

**MINUTES OF THE 22ND MEETING OF THE GENERAL TEACHING
COUNCIL FOR N.I., HELD ON TUESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2007,
AT THE CITY HOTEL, DERRY**

Present:

Mrs Sally McKee (Chair)	Mr Brendan McConville
Ms Aine Andrews	Mr Dominic McElholm
Mr Ivan Arbuthnot	Mrs La'Verne Montgomery
Ms Roemary Barton	Ms Daisy Mules
Mrs Susan Campbell	Mr Alistair Orr
Mr John Colgan	Mrs Thea Patton
Mr Joe Corrigan	Mr John Pollock
Mr Malachy Doherty	Mr Peter Scott
Mrs Frances Donnelly	Mr Keith Smith
Mr Charles Glenn	Mrs Audrey Stewart
Mrs Teresa Graham	Mr Damian Walls
Mr Tony Lappin	

In Attendance:

Mr Eddie McArdle (Registrar, GTCNI)
Mrs Yvonne McCool (Corporate Services Manager, GTCNI)
Mr Barnaby Ball (Policy & Registration Manager, GTCNI)
Mr Gerry Devlin (Senior Education Officer, GTCNI)
Ms Deirdre Lavery (Finance & Office Manager, GTCNI)
Mrs Helen Jackson (Registration Team Leader)
Mrs Carol Bailie (Minute Secretary)
Ms Lesley Dickson (PA to the Registrar, GTCNI)
Mrs Debra Castles (Communications Officer, GTCNI)
Ms Glenise Brothwick (General Teaching Council for Scotland)
Mr Julia Evans (General Teaching Council for Wales)

Apologies:

Ms Dorothy Black	Dr Theo Laverty
Dr Leslie Caul	Mr John McGrady
Rev Lee Glenny	Dr Wilfred Mulryne
Mrs Miriam Karp	Mr Gordon Topping
Mr John Kerr	

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted. The Chair welcomed Ms Glenise Brothwick, GTCS and Ms Julia Evans, GTCW to the meeting. The Chair expressed her condolences to Mr Damian Walls, on behalf of the Council, on his recent bereavement.

2. COUNCIL MINUTES (GTC/07/Min21)

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved: proposed by Mr Dominic McElholm and seconded by Mr Brendan McConville.

3. MATTERS ARISING

The Department of Education are still actively seeking a new Council member to replace Mr Kinney. The Registrar will write to the Department of Education requesting information on the progress to date.

The Chair stated that attendance at Committee meetings has improved significantly from the last Council meeting.

The Chair further stated that a special meeting of Council will be held when the Special Education Needs Consultation document is published, hopefully in 2008.

The Registrar informed members that the Education and Skills Authority in England have introduced the registration of FE lecturers, Officers will monitor this issue as it may have implications for GTCNI.

4. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair briefly updated members on her work programme since the last Council meeting. The Registrar, Policy and Registration Manager, Senior Education Officer and herself met with the Education Committee of the Assembly. The main issue arising from the meeting was the small number of young males entering the teaching profession.

It was agreed that the Policy Committee should conduct a small scale research programme asking 6th form male pupils about their perception of the profession. Mrs La'Verne Montgomery stated that this is an area of concern for CCMS. They are currently researching the issue, and Mrs Montgomery will forward their findings to the Council.

In addition the Council had presented a strong case for a guaranteed one year's teaching experience for all graduates to the Education Committee.

5. OFFICERS' BUSINESS

None.

6. APPROVAL OF QUALIFICATIONS (GTC22/07/P1)

The Policy and Registration Manager provided members with an overview of the Council's 'approval of qualifications and registration processes' and brought to members attention the merging policy implications of the Council's new work.

The GTCNI (Approval of Qualifications) Regulations (NI) 2007 were made on 14 September 2007 and will come into operation on 19 October 2007. The Council is now satisfied that Article 36 of the 1998 Order, has now been operationalised through these new 'Approval of Qualifications' regulations, and that the Council can proceed with its approval of qualifications processes without the risk of being deemed to be acting 'ultra vires'.

