



General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland

PROMOTING
TEACHER
PROFESSIONALISM



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What we want for our students we should want for our teachers: learning, challenge, support, and respect.

Andy Hargreaves

PROMOTING TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM



Dear Colleague,

It is widely recognised that no education system can exceed the quality of its teachers. That is why our priority as your professional body is to protect and enhance the quality of teaching in Northern Ireland through 5 important activities: professional registration; professional regulation; professional development; professional research; and promoting your professional voice.

During 2013-14 I met with many teachers across Northern Ireland to understand better the issues that are important to you. As I approach the end of my second year as Registrar I want to highlight:

- the important activities that GTCNI has undertaken in 2013-14 on your behalf;
- the main focus of our work during 2014-15 to promote and enhance the standing and influence of the teaching profession; and
- some significant changes to the role and remit of GTCNI in the near future and what these will mean for the teaching profession.

I look forward to continuing to work with and for you during 2014-15 to enhance public understanding, respect, trust and confidence in our complex, demanding and rewarding profession which makes a vital contribution to the lives of young people, society and the economy in Northern Ireland.

Dr Carmel Gallagher

Registrar

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carmel Gallagher". The signature is written in a cursive style.

WHAT THE GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL DOES FOR YOU

The 33 members of the General Teaching Council are either directly elected by you or appointed by educational stakeholders to represent the interests of the profession. The Council determines our strategic objectives and ensures accountability across the 5 important areas of work:

1. Professional registration: We protect professional standards by ensuring that only those who are appropriately qualified are registered to teach in our schools;

2. Professional regulation: We work with all educational partners to promote the highest professional standards;

3. Professional research: We undertake and disseminate surveys and research to promote professional dialogue and to inform policy development;

4. Professional development: We promote professional excellence and offer advice on initial teacher education and career-long professional development to enhance professional practice; and

5. Professional voice: We listen to and advocate on your behalf to promote the influence of the teaching profession on the issues that matter to you.

During 2014-15, new legislation will:

- establish the Council's full regulatory powers for the first time;
- extend our remit to the Further Education sector; and
- enhance our independence from government.

WHY PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION IS IMPORTANT

GTCNI protects the standing of the teaching profession by ensuring that only those who are appropriately qualified are registered to teach in our schools. Your £44 annual registration fee (which after tax relief is less than 50p a week) is used to enable us to:

- maintain an up-to-date professional register of 26,700 registered teachers, and provide an accurate statistical profile of the profession;
- undertake rigorous checks to ensure that new applicants for registration are suitable and appropriately qualified; and
- accredit all initial teacher programmes in Northern Ireland to ensure they meet professional standards.



During 2013-14, we ensured:

- 1100 new applications were assessed and 990 teachers with appropriate qualifications were added to the register;
- a Further Education Working Group was established, representing FE employers and unions, to plan for the future registration of FE lecturers.

During 2015-16, we will:

- ensure, this important work will continue; and
- procure a new registration database to enable GTCNI to deliver our new role and remit effectively.

WHY SELF-REGULATION IS IMPORTANT

Self-regulation is central to the professional status of teachers. It enables the profession to determine the minimum standards required for entry into the profession, and the conduct and professional competences required of teachers. This enables us to enhance public trust and confidence in the teaching profession and promote greater understanding of the complex nature of teaching and the excellence that exists within our classrooms.



During 2014-15, we will:

- develop and consult on a revised code of values and professional practice and competence framework which is intended to be of greater practical use to you and your school in informing the focus of planning, self-evaluation, PRSD and continuous professional development; and
- develop processes for considering cases of eligibility for registration, once this responsibility is transferred from the Department of Education to GTCNI.

Between 2015 and 2017, we will:

- develop fair and transparent regulation processes to enable the profession to self-regulate in a way that enhances professional standing while meeting our 'public interest' responsibilities.

WHY CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS IMPORTANT



GTCNI recognises that, as professionals, it is vital that we have adequate opportunities to access relevant and appropriate initial and continuous professional development throughout our careers. Therefore, in partnership with educational stakeholders we are developing a comprehensive career-long professional development framework.

Between 2010 and 2013, we:

- actively supported opportunities to enhance research informed practice, previously through the *Research Lesson Study* and *Teacher Fellowship Programmes*.

In 2013-14, we supported and promoted:

- the BERA-RSA Inquiry into the role of research in teacher education and building the capacity for a self-improving education system;
- *Teachmeet* initiatives bringing teachers together to share good practice;
- professional excellence among our student teachers through the GTCNI student teacher awards delivered in partnership with our teaching universities and colleges of education. We also recognised excellence in our FE sector through a Colleges NI BEST Award for FE.

