

# ASTIR

ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY TEACHERS, IRELAND

ISSN 0790-6560 | VOLUME 43: NUMBER 2: MARCH 2025

## Impact of AI on Additional Assessment Component Leaving Cert integrity



- | Senior Cycle campaign update
- | Teachers' sick leave
- | Global status of teachers

**ASTI**



# POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES AT MIC

## EDUCATION POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology
- Professional Master of Education (Primary Teaching)
- Master of Education (M Ed) with Specialisms (NEW)
- M Ed in Literacy Education
- M Ed in Leadership of Wellbeing in Education
- M Ed in Educational Leadership & Management
- M Ed in Education for Human Rights & Equality
- M Ed in Education for Sustainability & Global Citizenship
- Graduate Diploma/M Ed in Inclusive Special Education
- Graduate Diploma/M Ed in Adult & Further Education
- Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma/MA in Autism Studies
- Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma/M Ed in Digital Leadership in Education
- Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma/M Ed in Middle Leadership & Mentoring
- An Teastas Iarchéime i dTeagasc Ábharbhunaithe san Iarbhunscolaíocht Lán-Ghaeilge & Ghaeltachta
- Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice

## PhD & MA BY RESEARCH AND THESIS IN THE FOLLOWING EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

Learning; Society & Religious Education; Language & Literacy Education; Arts Education & Physical Education; Reflective Pedagogy & Early Childhood Studies; Educational Psychology; Inclusive & Special Education; STEM Education

## LIBERAL ARTS POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- Structured PhD in Applied Linguistics
- MA in Climate, Justice & Sustainability
- MA/M Sc in Environment, Society & Culture
- MA in Modern English Literature
- Graduate Diploma/MA in Applied Linguistics
- MA in History
- MA in Local History (with UL)
- MA in Media Studies
- MA sa Ghaeilge (Ceannaireacht i dTeanga, Cultúr agus Pobal)
- Certificate/MA in Christian Leadership in Education

## PhD & MA BY RESEARCH AND THESIS IN THE FOLLOWING LIBERAL ARTS DEPARTMENTS

Business Studies; Drama & Theatre Studies; English Language & Literature; French Studies; Gaeilge; German Studies; Geography; History; Mathematics & Computer Studies; Media & Communication Studies; Music; Philosophy; Psychology; Theology & Religious Studies



[mic.ie/postgraduate](https://mic.ie/postgraduate)

# CONTENTS

- 4 From the President's desk  
*Senior Cycle on the agenda*
- 4 General Secretary's update  
*Recruitment and retention*
- 5 News
- 11 News feature  
*Update on Senior Cycle campaign*
- 12 Features
  - 12 *Climate action and schools*
  - 15 *AACs: Leaving Cert exam integrity and increased workload are teachers' greatest concerns*
  - 18 *Reduce workload, increase teacher voice in policymaking – international report*
  - 20 *Menopause in the workplace*
- 22 FAQs
  - 22 *Sick leave for teachers*
- 25 ASTI in the media
  - 25 *AI and AACs*
- 26 RSTA news
- 28 Convention 2025
  - 28 *Pressing issues on the agenda at Convention 2025*
- 29 Noticeboard/Obituary
- 30 Crossword




## Climate action and schools

12



## ASTI survey on AACs

15



## Global status of teachers

18



## Menopause in the workplace

20



## Teachers' sick leave

22

### Editorial Board

Donal Cremin	President
Kieran Christie	General Secretary
Geraldine O'Brien	Immediate Past President
Padraig Curley	Vice President
Pádraig Murphy	Honorary Treasurer
Adrienne Healy	Standing Committee nominee
Anne Loughnane	Standing Committee nominee

**Media and Communications Officer:**  
Gemma Tuffy

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

### Published on behalf of ASTI by Think Media

Editorial: Ann-Marie Hardiman, Paul O'Grady and Colm Quinn  
Design: Rebecca Bohan and Tony Byrne  
Advertising: Paul O'Grady

### ASTI

Thomas MacDonagh House,  
Winetavern Street,  
Dublin 8,  
Do8 P9V6  
Tel: 01-604 0160 Fax: 01-897 2760  
[astir@asti.ie](mailto:astir@asti.ie)

ASTIR is published five times annually by the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland. The opinions expressed in ASTIR are those of individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the ASTI. While every reasonable effort has been taken to ensure information published is accurate, the ASTI cannot accept responsibility for articles or advertisements. Publication of advertisements does not equate to endorsement by ASTI.

The ASTI reserves the right to edit all material submitted for publication.

The ASTIR Editorial Board is interested in receiving feedback on ASTIR.

Members can email [astirfeedback@asti.ie](mailto:astirfeedback@asti.ie) or text 087 934 9956.

## Senior Cycle on the agenda

Last month, ASTI representatives met with the new Minister for Education and Youth, Helen McEntee TD. We raised teachers' key concerns about Senior Cycle redevelopment, including:

- generative AI is evolving at a faster pace than the education system's capacity to respond to it/address its challenges, including implications for State exams assessment,
- teachers fear they will not be in a position to authenticate students' work for Additional Assessment Components (AACs) in the Leaving Cert,
- some students who have access to supports, advice, and resources outside of school will be able to gain advantage in AACs,
- a blanket decision that all AACs will account for a minimum 40% of students' Leaving Cert grades is not appropriate for many subjects,
- AACs across multiple subjects (and eventually across all subjects) will add additional workload and stress for students and their teachers, and
- teachers of Senior Cycle Redevelopment Tranche 1 subjects, who will be implementing revised subject specifications this September, have received inadequate training and resources.

These concerns are mirrored in the findings of a REDC survey, commissioned by the ASTI, on teachers' attitudes towards AACs. Key findings include that the vast majority of teachers (88%) believe that the 40% minimum allocation for AACs will create difficulties relating to teachers authenticating students' work. The survey asked teachers of subjects that currently have additional components about their experiences of submitting this work digitally on behalf of students. Some alarming findings emerged here, including the fact that eight in 10 have experienced technical difficulties. Only 2% said they have received training in the submission of digital booklets. You can read more about the REDC survey on page 15.

### Senior Cycle to dominate Convention

Not surprisingly, Senior Cycle redevelopment is high on the agenda for ASTI Annual Convention 2025. A motion from Clare Branch (Motion 14) on the use of AI by students for AACs and the need for indemnity for teachers who sign off on AACs, is the most prioritised motion for the year's Convention. Two other motions which, if adopted by Convention, would require a ballot of members, insist that certain conditions are met prior to implementation of Senior Cycle redevelopment.

We believe that our education system must be innovative, of high standard, and equitable. In this context, the issues outlined above demand a speedy response from the Minister. The ASTI will continue its campaign for a delay to the 'accelerated' Senior Cycle Redevelopment Programme.



## Recruitment and retention

For several years now, the recruitment and retention crisis has bedevilled second-level schools. The ASTI has been calling for a more fundamental approach to finally address this problem. At its heart is the need to make teaching more attractive as a profession. We have called for increased investment and a reversal of the relentless onslaught on teachers' terms and conditions. The OECD report *Education at a Glance 2024* found that, in real terms, teachers' salaries in Ireland decreased by 6% between 2015 and 2023, at a time when they increased by 4% in most other developed countries. A proper promotional structure will have to be put in place. There must be a restoration of allowances that were abolished in 2012 for new beneficiaries. The two-year Professional Master of Education (PME) must be reduced. *Ab initio* permanent appointments must be introduced, subject to probation, rather than the current two-year wait for a contract of indefinite duration (CID).

It was interesting to read recently about the 46 apartments at Bolands Mills Quarter in Dublin, which were launched at discounted rents for key workers such as gardai, nurses and teachers. The ASTI has been arguing that ringfenced affordable accommodation for key workers could be one measure that might help to alleviate the teacher recruitment and retention crisis.

At time of going to print, our new Minister for Education and Youth, Helen McEntee TD, has stated publicly that she intends to bring forward proposals as to how the teacher shortage can be addressed. I'm hoping for more vision than we have experienced in the past.

### Local bargaining

The upcoming pay increases under the current Public Service Agreement are as follows:

- 2% or €1,000, whichever is greater, with effect from March 1, 2025,
- 1% with effect from August 1, 2025,
- 1% or €500, whichever is greater, with effect from February 1, 2026, and
- 1% with effect from June 1, 2026.

In addition, under local bargaining arrangements, an additional maximum of 3% of basic pay cost, inclusive of allowances, can be negotiated. This may include proposals involving changes in structures, work practices or other conditions of service. The first instalment, equivalent to 1% of the basic pay cost, will be implemented on September 1, 2025, and the balance will fall to be addressed in any successor pay agreement. Progress relating to local bargaining has been non-existent, but the process is to commence shortly.

The ASTI's Central Executive Council adopted a motion in February 2024 that stated:

*That ASTI shall not accept a local bargaining offer as part of the Public Service Agreement 2024 – 2026 without a ballot of members.*



## ASTI at the BT Young Scientist 2025



### Scoil Mhuire gan Smál

ASTI President Donal Cremin (far left) and ASTI General Secretary Kieran Christie (far right) are pictured with students Tadhg Ambrose, Dylan Patterson and Qiwei Leo Xue from Scoil Mhuire gan Smál, Blarney, Co. Cork, and their teachers Robert Nolan and Edel Healy. The students' project was titled 'A mathematical investigation into Ulam spirals'.



### Presentation Secondary School

ASTI President Donal Cremin (far left) and General Secretary Kieran Christie (far right) are pictured with the winners of the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition, sisters Saoirse, Ciara and Laoise Murphy, and their teacher, ASTI member Helena Madigan, from Presentation Secondary School in Co. Kerry. The sisters won first place for their project titled 'ACT (Aid, Care, Treat): App-timising emergency response, a medical app designed to support emergency healthcare responses and provide swift and effective aid during critical situations'.

## Sligo RSTA Branch event



Pictured (from left): Breda Martyn (St Mary's coffee morning group), Alice Lindsay (RSTA Sligo Branch), Kathleen Kennedy (Chairperson, Northwest Parkinson's Association), Mary Benson, and Brid Armstrong (RSTA Sligo Branch).

The RSTA Sligo Branch and St Mary's GAA coffee morning group recently presented a donation of €850 – proceeds from the Christmas hampers raffle – to the Northwest Branch of the Parkinson's Association.

**Read more about the RSTA's activities on page 26.**

## Union Week 2025



Building on the success of last year's Better in a Trade Union campaign, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) has announced Union Week 2025, which will run from April 28 to May 2.

Throughout the week, Congress and unions across Ireland will be hosting events to highlight the vital work unions do and to encourage more workers to get involved by joining a union.

Union Week and the Better in a Trade Union campaign provide an opportunity to start conversations in your workplace about the many benefits of trade union membership. Unions in every sector will be celebrating and promoting the positives of membership.

**Visit [www.ictu.ie](http://www.ictu.ie) for information on planned events.**

## ASTI Honorary National Organiser completes term



ASTI HNO Michael McGrath, who completes his term of office in May.

ASTI member and activist Michael McGrath will complete his term as Honorary National Organiser in May. Michael has served as Honorary National Organiser since his election in 2020. Michael is a longstanding member of the ASTI, first joining over 40 years ago. A member of Dungarvan Branch, Michael has served the union and his branch in a variety of different roles such as branch vice-chairperson, ASTI school steward, and as Standing Committee Regional representative. His focus on face-to-face recruitment via school visits and visits to third-level colleges has contributed to the ASTI's growing membership numbers. During his term, ASTI membership has increased from 18,400 members at the end of 2020 to 20,200 members at the beginning of 2025. The ASTI would like to thank Michael for his service, and wishes him well in his future endeavours. The ASTI Central Executive Council (CEC) will elect the next Honorary National Organiser at its May meeting.



