

2021 KT Walsh Scholarship (MAIS) Project Summary

1. Project Title and Associated Programme

KT Programme	Teagasc Education – Curriculum Development Support Unit
Project title	Evaluation of a pedagogical competency framework in the design and delivery of training for Teagasc Education Staff

2. Project background

Educators are considered key agents in shaping education for learners and generating change and innovation in educational practices. Agricultural teachers play a significant role in the development of future ‘young farmers’ entering the highly competitive agricultural sector with the additional challenge of goals for sustainable land use. A previous Walsh Scholar conducted a PhD study on *An Exploration of the Professional Development Needs of Agricultural Teachers in their Role as Educators*. This research proposal builds on findings from this study. The findings from this study are grounded in the views of participants due to the bottom-up, participatory approach employed. Consequently, the framework developed is grounded in the practical needs of vocational agricultural teachers while furthering conceptual understanding of teaching and learning in a technically driven VET scenario.

Teagasc made a commitment to prioritising teacher professional development and pedagogical training within the education vision report. Within this context, an evaluation of the pedagogical competency framework developed by Flannery *et al.*, (2019) in their PhD study will support the development of a training programme suitable to agricultural VET teachers. The development of formally recognised teacher education qualifications within the VET sector in Ireland is a relatively new space which previously did not have a recognised qualification. However, this is not the case across Europe, and such an evaluation has the potential to enhance and develop agricultural VET teacher’s pedagogical competence in the design and delivery of a training programme suitable to their needs.

This research proposal addressed both goals highlighted in the Teagasc Education Vision – Meeting Future Needs report. Under the QQI agreement as set out in the Core Statutory guidelines, Teagasc is required to ensure staff development to ensure quality of teaching and assessment to meet the future needs of learners.

3. Project aims and objectives

Aim:

An evaluation of the pedagogical competency framework developed by Flannery *et al.* (2019) in supporting the development of an effective training programme suitable to the pedagogical/teaching and learning needs of Teagasc Education Staff

Objective 1:

To evaluate the pedagogical competency framework developed by Flannery *et al.* (2019)

Objective 2:

To design and deliver/pilot a professional development module suitable to the pedagogical/teaching and learning needs of agricultural teachers within the vocational education and training sector

Objective 3:

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development module