



# Communications and Engagement Strategy 2024-2027

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## Purpose of this strategy



The Teaching Council is the regulator of the teaching profession in Ireland. It is dedicated to promoting and regulating excellence in the teaching profession.

This strategy has been developed to further the objectives in the Council's Strategic Plan (2022-2027). This requires the Council to:

**“Develop and implement an integrated communications strategy to incorporate clear objectives and deliverables with a particular emphasis on plain English and Gaeilge shimplí”.**

Aligned to the Strategic Plan, the communications strategy will support the communication of policies, regulations, and standards for the teaching profession.

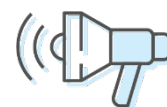
The communications strategy aims to facilitate regular and timely engagement with stakeholders, promoting collaboration and gathering feedback to shape our outreach and the services we provide. Our communications will also support the professional development of teachers by conveying information relating to relevant opportunities, guidance and professional standards.

Following from this, communications will also have an essential role in upholding and promoting the acknowledged integrity of the teaching profession and the public trust placed in teachers by society.

The strategy will be supported by annual implementation plans and activities regarding

the specific functions and operations of the Teaching Council. It will be kept under annual review by the Director of the Teaching Council to ensure its ongoing relevance and timeliness for the wider corporate strategy.

## Communicating our purpose



The Teaching Council is the regulator of the teaching profession in Ireland. Our role is to protect the public by promoting and regulating professional standards in teaching.

We do this through the statutory registration of teachers, ensuring a highly qualified teaching profession, whose members meet and uphold high standards of professional competence and conduct.

## The Teaching Council's primary functions include (and are not limited to):

The following responsibilities are reflected in the Council's communication needs, promoting effective regulation in the public interest.

We do this for a school system including over 120,000 registered teachers, almost 4,000 schools and pupils and learners across primary, post-primary and further education sectors.

- 1. Responsibility for maintaining a register of qualified and vetted teachers in Ireland.** This ensures that teachers meet the necessary qualification, standards, competencies, and character requirements for registration.
- 2. Establishing and upholding high standards for teachers in Ireland.** The Council establishes standards across the

entire career span for teachers including guidelines and codes related to their professional conduct, knowledge, skill, and competence.

- 3. Ensuring the quality of initial teacher education programmes provided by higher education institutions in Ireland.** This includes review and accreditation processes to maintain high standards of initial teacher education, which in turn contributes to the quality of teaching and learning in the country.
- 4. Establishing standards to guide and support induction processes that are required on a statutory basis and promoting lifelong learning for registered teachers.** This sets systematic benchmarks supporting the early stages of teachers' careers and encourages continuing professional learning throughout their career.
- 5. Commissioning and conducting research, using data and evidence to inform decision making and policy development.** This provides evidence-based recommendations and contributes to discussions on educational policies, practices, and reforms, with the intention of ensuring high standards in the teaching profession.

## Themes underpinning communications



In preparing this strategy, the Teaching Council consulted stakeholders and identified the following priority themes:

- 1. Role clarity:** We will communicate the purpose of the register of teachers, clearly articulating our role as a regulator, and encouraging and promoting high standards in the profession.
- 2. Upholding standards in order to protect children and vulnerable people:** We will ensure that there is compliance with regulatory policies and guidelines and thereby promote the integrity of the teaching profession in the public interest.
- 3. Our positive contribution and value:** We will highlight our contribution to the teaching profession, and to the education

system, to promote ongoing trust and mutual respect among our stakeholders.

- 4. Transparency and accountability:** We will communicate our processes and decision-making criteria to demonstrate fairness, competency, efficiency, transparency, and accountability, including our fitness to teach processes.
- 5. Engagement and collaboration:** We will emphasize our intention for constructive dialogue with all stakeholders to enhance and support the teaching profession.

In line with our remit under the Teaching Council Act, we will contribute regularly to the policy discourse on education on an evidence-informed basis.

As well as communicating outwards, we will be a listening, evidence-informed and learning organisation, for all who we work with.

