

# Report of the Steering Committee on the Establishment of a Teaching Council

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH  
ARNA FHOILSIÚ AG OIFIG AN tSOLÁTHAIR  
Le ceannach díreach ón  
OIFIG DHÍOLTA FOILSEACHÁN RIALTAIS,  
TEACH SUN ALLIANCE, SRÁID THEACH LAIGHEAN, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2,  
nó tríd an bpost ó  
FOILSEACHÁN RIALTAIS, AN RANNÓG POST-TRÁCHTA,  
4 - 5 BÓTHAR FHEARCHAIR, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2,  
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# Foreword

Mr. Michel Martin  
Minister for Education and Science.

Dear Minister,

I have pleasure in presenting you with the report of the Steering Committee on the establishment of a Teaching Council. The Steering Committee met on 6 occasions, during which it considered the report of the Technical Working Group which was submitted to you in April of this year. Throughout our deliberations we were guided by the terms of reference which you issued on the occasion of launching this initiative in Dublin Castle on November 4th, 1997. These were as follows:

- 1 To make recommendations on the establishment of a Teaching Council, having regard to the present and future educational and professional needs of teachers.
- 2 To make recommendations on the role, structures, composition, functions and funding of the Council.
- 3 To consider the legal and practical issues arising with regard to the establishment of the Council.
- 4 To consider any other matters relevant to the establishment and functioning of a Teaching Council.

We feel confident that our report has addressed the many complex issues which arise in meeting these terms of reference.

On behalf of the Technical Working Group and the Steering Committee, I wish to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, Mr. John Dennehy and his officials. In particular, the expert guidance provided by Mr. Tom Boland and Ms. Anne O'Mahony, and, through them, by the Attorney General on the legal implications of the proposals contained in our report, was deeply appreciated by both groups.

The members of the Technical Working Group and the Steering Committee approached the preparation of this report with great dedication and enthusiasm, and in a spirit characterised by a genuine conviction of the potential of a Teaching Council to afford teachers a significant degree of professional autonomy and self-regulation, and thereby enhance the status and morale of the teaching profession and the quality of education being provided for students in our schools.

I wish to record my sincere thanks and grateful appreciation to the members of both groups for the professional manner in which they approached the challenge presented to them, and for the courtesy and cooperation they offered me in my role as Chair. It was

both a pleasure and an enriching educational experience to have served such highly talented and motivated groups.

The work of the committees necessitated the preparation and circulation of draft reports to the members between meetings, often at short notice. For this and for the many other tasks associated with facilitating the work of the group, I, on behalf of the members of both groups, wish to place on record the expert and courteous assistance provided by Mr. Fergal Costello, Secretary to the Group. I am confident that it would have taken considerably longer to bring our work to this stage were it not for the unselfish dedication which he brought to this task. We are indeed fortunate to have public servants of his ability and commitment.

As you stated at the launch of this initiative and as has been developed in our report, this is an opportune time to consider the establishment of a Teaching Council in Ireland. We are convinced that the establishment of a Council represents an essential step towards the recognition of teaching as a fully-fledged profession, and would entitle teachers to appropriate regulation of their own affairs and empower them with greater responsibility for the quality of education.

We hope that this report will contribute to the achievement of this objective.

Yours sincerely,

---

Séamus McGuinness  
School of Education  
Trinity College

June, 1998.

## **Members of the Steering Committee**

Dr. Séamus McGuinness (Chair)	
Senator Joe O'Toole	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Mr. Tony Bates / Mr. Brian Hynes	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Mr. Charlie Lennon	Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland
	Ireland
Mr. John Hurley	Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland
	Ireland
Mr. Jim Dorney	Teachers' Union of Ireland
Ms. Alice Prendergast / Mr. Joe Carolan	Teachers' Union of Ireland
Sr. Eileen Randles	Catholic Primary School Managers' Association
Ms. Eileen Jackson	Church of Ireland Board of Education
Ms. Deirdre O'Donoghue	Educate Together
Ms. Jacqueline Ní Fheargusa /	
Ms Niamh Ní Mhaoláin	Gaelscoileanna
Mr. Proinsias Ó hAilín	Gaelscoileanna
Mr. Michael Moriarty	Irish Vocational Education Association
Mr. George O'Callaghan	Joint Managerial Body
Mr. Seán McCann	Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Ms. Fionnuala Kilfeather	National Parents' Council — Primary
Mr. Seán Grehan	National Parents' Council — Post-Primary
Mr. Liam Murphy	Secondary Teachers' Registration Council
Mr. John Canavan	Colleges of Education
Dr. John O'Brien	Heads of University Departments of Education
Ms. Maureen Killeavy	Irish Federation of University Teachers
Professor John Coolahan	Technical Working Group
Dr. Deirdre O'Keeffe	Department of Education & Science
Mr. Fergal Costello (Secretary)	Department of Education & Science

## **Members of the Technical Working Group**

Dr. Séamus McGuinness (Chair)	Dr. Deirdre O'Keeffe
Dr. Andy Burke	Ms. Anne O'Mahony
Mr. John Carr	Mr. Pádraig Ó Ríordáin
Ms. Maura Clancy	Sr. Eileen Randles
Professor John Coolahan	Mr. John White
Ms. Eileen Jackson	Mr. Fergal Costello (Secretary)
Ms. Rose Malone	





## **CHAPTER 1**

# **The Context and Rationale for a Teaching Council**



## CHAPTER 1

# The Context and Rationale for a Teaching Council

### **1.1 What is a Teaching Council?**

A Teaching Council is an independent, statutory agency which exercises the powers and performs the functions through which teachers can achieve a large degree of professional autonomy and self-regulation and thereby enhance the status and morale of the teaching profession and the quality of education being provided for students in our schools. The establishment of such a body to regulate professional practice, oversee teacher education programmes, and assume responsibility for furthering the highest levels of service to the public is a normal and necessary developmental step in the maturation of every profession. A Teaching Council exercises a significant role in the policy decisions affecting the professional aspects of the teaching career, from initial preparation to continuing professional development, as well as performing certain functions in promoting high quality performance by its members.

### **1.2 Public Endorsement for a Teaching Council**

Teachers have long sought such a Council and extensive efforts have been made to ensure its establishment, particularly over the last three decades. While a Teaching Council has not been instituted to date, many significant advances in the development of the teaching profession have been achieved over these decades. There have been significant developments in our knowledge and understanding of the complexities of teaching and learning, and, in response to these, considerable improvements have been achieved in the education and preparation of teachers, in the establishment of an all-graduate profession and in the recognition of the need for continuing professional development throughout the teaching career. The introduction of a common salary scale and the establishment of a common scheme of conciliation and arbitration for teachers at first and second levels were significant developments in promoting the unification of the profession. In addition, the formal recognition of the contribution of teachers to policy development and implementation illustrates the enhanced standing of teachers as professionals who possess the knowledge and expertise to shape not only the future of their profession, but also to contribute effectively to the future direction of educational policy.

Public endorsement of the teaching profession in Ireland has never been so pronounced as at present. This is reflected in a range of official reports. The OECD's *Review of Irish Education* (1991) remarked that "Ireland has been fortunate to maintain the quality of its teaching force" (p.100). Looking to the future, the Report recommended that a statutory national council for teaching

would be a valuable agency (p.107). The Irish Government's Green Paper, *Education For A Changing World* (1992), acknowledged that "Teachers have made an enormous contribution to Irish society, and it is important that the career of teaching continues to be an attractive and professionally rewarding one" (p.163). It stated that "A council or governing body for teaching has long been sought by the profession and has been proposed, in one form or another, in a number of reports and other documents on education in Ireland." (p.170). The Green Paper hoped that the resolution of some outstanding legal issues could lead to the establishment of such a council.

