

## NEW MORTGAGE SERVICE FOR TUI MEMBERS



- ALL IN EDUCATION
- YOUNG SCIENTIST EXHIBITION
- BRANCH OFFICER TRAINING
- APPRENTICESHIPS



PINK  
AND BLUE  
POWER  
PROGRAMME

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# A Word from the President - Anthony Quinn

Dear Members,

With Annual Congress now on the horizon, I want to take this opportunity to reflect on the challenges we've faced, the progress we've made, and the path forward for our Union and the education sector. Together, we have achieved significant milestones, but there is still much work to be done to ensure that our profession and our students thrive in the years ahead. The findings of the recent DCU research on teacher burnout are deeply concerning. With 85% of teachers reporting moderate to high work-related burnout and 42% indicating they may not remain in the profession long-term, urgent action is needed. Excessive workloads, unrealistic expectations and insufficient support for students with special educational needs are driving talented educators away from the profession. As a union, we are

committed to advocating for smaller class sizes, reduced administrative burdens and meaningful support systems to retain teachers and ensure their well-being. We will continue to push for systemic reforms that prioritise the mental health and professional satisfaction of our members.

## Recruitment and retention causes must be remedied

The recruitment and retention crisis in second-level schools remains a pressing issue. The TUI has outlined measures to address this, including increasing teacher allocations, restoring career structures, reforming the Professional Master of Education (PME) and recognising international teaching experience. We must also address the aggressive recruitment of Irish teachers by other jurisdictions,

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which offer better career progression and support. Without decisive action, the quality of education in Ireland will suffer, and our ability to sustain a high-quality public education system will be undermined. Apprenticeships are a vital pathway for students, yet they continue to face systemic challenges. The TUI is advocating for genuine parity of esteem between apprenticeships and academic routes, integration of apprenticeship applications into the CAO system, and payment of at least the minimum wage for apprentices. We are also working to address the recruitment crisis in practical subjects foundational to apprenticeships, such as Construction Studies and Engineering. These efforts are essential to building a robust and equitable apprenticeship system that serves students, educators, and society.

### Equality, inclusion and transparency

The TUI remains steadfast in its commitment to equity, inclusion, and transparency in education. At meetings with Ministers, department officials and recent conferences on Artificial Intelligence in education, we emphasised the importance of protecting the human-centred vision of public education. While AI has the potential to support teachers and learners, it must be used prudently and ethically, with unions actively involved in its governance and implementation.

We will continue to advocate for guidelines and guardrails that ensure AI serves as a tool to enhance education rather than replace the invaluable role of educators. Despite the challenges, we have much to celebrate. The TUI's Global Development Fund continues to support educational and developmental projects worldwide, reflecting our commitment to global solidarity. Initiatives like the "Pink & Blue Power" programme and the Teachers' Mortgage Service demonstrate our dedication to the wellbeing of our members, both professionally and personally. Additionally, the sponsorship of school team jerseys by the Cork branch and the TUI Credit Union's "Grow an Orchard" campaign highlight our efforts to enrich the lives of students and communities.

### Participate in shaping the future of our union

As we prepare for the Annual Congress 2026 in Kilkenny, I encourage all members to actively participate in shaping the future of our union and the education sector. Your voices and experiences are invaluable in driving meaningful change. Together, we can continue to advocate for the rights and wellbeing of educators, promote equity in education, and ensure that our profession remains a cornerstone of Irish society. Thank you for your unwavering dedication to your students and



TUI PRESIDENT, ANTHONY QUINN

your profession. Let us move forward with determination and unity, knowing that together, we can overcome any challenge and build a brighter future for education in Ireland.

Anthony Quinn

President, Teachers' Union of Ireland

# TUI's Global Development Fund supports a range of educational, developmental and trade union programmes around the world

The TUI's Global Development Fund was established with the distinct purpose of assisting educational, developmental and trade union projects in underdeveloped countries as approved by the Executive Committee. At Annual Congress 1999, a motion was passed whereby €0.95 of each full member's subscription is allocated to the fund.

Applications for donations from the TUI's Global Development Fund are considered once a year at the November or December meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee and notification regarding successful applications will be posted shortly afterwards.

A list of the projects that received funding for 2026 is set out below.



- **Nepal Leprosy Trust projects**
- **Kate Lynch Scholarship Fund, Tanzania**
- **Youth Alive, Zimbabwe**
- **Bukas Foundation, Tagaytay, Philippines**
- **PEPY – Siem Reap, Cambodia**
- **Sierra Leone Ireland Partnership**
- **See Beyond Borders, Cambodia**
- **Schools and Health Foundation – benefiting projects in locations including Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cameroon**
- **Volunteer Missionary Movement, Kitale, Kenya**
- **Franciscan Sisters Minoress Mission , Kwa Zulu-Natal, South Africa**
- **Self Help Africa**
- **Harambee Scholarship, Mukuru, Nairobi, Kenya**
- **Hebron International Resource Network (HIRN), Palestine**
- **PAIRS Group Ireland, supporting healthcare in Africa**
- **Carpentry and Skills Training Summer School, Zomba, Malawi**
- **Community based youth work, Philippines**

# TUI representatives raise key concerns of members with new Minister

TUI representatives met with the new Minister for Education and Youth, Hildegarde Naughton, TD, on 15th January.

The Union welcomed the Minister to her role and raised key issues of concern including unsustainable workload, the recruitment and retention crisis and concerns in relation to Senior Cycle redevelopment.

Minister Naughton was appointed to the role on 18th November 2025.

Before this, she served as Minister of State attending Cabinet at the Department of Children, Disability and Equality with special responsibility for Disability.

Minister Naughton previously served as Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach as Government Chief Whip; and the Department of Education with special responsibility for Special Education and Inclusion. She has also



served as Minister of State in the Departments of Transport, Health and Justice.

She was a primary school teacher and was elected to Galway City Council in 2009. She was mayor of the city in 2011/2012.

Having served in Seanad Éireann, she was

first elected to represent the constituency of Galway West in the 2020 general election. She has served on a number of Oireachtas committees including the Future of Healthcare, and Budgetary Scrutiny. She was appointed as the chair of the Communications, Climate Action and Environment committee in 2016.

## TUI in the media

### Main public-sector unions add 16,000 members in two years – Irish Times 4/1/26

TUI was identified as one of 'five public sector unions that added about 16,000 members between the start of 2023 and the end of 2024, bringing the total combined membership of the five to 224,007 according to their various annual returns.'

### Housing shortage and how it affects the profession

TUI member Aideen Clarke featured on RTE's Futureville programme on 13th November, where she discussed the realities of commuting and the ongoing challenges of the housing crisis

### Schools 'ill-prepared' for Leaving Cert reforms, Oireachtas committee hears - Irish Examiner 11/12/25

TUI general secretary Michael Gillespie

told the committee the union was always in favour of additional assessment components (AACs) providing they were 'meaningful' and marked something outside of an exam.

'The fact that some of these are now being brought in, I would say, on the cheap, in terms of project work is causing problems.' Students are worried about the project work, which is worth 40% and missing the content, worth 60%, Mr Gillespie said.

'We may end up creating more stress here. We need to think again about some of the additional assessment components. They need to be better,' he added. The other 'elephant in the room' is AI. Third level is moving away from written project work, Mr Gillespie added. 'We haven't taken any of that into account.'

**TUI President Anthony Quinn discussed the findings of new DCU research on teacher burnout on**

### Newstalk's Breakfast programme on 10th December

'42% are unlikely to remain as teachers and 83% of teachers have received no training or support in managing their personal well-being or mental health,' he explained.

'The report does identify a myriad of factors such as heavy workloads, unrealistic parental expectations, organisational issues and challenges and supporting students with educational needs. All of these are contributing to teacher stress levels.'

**Ahead of TUI presentation to an Oireachtas Committee meeting on apprenticeships, TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie was interviewed on Newstalk's Breakfast programme about what needed to be done to further promote the option within schools 27/11/25.**

# ‘Consultation, parity of esteem and application of pay agreement increase required for professorships’

Any professorships introduced in the Technological University/Institute of Technology sector must have parity of esteem with those in the traditional universities, the TUI has said.

The union has also warned that full consultation, negotiation and agreement in relation to the new grade are essential, and that a 1% pay increase under the latest pay agreement's local bargaining provision as per an existing TUI claim in relation to the grade's introduction must be applied.

In December, Minister James Lawless TD announced the Government's intention to introduce the grade to the sector.

Speaking on the day of the announcement, TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie said that the Union's Executive Committee noted the decision and drew attention to last year's Annual Congress which affirmed that any professorships introduced must have full parity of esteem with professorships in traditional universities and that the TUI must be fully consulted on their implementation.