The Council will be operating its registration/approval of qualifications processes within a 'transitional' environment, whereby the concept of eligibility, as granted by the Department remains alongside the Council's approval processes

In developing its processes to approve qualifications and to handle applications to register, the Council has identified 5 categories of applicant as follows:

1. ITE Student (NI):
The Council has a well established and highly automated process for the registration of students graduating from local providers of ITE.
2. DE Recognised Teacher:
This process has been developed in order to deal with applications to register from teachers, who have been previously recognised and awarded eligibility to teach, by the Department.
3. UK Applicant:
The Council will receive applications to register from teachers trained in Scotland, England and Wales.
4. EU/EEA Applicant:
The Council has been designated the 'competent authority' for the purposes of the implementation of the EU Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications. The Council will be responsible for assessing applications from teachers under the terms of the Directive.
5. Rest of World Applicant:
The Council will receive applications from persons outwith EU/EEA Countries and will need to have effective and efficient processes in place to deal with such applications.

There are a number of key issues that the Registration Committee, Policy Committee and Council will need to consider further over the next 12 month period, including:

- in partnership with the Department and the nascent ESA, the Council will need to make progress with the 'enactment' of the repeal of Article 70 (4) (a and c), and in so doing the Council will need to address the wider issues of the safety and welfare of children, vetting/CRB checks and the concept of professional suitability;
- the Council will need to consider further the position of those returning to the teaching profession after extended career breaks.
- through liaison with GTC England and Wales and the TDA, the Council should continue to monitor and evaluate QTS developments and assess the potential impact QTS changes might have for its registration process;
- the Council will need to work closely with the other UK GTCs, with regard to the EU Directive and to EU/EEA applicants. It will need to consider carefully the issue of 'compensation measures' and to monitor the impact of 'temporary service providers'. In addition, the Council will need to liaise and cooperate with the Teaching Council of Ireland on 'North/South' movements of teachers; and
- the Council, will need to keep under review the teaching qualification 'assessment criteria' it applies when considering applications from persons educated/trained outwith EU/EEA countries. This is imperative in order to ensure that teaching qualifications obtained 'elsewhere' remain equivalent to Northern Ireland ITE qualifications.

Mr Joe Corrigan expressed concerns if a teacher takes an extended career break the teaching profession could possibly be completely changed on their return.

The Policy and Registration Manager informed members that the Appeals Process is going to be discussed at the next Registration Committee. The Council have bought into the NIRAC database to compare qualifications across different countries.

Mr Brendan McConville commended the Policy and Registration Manager and the Registration team on their hard work.

The Council noted that from 19 October 2007, it will have responsibility, through the Registration Committee, for issues in relation to approval of qualifications and the associated registration processes.

7. ACCREDITATION OF COURSES (GTC22/07/P2)

The Registrar identified the main points of this paper. The Council is dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the status of the profession and promoting the highest standards of professional conduct and competence. Under Articles 34-41 and Schedule 1 of the Education (NI) Order 1998 the Council has advisory responsibilities in relation to:

- the training, career development and performance management of teachers;
- standards of teaching; and
- standards of conduct of teachers.

The Registrar outlined the proposed stages in the accreditation process:

1. Expression of Interest;
2. Institution Approval/Validation;
3. Accreditation; and
4. Ministerial/Departmental Approval.

It is envisaged that the cycle for accreditation will be 4/5 years with a facility for in-cycle review when programmes have altered significantly, or if the ETI have expressed reservations and have identified weaknesses deemed to be impacting on the learning experiences of students enrolled in the programme.

The way forward will include:

- establish a working group made up of HEIs, ETI and GTCNI;
- review of work in other jurisdictions and other professions;
- draw up criteria for evaluation;
- develop protocols and agree timeframe;
- discuss arrangements for benchmarking of current provision;
- agree administrative processes; and
- agree implementation schedule.

The Accreditation of Coursed papers was adopted; proposed by Mr Alistair Orr and seconded Mr John Colgan.