The concept of a Teaching Council was examined and discussed at the National Education Convention. The *Report On The National Education Convention* (Coolahan, Ed., 1994) stated "The general view was that such a Council was timely in Irish circumstances and would give the teaching profession a degree of control over and responsibility for its own profession and allow for its closer engagement in the process of change." The Report's conclusion was that "Such a Teaching Council could do much to promote a distinguished future for the teaching profession in Ireland into the new century" (p.90). The Government's White Paper, *Charting Our Education Future* (1995), also contains a strong endorsement of the teaching profession. It emphasised that "The quality, morale and status of the teaching profession are of central importance to the continuing development of a first-class education system in the decades ahead. Irish teachers are highly regarded, and the profession continues to attract people of high calibre and commitment" (p.121). The White Paper concluded that "The establishment of a Teaching Council would emphasise and enhance teaching as a profession" (p.135).

Several Ministers for Education have expressed their support for establishing a Teaching Council and the White Paper records a ministerial commitment to publish "a draft legislative framework for the operation of the Council, following the resolution of some legal difficulties" (p.135). The present Minister for Education and Science, Mr. Micheál Martin, supports the establishment of a Teaching Council and is of the opinion that, in addition to emphasising the unity of the teaching profession, it "would set and maintain the highest professional standards in the interests of teachers, students, their parents and the wider community" (4 November, 1997).

Endorsement of the high quality of the education system and of the teachers is also to be found in statements by government agencies and multi-national corporations who testify to the high standard of education and the skills of the workforce as a major contributor to economic growth, and one of the main attractions for establishing enterprises in Ireland. At international level, the high quality of Ireland's teachers has been the subject of favourable comment and organisations such as OECD, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the EU have, in recent reports, emphasised the need to support the development of the teaching profession. The widespread degree of endorsement for the dedication and expertise of teachers in Ireland should not be under-emphasised and ought to be viewed

against a background where teachers in other countries are frequently the target of much criticism and blame for the quality of education being provided in schools, and against our own previous experience when the contribution of the teaching force to the country's social and economic development was not so readily acknowledged.

### **1.3 Need for Consolidation**

This high level of approval has not been easily earned. Rather, it can be seen as the result of decades of dedication by teachers in advancing their own professional expertise, often at considerable personal and financial sacrifice, and the support of a public which places a high value on education, thereby conferring deserved high standing on teaching as a profession.

The successes of the past which have resulted in this high regard for teaching as a profession need to be consolidated. Notwithstanding the increasing involvement of teachers in areas which directly affect their work and their career, teachers have not yet achieved a status comparable to that afforded other professions, such as the legal, medical, and veterinary careers. The establishment of An Bord Altranais has served to enhance the professional status of nurses. As long as teacher involvement in areas such as recruitment into teaching, preparation for teaching, induction, probation, incareer development and the regulation of the profession is limited, the profession can be described as in a state of limited development.

### **1.4 The Changing Context of the Teacher's Role**

It is the considered view of many authorities in the field that teaching has reached a stage where its claim to professional recognition should be unambiguously granted. Significant developments in the knowledge base of teaching have taken place in the present century. From being a craft whose skills could be acquired through apprenticeship and/or a short training course, teaching has come to be regarded as a professional activity, teachers as professional people, and teacher education as a form of continuing professional development through initial education, induction and incareer development.

The changing and increasingly complex nature of the societal, community and school settings in which teachers must be competent to operate today has broadened their role significantly. They find themselves unavoidably drawn into dealing with the effects on pupils of family breakdown, substance/alcohol abuse, physical/sexual ill-treatment, and unemployment. This changed situation makes particular demands on teachers' professional knowledge, personal and pedagogical skills, powers of adaptability, and decision-making ability. This extended role of the teacher in contemporary circumstances has been recognised by the OECD team in its *Review of Irish Education (1991)*. The report notes that the teacher's roles:

... must encompass not only the instructional, the custodial, the inspirational and the disciplinary, but extend into practically all spheres of life with teachers acting as agents of physical, moral and spiritual development, emotional and mental health, and social welfare. Among the qualities called for — in addition to the academic and pedagogical — are political and negotiating competence, accountancy and fund-raising abilities, a repertoire of skills to assume extra-curricular responsibilities and to communicate with widely diverse groups, planning and management skills, and an up-to-date knowledge of developments in technology and working life (p.91).

### **1.5 The Increasing Professionalism of the Teacher's Role**

The notion of professional action as the exercise of discretionary judgement and the application of a high level of knowledge and skill in complex situations and in conditions of unavoidable uncertainty is at the core of current concepts of professionalism. In the case of teaching, this view of “profession” incorporates, enhances, and renders complementary the perceptions of the teacher as skilled practitioner in the science and art of teaching, who applies professional knowledge, personal intuition, creativity, and improvisation to accomplish teaching's tasks; as problem-solving and decision-making clinician; as curriculum maker, researcher, evaluator, and reflective practitioner; and, finally, as “significant other person” who exercises considerable moral influence.

Competent decision-making is at the core of every profession. Lee Shulman (1987), one of America's most respected educationalists and researchers, claims that rarely do medical doctors face situations as complex and cognitively demanding as that of the classroom teacher. As ‘dilemma managers’, teachers, like other professionals operating in complex human contexts, constantly decide on best-fit solutions for particular situations and individuals. Research shows that classroom teachers make up to thirty non-trivial decisions every hour — decisions that impact critically on individual pupils, their parents and, ultimately, their country (Berliner, 1987). It is arguable that, of all the professionals that service the needs of families, teachers make the greatest impact both in the short-term and in the long-term on the lives and future prospects of pupils.

### **1.6 The Timeliness of a Teaching Council**

In view of the undoubted professional role which teachers now play, it is timely that this be formally recognised by the establishment of a Teaching Council. The establishment of an autonomous body to speak freely on educational matters and to promote the highest standards of practice in Irish schools, is the next indispensable step towards the enhancement of teaching as a fully-fledged profession. A properly constituted Teaching Council would achieve this objective. It would confirm the status of teaching, entitle teachers to appropriate regulation of their own affairs, and empower them with greater responsibility for the quality of education.

The time is right for putting in place a Teaching Council which would be a historic landmark in the development of the career of teaching in Ireland and be a bulwark of support for the profession in the future. Moving from a position of strength and high status, and supported by the endorsements of government, international organisations and the general public, it is now opportune to put teaching on a sound professional footing. Ireland is fortunate at present that entrance to the career of teaching is highly competitive. In Ireland, teaching continues to attract personnel of a remarkably high calibre. The existing teaching force is demonstrating great commitment to its own self-development through unprecedented levels of engagement with general inservice education opportunities and through an all-time high level of registration on certificated inservice courses in third-level institutions, much of it self-financed. As a means of consolidating past achievements, of responding to the current vibrancy in the profession and as a preparation for the challenges which an uncertain future may pose for teachers, it is particularly timely that a statutory Teaching Council be established to protect and promote the status of teaching and the advancement of the profession.

### **1.7 The Value for the Teacher**

A Teaching Council will provide an important and influential forum for presenting the views of the profession on all aspects of the teaching career from initial recruitment to incareer professional development.

The teacher in the classroom will benefit in many ways from the work of the Council.

The teacher's individual status and identity will be enhanced by being part of a recognised, collective professional identity, with statutory authority.

A Teaching Council will promote research and engage in debate and policy discussions on wider issues related to educational provision.

It will advise Government on all professional issues.

It will enhance the public image and status of the profession and promote teaching as a career.

It will protect standards of entry to the career, promote better induction processes with the assistance of teacher colleagues and foster best practice in on-going professional development.

It will provide communications on relevant professional and research matters and sponsor research in areas of teacher concern.

It will offer advice on teacher supply and demand and on pupil-teacher ratios and engage with appropriate international agencies on behalf of the teaching force.

Over and above such considerations, the responsibilities of teachers in promoting teaching as a profession and in recruiting and preparing the next generation of teachers, and thereby ensuring that the profession continues to attract high quality and well-qualified candidates, form an important role for a Teaching Council.

### **1.8 The Teaching Council and the Teacher Unions**

While there will be many areas of common concern to the Teaching Council and the teacher unions, there is a fundamental distinction between their responsibilities. A Teaching Council will be solely concerned with the qualitative and professional matters within its remit, whereas negotiating on conditions of service, salaries and pensions will continue to be a major concern of the teacher unions, in addition to their established role in the areas of policy development and curriculum. The teacher unions will continue to have the right to represent their members in all areas, and particularly in relation to disciplinary issues. The work of a Teaching Council as an independent statutory agency will complement the on-going efforts of teacher unions to promote the professional concerns of their members and will set standards of practice and ensure the competence of its members.

