

# termtalk

General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland



**The Guiding Principles  
On Teacher Professional Learning**

**Statistics**  
A demographic profile of the profession

**Prof. Laura Lundy considers**  
Children's rights in the classroom

GTCNI's magazine for the teaching profession

# termtalk

your professional magazine

Termtalk is the Council's principal communications channel delivered to all teachers on the Register. This edition is published in a new compact format.

## In this edition...

- ▶ **MEET YOUR COUNCIL**
- ▶ **GTCNI'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES** – an overview of the Council's renewed policy commitment to Teachers' Professional Learning.
- ▶ **GTCNI Regulation FAQs** – understanding regulation – your key questions answered.
- ▶ **WIDER GTCNI WORK including:**
  - ▶ **Learning Leaders:** A Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning;
  - ▶ **MyGTCNI** - Inside Registration – helpful information;
  - ▶ **UCET(NI)** - Teacher Education in Northern Ireland; and
  - ▶ **Legal Lines** – with Laura Lundy, Professor of Education Law and Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast.



*Termtalk* Issue 25, 2018



## General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland

### Promoting Teacher Professionalism

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*Termtalk* is also available from the website in PDF format. Download directly from the GTCNI homepage or from the publications section, index under, *Termtalk*.

Are you carrying out educational research or preparing for a teaching interview? Why not check out our past editions of *Termtalk* and the Council's other publications. A complete archive of content is ready and available from the website: [www.gtcni.org.uk](http://www.gtcni.org.uk)

Join us on Twitter – *for news, views and updates*

See: [twitter.com/GTCNI](https://twitter.com/GTCNI)

*Termtalk* is the official Journal of **The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland**. GTCNI is the statutory regulatory body for the teaching profession and is dedicated to enhancing the status of teaching and promoting the highest standards of professional conduct and practice.

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# WELCOME

## from the GTCNI Council Chair

It is with great pleasure that I reintroduce *Termtalk*, the professional magazine of the Council. As you know, the Council is the professional body for teachers in Northern Ireland and, in performing this role; it essentially acts as a 'gatekeeper' to the profession. At a practical level, it does this by maintaining a Register of individuals whose qualifications to teach have been approved by the Council. In the near future, the Council will also begin to perform its regulatory role and this will ensure that the highest standards of professional conduct are maintained by all registered teachers. This will enhance the status and standing of the profession in the eyes of the public and among those we seek to serve; our pupils and their parents/guardians or carers.

The GTCNI, as a representative professional body, also acts as the 'professional voice' of teachers to ensure that any educational policy making that impacts on our teaching is fully informed by the expertise and experience of Council members. In this context, the Council had a formative role, working with other stakeholders, in the development of the Department of Education's 'Learning Leaders: A Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning.' This strategy and its implementation will undoubtedly shape the provision of teachers' professional learning in the years ahead. The Council's own 'Guiding Principles on Teacher Professional Learning' published in this edition of *Termtalk* provides an overview of its own views on what constitutes the quality professional learning that teachers must have access to.

The Council is also about to enter a new and exciting era in its development with the imminent appointment of its new Registrar/ Chief Officer. This individual will be responsible, in the years ahead, for leading the GTCNI with a vision for teacher professionalism in Northern Ireland while ensuring, at the same time, that the organisation continues to carry out its statutory responsibilities in an efficient and effective manner.

I hope you will enjoy this first republication of *Termtalk* and remember, it in itself, contributes to your own professional learning.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Canning". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Canning OBE  
GTCNI Chair

# Meet YOUR Council

**Council Members shape the strategic direction of GTCNI – overseeing the development of strategies, plans and policies that contribute to the development of teacher professionalism and professional standards in Northern Ireland.**

Council members are obliged to comply with a Code of Conduct and observe the highest standards of Trust, Honesty, Commitment, Excellence, Respect, Fairness, Equality, Dignity, Integrity, Tolerance and Service in relation to all matters. They attend four meetings of full Council per year and serve on one of four committees. Committees meet regularly for the transaction of their business areas, covering multiple functions and delegated responsibilities, as determined by the Council itself. Council is made up of 33 members, of which 14 are directly elected by teachers and 19 are appointed by a variety of local education stakeholders which include: NI Teachers' Council (5), Employing Authorities (4) and other educational bodies (6). The Department of Education appoints four members, of whom one will be representative of industry and commerce and three will reflect the wider public interest. Each Council has a term of office of 4 years.

## Elected Members

### Nursery School representative

Joanne Burns

### Special School representative

Paul Fitzpatrick

### Primary School representatives

Chris Murdock

Catriona Mullan

Grainne McAleer

Delma Boggs

### Secondary School representatives

Susan ParLOUR

Raymond Beggs

Brendan Morgan

Siobhan McElhinney

Clive Bowles

### Primary School Principal

Brian McGrath

*NOTE: There are currently three vacancies on Council in the categories of Primary School representative, Secondary School Principal and one DE appointee.*

For information on Council, Business Planning and Governance; visit the GTCNI website homepage [www.gtcni.org.uk](http://www.gtcni.org.uk)



## Appointed Members

### Northern Ireland Teachers' Council

David Canning OBE, GTCNI Chair

Gillian Dunlop

Eamonn McDowell

Gordon White

Paddy McAllister

### Education Authority

David Cargo

Monica Culbert

### Council for Catholic Maintained Schools

Paul O'Doherty GTCNI Vice Chair

Malachy Crudden

### Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta

Áine Andrews

### Governing Bodies Association

Mary Lou Winchborne

### Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

Clíodhna Scott-Wills

### Transferor Representatives' Council

Rosemary Rainey OBE

### Trustees of Catholic Maintained Schools

Carmel McCartan

### Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers

Martin Hagan

### Department of Education

Paul Boyle

Sheila Fleming

Maria Mullally



# GTCNI's Guiding Principles on Teacher Professional Learning

The publication of the Department of Education's – 'Learning Leaders: *A Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning*' is evidence of a renewed policy commitment to teachers' professional learning.

For its part, the Council has long argued that teachers have a right to quality professional learning throughout their careers. Indeed, the importance of professional learning is set out clearly in the Council's Code of Values and Professional Practice (*the Code*). The

Code states under 'Commitment to the Profession' that teachers will:

- as reflective practitioners, contribute to the review and revision of policies and practices with a view to optimising the opportunities for pupils or addressing identified individual or institutional needs; and
- in keeping with the concept of professional integrity assume responsibility for their ongoing professional development needs as an essential expression of their professionalism.

