

# **Candidate Information Booklet**

**Social Science Researcher  
(Higher Executive Officer)**

**Open Competition**

**Closing Date: 3pm on Friday, 29 August 2025**

# Candidate Information

## **Social Science Researcher (Higher Executive Officer)**

The Teaching Council is an equal opportunities employer and all applications for employment will be considered based on merit. The Teaching Council welcomes applications from all suitably qualified candidates irrespective of belief, gender, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, membership of the travelling community, family status or whether they have dependants.

The Teaching Council is committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003 and welcomes candidates with competence in the Irish language, or an interest in developing same.

- E-mail: [recruitment@teachingcouncil.ie](mailto:recruitment@teachingcouncil.ie).
- Block A, Maynooth Business Campus, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, W23 Y7X0.
- For further information on the Teaching Council please visit [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie)

## **Purpose of the Teaching Council**

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 is currently seeking a suitably experienced and qualified person to fill the vacancy of Social Science Researcher (Higher Executive Officer).

## **Location**

Teaching Council, Block A, Maynooth Business Campus, Maynooth, Co. Kildare (Blended working arrangements are available in accordance with the Teaching Council's Blended Working Protocols).

## **Job Type**

Full-time permanent position

## **Role Summary**

The Higher Executive Officer (HEO), Social Science Researcher role is situated within the Policy & Communications section of the Teaching Council and they will report to the Head of Policy & Communications. They will also support the cross functional work of the organisation and its strategic objectives, and advise, interact, and support the Senior Management team and staff at all levels in respect to matters related to their areas of responsibility.

The successful candidate will be a key member of the Policy & Communications team, managing the delivery of research projects and outputs, in addition to a variety of wider projects across the organisation. The successful candidate must have strong quantitative and qualitative research knowledge and skills, to ensure that research is conducted robustly and informs evidence-based findings and recommendations.

The successful candidate will demonstrate an ability to understand complex areas quickly, including relevant legislation that applies to the Teaching Council and the education policy landscape, including emerging issues and challenges.

## **Further duties and responsibilities include:**

- Manage and deliver assigned projects in the Policy & Communications section.

- Manage and deliver projects focusing on the Council's statutory roles and functions, in alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan.
- Design and conduct research projects, collect, and analyse quantitative and qualitative data, write findings, recommendations and reports for the Head of Policy & Communications, Senior Management Team, Council and its subcommittees, and external stakeholders.
- Proactively monitor the external environment and develop strategic policy advice by researching, analysing and develop evidence-based positions on current and emerging education issues as relevant to the Council's role and functions.
- Accurately identify where there are gaps in the evidence base and make sound recommendations for how this can be managed.
- Develop new research projects in collaboration with other colleagues within the Teaching Council and external organisations, liaising and consulting with external stakeholders as required.
- Ensure that all legal, ethical, and data compliance requirements are met in relation to research activities.
- Monitor and review performance and progress of research contractors.
- Represent the Council at external meetings, events, conferences and disseminate findings from projects through oral presentations and written outputs.
- Develop a network of research contacts and engage with national and international stakeholders such as academics, policy experts, other regulators and government departments.
- Manage budgets, staff assigned and other resources, including the coaching and mentoring of team members.
- Work effectively with other HEOS where cross-over issues arise and contribute to the strategic goals of the Council.
- Support capacity building within the organisation around social research methods and data analytics.

Other duties assigned by the Head of Policy and Communications or Teaching Council Director or Deputy Directors.

## **Essential Requirements**

The successful candidate must:

- Have a minimum of three years' relevant work experience.
- Have the requisite knowledge and ability to be able to discharge all the functions of the position.
- Have the ability to bring experience/expertise from previous projects to bear on existing issues.

- Have exceptional planning, organisational and analytical/interpretative skills with the ability to work to tight deadlines, prioritise tasks effectively and deliver results within strict deadlines while maintaining a focus on quality of work.
- Have excellent communication, interpersonal and people management skills.
- Have a proven ability to build productive working relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Be solutions-oriented with good initiative and problem-solving ability and have a desire to innovate and drive change.
- Have an organised approach and meticulous attention to detail in assisting with complex tasks and procedures.
- Have experience of and be proficient in the use of qualitative and quantitative data software and have an organised approach in managing information, including file management and use of ICT.
- Have the ability to be flexible and adapt to changing demands, manage competing priorities and meet deadlines.
- Have the ability to deal with complex queries from a wide range of stakeholders.
- Have the ability to work with confidential information and maintain confidentiality.