During 2014-15, we will continue to work towards:

- a progressive ladder of career progression; and
- a framework for continuous professional development.

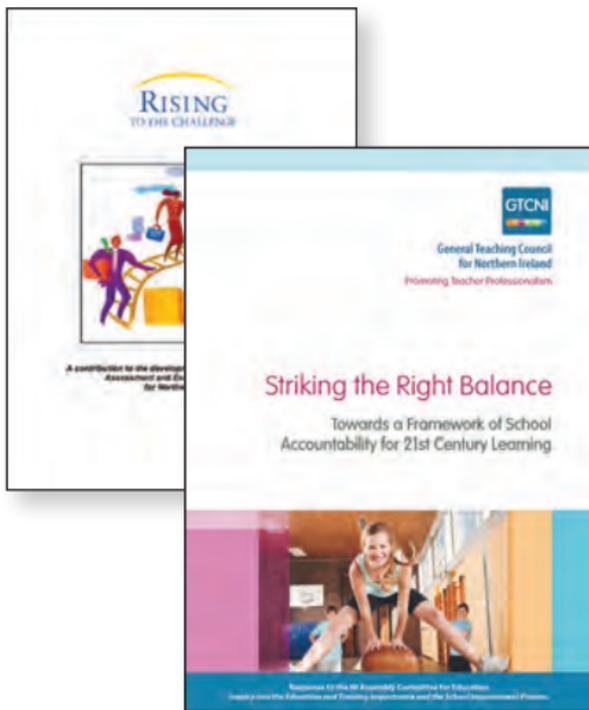
WHY RESEARCH-INFORMED POLICY AND PRACTICE IS IMPORTANT



GTCNI recognise the positive impact that research-informed practice can have on learner outcomes and we will continue to undertake and disseminate surveys and research to promote professional dialogue and enhance classroom practice. As your professional body, we also recognise that one of our most important roles is to keep up to date with research and policy developments so that we can respond, on behalf of the profession, to policy consultations.

During 2013-14, or we provided research-informed advice on:

- **Assessment:** Our *Rising to the Challenge* report on Assessment and Evaluation made 11 recommendations about how assessment could be improved as part of the development of a holistic value-added approach;
- **Inspection:** Our *Striking the Right Balance* submission to the NI Assembly Education Committee Inquiry into the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) and the School Improvement Process made 20 recommendations about how inspection and accountability could be improved; and
- a range of policy consultations on examinations, school funding, the BERA/RSA *Inquiry into Research and the Teaching Profession* and the Inquiry into Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland.



During 2014-15, we will:

- continue to respond in a research-informed way to all relevant policy consultations; and
- promote professional dialogue through a range of concise professional updates on areas of research and development that are relevant to professional practice.



WHY YOUR PROFESSIONAL VOICE IS IMPORTANT

As your professional body, GTCNI listens to, and advocates on the issues that matter to you so that education policy is informed by the experience of school leaders and classroom practitioners.

During 2013-14 we conducted 2 major opinion surveys (requesting at least one response from each school) to ensure that the professional voice of teachers could help to shape policy on:

- **Approaches to statutory assessment:** (500 responses were received). The main message was that numerical outcomes (levels) were considered to be of limited value in providing useful information for teachers, pupils, parents, the ETI and politicians; and 91% of teachers found the external moderation process burdensome; and
- **Approaches to Inspection:** (1,677 responses were received, including 450 responses from principals). These responses informed the detailed GTCNI submission to the NI Assembly Education Committee 'Inquiry into the Education and Training Inspectorate and School Improvement Process' and had a significant impact on the Committee's recommendations.

During 2014-15, we will:

- provide professional updates about the issues that matter to you – including an update on the NI Assembly Education Committee Inquiry on inspection;
- advocate on behalf of the profession on issues including a framework for career-long professional development; and
- continue to promote understanding, respect, trust and confidence in the teaching profession.



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When we become a really mature, grown-up, wise society, we will put teachers at the centre of the community, where they belong.

Charles Kuralt

If you've recently changed address, name, telephone or email, update your details from our website, using your **MyGTCNI** account. It allows you to view and edit a range of information including:

- your address
- contact telephone numbers
- school
- email address, so that we can send you information and updates

Sign-up for online news

You can sign-up to receive online information directly from the GTCNI homepage.

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