### **1.9 International Links**

The history of education demonstrates that circumstances, political and socio-economic contexts and attitudes to education are liable to change and can be less favourable to the teaching force than has been experienced in Ireland in the recent past and contemporary situation. It will also be recalled by many that this is not the first attempt to establish a Teaching Council in Ireland. Previous attempts, aimed at responding to calls from teachers for the establishment of a professional body while going a long way towards defining the role, functions and composition of a Teaching Council, failed to materialise for a variety of reasons. A General Teaching Council for Scotland was established in 1966, while similar initiatives to establish a professional body to represent the interests of the profession have recently been undertaken or are under way in other countries, notably Ontario and New Foundland in Canada, England, Wales and Northern Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa. The establishment of a Teaching Council in Ireland will contribute significantly to this international movement and facilitate formal linkages, thus providing an international forum where issues with a clear professional focus could be debated. Consequently, the favourable circumstances which now exist for the recognition of teaching as a fully-fledged profession should be utilised and appropriate structures established to give effect to this status.

### **1.10 A Partnership Approach**

Professional empowerment carries with it serious obligations as the French word for empowerment — *responsabilisation* — clearly connotes. In an era of accountability it is in the interest of teachers that the profession identifies standards of good practice and puts in place a visible mechanism for their implementation. A properly constituted Teaching Council will both safeguard professional standards



and fulfil the role of independent public commentary on educational matters. Neither of these needs is adequately catered for at present since there exists no statutory provision for input by the teaching profession into policy formulation in education. A Teaching Council will reflect not just the views of teachers but also those of the main partners in the system, the Department of Education and Science, teacher educators, school management, parent organisations and the general public, who through their membership on the Council will work in partnership with the teachers in promoting quality and high standards. Thus, an effective Teaching Council will have the potential to become a significant agent for change in the system. The ultimate beneficiaries will be the students in our schools.



## **CHAPTER 2**

# **Role and Functions of the Teaching Council**



## CHAPTER 2

# Role and Functions of the Teaching Council

### **2.1 Role of the Council**

The Teaching Council will be an autonomous, statutory, self-regulating body with the role of setting and promoting the highest professional standards for first and second level teachers. It will have a statutory role in relation to the regulation of the profession and the professional affairs of teachers and an advisory role in relation to other matters. The over-arching objective of the Council will be to enhance the quality of the education service by providing teachers, assisted by the education partners, with a formal structure to regulate their profession.

The Teaching Council will subsume the role of the Secondary Teachers Registration Council.

### **2.2 Functions of the Teaching Council**

The Teaching Council will exercise the following functions:

- (i) Establish and maintain a register of all teachers, and update the register at regular intervals
- (ii) Determine the qualifications, including standards of education, training and fitness to teach, which satisfy the conditions for registration
- (iii) Act as the Designated Authority for the recognition of teacher qualifications in relation to the EU Directive on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications
- (iv) Act as the competent authority for the recognition of non-EU qualifications
- (v) Advise the Minister for Education and Science on the minimum standards of educational attainment required for entry into initial teacher education programmes
- (vi) Accredite and keep under regular review, for satisfying the requirements for registration, all programmes of teacher education, including primary degrees. (This will be done in consultation with the institutions concerned)
- (vii) Establish procedures and criteria for the probation and full recognition of new entrants to the teaching profession
- (viii) Advise and make recommendations on the induction of newly qualified teachers into the profession

- (ix) Draw up codes of professional practice for teachers and offer guidance on professional conduct, as deemed necessary
- (x) Investigate and, where appropriate, apply sanctions in relation to the professional misconduct or fitness to practise of any member
- (xi) Set out a framework for the incareer professional development of teachers and establish a mechanism, including accreditation, whereby the framework can be implemented
- (xii) Promote teaching as a profession through the organisation of lectures and conferences and the publication of newsletters, research reports and articles on educational issues
- (xiii) Undertake or commission research on educational issues relevant to the work of the Council and, as it deems appropriate, publish such research
- (xiv) Present the views of the teaching profession on educational issues and establish procedures for communicating with members, the public and organisations involved in education
- (xv) Advise the Minister for Education and Science on teacher supply and demand
- (xvi) Advise the Minister for Education and Science on educational issues related to the remit of the Council and offer advice on any matter referred to the Council by the Minister.

### **2.3 Relationship between the Minister for Education and Science and the Council**

The Minister for Education and Science has a primary role in promoting a quality education service in the State. The role of a self-regulating Teaching Council is complementary to this.

Where the Minister for Education and Science decides, for whatever reasons, not to implement recommendations of the Teaching Council in relation to standards of entry to the teaching profession and teacher supply, the Minister should be required to publish a statement giving the reasons for not implementing such recommendations. Where a difficulty arises it will be a matter for the Teaching Council and the Minister to devise a satisfactory solution to this problem.

## **CHAPTER 3**

# **The Register**





## CHAPTER 3

# The Register

A key function of the Teaching Council will be to establish and maintain a register of teachers. The conditions for admission to the register will be set out in Regulations made by the Council. The most important function associated with the provision of a professional register is that it should be available to validate the claims of an individual to be professionally qualified.

Registration by the Council shall be a pre-requisite for employment as a teacher being paid out of state funds in recognised primary and post-primary schools, in accordance with Ministerial regulations.

The register will include as a minimum the following details in respect of each person entitled to be registered:

- 1 Full Name
- 2 Address
- 3 Date of Birth
- 4 Qualifications
- 5 Type of Registration
- 6 Registration Number
- 7 Date of Registration

### **3.1 Conditions for Registration**

#### ***A Academic and Professional Qualifications***

##### Future Teachers

(Note: Following the definition used in the Education (No. 2) Bill, 1997, throughout this report the term teacher includes Principal teacher).

The academic and professional qualifications for admission to the register in the case of future teachers will be as follows

- (a) A suitable primary degree awarded by a university or other recognised degree awarding authority and a post-graduate teacher qualification, or equivalent

or

- (b) A degree awarded by a university or other recognised degree awarding authority on the basis of a concurrent course of academic study and teacher training extending over a period of not less than four years, or equivalent

or

- (c) A university degree awarded by a university or other recognised degree awarding authority on the basis of a concurrent course of academic study and teacher training in a College of Education recognised by the Minister for Education and Science under the Rules for National Schools, or equivalent

or

- (d) Such other professional qualifications as may be recognised by the Council for the purpose of registration

#### Existing Teachers

All existing teachers shall be deemed as having satisfied the conditions for admission to the register.

The term 'existing teacher' is defined as follows

- (a) A teacher serving on a specified date in a recognised capacity in accordance with the relevant regulations in a school recognised by the Minister for Education and Science

or

- (b) A teacher who has already served, or who was eligible to serve, in a recognised capacity in accordance with the relevant regulations in a school recognised by the Minister for Education and Science, and who is not serving in a recognised school on the specified date, but who is eligible for service in such a school.

#### ***B Other Requirements***

At present the State requires a competence in Irish as a condition for recognition.

#### ***C Evidence of Character***

The provision of satisfactory character evidence as attested by a professional person of public responsibility.

#### ***D Discretion of the Council***

The Council may refuse to register a person who fulfils the above criteria on the grounds of unfitness to practise as a teacher. That refusal may be appealed to the High Court within a period of two months. The High Court may then either cancel the refusal and direct that the person be registered, or affirm the decision of the Council.

### **3.2 Types of Registration**

The registration of teachers is a two stage process with a distinction being drawn between those teachers who are on probation or awaiting full registration, and those who are eligible for full registration.

Accordingly, three types of registration will be provided by the Council:

- (i) Provisional Registration for those recommended for registration who satisfy the conditions for registration, with the exception of the probation period
- (ii) Conditional Registration for applicants holding EU or exceptional qualifications which do not satisfy the standard requirements set down by the Council. Such registration to be granted for a limited period during which the applicant will be expected to fulfil the conditions prescribed by the Council. Thereafter, the applicant will be granted provisional or full registration, or, if the conditions are not fulfilled, registration will lapse
- (iii) Full Registration if the person has satisfied the conditions set down by the Council, including the probationary period.