*(Please ensure that you demonstrate these in your application form)*

### **Desirable Criteria**

- Hold a third level qualification, in applied social research, statistics, sociology, social science, economics, geography, data analytics or a related discipline. The qualification must contain a substantial focus on social research methods and/or statistical methods
- Have detailed knowledge and experience of research project management: designing and conducting research projects to include research design and methodology, ethical procedures, literature reviews, development of research questions and conceptual frameworks, qualitative and quantitative research methods, data collection, data analysis, writing findings, discussion, recommendations and producing reports.
- Have detailed knowledge and experience in relation to qualitative and quantitative instrument design.
- Have significant technical ability in relation to qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques and software.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the work and strategic goals of the Teaching Council as the professional standards body for teaching in Ireland and the regulatory and policy context, both Irish and international, within which the Teaching Council carries out its work.
- Have detailed knowledge and experience in relation to business intelligence skills.

- Ability to interact using Irish language.

This job description is intended as a general guide to the range of duties, and it is neither definitive nor restrictive. The Teaching Council reserves the right to assign staff within the Teaching Council as appropriate and necessary.

### **Candidate Assessment Criteria**

Candidates will be assessed based on the job description outlined above, evidence of meeting the essential requirements set out above and the competency framework for Higher Executive Officer grade staff shown below.

#### **Team Leadership**

- Works with the team to facilitate high performance, developing clear and realistic objectives addressing performance issues if they arise.
- Provides clear information and advice as to what is required of the team.
- Strives to develop and implement new ways of working effectively to meet objectives.
- Leads by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required.
- Places high importance in staff development, training and maximising skills & capacity of team.
- Is flexible and willing to adapt, positively contributing to the implementation of change.

#### **Analysis & Decision Making**

- Gathers and analyses information from relevant sources, whether financial, numerical, or otherwise weighing up a range of critical factors.
- Takes account of any broader issues and related implications when making decisions.
- Uses previous knowledge and experience to guide decisions.
- Makes sound decisions with a well-reasoned rationale and stands by these.
- Puts forward solutions to address problems.

#### **Management & Delivery of Results**

- Takes responsibility and is accountable for the delivery of agreed objectives.
- Successfully manages a range of different projects and work activities at the same time.
- Structures and organises their own and others work effectively.
- Is logical and pragmatic in approach, delivering the best possible results with the resources available.
- Delegates work effectively, providing clear information and evidence as to what is required.
- Proactively identifies areas for improvement and develops practical suggestions for their implementation.
- Demonstrates enthusiasm for new developments/changing work practices and strives to implement these changes effectively.
- Applies appropriate systems/processes to enable quality checking of all activities and outputs.
- Practices and promotes a strong focus on delivering high quality customer service, for internal and external customers.

### **Interpersonal & Communication Skills**

- Builds and maintains contact with colleagues and other stakeholders to assist in performing role.
- Acts as an effective link between staff and senior management.
- Encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues.
- Projects conviction, gaining buy-in by outlining relevant information and selling the benefits.
- Treats others with diplomacy, tact, courtesy, and respect, even in challenging circumstances.
- Presents information clearly, concisely, and confidently when speaking and in writing.

### **Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development**

- Has a clear understanding of the role, objectives and targets of self and team and how they fit into the work of the unit and Department/Organisation and effectively communicates this to others.
- Has high levels of expertise and broad Public Sector knowledge relevant to their area of work.
- Focuses on self-development, striving to improve performance.

### **Drive and Commitment to Public Service Values**

- Strives to perform at a high level, investing significant energy to achieve agreed objectives.
- Demonstrates resilience in the face of challenging circumstances and high demands.
- Is personally trustworthy and can be relied upon.
- Ensures that customers are at the heart of all services provided.
- Upholds high standards of honesty, ethics, and integrity.



# Competition Process

## How to Apply

Applications should be made by completing the application form. All sections of the **form must be fully completed**. Once you complete your application you must email it to [recruitment@teachingcouncil.ie](mailto:recruitment@teachingcouncil.ie).

All application forms must be submitted in **Microsoft Word format only**.

## Closing Date

Your application must be submitted by email no later than **3pm on Friday, 29 August 2025**.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within **five working days** of applying, please contact [recruitment@teachingcouncil.ie](mailto:recruitment@teachingcouncil.ie).

Applications will **not** be accepted after the closing date.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the Teaching Council and should make sure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct.

## Selection Methods

The selection will include:

- Shortlisting of candidates based on the information contained in their application form.
- Competency-based interview.

## Shortlisting

Normally, the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the Teaching Council may decide that a number only will be called to interview.