8. ROLL-OUT OF TEACHING: THE REFLECTIVE PROFESSION 2007-2008 (GTC22/07/P3)

The Senior Education Officer briefed members on the roll out of 'Teaching: the Reflective Profession' to date and outlined future plans in order to ensure that it has maximum impact across the whole education service and particularly at school level.

9. DRAFT COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIC PLAN 2007- 2010 (GTC22/07/P4)

The Chair welcomed the Communications Officer to the meeting. Mrs Debra Castles provided members with a short presentation on the Draft Communications Strategic Plan and highlighted the main aspects including:

1. Purpose and Core Objectives
2. Current Environment
3. Perceived Challenges
4. Key Communication Objectives and Channels
5. Identified Stakeholders.

The Chair thanked the Communications Officer for the short presentation.

10. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS (GTC22/07/P5)

The Corporate Services Manager briefly took members through the Annual Report and highlighted key changes from last year's report for members. She also outlined the annual accounts for 2006/07. In summary, at the end of the 2006/07 financial year, the Council's finances were as follows:

<u>Operating Income</u>	2007 £
Registration Fees	1,184,141
Other Income	<u>2,681</u>
	1,186,822
 <u>Expenditure</u>	
Staff Costs	398,167
Registration/direct Programme Costs	23,896
CPD Programme Costs	117,212
Other Operating Costs	429,050
Depreciation	17,660
Notional Cost of Capital	11,932
Total Expenditure	(997,917)
Surplus on Ordinary Activities	188,905
Interest Receivable	30,461
Adjustment for notional cost of capital	11,932
Surplus for year transferred to reserves	231,298

The Finance Manager had queried the amount of tax that the Council has paid on interest earned with the Northern Bank and as a result the bank will be refunding all tax payments back to the Council.

Mr Brendan McConville commended staff on the level of professionalism and asked for Officers salaries to be discussed at the next General Purposes and Finance Committee.

11. PHASE 2 STAFFING (GTC22/07/P6)

The Registrar introduced this paper and outlined the backdrop to the developments and the associated costs and savings. He indicated that the changes proposed reflected both new pressures and potential pressures of work and the changing needs of the Council as it moved from a period of initiation to consolidation.

He indicated his personal indebtedness to Mrs Mc Cool and paid tribute to her professionalism, commitment and good humour over the past years. Members wholly endorsed Mr Mc Ardle's sentiments.

12. COMMITTEE MINUTES

(i) Audit Committee (AC/07/Min14)

Mrs Teresa Graham presented the Audit Committee minutes to Council as an accurate record of the meeting. She reminded members that all Council members' cars must be insured for business purposes. She noted that governance training, recruitment and equal opportunity training are currently being arranged by the Corporate Services Manager for all members of Council. She informed members that a bilateral meeting between herself and the External Auditor has been arranged for Monday 26 November 2007. She further noted the core risks of the IT Risk Management Action Plan.

(ii) General Purposes and Finance Committee (GP&FC/07/Min 20)

Mr Alistair Orr presented the General Purposes and Finance Committee minutes to Council as an accurate record of the meeting. He stated that Officers proposed the appointment of a senior registration officer. He commended the Finance Manager for recovering the back interest for the Council. He hopes that the Bursary Programme will continue as it is encouraging professional development among teachers and has a very positive impact on the Council's image. He stated that the Scheme for Payment of Council Members, Chairperson's Allowance and Phase 2 staffing papers were adopted at the last General Purposes and Finance Committee meeting.

(iii) Registration Committee (RC/07/Min18)

Mr Peter Scott presented the Registration Committee minutes to Council as an accurate record of the meeting. He thanked the Policy and Registration Manager and the Registration Team Leader for their very extensive work on the Approval of Qualifications Project.

(iv) Policy Committee (PC/07/Min22)

Mr Tony Lappin informed members that the minutes of the last Policy Committee were an accurate record of the meeting and briefly identified the main discussions that took place, in relation to the Consultation on the Draft Professional Competences for Chartered Teacher in Northern Ireland and GTCNIs Preliminary Research Proposal.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

14. VENUE, DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Council meeting will be held in Malone House, Belfast on Friday 18 January 2008.

Signed: _____ Date: _____