

# Professional Certificate in Education: Choral Conducting in Education and in the Community



*Vignettes of student presentations, November 2014,  
— from Cork to Donegal to  
St Patrick's College, DCU...*

## AIMS

This part-time professional certificate course (Level 9, 20 ETCS) seeks

To generate and enhance choral participation through the professional development of emergent and aspiring choral conductors

In order to:

- Bridge schools and communities through choral participation
- Increase well-being in schools and communities, and across the lifespan
- Enable artistic, challenging and enjoyable experiences for all
- Meet DCU's strategic objective of *Engagement* in its fullest sense.

The course provides a stepping stone for educators at all levels of musicianship to become activists in their communities—not just in establishing choral music in schools and classrooms—but in working with other educators and musicians to support learners of all ages, and thus extending their reach into the community.



Tara Gallagher led a choir from **St Catherine's Vocational School, Killibegs, Co Donegal**. Tara has since progressed to conducting the **Donegal Youth Choir**.



Róisín McGrath directed 5<sup>th</sup> class pupils for Brooklodge NS in **Glanmire, Cork**. Róisín is a music teacher with **County Cork School of Music**.

• Ciara Clancy led the Dolce Chamber Choir based on the **North side of Dublin**. As she says, each person gets something different from the group, be it improving sight-reading, gaining more confidence by singing in a smaller group or improving their listening skills.

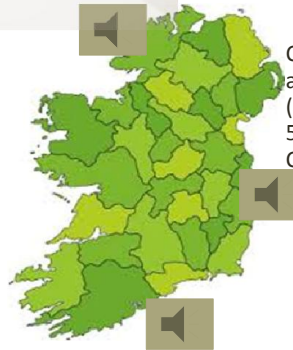


## Benefits of Choral Participation

Participation in group singing or choral music has the potential to *transform* lives across the lifespan (European Choral Association, 2015).

- scientifically proven to lower stress, relieve anxiety and elevate endorphins.
- impact and enhance the brain in powerful ways
- act as a survival mechanism that can help heal strokes and depression.

The benefits of singing for brain damaged individuals was first observed by a Swedish physician, Olaf Dalin in 1736, and continuing research confirms this observation.



Caitriona Quigley is originally from **Monaghan** and teaches in Gaelscoil Chluain Dolcain (**Clondalkin**), a primary school with the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> class choir. Caitriona currently conducts the **Cameron Singers** based in **Raheny**.

• Helen Gubbins travelled with a choir from **Gaelcholáiste na Mara**, a post primary school from **Arklow, Co. Wicklow** to take part in the performance assessment in St Patrick's College.



Fiona Sweeney led **Lucan East Educate Together National School**, Dublin, with children from 4<sup>th</sup> class. She conducts several nights a week in **CÓRus** (based in Lucan) and works as a music/singing teacher with **Enable Ireland** adult services where the service users are all adults with physical and cognitive disabilities.



Laura Wickham led a 134-member choir from **St Brigid's Girls School in Killester, Dublin**. Laura began with 25 girls and grew her voluntary, early morning group to 134 primary school children. They have performed with **St Joseph's School for the Blind** and Fr Liam Lawton, participated in **Feis Ceoil** winning in 2011, 2012, appeared on the **Late Late Toy Show**, the launch of **Encountering the Arts in Ireland** in 2014 and numerous other events. Laura is currently completing the **Professional Diploma in Education (Choral Conducting in Education and in the Community)**.