‘The TUI Executive Committee demands that the 1% Local Bargaining provision under the Public Service Agreement 2024–2026 be applied to all academic, teaching and researcher grades in TUs and IoTs from 1st September 2025 in

return for our members' cooperation with the introduction of professorships,’ he said. ‘In this regard, the union has already submitted a claim.’

‘In the absence of consultation, negotiation and agreement on the introduction of the professorship grade to the sector and agreement of the terms and conditions associated with such positions in return for payment of the 1% under the national pay agreement, the TUI will withhold all cooperation with the introduction of professorships in the sector and will ballot members for industrial action, up to and including strike action.’

## DkIT and QUB partnership: Terms and conditions of members must be absolutely protected

The TUI notes November's announcement of the partnership between Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) and Queens University Belfast (QUB) to establish a University College. We have expressed our disappointment that the Union was not advised or consulted in advance of the development.

DkIT has played a critical role in developing the region's learning landscape. Vitally important industry and community links have been forged over time and DkIT has supported innovation that benefits enterprises in the region.

Moreover, the TUI locally has long campaigned, including using industrial action, to ensure that this institute achieves university status for the benefit of its students, staff and the northeast region. Therefore, on the face of it, we welcome a development which aligns with the union's long-sought after goal for this institute.

That being said, at all stages of this development, we will insist that the terms and conditions of employment of our



members are absolutely protected. In addition, there must be meaningful consultation and timely communication, and where concerns arise, these must be addressed as a matter of urgency. Where our expectations are not met, arising issues will be immediately addressed by the TUI.

Separately, IADT, now the only remaining institute of technology outside of existing technological university or planned university college projects, must be facilitated in achieving university status and the appropriate funding and resources must be provided to make this happen.

# TUI to relaunch potentially life-saving initiative

*I in 7 women get Breast Cancer, while 1 in 6 men get Prostate Cancer.<sup>1</sup>*

TUI has teamed up with Cornmarket and Breast Cancer Ireland to relaunch the 'Pink & Blue Power' programme this year. Thousands of eligible Income Continuance Plan members<sup>2</sup> will be invited from March 2026. Thousands will get the chance to book an appointment for a physical breast/prostate exam, education, and a referral for further tests if needed. Invites will be posted in March, May and September.

When we first launched this potentially life-saving breast and prostate health assessment and education programme back in 2018, we hoped to increase awareness around these common cancers. Nothing prepared us for the results. 95% said they were confident to self-check after their Pink Power appointment. Hundreds were referred on to a specialist for further tests. When we surveyed members, incredible feedback poured in. One member said: 'It was excellent. Wonderful doctor and so thorough'. Another member commented "Super service; provided great follow up care and reassurance".<sup>3</sup>

At the recent launch, TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie said, 'The last time we ran this programme, cancer was found in four TUI members. Thankfully, their outcome was improved due to swift intervention. If one life can be saved it will all be worthwhile; we urge members to book an appointment when they get their invite.' Invites will be posted in March, May and September.

Clodagh Ruddy, Director at Cornmarket, added, 'As a company, our purpose is to look after the wellbeing of members. We wanted to create a programme that would genuinely start an important conversation.'

Pink & Blue Power is only available for a limited time and on a first-come, first served basis so book early to avoid disappointment. For more information, visit [cornmarket.ie/tui](http://cornmarket.ie/tui).



→ **Don't forget, TUI members can also book a free Breast Cancer Ireland workplace visit. This is open to all members. To register your interest, email [tui@bciresearch.ie](mailto:tui@bciresearch.ie) today. Together, we can save lives through awareness and education.**

Sources: <sup>1</sup>Breast Cancer Ireland and the Irish Cancer Society, 2025. <sup>2</sup>Members aged 30 to 49 assigned female at birth (Pink Power) and members aged 40 to 65 assigned male at birth (Blue Power). <sup>3</sup> Survey of TUI participants, 114 respondents, Cornmarket, 2022 - 2023. Clinical numbers provided by Full Health Medical, June 2023. The Pink and Blue Power programme is brought to members by Cornmarket on behalf of the Plan underwriter and is not a regulated financial product. The booking website and doctor service is managed by Full Health Medical. Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.

The TUI Income Continuance Plan is underwritten by Aviva Life & Pensions Ireland DAC (Aviva). Aviva Life & Pensions Ireland Designated Activity Company, a private company limited by shares, trading as Aviva Life & Pensions Ireland and Friends First, is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.

*Please note: The assessment provided only reflects a point in time. No test or exam will pick up every case of breast/prostate cancer. Therefore, if you have signs and/or symptoms now or in the future, please consult with your own GP without delay and do not wait for a Pink/Blue Power appointment to become available.*

# TUI teams up with EDUC Mortgages to provide bespoke new service to members



There's a particular kind of tiredness that comes from the housing conversation in Ireland - the tiredness of doing the sums again and again, of watching listings disappear, of wondering if living near your school or campus is realistic or a luxury. For teachers and lecturers, that conversation often runs quietly in the background of daily life: between classes, over a quick coffee, or on the drive home. It's not just about wanting a home. It's about trying to make a home fit around the work and the life you're already committed to.

And just as careers in education span decades, mortgage questions change over time. Newly qualified members may be asking, How do I get in? Later, the focus often shifts to How do I make this manageable — or better still, cheaper? Further on, the questions can widen again: How do I plan for children going to college? What does my mortgage look like as

retirement comes into view? How do housing decisions change after a separation, or during a major life reset? Different questions, same need: clear advice that reflects the reality of education careers and the world we're trying to buy in.

What often gets missed in all the noise around the housing market is that education professionals tend to be in a stronger mortgage position than they realise. Lenders generally view teaching and lecturing as stable, long-range careers. Pay progression is predictable. Income is steady. And in many cases, allowances and additional responsibilities can be counted in full. Where increased borrowing power is needed, some lenders are willing to assess teachers' basic pay at a level between one to five points up on the salary scale — such is their confidence in education careers.

Government schemes add another layer of complexity, and opportunity. Help to Buy,

the First Home Scheme and various green or energy-upgrade supports can all play a part in making a purchase more affordable. The challenge is working out what you are eligible for and how these schemes affect the amount you can borrow.

That's where the Teachers' Mortgage Service from EDUC Mortgages comes in. Established to support educators specifically, EDUC Mortgages works with teachers, lecturers, school leaders and the wider education community to help them navigate property decisions with greater clarity and confidence - not just at the point of purchase, but across the lifetime of a mortgage.

**The service is free and comes with additional benefits for TUI members.** This includes practical supports such as a free valuation, fixed-rate legal and conveyancing fees, and discounted life insurance. It also looks across the full range of Irish lenders, so the advice is based on fit rather than on one provider. And because the team works with education pay structures every day, they can present your situation clearly to lenders and help you compare options in plain language.

Importantly, the service recognises that housing decisions are often made alongside other major life moments. Members may be balancing mortgage choices with school or college costs for children, thinking about how a loan term aligns with retirement, or navigating a change in circumstances following separation or divorce. Having access to advice that takes these realities into account can make a difficult period feel more manageable and help members make decisions with longer-term confidence.

If homeownership is on your horizon, or if you're simply curious about how to make your mortgage work better for you, an early conversation can be surprisingly useful. A short call can clarify what you might borrow, which lenders are likely to suit your circumstances, and what steps would make the process smoother when the time comes. Sometimes the biggest relief is seeing a path laid out in front of you.

EDUC Mortgages is an endorsed service provider for TUI members. More information, and a no-obligation chat, are available at [www.educmortgages.ie](http://www.educmortgages.ie).



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# 'Students offer hope for the future' – President Connolly at Young Scientist Exhibition

The RDS in Dublin again hosted the 2026 Stripe Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition which saw 550 excellent projects being showcased.

The event was officially opened by President Catherine Connolly, who said that the event made her 'feel a sense of hope for the future – hope sourced not only in the brilliant young scientists I have met who are full of creativity, curiosity and ingenuity, but also enthusiastic global citizens.'

A sample of just some of the projects visited by TUI's President Anthony Quinn and Vice President Laura Conheady is set out here.