Honorary National Organiser Michael McGrath (far right) is pictured on a school visit to High Cross College, North Campus, Co. Galway earlier this year. Also pictured are (from left): Pdraig Curley (ASTI Vice President), Clodagh Clarke (ASTI member), Principal Neasa Cosgrove (ASTI member), and Eimear O'Donovan (ASTI member).

DCU  
Official Charter  
Shooli Atha Cloinn  
Dublin City University

# DCU Institute of Education

## Postgraduate Programmes

Providing you with an innovative learning experience in a vibrant and academic environment, covering fields such as special education, leadership, and primary and post primary education.

Scan the QR or check out the link for a full list of postgraduate programmes

## New NCSE resource for teachers

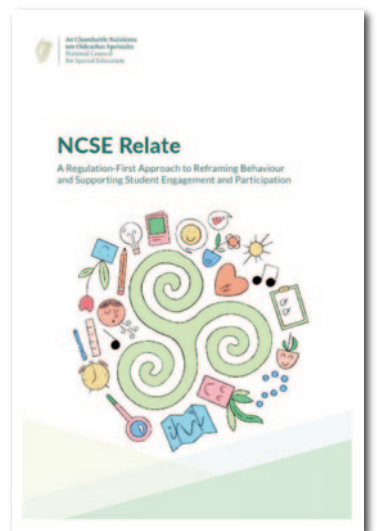
The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) has released a new resource for teachers called Relate.

Relate takes a regulation first approach to student behaviour, describing differences between a student experiencing regulation compared to dysregulation, and providing guidance to teachers on encouraging a return to regulation.

Relate also provides links to other resources, including guidelines for responding to crisis situations.

Relate supports school staff with a suite of professional learning focused on its eight principles: rights based; student voice; regulation first; neuro-affirmative; solution-focused; staff and student well-being; unconditional positive regard; and, universal design for learning.

Teachers will have access to a range of teacher professional learning opportunities, including information sessions in education centres, NCSE teacher professional learning (TPL) seminars, and advisory support visits with the NCSE Behaviour for Learning and Wellbeing team. Relate is a live resource and will be updated on a regular basis.



**For more information on Relate, please visit: <http://ncse.ie/relate>**

## Teaching Council update

### Renewals

Teachers can apply to renew their Teaching Council registration via their 'My Registration' accounts on the Teaching Council website. Teachers should ensure that their contact information is updated, and that any missing data such as postcodes and phone numbers is provided. Further information on the registration process can be found here: [www.teachingcouncil.ie/i-am-a-registered-teacher/renewing-your-registration/](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/i-am-a-registered-teacher/renewing-your-registration/)

### Expiring conditions on your registration

Teachers who are reaching the expiration date of their registration with condition(s) are required to submit evidence that they have addressed the condition(s). Teachers who have not been in a position to address the condition(s) must apply for an extension of time to comply with the condition(s) attached to their registration. It is important that teachers engage in a timely manner. Submitting the required documentation and promptly responding to any follow-up queries in a timely fashion allows the Teaching Council to deliver a more efficient service to its members. Teachers can make their extension request and submit the supporting documentation by logging on to 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 condition(s) are putting their registration at risk.

### Re-vetting

Teachers who hold a National Vetting Bureau (NVB) disclosure that is more than three years old must apply for re-vetting on a rotational basis to retain their Teaching Council registration. Re-vetting is a two-stage process:

**Stage 1:** Teachers who have received an invitation to apply for re-vetting are asked to commence this process as soon as possible by logging on to their 'My Registration' account and uploading their proof of identification documents. The Council will then check the application and identification documents, and once all is in order, the application for re-vetting will be submitted to the National Vetting Bureau (NVB).

**Stage 2:** Teachers who have applied for re-vetting will receive a link to the NVB online application form. Applicants have 30 days to complete the form from when they have received it. Teachers are asked to include all past addresses from birth to the present, including addresses outside of the Republic of Ireland. Failure to do so may cause delays in the registration process.

For more information on re-vetting, please go to:  
[www.teachingcouncil.ie/vetting/re-vetting](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/vetting/re-vetting)



### Access to Teaching Council online library

The Teaching Council provides all registered teachers with 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.

The Teaching Council ebook library has been recently upgraded to an enhanced repository, gaining even greater access to journals, ebooks and articles to support teachers' professional journey.

Registered teachers can access the online library by logging in to their 'My Registration' account via the Teaching Council website or using the following link: <https://my-tc.teachingcouncil.ie/Site-Login>

# ASTI Salary Protection Scheme



## What's Salary Protection?

If you're ill or injured and can't work, the ASTI Salary Protection Scheme aims to pay up to 75% of your annual salary\* - ensuring the important things in your life can stay on track!



## Key benefits of the Scheme

### ✓ Disability Benefit

Up to **75% of salary\*** less any other income that you may be entitled to.

### ✓ Death Benefit

Of **typically two times** your annual salary

- Terminal Illness Benefit - 100% of Death Benefit
- Accidental Death Benefit - €15,000
- Children's Death Benefit - €5,000

### ✓ Full Specified Illness Benefit

A once-off **lump sum of 25% of annual salary** paid if you are diagnosed with one of the Full Specified Illnesses covered\*\*.

### ✓ Partial Payment Specified Illness Benefit

A once-off lump sum of **€10,000 or 25% of annual salary** (whichever is less) paid if you are diagnosed with one of the Partial Payment Specified Illnesses covered\*\*.

## Scheme enhancements

Members also have access to additional services, including MyDoc and Early Absence Support.

### MyDoc

An easy, online healthcare service for you, your spouse/partner and dependent family members living with you. Book free consultations, get prescriptions, sick certs or referrals, whenever and wherever you go! **Register today** at [cornmarket.ie/mydoc](https://cornmarket.ie/mydoc)

## We're here to help you

To speak to a member of our team about cover:

Phone: **(01) 470 8070**

Email: [financialplanning@cornmarket.ie](mailto:financialplanning@cornmarket.ie)



\*Less any other income you may be entitled to, such as half pay, Ill Health Early Retirement Pension, Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration, State Illness Benefit or State Invalidity Pension. \*\*Only one claim per member.

For the full terms and conditions of the Scheme, full list of the Insurer's specified illnesses covered, and the policy definition/criteria of each illness, please see the Scheme Summary booklet available at [cornmarket.ie/asti](https://cornmarket.ie/asti).





## How does Early Absence Support work?

When you're ill or injured and can't work your Scheme helps you with a replacement salary. Separately, this service supports your return to health using Irish Life's internal nursing team, and a range of rehabilitation programmes and therapies, at no additional cost!

### What will the service provide?



**Chat** through your medical issues and integrate this information with various support services that may help you



**Schedule** follow up appointments as and when you may need them



**Agree** a plan to help you focus on getting better



**Prepare** a report which you will be able to discuss with your GP and Employer if required

### When can I use it?

- 1 If out of work for around 4 weeks and
- 2 If looking for help to return to health

### How do you use this service?

Email [eas@irishlife.ie](mailto:eas@irishlife.ie)

Call (01) 562 5106

Visit [irishlifeemployersolutions.ie/asti](http://irishlifeemployersolutions.ie/asti)



SCAN ME

## Requesting digital publications through MyUnion

MyUnion, the members' only area of the ASTI website, allows members to decide if they would like to receive our publications digitally. Once you have created an account, you will have convenient access to information about your membership, and will be able to request digital or hard copies of all our publications, such as *ASTIR* and *Nuacht*.

Members can also update their personal details directly in the MyUnion area – for example, your home address and email address – to ensure that you receive the most up-to-date correspondence from the ASTI.

You can do this at: [www.asti.ie/my-union/](http://www.asti.ie/my-union/)

## Flat Rate Expenses allowances

The Teachers' Flat Rate Expenses (FRE) allowance regime is operated by Revenue. From 2025 onwards, the way teachers' FREs will be administered changes.

The basis of the allowance is that "the expenses are wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of the duties of the office or employment by the employee concerned and that such expenses are not reimbursed by his or her employer".

Revenue has informed the ASTI that employees who qualify for an FRE allowance may continue to benefit from that allowance in 2025.

### What do teachers need to do?

Employees who are entitled to an FRE allowance will be required to submit a claim each year. The quickest and easiest way to claim an allowance is via Revenue's online service, myAccount:

- using the PAYE Services tab in myAccount, PAYE taxpayers can claim the FRE allowance in the current tax year. When an FRE allowance is claimed in year, the relevant allowance is included on an amended Tax Credit Certificate (TCC) and the benefit of the allowance is made through payroll, and
- alternatively, PAYE taxpayers can claim the FRE allowance for previous tax years by completing an annual Income Tax Return in myAccount.

Detailed guidance on how to make a claim, both in year and out of year, is available on the Revenue website.

### Rate of FRE allowances

Details of the FRE rates for years up to and including 2025 are available on the Revenue website.

Further guidance on the FRE regime is available at the following links:

- Revenue website, and
- Tax and Duty Manual Part 05-02-20.

## New Minister for Education and Youth

Former Minister for Justice Helen McEntee TD has been appointed as Minister for Education and Youth. Ms McEntee previously served as Minister of State with responsibility for Mental Health and Older People from 2016 to 2017, Minister of State for European Affairs from 2017 to 2020, and Minister for Justice from 2020 to 2024.



*New Minister for Education Helen McEntee TD. (Photo courtesy of Department of Ed.)*

Minister McEntee was first elected to represent the Meath East constituency in 2013. She previously served on the Oireachtas Committee on Transport and Communications, and was also a member of the Oireachtas Committee on Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht.

At a recent meeting with Minister McEntee, ASTI representatives highlighted key issues for second-level education, including the teacher recruitment crisis, teachers' concerns about the accelerated Senior Cycle Redevelopment Programme, and funding for second-level education.

## Meeting the new Minister



*ASTI representatives met with Minister for Education and Youth Helen McEntee TD to discuss key issues impacting Senior Cycle redevelopment, teacher shortages, investment in schools, and teacher workload. Pictured are (from left): Donal Cremin (ASTI President), Helen McEntee TD (Minister for Education and Youth), Kieran Christie (ASTI General Secretary), and Diarmaid de Paor (ASTI Deputy General Secretary).*

# SENIOR CYCLE REDEVELOPMENT UPDATE

2025 is a crucial year in relation to the proposed redevelopment of Senior Cycle.



ASTI and TUI members at the recent Senior Cycle protest are pictured outside Loreto Community School in Milford, Co. Donegal. Photo by Clive Wasson, CW Photos Limited.

In November 2024, the ASTI and TUI jointly launched a campaign for a postponement of the implementation of the “accelerated” Senior Cycle Redevelopment Programme. On November 19, more than 30,000 ASTI and TUI members engaged in a lunchtime protest to highlight concerns over changes to the Senior Cycle, which they believe risk undermining both educational standards and fairness for Leaving Certificate students.

Since then, there has been engagement between the Department of Education and the ASTI and TUI on the issues of most concern to teachers. The ASTI also met with the new Minister for Education and Youth, Helen McEntee TD, and outlined these concerns, including:

- the decision in September 2023 to accelerate the Senior Cycle Redevelopment Programme without consultation with unions representing second-level teachers,
- the need for proper resourcing of science labs and other facilities for all schools prior to the implementation of the Redevelopment Programme,
- the need for adequate training and supports for teachers, and
- the need to address teachers’ concerns regarding authenticating students’ work for Additional Assessment Components (AACs), particularly in light of developments in AI.

As *ASTIR* goes to print, engagement between the teacher unions and the Department is continuing. A joint meeting of the ASTI Standing Committee

and TUI Executive has been scheduled in order to progress the Senior Cycle redevelopment campaign. In April, a number of key motions on Senior Cycle redevelopment will be debated at ASTI Annual Convention. If these motions are adopted by Annual Convention, they will become ASTI policy for implementation.

## Tranche 1 specifications

The ASTI expressed its dismay at aspects of the Tranche 1 subject specifications processes, particularly the failure to share submissions from public consultations with members of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) subject development groups. The ASTI has sought a commitment that members of subject development groups, who play a key role in decisions being made about new and revised subject specifications, are provided with full information.

## Draft Tranche 2 specifications

Consultations on the draft specifications for Tranche 2 subjects are ongoing. The ASTI has been encouraging members to provide input to these processes. Links to the online consultation forms can be accessed here: <https://ncca.ie/en/senior-cycle/curriculum-developments/>.

ASTI members are also urged to provide clear feedback at CPD events related to Senior Cycle.

## Call to action 2025

2025 is the most important year for ensuring teachers’ voice influences Senior Cycle redevelopment. It is vital that the lessons of the Framework for Junior Cycle process are not lost.

To meet this objective, the ASTI is calling on all members to be a part of our Senior Cycle campaign.

**Keep up to date at this crucial time by logging on to [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie)**

# CLIMATE ACTION AND SCHOOLS



The first in a series of articles on the role of the education sector in addressing climate change looks at two key policy documents. Article written by Breda Slevin.

Schools and education systems are increasingly centre stage in national and international climate action plans – as is evidenced in the first ever declaration on education from the 2023 Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change (COP 28).

Weather-related disasters are causing mass disruption to learning across the world – our own experience of Storm Éowyn earlier this year being a case in point. According to Moira Leydon, ASTI Assistant General Secretary/Education & Research, “it is important to stay informed on both national policy and global discourses in response to the unfolding climate crisis. We must also be mindful that from the trade union point of view, the concept of just transition is central: no one must be left behind in the movement to carbon zero economies. All too often the impact of climate change has fallen on groups who are least able to bear the costs of adaptation”.

Over a series of articles, *ASTIR* will explore the role of the education sector in the areas of climate change – including education and equity. In this issue, we review two key Government documents that have recently been published or updated, which provide information/guidance for fair and equitable changes to infrastructure and educational practices for the Irish educational sector. They are:

1. School Sector Technical Climate Action Roadmap (2024-2030) (Dept. of Education publication, updated December 19, 2024).
2. ESD to 2030: Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (Dept. of Education publication).

These publications reference economic, educational and equity aspects of climate change and sustainability as they relate to education in Ireland.

---

**“The retrofit has had a huge impact on my work life in Holy Faith. The modern, warm building has enhanced the teaching and learning environment, and helped increase productivity and well-being.”**

**Teacher, St Mary’s Holy Faith Secondary School, Killester.**

Quoted in pathfinder case study – School Sector Technical Climate Action Roadmap 2024 to 2030 – Making the Transition to Net Zero in Our Schools

---

## **Decarbonisation**

The Irish State is legally required to achieve, by 2050, “a climate-resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable, and climate-neutral economy” under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

This Act informs the Irish Government’s Climate Action Plan (CAP), which is updated annually. CAP 24 is the most recent publication. To support the aims of the CAP, a Public Sector Climate Action Mandate was published in 2022 and in recognition of the unique circumstances of schools, a School Sector Climate Action Mandate was published separately.

The implementation of the School Sector Climate Action Mandate is supported by the School Sector Technical Climate Action Roadmap. This document was first published in 2023. It is updated regularly and the most recent update, on December 19, 2024, is outlined on page 13.



**The Irish State is legally required to achieve, by 2050, “a climate-resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable, and climate-neutral economy” under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.**

## School Sector Technical Climate Action Roadmap (2024-2030)

*(Making the Transition to Net Zero in Our Schools) – published by the Department of Education, updated December 2024.*

This document establishes a roadmap for the school sector’s transition to net zero emissions by 2050, and details the strategies, progress and challenges to achieving climate targets from 2024-2030.

It notes that although schools account for just 7% of overall public sector energy consumption, schools and other education settings have a “leading role in their communities and what happens in classrooms reaches into homes right across the country”.

The roadmap states that meeting the climate action targets requires key interventions including:

- The delivery of an ambitious capital investment plan: This is contingent on a funding commitment for progressively decarbonising school buildings and implementing a structured School Estate Maintenance and Asset Management System.
- Climate action decarbonisation delivery programme for the school sector to achieve net zero emissions no later than 2050: The Department has developed, with support from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), a dedicated energy and carbon rating system for schools called SEACER (School Energy and Carbon Estimated Rating). The Department pathfinder programme encourages schools to lead the way on change. To date, the pathfinder programme has retrofitted 62 schools across Ireland, with an additional 15 schools currently at various stages of progress in undergoing deep retrofit to a Building Energy Rating (BER) of B with renewable heating systems. The work is illustrated through case studies in the report.
- An ongoing programme of education for sustainable development in our schools: Education for sustainable development (ESD) aims to ensure

that by 2030 all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development through ESD. Climate Action and Sustainable Development will be introduced as a Leaving Certificate subject in September 2025.

- Schools acting as exemplars in their communities on climate action: This requires:
  - full alignment with the CAP,
  - the education of students, motivated and empowered to be well-informed citizens,
  - sustainable ways for students and staff travel to and from school,
  - modern and sustainable buildings within our communities, and
  - a national communication strategy on actions taken under the CAP highlighting exemplar climate action achievements in our schools.
- More sustainable school transport and promotion of active travel: The roadmap includes details on the ongoing review of the School Transport Scheme. This includes looking at how the school transport scheme can work in liaison with the State Routes to Schools Programme.

**The document can be viewed at:**

[www.gov.ie/en/publication/3c42a-climate-action-roadmap/](http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3c42a-climate-action-roadmap/)

The Roadmap is a valuable and comprehensive document, linking the aims of the CAP to the School Sector Climate Action Mandate.

It compiles valuable data, guides progress, and signposts the investment required to achieve decarbonisation, noting “the timing, pace and scope of the decarbonisation trajectory for the school sector will be contingent on the availability of both capital and operational resources”.

**Education for Sustainable Development**

The UN Global Summit in Education in September 2023 placed education at the heart of society’s response to the climate crisis. The Department of Education’s National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development is the guiding document for the education sector in Ireland. The Strategy was first published in 2018 and was updated on January 25, 2025. The Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development to 2030 provides a framework to guide and support the contribution of the education sector towards a sustainable future by 2030. It builds on the successes of the first ESD strategy and is essentially an action plan for the sector. A review will take place in 2026 to evaluate progress.

**Just transition**

Inequality and just transition are key issues in the context of sustainable development. The National Strategy Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to 2030 states: “ESD is grounded in principles of social justice, equity and a respect for human rights and seeks to foster engaged and active citizens, of all ages, motivated to take action towards a sustainable future”.

One of the key messages in the UN Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2023 was the societal consequences of the phasing out of

---

**“We are increasingly asking if what people learn is truly relevant to their lives, if what they can learn helps to ensure the survival of our planet. Education for Sustainable Development can provide the knowledge, awareness and action that empowers people to transform themselves and transform societies.”**

**Stefania Giannini, Director General for Education, UNESCO**

Quoted in the introduction to ESD to 2030: Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development.

---

unsustainable practices globally, raising the issues of “compensation, just transitions and new social contracts in response to losses of livelihoods, jobs, and industries to avoid social and political backlash against change”.

## Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development – ESD to 2030

The Second National Strategy – ESD to 2030, was first published in June 2022. The Strategy uses a lifelong learning approach and is published across three Government Departments: the Department of Education, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, spanning the education sector from early learning to third-level education and beyond.

The structure of the Strategy is aligned with UNESCO’s Framework for ESD for 2030, and includes five key priority action areas:

1. Advancing policy.
2. Transforming learning environments.
3. Building capacities of educators.
4. Empowering and mobilising young people.
5. Accelerating local level actions.

The first progress report on ESD to 2030 outlines some of the key achievements in the period to June 2023. These include:

- new Leaving Certificate curriculum for Climate Action and Sustainable Development from September 2025,
- social and environmental education as an area of learning under the Primary Curriculum Framework from September 2025,
- inclusion of the Irish Second-Level Students’ Union on the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment,
- participation in the EU Working Group on Learning for Sustainability,

- adoption of ESD to 2030 by UNESCO as Ireland’s Country Initiative for ESD,
- sustainability toolkit for schools,
- €1m in funding for organisations and schools for ESD projects 2022-2024,
- quarterly ESD newsletter,
- ESD CPD opportunities,
- programmes that support ESD such as the Green Schools programme, and
- opportunities for students to develop action-oriented skills.

For more information on this document and a range of publications visit: [www.gov.ie/en/publication/02952d-national-strategy-on-education-for-sustainable-development-in-ireland/#national-strategy](http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/02952d-national-strategy-on-education-for-sustainable-development-in-ireland/#national-strategy)

The National Strategy also provides a wealth of practical information for educators including public consultation, funding, an art competition for schools, a newsletter, advisory groups, a national forum, a sustainability toolkit for schools, and CPD.

The multi-Government departmental approach, combined with collaboration with schools and other educational institutions, ensures a far-reaching strategy across society.

This document also forms an important part of Ireland’s role in achieving the Global Development Goals adopted by the UN in 2015, which include quality education.

# AACs: LEAVING CERT EXAM INTEGRITY AND INCREASED WORKLOAD ARE TEACHERS' GREATEST CONCERNS



A recent REDC/ASTI survey highlights serious concerns regarding the proposed Additional Assessment Components for Leaving Cert.

The vast majority of second-level teachers believe that the new Additional Assessment Components (AACs) in the Leaving Cert will create difficulties relating to teachers authenticating students' work, according to a REDC/ASTI survey conducted in November 2024. Teachers also expressed significant concern at the proposal that AACs will be worth a minimum 40% of the overall exam grade in every subject.

A total of 2,758 ASTI members out of a sample of circa 14,000 members took part in the survey, representing a response rate of 20%.

The participants included 2,720 classroom teachers, 10 principals and 28 deputy principals who also have subject responsibility. Participating members received an online questionnaire from REDC via email to complete in November 2024.

### Increased workload and authentication of work

When asked about their concerns, survey respondents emphasised a number of issues, including the reliability of work attributed to students (Figure 1):

- 89% of all teachers surveyed said the new Leaving Cert AACs will lead to increased teacher workload,
- 88% said AACs will create difficulties in relation to the authentication of students' work,
- 82% said AACs will increase students' workload,
- 70% said AACs will increase stress among Leaving Cert students, and
- 60% said ACCs will lead to over assessment of students.

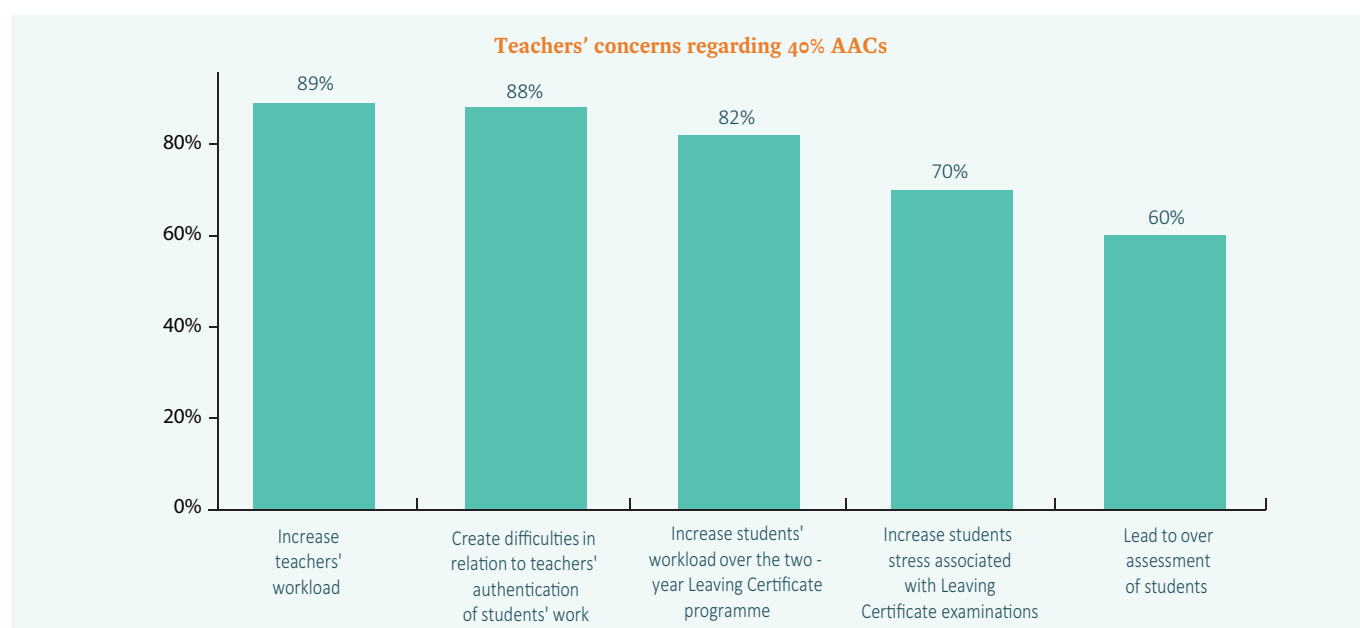


FIGURE 1: Teachers expressed high agreement with negative impacts and high disagreement with positive impacts of a minimum 40% AAC being applied.



Most teachers who took part in the REDC/ASTI survey believe that 40% is excessive for the AAC in their subject.

Teachers also deem a multitude of resources necessary to support teachers and schools before introducing new AACs (Figure 2):

- 82% of all teachers believe guidance on AI is necessary,
- 78% believe guidance on authentication of students' course work is necessary,
- 74% said smaller class sizes are necessary,
- 70% said there must be more ICT devices in teachers' classrooms,
- 68% said more supports for students with special educational needs (SEN) are necessary, and
- 68% said digital devices must be available to all students throughout the school day.

#### Learning from current practice

Many teachers of Leaving Cert subjects that currently have an additional exam component are satisfied with the current percentage of marks allocated, according to the survey. The majority of these teachers would prefer to retain the current percentage mark. Music has the highest level of satisfaction with the current additional component (which is worth 50% of the overall mark), with 96% of music teachers saying that they are very satisfied or satisfied.

Some teachers of subjects that currently have additional exam components are dissatisfied with the current percentage allocation. For example, more than half (54%) of Home Economics teachers would prefer an AAC with more than 20% weighting.

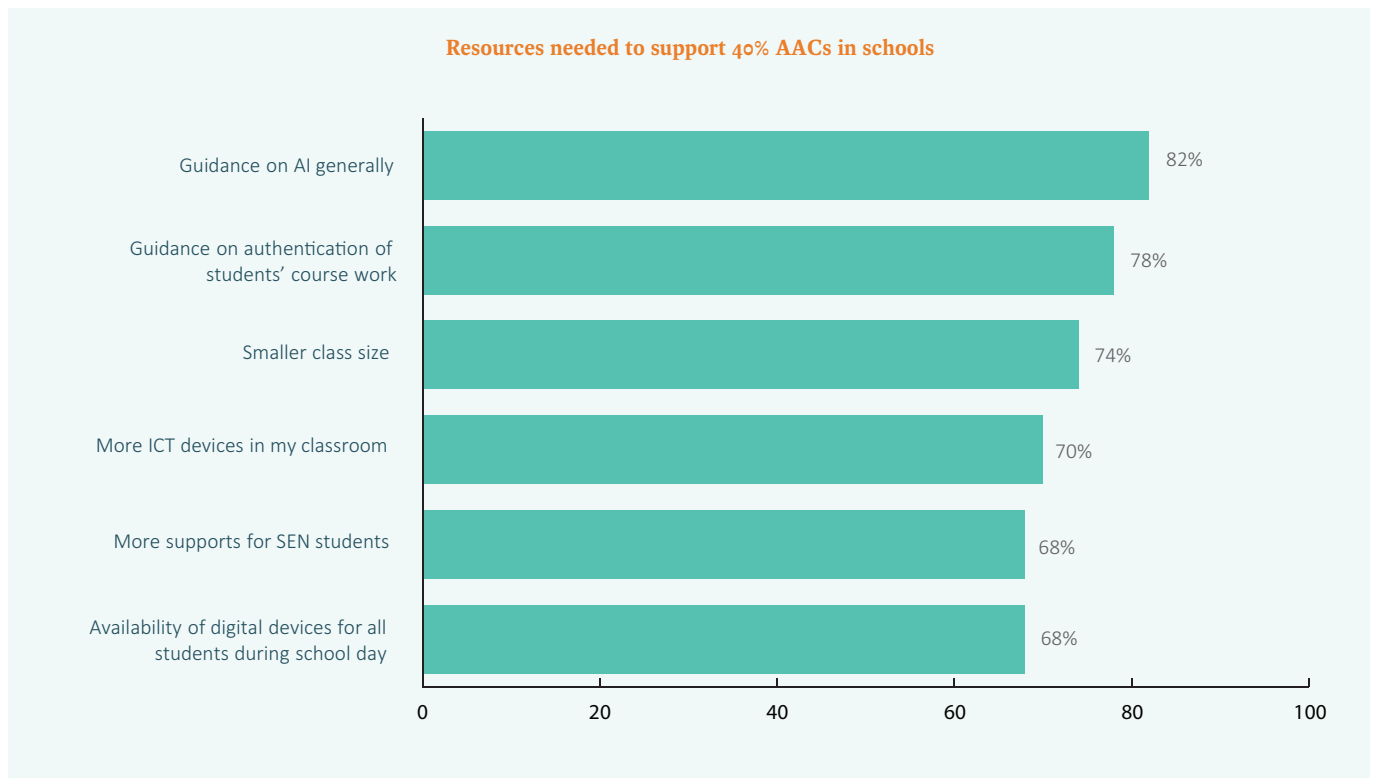


FIGURE 2: A multitude of resources were deemed necessary by teachers to support them in responding to a new marking system of 40% for AACs in their subject(s).



**Subjects with no additional assessment currently**

Most teachers who took part in the survey believe that 40% is excessive for the AAC in their subject.

For teachers whose subject does not currently include any form of additional assessment in the Leaving Cert, such as Physics, Chemistry, Business, English, and Maths, three out of four are dissatisfied with the proposed 40% allocation (Figure 3).

The majority of these teachers propose 20% or lower for AACs (Figure 4).

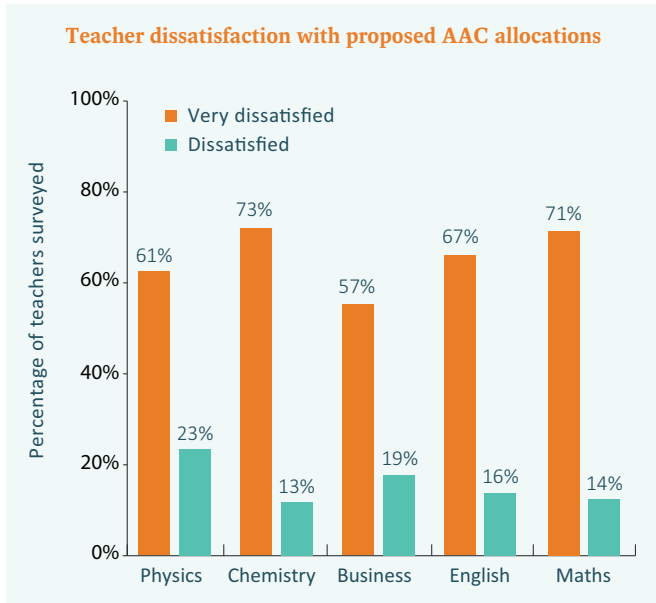


FIGURE 3: A majority of teachers in subjects that currently do not have an AAC were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the proposed 40% allocation. For the full list of subjects included in the survey, please see full report.

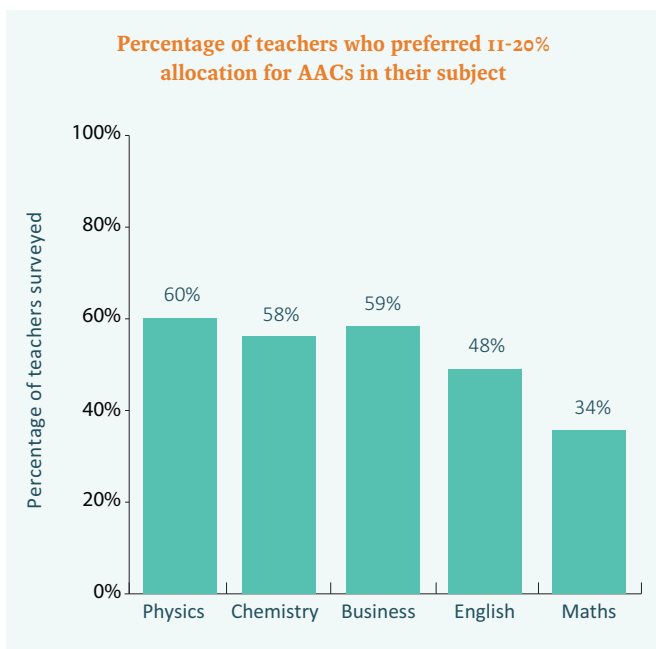


FIGURE 4: The majority of teachers who do not currently have an AAC chose 11-20% as their preferred allocation. For the full list of subjects included in the survey, please see full report.

**Submission of digital booklets**

Currently, project work in 10 Leaving Cert subjects involves submitting a standardised State Exams Commission (SEC) digital booklet to the SEC. The survey found that, in the majority of cases, it is the subject teacher who submits students' digital booklets. However, only 2% of teachers of subjects with project work have received training in how to submit digital booklets (Figure 5). Furthermore, eight in 10 teachers say they have experienced technical difficulties while submitting digital booklets, with difficulties including upload errors/time-outs, difficulty navigating the submission platform, and file size limitations (Figure 6). In addition, only three in 10 believe that the IT system in their school can do this processing securely.

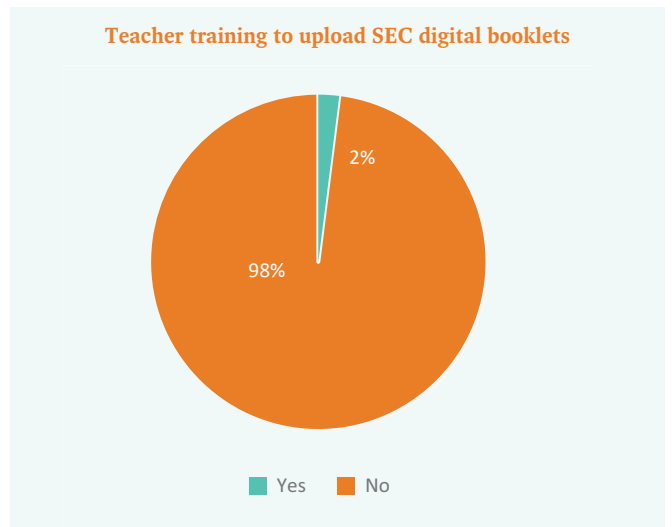


FIGURE 5: Only 2% of teachers surveyed had received training on submission of digital booklets.

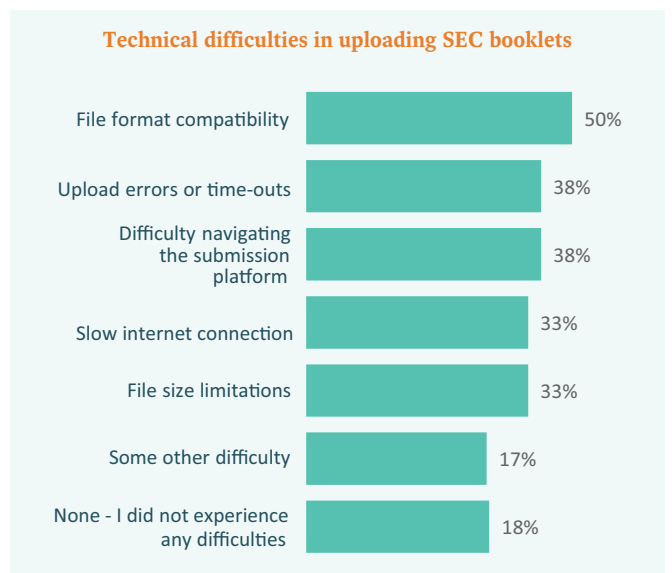


FIGURE 6: Teachers listed a range of technical difficulties they encountered when uploading digital booklets.

The full REDC/ASTI survey is available to read here: [www.asti.ie/document-library/asti-redc-jan-2025-senior-cycle-redevelopment-additional/](http://www.asti.ie/document-library/asti-redc-jan-2025-senior-cycle-redevelopment-additional/)



# REDUCE WORKLOAD, INCREASE TEACHER VOICE IN POLICYMAKING – INTERNATIONAL REPORT

**A new report from Education International makes recommendations to build a high-status, high-retention teaching profession.**

Teacher shortages, declining professional status, and limited influence over policymaking are among the most pressing concerns of teachers worldwide, according to a new report commissioned by Education International. The Global Report on the Status of Teachers 2024 contains the findings of research carried out by Dr Ben Arnold, Senior Lecturer in Educational Leadership, and Dr Mark Rahimi, Senior Psychosocial Researcher, Data Analyst and Data Scientist, both at Deakin University, Australia. The 2024 publication builds on the findings from previous reports in 2015, 2018 and 2021. Educational International is a global federation of teacher unions (including the ASTI), which represents over 33 million teachers and education support personnel in 180 countries and territories.

The report provides an analysis of the state of the teaching profession worldwide, highlighting the key role teachers play in ensuring high-quality and equitable education systems. The data is drawn from a survey of 204 education union representatives across 121 countries and the report highlights the need for “urgent, co-ordinated action and system change to ensure that the teaching profession remains attractive, sustainable and capable of meeting the needs of future generations”.

---

**“Low salaries, poor career progression, and excessive workloads were identified as the key reasons for recruitment and retention issues”**

---

**The key findings of the research are:**

## ■ Teacher shortages

The report identifies severe shortages across all levels of education globally. Subject-specific shortages vary regionally, although special education, IT, maths and science teacher shortages were identified across all regions. Low salaries, poor career progression, and excessive workloads were identified as the key reasons for recruitment and retention issues.

## ■ Challenging working conditions and well-being

The report also found that teachers face high stress levels due to a range of factors including large class sizes, increased administrative workload, emotional demands, and unsupportive working environments.

## ■ Professional status

Despite the vital role teachers have in society, the report found that in many regions teachers are often undervalued with limited professional voice.

Many of the key global findings in the report, such as teacher shortages and increased workload, pertain strongly to the current Irish education sector. An August 2024 ASTI REDC survey of secondary school leaders found that in Ireland four out of every five teaching vacancies had no applicants in the previous school year, with maths, Irish and modern languages most affected.

ASTI members also consistently highlight increased teacher workload, and almost nine in ten members agree that new Leaving Cert Additional Assessment Components will further increase workload (ASTI/REDC survey on Senior Cycle redevelopment, January 2025).

## ■ Recommendations

The Education International report calls for “bold and urgent action” to address the obstacles to building a high-status, high-retention teaching profession. In order to attract and retain teachers, the report recommends that governments:

- review teacher salaries and compensation to ensure that they are competitive and commensurate with the significance of the job,
- engage directly with teachers to understand their needs and develop policies that address these concerns,
- develop targeted recruitment initiatives in subject areas with critical shortages, and
- support teacher well-being with reduced workloads and enhanced support systems.

## Read the report

To read the full report, please scan the QR code:



Further recommendations in the area of equality, fundamental to ensuring all students have access to quality education, include:

- increased funding and fair distribution of educational resources, and
- enhanced consultations between unions and government.

From a global perspective, the report concluded that the main cause of teacher shortages was considered to be low salaries and limited financial incentives for teacher retention. Unions also identified excessive workloads, lack of professional status and poor career progression opportunities as major contributory factors. Crucially, it was widely perceived that education authorities had a limited understanding of why teachers were choosing to leave the profession.

In light of these recommendations, it is notable that the Irish Government’s Programme for Government, published in January 2025, contains little to no detail on how Ireland’s teacher shortage crisis will be tackled, according to

ASTI General Secretary Kieran Christie. “The Programme for Government fails to provide a real commitment to addressing the teacher shortage crisis. This is despite the fact that recruiting and retaining teachers is now the number one threat to our education system,” said Mr Christie.

Speaking at the launch of the Education International report, Dr Ben Arnold said of the status of teachers: “It’s not only the sheer volume of work that teachers are required to contend with but it’s also the emotionally demanding and intellectually challenging nature of the work”.

He concluded: “To really understand what teaching work is, we need to listen to teachers, to establish a strong professional voice and think about what a healthy school, a healthy school system and a sustainable profession would look like”.

## TACKLE YOUR FEELINGS SCHOOLS



## WIN TICKETS TO A PROVINCIAL RUGBY MATCH!

Tackle Your Feelings (TYF) is giving teachers the opportunity to win tickets to a provincial game once they sign-up to the programme. There will be four sets of tickets available with one winner per province. All teachers who complete the course will also qualify for a visit from a rugby player to their classroom during the 2024/25 school year. To register, follow the QR code below and upon registering mention that you saw us via the ASTI.

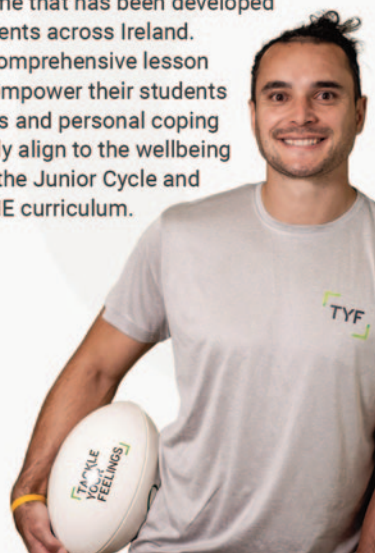
### WHAT IS TYF SCHOOLS?

The TYF Schools Programme is designed by mental health and wellbeing experts to support and nurture the positive mental health of young people. The Programme uses positive and sport psychology principles to help build awareness, encourage positive habits and skill adaptation, as well as changing attitudes and behaviours towards mental health and wellbeing. Led by Ireland’s rugby players, the initiative is brought to you by Rugby Players Ireland in partnership with Zurich Ireland and the Z Zurich Foundation.



### FOR WHO?

TYF Schools is a **FREE** classroom based, teacher-led programme that has been developed for second level students across Ireland. Supported by eight comprehensive lesson plans, teachers can empower their students to build healthy habits and personal coping strategies that directly align to the wellbeing guidelines set out in the Junior Cycle and complement the SPHE curriculum.



#TACKLEYOURFEELINGS



DOWNLOAD

Deadline extended to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2025

# MENOPAUSE IN THE WORKPLACE

**Teachers who are experiencing perimenopause symptoms are entitled to seek reasonable accommodations in their workplace.**



It is only very recently that public attention has begun to focus on issues caused by menopause in the workplace. While it is a universal experience for women, menopause is often not discussed openly in the workplace, especially in professions like teaching, where the focus tends to be on students. For teachers in Ireland, understanding menopause and its potential impact on your health, well-being, and work life is important, as is a knowledge of your rights in seeking support.

## What is menopause?

Menopause occurs when a woman has gone 12 months without a menstrual period, signalling the end of her fertility. The period leading up to menopause is called perimenopause, and this can last for several years. During perimenopause, hormone levels fluctuate, which can cause a variety of symptoms.

## Common symptoms of perimenopause

Symptoms of perimenopause can vary widely from person to person, but common ones include:

- hot flushes,
- night sweats,
- irregular periods,
- mood changes,
- fatigue,
- memory problems,
- sleep disturbances, and
- joint pain.

For teachers, the classroom environment can exacerbate some of these symptoms, especially with fluctuating temperatures, long work hours, and the stress of managing a class. As we know, teaching is a demanding profession requiring teachers to maintain high levels of energy, focus, and patience. The challenges posed by perimenopause symptoms can sometimes make these demands feel even more overwhelming. The combination of symptoms outlined above can leave teachers feeling exhausted, making it harder to keep up with the demands of the job.

## Strategies for managing perimenopause symptoms in the classroom

While perimenopause can pose some unique challenges, there are strategies teachers can use to help manage their symptoms and continue to thrive in the classroom.

### 1. Create a comfortable environment

- **Adjust the classroom temperature:** If possible, consider making small changes in the classroom, like positioning your desk near a window or using a fan to regulate the temperature. A cooler environment can help to reduce hot flushes and night sweats.
- **Layer your clothing:** Wearing layers can help you to adjust quickly to changes in body temperature. Having a cardigan or jacket to take off when you feel warm can make a difference.
- **Access to water:** Keep a water bottle on hand to stay hydrated and help cool you down during a hot flush.

### 2. Take breaks when needed

It is essential to prioritise self-care. If you experience a hot flush or feel mentally fatigued, take a few moments to step out of the classroom and take a deep breath or sip water. A short break can help reset your energy and focus.

### 3. Seek support and open communication

- **Talk to your colleagues:** Perimenopause is a common experience for many women and talking with trusted colleagues can create a supportive environment. Sharing your experiences can help reduce feelings of isolation.
- **Speak to your principal:** If you are struggling with perimenopause symptoms, it is important to speak with your principal. Schools in Ireland are required to support staff in managing health-related issues, and accommodations such as flexible working hours or a private space for rest may be available.
- **Speak to your school steward or safety representative:** These colleagues have particular roles helping you in negotiations with school management as you seek support in your work.



#### 4. Stay organised

The mental fog that often comes with perimenopause can make staying organised a challenge. Use tools like planners, digital reminders, or checklists to keep track of your tasks and lesson plans. Breaking larger tasks into smaller steps can also help alleviate stress.

#### 5. Practice stress management

■ **Mindfulness and relaxation techniques:** Meditation, deep breathing, and mindfulness exercises can help reduce stress and anxiety. Starting or ending your day with these techniques may provide mental clarity and emotional balance.

■ **Physical activity:** Regular exercise can help reduce many perimenopause symptoms, including fatigue, mood swings, and joint pain. Even a daily walk can provide physical and mental relief.

#### 6. Maintain a healthy diet

Eating a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can help manage perimenopause symptoms. Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish, flaxseeds, and walnuts, may help reduce mood swings, while calcium and vitamin D are important for bone health.

#### What should be done to support women going through the menopause?

The ASTI is committed to supporting women in schools who are experiencing the menopause. We continue to campaign for an environment where all women are able to:

- work through the menopause in an environment that is supportive,
- control the room temperature in their classrooms and, through negotiation, the staffroom as well,
- access a toilet during break times – and expect systems to be in place in the workplace to ensure that if a member of staff wishes to use the toilet during lesson time, they are able to do so,
- expect understanding from managers and colleagues regarding any condition that may require reasonable adjustments, and
- work in an environment where reasonable adjustments are made to achieve a comfortable working environment for all.

#### Questions to raise in your workplace

- Are all staff menopause-aware so that women do not need to raise it as an individual issue?
- Is there a climate of openness where women are able, if they so choose, to disclose their symptoms to colleagues and management, and request adjustments?
- Is there adequate ventilation and temperature control in each classroom and in other areas of the school, such as the staffroom?
- Is there a procedure for providing brief cover arrangements for women workers who may need to use toilet/washing facilities during a lesson or when they are working with an individual pupil?
- Is there ready access to cold drinking water?

#### Legal rights and supports for teachers in Ireland

In Ireland, teachers have legal protections under the Equality Act 2004, which prohibits discrimination based on gender, age, or any related issues such as menopause. This means that if menopause is affecting your ability to perform your job, you are entitled to reasonable adjustments. For example, you could ask for flexibility in your working hours or a private space to rest or cool down during the day. If you are experiencing difficulty in accessing such adjustments, do not hesitate to contact the ASTI for advice and support.

## ASTI motion on menopause leave

The following motion was proposed by the ASTI at the ICTU Women's Conference 2024, where it was adopted:

#### Menopause leave

That the ICTU negotiate with the relevant bodies, with the aim of introducing menopause leave, which will allow workers to request suitable workplace adjustments such as flexibility, time off to attend medical appointments, and work task adjustments when workers are experiencing symptoms.

*Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland (ASTI)*

# SICK LEAVE FOR TEACHERS



## All you need to know about your entitlements under the Sick Leave Scheme.

### What do I need to do on my first day of sick leave absence?

You must notify your employer as early as possible on your first day of absence in line with your school's normal procedures. You should indicate the likely duration of absence, if possible, and whether it is certified or self-certified leave.

**Note:** Self-certified sick leave is seven days' paid leave over a rolling two-year period.

### When do I need to provide a medical certificate?

In the case of certified sick leave, a medical certificate is required if you are absent for more than four consecutive school days in a voluntary secondary school and three school days in the case of an ETB school.

- To be acceptable, a medical certificate should be signed by a qualified medical practitioner.
- A medical certificate normally covers a period of no more than one week; however, certification of up to one month may be accepted at your employer's discretion.

**Note:** A medical certificate for one month's duration is usually for 28 days, and therefore can trigger an immediate referral to Medmark.

- The medical certificate should state your fitness to work or otherwise.
- It is not obligatory to state the nature of the illness.
- A medical certificate should be provided as soon as possible but not later than one week after the absence commences.
- Self-certified sick leave cannot be availed of immediately after certified sick leave.

### What are my sick leave entitlements?

Initially, your sick leave entitlements are under the Ordinary Illness Provisions, which cover employees who are absent from work due to personal illness or injury.

#### Ordinary Illness covers:

- a maximum of three months (92 days) on full pay in a 12-month period,

- a maximum of three months (91 days) on half pay, and
- subject to a maximum of six months (183 days) in a rolling four-year period.

**Note:** Total sick leave includes both certified and self-certified leave.

### How do I calculate my sick leave entitlements?

Your sick leave is calculated based on a dual look back system.

#### Step 1:

Determine the total number of sick days taken over the previous four-year rolling period, i.e., from the current date back four years (e.g., 21/03/2025 to 21/03/2021).

#### Step 2:

Determine the number of days that fell in the previous 12-month rolling period, counting back from the current date (e.g., 21/03/2025 to 21/03/2024). For example, if you used 60 days in the previous four-year rolling period, 20 days of which fell in the previous 12-month rolling period, this is how you would calculate your remaining sick leave:

$$183 - 60 = 123 \text{ sick leave days remaining}$$

#### Step 3:

To calculate your rate of pay for these remaining days, you look back 12 months. The maximum full paid number of days in a 12-month period is 92 days, so subtract the number of days taken in 12 months from 92 and this is your full paid sick leave.

$$92 - 20 = 72 \text{ sick leave days remaining at full pay}$$

The balance is then paid at half pay, so in this case:

$$123 - 72 = 51 \text{ sick leave days remaining at half pay}$$

**Note:** A teacher can request a detailed statement of leave from their employer (school), which will show what sick leave has been used in a 12-month and a four-year rolling period. At least one report should be provided by the employer annually.

**Members can access the Sick Leave calculator by logging in to their MyUnion account using the following link: [www.asti.ie/my-union](http://www.asti.ie/my-union)**



### What happens if I am absent either side of a weekend?

- Sick leave periods can include weekends, school closures, and days on which a teacher is not timetabled.
- Where a school closure occurs during a period of sick leave, the full period including school closure will be considered sick leave.

**Example:** If a teacher is absent on either side of a weekend, i.e. on Friday and the following Monday, then this absence will count as four days' sick leave in their overall sick leave record.

### What happens if I am absent before or after a school closure?

Where a teacher is absent on sick leave and has not returned to duty for a reasonable period before or after a period of school closure, the teacher will be deemed to be on sick leave for the whole duration unless:

- the teacher provides a medical certificate of fitness to resume full duties prior to or during a period of school closure,
- the advice of Medmark as to the teacher's fitness for full duties has been obtained and whether the school closure period or any part thereof might be discounted, and
- Medmark has deemed the period of return to duty to be reasonable taking into account the medical circumstances in individual cases.

### How do I claim Illness Benefit?

- Illness Benefit is claimed directly from the Department of Social Protection within six weeks of becoming ill.
- Teachers can apply online or submit a paper application.
- The application is done through your GP as your illness must be certified by your GP.

#### Online application:

- You can apply for Illness Benefit online at MyWelfare.ie if you have a verified or basic MyGovID account.
- Your GP can electronically submit a Certificate of Incapacity for Work.

#### Paper application:

- Your GP will provide you with an Illness Benefit claim form (IB1) and the Certificate of Incapacity for Work. You fill in the IB1 form and freepost it to the Department of Social Protection (address is on the form).
- Illness Benefit is then paid directly into your bank account and the Department of Education then applies a deduction to salary that is equivalent to the amount claimed (the balance of your salary is paid as normal).

### When do I need to claim Illness Benefit?

- When a teacher is absent on sick leave and pays Class A1 PRSI, they may be entitled to claim Illness Benefit (depending on duration of absence).
- If it is a first illness in 2025, and illness is for less than five days, then you do not need to apply for Illness Benefit.
- If the first illness is for more than five days, then you need to claim Illness Benefit from day six.
- If you have used five days of sick leave (either continuous or cumulative) and become ill again in the same year, and that absence is in excess of three days, then you need to claim Illness Benefit from day four.
- These are the current Illness Benefit requirements that came into effect in January 2024.

**Note:** These requirements are subject to change. For the most up-to-date information, please check the Department of Social Protection website.

## Medmark

### What is Medmark?

Medmark is the occupational health service for teachers.

### What is Medmark's role?

Medmark is the sole recognised provider of independent medical advice for teachers and employers. It is a requirement of the Sick Leave Scheme that all employers and teachers co-operate with Medmark.

### When will I be referred to Medmark?

- Where a teacher has been absent on sick leave for four weeks (28 days), continuous or cumulative, in a 12-month rolling period.
- Where reasonable concerns exist as to the capacity of the teacher to undertake their duties in a manner that is safe.

Examples: Repeated short-term absences or work-related health factors.

### What can I expect once I am referred to Medmark?

- The employer (school) informs the teacher that they have been referred.
- Medmark contacts the teacher by telephone to discuss their medical circumstances (initial contact is usually from a nurse).
- Medmark establishes the reason for and likely duration of the absence.
- Medmark will either agree a return-to-work date or schedule a further review if necessary.
- Medmark has the final say in a teacher's fitness to return to work and can overrule a GP or consultant.
- The employer is notified of the outcome.



## Critical Illness Provisions

### When do I apply for Critical Illness Provisions (CIP)?

- Teachers may apply for access to Critical Illness Provisions where they become incapacitated as a result of a critical illness or serious physical injury.
- An application can be made at any time provided you are absent on sick leave, under the care of a consultant and meet the medical criteria.
- If awarded, the critical entitlements are:
  - a maximum of six months (183 days) on full pay in a 12-month rolling period,
  - a maximum of six months (182 days) on half pay, and
  - subject to a maximum of 12 months (365 days) in a rolling four-year period.

**Note:** CIP entitlements extend the Ordinary Illness Provisions.

### What are Medmark's medical criteria for CIP?

The nature of the medical condition must have at least one of the following characteristics:

- acute life-threatening physical illness,
- chronic progressive illness, with well-established potential to reduce life expectancy,
- major physical trauma ordinarily requiring corrective acute operative surgical treatment, or
- in-patient or day hospital care of 10 consecutive days or greater.

### How do I apply for CIP?

CIP application process:

- the teacher must apply to their employer for access to CIP on the Employee Application for CIP (this is available here: [www.asti.ie/document-library/employee-application-for-critical-illness-provisions-cip/](http://www.asti.ie/document-library/employee-application-for-critical-illness-provisions-cip/)),
- upon receipt of the Employee Application for CIP, the employer (school) must initiate a referral to Medmark and complete the Occupational Health Referral Form,
- upon completion of this referral, the employer will receive a unique CIP referral number, which must be given to the teacher,
- a copy of the completed referral form must also be made available to the teacher,
- the next step then is that the teacher provides a completed report from their treating consultant directly to Medmark,
- there is a template for this report (MM180), which can be located on the ASTI website using the following link: [www.asti.ie/document-library/medmark-mm180/](http://www.asti.ie/document-library/medmark-mm180/).

**Note:** The unique referral CIP number should be included on this report.

- the report must address the following areas: diagnosis, treatment, prognosis and any hospital stays, and
- once Medmark receives and reviews the report from the treating consultant, it will advise the employer (school) by way of a report if, in its opinion, the teacher fulfils the medical criteria for award of CIP.

### What if Medmark refuses my medical application for CIP?

- As the criteria for granting CIP on the basis of Medmark's medical grounds are quite narrow, there will be cases that involve quite serious illness, injuries or conditions, which may deserve CIP, but do not fall within Medmark's medical criteria.
- Therefore, in such cases employers are allowed to exercise managerial discretion (Board of Management) and may grant CIP after considering the circumstances of the individual case.

In exercising managerial discretion, the employer must establish the following:

- that there are "exceptional circumstances",
- that those exceptional circumstances relate to the illness, injury or condition of the employee, and
- that those exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of CIP.

Examples of exceptional circumstances:

- presence of medical complications, or
- hospital stay close to Medmark's 10-day threshold.

The employer, when making this decision, should consider the relevant information from the following three sources:

1. The medical CIP report.
2. Relevant information from the employee.
3. Relevant human resources information and professional judgement.

### Once I return to work, will I still have access to any remaining CIP?

- It is important to note that once a teacher has been declared fit to return to work following critical illness, they retain access to any remaining sick leave available under CIP for 12 months, even if the reason for the further absence is not regarded as critical.
- After the 12-month period, sick leave entitlements will revert to the Ordinary Illness Provisions.

## What is Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration?

- Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR) is a payment to support teachers who are absent on extended sick leave and who have exceeded the 183 days of paid sick leave under Ordinary Illness Provisions or 365 days under CIP in a rolling four-year period.
- The overall rate of TRR is 37.5% of salary (inclusive of Illness Benefit payment).
- TRR will not exceed 18 months (548 days) in the case of Ordinary Illness.
- In the case of Critical Illness, teachers may have access to TRR for 12 months (365 days) followed by a further period of TRR not exceeding 24 months (730) days. This further period is subject to six-monthly reviews by Medmark.
- The period during which TRR is paid is not a period of pensionable service and will not count for pension purposes.



# AI AND AACs

*ASTI representatives have been speaking about teachers' concerns around AI and the proposed 40% allocation for Additional Assessment Components at Leaving Cert.*

"[On using AI tools in the classroom] We're not going back to a world before AI, and we have a responsibility to prepare students and to educate them in how it can support their learning – but also to know that a machine will never take away from what it means to be uniquely human."

**Shannon Ahern, ASTI member**  
*The Irish Times, January 21, 2025*

"The concerns surrounding the use of AI in the AACs stem predominantly from the fact that this project work is typically conducted outside the school. For example, when their student is writing their history project, which is worth 20% of the overall mark for the subject, the project is typically done in the student's own time outside of school. I think teachers' concerns surrounding the use of AI in projects arise from the fact that they have to be able to say: "Can I sign off on this? Do I really believe that this is my student's work?"."

**Moira Leydon, ASTI Assistant General Secretary**  
**Education & Research**  
*LMFM, January 22, 2025*

**"Teachers believe the integrity of the exam will be compromised. The allocation of 40% of overall marks is too much for certain subjects, as not all aspects will be completed within the school..."**

"In relation to the new assessment components, the acceleration that the Minister is implementing is generating enormous concern around the assessment integrity. The lack of guidance on the use of AI has added to those anxieties. Teachers are quite concerned that they won't be in a position to authenticate the work of students. The Additional Assessment Components (AACs) will create additional workload for students and the extra workload for students in turn creates enormous pressures within a classroom. In order to be successful in dealing with this, we need to tackle the fact that we have among the most densely populated classrooms in the OECD countries across the European Union."

**Kieran Christie, ASTI General Secretary**  
*Newstalk, January 22, 2025*

**"There had been no proper consultation, which is required for a change like this. And since then, there has been no meaningful communication from either the Department or from the patron body with the staff."**

"The REDC/ASTI survey showed that 88% of teachers believe that signing off on projects will be a problem, 82% believe students' workload will increase as there is a reduction in the tuition time from 200 hours at present to 180 hours for each subject, and 70% believe it will create extra stress on students. Teachers believe the integrity of the exam will be compromised. The allocation of 40% of overall marks is too much for certain subjects, as not all aspects will be completed within the school...Having a project in seven subjects will create greater stress for students as projects will overlap each other."

**Donal Cremin, ASTI President**  
*Galway Talks, Galway Bay FM, January 23, 2025*

"Both the ASTI and the Irish Science Teachers' Association (ISTA) have publicly dissociated themselves from the research project components (worth 40%) of the new curriculums in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. In the science subjects, laboratory practical skills will be assessed solely by means of a document submitted by each student. Such documents can easily be generated within minutes using AI tools, raising significant concerns about authentication."

**John Conneely, ASTI member and Standing Committee Representative Region 4**  
*The Irish Times, January 24, 2025*

"[On the Department's decision to turn Synge Street into a Gaelscoil] This is a very major change for the staff and for the school community in general. They heard about this last September, the day before the Department of Education and the school just announced that the decision had been taken. There had been no proper consultation, which is required for a change like this. And since then, there has been no meaningful communication from either the Department or from the patron body with the staff. They do not know where this will leave them."

**Diarmaid de Paor, ASTI Deputy General Secretary**  
*News at One, RTÉ Radio 1, February 14, 2025*

# RSTA Annual Conference and spring break

**The RSTA Annual Conference will take place this year in Kilkenny on Wednesday, April 30.**

The idea of wrapping a spring break for members around the RSTA Annual Conference has become an established pattern over recent years and the event is now the highlight of the RSTA social calendar. RSTA Kilkenny Branch members will host this year's Conference on Wednesday, April 30, in the Ormonde Hotel. Members will be welcomed on Tuesday evening with a performance by the Kilkenny School of Music String Quartet in the hotel foyer. Conference business will be completed by lunchtime on Wednesday, after which members are free to explore Kilkenny, with helpful guidance from local branch members if required. Representatives from the ASTI, and retired colleagues from NASUWT (Northern Ireland), The Alliance of Retired Public Servants, RMA-TUI and the Retired Teachers' Association of Ireland (RTAI) are welcome guests at the Conference Gala Dinner on Wednesday evening. Topics raised by members at Conference 2024 included the perennial concern

over pension parity, the Single Public Sector Pension Scheme, the impact on pensions of the local bargaining element of public service agreements, and issues surrounding the recruitment of retired teachers to meet teacher shortages in schools. Teacher Unity: Conference 2024 adopted a motion that "RSTA shall encourage and promote closer co-operation with other Retired Teacher Organisations". There were reports from speakers of co-operation at branch level – a welcome development coinciding with the recent ASTI/TUI survey on teacher unity and the joint union Senior Cycle campaign.

Ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid!

All information is on our website – [www.rsta.ie](http://www.rsta.ie).



*Pictured at the RSTA Annual Conference in 2024 are RSTA members Carmel Heneghan (RSTA Tuam Branch) and Henry Collins (RSTA Waterford Branch).*




*Ber Owen (left) and Salette Murphy (right) from RSTA Cork Branch at the RSTA Annual Conference 2024.*



*Pictured at the recent RSTA coffee morning held in ASTI Head Office were (from left): Donal Cremin (ASTI President), Margaret O'Neill (RSTA member), Padraig O'Doherty (RSTA member), Geraldine O'Brien (ASTI Immediate Past President), and Ger O'Donoghue (RSTA member).*



*Pictured at the recent RSTA coffee morning held in ASTI Head Office were (from left): Micheál O'Neill (RSTA National Secretary), Mary Durkin (RSTA member), Margaret O'Neill (RSTA member), Donal Cremin (ASTI President), Moira Leydon (ASTI Assistant General Secretary Education and Research), and Joan Murphy (RSTA member).*



**ASTI members,  
let us save  
you money!**



### Car Insurance

Get  
**€50 OFF!**

For new customers who take out a new policy before 31.03.25. Min. premium (€355), underwriter eligibility criteria, T&Cs apply.



### Home Insurance

Get  
**€50 OFF!**

For new customers who take out a new policy before 31.03.25. Min. premium (€156), underwriter eligibility criteria, T&Cs apply.



### Travel Insurance

Use code  
**Cornmarket10**

for **10% OFF**  
before 31<sup>st</sup> March!

Get a quote at [cornmarket.ie](https://cornmarket.ie)

Or call **0818 601 601**



 **Cornmarket**



Discounts are applied at quotation and apply in year one only. We are unable to issue discounts retrospectively. Eligibility criteria, terms and conditions apply. This Car Insurance Scheme is devised and administered by Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. and is available through: Allianz plc, Aviva Insurance Ireland DAC and RSA Insurance Ireland DAC. Home insurance policies through Cornmarket are underwritten by Allianz plc, Aviva Insurance Ireland DAC and RSA Insurance Ireland DAC. Allianz plc. is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. Aviva Insurance Ireland DAC, trading as Aviva, is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. RSA Insurance Ireland DAC is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. Cornmarket Travel Insurance is underwritten by MAPFRE ASISTENCIA Compañia Internacional De Seguros Y Reaseguros S.A. (trading as MAPFRE ASSISTANCE Agency Ireland), and is authorised by the Dirección General de Seguros y Fondos de Pensiones del Ministerio de Economía y Hacienda in Spain, and is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland for conduct of business rules. Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.

# PRESSING ISSUES ON THE AGENDA AT CONVENTION 2025

Key issues on the agenda for ASTI Annual Convention 2025 include the impact of the changes to the Leaving Certificate on both teachers and students, concerns surrounding the use of AI in State exams, and the safety, health and welfare of teachers.

This year's ASTI Annual Convention will be held in the INEC Convention Centre, Killarney, Co. Kerry, from April 22-24. Convention is where ASTI members from across the country gather to decide ASTI policy for the coming year. Delegates will listen to key speeches, including from ASTI President Donal Cremin and the Minister for Education and Youth Helen McEntee TD.

## Topics for debate

Some of the key motions for debate at Annual Convention 2025 will address the impact of the changes to the Leaving Certificate under the Senior Cycle Redevelopment Programme, as well as teachers' health, safety and welfare. Motions focusing on making teaching sustainable and attractive are also on the agenda at Convention 2025. On the issue of the Leaving Certificate Additional Assessment Components (AACs), motion 14 seeks to protect teachers from any legal action taken by students when certifying students' work as part of the AACs if results are withheld due to suspected cheating using AI. Motion 48 calls on the ASTI to withhold support for Senior Cycle redevelopment unless specific demands are met, including full teacher training, improved ICT resources, upgraded science labs, and timely access to subject specifications and materials. Several motions are dedicated to the health, safety and welfare of teachers, with motion 19 calling for a survey of members regarding physical aggression in the workplace, and calls for financial assistance, assault leave, a support system for affected teachers, research into mental health issues and the establishment of a code of best practice. Motion 23 urges changes to the Sick Leave Scheme so that weekends and public holidays are excluded, while motion 30 calls for doubling the current sick leave allowance, aiming to restore it to pre-2008 arrangements.

## Working conditions and Junior Cycle

Motions 10 and 12 seek to improve teachers' working conditions, with

motion 12 demanding that the ASTI negotiate with the Department of Education that any hours spent on extracurricular activities are considered part of Croke Park hours. Motion 10 asks that the ASTI commission a report into the different pension options available to members so that members can make a more informed choice in choosing the best possible option available to them. Composite motion 44 calls for a fairer Junior Cycle grading system. Motion 43 seeks broader access to exam papers at both higher and ordinary levels. Motion 11 advocates for additional educational needs (AEN) roles to be ex quota to ensure full support for AEN students. Composite motion 35 calls for an independent review of curriculum design and assessment, while motion 39 urges the ASTI, in partnership with the TUI, to seek that subject-specific CPD is provided to teachers before the implementation of new subject specifications. Motion 9 seeks equal time allowances for post holders in voluntary secondary schools as in Education and Training Board and community and comprehensive schools. Motion 7 calls for all AP1 and AP2 job postings to include clear duty descriptions. On equality, motion 20 seeks paid leave for members experiencing miscarriage or undergoing IVF treatment. Motion 21 proposes paid menopause leave and adjustments for affected teachers. On salaries and allowances, motion 3 demands that the length of teacher salary scales be shortened to align with those of other public servants. Motion 6 calls for reversing the FEMPI-related increment freeze with ICTU support. Motion 15 seeks that job-sharing teachers are not timetabled for more than three days a week, if that is their preference. Other motions relate to ASTI Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle campaigns, and members' engagements with their union.

For a full list of motions at Convention 2025 please visit:  
[www.asti.ie/member-benefits/events/convention-2025/](http://www.asti.ie/member-benefits/events/convention-2025/)

## Tune in to Convention 2025

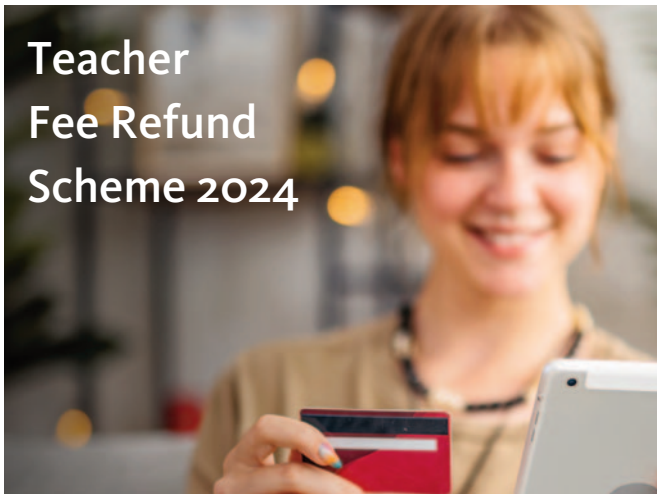
How to follow what's happening at Convention 2025:

### Watch key speeches live and read them back

Key speeches from the ASTI President and the Minister for Education and Youth will be streamed live on the ASTI website. Links will also be available on the website as soon as practical.

### Social media

Don't forget to use the hashtag #ASTI25 to see all the latest tweets from Convention and to join in the discussion. Updates will also be posted to the ASTI Facebook account – [www.facebook.com/astiteachers/](http://www.facebook.com/astiteachers/) – and the ASTI website – [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie) – in due course.



The Teacher Fee Refund Scheme provides funding towards the cost of professional development courses that are relevant and of benefit to schools. Courses must be subject to certification/award by an accreditation authority and must be recognised by the Department of Education. Applications will only be considered for courses/part of courses completed in the period from September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2024 (see Circular 0003/2025). The closing date for receipt of applications is Wednesday, April 2, 2025. Late applications will not be considered.

## Schools supporting young migrant students



Researchers from the University of Limerick are leading a national study to explore the well-being of students from migrant backgrounds in Irish schools. This research, co-funded by Research Ireland and Narrative 4, aims to design a school-based resource to promote a sense of connection, belonging and better well-being for students with a migrant background. The research team is launching a nationwide survey in April 2025 to better understand what well-being supports currently exist in Irish post-primary schools for students with a migrant background, as well as school leaders' experiences of providing these supports. "By sharing your school's experiences, you will help identify the priority needs of schools in this area and shape the development of resources that support migrant students' well-being in Irish classrooms," says Dr Jennifer McMahon, principal investigator and founder of UL's School, Child & Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Lab (SCY-Lab). To mark the launch, the team is hosting a free webinar on Tuesday, April 29, at 4.00pm. This event will describe the context for the research and feature a panel discussion with education experts, youth representatives, and migrant support professionals.

For more information about the survey, please email [Jade.M.Gill@ul.ie](mailto:Jade.M.Gill@ul.ie). Scan the QR code above to register for the webinar.

## Comhdháil Cheannaireachta: Fís, Fás, Forbairt agus Feasacht

I gcomhpháirt le Gaeloideachas, is cúis áthais do COGG Comhdháil Cheannaireachta 2025 a fhógairt. Is é 'Fís, Fás, Forbairt agus Feasacht' teideal na comhdhála i mbliana. Tugtar cuireadh – do phríomhoidí, do phríomhoidí tánaisteacha in iar-bhunscoileanna lán-Ghaeilge agus do mhúinteoirí i bhfeighil ar aonaid – a bheith i láthair ar an Aibreán 2/3 in Óstán Bloomfield sa Mhuileann gCearr. Cuirfear réimse leathan ceardlann i láthair chun tacú le ceannairí scoile an lámh in uachtar a fháil ar chuid de

na dúshláin atá roimh an earnáil lán-Ghaeilge ag an iar-bhunleibhéal faoi láthair. Clúdófar lóistín agus bia do thoscairí na comhdhála agus táthar ag súil leis na hacmhainní atá nua-fhorbartha le déanaí ag COGG a chur i láthair le linn na comhdhála.

Tuilleadh eolais agus nasc chun clárú: [www.cogg.ie](http://www.cogg.ie)

## OBITUARY

### Marguerite Martin



The past and present school community of St Mary's Baldoye were deeply saddened to hear of the untimely passing of our late colleague Marguerite Martin.

Marguerite was a hugely respected and very well-known teacher, dedicating 39 years of her life to St Mary's Baldoye.

Testimonies from current and past pupils, parents, and teaching colleagues, both retired and active, show how Marguerite was hugely influential not only in the lives of her pupils, but in the many educational initiatives she spearheaded.

Marguerite was instrumental in developing the

national Transition Year Programme and introduced the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and Gaisce Award scheme to St Mary's. She was also very active in the History and Business Studies teachers' associations. Her love of learning and teaching in History and Business was transferred with a passion to all her students. Following her retirement from teaching, Marguerite continued to transmit her deep interest in history to visitors as a guide at the Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre in Oldbridge.

Marguerite was also a committed trade unionist, spanning over 25 years as ASTI school steward and a very active member of ASTI Dublin North East Branch.

She leaves a very proud legacy in St Mary's and the wider Baldoye community. Our deepest sympathies are with her husband Frank and son Andrew.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dílis.

*ASTI Members, St Mary's Baldoye,  
Dublin North East Branch*

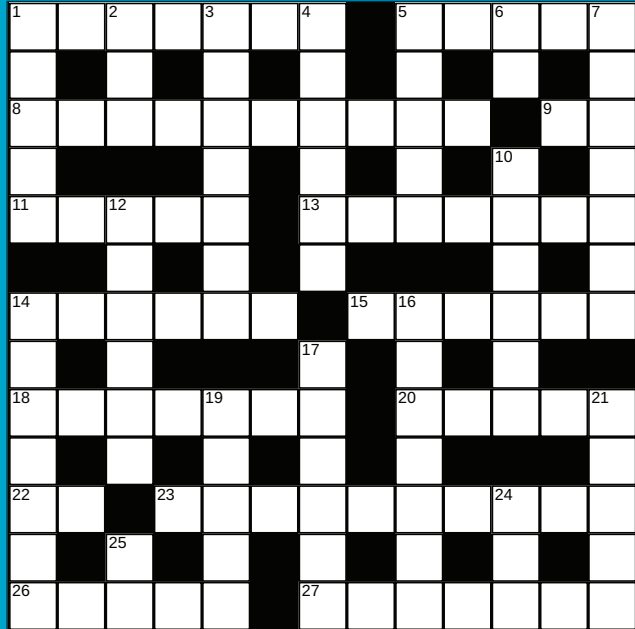


Sponsored by Cornmarket

ASTIR CROSSWORD NO. 2502

The winner will receive €250 in One4All vouchers.

If you wish to keep your copy of *ASTIR* intact you may send a photocopy of the crossword. One entry only per member.



Name

School

Address

ASTI Branch

Entries to: ASTIR Crossword No. 2502,  
Think Media, The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.

To arrive by: Friday, April 11, 2025.

LEIDEANNA TRASNA

- Faiteach, scáfar, inmíoch (7)
- Fionnadh fada armhuineál ainmhí (5)
- An trup a dhéanann báisteach nó cloche sneachta (10)
- An mada a bhí ag Cúlainn sa bhfinscéal (2)
- Fabht, máchaill, éalaing (5)
- Am a rachaidh sa todhchaí (7)
- Déantar scrúdaithe scoile iontu seo, go minic (6)
- Creach, slad, bánú (6)
- Conradh ar ceal do na súile (7)
- Fág, téigh as, teith (5)
- Bíonn sé i gceannas ar mhainistir (2)
- Bhí ceann ag na Rómhánaigh agus ag na hOstaraigh. (10)
- Céadainm Uachtarán an ASTI (5)
- Federico, stiúrthóir scannán (7)

LEIDEANNA SÍOS

- Scarbhileog de chuid Microsoft (5)
- Stát san India go mba leis an Phortaingéil é, tráth (3)
- Bíonn rásaí capall ann gach Meán Fómhair in Inse, Co. na Mí (2,2,3)
- Cluasa rothair (6)
- Cathair naofa de chuid na Moslamach (5)
- Réimir a chialaíonn "móran" (2)
- Buachaillí bó na hAigintíne (7)
- Oileán san Aigéan Ciúin gur leis an Fhrainc é (6)
- ... an Treoigh, an áit ina bhfuil Ollscoil Luimní (6)
- Ollscoil cháiliúil i nBostún (7)
- Iascaire allta in áit as a mbaintear gaineamh nó cloche (7)
- Ball éadaigh a chastar timpeall an mhuiníl (6)
- Ní le haon tír an limistéar seo: ... / ... / Thuaidh (2,3)
- Cinn dearga a chaitheann cairdinéil (5)
- Fórsa beathach na Síneach (3)
- An cód ar shine ar an tabla periadach (1,1)

Solutions to ASTIR Crossword No. 2501

ACROSS	DOWN
1. The tooth fairy	2. Haemostat
10. Three	3. Tir
11. Retrograde	4. Optician
13. Fungous	5. Hooke
15. Crescendo	6. African
16. Upset	7. Radon
17. Crampon	8. Stiff upper lip
19. Sag	9. Grindstone
20. Plotters	12. Tongue in cheek
21. Gendarme	14. Secures
24. Rue	18. Preview
25. Rossini	19. Scrumages
26. Women	22. Downright
27. Immigrant	23. Filthily
30. Warpath	25. Regimen
31. Unimposing	28. Minsk
33. Glebe	29. Aloof
34. Skin of my teeth	32. Gee

**Did you miss?**

Update on Senior Cycle campaign 11

Sick leave for teachers 22

**CONGRATULATIONS**

Congratulations to the winner of Crossword No. 2501: Katie Langford, Loreto St Michael's Navan, Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath. Navan Branch member



**Irish Aid**  
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha  
Department of Foreign Affairs

**New Form!**

# Global Passport 2025

Apply for your passport for your Global Citizenship Education journey

The Global Passport is a tool to reflect on your school's current **Global Citizenship Education (GCE)** practice and how to build on your achievements.

## REASONS TO APPLY

- You will get the opportunity to record and reflect on your school's GCE practice.
- You will gain external recognition of the GCE work being done in your school and raise your school's profile.
- You can avail of personalised support for your school's GCE journey and continuous professional development opportunities.
- Your school can receive a grant of **up to €800** to support your GCE activities and initiatives.

Some GCE themes you can explore:



**Deadline for application:** 23rd May at 17:00

**Info:** [global.passport@worldwiseschools.ie](mailto:global.passport@worldwiseschools.ie)

Scan to register your interest: ▶



**Global Citizenship Education (GCE)** is an educational process aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live.

WorldWide Global Schools is Irish Aid's Global Citizenship Education programme for Post-Primary settings in Ireland.

*'You don't realise how much you have done until it is all down on paper.'*  
**E.J., (Teacher)**

# Health Insurance Just Got Better!

4 Providers, More Choice, Big Savings...



Cornmarket is the **exclusive broker** for Level Health.  
Last year, we saved ASTI members **€578** on average!\*

 **Irish Life**  
health

 **laya**  
healthcare

 **Vhi**

 **Level** Health

Get a quote **before 31st March** for your chance to  
**WIN a 2 night spa break in Wineport Lodge & €500!\*\***



SCAN ME

 **Cornmarket**

Call **(01) 408 6214**  
or go to **cornmarket.ie/health-insurance**

Please note: There is a service fee for our Health Insurance Comparison Service, if you decide to go ahead with the policy we recommend. Visit [cornmarket.ie/health-insurance](https://cornmarket.ie/health-insurance) for details. \*Average saving based on 1016 ASTI members who reviewed & switched their cover between October 2023 & October 2024. Source, Cornmarket November 2024. \*\*Terms & Conditions: You will be entered into the draw when you get a health insurance quote with Cornmarket, by phone or via our online health tool, between 01.01.25 & 31.03.25. You can opt out of the draw by contacting us before the draw deadline date by emailing [dataprotection@cornmarket.ie](mailto:dataprotection@cornmarket.ie). The prize draw is open to persons aged 18 and over who are ROI residents. Only one entry allowed per person. A winner will be drawn at random by an independent adjudicator on 03/04/25 and will be informed by email or phone within 3 working days of the draw. The winner's details will be available upon request. The promoter, Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd., reserves the right to alter, amend and foreclose the promotion without prior notice. The promoter's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. There will be one winner of the break to Wineport Lodge worth €1060 & €500 cash. There is no cash alternative for the hotel break. Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.

20728 Health advert ASTI 02-25