### **3.3 Up-Dating of Register**

The register of members will be kept up to date by regular reviews of the data included thereon.

Changes in names, addresses and qualifications shall be brought to the notice of the Council by the individual member. The Council shall be informed of changes relating to the appointment, transfer and resignation of registered teachers by the employing authority.

In the case of registered teachers temporarily out of employment, the individual in question shall inform the Council of any changes.

### **3.4 Registration Procedure**

Applicants shall apply individually to the Council for registration.

Applicants for conditional registration who have completed their courses within the EU shall provide full evidence of their qualifications, as indicated by the Council.

Upon satisfactory completion of the probationary period and having satisfied the other conditions of registration, the applicant should be accorded full registration.

### **3.5 Registration Fees**

An initial registration fee, as determined by the Council, shall be payable by all new applicants for registration. The initial registration fee shall be waived in the

case of existing teachers who will automatically qualify for registration with the Council.

An annual fee, to be determined by the Council, shall be paid by all teachers in order to remain on the register.

### **3.6 Proof of Registration**

As proof that registration has been granted by the Council, a distinctive certificate indicating the type of registration accorded will be given to successful applicants.

Proof that registration has been renewed and is up to date shall be provided by the Council in the form of a receipt acknowledging the payment of the annual registration fee.

In the case of a potential employer wishing to establish a teacher's current standing, direct contact should be made with the Council.

### **3.7 Access to the Register**

The Council will decide the information contained in the register which may be made available for inspection by members of the public, and the circumstances in which, and the conditions subject to which, that information may be made available.

Prospective employers shall, before confirming an appointment, establish by reference to the Council that a person applying for a teaching post being paid out of state funds in a recognised school is a registered teacher.

### **3.8 Right to Withdraw from the Register**

When leaving the teaching service a teacher may, by forwarding a written request to the Council, have his/her name withdrawn from the register. In such cases of voluntary withdrawal, no part of the annual fee payable shall be refundable.

The teacher shall have the right to apply to the Council for re-registration at a future date under procedures to be decided by the Council.

### **3.9 Removal from the Register**

The Council, through its Committees, will establish procedures for investigating complaints in relation to the professional conduct or fitness to practise of any member, and, to conduct, if appropriate, formal hearings and apply appropriate sanctions.

Members against whom complaints have been made shall have the right to be represented at any hearings conducted by the Council. The Council shall conduct such hearings in accordance with the constitutional rights of the teacher and with

due regard for natural justice. In the event that the Council determines that any disciplinary action, up to and including withdrawal from the register, is appropriate, it will notify the teacher of its decision. The teacher may appeal such a decision to the High Court. If no appeal is made the Council will apply to the High Court for an order affirming its decision.

Where a registered teacher is convicted of an offence triable on indictment, or a similar offence outside the State, the Council may decide to remove that teacher's name from the register. Again, the teacher may appeal any such decision to the High Court and if no appeal is made, the Council will apply to the High Court for an order affirming its decision.

The power of the Teaching Council to remove teachers from the register will not affect any existing statutory rights of teachers under the Unfair Dismissals Acts or the Vocational Education Acts.

### **3.10 Extending Membership**

Whereas in the first instance membership of the Teaching Council will primarily be comprised of teachers having qualifications to teach in officially recognised first and second level schools, the Council should initiate discussions with a view to encouraging teachers in centres for education, lecturers in Colleges of Education and University Departments of Education having responsibility for the supervision of student teachers undergoing teaching practice in schools, members of the Department of Education and Science having responsibility for inspecting schools and advising teachers, and teachers working in the non-State funded sector to register with the Council.

As the non-formal system of education develops the Council may also wish to determine appropriate qualifications for teachers in the early childhood and adult education sectors, and develop procedures for the full recognition of teachers in these areas.



## **CHAPTER 4**

# **The Professional Education of Teachers**





## CHAPTER 4

# The Professional Education of Teachers

A Teaching Council will give members of the profession a significant measure of control over professional issues relating to all aspects of the teaching career from recruitment and supply, through initial preparation, induction and probation, to incareer development, as well as for professional conduct and competence.

### **4.1 Recognition of Qualifications**

In Ireland, initial teacher education programmes for primary teachers are provided in Colleges of Education and are validated by the universities, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Science. Minimum academic standards of entry and the number of places to be provided are also determined by the Minister.

At post-primary level, the Registration Council, subject to the approval of the Minister, determines the qualifications required to be eligible to teach in voluntary secondary schools.

The Minister is responsible for determining the qualifications appropriate for teaching in Vocational schools and in Comprehensive and Community schools.

The Teaching Council shall be empowered to make recommendations on the arrangements for entry into teaching, including advising on standards of entry, and should assume responsibility for the recognition of teachers' qualifications for the purpose of registration.

It will be a function of the Council to accredit and review at regular intervals degrees and other qualifications awarded by institutions of higher education, including courses of training for student teachers, as suitable qualifications for teaching. The Council should, in the exercise of these functions, consult with the Minister for Education and Science and with the relevant authorities in the institutions of higher education.

### **4.2 Induction**

An important function of the Council will be to seek to ensure that new entrants to the profession receive adequate support and advice during the formative period when they have their first encounters in the classroom. The Council shall seek to ensure that they will have the opportunity to refine and develop the skills acquired during the course of initial teacher education so that the experiences gained during this induction period will have a positive influence on their future success as teachers.

The Council, in cooperation with the Teacher Education Institutions and schools and through the dissemination of guidelines and support materials, will ease this transition for the student teacher, and seek to ensure that the supports it provides are supplemented at school level and include the provision of tutorial assistance by experienced personnel.

The development of these links will afford the Council a unique opportunity to foster closer relationships with its registered members and to identify their professional learning requirements.

#### **4.3 Assessment of Probationers**

The Council will assume responsibility for granting full recognition to teachers in recognised schools, following the successful completion of their probationary period. It will therefore be a function of the Council to make the necessary arrangements for the assessment of the performance of the probationary teachers so that those who have been deemed successful can be granted full registration.

Consistent with the view that the profession should be afforded greater control over its own affairs, the Council will assume responsibility for the assessment of probationary teachers. The procedures to be adopted in this area will be drawn up by the Council in agreement with the relevant partners.

The right to appeal an unfavourable assessment will be available.

#### **4.4 Incareer Development**

Teacher education is a continuum in which preservice education and induction are followed by well-designed incareer programmes, available throughout a teacher's career. Career-long professional learning is the key to creating a supportive environment in which both teachers and students can benefit.

The White Paper(1995, p.126) acknowledges that there is

a unanimous acceptance of the need for a cohesive policy on, and a comprehensive programme of, in-career professional development for teachers, related to the long-term development of the teaching profession and the education system generally.

The Teaching Council will have an important role in encouraging and supporting teachers in meeting the challenges of increasingly sophisticated standards of practice throughout their careers.

The Teaching Council will offer teachers the opportunity to take collective responsibility for their ongoing professional development by establishing professional learning goals and devising strategies which will ensure that they are well prepared to meet the challenges of educating the children of the nation.

The Teaching Council will propose a professional framework for career-long learning so as to maintain high standards of practice and to promote continuing competence among members. The purpose of the framework will be to provide a context of priority and coherence within which teachers, individually and collectively, can establish their own professional learning plans, and providing agencies can develop programmes and strategies for professional learning.

The Council will also promote and support research on best practice in incareer education.

The Teaching Council will:

- propose initiatives that support the individual in planning and developing a process of career-long professional learning

- acknowledge the different learning needs of teachers at different stages in their careers and devise strategies to meet the needs identified

- promote initiatives and conditions that foster shared learning among teachers

- recommend professional learning that will assist teachers in implementing national policies and new programmes

- accredit and review national inservice initiatives designed to support new policies and programmes.



## **CHAPTER 5**

# **The Composition and Structure of the Council**



# The Composition and Structure of the Council

## 5.1 Composition of the Council

The composition of the Teaching Council should be such as to reflect the scope of the Council's work. As the teaching profession should have a major say in the affairs of the Council, the Council should be composed of a majority of registered teachers. Other parties which have a legitimate interest in the affairs of the Teaching Council will also be represented on the Council. These include school managerial associations, educational institutions involved in teacher education at primary and post-primary level, parents and the Minister for Education and Science.

The overall membership of the Council should be such as to facilitate the efficient, effective and expeditious conduct of the business of the Council. The need to ensure a gender balance on the Council and sufficient members to serve on the committees established by the Council should also be borne in mind.

The Council will consist of 37 members as follows:

- (a) 22 registered teachers, including principal teachers at primary and post-primary levels, equally divided between the primary and post-primary sectors.

Of the eleven teachers at primary level, nine will be elected by primary teachers and two nominated by their union.

Of the eleven teachers at post-primary level, seven will be elected by post-primary teachers and two nominated by each of the unions at this level.

- (b) 15 members selected as follows:

4 nominated by institutions involved in teacher education, 2 primary and 2 post-primary

4 nominated by school managerial associations, 2 primary and 2 post-primary

2 nominated by National Parents' Associations, 1 primary and 1 post-primary

5 appointed by the Minister for Education and Science, to include one each from IBEC and ICTU.

The Teaching Council will operate as an autonomous, self-regulating statutory body, with a large degree of independence. The Council will act in the interests of the profession by promoting high standards of professional practice.

## **5.2 Selection Procedure for Registered Teacher Members**

The directly elected teacher members of the Council shall be elected by the body of registered teachers.

## **5.3 Method of Election**

The process of electing members to the Council will be open to all registered members, including those not currently working as teachers who have chosen to keep their registration current. Electoral procedures shall be adopted to include membership from all sectors of the profession. For example, it will be important that the diversity of experience and expertise within the post-primary sector, secondary voluntary, vocational and community and comprehensive, be reflected in the composition of the Council. It will also be important that there be a regional dimension in the membership of the Council.

## **5.4 Election of Teachers to the First Council**

Following the enactment of legislation, the first task will be to elect the teacher members of the first Teaching Council. Since a definitive register of eligible teachers will not have been compiled the first register shall comprise all recognised teachers whose salaries are paid by the State and who are serving in publicly funded schools on the day on which nominations for elections to the Council are required. Each teacher shall be entitled to vote according to the sector in which he/she is employed. In recommending this course of action, we recognise that some teachers who would be eligible for registration will not be entitled to vote, but to delay elections until a definitive register of electors can be prepared would result in an unreasonable delay in the establishment of the Council.

One of the first tasks of the Council will be to compile a list of all teachers who hold qualifications to teach in the State, and in subsequent elections all such teachers registered with the Council at the time of election will be entitled to vote according to the category in which they are employed, or if out of service, in only one of the categories in which they are qualified to teach.

Ideally, the mechanisms for the election to be devised should allow for rolling membership.

## **5.5 Organisational Structures**

The Council will elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, and arrange for the membership of each committee and approve an administrative structure and staffing arrangements for the Council.

The Council will hold a minimum of 3 meetings each year, and such other meetings as the Council may deem necessary. In addition, 10 or more members of the Council



may request the Director to call a meeting of the full Council to discuss any particular issue.

The first term of office of the Council will be 3 years and subsequent terms 4 years. The Council shall decide the terms of office of each of its committees.

Excluding the first term of office, members may serve for two consecutive terms only.

#### **5.5.1 Council Committees**

The committee structure devised by the Council to carry out its business will be dictated by the functions of the Council, as already outlined. In summary, these functions include:

- promoting the quality of education provided for first and second level students

- the establishment and maintenance of a register of members

- reviewing standards of education, training and fitness to teach of persons seeking admission to the teaching profession

- establishing procedures and criteria for the probation and full recognition of new entrants to the teaching profession

- acting as the Designated Authority for the recognition of teacher qualifications in relation to the EU Directive on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications

- acting as the competent authority for the recognition of non-EU qualifications

- drawing up a code of professional practice for teachers

- assuming responsibility for the professional discipline of registered teachers

- devising a framework for the in-career professional development of teachers

- evaluating the acceptability of newly established degree programmes for acceptance for entry into teacher training

- accrediting and reviewing preservice and inservice programmes designed to implement new policies and programmes

- promoting teaching as a profession

- commissioning research on educational issues relevant to the remit of the Council

- representing the views of the Council on educational issues

advising the Minister for Education and Science on teacher supply and demand and on such other matters as the Council deems appropriate, or as the Minister may refer to it.

A number of committees will be established to carry out the functions under the remit of the Council. These will consist of statutory and standing committees.

The statutory committees will comprise the Executive Committee, the Investigating Committee and the Disciplinary Committee.

The standing committees will comprise the Finance Committee, the Registration Committee and the Education Committee.

The functions and composition of these committees are described hereunder.

The functions of the three statutory committee will be specifically set out in legislation.

The Council may form other committees as the need arises.

## **5.6 Statutory Committees**

### **5.6.1 *Executive Committee***

The Executive Committee is designed to facilitate the efficient and effective functioning of the Council by conducting the business of the Council between general meetings of the Council.

The Chair of the Teaching Council will be the Chair of the Executive Committee.

#### *Composition of the Committee*

The Committee will consist of 11 members: the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council, the chairs of the standing committees and six other members.

#### *Functions of the Committee*

The specific functions of the Executive Committee will include:

- (i) Liaising with the Director to prepare the agenda for the general meetings of the Council
- (ii) Acting as a co-ordinating forum to keep the Council aware of the activities of committees, and providing a co-ordinating mechanism to take actions on overarching issues as they may arise

- (iii) Acting on behalf of the Council when, due to time constraints or other circumstances, it is not possible to arrange a general meeting of the Council
- (iv) Making interim orders on behalf of the Council in urgent situations where the Council is unable to meet at short notice
- (v) Reviewing reports and proposals issued by Government Departments or other organisations and making recommendations to the Council as appropriate
- (vi) Recommending the establishment and membership of ad hoc and special committees to the Council for approval
- (vii) Making appointments to serve on an interim basis to statutory, standing, special and ad hoc committees in the event of a vacancy, subject to formal ratification by the Council
- (viii) Reviewing the terms of reference of standing, special and ad hoc committees when deemed appropriate and making recommendations to the Council
- (ix) Authorising emergency expenditures subject to general budgetary constraints
- (x) Reporting regularly to the Council
- (xi) Such other functions as the Teaching Council may from time to time delegate to the Executive Committee.

### **5.6.2 *Investigating and Disciplinary Committees***

The establishment of a Teaching Council marks an important stage in the recognition of teaching as a profession and in conferring on teachers the trust and respect that their service to the community merits. The main aim of a Teaching Council is to ensure the quality of those to whom the teaching of the children of the nation is entrusted. This quest for quality is directed towards ensuring that those who teach are professionally qualified to do so, and that they meet the standards of practice approved by the Teaching Council.

Complaints against members will be dealt with by two committees, the Investigating and Disciplinary Committees, whose functions are outlined hereunder. These committees will be empowered to investigate and adjudicate on complaints where it has been alleged that teachers have failed to meet acceptable standards of practice. Teachers' existing rights will not be affected by a Teaching Council. In particular, the power of the Teaching Council to remove teachers from the register will not affect any existing statutory rights of teachers under the Unfair Dismissals Acts or the Vocational Education Acts. Neither will the Council become involved in

day-to-day contractual or disciplinary matters, or hearing complaints which can be more appropriately dealt with at local level. The Council's role will be limited to issues of serious professional misconduct or cases where a teacher is the subject of a criminal conviction. Such issues may lead to withdrawal of registration on a temporary or permanent basis.

On the basis of experience of similar Councils, it is not expected that issues of this nature will arise often for consideration by the Council. The Council in exercising its functions in relation to safeguarding professional standards and in assuring accountability of the profession to the public, shall put in place procedures for dealing with such cases as may arise and in ensuring that these procedures are fair to all the parties concerned.