- 6. Communications style and approach:** We will adopt a professional, compassionate, and helpful approach in our communications, reflective of our organisation and people, articulating a consistent, clear, and strong message about the role of the Council.
- 7. Operations and service enhancement:** We will seek to further optimise our procedures, including internal processes and interactions, to continually enhance overall user-experience.
- 8. Describing who we are in a uniform way:** As an opener with all audiences and stakeholders, we'll describe who we are, what we do and why we do it (our remit under the Act), along the following lines:

**The Teaching Council is the regulator of the teaching profession in Ireland.**

**Our role is to protect the public by promoting and regulating professional standards in teaching.**

**Communication objectives include;**

- Creating awareness that the Teaching Council is promoting professional standards through regulation, in the public interest, and this is a good thing for the teaching profession;
- Demonstrating that the Teaching Council is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities, including the promotion of high standards and communications around fitness to teach;
- Developing and enhancing co-operative relationships that facilitate the Teaching Council's role, including collaborative engagement with all stakeholders;
- Enhancing engagement with the teaching profession and the wider education community, including consultation and information output relevant to our statutory remit.



## Strategic communications overview in line with Teaching Council Strategy 2022-2027

Goal	Strategic Area	Strategic Communications Approach	Strategic Communications Action(s)	Communication Deliverables
1	<p><b>Teacher Registration and Supply</b></p> <p>Ensure a sufficient supply of registered and vetted teachers to meet the identified needs of the school system, including diversity, in collaboration with the Department of Education, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and all stakeholders.</p>	<p>Focus on the solutions we are creating to address this evolving requirement, including acknowledgement of the various socio-economic pressures that exist in providing appropriate volumes of registered teachers across all regions of Ireland.</p> <p>A strong emphasis on facts and figures, taken from research, will underpin our outreach in this area.</p> <p><b>This requires us to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align our communications themes with the principles of transparency, engagement, and collaboration, promoting our mission and values and building further trust and credibility among our stakeholders.</li> <li>Develop narratives around our role, objectives and how they align with broader education policies and goals.</li> <li>Position the Teaching Council as an innovative leader, particularly in professional regulation and digitisation.</li> <li>Emphasise our commitment to streamlining processes for increased efficiency and optimised service delivery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in proactive and reactive media outreach to support our narrative.</li> <li>Coordinate communication with stakeholders to ensure consistent messaging and understanding.</li> <li>Leverage our website, social media channels, and other digital platforms to disseminate information widely and effectively.</li> <li>Activate a communications style guide. Use plain English and Gaeilge shimplí in our communications to ensure accessibility and understanding.</li> <li>Ensure best practice in line with our obligations under the Official Languages Act.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter and email updates: Continue regular newsletter and email updates to keep teachers and stakeholders informed about our progress and upcoming activities;</li> <li>Webinars and online forums: Engage with our stakeholders, discuss our initiatives, gather feedback, and answer any questions;</li> <li>Outreach: Continue to attend career fairs, Initial Teacher Education and Induction events and NQT meetings;</li> <li>Stakeholder meetings and workshops: Regular meetings with key stakeholders to provide updates, discuss our initiatives, and collaborate on strategies;</li> <li>Irish language: Continue to enhance Irish language accessibility on the My Registration portal and Teaching Council website;</li> <li>Bi-annual report to support communication on progress against key statutory obligations and strategic priorities;</li> <li>Teaching Council annual report: Detailing our activities and progress in line with strategic goals each year.</li> </ul>

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2	<p><b>Collaborative Professional Communities for Sustainability</b></p> <p>Provide practical frameworks and supports for collaborative professional communities with a particular focus on inclusion, joy, and creativity in quality teaching and learning.</p>	<p>Emphasise the importance of collaboration, inclusion, creativity, and quality in teaching and learning.</p> <p>Provide leadership in regulatory standards and promote innovation, also highlighting and acknowledging our interdependence with stakeholders.</p> <p>Highlight our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and quality across every aspect of teacher education.</p> <p>Highlight our commitment to the Irish language.</p> <p>Reflect our role and objectives, ensuring our messages are received by our audiences in as clear and as impactful a manner as possible.</p> <p><b>This requires us to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Emphasise our engagement with stakeholders in teaching and learning.</li> <li>○ Promote a culture of professional collaboration and knowledge sharing.</li> <li>○ Promote and support research, demonstrating the value it brings to the work of the Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use research findings to inform our policymaking and distribute research findings to inform policymaking and practice in the wider education system.</li> <li>○ Leverage our website, social media channels, and other digital platforms to disseminate information widely and effectively.</li> <li>○ Activate a communications style guide.</li> <li>○ Use plain English and Gaeilge shimplí in our communications to ensure accessibility and understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Website updates,</li> <li>○ Infographics, audio-visual outputs,</li> <li>○ Social media campaigns,</li> <li>○ Newsletters and email updates,</li> <li>○ Inclusions/articles in stakeholder publications,</li> <li>○ Stakeholder meetings and workshops,</li> <li>○ Webinars and online forums,</li> <li>○ Teaching Council annual report inclusions.</li> </ul>