**Soleus - the forgotten knee muscle? Is its neglect contributing to an increase in incidence of Anterior Cruciate Ligament injury in Ireland?**

**Kinsale Community School, Co Cork**

Catherine Coughlan, TUI President Anthony Quinn, Miah O' Callaghan, Peter Leahy, Ellen McCarthy (teacher), TUI Vice President Laura Conheady



**A Longitudinal Study Into The Effect Of The Menstrual Cycle On The Wellbeing Of Teenage Girls**

**Castlecomer Community School, Co Kilkenny**

Anthony Quinn, Doireann Kelly, Amy Houlihan, Laura Conheady



**Cúram Curamach!**

**Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin, Co Chorcaí**

Anthony Quinn, Isobel Ní Dhonnabháin, Ronán O' Muirí, Éabha NicSomhairle, Laura Conheady



**Shading the Future: Ultraviolet Bioprotective Solutions for Human and Environmental Health**

**Castleblaney College, Co Monaghan**

Anthony Quinn, Caoimhe Quinn, Hannah Quinn, Laura Conheady



**Staidéar ar an éifeacht a bhaineann forlónadh Creatine le sláinte agus corp déagóirí**

**Coláiste Ailigh, Co Dhún na nGall**

Anthony Quinn, Caolán McTaggart, Daithi McDermott, Matthew Farrell, Laura Conheady, Shane Ó Breacáin (teacher)



**LeafSense: Using AI to Predict Plant Health**

**St Joseph's Secondary School, Rush, Co Dublin**

Anthony Quinn, George Coll, Helen Teehan (teacher), Laura Conheady



**The Impact of Social Media on Teen Cognitive Ability**

**St. Joseph's Secondary School Tulla, Co Clare**

Anthony Quinn, Aishling White, Mairead O' Brien (teacher), Laura Conheady



**Brain Track: Cognitive Support and Familial Connectivity in Dementia Care**

**Shannon Comprehensive, Co Clare**

Anthony Quinn, Biella Pulido, Caoimhe Ashton, Chloe O' Loughlin, Jacquie Murphy (teacher), Laura Conheady



**An investigation on tidal forces and the effects from a black hole on different sized planets**

**Bremore Educate Together Secondary School, Co Dublin**

Anthony Quinn, Kayla Hughes, Lynda Jordan (teacher), Laura Conheady



**An initial analysis of 320 million-year-old micro coprolites from Doolin**

**Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Co Clare**

John Sims, Laura Conheady, Béibhinn O' Loughlan, Anthony Quinn

# GROW AN ORCHARD PHASE 2 APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN!



After the fantastic response to Phase 1, TUI Credit Union is delighted to announce that applications for Phase 2 of our 'Grow an Orchard' campaign are now open! This initiative encourages schools and communities to plant orchards, supporting environmental sustainability and providing unique educational opportunities.

## Why Take Part:

- Help create a greener, more sustainable future for your community.
- Inspire students to learn about nature, biodiversity, and sustainability.
- Join a growing network of schools making a positive impact.

## How to Apply:

- Applications are now open!
- Closing date: 28/02/25
- To enter: Scan the QR code.



## A message from our CEO, Paul Roche:

*"This campaign is a testament to our commitment to sustainability and community development. By working together, we can create a positive impact on our environment and inspire others to do the same."*

For more information, visit <https://tuicu.ie/about-us/start-your-orchard-competition> or contact us at [info@tuicu.ie](mailto:info@tuicu.ie)

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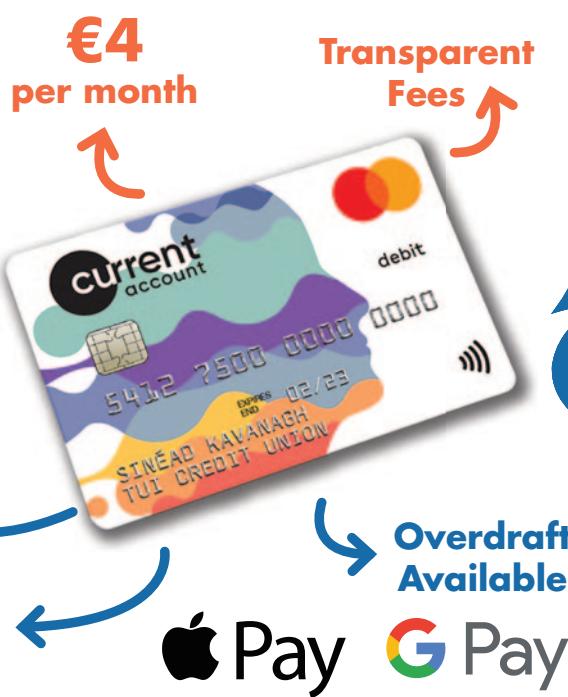
- Get expert tips for financial wellbeing
- Explore savings, loans, and mortgage options
- Find out how our current accounts and overdrafts can make life easier
- Learn how to switch your banking to TUI Credit Union with ease
- Discover exclusive member benefits and offers
- Receive guidance on building your credit and managing debt
- Get answers to all your financial questions—no jargon, just friendly advice

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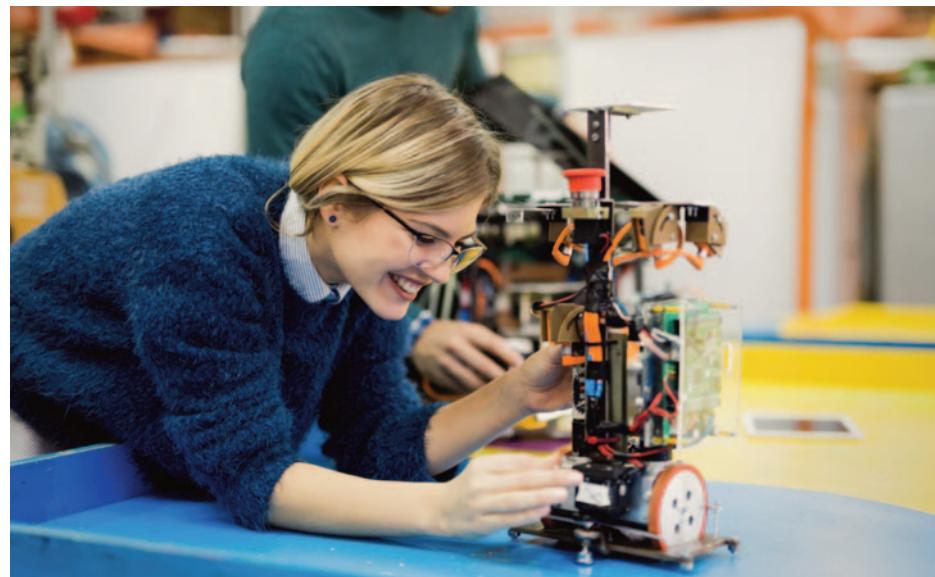
# ‘Substantial reform required if apprenticeships are to achieve parity of esteem they deserve’

In a presentation to the Joint Committee on Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on 27th November in relation to apprenticeships, TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie said that the TUI is ‘deeply committed to promoting, developing, and safeguarding a system that serves apprentices, educators, and society’, but that ‘substantial and systemic reform is urgently required if apprenticeships are to achieve the parity of esteem they deserve and to function as a genuine engine of educational and economic progress.’

The TUI stated that a central obstacle to enhancing the status and visibility of apprenticeships is the profound recruitment and retention crisis within post-primary schools, especially in practical subjects that are foundational to many apprenticeships. Critically, subjects such as Construction Studies, Woodwork, Engineering, and Metalwork are among the hardest to staff. As a direct consequence, schools are increasingly dropping these subjects not because of lack of student interest, but because of lack of teachers.

While the Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021–25 has achieved progress, the deeper challenge lies in transforming the cultural mindset that continues to relegate apprenticeships to a lower status than academic pathways. Though registrations have increased with over 7,500 craft apprentices and 2,200 consortia-led apprentices in 2024, the system still suffers from being viewed as the “Cinderella” of the education sector. Students who might thrive within apprenticeships are instead directed toward CAO programmes simply because that system is familiar, straightforward, and socially validated. By contrast, the apprenticeship entry process is opaque and heavily dependent on social capital: securing an apprenticeship often depends on personal networks, employer contacts, or knowing “the man with the van” who is willing to take on a young person.

TUI emphasised that the current apprenticeship model is overly employer-led and insufficiently apprentice-centred. Unlike CAO students who receive structured induction, accommodation support, and consistent campus services apprentices frequently attend their on-



campus training during periods when college facilities are limited or closed. They may travel long distances, incur significant costs, and navigate their studies with minimal support. This inequity is compounded by financial hardship: many apprentices earn below the minimum wage, with some in Year 1 earnings as little as €7.67 per hour. Expecting individuals to travel, secure accommodation, study intensively, and pass examinations while being paid at this level is neither fair nor sustainable. TUI insists that apprentices must be paid at least the minimum wage, recognising that they contribute meaningful and productive labour to their sectors while learning.

Additionally, recent funding shortfalls in certain ETBs in meeting apprentice payment obligations demonstrate structural weaknesses that undermine confidence in the system. A robust apprenticeship framework cannot depend on inconsistent financial support.

Despite these challenges, TUI continues to champion apprenticeship education. In this regard, the Union works closely with ETBs, SOLAS, WorldSkills Ireland (WSI), and the broader apprenticeship community.

## What needs to be done:

To address the overarching systemic issues, TUI calls for the following:

- I. Genuine parity of esteem between apprenticeships and academic routes, supported by national messaging and policy reform.
2. Integration of apprenticeship applications into the CAO system, ensuring transparency, accessibility, and equal status.
3. Centralised governance and accreditation through the National Apprenticeship Office (NAO) and QQI.
4. Development of programmes only where there is a demonstrable sectoral need, ensuring broad, transferable skills rather than narrow, industry-specific training.
5. Meaningful investment in staffing, training, and resources for those delivering apprenticeship education.
6. Payment of at least the minimum wage for apprentices, recognising their contribution and ensuring their financial viability.

Apprenticeships deliver immense societal and economic value. The TUI remains steadfast in its belief that Ireland can build a world-class, adaptable, and equitable apprenticeship system one that begins in schools, is supported in communities, and is strengthened through national leadership. To achieve this, apprentices must be valued, supported, and afforded dignity, both in pay and in educational experience.

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# Schools must be supported if they are to be effective in area of drug prevention and education – TUI

In its presentation to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Drug Use in December, the TUI affirmed that schools have an important role to play in the area of drug prevention and education, but responsibilities also rest with parents, communities and the relevant Government departments and aegis bodies.

TUI President Anthony Quinn and Education/Research Officer David Duffy are pictured with ASTI and INTO colleagues and Oireachtas members.

The TUI made the following recommendations to the Committee:

- All schools should have access to HSCLs, and not just DEIS schools.
- There should be additional provision of guidance teachers to all schools. Additional staffing resources are also required by counselling support services in higher education institutions.



- Members of student support teams need ringfenced time to carry out their prevention work.
- There needs to be more pastoral supports in schools, especially year head positions.
- CPD should be available to all education staff in the post-primary and Youthreach systems and not just to a small number of staff.

## Union sets out measures required to tackle teacher shortages



TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie and President Anthony Quinn addressed the Oireachtas Committee on Youth and Education in December in relation to the measures required to

tackle the recruitment and retention crisis in second level schools.

These measures include increasing teacher allocations to enable full-time permanent jobs, restoring and expanding career structures, reforming the Professional Master of Education (PME), recognising international teaching experience, reinstating key allowances and addressing excessive workload and administrative burden.

In its conclusion, the Union stated that the measures implemented to date have been reactive and insufficient. Meanwhile, other jurisdictions aggressively recruit Irish teachers, offering full-time posts months in advance, accommodation supports, and clearer career progression. Ireland is increasingly losing both new graduates and experienced teachers to these international recruitment drives. Unless decisive action is taken, the current crisis will deepen, diminishing educational quality, eroding student opportunities, and undermining Ireland's ability to sustain a high-quality public education system.

**Vice President Laura Conheady, Past President David Waters, Associate Official Anthony Dowling and Executive Committee member Tomás McMahon at the Engineering Technology Teachers Association (ETTA) conference in Athenry**





## GENERATION APPRENTICESHIP

[www.apprenticeship.ie](http://www.apprenticeship.ie)

# THE 2026 GENERATION APPRENTICESHIP COMPETITION IN SECOND LEVEL SCHOOLS AND CENTRES

Closing date: **Friday 06 March 2026.**



**Generation Apprenticeship in second level schools and centres is an annual competition that engages learners in the expanding world of apprenticeship and showcases how they can combine future careers with their commitment to green values and sustainable futures.**



€500 CASH PRIZE

FREE TO ENTER

### Dear partners

The schools and centres competition is open and we are hoping you can support us to ensure the entries are regionally inclusive and represent your locality and area of work.



**Scan the QR code to ENTER!**



### Competition brief

The 2026 Generation Apprenticeship competition invites students to create an **A** letter that can be used to replace the **A** in **Apprenticeship** and bring its many career opportunities to life. Entries, which are free, can be in one of three categories:

1. Create a physical A
2. Create a virtual A
3. Create a short apprenticeship podcast

Those submitting entries will receive a specially-designed, large-format Generation Apprenticeship poster for their school or centre. Entry to the competition provides students with practical knowledge as well

as the opportunity to share their ideas with a national audience and to compete for a cash prize of **€500** for the winning entry in each category. A short video on the apprenticeship.ie website will give students ideas for their entries. Category 1 sets a general 'making' brief, while category 2 requires use of digital tools to create an **A** letter. Category 3, the Generation Apprenticeship podcast, is a new category this year.

### Competition prizes and profile

As well as a cash prize the winning entrants will feature in an advertising campaign that promotes the 70+ apprenticeship opportunities now available

and the important role future careers play in tackling climate change. The winning category 3 entry will be commissioned as a 20-minute podcast. This generation of learners already know their role in leading change in the world of work. The competition is an opportunity for wider society to hear their voices and to be the champions of their stories.

### Closing date for entries

The closing date for entries in all categories is **Friday 06 March 2026**. Information and guidance for students and teachers are available, contact us via [gacompetition@nao.ie](mailto:gacompetition@nao.ie).



**NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP OFFICE**  
GENERATION APPRENTICESHIP



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# DCU research illustrates 'alarming' extent of teacher burnout

New research from DCU's Centre for Collaborative Research Across Teacher Education (CREATE) on the extent of teacher burnout has been described as 'alarming' by the TUI. More than 1,000 teachers responded to the Teacher Occupational Wellbeing survey, and 85% of participants report moderate to high work-related burnout.

The union said that the findings illustrate the urgent need for real measures that tackle the factors that are driving teachers away from the profession in the current recruitment and retention crisis to other professions where they feel better valued.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recognises burnout as an occupation-related phenomenon caused by prolonged and unmanaged workplace stress, with three key features: emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment.

- Teachers were asked to record their self-rated mental health over the past year on a 5-point Likert scale, where: 1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor, 3 = Average, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent. When combined, 67% rated their mental health as average or good (3 or 4). Only 5% felt their mental health was excellent, while 28% of respondents rated their mental health as poor or very poor.
- Participants were asked to indicate contributing factors to burnout. Of those who responded, workload was cited by the majority (n=523/613, 85.5%) as the most commonly reported contributing factor, followed by unrealistic expectations from parents



(n=300/613, 49%) and challenges in working with pupils with special educational needs (n=283/613, 46.2%).

- Participants were asked whether they believed they would remain in the teaching profession long-term. 57.3% (n=394/688) indicated Yes, suggesting they anticipate remaining in the profession for the foreseeable future. In contrast, 42.7% (n=294/688) responded 'No'; they did not expect to continue teaching long-term.

'If teachers are to be retained in the system, we need to see smaller class sizes and a reduction in the administrative burdens that deflect from the core duties of teaching and learning,' said TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie.

The new DCU data follows findings released earlier this year that showed 86% of teachers reported moderate to high levels of personal burnout, while a similar figure (85%) reported experiencing moderate to high levels of work-related burnout.

The research involved a survey of over 1,000 teachers and was carried out by Dr Sabrina Fitzsimons, Dr Pia O'Farrell and Professor Catherine Furlong at CREATE.

TUI's own research has highlighted these issues, specifically in terms of the bureaucratic and administrative duties. In the findings of a national survey of members released last year, 89% of respondents said they believed that bureaucratic or administrative workload deflects from their core role of teaching, while 91% believed that this burden has increased since they began their career. A majority believed that such duties are not of benefit to teaching and learning in their schools.

# 'Human-centred' vision of public education must be protected in age of AI

A major education conference on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education heard that the 'human-centred' vision of public education must be protected in the age of AI.

TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie attended the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) conference on Artificial Intelligence in October in Copenhagen. Former TUI General Secretary John MacGabhann is President of ETUCE.

Separately, both joined representatives from Irish unions IFUT and INTO and international colleagues for Education International's Global Artificial Intelligence conference in Brussels in December.

In his address setting out the theme of the Copenhagen event, John MacGabhann said that 'good teaching exists entirely independently of AI. Good teaching is not dependent on, an emanation of or generated by AI. When AI did not exist at all, good teaching flourished. Aristotle and Plato managed rather well, with not a tablet in sight.'

He acknowledged that AI is clearly a powerful tool, and that its functionality could, used prudently, support teachers and learners. However, it must be for teachers, using their professional judgement and pedagogical knowledge, to decide whether, when and how to use AI – just as is the case with any other tool deployed in an education setting.

He said that as the leaders of unions representing educators, those present at the event were honour-bound actively and strategically

- to defend and promote our human-centred vision of quality public education for all,
- to champion European principles, European autonomy, national competence and societal cohesion
- to protect the human right of all our students to a quality public education informed by the principles of equity, equality, inclusion and transparency
- to defend and promote collegial, democratic decision-making and



**TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie and former General Secretary, now ETUCE President, John MacGabhann in Brussels with representatives from Irish colleague unions IFUT and INTO for Education International's Global AI conference.**

governance in and for education, and

- to prevent the privatisation of a public good, its colonisation by private interests.

'Any proposed procurement or deployment of AI in the education sector must be regarded, assessed and dealt with both as an industrial relations and a professional issue and must be thoroughly interrogated as such before proceeding,' he said.

'We are, of course, fully aware that very many of our members and of our students are using AI, are interested in and, sometimes, beguiled by aspects of its functionality. For teachers, AI has the potential to streamline some of the more tedious and time-consuming bureaucratic elements of workload that divert from true professional purpose. However, there is a risk of off-loading one's professional responsibility to AI.'

'For students, the prospect of short-cuts to completing assignments and to examination success is tempting bait.'

He said that those representing educators must therefore seek to identify, accurately and objectively, the legitimate potential of AI-enabled technologies and

advise and guide all and sundry towards appropriate use and away from improper use.

To this end, ETUCE representatives must

- demand that ETUCE and its affiliate unions be fully involved in the development of guidelines and guardrails that will help members to act with professional acuity and prudence when using AI in education and, in that context, vindicate the right of teacher unions to be involved in co-design and governance of AI in education.
- oppose careless or hasty procurement from public funds of AI-enabled technologies
- advocate for and assist as far as possible the development at EU and national level of indigenous AI capacity and infrastructure that respects our values and recognises the rich linguistic and cultural diversity of the European region
- demand the requisite level of public investment to achieve this goal.

# Branch Officer Training 2026

The TUI's national Branch Officer training took place at the Clayton Hotel, Galway on Thursday 15th and Friday, 16th January. The event, which was attended by 100 delegates, covered a range of important areas for branch officers.

Topics over the two days included an exploration of grievance pathways, mediation, supporting members in distress and empathy in leadership roles.

In addition, there was a focus on building stronger branches, with the Co. Meath branch used as a case study. A full overview of the services available to TUI members was

provided, along with a guide to effectively utilising the new members' portal. There was also a presentation on the upcoming Special Congress on a new rule book and a session on the opportunities provided by Erasmus projects.

Delegates also had the opportunity to meet colleagues from other branches and sectors in the conference's social events.

Feedback for the event was very positive, with delegates finding the content informative and relevant in terms of their particular branch roles.



**Gerald Brennan, Siobhan Nolan, Donal McElligott.**



**Caroline McKenna, Tomás Ó Loingsigh, Anne Marie Lyons**



**Executive Committee member Shane O'Rourke, Dr. Sile O'Flaherty, Helen Fagan, Executive Committee member Anne Meagher.**



**Executive Committee member Siobhán McCullagh, Kyle Clarke, Catherine Hamilton.**



# PDA conference provides wide range of professional learning and networking opportunities

The 2025 annual PDA Conference was held in the magnificent setting of the Slieve Russell Hotel in Ballyconnell, Co Cavan. A large number of delegates from right across the country had the opportunity to network and engage with a wide range of professional learning opportunities over the two-and-a-half-day event. Delegates also appreciated the opportunity to interact with a diverse range of exhibitors who provide products and services to schools.

The conference kicked off on Wednesday evening with a most interesting presentation by Barry Loftus on dealing with the highs and lows that we can experience on life's journey. Drawing on personal experiences, he shared how he turned it all around by seeking help, developing healthy obsessions, unwinding anxiety to finally conquering the Sahara as he took on the toughest race in the world, the Marathon Des Sables.

Day 2 started with a hectic morning with a focus on self-evaluation and school improvement. The morning featured three presentations followed by a facilitated discussion. First off was a presentation by Dr Shivaun O'Brien of DCU in which she shared some key messages for school leaders arising from her experience of 13 years of research on school self-evaluation in Ireland. This was followed by Dr Johanna Fitzgerald who introduced the RISE strategy and explored how collective evidence can support inclusive school improvement. The third and final presentation of the morning was delivered by Donal Madden, Principal of Newport College. Donal shared a rich, down-to-earth experience of school development and improvement with a focus on empowering the learner's voice. All three presenters went on to



**Michael Murphy, PDA President, Sandra O Toole, PDA Vice President, Michael Gillespie, General Secretary TUI**

contribute to a panel discussion that was capably facilitated by Paddy Flood, Director of Schools at Cavan Monaghan ETB.

Thursday afternoon commenced with the President's address delivered by Michael Murphy. In his comprehensive address Michael spoke about many of the key issues and challenges facing delegates in their school leadership roles. The President's address was followed by the TUI forum. This forum is a central feature of the Annual Conference which presents delegates with a unique opportunity to hear from and engage with TUI leadership.

The TUI Vice President Laura Conheady and General Secretary Michael Gillespie addressed many current issues in the education sector impacting teachers and school leaders. As is usual they also responded to delegates who raised issues of concern in a school leadership context. Delegates greatly appreciated the level of engagement with issues during the forum and in some cases after the session had concluded.

Thursday continued with a presentation on Pedagogy for the Age of GenAI by Dr

Brendan Tangney, Professor of Computer Science at Trinity College in what delegates found to be an insightful and thought-provoking offering. The final session on Thursday featured a presentation by Geraldine McTavish of Sport Ireland. Geraldine started with an overview of Sport Ireland and went on to look how schools can facilitate inclusion in sport. On a practical level she suggested investment in adaptive equipment for students with disabilities and invited delegates to inspire a new outlook on sport and disability in our schools.

The final day of conference commenced with a presentation on Empathetic Leadership by Annmarie Clancy. Ann's presentation explored empathetic leadership in the context of Connection, Courage and Care. Ann reminded delegates that sometimes just listening is an Empathetic Leadership superskill. The final presentation of Conference 2025 featured Dr Nicolaas Blom from the University of Limerick with an intriguing topic entitled Leadership Through the Soul. Dr Blom reminded us that Leadership education often focuses on

what leaders do and know but neglect who we are as leaders. He concluded a fascinating presentation by reminding leaders that they have a choice to make – things happen but it's your response that determines if the outcome is positive or negative.

Finally, a reminder of the leadership roles in PDA post-conference 2025. Michael Murphy was returned as President with John Healy as Secretary and Sandra O'Toole as Treasurer while Denis Quinn takes on the role of Vice-President. It was agreed that Conference 2026 would take place at the Knightsbrook Hotel and Spa in Trim, County Meath from November 18th to 20th.



**Nicola Whelan, Deputy Principal St. Conleth's Community College, Newbridge, Co. Kildare, Brid Keely, Deputy Principal, Confey College, Leixlip Co. Kildare, Siobhan Nic Loinsigh, Priomhoide, Coláiste Ráithin, Bre, Co. Mhantáin.**

## Cork County branch proud to sponsor Coláiste Choilm GAA jerseys

A proud moment at Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig, as players Aisling Cussen (Ballinhassig) and Kevin O'Leary (Ballincollig) received their new team jerseys in the presence of Deputy Principal Donal Lyons and TUI President Anthony Quinn and Branch Treasurer Miriam Walsh.

The County Cork branch of the TUI generously funded a full set of jerseys for both school teams, a gesture that reflects the commitment of teachers in supporting students beyond the classroom. The design process was a collaborative process, led by teachers in the school and Executive

Committee member Hugh Murphy, ensuring the jerseys carry a strong sense of identity and pride. This initiative highlights the collegiality and camaraderie that define TUI members' work nationwide. Every day, teachers go above and beyond to enrich the school experience. Involvement in volunteerism among



teachers remains extremely high, with the findings of a survey of TUI members last year showing that more than half (51%) of respondents were involved in extracurricular activities outside of school such as sports, drama, music and debating. Of these, 39% spend between two and four hours per week on these activities

while 18% spend more than four hours per week. These jerseys symbolise that dedication. We wish Coláiste Choilm every success in both codes for the year ahead!

# An nuacht is déanaí ó COGG

## Páipéir Scrúdaithe & Acmhainní do Mhúinteoirí

Leabhráin d'larpháipéir Scrúdaithe

Is féidir le scoileanna réamhordú a dhéanamh ar leabhráin d'iarpháipéir scrúdaithe roimh an 26 Meitheamh 2026 ag:

<http://www.4schools.ie>

01 808 149

## Na Triailscrúduithe

Tá leaganacha Gaeilge de na triailscrúduithe (2026 agus siar) ar fáil le híoslódáil ó shuíomh COGG.

→ Beidh ar mhúinteoirí teagháil a dhéanamh le príomhoide nó rúnaí scrúduithe na scoile chun an pasfhocal a fháil.

Bailí go dtí Eanáir 2027

## Acmhainní Breise

Is féidir na dlúthdhioscaí don Fhraincis, Spáinnis, Ghearmáinis, Ghaeilge (T1) agus Ceol, chomh maith le léarscáileanna Tíreolaíochta, a cheannach ó shuíomh Examcraft:

Examcraft: 01 808 1494

[info@examcraftgroup.ie](mailto:info@examcraftgroup.ie)

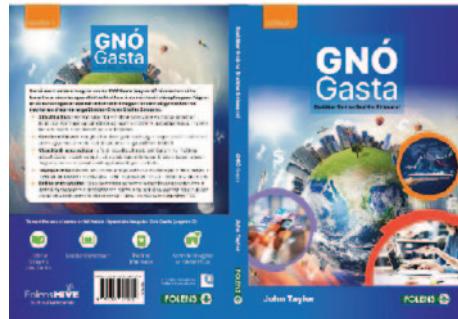
<http://www.examcraft.ie> (cruthaigh cuntas le seoladh ríomhphoist na scoile)

Tá acmhainní nua ar An Tairseach, ag teacht leis na sonraíochtaí nua do na hábhair seo a leanas, ar fáilanois:

## Bitheolaíocht, Ceimic agus Fisic.

Tá raon leathan téacsleabhar nuafhoilsithe trí Ghaeilge i roinnt ábhar ar fáilanois don scoilbhliain seo ó fhoilsitheoirí éagsúla ag leibhéal na Sraithe Sóisearaí agus Sinsearaí, ina measc:

Stair, Tíreolaíocht, Gnó agus Innealtóireacht.



## Gnó Gasta

Tá an téacsleabhar nua, Gnó Gasta: Staidéar Gnó na Sraithe Sóisearaí, ar fáilanois!

Tá an téacsleabhar agus an Leabhar Scileanna agus Cuntas, aistriúchán ar SMART BUSINESS (le Folens), ar fáil le ceannach ag an nasc seo:

<https://folens.ie/pages/gno-gasta>

San áireamh sa dara heagrán de Gnó Gasta tá:

- Struchtúr simplithe do thopací uile an chúrsa, ag teacht le spriocanna foghlama na sonraíochta
- Leagan amach tarraingteach agus daite ar na caibidlí
- Tacaíocht do MRBanna
- Béim ar riachtanais na scrúduithe
- Cleachtaí agus súil siar spraíúil

Seoladh cóip shamplach amach chuig gach scoil le déanaí.

Tá súil againn go mbeidh idir mhúinteoirí agus scoláirí an-sásta leis an bhfoilsíúchán nua!

## Compás

Beidh Compás (Téacsleabhar Tíreolaíochta agus Leabhar Scileanna don tSraith Shóisearach) ar fáil as Gaeilge go luath – foilsíúchán de chuid Educate.ie i gcomhar le COGG.

Tá na chéad ocht gcaibidil ar fáil cheana féin mar ríomhleabhar ar Educate.ie anseo.

Beidh an leabhar iomlán, chomh maith leis an Leabhar Scileanna, ar fáil sna siopáí roimh Nollaig.

San áireamh sna foilseacháin seo tá:

- Uillmhúchán do scrúduithe agus ceisteanna scrúdaithe
- Comhtháthú léamh léarscáileanna agus scileanna tíreolaíocha eile
- Béim ar fhéachaint ar an Tíreolaíocht trí léarscáileanna
- Leabhar Scileanna: réimse gníomhaíochtaí chun scoláirí a chur ag cleachtadh scileanna tíreolaíocha agus scrúdaithe
- Cleachtaí teanga a nascann foghlaim na Gaeilge le foghlaim na Tíreolaíochta

Tá súil againn go mbeidh idir mhúinteoirí agus scoláirí Tíreolaíochta an-sásta leis an bhfoilsíúchán seo!

# Annual Congress 2026

7th – 9th April

Annual Congress 2026 will take place at the  
Kilkenny Convention Centre, Lyrath, Co Kilkenny



# TUI Executive Committee and staff stand in solidarity with Palestine



**TUI Executive Committee members and staff stood in solidarity with the people of Palestine on 28th November as part of an Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) coordinated Workplace Day of Action which called for an end to the genocide in Gaza and Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian territories.**

## Best wishes to our colleague Jane O' Sullivan upon her retirement



**At the start of December, TUI Head Office said goodbye to our friend and colleague Jane O' Sullivan upon her retirement. A key member of the union's Head Office team since 1999, Jane will be missed by all of us. We wish her the very best of luck for the adventures ahead!**

## Did you graduate from initial teacher education in 2019 or 2022?

### Teachers' Professional Journeys (TPJ) longitudinal research study - invitation to participate!

All post-primary and FET teachers from the 2019, 2022 and 2026 graduate cohorts are invited to share their story, challenges and successes by a research team from UL, MIC and the ESRI. Ensure your voice is heard as a participant in the Teachers' Professional Journeys (TPJ) longitudinal research study.

The TPJ longitudinal research study aims to investigate teachers' professional journeys during the first decade following graduation from initial teacher education, and the key personal, educational, professional and systemic influences that define and shape their early careers and practice. The study will involve teachers in the primary, post-primary, and further education sectors.

Together we can understand what it means to be a teacher today. Knowing the diversity of teachers in Ireland will give us a clearer picture of who our teachers are today. By sharing your personal journey, you will help us understand your experiences better. Your participation matters because your voice matters, so help create the future of an inclusive Irish education by making your voice heard.

TPJ is being undertaken by a research team from UL, MIC and the ESRI, and is jointly funded by the Department of Education and Youth and the Teaching Council with a duration of 6 years (Autumn 2024 to Spring 2030). For further information, please see the TPJ longitudinal study website: <https://tpjstudy.ie/>

# Teaching Council updates

## The following updates have been provided by the Teaching Council

### Renewals

An application for renewal of registration can be made online via your My Registration account on the Teaching Council website.

Please ensure that you update your personal contact information and provide any missing data such as eircodes and mobile phone numbers. Further information can be found on the Teaching Council website.

### Expiring Conditions on your Registration

If you are reaching the expiration date of your registration with condition(s), you are required to submit evidence that you have addressed the condition(s).

If you have not been in a position to address the condition(s) you must apply for an extension of time. If you intend to apply for an extension of time to comply with the condition(s) attached to your registration, the Council kindly asks that you engage in a timely manner.

You can help us deliver a more efficient service to you and all other teachers requesting extensions by submitting the required documentation and promptly responding to any follow-up queries.

You can make your extension request and submit the supporting documentation by logging onto the My Registration portal and selecting My Conditions. It is important to note that teachers who do not engage or do not show evidence of attempting to address their conditions are putting their registration at risk.

### Droichead

Please note that the last day to register to commence Droichead in the 2025/2026 school year is Monday, 9th March 2026. Applications must be received before 5pm on that day.

Registration for Droichead will re-open the first week of September for the 2026/2027 school year.

### Re-vetting

The Teaching Council invites teachers who hold a National Vetting Bureau (NVB) disclosure, which is more than three years old, to apply for re-vetting on a rotational basis. Re-vetting is a two-stage process:

- Stage 1: If you receive an invitation to apply for re-vetting, we ask that you commence this process as soon as possible by logging onto your My Registration account and uploading your proof of identification documents. The Council will check your application and identification documents and once all is in order your application will be submitted to the NVB.
- Stage 2: The NVB will then email you a link to the NVB online E-vetting application form. You have 30 days to complete the form from the date you receive it. Please remember that when completing the NVB form you must include all your addresses from birth to the present, including all addresses where you resided outside of the Republic of Ireland (ROI).

Please note that you will not be able to renew your registration until you have completed stage 1 and stage 2 of the vetting process.

Further information about re-vetting can be found on the Teaching Council website.