### **5.6.3 Investigating Committee**

#### *Composition of the Investigating Committee*

The Investigating Committee will consist of 11 members: the Vice-Chair of the Council and ten other members of the Council of whom 6 shall be from the teacher group, 3 from the nominated groups and 1 from the appointed group.

The Vice-Chair of the Council shall be the Chair of the Committee.

The Director will act as Secretary to the Committee.

This committee will investigate complaints against teachers where

- (i) a registered teacher has been convicted by a Court of a crime, and the conviction is of a nature which may imply that he/she has been guilty of professional misconduct which renders him/her unfit to teach, or
- (ii) a question arises whether the behaviour of a registered teacher constitutes professional misconduct, or has implications in relation to fitness to practise, or
- (iii) a person has been registered in error in consequence of any false or fraudulent declaration or representation.

The Investigating Committee will decide if there are sufficient grounds to refer matters to the Disciplinary Committee for a formal hearing.

#### *Hearing of complaints*

The Director shall, on behalf of the Investigating Committee, examine all complaints submitted to the Council. The Director shall only consider complaints which have been received in writing, signed by the complainant,

and supported by appropriate documentation setting out in detail the facts alleged and the surrounding circumstances.

The Director shall have the authority to reject a complaint if it is deemed to be frivolous, vexatious, made in bad faith, or otherwise an abuse of process.

The Director shall so inform the complainant, giving his/her reasons. However, a complainant may appeal such a decision to the Investigating Committee, who will then consider the case.

The Investigating Committee shall consider all cases referred to it by the Director, except where it appears to the Committee that

- (i) the complaint does not address an issue of the teacher's suitability to teach in a State-funded position
- (ii) existing established procedures have not been exhausted except there are good and sufficient reasons for considering the case
- (iii) there is insufficient evidence to warrant an investigation.

If the complaint is not appropriate for the Investigating Committee to consider, the Director shall notify the complainant, stating the reasons why it will not be considered by the Investigating Committee.

A member shall be given notice of a complaint brought to the attention of the Investigating Committee, and shall be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint.

Before arriving at a decision on the issue the committee may request such other information as it deems necessary, and obtain such advice or assistance from the legal advisor to the Council as it deems appropriate.

The committee, after investigating the complaint and considering the submissions, shall determine either

- (i) that the case shall not be referred to the Disciplinary Committee, or
- (ii) that the case, in whole or part, be referred to the Disciplinary Committee for proceedings.

The Investigating Committee shall notify the complainant and the member of its decision.

#### **5.6.4 *Disciplinary Committee***

The Disciplinary Committee will, through its panels, conduct hearings into cases referred to it by the Investigating Committee and decide on the action, if any, to be taken.

##### *Composition of the Committee*

The Disciplinary Committee, through its panels, will be comprised of 13 members of the Council, 7 of whom shall be from the teacher group, 3 from the nominated group and 2 from the appointed group, and the Chair of the Council, who shall chair the committee.

No member of the Disciplinary Committee shall be eligible to serve on the Investigating Committee.

The Director will act as Secretary to the Committee.

##### *Appointment of Panels*

Panels will be selected from among the members of the committee to hold hearings of individual cases. A panel shall consist of at least three and not more than five members of the committee, a majority of whom shall be registered teachers. The chair of the committee shall, in consultation with the committee, appoint the chair of each panel from the committee.

Panels shall hold a hearing regarding:

- (i) any case referred to it by the Investigating Committee
- (ii) an application for reinstatement submitted by a previously disqualified member
- (iii) an application submitted by a person who had been a recognised/registered teacher but whose recognition/registration had been withdrawn prior to the establishment of the Council.

The Director shall give notice of the hearing to the member and include:

- (i) a statement of the time, place and purpose of the hearing
- (ii) a statement indicating the statutory authority under which the hearing will be heard
- (iii) a statement that if the member notified does not attend the hearing, the panel may proceed in the individual's absence
- (iv) a statement that the member will be afforded the opportunity to examine written evidence, may be represented by legal or other advisors, examine witnesses, present arguments and submissions and conduct cross-examinations.

Legislation shall provide for the panel to be granted the powers, rights and privileges vested in the High Court, or a judge thereof to:

- (i) enforce the attendance of witnesses and their examination on oath or otherwise, and
- (ii) compel the production of documents.

Where any person refuses to comply with the Disciplinary panels in regard to these issues, or indeed undertakes any action which might be construed as contempt of court, were it to occur in a court of law, such a person shall be liable to summary conviction and a fine.

The panel shall consider the allegations, hear relevant evidence and ascertain the facts of the case. On completion of its inquiry, the panel shall embody its findings in a report to the Disciplinary Committee, including its opinion on the allegations.

#### *Levy of Sanctions*

The Disciplinary Committee shall have the authority, subject to confirmation by the High Court, to apply any of the following sanctions:

- (i) the member's Certificate of Registration be revoked, or
- (ii) the member's Certificate of Registration be suspended for a specified period of time, or
- (iii) impose specific terms, conditions and limitations on the member's Certificate of Registration for a specified or an indefinite period of time, or
- (iv) direct that the effect of an order in relation to revoking a member's Certificate of Registration be suspended for a specified period of time on condition that the member seek the assistance of the Teacher Welfare Service or attend a specified incareer development course, or such other course as may be deemed appropriate.

In accordance with the principles of natural justice, members of a panel which considered the case may not act on the Disciplinary Committee when it is considering the sanctions to be applied in that particular case.

The Director shall inform both parties of the decision of the panel.

Upon receiving notice of the sanction, the teacher may, within a specified period, apply to the High Court to cancel this decision.

Should the teacher not make such an application in the specified time period, the Council shall apply to the High Court to affirm the decision of

the Disciplinary Committee, and to direct that the sanction be applied. Where appropriate, the Council shall also inform the employer of the decision.

## **5.7 Standing Committees**

### **5.7.1 Finance Committee**

This committee will have responsibility for the management of the financial affairs of the Council, including the preparation of the annual budget, the control of expenditure, the reviewing of registration and other fees, the management of the Council's property and investments and the determination of employee salary and benefits.

#### *Composition of the Committee*

The committee shall be composed of 5 members, 3 from the teacher group and 1 each from the appointed and nominated groups. The chair will be appointed by the committee.

#### *Functions*

The Finance Committee's functions shall include:

- (i) reviewing and reporting on the financial affairs of the Council
- (ii) preparing the annual budget
- (iii) supervising the disbursement of funds
- (iv) reviewing and making recommendations with respect to the Council's fees and special levies
- (v) reviewing employee salaries and benefits and making recommendations to the Council
- (vi) recommending the appointment of auditors
- (vii) liaising with and preparing accounts for the auditors
- (viii) reporting on the financial affairs of the Council to the general meetings.

### **5.7.2 Registration Committee**

This committee shall have responsibility for the following:

- (i) Regular applications for admission to the register
- (ii) Applications for exceptional admission to the register
- (iii) Probation of new teachers



- (iv) Accreditation and review of newly established degree programmes submitted for acceptance for entry into teacher training and pre-service teacher education programmes designed to implement new policies and programmes.

#### *Composition of the Committee*

The committee will consist of 13 members, 7 from the teacher group, 4 from the nominated group, and 2 from the appointed group.

The Chair of the Committee shall be selected by the members of the committee.

The Deputy Director of the Council will have responsibility for dealing with and reporting to the committee on regular applicants for admission to the register.

The committee will appoint panels of its members for the purpose of:

- (i) considering applications for admission to the register from persons eligible under the EU Directive on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications, or persons holding out of state, or exceptional qualifications
- (ii) providing for the needs of probationary teachers and their assessment
- (iii) accrediting newly established degree programmes submitted for acceptance for entry into teacher training
- (iv) reviewing and accrediting pre-service teacher education programmes.

For the purposes of fulfilling functions (iii) and (iv) above, the committee shall co-opt suitably qualified persons. Such panels should have representation of registered teachers and of staff from higher education institutes and the NCEA so as to ensure an adequate balance of expertise. Co-opted members should not be associated with the institution or course under review.

#### *Operation of panels*

##### (i) Exceptional Admissions to the Register

This panel will consider applications for admission to the register from persons eligible under the EU Directive on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications, or persons holding non EU, or exceptional qualifications.

Upon examination of the qualifications and supporting documentation of applicants, the panel shall recommend any of the following decisions to the Registration Committee:

- (a) Grant full registration
- (b) Grant provisional registration if the applicant satisfies conditions equivalent to those set down by the Council, excluding those relating to the probationary period
- (c) Grant conditional registration with the condition that the applicant undertakes further course(s) as advised by the committee and within the period determined by the committee
- (d) Refuse to grant registration on the grounds that the applicant does not meet the conditions set for full, provisional or conditional registration.

Appeals from candidates refused admission to the register under the above conditions will be considered by the Education Committee.

(ii) Probation

This panel shall have the following functions:

- (i) Recommending the conditions to be fulfilled by probationary teachers
- (ii) Managing the probationary service
- (iii) Producing documentation for probationary teachers
- (iv) Determining the assessment criteria for satisfactory probation
- (v) Recommending teachers who have successfully completed the probationary period for full registration
- (vi) Adjudicating on appeals from candidates who have not been recommended for full registration
- (vii) Hearing appeals from applicants having out of state or exceptional qualifications who have not been granted admission to the register.

(iii) Accreditation and Review

This panel will accredit and review newly established degree programmes submitted to the Council for acceptance for entry into teacher training and pre-service teacher education programmes.

A panel should consist of at least 4 and not more than 7 persons, ensuring a balance of appropriate expertise and should exercise the following functions:

- (i) Examine the relevant course documentation
- (ii) Where appropriate meet with representatives of the institution, including members of the course committee.

Having conducted its enquiries, the panel shall report to the Registration Committee, who in turn shall report to the Council. The Council shall then direct the Director to:

- (a) issue a certification of accreditation, or
- (b) issue a certification of accreditation, subject to certain modifications to be implemented within a specified period of time, or
- (c) refuse or withdraw accreditation.

### **5.7.3 Education Committee**

This committee will have responsibility for making recommendations on the induction of new members into the profession, developing a code of professional practice for teachers, preparing submissions and reports on issues of educational interest, establishing the in-career needs of teachers and developing a framework for the provision of programmes to meet the needs identified, accrediting and reviewing inservice programmes designed for the purpose of implementing new programmes and policies, advising on teacher supply and demand and developing policy proposals for effective communications with the profession and the wider public.

#### *Composition of the Committee*

The committee will consist of 13 members, 7 from the teacher group, 4 from the nominated group, and 2 from the appointed group.

The Chair of the Committee shall be selected by the members of the committee.

The committee will establish panels of its members for the purposes of carrying out its functions.

#### *Operation of Panels*

##### Induction

The functions of the panel will include advising on and making recommendations on the induction of new members to the profession, and fulfilling the functions of the Council in this area as set out in Chapter 4.

##### Education

The functions of the panel will include:

- (i) drawing up a code of professional practice for teachers
- (ii) preparing submissions and reports on educational issues as directed by the Council

- (iii) promoting, supporting and commissioning research relating to the professional needs of members
- (iv) developing a framework to provide for the incareer development of teachers and liaising with providing institutions
- (v) accrediting and reviewing national inservice initiatives designed to support new policies and programmes
- (vi) monitoring teacher supply and demand and preparing reports for the Council.

#### Communications

The functions of the panel will include the following:

- (i) acting as directed by the Council on matters relating to communication between the Council and the profession, and the Council and the public
- (ii) developing policy proposals for the Council in relation to communication issues, including the preparation of newsletters, bulletins, reports, the organisation of seminars and conferences, media advertising and the organisation of meetings other than those of the Council and its committees.

**CHAPTER 6**

**Administration and Finance**



## CHAPTER 6

# Administration and Finance

The Teaching Council will operate as an autonomous, self-regulating, statutory body, acting in the interests of its members and the public in promoting the highest standards of professional practice. The Council will operate from the outset as an independent organisation which, while functioning in co-operation of the Department of Education and Science and the other partners in the system, will have its own specific remit and independent structures. To enable the Council exercise its responsibilities in a manner becoming of a professional organisation it is also important that it be financially independent.

Estimates of the expenditure required to meet the annual costs of the Teaching Council during the early years of its operation are provided in the chapter. These are sub-divided under three headings as follows. The administrative support structure in terms of staffing and related salary costs are presented in the first section. This is followed by an outline of the expenditure associated with providing suitable office accommodation and an estimate of the operating costs necessary for financing the work of the Council.

The estimates quoted only serve as an illustration of the likely expenditure of the Council. More definitive statements will only be possible once the precise staffing and functions of the Council have been agreed. It should also be appreciated that the estimates provided are based on current costs and the figures quoted will have to be adjusted upwards to take account of inflation and the salary levels payable at the time the Council is established.

The expenditure estimates do not take into account the initial costs involved in establishing the Teaching Council. These will be the subject of a later section.

### **6.1 Administration: Staffing**

The Teaching Council will have a complement of fourteen staff as follows:

- One Director
- One Deputy Director
- One Finance and Administrative Officer
- Three Education Officers
- Three Staff Officers
- Four Secretarial Staff
- One Caretaker/Security person

A general indication of the responsibilities attaching to the above positions is outlined hereunder.

### ***Director***

The Director will carry out the functions assigned by the Council and will have overall responsibility for overseeing the administration of the affairs of the Council and for the management of the administrative staff. He/she will also have an important role in liaising with national and international educational organisations and in representing and promoting the Teaching Council at home and abroad. While some of the key functions attached to this position may be delegated to other staff, the Director will be accountable for ensuring the successful implementation of Council policy.

The person appointed to this position should be highly qualified academically, with particular expertise and a proven track record in management. It is unlikely that a person with the qualifications and experience necessary to discharge the duties attached to this position and the ability to command the respect and confidence of the profession, as well as give prestige to the Council would be attracted to this post with a salary less than that of Assistant Secretary in the Civil Service.

### ***Deputy Director***

The Director will be assisted by a Deputy who, in addition to deputising for the Director in his/her absence and undertaking the functions delegated by the Director, will have specific responsibility for all matters relating to the registration of new members, including exceptional admission to the register, the maintenance of the register, the organisation of the probation service and the administration of the duties attached to the accreditation and review functions of the Council.

The person appointed to this post will have particular expertise in the professional areas related to the functions attached to this position.

The salary appropriate for this position would equate with that of a Principal Officer (Grade 1) in the Civil Service.

### ***Finance and Administrative Officer***

The person appointed to this position will have responsibility for the development and management of the financial, accounting and budgetary operations of the Council, the management of the property and investments of the Council, the establishment and operation of computer operations, and the management of the general administrative operations of the Council. including the payment of staff salaries, benefits, other expenses and administration costs, preparing financial statements for the Council, drafting the annual budget, reviewing income and expenditures and liaising with the Council's auditors.

The person appointed to this post will have particular expertise in the financial and personnel management and would merit a salary equivalent to that of a Principal Officer in the Civil Service.



### ***Education Officers***

The persons appointed to this position will assume responsibility for those areas included under the remit of the Education Committee. Of particular significance in this area will be the preparation of materials for the induction of newly qualified teachers and for mentors, drafting a code of professional practice, identifying the professional development needs of members and producing communication materials for members.

Relevant professional experience in all areas related to the preservice and incareer development of teachers will be a requirement for this position.

The salary attached to this position will be equivalent to that of a Principal Officer in the Civil Service.

### ***Support Staff***

The above staff complement will be supplemented by three staff officers, three secretarial staff, a receptionist and a caretaker/security person. The salaries for these positions will equate with those attached to the equivalent ranks in the Civil Service.

It is recognised that in the early stages of establishing the Council and at particular periods when it is fully operational, or for particular tasks as determined by the Council, there may be a requirement for additional staff. Such requirements may best be met by the appointment of part-time and temporary staff as determined by the Council as the need arises.