With these formal commitments in mind and the publication of 'Learning Leaders: *A Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning*', the Council has recently set out what it considers to be the fundamental guiding principles that must underpin quality professional learning. In our Code, teachers have made a professional commitment to undertake professional learning as an essential expression of their professionalism, going forward; the education system has a responsibility to ensure that teachers have access to quality provision and opportunities in this area.

GTCNI invited DE to provide further information on the Learning Leaders strategy. Turn to pages 10 and 11 for their input. 





## General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland

- All teachers should have access to quality Professional Learning Programmes aligned to an agreed competence framework which is structured in a coherent, progressive way from initial teacher education and early professional development through continuing professional learning to middle and senior leadership roles and headship.
- Professional Learning Programmes should build capacity through a self-sustaining system of practice-led, experiential learning. This should be based on a facilitative, deep model of co-constructed learning grounded in research on effective pedagogy and leadership.
- Professional Learning Programmes should promote a culture of respect for diversity and equality and be supportive of the goal of social cohesion and commitment to the optimising of educational opportunities for all children and young people.
- Professional Learning Programmes should address individual and institutional needs as well as regional priorities and systems-wide developments within a collaborative, cross-sectoral framework.
- Professional Learning Programmes should be structured and developmental, offering a continuum of approaches and opportunities genuinely reflecting the varying professional/work and home circumstances experienced by teachers.
- Professional Learning Programmes whilst embracing and addressing the issues of classroom practice and competences should also allow teachers to explore and reflect on the broader issues of philosophy and purpose in education thus empowering individuals to play an active part in defining the aims of education itself.
- Professional Learning Programmes must be structured, adequately resourced and managed in a manner that ensures cohesion, accessibility, quality and relevance.
- Professional Learning Programmes should respond to new opportunities afforded by technological change and developments at the macro-level of society and economy and address the implications for teaching, learning and school leadership arising from these.
- Accreditation, within the context of an agreed professional competences framework for Professional Learning Programmes, should be seen as a guarantee of quality and professional oversight. ■ ■ ■



# Regulation FAQs

**Professional self-regulation is central to the professional status of teachers and is a cornerstone of GTCNI's commitment to promote the highest standards of professional conduct.**

Regulation, like all of our processes, is built upon the values of respect, integrity, openness, transparency, partnership and professionalism – and delivered on behalf of the profession and in the public interest.

The GTCNI Conduct Rules set out how we will deliver regulation and there are a number of guidance documents that provide more detailed advice available on our website: [www.gtcni.org.uk](http://www.gtcni.org.uk)

## ■ What is regulation?

The vast majority of teachers are committed to maintaining the highest standards of professional conduct. The GTCNI, in carrying out its regulatory responsibilities, uses a broad definition of misconduct to include conduct which falls short of the standard expected i.e. is fundamentally incompatible with being a registered teacher and/or conviction of a relevant offence. In these cases GTCNI will investigate and, if necessary, remove a teacher from the Register. This is professional self-regulation.

The public has come to expect that all professionals are registered and value the reassurance that regulation brings.

Professional self-regulation is hard won; it is a significant privilege and responsibility and should be valued by the profession, its representatives and those who employ teachers.

## ■ How does regulation work?

There are four main stages in the GTCNI regulation process:

- (1) Referral where an allegation is received by the GTCNI: The majority of referrals will come from employers, who have a duty to inform GTCNI, under paragraph 40(4) of the 1998 Education Order, if a registered teacher is dismissed on the ground of misconduct and/or conviction of a relevant offence, or would have been had they not resigned. We may also get referrals directly from the PSNI.
- (2) Screening to establish if the referral falls within our statutory remit and is 'capable of amounting to an allegation'. At this stage, we have to contact the relevant employer to check if all employer processes are complete. The majority of referrals will be 'screened out' at this stage and we will only 'screen-in' serious allegations.
- (3) Investigation where an Investigating Committee, drawn from the GTCNI Regulatory Panel, will look at the available evidence and a written submission from the teacher and decide if there is a 'case to answer'. This includes a 'realistic prospect' test - so that only the most serious allegations, which may lead to a teacher being removed from the register, are considered by a Conduct Committee.
- (4) A Conduct hearing where a Conduct Committee, drawn from the GTCNI Regulatory Panel, will hear all of the facts relating to the case and make a decision about the allegation and whether a teacher should be removed from the Register. The teacher has a right to representation before a Conduct Committee.

If an allegation of misconduct is proven or a teacher is convicted of a relevant criminal offence, and a Conduct Committee finds that the behaviour is fundamentally incompatible with being a teacher; the only sanction available to GTCNI is removal from the Register.

A Conduct Committee can set a specific length of time that a teacher is 'removed' from the Register or decide that the time limit is indefinite. Any application for reinstatement will be dealt with by a new Conduct Committee only after the time period of removal from the Register has expired.

Any decision made by a Conduct Committee can be published and this may include notification on GTCNI's website.

### ■ What rights does a teacher have?

GTCNI will carry out an initial screening assessment to ensure that any referral falls within our statutory remit and will only consider an allegation that relates to misconduct or conviction of a relevant criminal offence.

We will ensure any teacher involved in the regulation process is given as much information as possible at every step of the process.

GTCNI advise any teacher that receives regulation correspondence from us to seek advice from their trade union or a legal representative. If a teacher has any specific questions about their case they can also contact the Regulation Team directly.

A teacher has the right to make a written submission to the Investigating Committee and to representation at a Conduct Committee hearing, including trade union or legal representation. At both of these stages the teacher will be provided with all the information that GTCNI will be relying upon so that they can prepare their response.

A decision made to remove a teacher from the Register can be appealed to the High Court within 28 days from the date on which the decision is made.

### ■ What power does GTCNI have to regulate?

GTCNI was established by the Education (NI) Order 1998 to provide a range of functions including maintaining a register of teachers, regulating the teaching profession and providing advice to the Department of Education and employers about important professional issues including registration and professional standards.

The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (*Registration of Teachers*) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 gives GTCNI the power to remove a teacher from the Register on the grounds of misconduct. This legislation enables the GTCNI to establish its regulatory processes and

provides any teacher who is removed from the Register with the right of appeal to the High Court.

### ■ What is the difference between the role of an employer and GTCNI?

The employer (*or employing authority*) is required to deal with any allegation of misconduct using the agreed disciplinary process as set out in the 'Disciplinary Procedure for Teachers including Principals and Vice-Principals in Grant-Aided Schools with fully delegated Budgets' (*TNC 2016/2*). This includes substitute teachers.

The employer also has a duty to notify GTCNI about any teacher who is dismissed, or resigns prior to dismissal, on the grounds of misconduct and/or conviction of a relevant offence; and to provide GTCNI with the information it needs to carry out an investigation or any subsequent conduct hearing.

It is important to recognise the difference between the role of GTCNI and the role of the employer. There are a number of things that GTCNI will not do.

The GTCNI will not intervene in matters between an employer and teacher or overturn any decision made by a school or an employer; investigate complaints against a school or employer in terms of how they have dealt with a particular situation; facilitate mediation between any teacher or member of the public; ask a teacher to apologise for any action; or investigate any allegation from a member of the public that relates to teacher competence. ■ ■ ■ ■



If you have any questions about regulation please contact the GTCNI regulation team: [regulation@gtcni.org.uk](mailto:regulation@gtcni.org.uk) ■

# LEARNING LEADERS

## A Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning

**GTCNI invited the Department of Education to outline the context of its 'Learning Leaders: A Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning'.**

The Department will work closely with the Council and other stakeholders to ensure that the strategy meets the needs of all teachers and that the professional voice of teachers is heard by those charged with its implementation.

### What is the Learning Leaders strategy?

The document sets out the Department's vision for teacher professional learning (TPL) over the next ten years. It includes the characteristics of good provision and a number of policy commitments.

The education sector has been going through a period of unprecedented change particularly with the establishment of the Education Authority and School Development Service.

These developments have given us the opportunity to look afresh at professional learning. Over the past decade there has been a radical shift in understanding about what constitutes effective TPL, where it takes place, what it should involve and how to provide it.

### Recognising excellence

Recognising the excellence that already exists in both teaching and TPL in Northern Ireland, the Department has

engaged with all education stakeholders to build consensus around what the TPL of the future should look like.

We believe that short term initiatives are not the answer to teachers' concerns around the type of support they need to continually improve practice.

Policies are more likely to succeed if they have support and input from stakeholders.

DE is committed to working with teachers to develop an agreed sustainable system and framework for TPL. One that builds on and shares existing good practice in order to identify new and better practice.

## “ The vision for the Learning Leaders Strategy is:

**Every teacher is a learning leader, accomplished in working collaboratively with all partners in the interests of children and young people.**

It aims to empower the teaching profession to strengthen its professionalism and expertise to meet the challenging educational needs of young people in the 21st Century.

We want to help teachers develop their leadership skills and provide practice led support using the best existing examples of good practice. 'Learning Leaders' is structured around five key areas:



## We want to:

**empower** teachers to build on their strengths and access additional support, through combinations of learning approaches geared towards personal learning and career preferences and reflecting the needs of pupils.

**support** the identification and harnessing of innovative practice in professional learning already in the system in order to deliver improvement and develop 'next' practice.

**support** closer collaboration between practitioners, schools and school clusters and professional learning providers.

**strengthen** the current support and professional learning for school leaders.

**engage** with practitioners and other stakeholders across the system on the actions arising out of this strategy.

Ultimately, a TPL Framework will enable teachers to take a more structured and informed approach to career-long professional learning.

### It will provide:

- support in the early part of their careers to develop their expertise;
- access to professional learning opportunities and pathways;
- opportunities to develop specialist knowledge and skills in specific areas together with coaching and mentoring skills to enable them to share outstanding practice;
- access to a mix of experiential, vocational and academic professional learning;
- professional learning communities within and across schools with access to a range of guidance and quality assured support; and
- a tool to recognise and share outstanding practice.



## Progress

As part of the Action Plan published with the Strategy, the Department has established an Oversight Group of key stakeholders to provide strategic direction and advice to the Department on:

- progress made in implementing Learning Leaders;
- identification of key priorities for future years, including potential ETI evaluations; and
- facilitating communication between stakeholders.

### Progress has also been made on a range of issues including:

- confirmation from GTCNI that the teacher competences remain fit for purpose;
- completion and publication of three reports evaluating current best practice in continuing professional learning in schools - [www.etini.gov.uk/news/learning-leaders](http://www.etini.gov.uk/news/learning-leaders); and
- an evaluation of best practice in Initial Teacher Education.

## Next steps

The Department continues to take forward work aligned to the five key areas in Learning Leaders. We remain committed to continued engagement with a range of stakeholders, particularly teachers, to ensure they can contribute to the design, development and evaluation of professional learning.

Engagement events for teachers will be held in the coming months and we would welcome feedback from teachers on Learning Leaders. 

### 'Learning Leaders: A Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning' is available at:

[www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/strategy-document-english.pdf](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/strategy-document-english.pdf)

### You can contact DE for further information by emailing:

[TEPDStrategy@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:TEPDStrategy@education-ni.gov.uk)

# #Avagate captivates social media

We welcome back Professor Laura Lundy with her regular *termtalk* article slot – *Legal Lines*. Laura is Professor of Education Law and Children’s Rights at Queen’s University. In this edition, Laura looks at how children’s rights in the classroom should be protected to avoid them being punished for things they didn’t do!



## Do collective punishments breach the ‘Geneva Convention’?

**In short – yes. Just not the one that an eleven year girl from Glasgow claimed that it did. Ava’s response to a written question asking, ‘things my teacher(s) can do better’ went viral after her father posted a picture of it on Twitter.**

Is it a war crime? Of course not – the extremity of the claim was one of the reasons that #Avagate captivated social media. Conflict at school may seem like a daily battle to some teachers and children, but it doesn’t meet the legal definition of war. Is it a breach of a Geneva Convention? Yes, but not the one that Ava called upon.

Children’s rights in school are covered by the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights

of the Child. One of the ironies of the children’s convention is that children had no input into drafting it. If they had, it would probably include an express provision saying they shouldn’t be punished for things they didn’t do. It does however give children the right, among many others, to be disciplined in a way that respects their dignity. Punishing a child for others’ misbehaviour is also arguably a form of degrading treatment, and adults and children alike have a right not to be subjected to that.

No adult would readily accept a punishment for others’ misconduct and yet some adults expect children to submit to this without objection. The practice of using collective punishments

is not specifically banned in education legislation. Nor are there any reported cases challenging them in the UK. However, if a parent or child decided to take legal action, there are a number of grounds they could pursue, including a possible judicial review on the basis that the action is unreasonable or unfair.

**Charles Dickens was on point when he observed:**

*‘In the little world in which children have their existence, whosoever brings them up, there is nothing so finely perceived and so finely felt as injustice.’*



What is also striking is the fact that the teacher and school had actually asked the question and then made the responses publicly available – her dad saw it on the classroom wall. That act of seeking the children's views is a thoroughly commendable attempt to realise one

of the most important rights in the children's convention – the child's right to have their views sought and taken seriously.

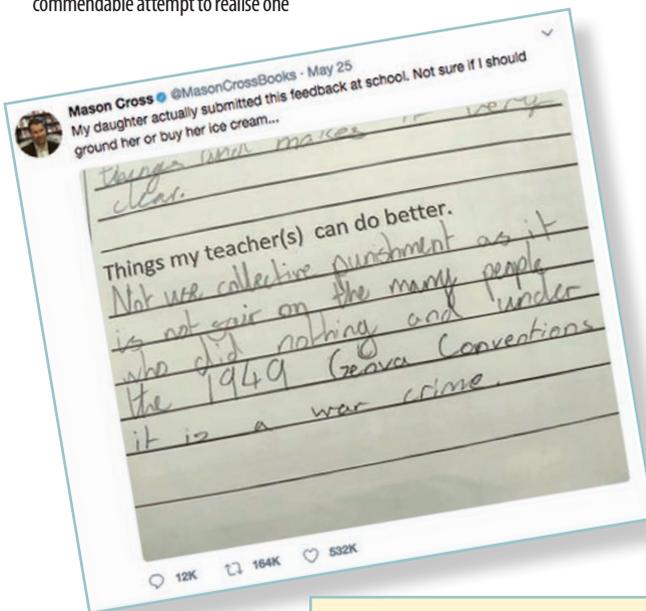
Ava's dad stressed that Ava has a really nice teacher. Kudos to her for asking the

question in the first place. If a breach of human rights (*although not a war crime*) is to be avoided, Ava's views must be given due weight. If that happens, it should be the death knell for collective punishment in one Glasgow primary school.

Ava's dad asked Twitter if she should be grounded or get an ice-cream. The follow-up tweet was a picture of Ava with not one but two massive ice-cream cones and the caption 'the people have spoken'.

The public recognised the injustice, Ava's claim undoubtedly tapping into similar slights in their own childhood or experienced by their own children. Here's hoping that this impromptu public referendum brings about a reversal in the use of collective punishments in schools.

Let's try not to punish anyone, children included, for something they didn't do.



A version of this article first appeared in:

<http://qpol.qub.ac.uk/collective-punishments-classrooms-breach-geneva-convention/>

# Teacher Education in Northern Ireland

## Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers, Northern Ireland UCET(NI)

*By Professor Linda Clarke, Research Director - Education, Ulster University*

“...one of the challenges faced by efforts to gain professional status for teachers is that teaching is complex work that looks deceptively simple” <sup>\*</sup> (*Grossman et al, 2009, p. 273*)

**The four local Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers work closely with local partner schools to help student teachers begin the challenging journey towards becoming competent, caring, reliable and reflective practitioners.**

We share the same fundamental principles that help shape our provision, ensuring that all our students enter the profession with the knowledge, skills and values which are vital to their continuing development. ITE courses in Northern Ireland are approved by the Department for Education, accredited by the GTCNI and inspected by the Education and Training Inspectorate (*DE Circular: 2010:03*) as well as undergoing the internal and external quality assurance processes of the higher education sector.

While the quality of our provision has been recognised, we continue to reflect on our abilities to meet the needs of the 21st Century teacher. Nevertheless, teacher education in NI has not been subject to the, arguably, ideologically driven upheavals which Initial Teacher Training (*ITT*) in England has seen in recent years, with radical reforms by successive ministers exercising their very considerable powers almost whimsically (*Pring, 2013, 192*). These reforms have much in common with developments in the United States where neo-liberal ideologues have sought to portray teaching as either

technicist ‘deliverology’ (*Pring, 2013*) of a prescriptive, content-heavy curriculum, or as a craft. In England, multiple entry routes, including apprenticeships, have been created and, in Academy schools, teachers are not required to have a teaching qualification. UCET(NI) argues that, by contrast, provision in Northern Ireland should move towards a trajectory similar to that of Finland, for example, where teaching is a highly esteemed, masters-level profession whose practice is informed by research.

Teacher Education courses in Northern Ireland are focused on the distinctive content, skills and pedagogical approaches of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and are underpinned by the teacher competences and professional values of the General Teaching Council who frame teaching as a reflective, activist profession (*GTCNI, 2011*). On successful completion of one of the Northern Ireland ITE courses graduates are not awarded Qualified Teacher Status (*QTS, as in England*), but are instead deemed eligible to seek registration with the GTCNI.

Further in contrast to the teacher recruitment and retention problems which are a feature of teacher education in England, in Northern Ireland, many teacher education courses are heavily over-subscribed, but have their student numbers capped by DE, meaning that many who do not get a place on a

local course must travel elsewhere to undertake teacher education. Entrants to teacher education in Northern Ireland are typically both well qualified and thoroughly committed to teaching as a career. Perceptions of teacher over-supply persist and teacher unemployment rates precipitate episodic bouts of consternation in the local press. Nonetheless, there is anecdotal evidence of an insidious increase in shortages in some subjects, whilst in others, graduates take several years to find a permanent job, a matter which is exacerbated by the return of many Northern Irish teacher education graduates who have qualified in other parts of the UK and are seeking registration with GTCNI and employment in Northern Ireland’s schools. A more recent problem is that the providers of recently diversified teacher education courses in England have been offering generous bursaries in shortage subjects and are making strenuous efforts to recruit students from Northern Ireland to these courses.

Recent changes in education infrastructure in Northern Ireland have impacted on two particularly important features of local provision: ITE partnerships and progression across the 3Is Model. The partnerships which lie at the heart of ITE were devised distinctively as a professional concept in which all the partners in the education



# UCET

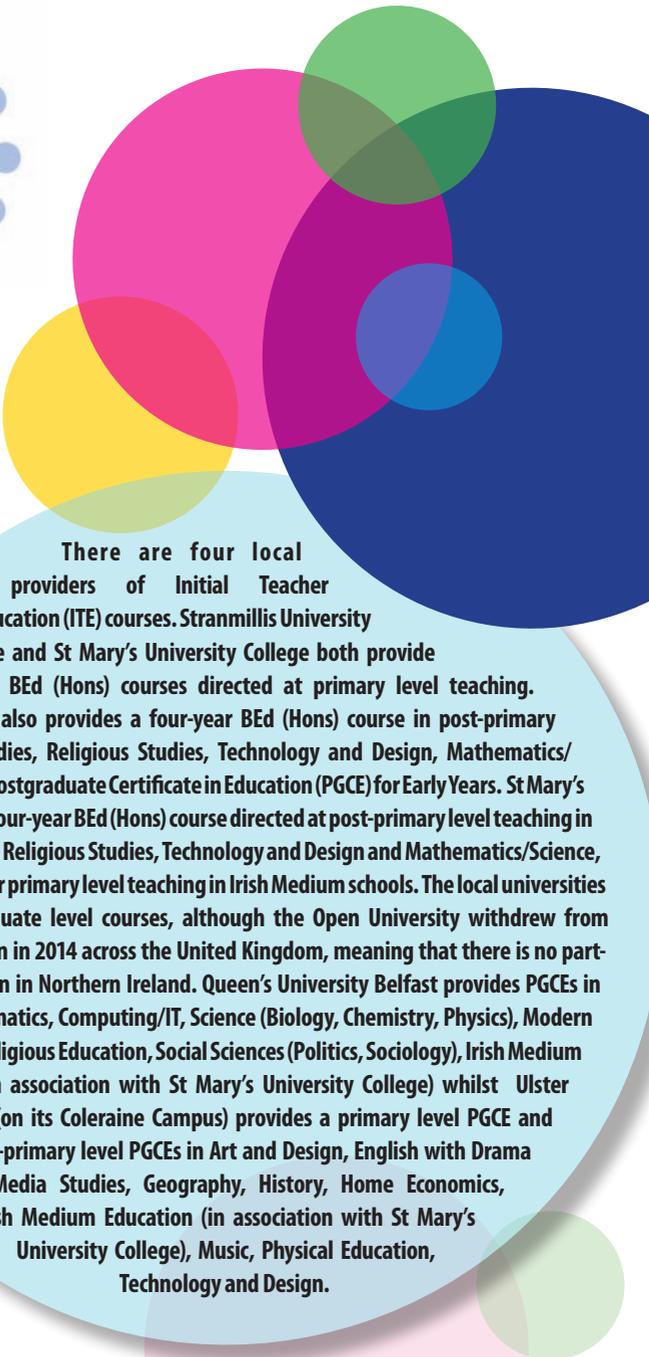
Universities' Council for the  
Education of Teachers

service collectively assume responsibility for the development of teaching as a profession, whilst, by contrast, partnerships in England are underpinned by contractual obligations (McIver, SIC, 1998, 32). In addition, Northern Ireland introduced an integrated 3Is Model (Initial, Induction, In-service) of teacher professional learning. However, continuity within this progression has been affected by the disruption surrounding the creation of the Education Authority and by discontinuities in employment. It is to be hoped that the benefits of these distinctive models will be restored and enhanced as the *Learning Leaders: A Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning* (DE, 2016) is implemented.



#### Forthcoming book:

Farren, S., Clarke, L. and O'Doherty, T. *Teacher Preparation in Northern Ireland since 1922: History, Policy and Future Directions, Emerald Studies in Teacher Preparation in National and Global Contexts.* ■



**There are four local providers of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses. Stranmillis University College and St Mary's University College both provide four-year BEd (Hons) courses directed at primary level teaching. Stranmillis also provides a four-year BEd (Hons) course in post-primary Business Studies, Religious Studies, Technology and Design, Mathematics/Science and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) for Early Years. St Mary's also provides a four-year BEd (Hons) course directed at post-primary level teaching in Business Studies, Religious Studies, Technology and Design and Mathematics/Science, and also a PGCE for primary level teaching in Irish Medium schools. The local universities provide postgraduate level courses, although the Open University withdrew from teacher education in 2014 across the United Kingdom, meaning that there is no part-time ITE provision in Northern Ireland. Queen's University Belfast provides PGCEs in English, Mathematics, Computing/IT, Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics), Modern Languages, Religious Education, Social Sciences (Politics, Sociology), Irish Medium Education (in association with St Mary's University College) whilst Ulster University (on its Coleraine Campus) provides a primary level PGCE and also post-primary level PGCEs in Art and Design, English with Drama and Media Studies, Geography, History, Home Economics, Irish Medium Education (in association with St Mary's University College), Music, Physical Education, Technology and Design.**

\*Grossman, P. Hammerness, K. & McDonald, M. (2009). *Redefining teacher: Re-imagining teacher education. Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 15(2), 273–290. doi: 10.1080/13540600902875340 [Taylor & Francis Online]

# Digest 2017

## ... a demographic profile of the profession

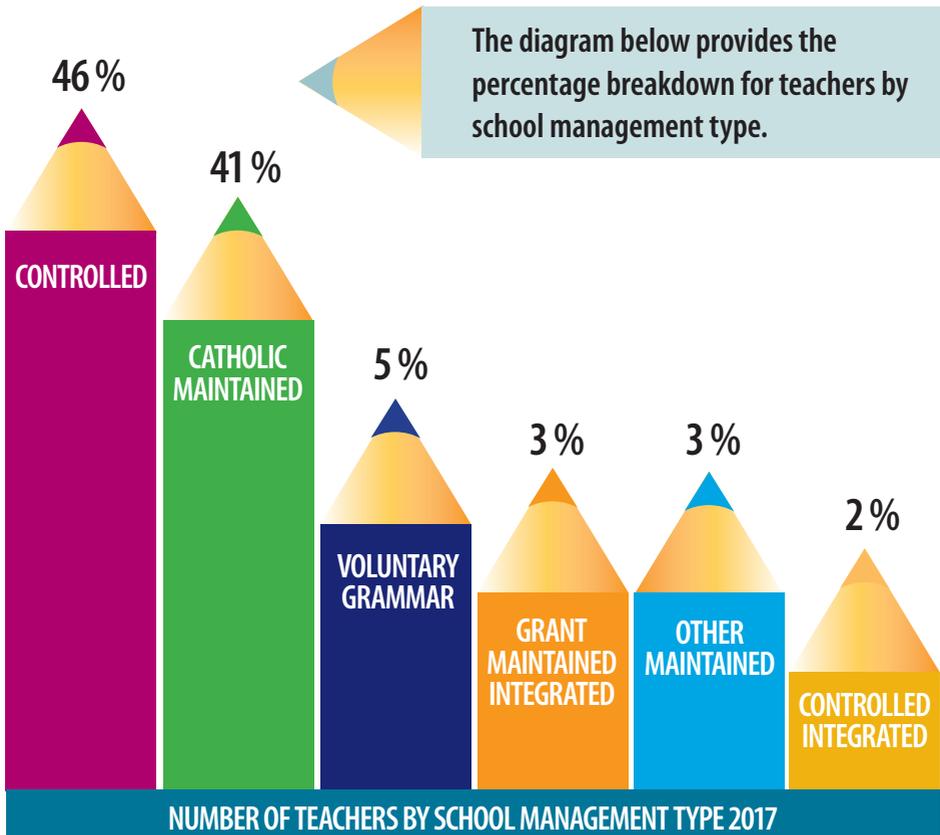
The Council's annual Digest of Statistics is based on the teacher registration data at the 31 March each year. The Digest provides a demographic profile of the teaching profession in Northern Ireland and, as such, it is an important source of data for partners across the wider education system and is used in policy development and planning.

The number of registered teachers at the 31 March 2017 was 26,719. This figure has remained reasonably stable over the past

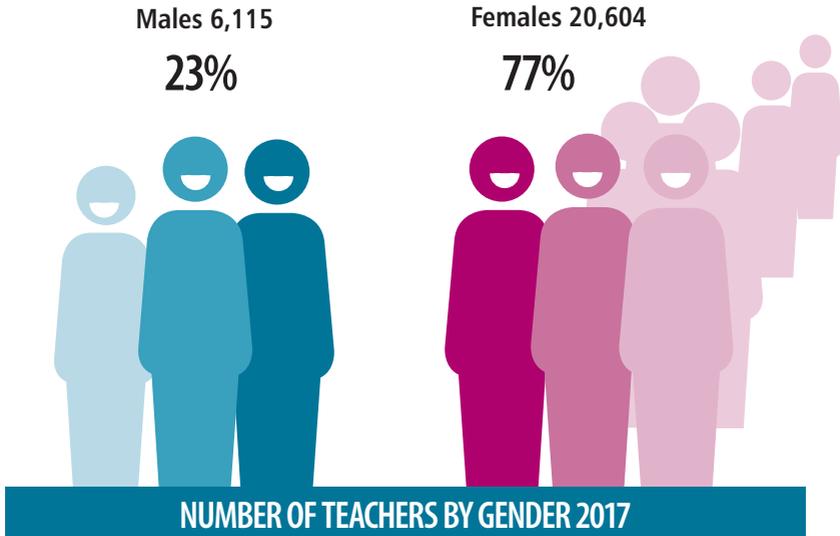
3 years with an average registration figure at 31 March 2015, March 2016 and 31 March 2017 of 26,733.

At 31 March 2017, the total number of teachers with either permanent contracts or substantial temporary contracts of a term or more was 20,165. Of this latter figure, 9,198 were employed as either nurse or primary teachers (220 and 8,978 respectively), 10,014 taught in post-primary schools and 953 were teachers in special schools. ■ ■ ■

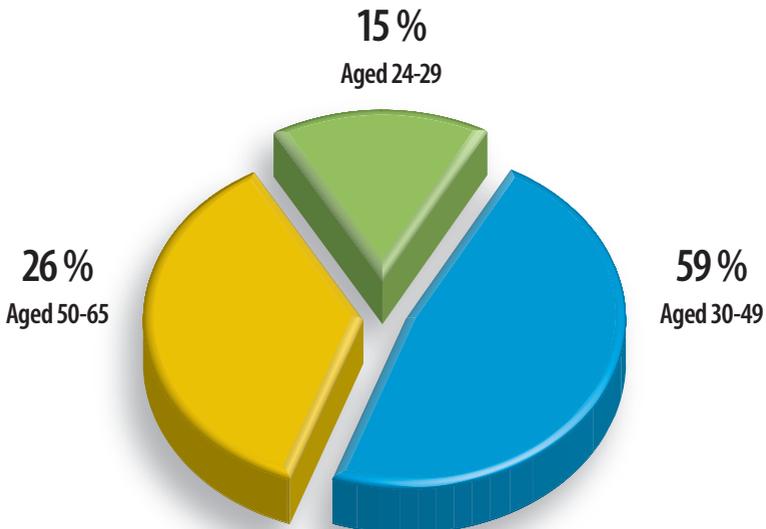
The diagram below provides the percentage breakdown for teachers by school management type.



The gender profile of the profession at the 31 March 2017 is provided below. The female to male ratio at 31 March, 2015, 2016 and 2017 has remained stable at approximately 3:1.



The age profile of the profession at the 31 March 2017 shows that approximately 15% of teachers were aged between 24 to 29, 59% were aged between 30 to 49 and 26% were aged between 50 to 65.



**AGE PROFILE OF THE PROFESSION 2017**

# MyGTCNI

**As a registered teacher you can have immediate access to your record at any time via MyGTCNI.**

If you have moved or changed your details in any way, it is important that you inform GTCNI. You can update your details or renew your registration by using MyGTCNI.

To do this please visit our website ([www.gtcni.org.uk](http://www.gtcni.org.uk)). If you are a first time user, please click on the link to enrol and follow the screen prompts to generate an account. If you are a returning user simply log in and update your details.



*Click  
to log in*

A hand is shown pointing towards the MyGTCNI logo. A curved arrow points from the handwritten text 'Click to log in' to the logo.

**24%**

Teachers have updated their details through MyGTCNI resulting in a total of 8,634 updates.

**31%**

Teachers have enrolled with MyGTCNI

You can find the MyGTCNI log in directly from the GTCNI website homepage ■

## Search the Register

All teachers in grant-aided schools must be registered with the General Teaching Council and it is important that schools/employers check a prospective teacher's registration status, before they begin working in schools. GTCNI's online enquiry service gives schools/employers access to search the Register, providing up-to-the-minute information regarding the current registration status of any teacher.

Providing search information in all four search fields will give the best results. If your search does not result in a match, try removing information from one field at a time and search again.

The search facility, whilst not case sensitive, will look for a teacher who exactly matches all the information you have provided.

## Completion of Induction and EPD

It is the school's and Teacher Tutor's responsibility to send a copy of the letter confirming the teacher's successful completion of Induction to the GTCNI, 3rd Floor, Albany House, Great Victoria Street, Belfast BT2 7AF. In addition, the school should retain a copy for its records, provide the teacher with a copy of the letter and send a copy to the Education Authority's Induction and EPD Team.

Records for teachers, who completed Induction prior to September 2009, are held by Teachers' Salaries and Administration Branch of the Department of Education, Waterside House, 75 Duke Street, Londonderry, BT47 6FP.

## Tax Relief

Did you know that GTCNI is an approved professional body and you may be able to reclaim tax paid on your professional fees? Full information on how to claim tax relief for professional fees and subscriptions is available on the HMRC website at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/incometax/relief-subs.htm> or by calling 0300 200 3300.

## NISTR

Should you wish to be employed as a substitute teacher you must be registered with the **Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers Register (NISTR)**. Criminal records checks carried out by NISTR can take a minimum of 8 weeks, therefore it is advisable that you apply to register with them as early as possible. You can register with NISTR by visiting their website: [www.nistr.org.uk](http://www.nistr.org.uk) or by contacting them on Tel 028 9056 6256. Please note that registration with GTCNI is required in order to join the NISTR.



**The Registration Team are always at hand to assist with applications, registration fees or MyGTCNI enquiries: –  
Tel: 028 9033 3390 / email: [registration@gtcni.org.uk](mailto:registration@gtcni.org.uk)**



# Pramerica embarks on its search for Ireland's top young volunteers of the year.

## Author and DJ Nikki Hayes launched the search for Ireland's top young volunteers.

The only youth initiative of its kind, the awards launched with a panel discussion at Pramerica's head offices in Letterkenny focusing on the role volunteering plays in some of today's biggest societal challenges including homelessness and mental health. Panellists included past and present honourees as well as representatives from each of the key charity areas.

Overseeing the event Nikki Hayes spoke first hand of the impact volunteering has had on her life and the importance of encouraging and educating young people about the benefits of volunteering in the local community. *"As someone who has experienced mental health issues throughout my life I am well aware of the devastating effect it can have on the people around you. It has also been well documented that young people here have higher rates of mental health difficulties than their peers in Europe and the USA. What is special about this awards programme is that it recognises the young volunteers helping their peers in their own community to overcome their problems and face the future together."*



Above, David Canning (GTCNI, Chair)

The Awards are run in partnership with the National Association of Principals & Deputy Principals (NAPD) and the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI). Principals can nominate up to two students from their school for recognition, from which 20 finalists will be selected to go forward for judging. Two overall winners will then be announced at a gala awards ceremony in March 2018, when the All-Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year will be awarded €1,000 each for their chosen charity and a trip to Washington, D.C. for the annual international Prudential Spirit of Community Awards celebration. The

finalists will all also be awarded €500 for their charities at the ceremony.

Commenting on the programme, Ciaran Harvey Managing Director of, Pramerica, said, *"At Pramerica we believe in supporting young people in our society and over the past 12 years we have honoured over 2000 volunteers from 300 schools across the island of Ireland. As we open the 2018 Awards we would encourage all school principals to shine a light on their pupils' volunteering activities and we are very much looking forward to hearing the inspirational stories from today's young leaders who are committed to making a difference in their local communities"*.



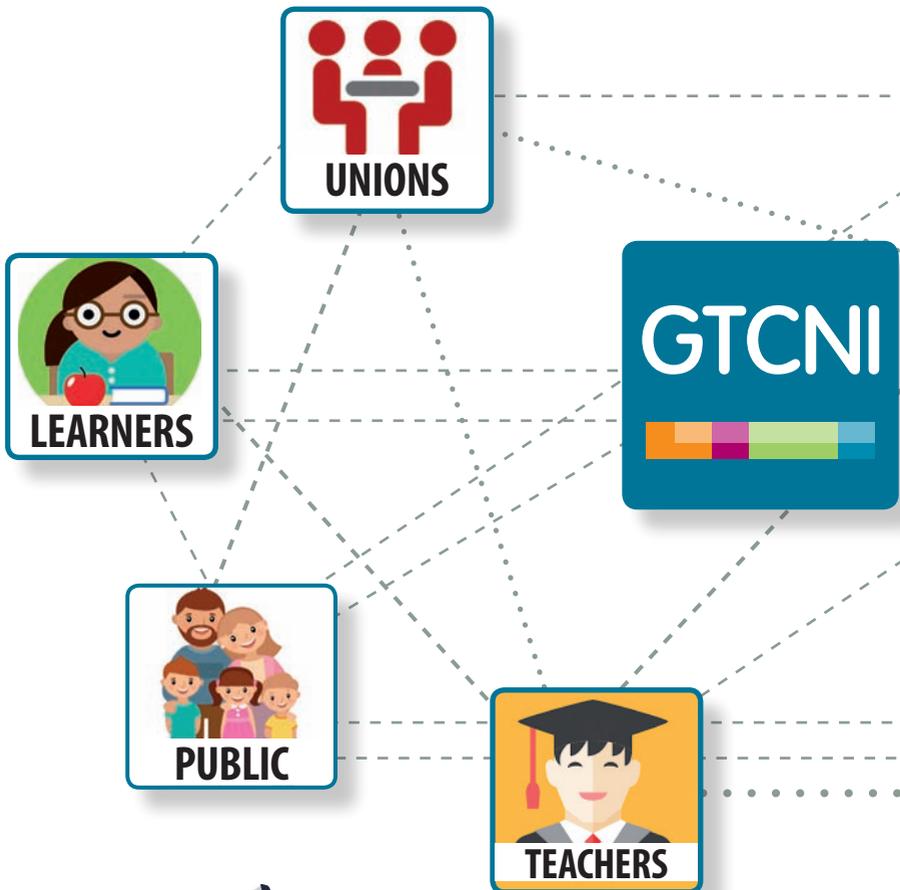
Visit [www.pramerica.ie/spirit](http://www.pramerica.ie/spirit) for updates on this year's awards, like the Pramerica Spirit of Community Facebook page, join the conversation on Twitter, or you can follow on Instagram.

# ts 2018 search for youth



*Below Right, Author and DJ Nikki Hayes launching the Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards 2018*





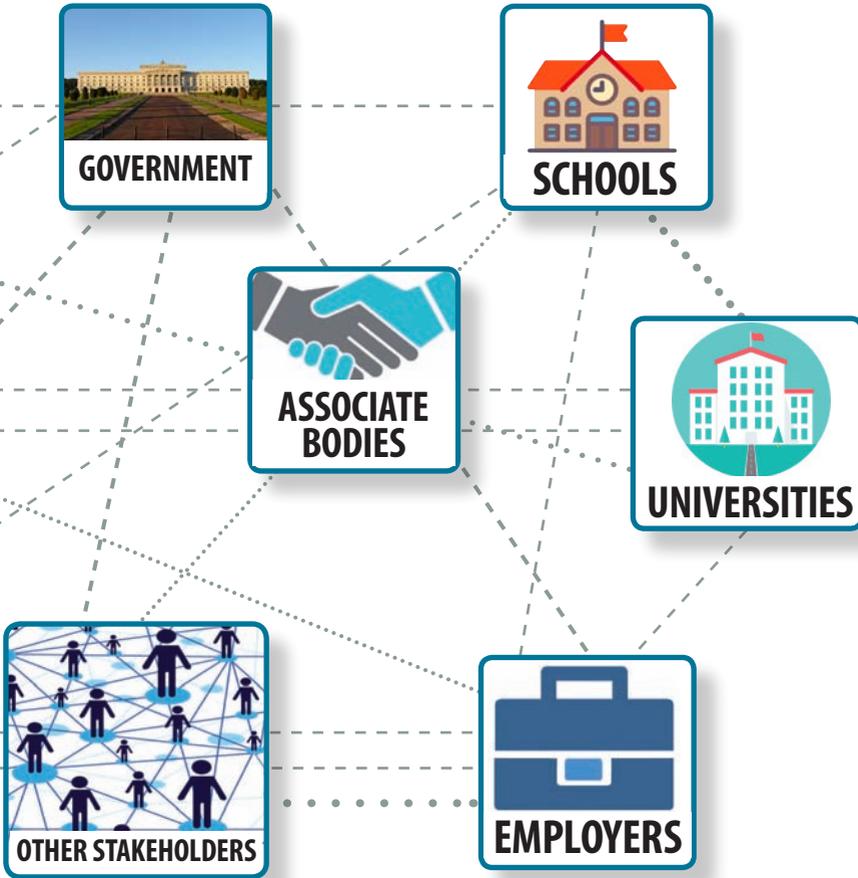
# GTCNI working t



**KEY  
FACTS  
2017**

**26,719  
TEACHERS  
REGISTERED**

**671  
NEW  
QUALIFIED  
TEACHERS NI**



# together and in partnership

**457**

**NEW  
TEACHERS  
REGISTERED**

**16**

**REGULATION  
PANEL MEMBERS  
RECRUITED**

**1,898**

**TWITTER  
FOLLOWERS**

**9**

**STAR AWARDS  
ISSUED TO  
STUDENT TEACHERS**

# STAR AWARDS

## TALENT / OPPORTUNITY / RECOGNITION

The GTCNI Student Teacher Awards were initiated in 2007 to celebrate the hard work, and talent of local student teachers. The award seeks to encourage and reward dedication and teacher professionalism from the outset.

In establishing this award scheme, the Council seeks to recognize the high standards of reflective practice that are demonstrated by student teachers in our local Higher Education Institutions. This, it is hoped, will emphasise to all beginning teachers that reflective practice and professional development are the hallmarks of effective and competent teaching and that, as a matter of necessity, this is a requirement throughout every teacher's career.

### Who is Eligible?

Final year BEd students and PGCE students studying at any of the Higher Education Institutions in Northern Ireland are eligible to apply for the STAR Award.

The award recognises students who have achieved at a consistently high level.

### Assessment

Each participating HEI selects the awardees based on academic and practical assessment, carried out as part of their course of study and teaching placement.



### The Award

Each student is awarded a framed certificate and £400 to facilitate engagement in continuous professional learning.

The STAR Award continues to promote positive values, build relationships with our partner HEIs and reward our local student teachers.

### What they say ...

**Ulster University** "This award should not be underestimated as a personal accolade to the candidates and their employing schools."

**Queen's University Belfast** "The GTCNI Awards are highly valued by the PGCE students and we have witnessed the framed certificates on the classroom walls of experienced teachers."

**St Mary's University College** "Award winning teachers can begin their career confidently knowing they can build on this outstanding achievement."

**Stranmillis University College** "It is important for students to recognise that GTCNI, as their professional body, has taken an interest in them from the beginning of their career." ■ ■ ■

## RECOGNISING TALENT

University / HEI	GTCNI STAR Awardees 2017
<b>Queen's University Belfast</b>	Katy McLarnon Anne Burke Ryan McCabe
<b>Stranmillis University College</b>	Rachael Jess Alice Hamilton
<b>St Mary's University College</b>	Noel Bradley-Johnston Katie Smith
<b>Ulster University</b>	Ruairi Convery Rachel Lister

### Celebrating Excellence

Contact your course provider to find out more about the Star Awards 2018 – Visit [www.gtcni.org.uk](http://www.gtcni.org.uk) for further details.