years 1-4) met to explore the themes of literacy and numeracy in the context of teacher education and professional teaching. The process was facilitated by the researcher. (See images below).

An anticipated primary research output of this research study will be a *GMIT Letterfrack Initial Teacher Education Literacy and Numeracy Framework* which will involve embedding literacy and numeracy skills training comprehensively into the curriculum on the *BSc in Education (Hons.) (Design, Graphics & Construction)* programme. To this end, a series of training workshops (including related training resources) will be developed.



Researcher Patricia O'Regan speaking at the *GMIT Creativity and Innovation in the Classroom Conference, 2020*.



Circle Table Discussions on Literacy and Numeracy at the *GMIT Creativity and Innovation in the Classroom Conference, 2020*.