In this respect, the Teaching Council provides for the use of a short-listing process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position. An expert board will examine the application forms against a pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position.

This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience.

# Appendix One

Part 1 (Conditions which particularly apply to this position)

## Pay

The scale of pay is as follows:

### Personal Pension Contribution (PPC) Pay Rate

€58,264   €59,967   €61,668   €63,366   €65,072   €66,769   €68,472   €70,928<sup>1</sup>  
€73,378<sup>2</sup>

This rate will apply where the appointee is a new recruit to the public service or is a civil or public servant *appointed on or after 6th April 1995* and is making a compulsory personal pension contribution. This rate will be adjusted in line with revised pay-scales published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

*\*LSI 1 is Long service Increment after 3 years on Max of scale.*

*\*LSI 2 is Long service increment after 6 years on Max of scale.*

The **Non-Personal Pension Contribution (Non PPC)** pay rate will apply where the successful candidate is current civil or public servant *recruited before 6th April 1995* and who is not required to make a compulsory personal pension contribution. This rate will be adjusted in line with revised pay-scales published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

**Important Note:** Candidates should note that entry will be at the minimum of the scale and will not be subject to negotiation and the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Increments may be awarded subject to satisfactory performance and to changes in the terms and conditions relating to salary increments in the Civil/Public Service generally. In certain circumstances, different conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is a serving civil or public servant. Please note that fixed period secondments from other Public Sector bodies may be considered.

# Appendix Two

Part 2 (other conditions which apply generally to the officer in this position)

## **Probation**

The appointee must serve a probationary period, which normally will last for six months. Should the appointee's service be satisfactory as regards health, conduct, efficiency, and performance generally during the probationary period, the appointment will be confirmed.

## **Duties**

The appointee will be required to perform any duties assigned from time to time as appropriate to the position.

## **Outside Employment**

The position is whole-time, and the appointee may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business, which would interfere with the performance of official duties. Clarification must be sought from line management where any doubt arises.

## **Headquarters**

The Teaching Council's headquarters are located in Maynooth, Co. Kildare and this post will be based there. The Teaching Council has developed a blended working protocol in line with the Blended Working Policy Framework for Civil Service Organisation. Employees may apply for a blended working arrangement in accordance with organisational requirements.

## **Hours of Attendance**

Hours of attendance will be fixed and will amount to not less than 35 hours net of breaks per week. No additional payment will be made for extra attendance as the rate of remuneration payable covers any exceptional extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time. Flexi-time is available.

## **Annual Leave**

The annual leave allowance will be 29 days per year, rising to 30 after five years' service. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave and is on the basis of a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

## **Sick Leave**

Pay during properly certified sick leave, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform sick leave circulars.

## **Superannuation and Retirement**

The appointee will be offered public service pension terms and retirement age conditions in accordance with pension arrangements in the Teaching Council depending on the status of the successful appointee:

In general, an individual who has no prior pensionable Public Service history in the 26 weeks prior to appointment or who is not currently on a career break or special leave with or without pay from a pensionable Public Service position will be a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme) which commenced from 1 January 2013 –Section 10 of the Public Service Pension (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012.

An individual who is on secondment will remain a member of the parent organisation's pension scheme and the pensionable remuneration will be based on their substantive grade i.e., the grade at which the individual is employed in their parent organisation.

An individual who was a member of a 'pre-existing public service pension scheme' as construed by the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Pensions) Act 2012 and who does not qualify for membership of the Single Scheme will have standard public service pension terms reflecting new entrant or non-new entrant status for the purposes of the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004.

## **Other Information**

The Teaching Council will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a campaign, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that the Teaching Council are satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important, therefore, for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position the Teaching Council will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises, the Teaching Council may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

### **Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

### **Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required by the Teaching Council, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the Teaching Council require regarding any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

### **Feedback regarding the process**

Feedback will be provided on written request following the interview stage. Feedback is not provided at the shortlisting stage. Such a request should be made within five working days of being notified of the Council's decision.

### **Candidates' Obligations**

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Candidates must not:

- Knowingly or recklessly provide false information,
- Canvass any person with or without inducements,
- Interfere with or compromise the process in any way.

A third party must not impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions if found guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine and/or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- Where the candidate has not been appointed to a post, they will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- Where the candidate has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, they shall forfeit that appointment.

## **Data Protection Act 2018**

When your application form is received, we create a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. To make a request under the Data Protection Act 2018 or GDPR 2018, please submit your request in writing to [dpo@teachingcouncil.ie](mailto:dpo@teachingcouncil.ie).

Please ensure that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes.