

Constitution

1. Name

The Association shall be called the “Association of Teachers of Catholic Religious Education” (ATCRE).
ATCRE was established in March 2018.

2. Mission statement

ATCRE aims to support and represent teachers of Catholic religious education in England and Wales by:

- facilitating dialogue amongst teachers;
- providing a voice at a national level for teachers;
- celebrating and sharing excellent practice.

3. Statement of principles

ATCRE seeks to promote:

- the mission of Catholic education as determined by the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales;
- excellence in the teaching of Catholic religious education;
- collaboration between teachers of Catholic religious education in different types of schools (such as primary, secondary, sixth form college, special, independent, voluntary aided, academies, free schools);
- collaboration with other Catholic organisations in furtherance of Catholic religious education;
- links with international Catholic organisations in furtherance of Catholic religious education;
- links with organisations that promote religious education in schools.

4. Statement of intent

ATCRE will:

- organise an Annual General Meeting (AGM);
- promote the vocation of the teacher of Catholic religious education
- organise events for teachers of Catholic religious education;
- communicate and disseminate news relevant to teachers of Catholic religious education;
- produce publications to support teachers of Catholic religious education.

Constitution

5. Membership

- i. Membership will be open to all teachers of religious education in Catholic schools in England and Wales.
- ii. Membership will also be open to all associated with religious education in Catholic schools in England and Wales and who subscribe to the mission statement and statement of principles of ATCRE.

5.1 Members will be entitled to:

- access the members' section of the ATCRE website;
- attend events and the AGM;
- receive ATCRE publications.

5.2 The Executive Committee will consist of:

- i. (1) Chair
- ii. (3) Vice Chairs (where possible drawn from different school types)
- iii. (1) General Secretary
- iv. (1) Treasurer
- v. (1) Communications Officer
- vi. (5) One representative from each the five provinces of England and Wales (Birmingham, Cardiff, Liverpool, Southwark and Westminster)
- vii. (5) One representative from each of the different types of Catholic school (primary, secondary, special, sixth form college, independent, joint Church schools)
- viii. Members may be co-opted for their specialist knowledge or expertise by the executive committee and ratified by the AGM.

5.3 Elections

- i. The Chair will serve for a period of up to six years. The Chair will be elected by a simple majority of the members of the executive committee. The immediate past Chair may remain on the executive committee with no specific constitutional role or responsibility but can be invited to contribute to specific work of the Executive or the Association.
- ii. One of the Vice Chairs would normally lead to appointment as Chair on the retirement of that officer. The Vice Chairs will usually serve for up to four years. Vice Chairs are elected by a simple majority of the membership at the AGM for a period of up to four years. Each year one Vice Chair position is elected at the AGM and serves for up to four years.
- iii. The treasurer, secretary and communications officer will serve usually for four years in that capacity.
- iv. Members of the executive will be elected at the AGM for a term of three years, via the Electoral Reform Society Single Transferable voting system.

Constitution

- v. A pattern of elections will be established so that the executive committee maintains stability of membership after first elected officer posts become vacant, either by resignation, completion of elected period (or for Vice Chair by election as Chair).

5.4 Role of the Executive

The Executive will:

- i. meet at least twice a year;
- ii. be responsible for the content, planning and organisation of events;
- iii. act on behalf of the Association and report such actions to the AGM;
- iv. coordinate the production of documents published on behalf of the Association;
- v. maintain communication with the members and ensure the website is kept up to date.

5.5 The role of the Chair

The Chair will:

- i. have a responsibility for strategic direction of the association;
- ii. lead the executive meetings.

5.6 The role of the Vice Chairs

The Vice Chairs will:

- i. collaborate with the Chair in developing the strategic direction of the association;
- ii. take a lead on specified areas;
- iii. deputise in the absence of the Chair as necessary.

5.7 General Secretary

The General Secretary will:

- i. make arrangements for the conduct and organisation of all meetings as directed by the Executive;
- ii. record minutes of meetings;
- iii. conduct correspondence of the Association.

The Executive may delegate some of the duties to other members as necessary.

5.8 Treasurer

The Treasurer will act in accordance with the following guidelines:

- i. a separate bank account to be used for all money transactions;
- ii. the account to be called 'ATCRE';
- iii. accounts for each year to be independently examined or audited (according to legal need), reported to the Executive and circulated to members with AGM material.

Constitution

5.9 Communications Officer

The Communications Officer will:

- i. seek to facilitate communications with and among members;
- ii. keep an up to date record of the membership.

5.10 Vacancies to the executive

Any vacancy occurring during the period of office of the Executive may be filled by the Executive at its discretion until an election is held at the next AGM.

5.11 Expenses

Appropriate expenses incurred by Executive Committee members will be reimbursed by the Association (see guidance document on appropriate expenses).

5.12 Executive meetings

The quorum for Executive meetings will be 65% of members, including the Chair and one Vice Chair, or at least two Vice Chairs if the Chair is not present.

5.13 Removal of members of the Executive

- i. If a member of the Executive does not attend meetings regularly (less than 50% of scheduled meetings within any twelve-month period), they will be asked to step down. If they do not step down, then following a discussion with concerned parties, they can be removed from post by unanimous vote of the Executive.
- ii. If a member of the Executive acts in a way that undermines the organisational aims of ATCRE, they will be asked to step down. If they do not step down, then following a discussion with concerned parties, they can be removed from post by unanimous vote of the Executive.

Constitution

6. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- i. The AGM is open to all members of the Association.
- ii. Notice of the AGM, including invitations to stand for election and business from members, will be circulated to members five working days before the AGM. Business items for the AGM must be received five working days before notice of the AGM is circulated.
- iii. There will be a vote for members of the executive, with one vote per member.
- iv. Report from the Executive.
- v. Presentation of accounts for approval.

7. Alteration to the Constitution

- i. This constitution may only be amended by a two-thirds majority of those members eligible to vote at the AGM.
- ii. Amendments to the constitution need to be submitted to the Executive in writing one month before the AGM and circulated to all members at least two weeks before the AGM.

8. ATCRE and Canon Law

ATCRE is a lay association within the Catholic Church. As such it follows the norms laid down in The Code of Canon Law (1983), specifically from the section on the obligations and rights of all the Christian faithful (208 - 223):

- The Christian faithful, even in their own manner of acting, are always obliged to maintain communion with the Church (Can. 209 §1).
- The Christian faithful are at liberty freely to found and direct associations for purposes of charity or piety or for the promotion of the Christian vocation in the world and to hold meetings for the common pursuit of these purposes (Can. 215).
- Since they participate in the mission of the Church, all the Christian faithful have the right to promote or sustain apostolic action even by their own undertakings, according to their own state and condition. Nevertheless, no undertaking is to claim the name Catholic without the consent of competent ecclesiastical authority (Can. 216).
- In exercising their rights, the Christian faithful, both as individuals and gathered together in associations, must take into account the common good of the Church, the rights of others, and their own duties toward others (Can. 223 §1).

In accordance with Canon Law, ATCRE has the consent of the Bishops of England and Wales.