### ***Costing of Staffing Structure***

	<b>Position</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>£</b>
1	Director	Assistant Secretary	60,000
1	Deputy Director	Principal Officer 1	55,000
1	Finance Officer	Principal Officer	51,000
3	Education Officers	Principal Officer	153,000
3	Staff Officers	Staff Officer	66,000
4	Secretarial Officers	Clerical Officer	74,000
1	Caretaker/Security Person	Caretaker	14,000
	Superannuation		105,000
	<b>Total</b>		<b>578,000</b>

Levels are for the comparative Civil Service Grades in each case.

Salary figures quoted are inclusive of employer PRSI contributions.

## 6.2 Administration: Accommodation and Office Expenses

An urgent task for the Teaching Council, once established, will be to obtain suitable office accommodation. This should comprise a reception area, conference rooms, staff offices, toilets and storage space, amounting to an area of approximately 8,000 sq. feet. The costs of rent, in addition to the associated costs of insurance, lighting, heating, minor repairs and maintenance are estimated as follows.

Accommodation	£
Rent of Premises and Rates (8,000 sq. ft)	240,000
Cleaning	50,000
Lighting and Heat	50,000
Insurance and Indemnity	50,000
Minor Repairs and Maintenance	30,000
Total	420,000

### *Office and Administration Costs*

Estimates of the annual costs involved in the organisation and conduct of the affairs of the Council are outlined hereunder. The purchase of appropriate texts and journals which will form the basis for a library/resource centre for members, is included under publications.

Travel and Subsistence	80,000
Telephone	35,000
Postage	95,000
Printing and Stationery	75,000
Professional Fees	25,000
Legal Fees	20,000
Investigating & Disciplinary Comm. Fees	200,000
Office Equipment	20,000
Office Furniture	10,000
Bank and Interest Charges	10,000
Staff Recruitment and Training	10,000
Publications	50,000
Research	50,000
Conferences and Seminars	50,000
Total	730,000

## 6.3 Estimated Total Annual Expenditure

The total estimated annual expenditure for the Council when it is operational is summarised as follows.

Staff Salaries	578,000
Accommodation	420,000
Office and Administration	730,000
Total	1,728,000
Contingencies	172,800
Grand Total	1,900,800

## **6.4 Income**

It has been stated from the outset that the Teaching Council will operate as an independent, self-regulatory, self-financing organisation. Similar professional bodies such as An Bord Altranais, the Medical Council, the Incorporated Law Society and Teaching Councils established in other countries are funded in the main by their members. In keeping with this practice the income required to fund the operation and activities of the Teaching Council will be derived from application and registration fees, an annual fee and fees associated with the services provided by the Council.

In arriving at estimates of the fees to be levied, the costs involved in running a Teaching Council having approximately 40,000 members were taken into account and comparisons made with the equivalent fee charges in other professional bodies and in Teaching Councils elsewhere.

### ***Application and Registration Fees***

A fee of £20 will be charged for processing routine applications from individuals having qualifications which meet the standard requirements set down by the Council. In the case of applicants holding qualifications from other EU states, or having non-routine in-state qualifications this charge will be increased to £50 to take into account the additional administrative costs involved in processing the application. A fee of £100 will be charged for applicants having qualifications from educational institutions outside the EU.

In addition, the above applicants will be charged a registration fee of £30.

### ***Annual Fee***

Based on a membership of 40,000 teachers, an annual fee of £50 is recommended to cover operating costs of the Council.

It is envisaged that this fee will be tax deductible and will be collected by mandatory payroll deduction in the case of members employed in publicly funded institutions.

### ***Service Fees***

A fee schedule for services provided by the Teaching Council will be a matter for the Council to decide. In arriving at an appropriate fee it may be of relevance to note that the current fee for accrediting degree courses is £300.

Once a decision has been taken to establish a Teaching Council a series of tasks will need to be taken so as to get it off the ground. These will be discussed in the final chapter of this report.



**CHAPTER 7**

**Making It Happen**



## CHAPTER 7

# Making It Happen

Once the decision to establish a Teaching Council has been made and the necessary legislation enacted, certain preparatory work will need to be undertaken so as to arrange for the appointment of the membership of the first Council. An outline of the tasks to be accomplished during this preparatory phase and a tentative time scale for the completion of this work is included in this chapter.

### 7.1 Start-Up Costs

The initial stage in establishing the Teaching Council will be critical from the financial point of view. Until the first Council is in place it will not be possible to levy fees and therefore provide the necessary finance to fund the initial phase of establishment. In the interim a series of tasks will need to be completed and this will require the appointment of temporary staff and making arrangements for the provision of appropriate office accommodation, equipment and operating costs. The tasks to be undertaken during this interim period are outlined hereunder.

There are cogent reasons for recommending that the costs involved during this period be provided from central funds.

Firstly, the Teaching Council will assume responsibility for a range of functions currently being performed by the Department of Education and Science and will result in significant savings in the immediate and long-term. In particular, the work now being undertaken by the Registration Council will be transferred to the Teaching Council.

Secondly, the Teaching Council will also provide a range of advisory services and expertise to the Department in areas such as teacher education, teacher supply and demand and the induction and probation of newly qualified teachers, services which in the normal course of events would have to be supplied by the Department. The provision of these services will result in significant savings for the Department over the long-term and should be taken into account when establishing the Teaching Council.

Thirdly, the Teaching Council will make a significant contribution towards improving the quality of education by promoting teaching as an attractive and rewarding career, by protecting standards of entry into the profession, by promoting high standards of professional practice and incareer development, by the exercise of disciplinary functions and in raising the morale and status of the profession. This will result in many long-term benefits to the nation and should be acknowledged by a gesture of goodwill on the part of Government.

In recognition of these services it is appropriate that the Government, through the Department of Education and Science, signal its support for the work of the Teaching Council by financing its activities through this critical period of development. Provision of a start-up grant and a suitable headquarters would ensure that the Council would be placed on a sound financial footing from the outset.

When a temporary staff has been appointed and suitable accommodation provided it will be possible to undertake the tasks specified for this interim period.

## **7.2 Preparation of Legislation**

The first task to be undertaken following the decision to establish the Council will involve the drafting and enactment of the legislation necessary to give a statutory basis to the Teaching Council. While it is accepted that the legislation will have to deal with a range of complex issues, it is expected that the areas addressed in this report will provide clear guidelines as to the broad intentions underpinning the Council and the specific functions it is intended to serve.

It is envisaged that a draft bill could be prepared and published for consultation by **November, 1998** and enacted by **April, 1999**.

## **7.3 Preparation of the Register of Electors**

The Teaching Council will not become statutorily operative until the first Council meets. It will be a priority to make the necessary arrangements for this to happen once the legislation has been enacted. This will involve a series of tasks which will require careful and methodological planning. The most complex and time-consuming task will be the organisation of the election of teacher members to the first Council. This will involve the organisation of a comprehensive list of recognised teachers whose salaries are paid by the State and who teach in publicly funded schools on a date to be specified. The data base for this task will be extracted from existing Department of Education and Science records and from lists of eligible teachers employed by Vocational Education Committees. The register will be organised by category and according to constituency.

This task should be completed by **September, 1999**.

## **7.4 Organisation of the First Election**

Regulations for the conduct of elections will have to be drawn up. This will include the preparation of the conditions to be fulfilled by candidates in order to be eligible for election, the invitation and checking of nominations, the preparation of lists of candidates, the printing and distribution of ballot papers and accompanying documentation, the organisation of the election, the processing of ballot papers and the announcement of results.



During this period arrangements will also have to be made for the appointment of the non-elected Councils members.

This phase of the work should be completed by **December, 1999**.

Thereafter, the arrangements for the first meeting of the Council and the preparation of the agenda will need to be completed. Items to be considered at the first meeting will include the election of a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council, the appointment of members to the Council Committees and making arrangements for the recruitment of staff.

The first meeting of the Council should take place in **January, 2000**.

#### **7.5 Summary of the Timetable for the Establishment of the First Council**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Publication of Legislation	November, 1998
Enactment of Legislation	April, 1999
Preparation of the Register	September, 1999
Completion of the Election	December, 1999
First Meeting of the Council	January, 2000



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