### NVB E-Vetting (stage 2) changes

The NVB have included two new questions on their e-Vetting form. If these are incorrectly answered your application will be rejected and your vetting will be delayed. The Teaching Council is currently rejecting one third of applications as the below questions are incorrectly answered. It is recommended that vetting applicants read the NVB e-Vetting Invitation Help Content page before submitting an application.

1. Does this role involve working with children?

You must answer yes to this question.

As you are applying for registration or renewal of registration (re-vetting) you must apply to the National Vetting Bureau (NVB) for a vetting disclosure. If you tick No to this question the NVB will reject your application, and you cannot continue with your vetting application and will be unable to register or renew your registration.

2. Other than the Republic of Ireland have you lived in any EU state or in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland?

If you answered Yes to this question, you must list the address(es) where you have lived in the EU state or in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

If you have answered No to this question, you must not list any addresses where you have lived in the EU state or in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Please check the addresses are listed correctly.

The National Vetting Bureau will reject your application if you answer these questions incorrectly.

### FREE access to an Online Library

The Teaching Council provides all registered teachers with free access to an online library of research journals and articles and to a collection of eBooks. The online library offers access to a wealth of materials in order to enhance education research, thereby supporting teachers' professional learning. We have recently upgraded to an enhanced repository, gaining even greater access to extensive journals, eBooks and articles to support your professional learning journey. Registered teachers can access the online library by logging into their My Registration account via the Teaching Council website.

## Are you due a Tax Refund?



Most teachers regularly review their health insurance cover or shop around for motor and home insurance. So why is it many are not reviewing what is most likely their largest outgoing in their house, their tax bill?

“Sure, I’m a PAYE worker, my tax is deducted at source” would be a common response when we advise teachers of the importance in filing an annual tax return and submitting your claims with Revenue.

Remember, we all have an obligation to pay tax, but none of us have an obligation to overpay, yet statistics will show you that over 80% of tax payers overpay their taxes every year by about €990.

Only those who file an annual tax return and claim their entitlements with Revenue Commissioners will receive their portion of the overpaid taxes. Once 4 years has passed this refund is no longer available. Therefore, 2022 is currently the oldest year you can submit a claim for, and you have until the 31st December 2026 to do so.

There is still a ‘fear factor’ with Revenue where a lot of individuals are afraid to file a tax return with Revenue in case they end up with a liability. This is very rarely the case. However, if it does happen it is important that such an issue is addressed ASAP, as it could continue to occur going forward, and in this regard the 4-year time limit mentioned above does not apply to Revenue.

Below is a list of the most popular reasons for PAYE refunds

**1. Health Expenses** – 20% relief is available on qualifying health expenses not already reimbursed by your health insurer. These include GP, Consultant, Hospital, Non-Routine Dental, Prescribed medicines or appliances and Nursing Home Fees.

**2. Change in personal circumstances** – If you have been through a marriage, bereavement, arrival of



children or change in salary you could be due a refund. This is because you are not taking advantage of sharing tax credits or bands with your spouse.

**3. Flat Rate Expenses** – Agreed amounts set by Revenue to cover employee costs to undertake your role as a teacher. These also incorporate the cost of Teaching Council of Ireland Fee (TCI) as follows:

	Expenses	TCI*	Total
Full Time Teacher/Lecturer	€518	€65	€583
Full Time Principal/Professor/Head	€608	€65	€673
Part-time Teacher/Lecturer	€279	€65	€344

\*if you are also a member of Teaching Council of Ireland

**4. Pension/Income Protection** – Pension or Income Protection contributions through salary receive tax relief at source. However, if you pay through your bank or by way of a lump sum you may be entitled to tax relief at your higher rate of tax, subject to certain limits. This also includes pension amounts withheld from your lump sum on retirement.

**5. 3rd Level College Fees** – 20% tax relief is available on 3rd level college fees, capped at maximum of €7,000. The first €3,000 (full-time course) or €1,500 (part-time course) is excluded for the first person you put through college.

**6. Caring for relatives** – If you are married and one spouse stays at home to look after your children or



a relative over 65 years old, you may be entitled to claim up to €1,800 per year. A Dependant Relative Tax Credit of €245 may also be available if they are over 65 and their earnings are less than €17,404.

7. **Medical Card Holders** – Holders of full Medical Cards are exempt from paying the 3rd rate of the USC, currently 4.5%. In most cases, your employer will adjust same. However, a large number of employees are not receiving this exemption.
8. **Rent Tax Credit** - If you are paying rent to a private landlord for yourself or a child in 3rd level college, you may be able to claim an annual tax credit of €500 per person.
9. **Mortgage Tax Credit** - If you were on a Tracker or Variable mortgage and paid a higher amount of mortgage interest in 2023 or 2024, compared to 2022, you may be able to claim 20% tax relief on the increase, subject to a maximum refund of €1,250.

The above are just some of the most popular means of tax refunds, and many more are available.

If you feel you may be due a PAYE refund and would like some assistance you can complete a registration and tax questionnaire on [www.TaxReturnPro.ie](http://www.TaxReturnPro.ie). This is a No Refund No Fee commission-based service, available for individuals with PAYE Income only. Commission is reduced from 10% to 6.5% (plus VAT) for TUI members when they use the discount code TUI.

Should any members require advice or assistance in preparing their Self Assessment/Form 11 returns, you can contact Tax Return Pro directly at [hello@taxreturnpro.ie](mailto:hello@taxreturnpro.ie)

The above article has been provided by Damian Wilson of Tax Return Pro based on today's rules and rates and does not constitute advice.

# Recent lunch for former DIT/TU Dublin staff



Retired members of the Transport department



Paul McSweeney and Leslie Smith



Branch Treasurer Brian Clare welcomes guests



Former TUI President Alice Prendergast and Mickey Whelan

## Thinking of Retiring?

**Stay Connected. Stay Involved. Stay Well.**

Join the Retired Members' Association of the TUI (RMATUI) — a friendly, active community where retired colleagues come together to share experiences, friendships, and good times.

Whether it's social events, outings, or simply keeping in touch with familiar faces, RMATUI helps you stay connected and supported in retirement.

Alongside our social activities, there is also a strong focus on looking after the interests of retired teachers — particularly in relation to pensions and other matters that affect your welfare and wellbeing. Providing advice and support to individual members is a central part of this work.

Membership is easy — just complete the short online application and choose how to pay your annual €25 fee:

- Deduction at Source (for ETB/TU/IoT retirees) or
- Bank Standing Order.

**YOUR FIRST YEAR IS FREE!**

As a member, you will also continue to receive TUI News, the TUI Diary, and have access to our website ([www.rmatui.ie](http://www.rmatui.ie)) for updates and information relevant to retired members.

Be part of something special — a community that values friendship, wellbeing, and the voices of retired colleagues.

**Join RMA**  
[www.rmatui.ie/join](http://www.rmatui.ie/join) or scan



# RMA News

Over the past year, the TUI Retired Teachers' Association (RMATUI) has continued to provide strong representation, effective organisation and a wide range of social, cultural and advocacy supports for its growing membership. The Management Committee met regularly with strong attendance, overseeing governance, finances, pensions, membership development and branch activity.

Membership now exceeds 1,500, with steady year-on-year growth. Renewals were efficiently managed with tailored communications depending on payment method, and the Treasurer confirmed full receipt of subscriptions from TUI. The Association's finances remain very sound. Initiatives to simplify access to membership, including online applications and QR codes, were approved. Pre-retirement seminars continued to receive very positive feedback, with a further seminar scheduled for February 2026. Members are encouraged to invite retired colleagues to local branch meetings and promote membership, which offers excellent value at just 50 cents per week.

Pensions and conditions of service remained a central priority. Motions passed at the AGM were progressed to the TUI Executive Committee, including protection of the parity link between pensions and current pay, pension-service pay parity, and RMATUI's inclusion in any TUI-ASTI

amalgamation discussions. An emergency motion reaffirmed that pension increases under the Public Service Agreement should align with serving teachers' pay increases.

Engagement with Education Shared Business Services (ESBS) regarding the transfer of pension payments for former ETB members was constructive, resulting in agreed twice-yearly liaison meetings. The transition to ESBS was closely monitored by the Management Committee, with significant support provided to members to ensure a smooth transfer and access to payslips. Members were also kept informed about Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) requirements and refund procedures, an issue affecting more recent retirees. Pension provision for third-level retirees remains with the NSSO, while pensions for former Community and Comprehensive teachers remain with the Department of Education; any future changes will be closely monitored.

Branch activity across the country remained vibrant. Active branches, including Dublin, Galway, Mayo, Donegal, Kerry, Limerick/Clare/North Tipperary, Kildare/Carlow/Laois/Wicklow, Cavan, South East and Sligo/Leitrim, held regular meetings with guest speakers on topics such as wills, assisted decision-making, health and pensions. Social activities included outings, cultural visits, table quizzes, Christmas lunches and joint events

with RSTA colleagues. Mayo and Donegal saw renewed energy, supported by visits from RMATUI officers.

National social and cultural activities were a highlight. A three-day Spring Break in Galway attracted 56 members, while an Autumn Break to Lake Garda, Venice and Verona marked the welcome return of European travel. Plans are well advanced for a Spring Break to Derry on 24-26 March 2026, with further cultural visits and outings planned nationwide. Please contact Mary Lane Heneghan to book your place at 087 668 9284

RMATUI maintained a strong profile within TUI structures, with the Chair addressing TUI Congress and promoting active recruitment. The Association remains committed to protecting members' interests, strengthening branches and fostering connection and solidarity among retired teachers.

Many thanks to my fellow Officers, Michael Mc Nulty, Tim O Meara, Majella O Neill, Mary Lane Heneghan, Mark Jordan and TUI AGS, Liz Farrell and Vice President, Laura Conheady for their trojan work and support throughout the year

**Seamus Lahart**

**RMATUI Secretary.**



**RMA members enjoying the autumn break to Italy**

Sponsored by



Congratulations to:

Vol 48 No 2 winner

Elaine McLoughlin

St Vincent's Secondary School

Glasnevin

## Crossword

€250 prize for the first correct answer drawn from the entries

Only one entry per member.  
Photocopies can be submitted.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace \_\_\_\_\_

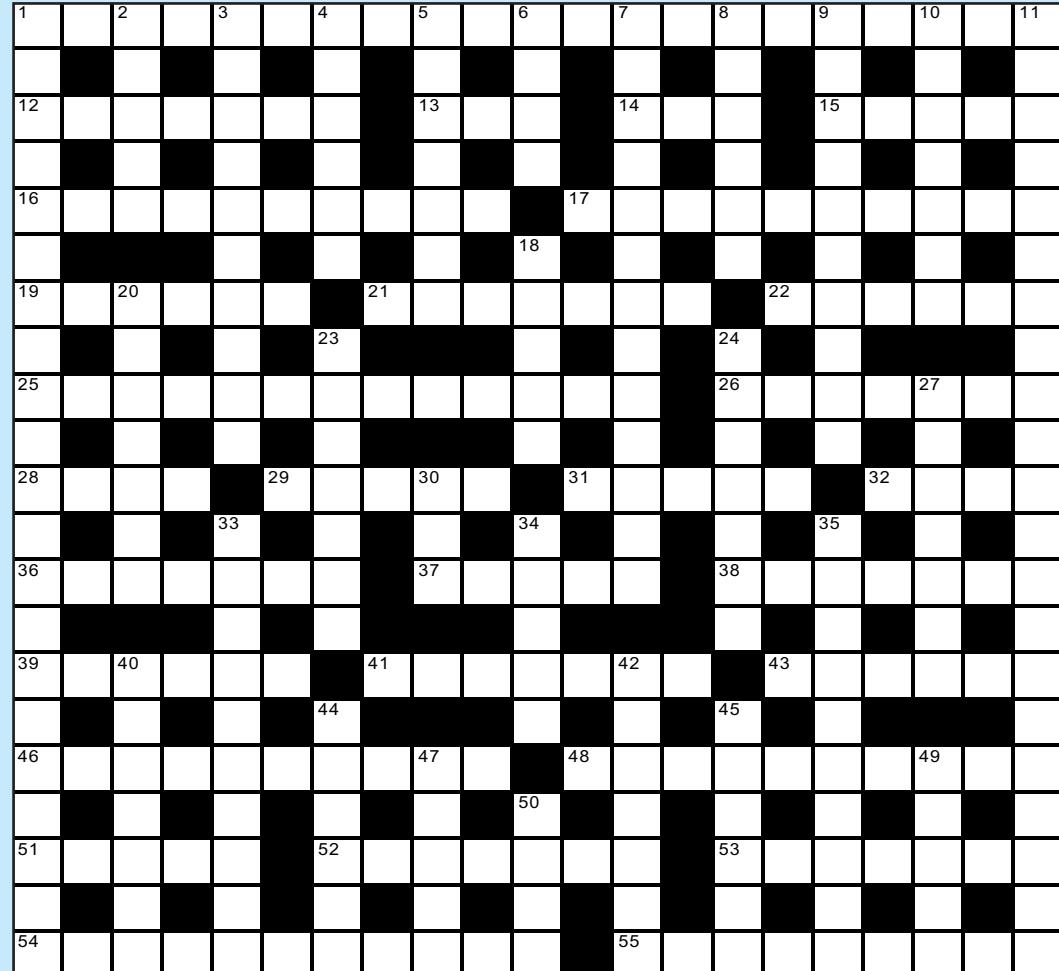
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number \_\_\_\_\_

TUI Branch \_\_\_\_\_

Send entries to  
TUI Crossword February 2026  
TUI, 73 Orwell Rd, Rathgar,  
Dublin 6, D06 YP89.

Closing date for entries: Friday, 6th  
March, 2026



### ACROSS

- North American republic, achieved independence in 1776 (6,6,2,7)
- A woman holding ducal title through birth or marriage (7)
- Equality of score in a contest (3)
- Paraphyletic grouping of passerine birds within the family Corvidae. (3)
- A group of ships travelling together or operating under the same ownership (5)
- Having a tail marked with rings of contrasting colour (4-6)
- Deliberate destruction of religious icons, traditional beliefs or established institutions (10)
- A European mint with aromatic and pungent leaves (6)
- Practising great self-denial (7)
- Six people considered as a unit (6)
- A homing bird used to carry messages (7,6)
- Type of LEGO that explores engineering (7)
- A submerged ridge of rock or coral near the surface of the water (4)
- Expel from one's property or force to move out by a legal process (5)
- Dwelling place, home (5)
- Noise emitted by a contented feline (4)
- Not heard (though not necessarily inaudible) (7)
- Italian poet famous for writing the Divine Comedy that describes a journey through Hell and purgatory (5)
- An exhilarating psychological state of pride and optimism; an absence of depression (7)

39 One of several thin slats of wood forming the sides of a barrel or bucket (6)

41 ----- for a Friend - Welsh band, formed in 2001 (7)

43 A hymn of praise or loyalty (6)

46 Of or relating to the defence of something, especially a faith or doctrine (10)

48 Legendary figure emanating from folkloric stories about St Nicholas of Myrna (5,5)

51 An activity, object, or idea that is extremely popular, usually for a short time (5)

52 1975 American comedy film starring Warren Beatty, Julie Christie, Goldie Hawn and Carrie Fisher in her film debut. (7)

53 A cocktail of gin (or vodka) and vermouth (7)

54 Happening or arising without apparent external cause (11)

55 Drawing of an exterior of a structure (9)

### DOWN

- Because of prevailing conditions (5,3,13)
- A member of the Quechuan people living in the Cuzco valley in Peru (5)
- Of or concerned with electrons (10)
- Small yellow-and-black Eurasian finch with a sharp beak (6)
- Deciduous horn of a member of the deer family (7)
- 1998 ---- After -1998 film inspired by the fairy tale Cinderella starring Drew Barrymore and Anjelica Huston (4)
- Causing disapproval or protest (13)
- A person, no matter who (6)
- Skilfulness in avoiding wasted time and effort (10)
- Not exact (7)
- A mechanical transmission which shifts gears automatically in response to speed and/or load, rather than requiring the operator to do so manually (9,12)
- Informal name for a widely known person (5)
- Sharp, piercing cry (7)
- A swaggering show of courage (7)
- Considered in detail and subject to an analysis in order to discover essential features or meaning (7)
- Provide with nourishment (7)
- Food of a ruminant regurgitated to be chewed again (3)
- Having or exerting a malignant influence (10)
- A facial expression of contempt or scorn; the upper lip curls (5)
- The royal charter of political rights given to rebellious English barons by King John in 1215 (5,5)
- A pear-shaped tropical fruit with green or blackish skin and rich yellowish pulp enclosing a single large seed (7)
- Any of various large edible marine gastropods of the genus *Haliotis* having an ear-shaped shell with pearly interior (7)
- A unit of instruction (6)
- Hinder or prevent the progress or accomplishment of (6)
- An adult insect produced after metamorphosis (5)
- A defence by an accused person purporting to show that they could not have committed the crime in question (5)
- Mr Holland's ---- - 1994 film starring Richard Dreyfuss as a music teacher struggling to balance work and family (4)