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3	<p><b>Fitness to Teach</b></p> <p>Continue to ensure that Fitness to Teach processes are fair, appropriate, and effective in the interests of the public and profession.</p>	<p>Continue to foster trust and confidence among the public and the profession in fitness to teach processes and their outcomes.</p> <p>Emphasise the independence and impartiality of our processes in line with the law and our regulatory remit.</p> <p><b>This requires us to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Highlight the opportunity that exists to resolve disciplinary matters in the first instance at school level (in appropriate circumstances).</li> <li>○ Highlight our work in relation to relevant regulatory powers (extant and required) and our commitment to continuous improvement for greater efficiency and accessibility around our processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Highlight our dedication to fairness, appropriateness, and effectiveness in our Fitness to Teach processes.</li> <li>○ Continue to provide updates and notices relating to Fitness to Teach through the Teaching Council website, including inquiries.</li> <li>○ Provide updates to stakeholders on our progress in reviewing and streamlining fitness to teach processes, as well as the ongoing implementation of legislative regulations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Publish formal notices of inquiries on the website,</li> <li>○ Website updates (explanatory information),</li> <li>○ Issue formal notices of inquiries to media in a timely manner,</li> <li>○ Admitting media to inquiries*,</li> <li>○ Teaching Council annual report inclusions,</li> <li>○ Progress report to reflect on our work since the enactment of our Fitness to Teach function,</li> <li>○ Annual Fitness to Teach report.</li> </ul> <p>*The Inquiry Panel decides as to whether a case will be heard publicly or privately, and/or whether the details of the case are anonymised or not, at the discretion of the panel.</p>

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4	<p><b>Corporate and Resourcing</b></p> <p>Sustainable ways of working.</p> <p>Maintain and enhance the Teaching Council's flexible, collaborative, and innovative organisational culture that supports shared learning and responsiveness to regulatory requirement and national priorities.</p>	<p>Focus on highlighting how our work values and promotes sustainability, flexibility, collaboration, innovation, and shared learning to enhance trust in our strategic direction and operational efficiency.</p> <p>As the regulator of the teaching profession ensure we carry out our work by regulating for risk in the interest of the public.</p> <p><b>This requires us to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Convey our commitment to staff wellbeing, organisational efficiency, effectiveness, and transparent and equitable service delivery;</li> <li>○ Showcase our proactive approach to legislative review, internal audit, and other governance structures;</li> <li>○ Highlight successful implementation of our people strategy in alignment with the achievement of our goals;</li> <li>○ Set appropriate standards and procedures to ensure we carry out our function of regulation by managing and regulating for risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Develop and share key messages around our organisational culture, strategic objectives, and accomplishments.</li> <li>○ Interact with stakeholders to strengthen relationships and increase awareness of the Council's role and operations.</li> <li>○ Communicate our commitment to human rights, equality, diversity, inclusion, and staff wellbeing, emphasising the role of these values in our decision-making processes and service delivery.</li> <li>○ Emphasise our concern for the wellbeing of teachers, throughout our processes, across their entire career pathway.</li> <li>○ Highlight our transparency and the fairness and impartiality of our service delivery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Selective media engagement,</li> <li>○ Website updates,</li> <li>○ Infographics, (how we work),</li> <li>○ Social media updates (LinkedIn),</li> <li>○ Teaching Council annual report inclusions,</li> <li>○ Internal communications ensuring awareness of our plans, programmes, and initiatives,</li> <li>○ Dissemination and communications of a sustainability action plan,</li> <li>○ Encourage and ensure Irish language capability,</li> <li>○ Continually monitor and update our risk register.</li> </ul>



## Summary



The Teaching Council's regulatory role ensures adherence by the teaching profession to standards and codes of practice and conduct, supporting an acknowledged culture of excellence in teaching in Ireland. This aligns with broader educational policies which aim to foster quality education, enhancing outcomes for pupils, and promoting inclusivity and equality of educational opportunity in Ireland.

The Teaching Council promotes teacher development, innovation, collaboration, and research, thereby contributing to enhanced education quality. It supports learner-centred policies and effective teaching methods. Through its regulatory role, the Council contributes to a robust, quality-driven, and standards-based educational system in the public interest.

Effective communications will support the achievement of the Teaching Council's statutory role and operational objectives in line with the corporate strategy (2022-2027). This will be supported by annual implementation plans, and programme and project plans, that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound for optimum effectiveness.