

**Controlled Schools' Support Council**  
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Ms Aoibhinn Treanor  
Clerk  
Committee for Education  
Room 205, Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
BELFAST BT4 3XX

22 March 2021

**Dear Ms Treanor**

**FAIR EMPLOYMENT & TREATMENT ORDERS (FETO)**

Further to your letter of 8 March 2021 seeking the position of the Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC) on the teachers' exemption in FETO, the Certificate for Religious Education (CRE) and any linkages between the two. Please find our comments on the matter below:

CSSC being the sectoral body for controlled schools, representing 49% of all schools in Northern Ireland, would support any measures which seek to ensure equality of opportunity for all in respect of teacher employment.

CSSC would consider that religious denomination should not be a factor in teacher employment.

CSSC would consider that any teacher, holding a teaching qualification, recognised by the Department of Education, should be sufficient for being considered to be appointed to a school, regardless of their religious beliefs or political opinions.

CSSC would however acknowledge that every school, irrespective of sector, has an individual ethos which is fundamental to all aspects of school life. CSSC would therefore welcome discussion as to how school ethos could be included in employment considerations, as this would not only ensure parity across the education system in Northern Ireland but also provide individuals with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of and ability to contribute to individual school ethos.

A schools' focus should be on ensuring the most appropriate candidate is appointed to any post in their school. In doing so it would be expected that they would wish to ensure that



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there is recognition and commitment to the ethos of the school and in their being able to contribute to the life of the whole school.

The continued use of and or reliance on the Certificate for Religious Education (CRE), as a pre-requisite to gaining employment in a school is not appropriate.

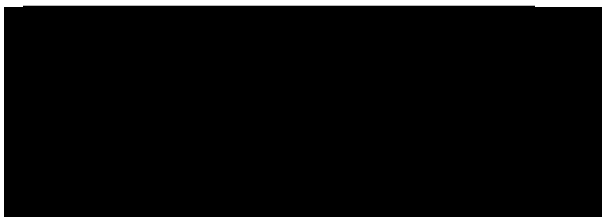
It is understood that the content of the CRE is reflective of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. As such CSSC recognises that it can complement the professional qualifications an individual may hold for the teaching of Religious Education (RE) in school.

CSSC would consider that the CRE should be available at all HE institutions that deliver initial teaching education and as such it would be available to all student teachers as an optional addition to their studies and teaching qualifications.

In summary therefore CSSC

- supports measures which would contribute to a more equal employment environment for all, and
- recognises that the Certificate in Religious Education can contribute to Religious Education in the schools' curriculum, and therefore should be available as an option for all student teachers

Yours Sincerely



**S N S McCURDY**  
**Interim Chief Executive**